

BOOK REVIEW

'The Bashful Chair'

By SISTER MARGARET TERESA

(Professor of Literature, Nazareth College)

THE BASHFUL CHAIR, poems by Rev. Robert H. Flood, Fisher College, 1952. 97 pages. These are "thinkies"; a tight-packed Kraton of verses for the modern pilgrim, with a range designed for the straight road and the long view. Here are keen and regretful analyses of the pilgrim's fellow-travelers, neo-pagans, "matter with a mystique," and worldly Catholics with their favorite dodges, "swamp minds" needy of the Holy Spirit.

MINGLED WITH THESE joyous commentary on children, grown-ups, priests, soldiers, martyrs, glowing from their contact with Life in the Church; and everywhere the consciousness of Christ, Christ born, Christ risen, Christ used and abused by His own, the Janitor callously summoned, Who says, "I was busy pulling my arms From rusty roman staples; My feet were slowed in A blood puddle. I was waiting for you; So I was held up."

Other subjects get a brief, often a humorous glance; modern education, modern literature (a just commendation of Christopher Fry, a condemnation equally just of the recent exhuming of poor Bozzy's youth), his own poetic credo (defined with a chuckle on page 35, seriously on page 46; forsaken on page 57).

The poet's integrity of purpose in writing, that by deliberate practice of the poetic art he might make himself a better teacher of it, has born real fruit.

LITERATURE, Newman said, is the personal use of language, and it happens in this volume that the poems directly personal in the simplest sense — phrased in imperatives, dialogue, thinking-aloud gerunds — are those which plead most for re-reading and permanence.

On grief, for example: Tap on heaving shoulders Whisper to them: You are not gods But God's.

or on the happiness of Holy Week: And fell to rhyming And sea to shining And season's coming And rhythm humbling...

or on Christ's harvest: That tall gawky fellow, Lord! Yes, Then... you mean all... you want all? Yes.

or on the timid worldlings: You have your niche Where you can keep the pose That your view is always rose...

Perhaps the most impressive of these conversation-poems is "How Old Is a Dead Man?" in which the most insistent speaker, Grand-Inquisitor-like, is heard only by the poet, not by the reader. His theme, "Men die more often, more rapidly, than some would ever guess" — then go on living, recalls T. S. Eliot's powerful use of Dante's line when he says "of the day's traffic" over London Bridge, "I had not dreamed death had undone so many."

TWO LONG poems at the end of the book, "The True Church" and a brief "Pastor's Play." "Stranger in the Tomb," an altogether a summary of the stronger moods of this poet. The first reminds us Catholic folk that persecution will make us know what we really are and love. The second dramatizes the devil's urgent desire that there be no Church to help us. Satan tempts the entombed Christ to let it all go, now that Life is empty; he paints the ugliness of our future history. Christ answers that His Mystical Body will suffer intelligently, lovingly.

A footnote must be added: He is a maker of true emblems and epigrams; any need of the quip? Is not thought play above word-play? Let me say in haste and justice that the preface promises entertainment on all levels and that the quips are rather consistently placed on the lowest — the bottom of the page.

No doubt quips make for the smooth saccato of the finished product — none the less, they are exercise. Thought play is the real rapier-work, calling for jealous skill, having an aim. Might not the quips have been deleted?

Nativity Scene In Public Square

Cleveland (NC) — A Nativity scene with life size figures holds a prominent spot in this city's Public Square as part of a divination of the Feast of Christmas. The Nativity scene is sponsored by the Catholic Federation of Women's clubs, the Cleveland diocesan section of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.



The Lost Lamb Carrying a lamb and holding a candle, this aged shepherd wends his way to Christmas Mass in Provence, France, in the little village of Les Baux. The Mass is celebrated with reminiscence of ancient customs, and shepherds from the country round, wearing traditional long coats, bring a lamb as an offering. Sometimes a goat, decorated with flowers and ribbons, pulls a little carriage holding the lamb, and children of the community stage a manger scene to commemorate the birth of Christ at Bethlehem.

Lay Missionaries To Teach Indians

New York (NC) — Responding to an SOS for lay teachers in Indian Missions, three men and one woman volunteered this month for teaching work among the American Indians. Enrolled in the Marquette League Lay Apostolate for Catholic Indian Missions are Gertrude McSpirt of New York, Charles L. McHarness of Seattle, Harold M. Mayer of Benton Harbor, Mich., and Francis Kieffer, veteran lay volunteer in missionary work.

Newark Archbishop Sets Installation

Newark, N. J. (NC) — Auxiliary Bishop Thomas A. Boland of Newark, will be installed as Archbishop of this see on January 14. The Most Rev. Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, is to officiate at the installation ceremony. The rite will take place at the Church of the Sacred Heart in Vailsburg, N. J., as Newark's new Sacred Heart Cathedral, now under construction, is unheated, and the old St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral is considered too small for the occasion. The Vailsburg church can accommodate 2,000 persons.

Bishop Boland, who was designated an Archbishop by Pope Pius XII on November 18, succeeds Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh, who died last June. The Archbishop-designate is a native of Orange, N. J.

Estate Of \$334,500 Aids Charity

Cincinnati (NC) — Three Catholic educational institutions will receive \$50,000 each from the estate of Charles F. Williams, Cincinnati business leader, who died September 11.

A total of \$334,500 will be distributed to nearly 40 institutions, most of them Catholic, under an entry of designation filed in Probate Court here. Under Mr. Williams' will, his widow was requested to leave the residue of his estate to religious, charitable, and educational institutions of her choice.

The three \$50,000 bequests designated by Mrs. Williams will go to Xavier University here; the University of Notre Dame, and the Cathedral-Seminary fund, a current campaign for the expansion of St. Gregory's Seminary and rebuilding of the old St. Peter in Chains Cathedral here. Mrs. Williams also directed that \$25,000 be given to the Jesuit Seminary Aid Association for the Support of Seminaries of Chicago, located at nearby Millford, Ohio.

Newspaper Editor Washington, D. C. (NC) — Rev. Philip Hannan, editor of the Catholic Standard, weekly newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington, is among seven priests honored by Pope Pius XII with the title of Monsignor.

Cures At Lourdes Church Holds Only 44 Miracles, Doctor Says 1,200 Unexplainable

Paris (NC) — Of the 1,200 cures at Lourdes that have been certified as medically unexplainable, only 44 are recognized by the Church as miraculous.

This was revealed in an article in La Croix, Paris Catholic daily, by Dr. Francois Leuret, chief of the Lourdes Bureau of Medical Authentication which certified the cures.

Priest State School Head In Africa

Cincinnati (NC) — When the British government needed a secretary of education for its Basutoland Protectorate in southern Africa, it chose Father R. L. Gullbeault, O.M.I., as the man best fitted for the job. The French-Canadian priest was teaching theology in the Oblate seminary at Roma, Basutoland, at that time.

Interviewed recently here, Father Gullbeault said, "It was just a temporary appointment. But I've had it for 13 years." Of the 900 schools under his supervision, only 400 are Catholic. The rest are conducted either by the government or by Protestant sects.

Asked if non-Catholic educators resented his appointment, the 40-year-old missionary replied: "It's possible that they did. But I just went ahead with the job."

Dr. Leuret stressed the fact that the Bureau never proclaims any cure a miracle. It is concerned only with establishing the medical facts of a case. On the basis of these facts, the Church decides whether or not a given cure is miraculous. He added, however, that he believed there were many miracles among the cures at Lourdes which the Bureau could not certify because of insufficient evidence.

Dr. Leuret is the only physician permanently attached to the Bureau. His job is to preside at examinations and discussions of alleged cures which other doctors make at the Bureau. These are usually doctors accompanying some pilgrims who are in Lourdes for only a short time.

ANY DOCTOR, of any belief or no belief, is free to go to the Bureau and make whatever investigations he likes and to present whenever an alleged cure is being investigated.

The facts to be determined by the Bureau include the proven presence of an illness before the person cured came to Lourdes, that the cure was instantaneous and complete, that no medical treatment of any sort was involved and that the cure cannot be explained by natural causes.

The CATHOLIC SHOP EXCLUSIVE! FOR NUNS CLERICAPE The Sisters' Raincape \$5.95 Complete Rain-Protection From Head-Dress to Ankles The Ideal Gift For "Sister" Tucker's 300 EAST MAIN 12 NORTH STREET

RODENHOUSE HAS THE BIG GENERAL ELECTRIC Christmas Special! 21-INCH at a NEW LOW PRICE! \$269.00 NO MONEY DOWN! RODENHOUSE offers you the opportunity to own this great set on 'Terms To Fit Your Budget' — NO PAYMENTS due until February 1, 1953. BLACK-DAYLITE TV Every House Needs RODENHOUSE 687 TITUS AVE. OPEN EVERY NIGHT 'TIL 9 P. M. Char. 4160 4161

NOTHING CHANGED BUT THE LABEL! STANDARD Dry LARGEST SELLING ALE IN TOWN A SMART NEW LABEL FOR AMERICA'S ORIGINAL DRY ALE! STANDARD BREWING CO., INC. ROCHESTER, N.Y.