

schools, a number of earnest people are taking steps towards Christianising the drama. The *journees d'art religieux*, the days of religious art, that have taken place recently in Paris, under the patronage of the Cardinal Archbishop, were interesting, opening as they did a vista upon the activities of certain Catholic artists whose object it is to create a Catholic theatre. They are, as a rule, young men, enterprising, full of initiative and ideas, who would fain introduce a Catholic element into all the branches of art. One of the best known is M. Henri Gheon, a convert of the war, who for the last four years has written for colleges, study classes, and schools Christian dramas that have had a well-deserved success. M. Gheon believes in creating between the actors and their audience a bond of sympathy that must contribute to the development of both. He now is prepared to extend his action beyond its original sphere and to produce his works before larger audiences. Given his well-known talent and knowledge of human nature, his success seems probable. M. Henri Gheon has founded a dramatic company to forward his views, the object of this company being to "serve art in a Catholic spirit." The Companions of Our Lady, as the group is called, proclaim their object at starting: they are "founded to glorify God and His Saints by means of dramatic art." They are not and must not be professionals but volunteers; they are practising Catholics and their work is purely gratuitous. They are told in their rules to consider their art as a manifestation of their Catholicity, to practise humility and self-forgetfulness. Their first representations will be given in Paris, at the theatre of the *Truc Colombier*, then, according to possibilities, in the Provinces. Of course, they can give only a limited number of representations every year; besides some original plays they will revive many medieval and foreign plays. M. Gheon does not ignore the difficulties he must face, but he hopes that, with the grace of God the inevitable little miseries of human frailty will be merged into a generous effort to secure the object in view. He believes that he will in time be able to create a popular theatre, full of healthy sentiment, dramatic sense, and sane merriment, and both the Cardinal Archbishop and other notable Catholics have encouraged his initiative. In touch with the Companions of Our Lady, M. Gheon has founded a group of their "Friends," who by their yearly subscriptions and their influence undertake to serve the object of the Association—"the diffusion of Christian dramas."

The Lure of Secrecy

George Ade, the famous humorist, suggests the passion for "dressing up" as the reason why so many men join secret societies. He thus describes the "Joiner," who was the "G.K." of one Benevolent Order and the Worshipful High Guy of something else and the Senior Warden of the Sons of Patoosh, and a lot more that his wife couldn't keep track of. He believed that anything done in a secretive and mysterious manner thereby became important. It made him happy to know that he was the custodian of "inside

stuff," which would never be divulged to one who had not taken the Oath. He carried at least twenty rituals in his head, and his hands were all twisted out of shape from giving so many different grips. Night after night he was off to a hall up a dark stairway to lead some unfortunate into the Blue Lodge of the Commandery or else over the Hot Sands. If he had not spent all his money going to conclaves and Grand Lodge meetings, he paid dues and assessments and brought uniforms. His wife complained that she could use on groceries some of the money he was spending on velvet regalia and emblematic watch charms, but he consoled her with the insurance money she and the children would get from these organisations, and continued to revel in uniforms and paraphernalia. He had one suit in particular, with frogs and cord and gold braid strung round over the front of it, and then a helmet with about a bushel of red feathers. When he got into this rig and strapped on his jewelled sword, he wouldn't have traded places with John Pershing. The real joiner loves to sit up on an elevated throne, wearing a bib and holding a dinky gavel and administering a blistering oath to the wanderer who seeks the privilege of helping to pay the rent. To a man who does not cut very many lemons around his own house, and where they are on to him, it is a great satisfaction to get up in a lodge hall and put on a lot of ceremonial dog and have the members kneel in front of him and salute him as the Exalted Sir Knight. You take a man who is plugging along on a salary and who has to answer the 'phone and wrap up tea all day, and let him go out at night and be a High and Mighty Gazookus, and it helps him to feel that he isn't such a Nine-Spot after all."

Fantastic Stories

The business of the Rome representatives of the daily newspapers seems to consist chiefly of collecting and transmitting to their papers ridiculous fabrications concerning the Vatican. Last week we published the exposure of the press story of the Spanish dancer, who claimed to have sung to the Pope and the whole Sacred College of Cardinals a song which the Archbishop of Paris was said to have condemned as offensive to religion. Readers will recall a recent cable message which told of a prize fighter who was represented as having chatted with the Pope on matters connected with the ring, just as if the bruiser had had the privilege of a private audience with the Holy Father. From reliable Catholic sources we learn that the whole thing was a fake invented deliberately either to supply copy to the journalists or to give the bruiser an advertisement. What happened was that the man was allowed into a *collective* audience in the Pontiff's presence, i.e., an audience in which one or two hundred persons are ranged round a hall. In this kind of audience the Pope passes slowly by the kneeling lines, presenting to each person his ring to kiss. Occasionally one may address a word to him by way of request. But this is only a word or two to ask a blessing for some absent

ones, etc. This is the kind of audience accorded to the prize fighter, who got admitted to the audience as any other mortal, so that not a word passed between the Holy Father and himself. Evidently the journalists take us all for marines.

Protestant Saints

A writer in the *Statesman* comments on the House of Clergy's attempt to create Anglican saints for the English Calendar. On the candidature of John Wesley, Florence Nightingale, Charles I, and Henry VI, he drily remarks: "If these are the best that can be found the matter may as well be dropped." He then develops a few difficulties the Anglicans will inevitably experience in making saints: there is none to decide their claims, and Government would get hold of the machinery for making saints. The *Catholic Herald of India* suggests as a third impediment to the creation of Anglican saints that there are none. Our contemporary goes on to say that "Protestants can undoubtedly boast of sanctity's understudy, the hero of charity, but sanctity in the good old Christian meaning of the term, is not there. Florence Nightingale was a charily heroine of a very commendable type, but far too much of a bully to be a credit to the calendar of saints. There was a time when we thought that General Gordon would be an excellent candidate for canonisation until we read in that iconoclast, Lytton Strachey, that General Gordon in moments of depression shut himself up in his tent and drank. Not a saint there either. What seems to be the matter with Protestant candidates for the calendar is naturalism. They are all very decent people, charitable, godly, pious, and all that, but none of them bitten by the folly of the cross. They do not seem to be able to go beyond the heights of vegetarianism and teetotalism. When a Catholic saint abstains from meat, he does so because he loves meat intensely and loves God still more; whereas a Protestant vegetarian abstains from meat because he hates the thing or does not believe in it. If a Catholic saint hated meat with the hatred of a vegetarian he would never be a vegetarian; he would take meat—to mortify himself. Protestant heroes of charity will bandage ulcers with great skill, relieve the patient, and feel nobly happy; but the saintly type will kiss the ulcer before bandaging it, perhaps not very skilfully, and Christian instinct gives him the laurel of sanctity. Natural humility is silent because it is silly to boast; saintly or supernatural humility is silent to give all the glory to God. Natural chastity is pure because it is hygienic and conducive to health; supernatural chastity is pure because it is a sacrifice to God. . . . Gordon and Nightingale were excellent materials for sanctity; they actually were the stuff of which saints were made; it was in them, but it wasn't in the Book of Common Prayer, which has been carefully expurgated of all that savors grace and supernaturalism. It remains to be seen how long Christian instinct will submit to starvation, as an ever growing number of choice souls in Protestantism are turning to Catholic ascetism on the sly."

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