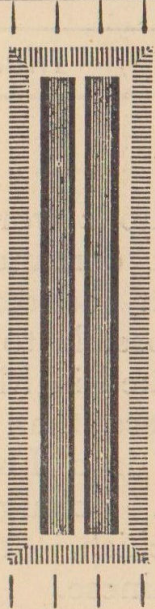


# LOUGH DERG

*St. Patrick's  
Purgatory*



The Catholic Truth Society of Ireland organize annually, at the end of June, a Pilgrimage to LOUGH DERG. Members and the General Public are invited to apply for particulars to the Society's Agents:—

Veritas Company, Limited,

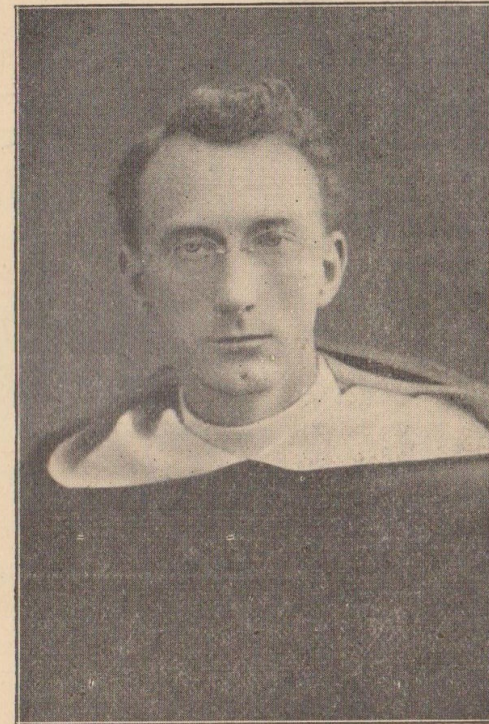
—VERITAS HOUSE—

7 & 8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin.

Telephone (2 lines): DUBLIN 44324 & 44325.  
Telegrams: "Veritas, Dublin."

# CHURCH AND STAGE

By REV. M. H. GAFFNEY, O.P.



Ḑaite áca éiaí:  
Dublin:

Comluét na Fíinne Catoilice i nÉirinn  
CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY OF IRELAND,  
7 7 8 Spáio na Maniurtreacé Íocstair  
7 & 8 Lower Abbey Street.

# A Short History of Catholic Dramatic Development.

## I. THE EARLY CHURCH AND DRAMA.

When the early Christians came forth from the Catacombs, in the days of the Emperor Constantine, the old Roman drama was at the height of its popularity. This drama was not without many noble and commendable features, but it was so irremediably premeated by lewdness and coarseness that the Church condemned it, despite the elements of nobility and dignity which that old drama certainly possessed. The Catholic Church has been subject to much ignorant criticism for this action towards the Roman drama. It is necessary, therefore, even in this brief study, to make clear what the attitude of the Church was, and how utterly degraded were the theatricals which were anathematised.

Even the most sturdy protagonists of classical drama admit, though sometimes with reluctance, that its doom was not undeserved. They maintain that, while condemning what was evil, the Church should have preserved what was noble. Such critics are forced, however, by the facts of history to admit that the Roman drama was so decadent that it could not have long survived, even if it had never been condemned by the Church. The ecclesiastical ban, in any case, gave it its deathblow. In fact a final and overwhelming proof of its fearful degradation is to be found in this, that even the pagan emperors, Domitian and Trojan, were forced in the interests of civic morality to proclaim the illegality of the dramatic spectacles of their time.

The art of the actor, when the Church excommunicated the Roman actors, had sunk to abysmal depths. It departed from its ideal, and pandered to the lowest passions of the mob. In the words of a cool and reliable historian, "the theatre had contributed its utmost to the demoralisation of the world." In the face of such a great and active force for evil, there was no attitude possible to a Church true to

*Permissu Superiorum, O.P.*

*Nihil Obstat:*

*Michael Canonicus Cronin, S.T.D.,*

*Censor Theol. Deput.*

*Imprimi Potest:*

✠ *Eduardus,*

*Archiep. Dublinen,*

*Hiberniae Primas.*

*Dublino, die 29 Aprilis anno 1930.*

its Divine commission except that of relentless hostility. Thus was Drama, which should be the handmaiden of the Faith, driven, as Francis Thompson says, from the sanctuary. The drama withered and died under the Church's curse. But we shall see how, in the wonderful way of God, she herself was to become the "nursing mother of the new birth of that dramatic art which seemed incapable of regeneration."

This brief resumé of the state of the drama when the Catholic Church was forced to regard it as irreconcilably inimical to Christian morality will give a clue to the reason why the Church's attitude towards the theatre has always been an attitude of extreme caution and wariness. She saw in the Roman drama a diabolically complete contrivance for thwarting her own commission to lead men to God. By her anathema she rendered that drama powerless.

## II. THE MIMES AND ROSWITHA.

Following fast upon the relentless hostility of the Early Church to the decadent Roman Drama came the utter extinction of that drama in the civic centres of the West. In the East it maintained a precarious hold until the barbarian invasion of the seventh century. The actors, however, as though unwilling to adopt other means of gaining a livelihood, literally took to the roads, wandering from town to town, giving entertainments wherever they met with a welcome, like the travelling minstrels of Ireland, but without their prestige.

The activities of these strollers and their successors are to a great extent shrouded in obscurity; but their known history proves that they carried on through the centuries the tradition, if not the dignity of the old drama. They provide almost the only link—and a weak one it is—between the drama condemned by the Early Church and the liturgical drama which was to rise so naturally from the bosom of the Church itself five hundred years after. These wanderers over the Continent of Europe performed a deathless service to the old drama, for they preserved the essential dramatic element—attenuated though it might be—in their entertainments. They were "irresponsible trans-

mitters of a great artistic trust." The liturgical drama was to rise in the tenth century and to its development the old classical drama was to be tributary. The nomadic fraternity was from the fifth to the tenth century an important if frail conduit through which the living influence of the ancient drama was conveyed to the later ages.

Meanwhile another force was at work to perpetuate the ideals of the classical drama. The new force was the literary work of ecclesiastics who imitated the style and form of the plays of Euripides, Plautus or Terence in the dramatic treatment of Christian themes. One of these productions is a Passion Play attributed to Saint Gregory Nazianzen. But the most important work in this Order was done by a German nun named Roswitha, who lived just one thousand years ago. Roswitha could not help knowing the vogue which the polished but vicious dramas of Terence enjoyed in educated Christian circles. She set herself to study exhaustively the style of Terence, and then she composed six lengthy dramas in the manner of her model. Roswitha had the consolation of seeing her brilliant dramas challenge the popularity of the coarse works of Terence, and through her labours, Germany, France and even England were brought into contact with the high ideal of literary monastic dramatic work. Roswitha's writings are in the nature of a quiet prelude to the development of the sacred drama. In England the recently established society for the popularising of the sacred drama has chosen this mediaeval nun as its patron. Perhaps the choice is delicately prophetic.

## III. THE INFLUENCE OF FESTIVE CUSTOMS.

In addition to the literary labours of Roswitha and the activities of the strolling players, many ancient festive customs may have exerted some influence upon the development of medieval drama. These customs possessed the lowest elements of drama, but one cannot help thinking that writers have conceded to these old customs too much importance. They are mentioned here merely to avoid the charge of ignoring them. One may well be sceptical regarding the claims made for the old festive usages of the

Latin, Teutonic and Celtic peoples by historians of the drama. The Catholic Church watched these old customs very closely, and, with her accustomed wisdom, she sanctified them. Not for one moment did she tolerate among her children usages which postulated a non-Christian creed. In Rome she did not destroy the Pantheon, the temple of all the Gods, but she consecrated it to God under the patronage of Our Lady and All Saints. This was, analogically, her attitude towards many of the pagan festivals. Pagan customs and pagan feasts were submerged and obliterated. But the people remembered them in Christian terms, and in a manner consonant with the dignity and demands of the faith. Incorporated with, and absorbed into, the ecclesiastical liturgy, or take under the Church's mantle in other ways, many ancient usages were Christianised, losing their old implications and significance. Forming part of the Church's liturgy they share the glory of the medieval dramatic renaissance. In this way, alone, I fancy, can the old pagan rustic and civic usages have a place in the history of the development of the sacred drama. Many historians claim much more than has been conceded, but it is difficult to see how their claim can be historically justified.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to return to the work of Roswitha. Her labours are of greater import than would be gathered from the short space devoted to them already. It is true that the strolling actors bridge the centuries in a ramshackle way, from the dispersal of the Roman actors to the beginning of the liturgical drama. Roswitha's work gives us, in the words of Dr. Ward, "a visible link between the few earlier attempts at utilising the forms of classical drama for Christian purposes and the miracle plays."

Roswitha tells us herself why she attempted this extraordinary work: "Lamenting the fact that many Christians, obsessed by the beauty of the drama, take delight in the comedies of Terence and thereby learn many unclean things." She says: "I determined to copy his style closely in order to adapt the same methods of extolling the triumphant purity of saintly virgins as he has used to depict the victory of vice."

Roswitha did magnificently the work which she determined to do. Terence's coarse, but brilliant comedies were widely read among Christians. Roswitha saw the peril and the remedy. She did her work bravely—though she herself confesses the blush was often brought to her cheek at the things she had to read in order to bring her style to perfection.

Roswitha's reading public must have been comparatively extensive. The acting of her dramas was not, or was it meant to be, widespread. The public which she intended to capture was the reading public which battered upon the coarse plays of Terence. There is every reason to believe that she caught that public and negated the evil which was being wrought by the pagan dramatist.

Roswitha's six dramas were written in Latin, the language of the educated classes. Her subjects were chosen, in direct contrast to the themes of Terence, to demonstrate the beauty and strength of virtue vivified by faith. Her dramas were devised, says Ward, "on the simple principle that the world, the flesh and the devil should not have all the good plays to themselves." The courageous dramatic work of this young German nun could not but exercise a very strong influence upon the development, if not upon the beginning, of the liturgical drama. Her work, now nearly a thousand years old, is of enormous value as being the first genuine effort on a large scale to win back the fallen drama to the service of the faith.

#### IV. THE DRAMATIC ELEMENT IN LITURGY.

Historians of the drama emphasise the influence of the mimes, or strolling players, and they seem to exaggerate the power of ancient customs, but they leave severely alone the element of drama in the liturgy, which must have had a power far exceeding that of any other medium, in keeping the popular mind attuned to drama of the highest kind. This influence of the liturgy is conclusively proved by the fact that the drama of the Middle Ages sprang so naturally from the liturgy itself. The medieval drama was but the natural flowering of a seed which the liturgy had conserved from the earliest days of Christianity.

The strolling mimes may have given to those who initiated the Sacred Plays their first inspiration. It is possible that these players received frequent hospitality at the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland, and in return it is possible that they led the monks to realise the power of the drama. In the monastery of St. Gall, as is almost universally admitted, the Miracle Drama of the Middle Ages had its source, and it is no wild surmise to suggest that the strolling players who had preserved an anaemic dramatic tradition throughout the centuries influenced the new drama from its very birth. But there the matter must rest unproved. The ancient pagan customs—prescinding from those numerous customs which the Church sanctified and absorbed into her own ceremonial—have still less claim to recognition as active influences upon the Sacred Drama either in its beginning or development. They were so much beneath the new drama and so contrary to Christian ideals that I would hazard the suggestion that they retarded both the inauguration and development of the Sacred Plays.

The labours of Roswitha in Christianising the classical drama had their own peculiar influence in France and Germany and, after the Norman invasion, in England. Her influence upon the beginnings of the sacred drama has sometimes exaggerated, and some writers like Dr. Ward trace a definite continuity between the old classical writers, with their various Christian imitators (of whom Roswitha is the greatest) and the rise of the sacred drama in the Middle Ages. But this suggestion has been scouted by one of the greatest students of the mediaeval plays, Professor Pollard, who says very dogmatically: "Not from vapid imitations of Euripides and Terence, but from simple liturgical customs did the religious drama take its beginnings." One other possible influence upon the rise of the mediaeval drama is the subject of a book by a Greek writer, who maintained that the Crusaders returning from the East brought back with them a knowledge of the technique of Greek drama which afterwards was influential. But this thesis is held generally to be not proven.

It is to Catholic liturgy, therefore, that one must turn for the origin of the sacred drama. The dramatic element

in the liturgy, and not the dramatic element maintained in the entertainments of the mimes, or preserved in rustic custom, or imitated from the classical writers, is the authentic source from which the religious drama sprang. In this wise did the Catholic Church, which dealt a deathblow to the degenerate Roman theatre, become "the nursing mother of the new birth of a dramatic art which once seemed incapable of regeneration."

It is hardly necessary to point out to Catholic readers that in the liturgy the dramatic element is secondary to its object. The Church's ceremonial is ordered to adoration of God, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. None of her ceremonies, however courtly, impressive or dignified, is mere representation. Modern liturgical romanticism—which approximates to the errors of Strauss, Kant, Rosseau and others—assert the contrary. In treating explicitly, as we have to do of the dramatic element in the liturgy, it is well to recall the words of Dom Virgil Michel. "The liturgy is," he says, "a drama, an action, a chain of Divine and human acts, the exercise of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, which at one and the same time renders the homage of praise and adoration to God and sanctifies and elevates the souls of the faithful by preparing them for a happy eternity." The works of Saint Thomas Aquinas must also be quoted in this connection. "The external acts of religion," he says, "have no value of themselves alone, since they are ordained towards the internal acts of which they must be considered manifestations and stimulations." The place and aim of sensible representations in the liturgy is to intensify the desires of the heart, and to render more vivid the truths which are thus contemplated under the dramatic cultural form. Bearing these principles in mind, there will be no danger of being misunderstood when we speak of the dramatic elements in the Church's public worship.

## V. THE DRAMATIC POWER OF THE LITURGY.

Every possible avenue through which the influence of the classical drama could have travelled has been explored. The Mimes claim the credit of having given a dramatic

lead to the monks of St. Gall, in which monastery the Sacred Drama had its source. But their claim is not very cogent, though it may be admitted as plausible. The theory that the Crusaders brought the Greek dramatic technique from the East to the West is not proven. The ancient pagan customs deserve little consideration. Roswitha's influence is unchivalrously discounted by that eminent scholar, Professor Pollard. Consequently, we are compelled to turn undivided attention to the ecclesiastical liturgy.

The whole liturgy is full of drama. But the liturgy is much more. And this has been made abundantly clear in the last article. With the important reservations already made, one can assert that the dramatic element has permeated the Christian liturgy since that liturgy was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

"The priesthood," says Very Rev. Father Vincent McNabb, "came into being when, at night, on the eve of the World's drama, the Victim said to His Apostles: "do this: TOUTO POIETE!"

"Morning by morning the Catholic priesthood—we cannot say plays, but renews—re-presents, until the Saviour comes again, what He wrought in saving us. At times, alas too seldom, this glorious drama of the Death of Jesus finds full expression in Solemn High Mass. Every medium of art is given a place in the dramatic worship of God. The words spoken are the noblest ever uttered by the man; indeed, some of those words were first uttered by the Divine Word. Many of them are sung to modes of song that were old when these Northern nations first heard the Name of Christ, and both words and song are helped in their dramatic mission to the soul by gesture and movements among the most graceful of the human body. To be a priest, then, is to be a sacred Actor—Maker—of Divine Drama."

These important words epitomise all the elements of music, song, gesture, word, action and representation which give to the liturgy its dramatic power. Characteristically, Fr. McNabb boldly traces the origin of that dramatic power to the solemn words of Christ the full significance of which is seen in the Greek: TOUTO POIETE. It

would be a pleasant task to follow up this fascinating subject, but this study must be kept too brief for that. It is sufficient, for our present purpose, that the reader realises the extent to which drama permeates the Church's sacrificial and sacramental system. The dramatic power of the liturgy once acknowledged, the stage is set for the coming of that drama which was nothing less wonderful than a luxuriant bourgeoing of the sacred liturgy itself.

## VI. THE TROPES.

The conclusion which has been reached—that the new drama of the tenth century found in the Catholic Church its nursing mother—is a more drastic verdict than appears at first sight. It is hard to believe that the Church which has only the scourge of austere censure for the drama of the late Roman Empire fostered the new drama which sprang up four or five centuries later. This apparent "volte face" should emphasise the fact that the Church's quarrel was not with the drama but with the flagrant abuses which had corrupted its appeal and perverted its power. By a patient process of examination we have eliminated all the theories except one which are advanced to explain the birth of the new drama. Now we are faced with the definite fact that the sacred drama of the Middle Ages can be traced back to its first tiniest and most timid blossomings upon the strong tree of liturgy. And this fact is the final proof of the theory which has been slowly worked out, that the Sacred Drama had its one authentic source in the heart of the Catholic Church.

The first traces of the liturgical development which was to culminate in the Sacred Drama are to be found in the embellishments of the liturgical text which we call *tropes*. These additions to the formal liturgy make the meaning of the liturgy more vivid by supplying a succinct running commentary, not merely upon phrases, but upon words. A simple example will make this clear. In certain churches the choirs did not sing the liturgical phrase: "Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth"; but they sang it with certain additions which are commonly called tropes. Their version was: "Sanctus, ex Quo sunt

omnia; Sanctus, per Quem sunt omnia; Sanctus in Quo sunt omnia; Dominus Deus Sabaoth, Tibi gloria sit in saecula." In English the phrase is: "Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts!" With the Tropes added, it becomes: Holy One, from Whom are all things; Holy One, through Whom all things are; Holy One, in Whom are all things; Lord God of Hosts to Thee be glory for ever!"

This very simple example will demonstrate the nature and object of the tropes as elaborations of the strictly liturgical text. There is no necessity to enter into a history of their development yet, except to say that from their first appearance between the years 800 and 900, that they grew steadily from short explanatory interpolations to long phrases and even to metrical dissertations. The liturgical text remained either as a starting point or a climax to which the long trope led. What concerns us here is the very interesting fact that these tropes gradually developed a dramatic character which, in the words of Fr. Blume, "reached its highest perfection in larger dramatic scenes, mystery plays, and plays of a purely religious character." Father Adrian Forescue supplies the dramatic grouping for one of the first liturgical dramas enacted by the priests and choristers within the sanctuary—the drama of Easter Day—in which alternate choirs recited before an empty sepulchre the troped dialogue of the Resurrection gospel.

Such was the quiet and almost imperceptible inauguration of that medieval Sacred Drama of which the enormous formative influence upon the religious culture of Europe is beginning to receive wider acknowledgment. One wonders less at this development, considering the impulse of the liturgy towards dramatic forms, than at the timorous tardiness with which it came.

The tropes were not introduced in the beginning to explain the liturgical text, but to supply words for the interminable series of notes which were written over the final "a" of the Alleluia of the Gradual. One of the St. Gall monks, named Notker, relates that when he was a boy he found it difficult to remember the endless notes, and he tried to set them to words to assist his memory. Notker presented his efforts to Monegal, an Irish monk of the

Monastery and received encouragement from him. These notes were added to the Alleluia, which is a solo chant, to give the cantor, says Professor Clarke very drily, "an opportunity of showing his powers." Thus was the sequence which we know to-day in the liturgy born. But it must be borne in mind that the true trope is not the sequence which is interpolated between liturgical units, but the phrase which is part of a liturgical text. "It would appear," says Professor Clarke, "that their author left the Alleluia of the Gradual to Notker, while he himself experimented with Introit." Father Fortescue says that all the tropes were cleared out of the liturgy by Pope Saint Pius V. Professor Clarke says that the same Pope retained only four Sequences. The Dominican rite retains at least eight.

#### VII. THE ORIGINATOR OF THE TROPES. IRELAND'S CLAIM.

The tropes were, as we have seen, embellishments of the sacred liturgy: they are always closely interwoven with the liturgical text, never changing its meaning, but rather throwing its significance into clear-cut relief. The word "trope" comes from a Greek word, a musical term for which the most exact translation in English is, probably, "variation"—as that word is used in musical terminology.

These tropes were originated by a monk of the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland, whose name was Tuatilo. "All writers on the early drama," says Chevalier Dr. Grattan Flood, "are agreed that Tuatilo was the actual inventor of the Troped-Introit of Easter Sunday, with the colloquy between the Angels and the Three Marias at the tomb, about the year 890."

Dr. Grattan Flood cites many well-known writers in support of the statement which has already been made, that these tropes which took their rise in the Sacred Liturgy, grew in turn into the Liturgical Drama. "All authorities—Gaultier, Chambers, Pollard, Young, Kretzmann—are agreed," he says, "that Liturgical Drama had its origin in the Introit Tropes invented by Tuatilo."

W. K. Sullivan claims, in his introduction to O'Curry's

“Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish,” that Tuatilo was an Irishman, and that the name by which he is now known is but the Latinised form of his Irish name. “In the second half of the ninth century,” says Sullivan, “there appear to have been many Irishmen at the monastery of St. Gall, and everything that we know of Tuatilo favours the view that he also was one. In the first place, the name is, to say the least, as much like the Latinised form of the Irish Tuatal, Tuotal or Tuathal, as of the Gothic Totilo. Again, the wandering disposition, the warm, impulsive spirit which made him equally ready to use his tongue or his arm against an enemy, remind us forcibly of St. Columbanus, and, lastly, his great skill in instrumental music seem conclusive as to his Irish nationality.”

There are some writers who favour this verdict. But it is only just, if unpleasant, to add that Sullivan’s theory and the proofs he adduces to support it are hotly attacked by Professor J. M. Clarke in his recent and valuable volume: “The Abbey of St. Gall as a centre of Literature and Art.” In two pages of delightful dialectic Professor Clarke takes Sullivan’s careful arguments and retorts them one by one—to his own obvious satisfaction. The authority of Professor Clarke is not to be lightly set aside—though, as has been said, some writers disagree with his conclusion.

Space forbids us entering into this very interesting discussion. But, while “we leave the wise to wrangle,” we can, I suggest, rest content with the conclusion that, if we cannot prove according to strict logic that Tuatilo was an Irishman, no historian has ever been able to prove that he was anything else.

We are thus led to a pleasant position in which we can make a probable claim that the sacred drama of the Middle Ages owes its origin not only to the Catholic Liturgy, but to the ingeniousness of an Irishman. That sacred drama fulfilled a wonderfully fruitful apostolate on the Continent; it penetrated into the great cities and into the remote villages, a force adapted with psychological precision to the religious needs of the people. It proved to be an evangelising factor which gave power and point to the eloquence of preachers. Its influence was so great upon the religion and culture of Europe that one cannot help

hoping that some day Ireland’s claims to Tuatilo, its author, may be found to be patient of proof.

### VIII. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TROPES.

The growth of the tropes was a very slow process. Professor Clarke suggests that it was as tedious and prolonged a development as that which took place between the first application of steam to industry and the construction of the first locomotive. It is interesting to study this process of development—from the Gregorian antiphonal chant to dialogue, and ultimately, to true drama. The best example to illustrate these developments is the troped-Introit of Easter Sunday, written by Tuathal at St. Gall, and of immense importance as the basis of all liturgical drama. The trope consists of the Resurrection Gospel-dialogue between the Holy Women and the Angels:—

“Whom seek ye at the sepulchre?”

“Jesus of Nazareth crucified.”

“He is not here. He is risen as He prophesied: go and announce that He is risen from the grave!”

Then followed the triumphantly simple liturgical Introit to which the above dialogue was added as a troupe: “I have risen, and am still with thee, alleluia!”

It is easy to imagine the vividness which this simple dialogue, sung upon the altar steps on Easter morning, gave to the Resurrection narrative. The dramatic element was added in a simple way.

In many places there was a custom of hanging a white veil before the Cross on Good Friday. The Cross was removed at night, but the veil remained until the angel, at the words, “He is not here,” threw it back and showed that the Cross was gone. This fusion of the Easter troped-Introit with the “Depositio Crucis” of Good Friday lent itself to the delicate elaborations which were to follow in rapid sequence. A sepulchre was placed upon the altar-steps and on Good Friday the Cross, wrapped in linen cloths, was reverently deposited therein. In Davis’s “Ancient Rites of Durham” there is a description of this ceremony which is well worth quoting: “Within the Church, on Good Friday, there was a marvellous solemn



service, in which service-time, after the Passion was sung, two of the ancient monks took a goodly large Crucifix all of gold of Our Saviour Christ nailed to the Cross. The service being ended, the said two monks carried the Cross to the Sepulchre with great reverence (which Sepulchre was set up that morning on the North side of the Quire, nigh unto the High Altar before the service time), and there did lay it within the said Sepulchre with great devotion."

(It is worthy to mention, in passing, that some old English churches still contain permanent stone sepulchres for this purpose. Parker, in his "Glossary of Architecture," mentions several).

This ceremony of the "Depositio Crucis" had its dramatic consummation during the singing of the troped-Introit on Easter morn, but soon, probably out of reverence for the Holy Mass, the whole dialogue and action were transferred to the Matin's Office of the Resurrection. There is extant an appendix to the Rule of St. Benedict, drawn up about the middle of the tenth century, which contains the following rubrics for the ceremonial:—

"While the third lesson is being chanted let four brethren vest themselves. One, in an alb, goes quietly to the Sepulchre, with a palm in his hand, and sits there. While the third response is being chanted, let the remaining three follow, vested in copes, bearing in their hands thuribles with incense, who approach the Sepulchre as though seeking something. These things are done in imitation of the angel sitting at the Sepulchre and the women with spices coming to anoint the Body of Jesus."

Directions follow concerning the singing of the Easter dialogue. At the end

"The angel lifts the veil from the Sepulchre and shows them the place bare of the Cross, but only the cloths laid there in which the Cross was wrapped. Then the priest, sharing in their gladness at the triumph of Our King, in that, having been vanquished, He rose again, shall intone the "Te Deum." And, this begun, all the bells chime out together."

It would be difficult to surpass the simple and sincere beauty of these descriptions of the first sacred drama.

Without delay similar representatives grew up around the other great festivals of the Church, and we still possess the text of Christmas, Epiphany and Ascension plays, as well as some dealing with other events in the life of Our Lord and the lives of the Saints. It may be possible, later, to treat of these in detail throughout the great countries of Europe down to the time when the English town of Chester became "a kind of dramatic metropolis for Preston, Lancaster, Kendall, and—Dublin. But here we must leave this fascinating study for the moment, content if we have shown, as we set out to do, that the one authentic fount from which the medieval drama rose was the great heart of the Catholic Church.

As a last word, may I say, lest anyone should think that the old ceremonial of the "Depositio Crucis" is merely a thing of the past, that there is to be witnessed in the Church of Corpo Santo in Lisbon a ceremony which recalls it in detail. There, after the Mass of the Pre-sanctified on Good Friday, a Figure of the dead Christ is carried on a bier through the church by four priests, vested in albs and black stoles, to a large Sepulchre erected on the praedella of the sanctuary, where the Sacred Image is incensed, reverently wrapped in linen cloths, and laid in the Sepulchre. The Sepulchre is then closed. On Easter Saturday morning the Sepulchre is still before the altar, but it is opened, and only the linen cloths are within, "carefully folded in one place." And through the church the words of the Introit seems to echo: "I have risen, and am still with thee! Alleluia!"

It is commonly asserted in the Press and elsewhere that there is a great future before the Sacred Drama in Ireland. That future lies largely with the Irish schools and colleges. It has been said, publicly and pretty bluntly, on more than one occasion, that they, with their great resources, should not permit themselves to be outstripped in this matter by that brilliant little band of Dublin altar boys and choristers who dared so much to pioneer the way, and to prove (even in the Theatre Royal of Dublin) that they could win the praise of the critics in their dramatic presentation of the mysteries of our faith while keeping mast-high the standard of the early monastic dramatists. The

Catholic stage in the Ireland of the future will, at its highest development, devote itself less to the dramatisation of the lives of saints and martyrs, than to the presentation of frankly modern problems, solved in accord with Catholic standards. This is the direction in which the Amateur stage—both parish and collegiate—is slowly but steadily veering. At the moment this conversation of the stage in Ireland is progressing. When it is happily accomplished, the pulpit will have an ally in the cause of Jesus Christ, not less powerful than it will be welcome.

### THE REVIVAL OF CATHOLIC DRAMA.

*The following lecture, which was delivered to the Maynooth College Union, on June 25th, 1929, sums up the matter of the preceding pages, and reduces their suggestions to practice. The lecturer deals with the possibilities of Catholic Drama on the college and parish stage, and he demonstrates the extensive apostolate which the stage is able to fulfil in our modern days.*

The early history of the relation of the Christian priesthood with the theatre is a record of irreconcilable hostility, culminating in an ecclesiastical anathema against the vicious Roman drama which even the pagan emperors endeavoured to surpress. From the fifth century, the Christian priesthood, which destroyed the ancient theatre, created a new drama, instinct with the spirit of Christ. It is possible to-day, after one thousand years, to trace in minute detail the origin of the new Christian theatre back to the Church's Liturgy.

Still more interesting for us is the acknowledgment by numerous historians, despite some doubters, that the father and founder of the new drama was a priest and an Irishman. This priest, Tuathal, was a member of the Irish Monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland. The new drama had its earliest beginnings in the tropes or additions which he introduced into the liturgical chant. The most important and earliest of these tropes consisted in the dialogue of the Angels and the Three Maries in the Easter Office.

Dialogue alone is not drama. But, in a short time, the Easter trope became dramatic through a very natural fusion

with the ceremony of the veiling of the cross. A veil was drawn over the cross on Good Friday evening, to represent the Burial of Christ. On Easter Sunday the cross was removed. On Easter Sunday morning a priest took his place beside the veil which symbolised the Sepulchre. Three other clerics, vested in albs and bearing censers, entered the sanctuary, and at their approach, the priest chanted the words of the Angels: "quem quaeritis in sepulchre?" The clerics answered: "Jesum Nazarenum Crucifixum." The priest chanted the Gospel response: "Non est hic; resurrexit sicut dixit." At the same time he drew back the veil to show that the cross was gone. Then the whole monastic choir took up the triumphant introit: Resurrexi et adhuc sum tecum! Thus the trope assumed all the elements of drama: action, dialogue, characterisation, and mis-en-scène. Such was the first timid blossoming of the drama upon the strong tree of the Sacred Liturgy.

The growth of dramatic activity, thus initiated under the shadow of the High Altar, is a fascinating story. We can trace the movement of the setting from the sanctuary to the nave when the dramatic action demanded wider freedom. Further, we can trace it to the porch of the Church, which became the stage for a drama based on the parable of the ten virgins. Next, the sacred dramas, entirely separated from the Liturgy, were presented in the Church precincts. And lastly, they passed into the city streets, went out amongst the people and the nations to fulfil throughout Western Europe, from St. Gall to Galway, a remarkable apostolate.

Written in the first instance to enrich the Sacred Liturgy, these plays quickly developed a didactic aim. The first subjects were the mysteries of the Life of Our Lord. These developed into a vast dramatisation of the whole Bible. They embraced every aspect of human life in its relation to God. They interpreted the harmony of the Catholic vision of the universe. They made vivid the stories of the Saints. They grew to a gigantic apostolate which, through mystery and miracle plays, interludes and moralities, shook the heart of Western Europe, infused into the people a sense of intimacy with the Saints, and

gave a vivid reality and piognancy to the Gospel narratives. A mere list of these dramas would be startling. In France alone, many dramas, varying from 4,000 to 37,000 lines in length, are still extant in manuscript.

The intention of the medieval dramatists was clear-cut and definite. They looked upon drama as the most magnificent human homage that could be offered to God. Many a city presented its sacred play as a plea for God's mercy or as a thank-offering for favours granted. These plays were intended for the ears of God as well as for the ears of man. The dramatists were neither littérateurs nor dilettanti, but they were men of long vision and of noble ideals. They had at heart the glory of God, and the instruction of His people. They acted in submission to Catholic direction, and walked in the way of Catholic truth. For hundreds of years, the priests were always ready to give their assistance. It was their absence, and not their presence, that was abnormal, in this marvellous bourgeoning of liturgical prayer, which did not cease to be prayer when it was transmuted into drama in the city streets.

The medieval drama that has its basis upon the doctrine of the Communion of Saints. It found a niche for all the creatures of God. It knew how to build the Shrines of Our Lady and the Saints. It has its thrones for the Principalities and the Powers, And over all things, past, present, and future, reigned the Eternal Father Himself, permanent, majestic, serene. That medieval drama achieved a success, which the modern theatre cannot claim, when it put the World, the Flesh and the Devil in their proper places.

The Lutheran revolt sounded the death-knell of that Christian dramatic movement, because Protestantism denied the basic principle upon which the whole movement was founded. Protestantism disrupted that gracious unity of mortal men with one another and with the citizens of Heaven, in Jesus Christ, their head. There ensued a shifting of hopes and ideals. Humanism, Puritanism and Jansenism were minor ebullitions of the cataclysm in which the medieval Catholic theatre, after a doctrinal apostolate of six centuries, received its death-

blow. Rigidity and isolation shattered the union and liberty upon which medieval drama developed. In the Counter-Reformation, Catholicism grew timorous of her fosterling, and she deserted the drama, lest the drama should compromise her doctrine.

From that time the forceful appeal of the drama has been almost completely divorced from the cause of Jesus Christ. But now a spirit, which has not left Ireland unmoved, is inspiring many nations to create a dramatic movement, like to that which, in the Middle Ages, stirred Western Europe to a realisation of the beauty and dignity of the Catholic Faith and the Catholic vision.

Other nations have led the way for this Catholic country. Amongst these nations, France, Belgium, Spain, England and the United States hold places of which they may well be proud. In Germany the Catholic publishing house of Hoefling has specialised in Catholic theatrical literature. It has printed 2,000 dramatic works, these being divided into three categories: for children, young men and women, and the popular theatre.

The world-movement in which these nations hold honourable rank, does not imply a mere revival of the medieval Christian theatre (any more that that meant a simple revival of the Greek and Roman drama), but, as Gaston Baty says, "Our new theatre will be founded upon the same essential principles. It will be Thomistic like those. Aeschylus and Sophocles foresaw neither the dogma nor the morale of the Gospels, but they worked according to the principles of Catholic aesthetics." These words are strong and challenging.

It is hard to realise that it is only four hundred years since the Dublin Corporation financed the presentation of of mystery plays on College Green. It is much less that four hundred years since the citizens of Waterford, Galway, Cork, Wexford and Drogheda crowded around the rough platforms upon which the medieval mystery plays were enacted.

In these few centuries the degeneration of drama in Ireland has been startling. I am extremely hesitant to judge modern drama here, as a pessimist. But a well-known and keen dramatic critic in Dublin states categorically

that "for some time past Ireland has been glutted up with stage presentations imported from England, Europe and America. We are in the peculiar position in the Free State that while a rigid censorship of movie films we have no official censorship of plays, or stage performances. An act or actor or actress may be vulgar, revolting, disgusting, indecent. There is no State censor to protect the public against these offensive exhibitions. Books, papers, periodicals and other classes of published matter are to be censored and banned. Stage acts, stage scenes, stage dialogues and stage incidents are free from State censorship. The tendency is to import more and more foreign plays. Any production, however gross and filthy, can be imported into Ireland, and there is no official censor to prevent its presentation in the Free State."

These words may well give us pause.

One theatre in Dublin, with Government support, attempts ostentatiously to interpret our national culture. Its achievement is best commented upon with silence. And one may challenge the Government's wisdom in financing a theatre which has used its position to broadcast so frequently the alleged frailties of our fellow-countrymen. In fact, it seems to me that it redounds to the credit of Ireland that, in spite of the persistent emphasis laid upon the worth of the drama sponsored by this theatre, the Irish people are less convinced now than ever before of its claim to be an authentic interpreter of our national life.

It is with unwillingness that one makes these admissions, but these are no less necessary than an effort to seek out the reason for our dramatic decadence, as a prelude to constructive suggestions.

To-day, admittedly, we possess no influential Irish theatre reflecting either our religious or our national culture. If it is true that "the drama's laws and drama's public give, and he who lives to please must please to live," is it not also true that the Irish people have acquiesced in, if they have not dictated, the degeneracy of modern drama? And is it not true, consequently, that our own Irish schools and colleges, which have educated these audiences, must in the last analysis bear a share in the

blame for the lacuna in the education of these audiences, which is manifested in their lack of sterling dramatic standards? No one can deny the power of the stage in the formation of the national character. And equally, no one can deny in this matter the responsibility of the schools. Therefore, constructive work will logically begin there. In speaking thus I am conscious that I am addressing the best and most interested friends that the Irish schools can claim. Further, amateur dramatic societies are springing up all over the country; and if those societies are to depend for their dramas and their dramatic standards upon another country or a non-native culture, or, I may add, a foreign language, the result will be disastrous for the nation. The remedy, I suggest, rests in the hands of the Irish priesthood and of the Irish schools.

The colleges need not fear that any drastic demands are being made upon them. Most of the colleges already possess stages and theatrical equipment. Some of the foremost Irish colleges have done remarkable dramatic work, both in the domain of educational drama and that of drama frankly religious. Any keen observer of the collegiate dramatic development of the last ten years would, nevertheless, have reason to challenge the normal collegiate attitude towards dramatic work. The primary ideal of medieval drama, and of all true drama, was to instruct pleasantly and to elevate. This ideal has been generally superseded in our schools by two other ideals. The first of these is the amusement ideal, which has led to the constant production of farces and modern English comedies. The predominance of this aim has done grave injury to the native dignity of the dramatic art, and consequently to the dramatic culture of the alumni of these schools.

Again, the scholastic drama has been injured by the very human desire to utilise it as a vehicle for display. The usual result of this desire is the production of ambitious plays and operas written for adults, dealing with adult life and with adult problems. The immediate effect is insincerity—drama is masquerade. The truth is not in it!

Thus, the schools have, in many cases, perpetuated, almost unconsciously, the apostasy of the stage. The

remedy lies in the revision of the scholastic attitude towards drama itself, in a frank acknowledgement of the primary ideal of all true drama. From Irish Catholic schools one may justly ask, also, for that faith and purity of intention, that prayerfulness and that virility which inspired the Catholic dramatic groups of medieval days, even here in Ireland. Such a revision of attitude will lead immediately to a discreet choice of plays, both secular and religious, worthy of Irish youth. It will lead ultimately and inevitably to the salvation of the actors, playwrights, and audiences of the future Irish theatres.

May I pay tribute, before I leave this point, to a great Irishman, now dead, whose scholastic dramatic work was in deliberate and conscious harmony with the religious and national culture of Ireland? His noble work has never received the attention it merits. His labour, like his own radiant figure, has suffered strange eclipse, although he is the creator in our generation of the dramatic ideal of medieval days. In dramatic work, his voice urges us now, to shake from our feet, even in this, the dust of servitude, and to enter into the spaciousness of our Catholic and national heritage. I speak of Patrick Pearse of St. Enda's, beannacht Dè le n'anam!

Dramatic development in the primary schools presents another problem. These schools lack all the accessories of the normal theatre. They boast of no stages, no scenic settings, no trained actors, and they can seldom provide elaborate stage costumes. A simple experiment solved the apparently insoluble dramatic problem for these schools.

Some short plays based on the lives of the Saints were written for these schools, and through the medium of a Dublin magazine, they reached thousands of schools throughout the world. The schools were invited to perform these plays, in Shakespearean fashion, without scenic settings or elaborate costumes. The result was startling. The effect of these plays was powerful, both upon the young actors and their adult audiences. From schools in Australia. New Zealand, Portugal, India (where the scenery consisted in jungle palms), Arabia (where some of the actors were Parsees), China, the United States and the Fiji Islands, as well as from numerous schools in South

Africa, England and Ireland, have come surprising reports regarding the result of this simple experiment. These reports, which would astonish anyone but an experienced dramatic critic, support the contention that drama, however elementary, still possesses its ancient appeal to the heart of childhood. And, consequently, is it not our duty to utilise this force in leading our youth to the Feet of the Master? The modern stage and cinematograph have lured our boys and girls to the clay feet of Peter Pan. May I hazard the hope that the new Christian drama will play a noble part in winning them back to Him Who died to make them His own?

Someone may suggest that school children are unequal to these demands. The history of scholastic drama is an obvious answer to this objection. Schoolboys were, with the priests, members of the caste of the earliest liturgical dramas in the monastery of St. Gall. Schoolboys were the actors of the first English stage play at Dunstable—the *Ludus Sanctae Catherinae*. The actors were schoolboys when, in the twelfth century, the sacred drama was a living force in the priestly schools of St. Alban's, Gloucester, St. Paul's, and Reading. Their teachers told Henry VIII., when he tried to suppress their plays, "that the sacred drama gave an esprit de corps to the boys, and that the hope that they might one day reach the real mitre, made them mind their books."

This energetic scholastic drama remained vigorous down to the days of Ben Jonson and Shakespeare. The drama which flourished in the great Catholic schools of England proved to be in fact no negligible force in the creation of English drama. It, too, withered under the blast of Protestantism. But even to-day the English schools are "keeping alive the fire that was lighted from the Cathedral vigil lights of old." I should be ashamed to think that the Catholic colleges of Ireland cannot with their Catholic culture fan that fire to a more splendid lustre than Eton or Winchester can. Irish Catholic schoolboys were staging sacred drama around the Old Market Cross of Kilkenny in 1644, long after the authentic Catholic drama of the English schools was dead. More than this, the Catholic drama was still vigorous as late as the year 1670,

amongst the boys of the Jesuit College at New Ross. Thus Continental and English and Irish dramatic history throws down a challenge to the Irish priesthood and to the Irish schools.

One cannot leave this point without suggesting that if the schools are to profit by the history of their own drama, they will direct their special energies to plays written for themselves. The schools, if they are to progress dramatically, must render themselves independent of professional drama; and I say, unhesitatingly, that they can, without educational loss, eschew the unintelligent and painful productions of Shakespeare or Sheridan or Molière, which we are sometimes constrained to witness upon their stages.

It is impossible to ignore the dramatic influence of the frankly Catholic halls in Dublin and throughout the country. I could submit much evidence to prove that their influence has not been good. One does not need to search long to find the explanation. The disastrous effect of the display or amusement ideal on the school stage, finds its counterpart in the complex of finance in the Catholic halls. These halls must stage the plays which please and attract their audiences. It is not the director of the hall who is blameworthy, but the audience; and ultimately, of course, the schools. If the theatre problem is ever to be frankly faced and solved in Ireland, the schools alone can face and solve it.

There is another aspect of the dramatic apostolate which concerns us intimately in Ireland, where every county, every holy well, every parish, has its associations with local Saints. In many cases the festivities of these Saints are celebrated in a manner which proves that the original aims of these feasts are obscured. There is no more potent instrument at our disposal for raising these local festivals up to their first aim than the drama. It is a very easy task to have presented, at these rural festivals, simple episodic plays representing the events of the lives of those Saints whom the people wish to honour. These plays can be presented with advantage in the open air, in natural settings. The impression which they can create is lasting and vivid. One virile drama, based upon the life of an Irish Saint, will be found to be a more vigorous

force than many sermons in reforming a degenerate pattern, and leading a whole countryside to a practical and quasi-liturgical recognition of a patron, whose life-work and example may have been for years ignored or obscured. The open-air drama can restore our forgotten Irish Saints to the people.

In Kilkenny, the Ossory players have for some years past presented an episodic drama of the life of Saint Fiacre in its authentic setting at the Saint's Holy Well in the valley of the River Nore. Their work illuminates the way for those who may follow in their footsteps. The success of the peasant theatres of Bavaria and the popular theatres of other Catholic countries, could be achieved in rural Ireland with slight difficulty.

Everything that has been said hitherto leads to this conclusion, that the claims of the New Irish Theatre are peculiarly strong upon ourselves as Irish priests. Historically we hold an enviable position. The most hostile historian has not yet proved that the creator of medieval drama, and the father of modern drama, was not a priest of Irish blood. We cannot play the traitor to him. If the Irish theatre of to-day is degenerate, it is not our fault. If the Irish theatre of to-morrow is unworthy of our Catholicism and of our country, I should not proclaim with the same certainty that we, Irish priests, would still be blameless. The present and the future are in our hands.

I have indicated the terrain upon which reconstruction will begin. In the Secondary Schools, the directive work of the priest is so clear-cut and definite that I hesitate to add anything to what I have already said. In the Primary Schools the work of the priest will be a little more exacting. For, to the priest primarily will fall the writing of those tiny mystery and patriotic plays which those schools need. The most diffident playwright can at least give the little children the Gospel dialogues, in Irish or English for dramatic presentation on the Feasts of Our Lord and His Apostles. He will have achieved no mean triumph when, through this simple means, he shall have, in the words of one of the Irish Bishops, helped the little

ones of his flock to realise the events of the life of Jesus Christ.

The open-air drama of the lives of our regional Saints can be written by no one so sympathetically as by the priest, who has the opportunity of studying the lives of those forgotten Saints, and leading his people to a vivid realisation of the events of their time, by a judicious use of the dramatic art. Thus will drama be gradually made worthy of Irishmen and Catholics. People will say that this dramatic revival is a transient fad. They will be wrong. It is a solid doctrinal apostolate, coolly thought out in all its implications, and without a strong faith in the doctrinal and didactic power of dramatic representations, I should, as a Dominican, have no right and no desire to discuss them upon this platform.

If we, Irish priests, deliberately utilise the force of the new theatre for Christ's cause the native dignity of the drama will once more be acknowledged in the Secondary Schools which seem to have passively acquiesced in its degradation. In the Primary Schools, where drama has been hitherto unknown, the children will be given an opportunity of sharing in that gracious intimacy with Christ and His friends, which is one of the noblest results of sacred drama. In the local patterns and festivals, the people will be led, through the dramatisation of the lives of their patron Saints, to a fresh and vivid outlook upon events which they should not forget. Such a result will be a rich reward, indeed.

These suggestions are in complete accord with the historic relations between the Christian priesthood, the Schools, and the Theatre. If we shirk the claims of the new drama, we shall, twenty years hence, be still lamenting the deleterious influence of the degenerate drama upon our people. To-day, if it be not already too late, the Irish priesthood is the arbiter of the destiny of the Irish theatre.

Monsieur Henri Ghèon, that valiant soldier and militant Catholic, who, since the war converted him, has devoted his life to the revival of the Catholic theatre in France, tells his striking experience of the influence of Catholic Drama: "When I was beginning my campaign for a popular Christian theatre," he says, "a company of pro-

fessional actors was presenting, without any great enthusiasm, "La Farce du Pendu Dependu." The young actor who was playing the principal part seemed to be no more a Christian than than the others, and in fact was not a practising member of the Faith. One evening, the day of the final dress-rehearsal, he took me aside in the wings and whispered: "Do you know that you have taught me to say my prayers?" "How is that?" I asked. "At the end of the second act, before I am to be hanged, you make me repeat the Rosary in a corner of the stage. Well, I find I am saying it in earnest."

"This revelation" (continues Ghèon), "which astonished me at the time, was soon confirmed by a hundred other similar instances of a class, a college, a whole parish being transformed by having lived on the stage for a few hours the life of a Saint."

I could easily parallel M. Ghèon's experience with many of my own. But I prefer that his voice rather than mine should emphasise the apostolic power of the Christian drama. Our own personal conviction of that apostolic power should be our inspiration in dramatic work, towards the building of that radiant New Ireland for the vision of which our eyes are wistful.

### SOME CATHOLIC PLAYS.

The following short list of plays for Catholic schools will be of assistance in the difficult task of choosing dramatic pieces for scholastic stages. The list is necessarily very short, and is intended to be merely suggestive. The scholastic producer may have to read many plays before he finds the one that suits his purpose. But his labour will be rewarded very richly by the results of a wise and discriminating choice. "Good plays," says Alexander Dean, "give children better ethical standards. Drama strongly teaches reverence for religion and fatherland. It aids in the cultivation of literary tastes—it develops a permanent preference for the best."

The scholastic producer who recognises the power of drama for good or evil, will grudge no pains to the task of discovering the best and noblest dramatic productions

for presentation by his young actors. The following plays may be ordered through the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland. The list here given is meant to be of utility only those dramatic groups which need to be put into contact with the work of Catholic playwrights. Those producers who seek a wider choice are recommended to procure the exhaustive list of Catholic Plays which has been issued under the direction of Rev. Daniel Lord, S.J. This catalogue may be ordered through the Catholic Truth Society, price 15s. 0d.

### I. RELIGIOUS PLAYS.

- THE YOUTHFUL MARTYRS OF ROME.** Canon Oakley. A dramatisation of "Fabiola." 20 males, 10 females.
- SAINT FRANCIS.** Fr. Cuthbert, O.S.F.C. 5s. 0d. A historical drama in four acts.
- SAINT FRANCIS IN THE WORLD.** Fr. Dekkers. A drama in three acts. 12m.
- THE LORD OF DEATH.** M. De. La Fuye. 1s. 6d. Translated from the French by L. Parker. Three acts. 7m., 12f.
- THE UPPER ROOM.** Mgr. Benson. 1s. 0d. A drama of Christ's Passion. 8m., 3f.
- A NATIVITY PLAY.** Lionel Basevi. 1s. 0d. 8m., 5f.
- THE WIDOW'S SON.** By an Ursuline Nun. A dramatisation of the Miracle of Naim. 7m., 4f.
- THE LEPER.** By an Ursuline Nun. A drama based on the Gospel Story of the curing of The Ten Lepers. 1m., 3f.
- BETHELEHEM.** 2s. 6d. A tableau of the Nativity for presentation by children.
- PILATE.** A Passion Play. Two scenes. 4m., 3f.
- EAGERHEART.** 1s. 6d. A Christmas mystery play which needs close study before production.
- CALVARY.** Fr. Kenyel, C.S.S.R. A Play of the Passion of Our Divine Saviour.
- A MYSTERY PLAY, IN HONOUR OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD.** Mgr. Benson. 1s. 0d. 10m., 7f.

- NICODEMUS.** By an Ursuline Nun. 1s. 0d. A Passion Play in two acts.
- SAINT BRENDAN'S QUEST.** F. A. Forbes. 6d.
- SAINT FRIDESWIFE.** F. A. Forbes. 6d. A Legend of Oxford.
- THE PEARL OF YORK.** Benedictines of Stanbrook. A drama in five acts. 15f.
- THE ROSES OF ST. DOROTHY.** F. A. Forbes. 6d.
- THE WHITE DOVE OF ERIN.** F. A. Forbes. 6d. A series of scenes from St. Brigid's life.
- IN BETHLEHEM TOWN.** 6d. A little Christmas play for children.
- THE SHEPHERDS.** Fr. Cuthbert O.S.F.C. 2/6. A Christmas play.
- SACRED DRAMA.** Mother Drane, O.P. 3/6. Three plays: "St. Catherine of Alexandria"; "St. Dorothea"; and a Nativity Play.
- THE SWEET MIRACLE.** Ega de Quieroz. 6d. Translated from Portuguese by Sisters of Notre Dame. 8m. 1f.
- THE STAR OF CHRIST.** Fr. Gaffney. 1/2. A Christmas play.
- THE POOR MAN OF ASSISI.** Fr. Gaffney. 2/8.
- SAINT TARSICUS** also **BLESSED IMELDA.** Father Gaffney. 2/6. In one volume.
- SWEET MIRACLE.** Fr. Gaffney. 1/8. With a Gaelic version by Fr. Cussen.
- CHRIST CONQUERS** also **THE HERMIT OF THE WELL.** Fr. Gaffney. 8d. post free. Two simple plays in one volume.
- RED ROSES** also **YOUNG SAINT PATRICK.** Father Gaffney. 8d. post free. Two school plays.
- BREAKING DAY.** Fr. Gaffney. 1/8, post free. A play about St. Patrick.
- AQUINAS.** Fr. Gaffney. 1/8, post free. A play about the patron of schools.
- THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS.** Fr. Gaffney. 1/-. A Passion play. 4m. and choir.
- BARTER.** Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P. 10/-. A drama of the Passion in 4 acts. Eleven actors, m. or f. Three scenes.



**THE LITTLE FLOWER.** Rev. Fr. McEvoy, O.P. 1/6. A Narrative play. From ten to twenty actors. Suitable for Convent schools only.

## II. SOME DRAMAS WITH A CATHOLIC OUTLOOK.

**SIX ONE-ACT PLAYS.** Rev. Daniel Lord, S.J. 7/6. This volume contains **The Road to Connaught; Rainbow Gold; The Sight of the Blind; Mistress ... Castlemaine's Christmas Dinner; The Flame Leaps Up; and Sir Folly.**

**THE KING'S SECRET.** Rev. T. P. Skuse. 1/6. 14m. Eight scenes. A College Drama.

**FALSELY ACCUSED.** A drama in four acts. About 20 actors, m.

**PIZZARRO.** Sheridan. A drama in five acts. About 20 actors, m.

**MAY BROOKE'S TRIALS.** Madame Cecilia. 1/-. Four acts. 7 actors, f.

**ANIMA.** Sisters of the Holy Cross. Three acts. 18 actors, f.

**THE REVERSE OF THE MEDAL.** 7 actors, f.

**ANCILLA'S DEBT.** Madame Cecilia. 7 actors, f.

**THE VIOLET SELLERS.** T. M. Lane-Clarke. 12 actors (children) and choir.

**THE ROSE OF SLEAT.** S. M. Lynn. A drama cantata. 6m. 4f.

**WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.** H. Fairfield. 14 actors (children). Nine scenes.

**ROBERT MARTIN: SUBSTITUTE HALF-BACK.** Henry Gunslock. 17 actors (boys only).

**O'DONOGHUE, INSURGENT** also **THE PATRIOT PRIEST.** M. Slaunton. 1/6 net. 8 actors and 10 actors respectively, m.

**THE TWO KINGS.** M. Robinson. 12 actors, m. or f.

**A CHILD'S INFLUENCE.** Madame Cecilia. 7 actors (girls).

**THE ONE OR THE OTHER.** E. Power. 7 actors (girls).

**TWO HEROES.** A drama for boys. About 12 actors (boys).

**THE MISTRESS OF FARNLEIGH GRANGE.** Madame CECILIA. About 12 actors (girls).

**ERNSCLIFF HALL.** Three acts. 6 actors (girls).

**A DEBT OF GRATITUDE.** A play for young people. 11 actors, m. or f.

**THE EMPEROR'S ROYAL ROBES.** F. A. Forbes. 9 actors, m. or f.

**THE MISER.** 11 actors (boys or men).

**THE TRIUMPH OF JUSTICE.** About 14 actors.

**FROM LA RABIDA TO SAN SALVADOR.** 4 scenes. 15 actors, m. or f.

**BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.** Gerald Marley. 6 actors (children).

**FLORA'S REVIEW.** C. H. Leonard. 17 actors (children).

**IF I WERE A KING.** About 30 characters (boys).

**THE PRODIGAL LAW-STUDENT.** 4 acts. 25 actors (boys).

**THE SEA-CALL.** J. B. McCarthy. One act. 6 actors, m. or f. (adults).

**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.** About 12 actors (boys).

**A VICTIM OF THE SEAL.** Fr. Kenyel, C.S.S.R. 20 actors (boys).

**A DAUGHTER OF THE COMMUNE.** S.M.B. 20 actors, m. or f.

**DARK BEFORE DAWN.** J. D'Arcy. 12 actors (boys).

**AT THE SIGN OF THE ROSE.** Maurice F. Egan. 12 actors (boys).

**THE MALEDICTION.** J. Lyons. Three acts. About 30 actors (boys).

**THE RECOGNITION.** About 40 actors (boys).

## THE STUDY OF DRAMA.

The following bibliography will be useful to those who desire to study more deeply the various points raised in the preceding pages:—

**THE ABBEY OF ST. GALL.** Clark. 1928. (Cambridge University Press).

**THE ART OF PLAY PRODUCTION.** Dolman. 1928. (Harper Brothers, New York).

- SCHOOL DRAMA IN ENGLAND.** Vail Motter. 1929.  
(Longmans).
- ENGLISH MYSTERY PLAYS.** Pollard. Eighth Edition.  
(Oxford University Press).
- PLAYGOERS' HANDBOOK TO RESTORATION  
DRAMA.** Elwin. 1929. (Jonathan Cope).
- HISTORY OF IRISH DRAMA.** Malone. 1929. (Lond.  
Constable).
- ENGLISH MEDIEVAL DRAMA.** Chambers.
- ART OF PLAY WRITING.**
- ENGLISH PAGEANTRY.** Whittington. (Harvard Uni-  
versity Press).
- PLAYMAKING.** Archer. (Chapman and Hall).
- LITTLE THEATRE ORGANISATION.** Alexander Dean.  
(Appleton. New York).
- PLAY PRODUCTION FOR COLLEGES.** Milton Smith.  
(Appleton. New York).
- LA MASQUE ET L'ENCENSOIR.** Baty. 1926. (Paris,  
Bland and Gay).
- YORK PLAYS.** The plays performed on Corpus Christi  
by the York Guilds (Oxford University Press).
- PRACTICAL STAGE DIRECTING FOR AMATEURS.**  
Taylor (Dutton. 1923).
- TECHNIQUE IN DRAMATIC ART.** Bosworth (Mc-  
Millian. 1926).
- THE TECHNIQUE OF THE DRAMA.** Freytag (Scott,  
Foresman).
- CONTINENTAL STAGE CRAFT.** Macgowan (Harcourt.  
1922).

#### PERIODICALS.

- THE THEATRE ARTS MONTHLY.** New York.
- THE MASK.** (Florence, Italy). Obtainable through  
Bretanos.
- THE DRAMA.** Chicago.
- PRACTICAL STAGE-WORK.** A Catholic dramatic  
periodical, edited by Fr. Helfen, which devotes  
the greater part of its space to Catholic drama.
- BULLETIN OF THE CATHOLIC THEATRE MOVE-  
MENT.** (New York).

# LIFE OF MATT TALBOT

By SIR JOSEPH A. GLYNN.

*Cr. 8vo. Boards.*

*118 Pages.*

*Illustrated.*

This book is offered to the Catholic world in response to the insistent demand for more detailed information concerning Matt Talbot than it was possible to give in the 20-page booklet issued in March, 1926. That booklet in less than two years has been translated into French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Hungarian, Polish, Czeckish, Yugo-Slavian, Breton and Chinese. Matt Talbot's story in short has caught the imagination of the world.

*Prices, 2/-; by post, 2/4.*

**VERITAS COMPANY LIMITED**

VERITAS HOUSE,

7 & 8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin.