

A curious rumor about Indian head pennies is now sweeping the Middle West. It is reported that the government is to call in these old-style coins and pay \$2 each for them. Many a kid, his soul torn by a yearning for chewing gum, passes the beckoning machine with strained face, refusing to drop therein the Indian penny which he is determined to cash for 200 times its face value.

CLASSROOM WISDOM

FROM "Boners" and "More Boners" published by the Viking Press (\$1.00) and compiled by Alexander Abingdon from examination papers:

Acrimony, sometimes called holy, is another name for marriage.

Celibacy is a crime a priest commits when he marries.

A Protestant is a woman who gets her living through an immortal life.

What are rabies, and what would you do for them? Rabies are Jewish priests. I should do nothing for them.

A momentum is what you give a person when they are leaving.

Contralto is a low sort of music that only ladies sing.

In Christianity a man can only have one wife. This is called Monotony.

The dog came bounding down the path emitting whelps at every bound.

Jacob, son of Isaac, stole his brother's birth mark.

Our Father which art in Heaven, Harold be thy name.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, while his parents were traveling on the Continent. He made many fast friends; among the fastest were Alice and Phoebe Cary.

Launcelot arrived at a castle where he asked if he could be put up with for the night.

A census taker is a man who goes from house to house increasing the population.

The government of England is a limited mockery.

The letters M.D. signify "mentally deficient."

Solomon had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

The Mediterranean and the Red Sea are connected by the sewage canal.

Climate lasts all the time, but weather only for a few days.

Chivalry is the attitude of a man toward a strange woman.

Appendicitis is caused by information in the appendix.

A monologue is a conversation between two people, such as husband and wife.

Vesuvius is a volcano and if you will climb up to the top you will see the creator smoking.

Science is material. Religion is immaterial.

Gravity was discovered by Isaac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the autumn, when the apples are falling off the trees.

What part did the U. S. Navy play in the war? It played the Star Spangled Banner.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CHINA?

THESE interesting facts have been assembled in Fu Jen News Letter, published by the Catholic University Press of Peiping, China:

China is the largest nation on earth.

China's area is one-fourteenth of all the land surface of the globe.

China's area equals that of the U. S. and all her dependencies with enough left over to make twelve states the size of Pennsylvania.

China's population is one-fourth that of the entire earth.

China's population is greater than that of North and South America, Africa, and Australia put together.

China's territory takes in China Proper, Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet and Chinese Turkestan. In language and racial customs each of these is a nation in itself.

China's population is over 450,000,000.

China's history began about 2500 B. C. A contemporary of Babylon and Chaldea, it has seen those powerful nations rise and fall. Always great, China has not yet reached the height of its development.

The Chinese invented fibrous paper, the art of printing, and were the first to make photographic engravings. The first book was printed with movable types in China, 500 years before the time of Europe's first printer, Lourenz Koster.

The Chinese were the first to use gunpowder and ink.

The Chinese originated the porcelain process and gave silk and tea to the world.

The Great Wall of China, the world's most stupendous engineering marvel, was begun 200 years before Christ.

Records show the existence of Nestorian Christianity in China in the seventh century. Arnobius, a Christian rhetorician who lived in Africa c. 300, testifies in his "Adversus Gentes" (lib. II, cap. VII) that Christianity had penetrated into China before the end of the third century.

The Catholic Church is represented in every part of China.

Franciscan missionaries, contemporaries of Marco Polo, made a systematic attempt to christianize China in the 13th and 14th centuries.

John of Montecorvino, a Franciscan friar, was nominated first Archbishop of Khanbalyk (Peking) in 1307.

St. Francis Xavier attempted to reach China, but died in 1552 on Sancian Island, off the coast of China.

Following St. Francis Xavier, many Jesuit missionaries penetrated into China, and made numerous converts among the elite of the Capital (Peking). The converts included one Prime Minister, 13 other high officials, 40 eunuchs, and 114 imperial clansmen.

One out of every 180 Chinese is a Catholic.

There are 75 bishops, 2,000 foreign and 1,400 native priests, 700 brothers, nearly 4,000 sisters, native and foreign, caring for the spiritual interests of China's 2,500,000 Catholics.

Six native Chinese priests were consecrated bishops by Pope Pius XI on October 28, 1926.

There are over 450 advanced primary and secondary schools maintained by the Catholic Church in China, having government recognition. The total number of Chinese Catholic schools is over 11,000. The pupils in these schools number nearly 270,000.

The preparatory, minor and major seminaries in China have in attendance nearly 5,000 students. Of these an average of 100 are ordained priests each year.

Non-Christian China has three great religions: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The first two are indigenous, while Buddhism was introduced from India. Confucianism, a politico-ethical code, has more than anything else swayed and molded the thought and aspirations of the Chinese for the past 3,000 years.

There are nearly 30,000,000 Mohammedans in China. Well-attended mosques are found in half the eighteen provinces of China.

ARE NEGROES INFERIOR?

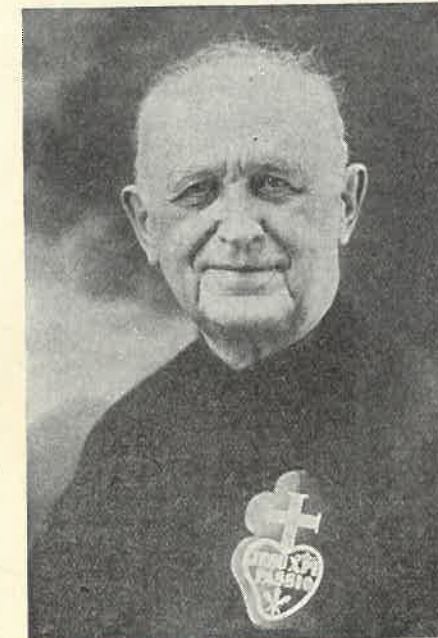
By
Mark Moeslein, C. P.

INFERIOR races? Are there such? Very many think so and without hesitation will refer to American Negroes as one of them. Not so, however, thoughtful people and still less well-informed people. They scout the notion of inferiority and substitute for the ugly word another which is true to facts. The substituted word is *backwardness*. We are all of the same stock whatever the variants.

The backward ones of one age may be the advanced ones of other ages. Fifteen hundred years ago the forefathers of the much vaunted "Nordics" were backward enough to be veritable savages, but they were not inferior to the Greeks and Romans, whose civilization they first wrecked and later, out of the ruins and under the guidance of the Catholic Church, builded the civilization which dominates the world of today. It is not so many ages ago since the Japanese were rated as a backward people, but at present they are numbered among the most advanced, at least in material ways, and their country is a not-to-be-trifled-with rival of our own.

Every race has members less able than others. It has always been so, and there is no reason for thinking that it will ever be otherwise. That all men are equal is both a half truth and a half falsehood. In the sense of equal abilities and equal advancement it is not borne out by facts either past or present. There are inequalities of bodily power, social culture, mental gifts, spiritual outlook and accomplishment. In every race the many have been and are the carriers of water and the hewers of wood. Will it ever be otherwise? But there is no inherent reason, surely not racial, why the children of the leaders of one age or civilization should not be the followers in another. It is as true of Negroes as it has been of "Nordics" and of the Japanese.

INTELLECTUALLY balanced people do not talk of inferior races. Sanity compels them to recognize backwardness in individuals and in groups of every race and even of en-



REV. MARK MOESLEIN, C.P.

FATHER MARK is in his seventy-eighth year and has been a priest for over fifty-three years. In January, 1928, he became pastor of Our Mother of Mercy Mission in Washington, North Carolina. Beginning with a few souls, he now has a rapidly growing congregation, nearly all of whom are converts. At the present time he needs about \$20,000 to put another story on his school to take care of an increase of the pupils. Mass is now being said in one of the classrooms. Later he hopes to be able to build a chapel. We earnestly ask our readers to help this zealous and saintly priest. Contributions may be sent to Father Mark at his residence, West 9th St., Washington, N. C., or to The Sign. The illustrations in this article are from photographs of Our Mother of Mercy Mission.—The Editor.

tire races. But they do not make backwardness or difference of abilities the basis of according them lesser human rights and less favorable human opportunities. The sanest of men, the God-Man Jesus, made both conditions the basis, if not of greater rights in justice, certainly of charity, not mere philanthropy.

AFTER all has been said Christian charity is a greater force for advancement than legal equality or even strict justice. Jesus preached the doctrine and lived it too: "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. . . . If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them." The Apostles surely were a backward lot. But will any one be tempted to say that they were inferior to the Greeks and Romans, whom they evangelized?

The spirit and example of the Master should be the standard of thinking and doing in regard to backward people, either as individuals, groups or races. Whether their backwardness be due to lesser abilities or to unfortunate social conditions, they are entitled to the greater rights, privileges and opportunities provided by Christ's charity for time and eternity.

For Catholics to think and speak of Negroes as an inferior race is unworthy of their Faith: "For you are all one in Christ Jesus." Their evident backwardness should be constant incentive to do more and more for them as a reparation for wrongs our country did and does to them both as individuals and as a race. Why they are so backward is a very sad story of restricted rights, of denied opportunities, of unfair discrimination and of undeserved blame for the wrong-doing of some of their group. Why retell the ugly story of white America's unfairness to colored people? Who does not know enough of it to make him ashamed? The unfairness of which they have been and are the victims should be inducement for making amend in



The membership of Our Mother of Mercy Colored Mission in January, 1928, when Father Mark took charge. Mr. David Keys, first from the left, was the prime mover in starting the Mission.

every way in which it can be made. The entire wrong cannot be undone.

Only persons whose acquaintance with the colored race is from afar and from the Press think of them as an inferior race or even overstress their backwardness. There are criminals among them, much the same as among other races. Along certain lines the white race has greater criminals to its demerit. Negroes are not responsible for the horrors of the world war. They did not bring about nor are they keeping up the distressing conditions of unemployment. They are not to blame for the glaring injustice of the wealth of the world being in the hands of the comparatively few—of the very few.

Who will question that the American Negro has real grievances,—not simply periodic, but constant? He is

discriminated against in the matter of employment, even of the kind for which he is fitted. He is denied the opportunity to earn enough to support his family in decency. To provide the necessities too many wives and mothers *must* work for wages and this away from their homes. How can any dwelling, with the mother out of it so much, be in any true sense called a home? Too often their so-called homes are of the shabbiest. Rarely are the neighborhoods of these dwellings improved. It is pitiable that so many of their children are underfed, because parents cannot do better for them.

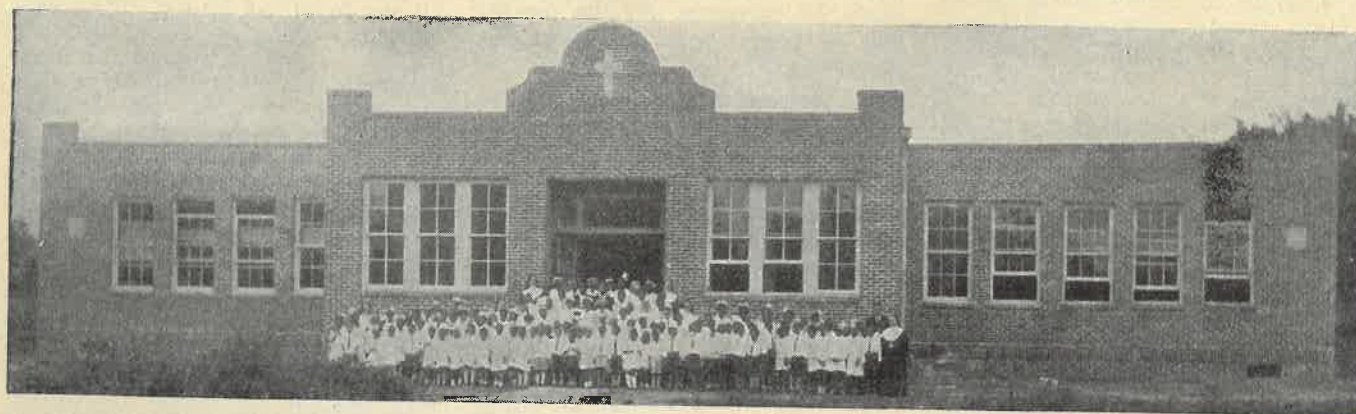
OFTEN the facilities for schooling are inadequate. Children frequently take up too early in life the worries about bread and butter.

Though comparatively so few of the colored people are property owners, the real owners pass the taxes over to them in the shape of rentals which they pay and the purchases they make.

Persons who are supposed to know contend that equal justice is not meted out to Negroes in our courts, much oftener than even human frailty can excuse. How many white men are condemned to thirty, sixty, ninety days "on the road" for offences which bring such punishment to Negroes? Can it be that the needs of the highways influence such sentences more than the claims of equal justice? In parts of the country it is managed in some way that colored people are maneuvered out of their legal right to vote. Yet, notwithstanding such conditions, American Negroes are not the most troublesome portion of our citizenry. What other portion of our population would tolerate for long such grievances? Their exercise of the right to vote would bring about a change for better or worse, if need be, by anarchy.

Whenever civic equality is claimed for colored people, otherwise good and sensible persons not unfrequently rebel on the score that ultimately it would entail intermarriage between the races, as if such were the thought uppermost in the minds of both sexes of our dark-skinned citizens. The writer has not discovered any such craze, but what is very much in evidence is justified disgust and rebellion against the white man's disregard for the chastity of colored women. What race would be as forbearing under this outrage as American Negroes have been?

Before God white womanhood has no more sacred rights on this score or any other than black womanhood. If white men will mate with women of color, why not be honorable enough to marry them? Under present social conditions such intermarriage is not to the best interests of the parties most concerned. Until



Our Mother of Mercy Colored Mission School. It was enlarged to its present size two years ago, and now needs to be enlarged again. Father Mark, the Sisters and the children are daily praying for the necessary means.



Membership of Our Mother of Mercy Colored Mission, Easter Sunday, 1931. Nine unavoidably absent ones should be in the picture. Present membership 96, counting the babies.

social conditions remove the barbarism from such unions white manhood should in honor safeguard the chastity of colored women as much as that of women of their own race. Too much stress cannot be laid on the platitude that no people rise higher in the scale of racial culture than its womanhood.

Earlier in life the writer was too busy otherwise to give thought, time and effort to colored people. Later, and for years, good fortune enabled him to live among them for the purpose of offering them opportunities for getting acquainted with Catholicism. Backwardness was and is enough in evidence. How could it be otherwise under the circumstances sufficiently indicated unless one claims for Negroes super-manhood? No one, and least of all Negroes, makes this claim. But evidence of Negro inferiority failed to impress itself.

A VERY excellent period for testing native ability and capability is early childhood. Little ones live in fairylands. It is well that it is so, because the gross realities of life come soon enough. It is true also of the little ones of colored people.

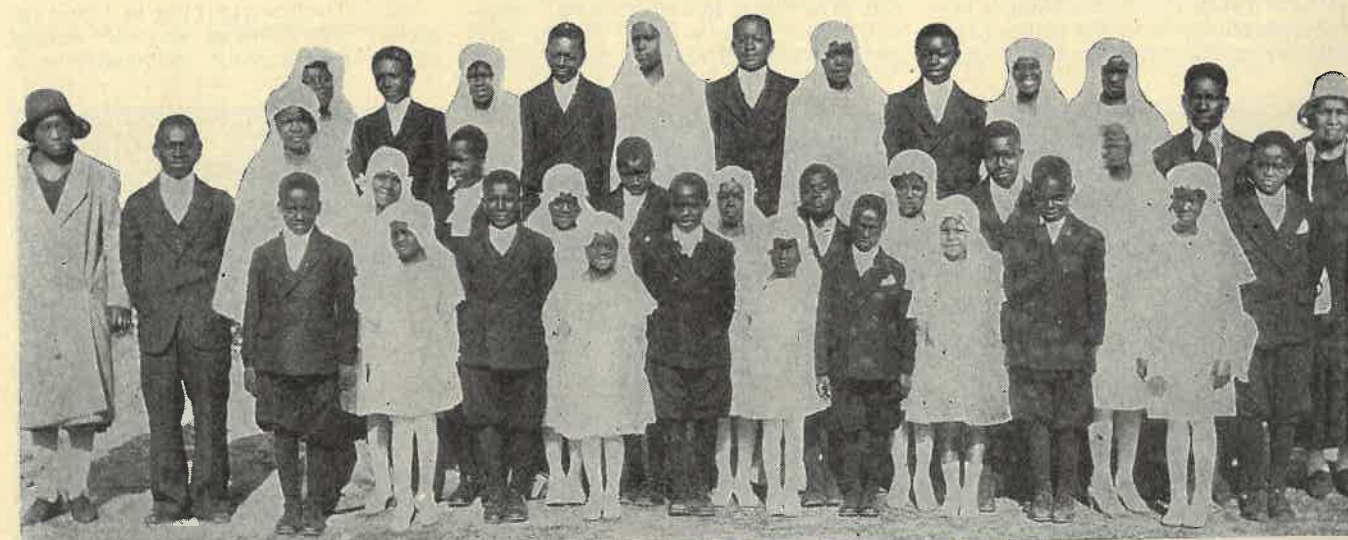
Fortunately so, because generally their lot is a harder one. It is an unmixed delight to witness the surprise of visitors to the school of Our Mother of Mercy School, Washington, N. C., conducted by Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, whose motherhouse is in Scranton, Pa. The delight is greater when the visitors are cultured and with a something of Negro inferiority lurking in the subconscious mind. The alertness of the pupils, their ambition to learn, their palpable progress, their whole-hearted response to every offer of uplift and their joyous readiness to submit to tests provoke surprise and unstinted praise. The delight changes into amusement, when visitors explain the situation by saying: "The children of your school belong to a superior class of colored people."

Negroes need the help of more advanced people, just the same as other backward races of the past and present. It should be much more than merely financial aid. Too few of the more cultured of the white race give personal service to the advancement of colored people. Many were and are opposed to it on principle. Even among Negroes not a few

are unfriendly to such service, seeing in it a slur on the abilities of the race. It was so when the barbarous "Nordics" overran Europe. They accepted the personal cultural service of the Catholic Roman world, whose political organization they wrecked. They did not make the blunder of which the Master spoke: "Can the blind lead the blind? Do they not both fall into the ditch?"

Cheerfully giving credit to colored people for what they have accomplished in bettering their condition, it would be a severe tax on credulity to assume that, in the short space of time since Emancipation, the colored race in the United States has developed a sufficient number of competent leaders to transform backwardness into self-sufficient advancement. Incompetent leaders are much in a class with the blind leading the blind.

Colored people no less than others need the leadership represented by Catholicism. It is the system which developed the really worth while values which persist in what may for brevity's sake be called the white man's civilization. It is assumed that this very civilization is the standard of advancement to which



First Communion Class of Our Mother of Mercy Mission, Easter Sunday, 1931. Thirty-five were in the class. The children's outfits were given by a generous Catholic layman of Boston.



Our Mother of Mercy Mission Original Colored Band with second-hand instruments provided by a Cleveland priest. The musical education of these lads, under the direction of Mother M. De Chantal, is remarkable.

colored people aspire. Possibly objection may be taken to this assumption. If so, what is the purpose of the struggle for equality?

The response of colored people to Catholicism, when given fair chance to get acquainted with it, is additional evidence that they are not of an inferior race. Informed people readily admit that Catholicism is intensely intellectual. It also appeals to noble sentiments of various kinds, which is very much to its credit. The misfortune is that these cannot ordinarily be brought into action during the early period of missions in the neighborhood of colored populations, because the poverty of such beginnings is against it. However, it is not without its advantages. Among those taken into the fold some give it as an added motive for their wish to be Catholics that the approach is to their intelligence and not to the hullabaloo of emotionalism.

OF LATE years there has been a remarkable trend in the missionary activities of Catholics in the United

States. It has always been in evidence in caring for the millions of Catholic immigrants who flooded this country for generations, seeking to better their living conditions. Now the trend is even to heathen lands. One marvels over the number of priests, Sisters and lay workers who respond to the Master's injunction to preach the Gospel. Another marvel is the generosity of the Catholic laity in financing these Divine ventures. They are always the financial prop of Catholic effort. Neither are the home missions overlooked. More can be done for these and, in God's own time, will be done.

Until recently not much could be done in the matter of providing opportunities for American colored people to get acquainted with the Catholic Church; not nearly enough is being done at the present time. The explanation is obvious. Those already of the fold had the first claim on the ministry of the Church. But progress is in the making. More and more priests and Sisters are giving their entire time to this ser-

vice. The laity, too, is learning of the financial needs and provides accordingly when approached.

It will be a blessed day when the Church in the United States as a unit will undertake to provide laborers and funds for the home missions. United action will accomplish what is beyond the power of bishops singly in the mission field of our own country, where vocations to the sisterhoods and to the priesthood are necessarily few, because the Catholic population is so very small. Besides being so few, the Catholic laity in mission sections is too poor to give anything like the needed financial aid. It should be an inviting field for the activities of religious communities of both sexes,—inviting, not in an earthly way, but spiritually. It is needless to say that these conditions apply with an especial force to home missions among Negroes.

All Catholics can help to bring on sooner this blessed day of united effort, by praying earnestly, and



The Kinderband of Our Mother of Mercy Colored Mission. The success of the Mission is due in no small measure to the intelligent and self-sacrificing zeal of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Marywood College, Scranton, Pa.

often to the Holy Spirit, the Divine Manager of the Church, to guide the Lord's Vicar on earth to bring about soon methods for the united effort of the whole Church in these United States, to labor on a large and energetic scale in our own home mission fields, not overlooking in any way God's very poor children of the dark skin.

Colored people need the Church now more than ever, because neopaganism is so intensely active. They are the ones who shall suffer most from its inroads, owing to the fact

He that showeth mercy to the poor shall be blessed. He that hath mercy on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and He will repay him.—Proverbs.

that they are less prepared to resist the direct and indirect economic, social, moral, and spiritual evils which it begets. What a glorious tribute of loyalty to the Christ it would be on the part of Catholics in

the United States, both lay and clerical, to be able to say that they have done even more than their part of the work of having the Gospel preached to the poorest of the poor. The climax of Jesus' testimony to Himself, sent to the Baptist, was: "And the Gospel is preached to the poor." Some day, the Master of the harvest will say to every one of us, either "As long as you did it to these My least brethren, you did it to Me" or the reverse, "As long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me."

The CONQUEST of NEW YORK

By
John Gibbons

IN years to come when University Classes of English Literature are reviewing my Works most competent critics will almost certainly agree that the finest story that I ever wrote in my life was a phantasy about what would happen after I was dead. Only the Editor to whom I submitted it wouldn't have it, and would I kindly stick, please, to writing about tangible things of which I had some glimmering of knowledge. I should do much better, he suggested, if I took some atmosphere with which I was thoroughly familiar.

VERY well, then, I'll take a refreshment room, what in effete old tyranny-run Europe they still call a bar. And then just out of sheer gentlemanly good feeling towards virtuous and probably horrified American readers I'll pitch my opening scene outside that bar instead of inside. Also I'll place the thing, I think, in Latitude 47.57 North and in Longitude 25.50 West. Tangible detail, you remember, that Editor wanted.

I am able, you see, to be so scientifically precise about my decimals because I have just this minute copied them from an old newspaper. The same sheet, I see, was begging its readers to go back at once to Milan in Italy, a centre, of course, of all the arts and in particular of somebody's jewelry store. Furthermore, when we did get to Milan and found ourselves under the shadow of the great and world-famous Duomo

we were above all things not to forget to drink our Coca-Cola.

OTHER items of interest in that day's paper implored us to make our homes either in the Ambassador or in the Savoy-Plaza Hotels of New York. The necessary reservations were to be made by radio, which would, of course, be free, while the meeting of guests was another little service naturally also gratuitous. It did not, however, say in so many words that the hotels themselves would be free, a little omission which rather worried me.

With all this rather skilfully applied atmosphere of mine you will probably by now have gathered that we are talking about a ship's paper, the sort of daily fly-leaf that they publish on board a transatlantic liner, and you will, of course, be perfectly right. The single point that will come as a surprise to you is that I wasn't there in my natural quality of an Ambassador or a Savoyard, but was, in fact, traveling third-class on that particular boat. Not the tourist-third business, but the real genuine third that is today the nearest thing left to the old pre-quota steerage. Further, at Latitude Whatever-I-Said, it was the third-class bar that I was sitting outside, on a rather uncomfortable bench at the bottom of a singularly draughty stairway that somehow managed to carry a young gale down about eight flights of decks. And as I sat there I was trying in a thoroughly literary way to

deal with three mugs of beer at once, only with refinement and without looking unduly obtrusive. But before going further I ought perhaps to explain that only one of the mugs was rightfully mine, the other two belonging respectively to a Catholic priest and a Jewish rabbi.

IN a way I think that I respected that rabbi more than most men that I've met in my life. I noticed him at the next table to mine at the first meal out of England. Because of his funny hat, a sort of cross between a black turban and a priest's biretta, and he put it on ceremonially the moment he sat down and kept it on till the moment that he had to bunk hurriedly from the saloon. Third-class, you can't expect too much, you know, and the whole decks below as it was, with artificial light and pumped air, that saloon certainly was a bit on the stuffy side, and any amount of seats were emptied with the chop of the English Channel seas. But the rabbi I noticed particularly, because, hat and all, he always turned up promptly at the start of every meal and then never could stick it through. And I thought that he was a plucky man. Also, after a bit, it dawned on me, when I began to watch, that he was a starving man as well. Because there was next to nothing of any meal that I ever saw him eating, though I didn't know why until later.

Most people as far as I could see laughed at him. There was one man