

BLACKFRIARS

sacrifice because it was freely accepted and offered by Our Lord. So a Jocist may and does, in the sublimest sense of a much abused cliché, make a virtue of what may otherwise be a necessity.

3. I do not know on what authority Mr. Robbins says that the J.O.C. is "out to Christianise industrialism" (an ambiguous phrase); but it certainly is out to Christianise the industrial workers, and to Christianise them as such. But the sacrificial element in the Jocist way of life denies neither of the given essentials, for

4. the end and the means of Jocism are not at all what Mr. Robbins represented them to be. I am sorry that he considers my description of this passage as a "grotesque caricature" to be "highly offensive." He brings forward no argument to show his unpleasant picture to be veracious, and I am convinced that anybody acquainted with the real ideals and heroism of the J.O.C. would consider my description of this paragraph from his article to be euphemistic—as indeed it was intended to be.

5. It is indifferent to the rightness or wrongness of Jocist ideals and programme by whom they are favoured. But in actual fact the leaders of the J.O.C. are, for the most part, themselves industrial workers; even its priest-founders and inspirers are ex-workers or of working-class stock and upbringing.

6. Hence I need not trespass on your space to discuss the reasons which Mr. Robbins brings forward for his "protest," for it is precisely my point that the J.O.C. he attacks is a J.O.C. of his own imagination and not the J.O.C. of fact.

Of course it is true that §70 of *Divini Redemptoris* the Pope is talking of something quite different from the matter of Mr. Robbins' article. The Pope is talking about sacrificial ideals which are in *fact* embodied in the J.O.C. Mr. Robbins is talking about a movement of his own invention whose aim is to dehumanise the workers in order that we may have cheap luxury commodities. He does not deny that it was the same J.O.C.—which has so often won the admiration and gratitude of the Holy Father—that he thus stigmatised.

But the Pope is urging the industrial workers to "a religious industrial martyrdom," and it was precisely this that his article called "heresy."

Yours faithfully,

PENGUIN.

OUT OF MIND, OUT OF SIGHT

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS,

Sir,—Being a resident Medical Officer in a large Scottish Mental Hospital, I read with great interest the article in your March issue entitled "Out of Mind, Out of Sight," and have felt I should like to endorse from the inside what "Onlooker" so

CORRESPONDENCE

aply sets forth (from the outside, one supposes by the choice of pseudonym).

It is perfectly correct, in my experience, that here, as in general hospitals, the priest is not only welcomed, but sent for when necessary. Moreover a Catholic "service" is held once a month, consisting of confessions and then Holy Communion, (never Mass). But, as "Onlooker" says, that is all. Mental patients are, by the very nature of their malady, asocial, unsociable and introverted, with the result that even though there may be a number of Catholics in the same ward, it is unlikely they will mix or converse very much and so help to hearten one another as they would in a hospital for physical illness; although I have sometimes seen mild cases among the younger patients reading Catholic periodicals together.

I agree heartily that surroundings are everything, that to expect women in outlandish uniforms and devoid of proper hair-dressing, and cosmetics (in these days), to recover their self-respect and reconstruct their personality successfully is absurd. "Onlooker" of course very rightly makes the point that to a Catholic patient not only are drab surroundings as depressing and retarding as they are to any other inmate, but also the absence of Catholic atmosphere, created by such things as a crucifix, pictures, a rosary and so forth, is definitely harmful also. This is certainly the case, as any mental hospital doctor can tell when he reads the correspondence of Catholic patients; I myself have seen this very thing—absence of pictures, etc.—referred to unhappily. But to my mind the issue is even bigger, and it is this.

It is impossible to live long in a mental hospital without feeling that in some way the devil is more active here than in a community of the same size consisting of sane individuals. This is not really very surprising when one considers that insanity consists essentially in a disintegration of the personality, leaving the instincts with their emotions and impulses to act separately and at random instead towards a goal for the common good of the person. Under such circumstances, therefore, would it not seem likely that the powers of evil may really be able to "possess" parts of these disintegrated and uncontrolled personalities and use them for their own ends? The horrible change in character so often noticed, the obscenities from people who have been known outside to be good-fiving citizens, the malice and vicious spite exhibited by mental patients, make it difficult to feel the devil has nothing to do with it. In any case, my point is this, in a community where it does seem that evil is more powerful than usual, surely the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and the

BLACKFRIARS

frequent offering of Holy Mass is more and not less desirable than it would be in a normal parish?

About a third of our patients here are Catholics, and perhaps a rather higher proportion of the nursing-staff, male and female. If these had their own spiritual power-house on the spot, with frequent access to the chapel, prayer, and Mass at least weekly, I cannot help feeling that the life of the place would be different and that the proportion of cures among Catholic patients would be higher.

Unfortunately one hospital here or there would be very little use; it would be necessary, if a plan for Catholic mental hospitals were to bring the required relief, to have at least one in each diocese for rate-aided patients, who are, after all, in the majority. If this scheme were taken up seriously I am sure it could be worked because it so eminently deserves God's blessing. If people "outside" knew the relief and happiness they might thus bring into thousands of hopeless lives I believe they would respond. I cannot say any more because of my position, but I do believe, with "Onlooker," that Catholic Homes for the Insane is indeed a work which should not be left to chance, but should be undertaken by the faithful without delay.

I am, sir,

Yours, etc.,

CATHOLIC DOCTOR.