

THE MIGHTY BATTLE AGAINST THE MYNAH BIRDS

(Continued)

ger said, "The only answer I can see is to cut down the banyan trees and the monkeypods and replace them with coconut palms." This statement was printed and immediately Mr. Fischbeck found that the Islands are teeming with lovers of banyan trees and monkeypods. "People quit speaking to me," he reported.

Some say that Mr. Fischbeck was beginning to suffer from delusions of persecution. He said that when he went home in the evening, the mynahs sent a hand-picked committee of 10,000 out to the trees surrounding his house, and that they stayed there all night to harass him, and go yah-yah at him. He quit going to the Waialae Golf Course because he said other committees of mynahs were sent out there, to roost in the trees and holler at him when he was trying to putt.

About this time, a Honolulu television station imported a talking mynah bird from the mainland for use in a series of commercials. This bird, named Harry, had been taught to say on cue, "Tums for the Tummy!" One day Harry escaped from the TV studio and there was a big to-do all over town and rewards were offered for his recapture. The TV people finally located their bird on the grounds of the Royal Hawaiian.

"Get him out of here!" Mr. Fischbeck cried. "Get him out of here and don't let him come back!" Into Mr. Fischbeck's mind had flashed a horrifying thought—the possibility of that commercial bird joining the mynahs in the banyan tree and teaching

them all to holler, "Tums for the Tummy!" in chorus from morning to night. Mr. Fischbeck knew that if such a thing ever happened both he and the hotel would be out of business. I think he was right.

ABOUT THIS TIME, too, the hotel engineer came up with a great idea. He caught several of the mynahs. He got himself a tape recorder. He would start the recorder and then hold one of the birds in front of the microphone and begin squeezing it until it would screech in anguish. He recorded these cries of pain and suffering and fright and then set up a speaker in the banyan, and began playing the tapes. They had no effect on the birds. If they thought anything at all, the mynahs simply concluded that someone was playing a special concert in their tree.

In the end Mr. Fischbeck gave up. The hotel management agreed that the only solution was coexistence. The tourists would have to put up with the mynahs, the mynahs with the tourists. Meanwhile Mr. Fischbeck departed the scene, and I understand he is now manager of a large hotel in Bermuda, an island where there are no mynah birds.

And so in conclusion I say to you, if you ever go to the Royal Hawaiian and find yourself distraught by the noise of the mynah birds, try to be tolerant of them. They have a long and sentimental history back of them, the same as you. They have fought the good fight, holding firm in the face of pitiless opposition. Valiant is the word for mynahs.



I was just thinking...

I AM ABOUT four feet tall with a mop of hair and I wear only a green sweater. This may be frightening to you. It bothers me a little. I shrieked when I entered my bedroom.

It might be better to begin at the very beginning.

For several days now, a robin has been attacking my bedroom window and my peace of mind. Hour after hour, he sits in the little apple tree and lunges regularly against the panes of glass in a futile attempt to dash his brains out or separate me from mine.

When Mother and I reached the conclusion that he might be seeing his own reflection and not liking what he saw, we closed the drapes. I groped around in the dark and he banged away in the sunshine. Bangity-bang. Thumpity-thump. No 40-hour week for my robin. He worked from dawn to after dark.

Finally, when I opened the casement, he flew away.

Five minutes later, he was back again, ratchity-ratch on the screen. Insurance men who think they have endurance could take lessons from this bird.

When all hope, but not the robin, of course, had fled, Mother called me at the office and told me the solution she'd concocted. I forgot about it until I walked into my bedroom and then almost took off myself.

There's a floor mop at the window, mop topside. It wears, somewhat rakishly, an old sweater, and Mother says the robin thinks the sweater-mop is me.

She says he sat for a long time and viewed her creation from one angle and then another before he sighed a robin-type sigh and went to greener pastures.

Mother says every time I get an exalted opinion of myself, all I need do is look at what my robin thinks I am.

Mother says I'm strictly for the birds.

Patty Johnson

All Right... Let's TEST CATHOLIC LOYALTY!

The majority of non-Catholics do not question the patriotism of their Catholic fellow-citizens.

They have seen too many Catholic sons die beside their own on countless battlefields. They have stood too often with Catholics in defense of common ideals and a common heritage.

Yet the ugly voice of bigotry is heard again—warning that Catholics "owe allegiance to a foreign potentate"... that "Popery" is a "menace to democracy"... even that Catholicism is as "totalitarian as Communism."

Informed non-Catholics will scorn these unworthy accusations. But in the interest of truth and good will among people of all faiths, this miserable skeleton of intolerance should be exposed for the benefit of the many who otherwise may become unwitting victims of false and misleading books, tracts and other anti-Catholic propaganda.

One critic in the United States suggests that the Catholic Church is "undemocratic" because it opposes such things as birth control, divorce and questionable reading matter. By this unreasonable standard, a religious denomination which opposes alcoholic drink could also be called "undemocratic" because it holds principles contrary to the law of the land. Catholics, certainly, make no such criticism.

Catholics are called "undemocratic" because they have their own schools. By the same reasoning, all other denominations with church-sponsored schools and colleges could be likewise condemned, despite the fact that religious schools preceded tax-supported schools in the United States and Canada, and that most of our private colleges and universities were founded by religious

bodies.

The Catholic Church is called an "alien" religion because the Vatican is located in Italy.

All of the major religious faiths of the United States and Canada had their origin in foreign lands. And the fact is that the religions professed by these bodies are at this very time the state religions in certain other lands. But does anyone call them "undemocratic?"

For nearly 2,000 years, the Catholic Church has existed under any and all forms of government. Its people comply with the political system of the land they live in... refusing to comply only if a political state should command them to violate God's law. An example is the Catholic resistance to Communism wherever it appears—because Catholicism and Communism are incompatible.

In the interest of harmony and good will... and as a matter of Christian and intellectual honesty... you should learn the truth about Catholics before seeking to judge them. We will send you free, in a plain wrapper, a pamphlet which gives a clear picture of the Catholic Church in its relation to government and the social order. And nobody will call on you. Write for Pamphlet No. FM-35.

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