

MEGA

to breathe so
 rock I wonder
 it's been here
 some glacier
 ago before man
 e narrow mind-
 in school talk-
 t men and how
 animals and
 imals than the
 were and this
 much if it can
 it knows some
 y and what an
 re's some straw-
 eside it and I'll
 that when they
 probably more
 that little creek
 hing more than
 e mud and rocks
 k like a hideous
 eld but it's still
 n here all I can
 up is the sky
 from the rest
 there's no one
 now that people
 e I can see the
 smoke over the
 sky and beneath
 eating to MAKE
 only enjoy them-
 ng all week but
 nd do the same
 go on in their
 nd always think-
 everything is es-
 ves and talking
 and in the next
 maiming lusting
 ing anyone who
 l stabbing their
 back and I wish
 uld stab me. . ."

BY A RIVER IN
 speculated, "It's
 way from every-
 no one to bother
 e way and shout
 ash like a bunch
 but out here it's
 eaceful I wish I
 ever it's a little
 wn and I wish I
 at flock of birds
 nset but I can't
 way and it's so
 those little waves
 kes against the
 I wonder what
 vn would it hurt?
 not for long it
 ver in a few sec-

onds under the water then I
 would be no more but I can't
 imagine that something must still
 exist thoughts must go on but
 with no body to hamper them at
 last free from this stupid world
 with everybody doing the same
 stupid things in the same stupid
 ways and laughing and thinking
 they're having fun and being
 rotten underneath and not giv-
 ing a good goddamn about any-
 one else and thinking they're so
 so good while they're just a bunch
 of cheating lying grabbing ani-
 mals and it's not worth it trying
 to live with them . . ."

**WALKING ALONG THE
 STREETS OF A CITY IN AU-
 TUMN** he mused, "Look what
 happens when men get together
 they build a city grey-black-dull
 red brick after red brick and
 cracked grey sidewalks and dirt
 piled up in the gutter and leaves
 and paper blowing all over and
 even the trees are ugly now
 without their leaves and every
 door is closed evry noise shut
 tight against everyone else but
 we're all people yet strangers are
 treated like something alien-for-
 eign-different-remote when really
 we're all the same the same stu-
 pid blundering mass calling our-
 selves the highest point in civil-
 ization and really no better than
 beasts but even worse 'cause we'-
 re supposed to know better ha!
 what a laugh we're just monsters
 mutants from something which
 could have been so beautiful
 maybe we were once a long time
 ago when the world was young
 but we weren't civilized then
 and they say we're so much bet-
 ter now and have so much more
 but all I can see is drabness and
 esus that wind goes right through
 my coat I'd like to be in front of
 a huge warm fireplace now in
 a lodge far away in the hills and
 so would lots of other people but
 they're all too afraid to do any-
 thing different and get out and
 live instead of just existing and
 I'm afraid too because I stay and
 say with all the others oh isn't
 that nice and how do you do? and
 yes I do and yes I will and yes
 I am and yes sir yes sir three
 bags full and for the rest of their
 lives they bow and grovel and
 do the same things over and over
 again and again to their graves
 and so will I . . . I wish I were
 dead. . ."

The Bishop's Blessing

by CAROLYN MURRAY

Won't ye let me give ye another glass, Father? Us Baptists can't drink but you Catholics seem to be able to. It's good of you to come and see me right off like this. Probly some of the folks won't like it too much but I always admire a man with guts no matter what his religion is. More people should be like that — give a person credit for guts no matter what else you got against them.

I suppose you think we're Scotch, seein' as how we got a Scotch name. Well, we're really Irish . . . Irish Protestants from County Kent. Family's been Protestants for generations and pretty proud of it, too, even though people always think we're Protestant any- way, seein' as how we got a Scotch name.

I mind a story my father used to tell, and this'll show ye what I mean about admirin' guts and the like. It was durin' the Irish Rebellion, I don't mind the year, but you probably know all about it, but from a different side than what I heard it. Well, it seems there was this here man name of Fitzroy or somethin' like that, some Irish name anyway, and he managed to escape from the custody of the Protestant soldiers that was holdin' 'im. Of course, the first thing they done was to put a price on his head which meant he was a marked man. "Well, my grandfather, Smallman was his name, didn't take much stock of things either way, him bein' a peaceful man and all, and death on fightin' and the like, so he was what you might call a neuter. Well, his little daughter Kate went out to fetch water from the pump one day and she comes runnin' and screamin' back to the house sayin' there's a man hidin' in the barn. Well, Grandfather Smallman runs right out and he guesses right off that it's Fitzroy, the wanted man. Well, Fitzroy is half dead from no food or rest and he's been hunted down like a dog so he comes runnin' to Grandfather Smallman with his hands in the air and says, "I give up. I can't run any more. You'll have to turn me over or shoot me yourself." Well for sure he wasn't gonna shoot him so he hides him in the barn for two weeks and every day little Kate goes out and drops some food in a special place by a fence-post for Fitzroy to pick up. Pretty soon Fitzroy's strength returns and he disappears and Grandfather hears later that he's gotten away, back to his own people.

Well, sir, it so happened that this Fitzroy was a brother to the Catholic bishop of the county (remember, I told ye that the Smallmans were Protestants) and he hears about how Grandfather Smallman sheltered his brother at the risk of his own life. So do you know what he does? He goes into the church (the Catholic church, of course) **before the altar**, mind ye, and says he's givin' a blessin' to the Smallmans. Whoever does good to the Smallmans is blessed in this life and in the life to come and whoever does evil to the Smallmans is cursed in this life and in the life to come. And this blessin' is to last to the third and fourth generations.

And ye know, I could tell ye a thousand ways that that blessin' has worked out — blessin' for some but curse for others, mind ye. Put you must of heard it from Father LeBlanc, who was here before ye. He was always friendly to me and I always held it was on account of the bishop's blessin'. And here you are, Father, comin' to see an old Baptist before you even get around to seein' all your own folk, so I guess you believe it, too. Come on, won't ye have another snort?