

Aids First Task

Our first task in life is to love God and our neighbor, as ourselves, if we can. We progressively learn to do that in family life.

Most Christian charity is carried out within or close to the family circle, and the motivations there established reach out and guide us in our relations with our neighbor.

Very Rev. John M. Conroy, Catholic University.

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BOOKS ON TRIAL



By John C. Tully

Interest in books is continuing at an all-time high, and sales have mounted to the astounding figure of 100,000,000 copies a year. More space is being given to books in newspapers and magazines and, with the step-up in advertising and its resultant publicity, it is harder than ever for the average reader to know which books are worth while and which are merely something to be sold.

In some lines, the quality of a product is evident at a glance. In other cases, only an expert can avoid being swindled. Books, unfortunately, can't be graded by looking at the outside; in fact, it's quite difficult to "rate" a book according to its exact merit, although most people—if they had the time to examine them—would have no difficulty at all in detecting the shoddiness of many recent volumes.

Two recent novels, for example, *The Black Path of Fear* and *Men Counted Six*, are clearly objectionable in their contents, and *The Feather Merchants* can hardly, by ordinary standards, be termed other than cheap and titillating.

The Tariff of Tradition, on the other hand, is not objectionable because of offensive language so much as in the acerbity of the author's attack on the Hierarchy and the teachings of the Church. Books of this kind, because of their skillful twistings and neatly turned innuendos, are pitfalls for unwary readers who fail to distinguish between fact and fiction.

The History of Romeo Hawks, a story of our Civil War times, is likewise the product of an author of great power, but its lewdness is quite indefensible.

Still another type of objectionable book is *The Emperor's Physician*. Christ is the central figure and the story is purportedly told by St. Luke—"sincerely and devoutly" say the secular commentators, who predict sales rivaling *The Babe and The Apostle*. But informed Catholics cannot look upon this book as other than a travesty on the Gospel story. The damaging effect of such books results from the fact that many readers accept them as being historically true rather than as caricatures. This book, nevertheless, is reported as having been chosen for distribution by the People's Book Club for November and December.

In *Cluny Brown and Pastoral* (each \$2.50), we are offered two novels of merit. They comprise the Book-of-the-Month Club dual selection for September.

"Cluny Brown" who gives the first book its title, is the story of an entirely uninhabited London plumber's assistant who was sent "into service" to learn her place, and who is always on the ragged edge of tragedy, but always safe. Motion picture rights are said to have been sold for the highest price ever paid for a novel.

The other book is a pastoral idyll of a bomber base in England. The narrative of the crew's actions in combat is the best I have read,

and in the unobjectionable love-story of the captain the author has taken advantage of new situations to develop a highly original approach.

Whether or not Poland and Russia (4270) has been purposely ignored by reviewers because of comments on Russia, this book by an American Presbyterian who lived for many years in Poland is the best of the year on the subject.

Anne and the King of Siam is a semi-fictionalized account of an English woman who tutored the royal children and worked as secretary to the King of Siam around the middle of last century. I read it as a matter of necessity, since it is a highly-advertised book club selection, and, although there are a few interesting episodes I can think of, a thousand other books that are far more worth while.

The *Glory of the Mohawks* (\$2.00) is a biography of Kateri Tekakwitha, the only native-born American now on her way to canonization. It was originally written in French and while the translation is not entrancing in style, it was not written for that purpose, but to trace the steps followed by the Indian maiden from the time the Grace of God came into her heart until her death at twenty-four. In that respect, it accomplishes the purpose admirably.

"TEAMWORK will win!"



Near East Missions

Most Rev. Francis J. Spellman, D.D., President
Rev. Thomas J. McHugh, S.T.D., National Secretary
Rev. Andrew H. Regan, S.L.T., Assistant Secretary

Her Boy

St. Augustine, honored on August 28, great priest and bishop, was once the straying child of his mother's tears. In her name, St. Monica, we ask more members of the Monica Guild. With their dollar a month we replace tattered vestments.

RAGS FOR ME,

RICHES TO THEM!

A worn, patched coat, a rickety bed and a chair, a scant meal—"rags for me"! A hundred little children about to start school, coming hungry from wretched homes. Charlie's own—"but riches for them!"

This is the plot of the play from Father Kirilakos, the weary old pastor in Southwest India. We can almost see him, gaunt and bent with age. He has been there for over forty years. And he can number his converts in the thousands.

These children he sees on their way to a little school we built for him. Just a little too thin, and not quite enough "pop" in their childish steps.

So he says: "Rags for me, riches for them!" Can you give even the smallest gift to swell the little fund of two hundred and ninety dollars we hope to send this faithful old shepherd and his little lambs?

NINE HOURS

St. Louis of France gave nine hours each day to prayer, and he died trying to make the Near East Catholic again. Can you give one hundred dollars or even a dollar for STUDENT SUPPORT CLUB which helps train more Near East priests?

NEAR

That day is near, that longed for day when we shall begin our Memorial Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows, and we beg for this monument to our soldier dead in the name of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, the devotion of September.

LAST WEEK

We have one more week before we complete our Holy Land School Fund and we ask for two hundred dollars in the sweet names of Jesus and Mary, for their land and their children.

IF WE DON'T

If we do not take into our Near East orphans all the homeless children, then the Moslems and others will. Write for our free pamphlet "Jesus in Islam" and please do send ten dollars for the orphan en dangered.

STRINGS

A stringless gift really has strings for a grateful missionary must pray for you every day.

SQUADRON

Each member of a bomber squadron enrolled as a perpetual member. "We'll need three Masses, Father." You can be one for twenty dollars and the family for one hundred.

WORRIED

We have worried a little during this hot summer, for missionaries just will not take a vacation. And we have been wishing for a chapel in honor of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, before August, her month, passes.

NEZER

Nezer, which means bud, makes Nazareth, in which all God's gifts budded and blossomed. So we are asking a ten dollar gift for the little Seminary at Nazareth, where these virtues will bud in our priests.

BIG MONEY

Not one parishioner in a Near East mission can give seventy-seven dollars, and yet this will buy an altar, tabernacle, crucifix and candlesticks.

STRANGE NAMES

Maronite, Melchite, Capt. Chaldean—all strange names, so write for our pamphlet "Shall the Twain Meet?"

ALONE

We shudder at the thought of being a soul in Purgatory with no one on earth to remember us. Offer Masses for such a neglected soul.

GRIM CHOIR

A one handed organist, several singers blind, part of one's lip falling off—but all praising God. Lepers, part of Father Damien's choir. Praise God with them by helping our DAMIEN LEPER FUND.

PROPER

It is only proper that the main group of Sisters in Egypt are called Holy Family Sisters, for there the Holy Family fled. For them, we ask a gift of sixty dollars to support a novice.

THOSE CLINICS

Everywhere our missionaries have them—for the sick and the dying. Can you give a medical kit? It costs fifty dollars.

FATHER JOHN

We know you will not forget Archbishop Ivanios, "Father John," who proudly sends forth three newly ordained priests on their mission of mercy to Christ's poor.

BUILDER

Pope St. Gregory built six monasteries out of his family fortune, before he became pope. In the case at Rome, he offered the Gregorian Masses. Our soldier boys can visit there and see the altar. Why not have these thirty Masses offered for a loved one deceased?

Send all communications to
Catholic Near East Welfare Association
400 Lexington Ave. at 46th St. New York 17, N. Y.