

Library Digest Book News and Notes

By Rev. Benedict E. Hansen

It is time in this column for evaluations of some of the current best-sellers. These estimates are called from responsible reviewers. They do not pretend to be infallible. They are intended as a guide to the responsible reader. Yet our readers should be responsible for their own choices.

East River by Solomon Asch. Partially objectionable and misleading. Dr. P. M. Marquand, not suitable for adults, but it does not seem particularly unsuitable for adults.

On the Top of the Popularity List in Ken- neth Roberts' *Life of Henry*. It is a history of the early American novel, beginning of the 18th century, and brings in that colorful figure, the negro with the French name, Toussaint L'Ouverture. You can depend on Mr. Roberts for a story packed with action and a good helping of history. But in this his latest he includes scenes of cruelty and lust, and violence which he depicts. They are strong, distasteful passages, but the book is not to be totally condemned.

The next book of the best seller list is to be totally condemned. It is *Stefan's Wayward Son*. Indeed it is a wayward son, and a conscientious reader should pass it up. The third book is Russell Janney's *The Miracle of the Wells*, which is just as clear as the *Wayward Son*. Opinions are very divided on the *Bells*. Some call it a piece of unmitigated tripe, and they cannot stomach it. Others grow to like it, even when they admit that it contains a good deal of unreality. Anyhow, it's not a book that's wrong to read.

Gentlemen's Agreement by Laura Hobson is a rather unusual novel on anti-Semitism. There is a kind of aggressive paganism in the tone of the book, which cancels out the grounds for moral indignation against race hate about which the author is concerned. Such a confusion about moral issues is one of the worst impediments to racial justice. The author's intentions are good, but her performance is spotty. Her book is objectionable in part.

Mrs. Miller, by Benedict and Nancy Freedman, is reckoned as a story "suitable on the whole for adults." It is a few stirring notes. It is based on a real-life career and tells of fidelity and pluck in pioneering conditions in the Northwest.

The Wives of Jeroboam by Paul Wellman is a complicated story of political intrigue in a mid-western State; part of the complications are caused by the women in the story. The book is reported to make fairly interesting reading, though the situations are rather contrived by the author than growing out of the characters' own control. To put it another way, they are puppets on strings, rather than people. "Occasional crudeness together with partial condonation of adultery

Book Group's Choice
New York. (N.Y.) — The first comprehensive English biography of St. Bridget of Sweden, entitled "God's Ambassador" written by Helen M. D. Redpath, a Bridgetine nun of Syon Abbey, England, has been chosen as the May selection of the Spiritual Book Association.

A LOOK AT LABOR

By A. C. Tully

The N. Y. telephone dispute is a case study in how not to conduct labor relations. Real collective bargaining demands three things: (1) The acceptance of trade unions as a necessary part of business enterprise; (2) The right of the workers to a voice in the determination of the conditions under which they work; (3) The willingness to meet the reasonable demands of the workers. These are the conditions for a peaceful and productive relationship.

Four business in the telephone field have been stalling across the table from management representatives for more than six weeks. Seventy-two hours before the strike deadline, the company made its first real offer. The attitude of the Bell system is that the workers know better than the union, who is good for the workers. It is disheartening that the union should show so much spirit. They do not like the N. Y. union, following the lead of the National Federation of Telephone Workers. They do not want industry wide bargaining on the union side. But on the management side the only bargaining in existence is industry wide.

The A. T. & T. controls the Bell system. The A. T. & T. in turn is controlled by the House of Morgan. The bankers on lower Broadway dictate what terms they will give to telephone workers, whether they are employed in New York or in Paducah. It is bureaucracy at its worst. Not even the president of the N. Y. Telephone Company knows how far he may go in making concessions to his workers. He must wait for the nod from the bankers. Last year the strike was avoided twenty-five minutes before the deadline when the House of Morgan finally gave the order.

Wages are an issue in the present dispute. Prior to the war the average telephone wage over the country was \$22 compared with a manufacturing average of \$23. Today the average wage (national) in the Bell system is \$43 compared to the manufacturing workers average of \$47. The telephone workers have lost their advantage. They are no longer better paid than industrial workers. They are willing to be. Both sides are willing to arbitrate the wage issue.

Union security is the major issue. Some \$200 million dollars will be spent in the near future mechanizing the telephone system. For example, plans are already drawn to speed the dialing of long distance calls without the use of an operator. The next year will see lay-offs in the Bell system, re-shuffling of jobs, etc. The workers feel that these matters are as much the concern of the workers as they are of the boss. They want a voice, a real voice, in these matters. They want to give security to the members of the union and to their workers with dignity. This means that the Telephone Company will have to give the union some form of union shop. Management says it will not before it will give its on this issue. Why? Because union security restricts the company's power. And there's the nub of the problem.

The pension system is a third issue. Presently, the management sets aside company funds (which are tax-free, which are considered as a company expense when setting up a pension plan, and which belong just as much to the workers as they do to management.) Management administrators this fund itself. The workers have no voice in it. As currently administered there are unfair restrictions on the "little people" who may qualify for it. The executives receive an exorbitant portion of the disbursements. The workers argue that these funds are not the reserves of management. They belong to the workers. It was theoretically set aside for them. They want to assist in administering the fund. The company refuses to arbitrate this demand (as it does the union security demand). Again they refuse to countenance a restriction of company power.

The unions are weak. They cannot match the A. T. & T. They have offered to arbitrate all the issues. John L. Lewis or Phil Murray would never make such an offer. The workers are 90 per cent Catholic. They are weak. They do not like to strike. They are dead. Nothing could increase their blood pressure unless an arbitrary and power hungry financial empire with \$20,000,000,000 worth of money whisper: "Beh, Yeh."

New Book Lists Letters Between Pope and FDR

New York. (N.Y.) — The world was fortunate indeed to have had in its darkest hour the parallel memoirs of the President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII. These two men, who were in a sense spiritual and humanitarian allies, were in the midst of the struggle for the preservation of the human race. Their letters, which were published in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, are a masterpiece of statesmanship and courage.

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Information Desk

Does "Father Divine" Claim To Be God? Is It A Sin To Read A Slightly Immoral Book? Why Do Cardinals, Bishops Wear Rings? St. Bernard's Seminary

Q. Does "Father Divine" claim to be God?
A. "Father Divine" has never called himself God, but he does allow his followers to consider him as such. Marcus Black, in his book *They May Find a Faith*, relates the testimony of a young Negro concerning Father Divine. "It's wonderful to see God in the flesh! That's what I have been looking for all my life. Now I've seen Him! It's wonderful to be able to go to a telephone day or night, and get God on the line!" Another follower of Father Divine is a young woman who writes: "I believe that Father Divine is God, because he is so good and so kind. He is the only one who has ever loved me as I am."

Q. Is it a sin to read a slightly immoral book?
A. The ring which is given to a Bishop on the occasion of his consecration symbolizes the mystical betrothal of the Bishop to his diocese, and is an emblem of pontifical dignity. The custom whereby bishops wear rings is a very ancient one, and we have records of it from the sixth century.

Q. Why do bishops wear rings?
A. The Pope, as the first Bishop of Christendom, has a special signet ring, called the "Ring of the Fisherman," which he uses to seal papal documents. Cardinals and Bishops may also wear rings, even for sacred functions. Those who have received the degree in Theology or Canon Law, may also wear rings, but not for sacred functions. Lesser dignitaries in the Church may not wear rings without special permission from the Pope. This is why you will never see a priest wearing a ring, even though it is customary among men of the age.

Q. How can the sacrament of Extreme Unction be given to a non-Catholic?
A. It is interesting to note that a three-hundred-day indulgence is granted for kissing devoutly the ring of the Pope. Those who kiss the ring of a Cardinal or of a Bishop, may receive an indulgence of one hundred or fifty days, respectively.

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Wine Citation

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Calendar of Feast Days

Sunday, Apr. 13 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Monday, Apr. 14 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Tuesday, Apr. 15 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Wednesday, Apr. 16 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Thursday, Apr. 17 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Friday, Apr. 18 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

Saturday, Apr. 19 — St. George, martyr; was the son of Leontius, King of the Vandal, who was imprisoned by his father because he refused to accept Arianism, and was his martyr's crown.

The Story of

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For "His" or "Her" First Communion

When the time comes for your child's First Communion, you will want a book that is both instructive and inspiring. This book is just what you need.

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For First Holy Communion

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