

A Look at Labor

No Minor Voices

By A. C. Tashy

When I went to school the children were taught their A B C's and the three R's. At the end of eight years we discuss Einstein, but we could write a fairly decent composition.

THERE IS A lesson in this even for a labor columnist. Sometimes he can become involved in the intricacies of the labor movement and forget that the elemental truths of labor are frequently forgotten and sometimes deliberately ignored.

When we say that workers have the right to organize, we mean that this is a right given them by God. We do not need Wagner Acts and Taft-Hartley Acts to teach us this truth.

THE RIGHT to organize is given to all men regardless of their color or nationality and regardless of the type of employer for whom they work.

THE RIGHT to organize apart from any civil law in the matter imposes a serious obligation on employers. If workers have the right to organize then

Pastor is 105; Still Active

Amman, Transjordan — In a part of the world for many months the scene of tragedy and sudden death is a 105-year-old priest, the Rev. Joseph Dadasash, pastor of the Greek Catholic church at Taybeh, Palestine, the biblical town of Ephraim.

Father Dadasash was born in Taybeh in 1843. Despite his age he is serving as pastor of the church in his native town because of the critical shortage of Byzantine Rite priests in the area.

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Courier-Journal Bookshelf

Bestseller Douglas Smears A Saint

By REV. ELMER A. McNAMARA
Professor of Sacred Scripture, St. Bernard's Seminary

Any novel coming from the pen of Lloyd C. Douglas is an event to be reckoned with. Within the space of a few weeks his latest book, THE BIG FISHERMAN, has climbed to the top of the list of best-sellers.

It is scarcely necessary to note that being at the top of the best-seller list in no way attests to the orthodoxy and excellence of a book. Sometimes such a distinction is at best dubious. As long as there is a glib public, advertising ballyhoo will always be able to sell spassess shampoo which grows hair on bald heads.

THE "BIG FISHERMAN" is the term of democratic citizenship with which Mr. Douglas presents the person of St. Peter. Evidently the author intends the book to be a life of St. Peter. The advertising jacket on the book says it is a novel.

But the main persons and events are historical with fictitious persons and events woven in between. Therefore, more accurately the book should be classed as historical romance. And once an author elects to use this type of literature he is bound by recognized literary usage and ethics to represent his historical characters truly as history records them.

THE PETER of Mr. Douglas is a big, lumbering, impetuous follower of Christ bent on making the earth a place safe for democratic brotherly love. He is just the kind of a Peter who would appeal to a great many "broad-minded" Americans with very little religious conviction.

But he is not the Peter of history and extra-biblical history describes him, namely, an inflexible rock of authority and teaching, the person upon whom Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church.

WE DO NOT meet Peter until page 115. The first 115 pages tell us that it is the period when Herod the Great is King of Judea, and King Aretas King of the Arabians. The Jews and Arabians hate each other and it is only to ward off a common threat of Roman invasion that Aretas is induced to espouse his daughter to Herod's son Antipas.

From this marriage a daughter is born, Fara, who then goes along to the end of the book as a principal character. With her as an opposite romantic figure goes Abil, an Arabian youth who ultimately becomes King of Arabia (apparently without Fara as Queen. We are not told what became of her.)

At a very youthful age Fara journeys to Palestine, having vowed to kill her father Antipas for his insults to her mother and to all Arabia. There she meets John the Baptist and hears the news that is going round about the humble Galilean Carpenter who preaches to the people about the Kingdom and works great marvels of healing.

THEN ON PAGE 115 Peter is introduced a rough, bawling if alterate sea-going man who never uses the word "agony" and seems as if he had no religion. From this point forward the other Apostles are brought in, together with Christ, and some of the New Testament events are intertwined with strands of the antics of Romans visiting the Court of Antipas.

After the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, Peter preaches the Kingdom of this world peace and freedom, but always with a little or no success. The Kingdom of universal love and peace does not come as he expects.

Only the night before the Romans put him to death does an angel reveal to him that he has been mistaken, and that the King-

ple by reason of some mysterious attraction in His eyes and in the tone of His voice. But there is no mention of Christ's command of authority that all men must believe in Him, be baptized, and obey all His commandments, or perish utterly.

John the Baptist is pictured as uncertain for a time about the identity of Christ. In fact the author has Christ himself saying that John the Baptist was quite mistaken about the nature of the coming Kingdom, preaching, as

Peter receives his first knowledge of Christ's resurrection in Galilee from the other Apostles. This is directly contrary to the Gospel record which expressly states that Christ appeared to Peter in Jerusalem on the very day of the Resurrection.

PERHAPS THE MOST serious error regarding Peter is the quite mistaken notion which the author credits him with concerning the nature and imminence of the coming Kingdom.

Peter always thinks that the Kingdom is to come even in his own lifetime. And the Kingdom, not only for Peter but seemingly for all the other Apostles, means a time when all men and nations on this earth will turn their swords into plowshares and love each other in the unruffled peace of world-wide freedom.

Nowhere in the book do we find a picture of the true Kingdom of Christ such as history depicts it, i. e. an organized, visible Church with Peter as its authoritative priestly head, with the sacraments as sources of life for the soul, and with eternal life in heaven as its ultimate perfection.

According to Mr. Douglas many of the 5000 converts in the Kingdom the first week after Pentecost came in because they were ready to cast their lot with any party which guaranteed liberty from oppression. Some came in to save their souls and others to save their necks!

All of this nonsense amounts to a very unchristian and false description of Peter, and Christ and the Catholic Church. For this reason the book should not be read by any Catholic.

By not buying it a person will be richer materially, and by not reading it he will not be poorer spiritually. If in its stead he reads the inspired pages of the New Testament or if, seeking a milk rather than meat form of diet, he reads the very recent biography by William Thomas Walsh entitled "Saint Peter the Apostle," then assuredly he will come to know the real St. Peter as true history has handed him down to us.

One can devoutly wish that Mr. Douglas will let this be his last caricature of sacred persons and things.

Daily Reading of Bible Urged For Knowledge of Christ

Washington—(NC)—Although the study of the Bible is overlooked by many Catholics, the Church consistently urges its members to read the Scriptures as frequently as possible, in order to know Christ more intimately and appreciate His Church.

This Catholic position was restated by the Rev. Louis Hartman, CSSR, general secretary of the Catholic Biblical Association, as he announced here that Septuagesima Sunday, February 13, was to be national "Biblical Sunday."

"It is very strange that many Catholics have the idea that there is something 'Protestant' about Bible-reading," the Biblical scholar declared. "Actually, there is no truer lover and defender of the Bible than the Catholic Church."

"BECAUSE MANY Catholics have become negligent in the reading of the Bible, which is the precious letter that God sent us from heaven," Father Hartman declared, "at the recent Pope's, since Leo XIII at the end of the last century, have insisted on a greater practical love among Catholics for this written Word of God."

"It is in my earnest wish of the Pope that we have Biblical Sunday; to remind the faithful that every Catholic family ought to have a Bible, or at least a New Testament, and ought often read it with devout attention."

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Schools Making Book-Drives For War-Stricken Libraries

Washington—(NC)—A nationwide drive to collect books from Catholic homes, school children, high schools and colleges for shipment to students and libraries abroad which were destroyed during the war is gaining momentum in many states under sponsorship of officials of Catholic Library Association.

Two thousand sample labels for shipments in the Association's "Book Aid to War-Stricken Countries" campaign were printed by the St. Thomas College library in St. Paul and sent to all Catholic high schools and libraries in Minnesota and the Dakota.

In Wichita, Kans., the students at Sacred Heart Academy have "adopted" the Ateneo de Cagayah in the Philippines as their beneficiary in the book collection campaign and have written to the officials of that school to learn what kind of textbooks and other volumes are needed.

THE LIBRARY GUILD at St. Vincent's College, Latrobe, Pa., has solicited the parents of students, asking them to "weed" their home libraries to aid the book collection campaign.

Catholic Library Association units across the country are reporting activities to Phillips Temple, librarian at Georgetown University here, and national chairman of Catholic Book Week this year. The book drive is being held in conjunction with the book week, February 20 to 26.

The book week observance has also inspired a number of exhibits, fairs, contests and programs in various cities. The Brooklyn-Long Island unit of the library association, as one example, has prepared 18,000 book marks for free distribution. The book marks carry a list of nine outstanding current Catholic books.

Frank Sheed Receives '48 Library Award

Webster Grove, Mo.—(NC)—The 1948 Catholic Library Award of the Gallery of Living Catholic Authors has been given to Frank A. Sheed, author and publisher, for his work, "Theology and Sanity." The Rev. Harold C. Gardner, S.J., literary editor of America, is chairman of the awards committee.

Sheed's "Theology and Sanity" is a book which deals with the relationship between faith and reason. It is a work of great depth and insight, and has been widely read and discussed.

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Japan Prepares For Pilgrimage
Nagasaki—(NC)—Civil as well as Church authorities are eagerly preparing for May 29, the day on which the great international pilgrimage in honor of the fourth centenary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan will open in this city.
City and prefectural governments have joined forces in purchasing some 2,000 square yards of ground on the hill made sacred three and one-half centuries ago by the sufferings of the 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki. It is here that the pilgrimage will be formally opened and the civil authorities have decided to dedicate this spot as a public park in perpetuity in memory not only of the martyrs but also of the pilgrimage with which the city is to be honored.
BISHOP PAUL Yamaguchi of Nagasaki is planning to purchase property adjoining this park on which to erect a memorial church for the same purpose.