

Some Looks At Books

BY LOCKIE PARKER

THE LONG SHIPS. Saga of the Viking Age, by Frans G. Bengtsson (Knopf \$4.50). This long book is a pleasing and impressive reconstruction of life among the Vikings around 1000 A.D., when the Vikings were going strong. The form is that of the old chronicles, so you can take it chapter by chapter with each a good story in itself while it builds up the total picture of a lusty, barbaric people who delighted in feasting and fighting.

Raids on more settled regions were as normal as hunting parties to them, and the chances of good loot or a quick death were pleasantly stimulating. So much so that on one occasion, a leader reports his men as complaining that "this expedition is providing splendid booty and excellent ale, but little in the way of good fighting."

The stories center around Orm, youngest son of a famous pirate. His dotting mother tries to keep him from the sea, but Fate is too strong for her. He is captured from his own farmstead by accident when another Viking chief stops to provision his expedition from the sheepfold of Orm's family. Thence begins a great journey and many adventures from successful raids to Moorish captivity. These develop Orm's latent abilities, and he becomes leader of the little band who escape and return to Norway.

So much would be enough for an ordinary book but it is only the beginning of Orm's adventures which include a visit to England where he accepts Christianity in order to get a wife, a trek through Eastern Europe and down the Dnieper and a relatively peaceful period in which he plants and reaps, and builds a house and a church.

The early contacts of the Vikings with Christian missionaries get a good deal of space in this book. No two groups could have been further apart in their ideals, and their efforts to understand each other provide a sort of dry humor to flavor the crude fighting and feasting. Also they give point to the whole, for Christianity was making progress. Orm might smile at an envoy's statement that King Ethelred "preferred to win the love of his enemies rather than destroy them and . . . was ready to give them such presents as would fill them all with joy." And Orm was not above replying that "we need a lot to make us merry for we are a melancholy people," but all the same these men of the church gradually gained his respect and grumbling Brother Willibald became his most trusted counselor.

A background of scholarly research and a major literary talent are joined in this author to give us a first novel whose quality is far above the average historical novel.

ROMAN WALL by Bryher (Pantheon \$2.75). This is another fine reconstruction of a past era but very differently done. Here we have a profoundly imagined, even poetic glimpse into the last summer of the Roman frontier in Helvetia (modern Switzerland). The time is 298 A.D. Rome still seems to many "Eternal Rome." True, emperors quarrel, there are divided counsels, the boundaries of the Empire are shrinking, but by and large Roman order is maintained, trade goes on, and there is leisure for painting pictures, growing gardens, the graces of life. Surely it will go on.

There is little action in the book, but there is suspense. We are held from the first by a feeling of imminent doom—the German tribes are coming in a few years, next summer, possibly tomorrow, but coming as surely as the leaves that turn yellow in the fall.

We are caught up in sympathy with two Roman aristocrats, the centurion, Valerius, in charge of a remote outpost, and his sister, Julia, living with him in a lovely, semi-ruined villa, left from the days when Helvetia was a rich and secure province, not a frontier.

The chorus in the tragedy is provided by the Greek trader, Demetrius. He has lived much, travelled far, is more philosophical. He regrets the world that is

passing, has compassion for those whose lives are disturbed but he remembers Heracles and his doctrine of flux. "The stream flowed, the willows rustled, the light breeze was master of the heavy apples; empires, like men, were mortal."

Yet underneath one feels the author's deep protest that civilized values went down before something cruder and a challenge to our own age to be alert to similar dangers.

POEMS: A Selection by Leonie Adams (Funk & Wagnalls \$3). Reviews of poetry always seem to me the better when there is less talk and more quotations. There is a wide range to choose from in this intensely felt and exquisitely phrased selection of verses from a poet of recognized distinction. There are conventional forms, the sonnet and such simple quatrains as this:

"Town is a blackened pool Hooded with sleep; And hooves are like bells With night so deep.

Then there is the freer play with music and meaning as in these lines from "The Summer Image (after a Persian carpet)":

"Ash and strewments, the first moth-wings, pale ardour of brief evenings, on the second wind; Or all a wing, less than wind, Breath of low herbs upfloats, petal or wing, Haunting the mask precincts of burial."

What it is impossible to convey in short quotations is the way the poet builds each sensitive reflection of day's glories or night's mysteries into a profound experience with metaphysical overtones or the way she culls from personal or natural tragedies some bitter-sweet of wisdom.

SLOW DRIVER

(Continued from Page 2)

with his own actions as the sole criterion; and slow drivers should be prodded with the view of lessening the number of occasions when others are tempted to commit unsafe acts.

The Law on Slow Driving

The North Carolina statute on slow driving reads:

"No person shall drive a motor vehicle at such slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic, except when reduced speed is necessary for safe operation or in compliance with law. Police officers are hereby authorized to enforce this provision by directions to drivers, and in the event of willful disobedience to this provision and refusal to comply with the direction of an officer in accordance herewith, the continued slow operation by a driver shall be a misdemeanor."

This law leaves something to be desired. The penalty provided is not for slow driving at all but for contumacy. Anyone who refuses to speed up when told to do so by a police officer probably ought to have his head examined. Untouched by the law are the slow pokes who will move faster when so instructed but continue to block traffic the rest of the time.

Why Go After Slow Drivers?

Traffic enforcement should concern itself with all driving practices that tend to produce accidents. Slow-poke driving does this and, therefore, should receive its share of attention.

Stopping slow drivers whenever encountered provides an additional opportunity for the highway patrol to establish personal contact with drivers in the promotion of highway safety. In a large measure these are probably different people from the ones reached in enforcing the more dramatic violations.

It is to be hoped also that slow-driver enforcement, augmented by appropriate publicity, will influence many slow drivers to mend their ways without ever having been noticed or personally warned by a patrolman. In general, motorists do just about what they think is required of them if they are to stay out of trouble. By keeping before the public the fact that slow driving is officially frowned upon, a reduction in the number of chronic slow drivers can reasonably be expected.

Another good reason for going after slow drivers is that it helps to win support for the entire enforcement program. Criticism that inordinate emphasis is placed upon speeders is dissipated. The press, if that of North Carolina is any criterion, will enthusiastically support slow-driver enforcement, resulting in a vast amount of additional highway safety publicity and increased safety consciousness on the part of the public.

Finally, law enforcement should be in tune with public opinion. In North Carolina public opinion strongly favors enforcement efforts against the slow driver. It is significant that many editorials greeted the announcement of greater emphasis on slow drivers in enforcement with the comment, "It's about time."

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

International Uniform Sunday School Lesson
BY DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN

Scripture: Acts 20:35; I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 8:1-9; Colossians 3:1-4; Philippians 4:15-20.

Growing by Giving

Lesson for August 22, 1954

A GREAT deal of "giving" is not giving at all. When two relatives give each other Christmas presents, it is more rightly called an exchange than giving. When the Red Cross or other community drives come along and the household or turns in his few dollars just so he will be counted, just to keep from being thought a tight-wad, that is not giving, it is a form of tax. When some higher court (say a Presbytery) or a Board or a Bishop lays upon a congregation an assessment, or in some church campaign for funds a certain amount is "alotted" to a congregation or an individual member, that still is not giving, but more like a tax. You can rightly call it "giving" only when it is freely done, out of sheer good-will, without desire of return.

Investing Personality
When a church invites you to give to one of the causes it supports, it is doing a great deal more, something quite different, than just asking you to shell out some cash. You are being invited to share and invest your personality, no less. There is a hymn which says, "If you cannot cross the ocean and the heathen lands explore, You may find the heathen nearer, you may find them at your door." Well, you cannot cross the ocean, perhaps. You may be too old to learn Korean or Portuguese. But your money can cross for you. Your money, given to "missions," represents your own work, your own energy and earning-power, put into portable form. In that portable form it becomes part (for instance) of the salary of a young man and his wife who are missionaries in Korea or some other country. They may be evangelistic missionaries, preaching sermons you could never preach. They may be medical missionaries, performing operations you could never do. Whatever they are, they are where they are, doing what they do, because of the gifts you and others have given through the church. Your personality, without those gifts, would be tied down to your little Main Street; your personality through those gifts goes out to the far corners of the world.

Adding to Yourself
In true giving, you not only invest your personality but your personality itself grows. Paul in writing to the Corinthian Christians whom he knew so well, gives them a high rating for their faith, for their ability to express their faith in words, for knowledge, enthusiasm and love for him. Now you would think that persons who had all those good qualities so that even an apostle, not too easily pleased, was delighted with them, would need no further improvement, they were good enough. But Paul thinks of one thing more. "Could you not add generosity to your virtues?" he asks. (Phillips translation.) The minute you read that you can see the point. A person without generosity is not so big a person as the same person with generosity added. Long after a man's body has ceased to grow, his soul can grow by his increase in the "grace of giving."

The Stingy Are Stunted
On the other hand, the stingy are stunted. They are stunted because their eyesight is poor—the eyesight of their mind, that is. All they can see is themselves, maybe their families. But they cannot see the needs of other people at all; on the contrary they never see people as they are, but only as sources of income for themselves. They are stunted because they tend to shrink more and more into themselves. Stinginess if left alone will cover up a man's soul as with a thick layer of cobwebs till the soul can scarcely breathe. The stingy man ends by being stingy even with himself. He becomes a miser. Money comes to be the only thing in the world for him. He began by not feeling the needs of others, he ends by not feeling even his own. He will go without much that he needs because even spending money (to say nothing of giving) hurts him to the bone. He is stunted because he finally loses resemblance to a regular human being and becomes no more than a slightly animated piggy-bank. You can put money into him but you can't shake it out. You would hardly guess that this poor shriveled soul had once been made in the image of God.

(Based on outlines copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. Released by Community Press Service.)



Dr. Foreman

WITH THE Armed Forces

Cpl. J. C. Atkins, whose wife, Mrs. Polly Atkins, lives in West End, is serving with the 7th Infantry Division in Korea. Men of the "Bayonet" division are undergoing intensive training to maintain the peak combat efficiency displayed by the unit from Pusan to the Yalu river.

A jeep driver in the 31st Regiment's Company E, arrived overseas 13 months ago. He entered the Army in January, 1953. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Atkins, live in Aberdeen.

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THE GREATEST WEAPON AGAINST COMMUNISM

A victim of an Iron Curtain Country escaped and found refuge in the United States.

In America he worked where he liked. He went to and from town, or crossed state lines as he wished. Never was he stopped and asked for "papers." Never were his belongings searched or confiscated. Never, when he went to bed at night, was he haunted by the fear of being torn ruthlessly from home and loved ones to be sent away forever. Yet these things are happening right now in his native country.

"Abroad, there is terror in many hearts," said this refugee, "that you Americans cannot understand because you have never experienced it . . . and God forbid you ever shall."

"This above all you must remember: The greatest weapon you have against Communism is your Bible and your Religion."

In other words, American Citizens, "Go to the church of your choice this Sunday—and every Sunday. Keep Christianity thriving. It's your mightiest weapon against the dark devices of Communism."

FORTY FAVORITE CHAPTERS IN YOUR BIBLE

The following forty favorite chapters from the Bible have been compiled by the American Bible Society, 450 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. They are the result of an exhaustive poll conducted over the entire United States, and of course reflect personal preferences.

1st day Genesis	1	15th day Micah	6	29th day John	17
2nd " Exodus	20	16th " Matthew	5	30th " Acts	2
3rd " Deut.	6	17th " "	6	31st " Romans	8
4th " Psalms	1	18th " "	7	32nd " "	12
5th " "	23	19th " "	23	33rd " I Cor.	12
6th " "	27	20th " Mark	15	34th " Ephesians	6
7th " "	46	21st " Luke	2	35th " Phil.	4
8th " "	103	22nd " "	15	36th " Hebrews	11
9th " "	121	23rd " "	24	37th " James	1
10th " "	35	24th " "	1	38th " I John	2
11th " Isaiah	40	25th " John	3	39th " Rev.	21
12th " "	53	26th " "	14		
13th " "	55	27th " "	15		
14th " "		28th " "			

- BROWNSON MEMORIAL CHURCH (Presbyterian)**
Cheves K. Ligon, Minister
Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship service, 11 a.m. Women of the Church meeting, 8 p.m. Monday following third Sunday. The Youth Fellowship meet at 7 o'clock each Sunday evening. Mid-week service, Wednesday, 7:15 p.m.
- THE CHURCH OF WIDE FELLOWSHIP (Congregational)**
Cor. Bennett and New Hampshire
Wofford C. Timmons, Minister
William H. Hill, Interim Minister
Combined Church and Sunday School services during August, 10 a.m.
Sunday, 6:30 p.m., Pilgrim Fellowship (Young people).
Sunday, 8:00 p.m., The Forum.
- CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH**
New Hampshire Ave.
Sunday Service, 11 a.m.
Sunday School, 11 a.m.
Wednesday Service, 8 p.m.
Reading Room in Church Building open Wednesday 3-5 p.m.
- FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**
New York Ave. at South Ashe
David Hole Coon, Minister
Bible School, 9:45 a.m. Worship 11 a.m. Training Union, 7 p.m. Evening Worship, 8 p.m. Scout Troop 224, Monday, 7:30 p.m.; mid-week worship, Wednesday 7:30 p.m.; choir practice Wednesday 8:15 p.m. Missionary meeting, first and third Tuesdays, 8 p.m. Church and family suppers, second Thursdays, 7 p.m.
- EMMANUEL CHURCH (Episcopal)**
Charles V. Cowell, Rector
(Lay Readers during August, in absence of Rector.)
Morning Prayer Service, with Children's Program, 10 a.m.
- MANLY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
Grover C. Currie, Minister
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Worship Service, 2nd and 3rd Sunday evenings, 7:30. Fourth Sunday morning, 11 a.m.
Women of the Church meeting, 8 p.m., second Tuesday.
Mid-week service Thursday at 8 p.m.
- SOUTHERN PINES METHODIST CHURCH**
E. E. Whitley, Minister
(Services held temporarily at Community building on May St.)
Combined Church and Sunday School services, 10 a.m.
- ST. ANTHONY'S (Catholic)**
Vermont Ave. at Ashe
Father Peter M. Denges
Sunday masses 8 and 10:30 a.m.; Holy Day masses 7 and 9 a.m.; weekday mass at 8 a.m. Confessions heard on Saturday between 5-6 and 7:30-8:30 p.m.

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