

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
by William Bruckart
National Press Building
Washington, D. C.

Washington.—The nation is continuing to witness labor disturbances of an exceedingly serious character.

More Labor Troubles

Many persons thought when the big sit-down strikes in the automobile industry were settled without serious bloodshed that we were on the way out of labor trouble in this country. The feeling in this regard had some confirmation when the great United States Steel corporation reached an agreement by which John L. Lewis and his faction of organized labor was recognized as the sole bargaining agency on wages for the greatest single unit of steel. Unhappily, those circumstances were not indicative of an end. They did not presage peace between labor and employers. The conflict is continuing and, I believe, holds the elements of much more danger than we have yet experienced. Because of the conditions that are now apparent and those which happen to lie ahead, the recent speech by Edward McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, becomes both interesting and significant. Mr. McGrady, it will be remembered, made a speech at Atlantic City, New Jersey, in which he said boldly to the members of the garment workers union that if labor and capital both are to survive, there must be a sincere effort on the part of each group to understand the problems of the other. He reduced the differences between employer and employee to the simple formula, namely, that representatives of each side, if they expect to do justice by their own people, must sit down at a table and talk things over honestly.

Now, the Assistant Secretary's interest in labor cannot be questioned. He is a former official of organized labor. During his term as Assistant Secretary he has been exceedingly active and earnest in his attempts to solve labor problems and bring about industrial peace. His efforts at conciliation cover the range from the bitter maritime strike on the west coast to the more or less inconsequential sit-down strike of a hundred employees in a hotel here in Washington.

So, it seems thoroughly fair to assume that any advice given by Mr. McGrady must include absolute justice for the workers.

Mr. McGrady believes that the irresponsible practices which lead employers to treat labor representatives as agitators are due to ignorance. On the other hand, you cannot help reading between the lines of his recent speech an inference at least that he regards some labor representatives as quite as irresponsible as some employers. His view in this regard is indicated by the stress, the emphasis, which he laid upon the importance of discipline among union members together with his assertion that labor must recognize the sanctity of its contract with the employers just as much as the employers must recognize the validity of their contract with labor.

Mr. McGrady pointed out what losses result from shut downs or strikes and declared that the efficiency in production, which the country has a right to expect from industry, cannot be achieved unless labor and capital work together.

Further, the Assistant Secretary observed that "responsible labor leadership" must place efficiency and elimination of waste and loss among its objectives if organized labor is to achieve a worthwhile goal.

Mr. McGrady's exposition of his conception of relations between employer and employee comes as something of a ray of hope to the

great masses of American citizens who are neither employers of labor nor members of labor unions. I have said in these columns before and I repeat that the tragedy of conflict between employer and employee, organized capital versus organized labor, lies in the fact that there are millions of people in the role of innocent bystanders. They are the individuals who suffer most. It is inevitable that they must suffer because in a nation whose commerce and industry is as complex as ours, every time capital or labor abuses the powers entrusted into its hands, those who are not members of either group pay a penalty which is not possible of measurement.

This characteristic of life obtains not alone in the United States. It exists in every civilized country to the extent that that country is industrialized.

There is no better evidence of the truth of the statements I have just made than an incident which occurred a few days ago in the house of commons in London. Stanley Baldwin, prime minister of England, and one of the most powerful men among foreign statesmen today, called attention to "a dark cloud" which he saw on the economic horizon of time.

Mr. Baldwin was speaking to his colleagues in the house of commons something in the nature of a valedictory because he is soon to retire from public office after three decades of service to his government.

I happened to have had the privilege of close contact with Mr. Baldwin when he headed his country's debt refunding commission to the United States more than fifteen years ago. From that association I learned to respect his mental capacity and his ability to foresee coming events. When he says, therefore, that labor and capital must be honest with each other, I cannot help feeling that Mr. Baldwin foresees the possibility of bloody clashes and unsound results in the offing, conditions that will flow from the abuse of power.

Mr. Baldwin told the house of commons that: "You will find in our modern civilization, that just as war has changed from being a struggle between professional armies with civilians comparatively uninterested in it, so the weapons of industrial warfare have changed from arms that affected comparatively small localized business into weapons that affected directly those who have no concern whatever with the issue except perhaps natural sympathy with their own class."

The British prime minister added that, under such circumstances, "the one thing we must pray for, not only in our statesmen, but also in trade union leaders and masters, is wisdom." It seems to me that Mr. Baldwin's admonition can be uttered from high places in our American government with a value just as important as he gave to his words. The fact that Assistant Secretary McGrady has been the only public official to speak so frankly and so honestly is comforting, but it is to be deplored that he alone has spoken.

Since there are ominous signs in a class struggle that unfortunately has been promoted in this country, it seems to me the attention of the

Nothing Doing

people ought to be directed somewhat more to conditions in congress. Some months ago I wrote in these columns my fear that the current session of congress was going to leave a rather dull record for having done nothing. Thus far, my fears have been justified to the fullest.

Congress went into session in the first week of January. To date, therefore, it has been in session five months. Its record of accomplishments includes passage of four appropriation bills, providing money for federal government departments; the Guffey-Vinson little NRA coal law and the cash and carry neutrality law. I do not see how anybody can be enthusiastic about those accomplishments. Passage of appropriation bills is mere routine usually because in most cases they involve no controversial question at all. Passage of the neutrality act likewise was an action about which there could be little dispute even though there may have been plenty of grounds for disagreement over the type of law enacted. That leaves, therefore, only the Guffey-Vinson coal bill over which there could have been much delay in house or senate debate. All of this makes the picture look even worse for congressional leadership.

There is talk already about adjournment of congress as soon as hot weather strikes Washington—and the temperatures can get very high and unpleasant. While this unrecurrent of talk is not yet in an important volume, it emphasizes the fact that there is a growing body of legislators who see no possibility of accomplishing anything worthwhile in the current session.

But what are the reasons? Having gone rather thoroughly into this situation, I think there are two factors to be considered. One is the lack of capacity of the leadership among both Democrats and Republicans and the other is traceable to the White House. President Roosevelt for four years has told congress what to do and to that extent has destroyed the initiative of the legislators as a body and now that some members want to reassert the power of congress, the President's organized spokesmen appear not to know what to do.

It may be said that the immediate cause of the failure of congressional leadership to get much of the legislative program out of the way in five months is the controversy resulting from Mr. Roosevelt's proposal to add six justices of his own choosing to the United States Supreme court. That statement, in my opinion, is only partially true. There are many senators and representatives, otherwise loyal to the President, who now feel that the court re-organization plan cannot be put through. But those spokesmen thus far have not advised the President frankly of their views and in consequence the court bill is still in the way. To that extent, then, the legislative leadership has lacked courage and Mr. Roosevelt has remained adamant, which possibly charges him with some responsibility in the legislative stalemate.

Leadership Falls

© Western Newspaper Union.

OLD DICTIONARY TO AID BIBLE CLARITY

Document of 10th Century Never Before Published.

New Haven, Conn.—Controversies that have arisen over incongruous translations in the English revised version of the Bible probably may be solved through the use of the oldest comprehensive dictionary of the Bible, which has been published by the Yale University Press.

The dictionary, written in the Tenth century and since then extant only in manuscript form, has been edited by Dr. Solomon L. Skoss, professor of Arabic in Dropsie college, Philadelphia. The dictionary was written in Arabic but in Hebrew characters and is based on manuscripts which for eight centuries lay forgotten in the basement of a Jerusalem synagogue. With it several disputed passages of the Bible have been clarified.

It was written by David ben Abraham al-Fasi, one of the Karaites, a Jewish sect which originated in Mesopotamia in the Eighth century and which denied the validity of the traditional teachings of the Talmud and later Rabbinic literature.

Accepted Old Testament.

The Karaites, accepting the Old Testament as the sole authority, devoted their entire attention to a thorough study of the Scriptures, its exegesis and philology.

Al-Fasi's dictionary enjoyed such popularity and authority among the generations of scholars that followed him that it was known simply as "The Book." In various European libraries today are to be found in manuscript form three different abridgements made during the Eleventh century.

An old and torn manuscript of al-Fasi's work was found in 1830 in an underground chamber of the Karaite synagogue in Jerusalem. The manuscripts, together with several fragments of the various versions, are now in the state public library in Leningrad.

Dr. Skoss in 1932 was investigating manuscripts in the library on a grant awarded by the American Council of Learned Societies when he discovered the last half of one of the partly destroyed Leningrad fragments.

A study of the Hebrew-Arabic dictionary has been made by students of the Old Testament and verses which have required elaborate interpretations to explain their incongruity have been shown to be incorrectly translated.

Exodus Chapter Cited.

As an example, Dr. Charles C. Torrey, Sterling professor of Semitics, Emeritus, of Yale, cites the customary version of the story of the golden calf in Exodus, chapter 32, verse 4. The revised version presented the story that when the wives, sons and daughters brought the golden earrings, Aaron "received it at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it a molten calf."

Aaron's transformation of the golden earrings into a golden calf by means of a graving tool has been difficult to understand. Dr. Torrey points out that the al-Fasi dictionary takes the corresponding Hebrew expression "heret" to mean "a mold into which molten gold and silver are poured" and the whole passage becomes clear: Aaron cast the earrings into a mold and made a golden calf.

According to Dr. Skoss, the author of the dictionary was born in Fez, Morocco, as his surname al-Fasi (the Fezite) indicates. However, he must have lived for some length of time in Jerusalem, where he most likely wrote his dictionary.

Dr. Skoss' editions are based on all the known manuscripts and fragments and all its versions.

U. S. Army Gets a Fourth 16-Ton Flying Fortress

Washington, D. C.—A fourth army bomber of the YB-17 type, popularly known as a flying fortress, has been turned over to the army at Langley field. Three of this type of giant bombers are now at Langley field and another is at Wright field at Dayton, Ohio. Nine more are being built by Boeing to be turned over to the army within the year. The aircraft company is also building the largest army bomber in the world for the army. The new plane, which shortly will undergo its test, is to be four tons larger than the 16 ton flying fortress.

It Takes an Engineer to Get Dog Out of Drain

Oxford, Ohio.—Miami University officials, unable to locate the source of howls issuing from all openings of the drains beneath new concrete tennis courts, called in the engineering faculty. J. Paul Albert, who planned the courts, used blueprints to figure out a hypothetical location, walked to a spot 50 yards from the drain entrance and said: "Dig here." Rescuers dug and liberated a fat beagle hound, which stretched, wagged its tail, and trotted off.

Squirrel Panhandlers

Ashtabula, Ohio.—Most persistent panhandlers in town are a family of three squirrels housed in a tree in a city park. They are so fearless that they often come to the doorsteps on nearby buildings to beg food.



The last parade of the Grand Army of the Republic at the close of their convention in Washington, D. C., as the aged veterans of the Civil war marched through the streets as they did more than seventy years ago.

DECORATING HEROES' GRAVES



Above, loved ones of brave boys of all wars, placing flowers upon their graves. Below, Boy Scout, marking grave of a soldier.

Stone Lions War Gift.
Two stone lions from the ancient Memin Gate have been placed at Canberra, Australia, the gift of Ypres, France, to the Australian War Memorial museum. Through the historic gate during the World war marched the armies of the British empire, France, the United States and Belgium, fighting in the battles of Ypres.

NAME DUE TO CLOTHES

THE term "butternut" was applied to soldiers of the Confederate army because many of their homespun uniforms were dyed light brown from the shell of the nut.

"Angel of Mons" Story Made Plenty Realistic

THE legend of the miraculous intervention of angelic bowmen under the patron saint of England, St. George, during the British retreat from Mons in August, 1914, was invented by the English author, Arthur Machen. He wrote a story called "The Bowmen" which appeared in the Daily News of London on September 29, 1914. This was an entirely fictitious account of how, during the days when the British were hard pressed by the enemy, an English soldier happened to utter the motto (in Latin): "May St. George be a present help to the English."

Immediately after he had spoken, he saw "beyond the trench, a long line of shapes, with a shining about them. They were like men who drew the bow, and with another shout, their cloud of arrows went singing and tingling through the air toward the German hosts."

This story was immediately taken up as an authentic record, states a writer in the Detroit News. Soldiers back from the trenches told of it as eyewitnesses.

IN THE DAYS OF 1861

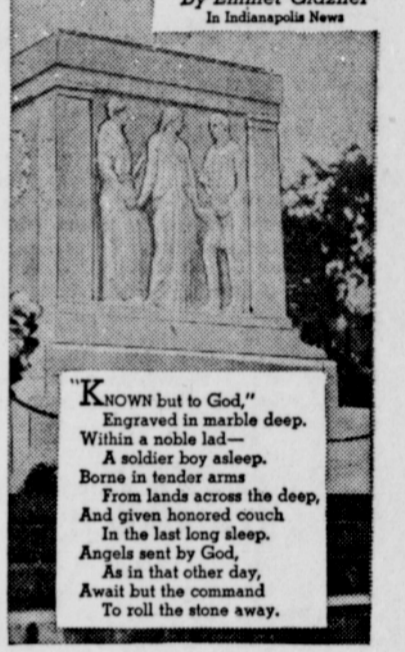


In the North, in 1861, masculine attire developed a strong trend in the direction depicted above. Drawing by Felix O. C. Darley.



Civil war veteran and the drum he "beat" to aid his comrades to "keep step" as they marched to the bloody battles. With him are members of the Sons of Veterans with their stands of colors.

The Unknown Soldier



Engraved in marble deep. Within a noble lad— A soldier boy asleep. Borne in tender arms From lands across the deep, And given honored couch In the last long sleep. Angels sent by God, As in that other day, Await but the command To roll the stone away.

Nation Pays Tribute to War Dead in Arlington

ARLINGTON National Cemetery just across the Potomac from the Lincoln Memorial is the scene each Memorial day of elaborate but solemn ceremonies honoring America's hero dead. These ceremonies are held in the magnificent Memorial Amphitheater provided through the efforts of the Grand Army of the Republic as a fitting memorial to our soldier dead and a suitable assembly place for the thousands in attendance at the services on Decoration day.

Usually attended by the President of the United States, other high government officials and foreign diplomats, Arlington Decoration day services are to the nation what the local observances are to each community throughout the land, observes a writer in Pathfinder Magazine.

For the benefit of those who have never visited Arlington cemetery and its magnificent Memorial Amphitheater a short description of the circular white marble structure will be interesting. The open-air structure covers an area of 34,000 square feet. In the amphitheater are seats of marble for 5,000 people. Several thousand more can find seats and standing room around the sides. On the stage there is room for several hundred more.

The eastern facade of the amphitheater overlooks the Potomac affording an excellent view of the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, the new government buildings, the Capitol and the city of Washington. Just across the roadway from the eastern stairway is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Civil War Men of Note

The Twenty-first regiment of the O. V. I., recruited in northern Ohio at the outset of the Civil war, was noted for the men among its ranks who rose to distinguished heights. Of its recruits, Stanley Matthews became associate justice of the United States Supreme court and Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley became presidents.

A GOLD STAR MOTHER

THE Gold Star Mothers' association defines a Gold Star mother as one whose son was killed overseas during the World war or who was killed on the sea while serving in the war.

Fate of Millions Still Unknown

Of the 16,000,000 soldiers and sailors who died or disappeared as a result of the World war, the fate of more than 7,000,000 is still unknown, asserts a writer in Collier's Weekly.