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The Cresset

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Christmas in October

One of the minor annoyances of our job is the nuisance of having to reorganize the year to correspond to our deadline's. Christmas, for us, falls any time within a ten-day period prior to November 1, the date when copy for the December CRESSET must go to the printer. But late October, in our latitudes, is not Christmasy. It is raw, windy, damp, and drab. Our offspring, engrossed in plans for Halloween, are still a long five weeks away from the pre-Christmas good-conduct period. Our colleagues, for whom this week is mid-term examination time, are in anything but a Fa-la-la-la-la mood. And the decorations in our end of town are not blazing trees and glittering tinsel but the soggy remains of last week-end's crepe-paper Homecoming displays.

But if you want to be very realistic about it, the general appearance and atmosphere of our town in late October is as close as we ever come to the actual appearance and atmosphere of Bethlehem in December, 3 or 4 B.C. Angels we may hear on high at Christmas time but what the good folk of Bethlehem heard was the noise (probably not too different from the noise of our Homecoming crowds) of the throngs who had descended upon their village for Caesar's registration. And if the shepherds were watching their flocks by night "all seated on the ground", it is unlikely that they sat in four inches of new snow. Hymns and carols to the contrary notwithstanding, everything that the historical geographer knows or can surmise about the real Little Town of Bethlehem of St. Luke's Gospel forces him to the conclusion that it was a good place to stay away from on the night our Lord was born.

We are not saying all of this in an attempt to assert our own candidacy for the title of The Man Who Killed Christmas. But the Word Who was made flesh, if indeed He was very God of very God, was basic and radical Truth. And we do Him no worship if we sentimentalize the circumstances of His appearance. The mythology of Christmas, with its silk-robed Nordic Virgin and her fat, happy Child, may be just right for those who are looking only for an occasion to celebrate a pleasant winter holiday. But it is a travesty upon the awful reality of God crying and kicking His legs on a bed of straw in a damp, chilly cave.

Perhaps it is in our very observance of Christmas that we most offend those who might believe. They come looking for some sign that God and His people care about them and we present them with what? With a Virgin straight out of the pages of Vogue and a Child who already looks like a dull, pompous archbishop. The Word is made myth — and an upper-middle class myth at that.

Where, in all of our celebrating, is the real Word, the Word Who is truly flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone? Where, among all of the tinsel and the glitter, is the Man of Sorrows Who is acquainted with the grief of the sick, the poor, the despised and the rejected? Millions of God's creatures are looking for something more than a pasteboard Jesus Who shows up on the first of December and disappears among the wrappings on December 26. They are looking for Immanuel, "God with us," and they are not finding Him. What they are finding instead is the God of October — a white man's god, a white-collar god, a god who crooks his little finger just right at the Ladies' Club teas, a god who tells funny little stories about kikes and who dreads the thought that his daughter might marry a Negro.

The world, perhaps, needs to be urged to put Christ back into Christmas. It is high time that the Church were urged to put Christmas back into Christ. Let us once dare to tell men the truth about how God really came into the heart and center of our need. For if we will but lift Him up where men can see Him as He really was, instead of hiding Him behind the walls of our hates and fears and prejudices, He will indeed draw all men unto Himself.
Another Cannibal Cannibalized

Like you and us and St. Eutychus the Weary, Georgi Zhukov is a sinner. And when a sinner gets into trouble there are finally only two things that one can say about him: a) He had it coming and b) May God have mercy on his soul! But since the urge to peep through key-holes is one of the basic human urges, and since this urge is responsible for probably ninety per cent of newspaper and magazine circulations, news men can not dismiss as intriguing a story as the downgrading of Zhukov with nothing more than a statement of fact and a prayer. They have got to assess its Significance and predict (i.e., guess at) its Consequences.

Such assessments and predictions are harmless enough if we remember that what is at issue in our day is not the future, good or bad, of this man or that; not even the survival of this or that economic theory. What is at issue is a definition of man. And we shall not have real peace until the issue is decided, one way or the other.

Who is the stronger in this struggle, the side which does not mean what it says or the side which does not say what it means? When we can answer that question, we will have gone a long way toward predicting the outcome. And that is why, with all of the best intentions in the world, we cannot be as optimistic as we would like to be. For when our enemies mean things that they do not say, their very dissimulation become camouflage for their most powerful weapon: their real, as opposed to their stated, definition of man. But when we say things that we do not mean there is reason to ask whether we really mean anything at all and, therefore, whether there is any possibility of our developing a strategy based upon anything more substantial than slogans.

Let us put it more concretely: what the leaders of the USSR consider man to be can be read in the cannibalistic orgies of their own high command, in their treatment of their own people, in the slave labor camps of Lenaland, in the blood-stained streets of Budapest. Evil in its terminal phases has an integrity of its own, and it must be granted that Communist practise is thoroughly consistent with Communist theory.

But what of the “free” world? By what right do we shout our slogans about liberty and equality and fraternity, about the dignity of the person and the brotherhood of man when we have long since abandoned the view of man which once gave these slogans their validity? It was no Russian, but one of the best minds in the Western world, that recently dismissed all of Christianity as an illusion. And if someone can explain to us the difference between the definition of man that underlies the boot training of the United States Marine Corps and that which underlies the economic theory of Karl Marx, we will be very much obliged.

The fact of the matter is that, as of this moment, the “free world” literally does not know what it is trying to defend. And so it can get tremendously steamed up about the fate of Georgi Zhukov while it forgets Budapest, it can idolize flag and country and economic system while it demurs the godlessness of Communism, it can shudder at the nihilism of Khrushchev while it awards Nobel prizes to Camus.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and saw it weeping over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes . . . thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

Notes Toward a Theology of Sputnik

In 1944, while Europe was aflame in the Second World War, C.S. Lewis brought out a little book called The Screwtape Letters. It is significant that in this book, which made a tremendous impact upon the thought of those years, Lewis had comparatively little to say about the war. And what he did have to say related largely to the significance of the war, as temptation and challenge, to the spiritual life of the individual soul. As a matter of fact, the mythical writer of the Letters, a senior tempter named Screwtape, had this to say to his young protege, Wormwood, about the war:

“Pray do not fill your letters with rubbish about this European War. Its final issue is, no doubt, important, but that is a matter for the High Command. I am not in the least interested in knowing how many people in England have been killed by bombs. In what state of mind they died, I can learn from the office at this end. That they were going to die sometime, I knew already. Please keep your mind on your work.”

It might be well for us to take some time from our running in circles, screaming, and shouting about the Soviet Union’s remarkable progress in the areas of technology and weapons to consider whether either Heaven or Hell is as excited about this thing as we are. Christians, at least, have never defined their path of duty in terms of the obstacles or dangers in the way but in terms of their understanding of the will of God. Caleb and Joshua proposed to march into Palestine despite the fact that it was occupied by the giants, the sons of Anak. Luther proposed to go to Worms even if there were as many devils there as there were tiles on the roofs.

A superiority of weapons in the hands of an evil enemy increases the mathematical chances of our getting killed in line of duty. We shall worry less about these prospects if we keep our mind on our work.
AD LIB.

A Dissertation on Toys

By ALFRED R. LOOMAN

In the next few weeks most adults will face what can be one of the most frustrating chores of the year, the purchase of a Christmas toy for the child or grandchild, a toy he will really like. Toy manufacturers are cooperating beautifully, and it is possible this year to find a miniature of almost anything in the adult world. You can buy a car or train that runs and that the child can ride in; you can buy a doll that does everything except think; you can get a scale model rocket or space ship; you may even be able to buy a kit which can produce a small hydrogen explosion. These new toys are complete and so accurately detailed that you can't tell them from the big original of the adult world, except for size. And this is exactly what is wrong with them. They are so correct according to detail that the child has no way of using his imagination when he plays with them. These new toys will look fine under the Christmas tree and Junior's face will light up when he sees them, but after five minutes of playing with a perfectly proportioned jet airliner, for example, he will be back to the two crossed sticks from his toy cupboard that have been serving him very well for his imaginative flights.

Basically, toys have changed little over the years, or at least the successful toys haven't. The catalogs of the mail order houses — not the Christmas editions but the regular catalog — show almost the same toys that were available 30 years ago. From my own childhood I can remember best an Erector set and a Lincoln Log set. Both of these had directions on how to build things, but you could also use your imagination and build structures only you had thought of. If you will think back to the toys you received, it's my guess you'll find that the toys you liked best and used most were those to which you could make some contribution in the way of imagination.

The reasons for buying a particular toy vary between the parents. The father is likely to buy a toy he thinks he would like to have had when he was a child. As a result many children end up on Christmas morning with an electric train that is too old for them and one they won't get to play with until Father is through enjoying it. Some fathers buy toys to develop a particular interest in their sons. (Grandfathers are good at this, too.) So a two-year-old finds an adult football and a set of shoulder pads under the tree. Because they are so much too large for him and because they have a tendency to frighten him, he will probably be off the game for life. You can't make a child like something just because you think he should or because you think you would have liked it.

Mothers, on the other hand, will try to find a toy the child will enjoy, but they look for something that will be completely harmless, an item that is not in itself destructive or one that can't be used destructively. Well, if there is anything almost any child likes it is something that is destructive or can be used that way. I'm not advocating the purchase of playthings that will tear up the house or injure the child either, but I think it is possible to go part way.

However, one doesn't have to do the choosing anymore if he will take the word of the child psychologists. Now, as you know, you can purchase a toy that is just right for a child of a certain age. These, in most cases, are brightly painted objects of wood. The wood is sanded smoothly and there are no sharp corners. You can buy one of these toys for any child from infancy to high school age. What's more, these toys are educational and will help develop their little intellects. From the advertising these companies put out one gets the idea that any of their toys would be ideal so long as the child didn't have fun with it.

I have my doubts about the educational value of these toys. The toys themselves are often successful, not because they are educational but because they allow for some use of the imagination and because they are painted in bright colors.

Almost everyone has had the frustrating experience at some time or another of seeing a child get a large number of toys until he is surrounded with the best the toy manufacturers can come up with. For a few minutes he plays with the new toys, but then he goes into the kitchen and spends the remainder of the day with an old sauce pan, a spoon, and an egg beater. I have no suggestions for you on specifically what toys to buy. On behalf of the kids, however, I would suggest you get something that will permit them to use their imaginations.

DECEMBER, 1957
The following settings of Christmas music were written specifically for use in the home during the Nativity Season. All may be performed on the organ or piano, or they may be performed with voices singing the cantus firmus with the remaining two instrumental parts being performed on a keyboard instrument or any other combination of instruments with suitable range. The settings could be utilized in the worship service by a children’s chorus or unison men’s or women’s chorus singing the cantus firmus. By means of transposition the settings may be performed by various combinations of instruments.

Permission for reprinting the texts selected from The Lutheran Hymnal has been granted by Concordia Publishing House. The United Lutheran Publication House has granted permission to reprint the text for Come, Jesus, Holy Child.

I. ALL PRAISE TO THEE, ETERNAL GOD

\text{text: Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ}
Martin Luther, 1524, \textit{cento}
Tr., unknown, 1858

\text{melody: Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ}
Wittenberg, 1524
BEHOLD A BRANCH IS GROWING

text: Es ist ein' Ros'
Author unknown, c. 1500
Tr., Harriet Spaeth, 1875

melody: Es ist ein' Ros'
Cologne, 1599

Like a cradle song

with octave if played on a keyboard instrument

Behold, a Branch is growing of love-liest

form and grace,

As prophets sung, fore-knowing; It springs from Jesse's race

And bears one little flower

In midst of coldest winter, As deepest midnight hour

DECEMBER, 1957
3. ARISE, SONS OF THE KINGDOM

text: Auf, auf, ihr Reichsgenossen
Johann Rist, 1651, cento
Tr., based on Winkworth, 1858

melody: Aus meines Herzens Grunde
Hamburg, 1598

Tr., based on Winkworth, 1858

Note: Two soprano recorders are recommended for the instrumental parts.
4. LET THE EARTH NOW PRAISE THE LORD

text: Gott sei Dank durch alle Welt
Heinrich Held, 1659
Tr., Catherine Winkworth, 1863

melody: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland
Erfurt, 1524

Let the earth now praise the Lord.

Who hath truly kept His word.

And the sinners' help and friend

Now at last to us doth send.
5.

LULLAY, THOU LITTLE TINY CHILD

text: Robert Croo, 1534

melody: The Coventry Carol
English melody, 1591

The Coventry Carol
English melody, 1591

The Cresset
FROM HEAVEN ABOVE

text: From Heaven Above
Tr., Anna Hoppe

melody: Old German Carol
"Koelner Gesangbuch," 1623

From heaven above, ye angels all,
Ei a! Ei a! susani, susani, susani! Come
praise the Babe in lowly stall, Alleluia! Let praises swell To
Jesus our Immanuel!
8. **OH, HOW JOYFULLY**

**text:** J. Folk, 1810

**melody:** O Sanctissima

**Sicilian Hymn**

1. Oh, how joy-ful-ly—Oh, how mer-i-ly—Christmas comes with its grace di-vine!
    Grace again is beam-ing,
    Christmas comes with its grace di-vine!
    Peace on earth is reign-ing,
    Peace on earth is reign-ing, Hail, ye Chris-tians, hail the joy-ous Christmas time.

2. Oh, how joy-ful-ly—Oh, how mer-i-ly—Christmas comes with its grace di-vine!
    Peace on earth is reign-ing,
    Peace on earth is reign-ing, Hail, ye Chris-tians, hail the joy-ous Christmas time.

3. Oh, how joy-ful-ly—Oh, how mer-i-ly—Christmas comes with its grace di-vine!
    Angels high in glo-ry,
    Christmas comes with its grace di-vine! Angels high in glo-ry,
    Angels high in glo-ry, Hail, ye Chris-tians, hail the joy-ous Christmas time.

**The Cresset**
COME, JESUS, HOLY CHILD

text: O Jesu, heiliges Kindelein
Hofgesangbuch, Leipzig, 1672
Tr., Paul Strodach, 1928

melody: Puer Nobis nascitur
"Musae Sionae" VI, 1609

COME, JESUS, HOLY CHILD

Come, Jesus,

Holy Child, to me; Close tight my heart to

all but Thee; And with Thy Holy Spirit's

grace Make me, dear Lord, Thy dwelling place.
Shakespeare, Schiller and an "Angry Young Man"

By Walter Sorell

Drama Editor

The days when "Three Men on a Horse" was considered the only feasible theatrical fare for the summer months fortunately seem to be over. This past summer it was Shakespeare who triumphed in city and country, and this Shakespeare syndrome shows, if nothing else, a mental growth or maturity of the American public and its theatre producers.

The American Shakespeare Festivals in Stratford, Connecticut, has achieved the almost impossible within the last few seasons under John Houseman’s leadership: a balanced program and professional productions with the best Broadway cast. This summer we saw "Othello," "The Merchant of Venice," and "Much Ado About Nothing," in other words, the best of Shakespeare’s tragic and romantic dramas as well as one of his lighter comedies. Although such stars as Katherine Hepburn, Alfred Drake and Earle Hyman were at hand, it was the type of repertory company — so well known from the European theatres and indispensable for a series of proficient productions — which Mr. Houseman got together that gave these performances the case and brilliance they had.

As a matter of fact, the stars did not always twinkle the brightest. Hepburn’s Portia suffered from mannerisms and her “quality of mercy” speech was chopped to pieces, although she was light and delightful as Beatrice. Earle Hyman’s Othello lacked weight and urgency and thus the credibility of his inescapable tragedy, while Alfred Drake’s Iago had all the necessary slyness and calculating restraints. Also his Benedick was a wonderful feat of acting. The strongest impression, however, made Morris Carnovsky’s Shylock, one of the rare great Shylocks who walked upright and caught our sympathy through the dignity of his suffering and the manner in which he bore his share of wrong. His usurer not only wore the usual mask of the evil-doer, but made us look deeper into the personal and racial reasons of his blind wrath and wickedness.

To give "Much Ado About Nothing" a Southwestern setting and cowboy flavor was the only faux pas, and an inexcusable one. Also Mr. Houseman seems to have succumbed to the fashion of turning everything that cannot resist into a musical, and though this production had fluency and lightness and visual beauty, the operatic flavor remained painful. To give Shakespeare the stunning staging his work deserves — without any phony face lifting — can still be done with minimal financial resources. Joseph Papp produced “Romeo and Juliet,” “Macbeth,” and “The Two Gentlemen of Verona” in Central Park in an artistically exemplary manner, and only recently The Shakespearewrights came up with a “Julius Caesar” performance which is powerful, virile and above all clearly enunciated. Such productions prove that Shakespeare needs no prompting and artificial polishing.

Shakespeare seems to be indispensable and he is borrowed from whenever possible. The "Romeo and Juliet" plot was worked into the seamy and unsavory story of the teen-age gangs in "West Side Story". The interesting feature of this musical is the skill with which Jerome Robbins successfully promoted the dance drama within the framework of the American musical. The English dramatist-actor Peter Ustinov transposed the feud between the Capulets and Montagues onto the political scene of our days and, undoubtedly, some fun emerges from the juxtaposition of Juliet, daughter of an American ambassador, and Romanoff, son of the Soviet ambassador. But the comedy of "Romanoff and Juliet" misses the opportunity of a great satiric target and loses itself in mere farcical fun-making.

With Tyrone Guthrie’s staging of Friedrich Schiller’s romantic drama, “Mary Stuart,” the American theatre honored itself. It was adapted by Jean Stock Goldstone and John Reich, and there is much to be said for this adaption, although every admirer of Schiller will claim that little is left of him. The meter of the verse became prose-poetry, the verbal exuberance or oratorical excess was reduced to an almost streamlined simplicity in expression and one third of the characters were eliminated. All this — may Schiller forgive me — only worked to the benefit of the play.

This drama of two queens culminating in the historically incorrect but dramaturgically most imaginative scene in which they meet, is a picture-book example of a protagonist and antagonist of equal intensity in characterization and interest. Mr. Guthrie made full use of it and powerfully pitted these rivals as queens and women against each other. As a matter of fact these two women, excellently played by Eva Le Gallienne and Irene Worth, commanded all the interest and the male cast seemed almost reduced to carriers of cues. With this production the Phoenix Theatre has justified its existence.

This season, hardly begun, has already seen a great many casualties or productions of plays which in no way enrich our theatre. "Compulsion," the Leopold-Loeb murder case, would better have remained the sensational reportage in novelistic form it originally was. As a drama it fails because of its repelling theme and the necessary psychological explanations, because
of its lack of dramatic coherence and pedestrian style of writing. Another play based on a novel — on Nathaniel West's "Miss Lonelyhearts" — did not live up to the bitter satire of its original and died of artistic anemia.

Molly Kazan wrote a thesis drama whose topic can be defined as "Don't be a sentimental liberal," as the communist finally tells "The Egghead." A well-made play, but it defeats its purpose by being too much of a propaganda play. It is written exclusively in a cerebral manner and expresses less the urgencies of life than the point to be proved. Although it is undoubtedly a drama of high spirit, it had to give up after a short struggle with the public.

Herman Wouk has written a comedy in which a woman is pregnant with a child and her husband with a musical show. The development resulting from this situation is filled with a humor which a certain audience will always patronize. Mr. Wouk's new opus, however, is thoroughly disappointing. Its title, by the way, is "Nature's Way." There were other flops and more entries which are still on the boards and might just as well not be there.

The only play of real interest so far was John Osborne's "Look Back in Anger" which, as the rebellious expression of the young generation, carries some weight. Though the hero's target is the people who have brought the post-war generation into this best of all possible worlds which they are about to leave to them in the worst mess imaginable, this young man, as their exponent, actually rails and rages against himself. And it is less important what he says — since he has no positive point of view — than how he says it because his words have passion and the urgency of someone who feels that time is against him. This play is written in the fever of despair with no panacea at hand. And it is well written, in fact, beautifully and forcefully, and in spite of its sting and ferocity it has much warmth which is disarming.

The outcry of unfulfilled emotions, the helplessness against the empty minds which rule, the apparent ruthlessness, coldness and cruelty of the world trapping the most tender feelings and forcing them to be cruel, cold and ruthless — this is the core of the play. Mr. Osborne has no solution for his hero if he is not ready to submerge his sensless anger in love, as he may, after all, when we leave him back in the arms of his wife at the final curtain.

When the hero screams at the top of his voice: "Oh, heavens, how I long for a little ordinary human enthusiasm! . . . I want to hear a warm, thrilling voice cry out Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I'm alive!," he does not realize that he himself screams against everything and everyone so much and so loud that he gives no one else a chance to become enthusiastic. He does not realize that the outside world has never been much better than it is now and that any change can only come from his own world within.

John Osborne's play should be accepted as a character study rather than a drama, for it is well written but badly plotted — if one can speak of a plot at all. But as such it may be indicative of the angry helplessness in which the post-war generation finds itself today.

---

**LITANY**

Gary of Bessemer volcanoes
ayawn with dizzy sparks
and Christmas color
City of steel and sinew
City of din
City of biceps and fire
you whose dazzlecrew of coughing chimneys
shepherd flumes aspout with flame
whose furnace mangers warm the wombs
welding our culture's frame
Savior outocrat to whom we bend
our knees
Refine us with the silence
of that holy starlit night.

Flamed universe
whose reeling sparks stun the sooty sky
let not your steel
mend our cancer on Christmas Day
and let no ingot answer our need
to pray
City of eternal sunsets in the north

whose sorethroated stacks
swear in sickness and rasp our air
squeeze God's sky with memories
of a Bethlehem
whose lightnings crash like padded feet
and bending knees.

Constellation of smoke
City of steel and fire
City of sin
you galaxy of gears and racket
of flashing ladles and mills
city of ghastly meteors that grime
your smelting smokeprimed air
Blast our flameland
with the whispers an Isralite knew
on His holy night.

Then shall we know
why the silent splashings of angelsong
gash night with a fire tinsel
that steals God's stars.

Robert EPP
From the Chapel

Advent Announced in Paradise

By Carl Albert Gieseler
Professor of Religion and Chapel Chairman
Valparaiso University

“\textit{I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed;}\textit{ he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.}\" Genesis 3:15 (R.S.V.)

Of the Religion Course 51, “Introduction to the Bible,” the second of our prerequisite religion courses, our University Catalog says: “Emphasis is placed upon the Messianic Covenant and its fulfillment in the establishment of Christianty.” In this course we endeavor to show the golden thread running through the Old Testament books, becoming brighter and clearer as the centuries march on, and ending in the little town of Bethlehem.

We follow the same purpose during the Advent weeks in our private devotions, in our daily Chapel gatherings, and in our Sunday services. During these days we are transported back into Old Testament times, the years of waiting and expectation, when we meditate upon the prophecies of the Old Covenant.

In this meditation we want to go all the way back to the first Gospel promise: Advent Announced In Paradise.

Let us reconstruct the scene as described in the third chapter of Genesis. Who were the \textit{dramatis personae}?

There was first the Serpent, “more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord had made.” Then there was the Woman, innocent, sinless, holy, as she had come from the hand of her Maker. And her husband, the Man, created before the Woman in the image of God, in holiness and righteousness.

There is a conversation between the Serpent and the Woman. The Serpent was just wondering whether it was true that God would not let them eat of every tree in the garden. The woman assured him that they had a great variety of trees to choose from, except the center tree. Eating of its fruit meant death. The serpent flatly disagreed that this would be the result. Rather, “God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God.” Thus he insinuated jealousy on the part of God. A doubting of God’s word, a longing look, a grasping of the forbidden fruit, — and there was something new in the world: SIN. “She also gave some to her husband, and he ate.” He had been standing by all the time and had said nothing. He had not warned his wife. On the contrary, he seems to have been an anxious partner in her disobedience. Thus both are in the same condemnation.

Now another dramatis persona enters the scene: The LORD God. All three heard Him. Two tried to hide. But when arraigned before the Creator the Man blamed the Woman, and the Woman blamed the Serpent.

The LORD God did not first speak to the human couple. He pronounced punishment on each of them a little later. After placing a curse upon the Serpent He said to him: “\textit{I will put enmity between you and the Woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.}\”

Do you understand these words? During my years of teaching Bible classes, high school classes, college classes, I have often been surprised at the widespread ignorance among our Christian young people of the meaning of this first Gospel. I am slow to blame their previous teachers, because I know how quickly we all forget what we have once learned. I have asked university classes to explain these words, and at times had little response. Who is speaking to whom? And what do the spoken words mean?

The fact of the matter is that the LORD God is addressing the Serpent. He means to say to him: “You and the Woman have become friends. I will destroy this friendship between you and your evil hosts on the one hand and the Woman and her seed, her descendants, on the other hand. There should be enmity between your kingdom of darkness and the human race, and this shall be accomplished by the Woman’s Seed, by one of the descendants of the first parents. You may bruise His heel, but He will bruise and crush your head.”

We call this the “Advent Announcement in Paradise.” This first Messianic Prophecy was fulfilled “when the time had fully come” and “God sent forth His Son, born of a woman (The Woman’s Seed announced in Paradise), born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive the adoption of sons.” (Galatians 4:4.)

From the human birth of the Son of God Satan was fighting Him. He fought Him through others; very early through King Herod. Satan fought Him personally in the wilderness, and finally in the most decisive battle
in the history of the world on Calvary. There he bruised the heel of the Woman’s Seed, but was himself crushed through the victorious outcome of the battle on Easter day.

On my baptismal certificate, which is an old-fashioned scroll, there is a picture of Christ hanging on the cross, but at the foot of the cross the earth is opened so we can see the lower end of the cross under the earth sharpened to a point and piercing the head of a large snake coiled under the cross in the ground. That is the interpretation of the Christian Church of Genesis 3, verse 15.

But is this the right understanding of our text? Is it really the first Gospel? Is it the first Advent Announcement in Paradise? There is nothing in Genesis chapter 3 which indicates who this Serpent was. We say, it was Satan. But how do we know? A few years ago I was “stumped” by a student in the class who asked: “Is Genesis 3:15 quoted in the New Testament as being fulfilled like so many other Old Testament prophesies?”

I had never given that a thought, nor had I heard it discussed from the time that I and many other little children recited this text under the Christmas tree in church on Christmas eve to the time that I was privileged to teach the Bible and the Christian Religion on the college level.

After searching the entire New Testament we must be truthful and say: Genesis 3: 15 is not quoted among the fulfilled prophesies.

The Serpent is brought together with Sin and Salvation by Jesus when He quotes the story of the Brazen Serpent in His talk with Nicodemus: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.” (John 3:14-15.)

The real key to the understanding of the “Advent Announced in Paradise,” in the first pages of the first book of the Bible, will be found in the last book, in the Book of Revelation. There we read:

“The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world — he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Rejoice then, O heaven, and you that dwell therein!’ ” (Revelation 12: 9-12.)

And we may add the words of St. Paul: “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” Romans 16:20.

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Letter from Xanadu, Nebr.

by G. G.

Dear Editor:

Well, here it is almost Christmas again and I ought to write a nice sentimental letter but every year I have tried to write that kind of letter I have gotten into trouble with somebody so this year I won’t try it.

The newspaper here in town asked some of us community leaders to write little articles on “What Christmas Means to Me.” Naturally I wrote down some guff that ought to go over pretty well with the customers but I had half a notion to write what Christmas actually means to me as a business man and that would go something like this:

Christmas is, to put it honestly, my last chance to balance the books for the year. Whatever I lost on the feed, grain, and implement business during the year I have got to make up on toys and appliances or I go in the hole.

Christmas is the season when I get about half as much sleep as I need, when my salesmen and clerks are touchy as bear, when everybody in the county with a Worthy Cause gets into my ribs for as much as he thinks he can squeeze out of me, when the PA system on the corner practically drives me nuts with the same songs, played over and over and over. (Last year, between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve, I heard Bing Crosby sing “White Christmas” exactly 209 times.)

Christmas is kids crawling all over the merchandise, women pawing around on the counters and snapping at the clerks, men giving me the same old hard luck line I have heard a dozen times before and expecting me to break down and give them twice as much credit as any man in his right mind would extend to them.

Christmas is haggling over bonuses, keeping a special eye out for shoplifters, grabbing supper on the run, and mopping up the slush that gets tracked in from outside.

Christmas, in short, is a mess, and the best thing about it is that it can’t last forever.

Regards,

G.G.
The development of the churchly arts reached a high point in the middle of the XIII Century. A tremendous premium was on originality and creativity. Particularly the works of sculpture in the great Gothic cathedrals showed this freedom. One has only to remember the world famous Angel of Rheims, or the West Portal of Strasburg, or the Coronation Angel at Marburg, or even the statue of Jesus and John from the Museum in Berlin, or the Man of Sorrows from Munich.

All of these highly original conceptions fall into the XIII or early XIV Century.

France kept the lead throughout those years. The general work there brought out an intense cultural activity such as Athens and Florence and Rome had known in the days. One has only to look carefully at the freedom with which these people worked to realize the joy that must have gone into the adornment of their churches.

One striking example is found in the choir stalls at Bamberg. The "Young King with his Lute" is a classic example of this almost lyrical quality of freedom and joyousness to be seen in the early concepts of the newly developing freedom in art. In sharp contrast to the tenderness and beauty of the Musician is the face of the Tormentor in the second picture. This is the face that the Middle Ages regularly gave to the Hangman and the Mercenary. This a fragment from "The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian" to be found in Nuernberg. Figures of this nature were used regularly to show the coarseness and complete depravity of a man without God, alongside of the beauties and spiritual quality of the saints. Since light and shadow could not draw the contrast in open sculpture, the crudities or the refinements of facial expression had to do the work.

The qualities of ecclesiastical ornament which close study of this free movement brings into the religious life of people must be regained again for our time. Stark simplicities have their place since they bring the qualities of inwardsness into the foreground. A man, therefore, has no more in the House of God than he has brought with him to the worship of his God. For people of fine spirituality, this can be enough. But there are times and seasons in the life of the individual and in the world outside when a man comes to the House of God sterile and barren. There is no one there to sound the call of God in words; then the work which is in windows, and statues, and ornaments, and altars begins its quiet but insistent communication. The cult of barrenness and sterility has almost run its course and men realize that the House of God is not only a building, and a place, but it is, above all, communication to the heart of a man -- about the best, and fairest, and holiest.

Particularly the young professionals of our day need the challenge which the new architecture and the new art presents so arrestingly. The answer can be a startling new communication of the Gospel which speaks to the brisk, alert minds of the atomic age and challenges them to see and understand rather than just follow trite and smug traditionalism and old forms.

Some symbols never change. A Cross remains a Cross and a Christmas tree a Christmas tree, but the way they are placed and the way they are lighted and where they are placed may mean all the difference between a Cross and a tree that says nothing, and a Cross and a tree that stops a man in his tracks and sends him back to the Crucified or to the Child in the manger.
Music needs the encouragement, the stimulation, and the help afforded by individuals and organizations when they commission new works. Therefore it is good to note that M-G-M is doing much for the tonal art in this way and, let me add, is doing it with signal success.

Let me tell you about a number of exceptionally fine compositions recently commissioned and recorded by M-G-M.

Marga Richter, who was born in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, in 1926, has written an engrossing Concerto for Piano, Violas, Cellos, and Basses, commissioned in 1955. This work is played by William Masselos, pianist, and the M-G-M String Orchestra under Carlos Surinach (M-G-M E3547). Miss Richter's composition reveals uncommon skill and resourcefulness. The composer herself is a capable pianist.

On the same disc you can hear Surinach's exciting Concertino for Piano, Strings, and Cymbals, played by Masselos and the M-G-M String Orchestra. In this work, which, in the words of Edward Cole, is "a formal concerto for piano and orchestra in Spanish style," the piano, according to the program notes — written, I suppose, by Surinach himself — "is cast predominantly in a percussive role, though the singing melodic capacities of the instrument are also explored."

Surinach was born in Barcelona, Spain, in 1915. For a number of years he has been living in New York City.

Peggy Glanville-Hicks, who was born in Melbourne, Australia, in 1912 and now makes her home in New York City, has written a grippingly beautiful Concerto Romantico for Viola and Orchestra. This composition is played by Walter Trampler, violist, with the M-G-M Chamber Orchestra under Surinach (M-G-M E3559). Every page of the work gives proof of a comprehensive command of the technical aspects of the art of composition. Then there is Miss Richter's absorbing Aria and Toccatas for Viola and String Orchestra, commissioned in 1956 and performed by Trampler and the M-G-M String Orchestra under Surinach. In addition, this disc contains a recording of St. Louis-born Ben Weber's Rapsodie Concertante for Viola and Small Orchestra, Op. 47, written and orchestrated in the early part of 1957 and presented by Trampler with the M-G-M Chamber Orchestra under Arthur Winograd.

Weber's composition exemplifies an unusually resourceful use of what is know as the twelve-tone row.

Winograd, who has come to the fore with giant strides as a champion of new and relatively unknown works, adds much to his rapidly growing reputation by conducting his own string orchestra in an impressive reading of Harold Shapero's Serenade in D, for String Orchestra. This is not a commissioned work. But by recording it (M-G-M E3557) M-G-M has rendered the cause of American music a significant service.

Shapero, who was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1920, writes:

I completed my Serenade in D, for String Orchestra in 1945 at the MacDowell colony in Peterboro, New Hampshire. The serenade's five movements are largely based on neoclassic harmonic and formal principles, and the qualities expressed are predominantly lyric. The score is dedicated to Nadia Boulanger, with whom I studied in 1941-42.

Recent Recordings

LANDMARKS OF A DISTINGUISHED CAREER.

Leopold Stokowski conducts his own orchestral version of Johann Sebastian Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, Debussy's Clair de Lune, Johann Strauss's Blue Danube Waltz, Jean Sibelius' The Swan of Tuonela, Debussy's Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun, and Sibelius' Finlandia. The orchestral tone is sumptuous. But the tempo for Bach's composition is entirely too rapid, and Stokowski does not present the Strauss waltz with the proper Viennese lilt. Capitol. — MILSTEIN VIGNETTES. The great violinist, with Leon Pommers at the piano, plays Polonaise in D Major, Op 4, by Henri Wieniawski; Manuel de Falla's Asturiana and Jota, as transcribed by Paul Kochanski; Maurice Ravel's Berceuse on the Name of Gabriel Fauré; Pablo de Sarasate's Romance Andaluza; Robert Schumann's Trauemerei; Bach's Air, transcribed for the G string by August Wilhelm; Ottakar Novacek's Perpetuum Mobile; Tchaikovsky's Melodie, Op. 42, No. 3; Debussy's The Maid with the Flaxen Hair, as transcribed by Arthur Hambraun; and Wieniawski's Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op 16. Breath-taking artistry. Capitol — JEAN SIBELIUS. Tapiola, The Swan of Tuonela, Karelia Suite, Bolero (Festivo). Well-played performances of some of the great Finn's most popular works. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Hans Rosbaud. Decca.
This book — a translation of Das Christliche Ethos (1949) — is a radically new approach to the treatment of "ethics" within Lutheran theology. Here Luther's insight that the pure doctrine is best preserved and transmitted through the proper distinction between Law and Gospel has been consistently applied to theological ethics. This has far-reaching implications for the method and content of this book. The question that Elert asks is not, "What should a man be?" but rather, "What is the Christian man in the judgment of God?". The answer to that question is the description of the Christian Ethos. It is the divine judgment of the human quality.

What we really have here is not an "ethics" in the sense in which most of our readers usually understand that term but rather a Lutheran anthropology or doctrine of man in terms of his actual existence. It is Elert's answer to the demand: Show me your kind of man. Elert is at home in many fields besides theology and he shows us the Christian man in all the ramifications of his existence. That existence is thoroughly examined and evaluated with the help of a thorough-going knowledge of ancient and modern scholarship which — thanks to the publisher's omission of Elert's bibliographies — can only be inferred by the English reader.

That examination and evaluation is always carried out in the light of God's judgment. Elert does not "putter" outside the field in which he is an expert but rather uses the insights of many disciplines to delineate the situations in which man exists under the judgment of God. It is especially important that that judgment is not inferred on the basis of man's self-judgment but rather proclaimed on the basis of God's revelation of His judgment over man in the Law and the Gospel.

The examination of the Christian under that judgment takes place in three stages:

1) Ethos under Law. Here that existence is examined which the Christian shares with all men. He is a creature of God; but he is also a sinner and under the condemnation of the Law. Like every other man he lives out his life with reference to various situations into which God has placed him (the orders of creation) and in which his sinful character is revealed. The Christian knows himself to be what every other man is, whether he knows it or not: caught up in the chain of guilt and death which binds all descendants of Adam into a common community.

2) Ethos under Grace. On one essential point, however, the Christian differs from the unbeliever. God's judgment of condemnation over him has been overcome by God's grace. He is not only always a sinner; he is always a forgiven sinner. He is a forgiven sinner because Christ the Friend of sinners has drawn him into the circle of disciples and become His Lord and Master. This transformation of his existence results in a transformation of his relationship to his fellowmen. It is, however, a transformation which is still in process. The Christian life takes place as an invisible struggle.

3) Objective Ethos. The Christian does not only exist as an individual. He is also a member of the church. And the church, too, exists within God's creation and relationship to all the powers of history. She, as well as the individual Christian, is, therefore, under the judgment of God.

That is a brief outline of the material which Elert covers. The answers which he gives are not new. Most of them are either found or presupposed in the Lutheran Confessions. This book is, however, not simply a presentation of Christian doctrine as though it were a mistitled volume of Dogmatics. Rather it is an analysis of the existence of the Christian man which gives practical relevance to the doctrines of the Confessions. It is an analysis of the man who is at one and the same time a righteous man and a sinner — not his biography, although the reader may often find it autobiographical, but rather of the essence of his existence. As such it will be found invaluable by anyone who has been struggling to understand just how this "at one and the same time a righteous man and a sinner" actually works out in practice. The student of theology will find it a gold-mine of stimulation and an incisive orientation in the most difficult problems. The preacher will find it indispensable as a ready analysis of the people to whom he is trying to preach Law and Gospel. And the theologically interested layman will find that it will bring a good many seemingly unrelated scraps of doctrine into an interrelated whole.

One should not expect to find it an easy book. It will provide all but the best with months of study and thinking. And it must be taken a little at a time and repeatedly. For its size and the familiarity of its topics are deceiving. Elert took seriously the German admonition — apparently unknown in Basel — that the art of genius lies in omitting the non-essential. And he has written one volume where other men would have written three or more.

A careful study of Elert's book will show that the Lutheran view of man has direct relevance for the Lutheran in any field of endeavor. With its clear analysis of the much-maligned and still more misunderstood "orders of creation" it illuminates the theological significance of man's existence in a situation ordered by the laws of nature and probability. It is within this context that the Creator both preserves and sits in judgment on His creatures. These orders of creation are the means by which God carries out His will. They are not to be misunderstood to mean that they, themselves, are to be equated with God's will. Rather within the orders of creation it is necessary to distinguish between God's creation and the disorderliness which man brought into that creation. But whether in accord with God's will or not, it is God's will that I live before Him in precisely this order of creation. And it is in this order of creation that I reveal the character of my ethos and stand under the judgment of God. (It is particularly unfortunate that this is obscured by the translation of "Schoepfungordnung" as "created order." One must read "order of creation.")

This in no way corroborates the old slander that Lutherans are quietistic. On the contrary, it may be my task to break with the old order and to reform it. It remains a question, however, whether this is the time and place to do so and whether I am the man. And the answer to that question will not be revealed until Judgment Day. The state, for example, is part of God's plan for His creation. It is made necessary by the fact that there are many families living together and some sort of supra-familial order is necessary. The government of
Nero happened to be the order of creation within which Paul existed; one will certainly not maintain that Paul and the Apostles called to revolt against this power of evil. Elert does not deny the possibility that revolution and the consequent disordered destruction of the existing order may be necessary. He does, however, point out that one must first attempt to effect changes within the existing order, making use of that order as an administrative organ of the political use of the law to preserve God's creation.

The analysis of the orders of creation may prove to be the most directly stimulating to the lay reader. The Lutheran distinctions between the two kingdoms and between Law and Gospel provide the basis for an approach to life which is intellectually respectable and capable of decisive and meaningful activity. One may disagree with this Lutheran understanding of life but there is no other reason for Lutherans to turn to non-Lutheran sources for their understanding of the Christian Ethos.

In the second section of the book, the most striking thing to this reviewer was the way in which Elert shows the basic agreement between the Synoptics and Paul. Whether he is discussing Jesus as Friend of Sinners, as Lord and Master, or the relationship between Jesus' understanding of the law and that of Paul — the inherent validity of the Confessional principle that the Word of God is Law and Gospel becomes apparent. This is a methodological approach which gives Lutheranism a coherent and integral approach to Scripture.

The publishers are to be congratulated on their initiative in bringing this book to us in an English translation. We cannot congratulate them, however, either on the translation or on the editorial practices which they followed.

This reviewer is well aware of the difficulties facing the translator and the unavoidable errors which he, under some law of probability or other, seems doomed to fall prey. Even those who edit the translation will fall prey to such errors. We find it hard to believe, however, that the multiplicity and regularity of the inaccurate reproduction of Elert's meaning can be explained statistically. We are sending a list of such inaccuracies to the publishers and can only hope that they will reconsider the entire translation in a most careful fashion. It certainly cannot be reprinted in this form. And those who purchase this edition should — if we may speak ethically — be provided with a list of the errors.

The errors are particularly unfortunate because they make the reading of Elert unnecessarily difficult. This is a difficult enough book to read in the German language. Still more so in English. The reader must understand why this is so, lest he direct his resentment against the author. Three things have happened to Elert's text in translation. 1) The small words which bind sentences together have often been omitted with a resultant loss of continuity. The reader will often have to write in his own "but's", "however's", etc. 2) The division of the paragraphs has been mutilated. At first it seemed that this had been done under the principle that two short paragraphs are better than one longer one. And this is often the case. However, a technical theological book is not a newspaper and we may hope that its reader has the patience to follow thought through to its conclusion. Sometimes a longer paragraph is simply necessary. However, no principle was followed consistently. Occasionally two short paragraphs of Elert are combined to form one; still worse three paragraphs are combined to form two. And when one finds that the long awaited conclusion of a paragraph which ties everything preceding together has been made a paragraph by itself or even the first sentence of the next paragraph one's frustration knows no end. Whoever knows the extreme care with which Elert expressed himself will find it hard to believe that he would have agreed to this practice. And the reader who finds his chain of thought perilously dangling over the rim of a paragraph should either learn German or write a letter to the publisher. 3) The German subjunctive has often been translated with a simple indicative. Even in modern English "can" and "could" are not interchangeable. This means that what Elert presents as possibility with the purpose of rejecting it is presented as his own opinion; and the reader does a double-take half a page later. Indirect discourse in which Elert presents another man's views is not indicated as such by the translation — but that is only a variation of the latter.

Let the reader, therefore, beware of laying this book aside in disgust. The basic thought does come through. And an experience such as this may well convince him of the necessity of retaining the study of foreign languages in our schools. And he may always comfort himself with the thought that the first 120 pages are the worst.

We can regard the omission of Elert's bibliographies only as a defect. Elert's major bibliography has been replaced by an American invention. It is difficult to understand the sense of this. It certainly cannot be because the American reader would not be able to use the German and Scandinavian books to which Elert refers; in that case, the bibliography of the English edition would not include the foreign language works which it actually does.

Elert provided every section of his book with a detailed bibliography which is in effect a program of study permitting the interested reader to follow the development of the Church's thinking on various points from the ancient order until the present time. They were an essential part of the German edition and should remain part of the English edition. There is no valid reason for their omission. At the very least, such changes and omissions should have been noted.

Some of Elert's most important footnotes and cross-references have been omitted. Typical is the omission of Elert's extensive documentation in favor of a note on the dates of Justin's life — which is simply an addition of Elert's text. (p. 72, fn. 3).

Na Ta, Americans study History of Doctrine, too.

Elert's remarks on the relationship between the Creator and the creature in the redemption are so poorly translated that they say exactly the opposite in English that they did in German. The last two sentences of the second full paragraph on page 25 must read: "The difference is a presupposition of the existing situation, but not the essence or content of the God-man encounter. It does not frustrate the plan of salvation, for it is not negated by human sin, nor does the difference have to be removed in the process of salvation." The misunderstanding is at least consistent, for it is repeated on page 145. In line 14 one must read the difference between the Creator and the creature has been restored (and not "abolished").

Finally we must take issue with the translation of usus politicus as the law of the "social use" of the law. This is hardly in agreement with Elert's thinking. If the direct translation "political use" were not acceptable the translation "civil" use might have been adopted; or the Latin phrase might have been retained — a large number of more difficult ones have in fact been left untranslated. "Social use" is misleading as a translation for it hides the fact that Elert always sees the usus politicus as the law of retribution. It can only be administered where it is backed by force. (p. 104). The use of "social" is further questionable in the light of Elert's critique of Melanchthon's use of the Aristotelian concept of societas (Morphologie des Luthertums, 2nd edition. II, 26ff.)

The useful indices of the German edition have been only partially included. The subject-matter index is shortened and the index of names and Scriptural references is omitted entirely. They should be included in a new edition.

ROBERT C. SCHULTZ

RELIGION

WHEN THE LIGHTS ARE LOW

By Henry Rische (Concordia, $2.50)

This is not a book of ordinary sermons. The book jacket explains that this collection of writings was developed from the
The translation, which is excellent, is Fox’s own. Purists will certainly object to the use of “only-begotten” for monogenes in the excerpt from the Timaeus (92C, p. 50), where it hardly fits Plato’s intention. But not even the purists will find many such instances to object to.

On the whole the collation is interesting and suggestive. I should, however, have two reservations about it.

1) The first concerns the Biblical quotations which precede the selections from Plato. Some of them seem to be rather arbitrary. Why for example, choose “God so loved the world” to compare with the description of the creation of the cosmos out of chaos in the Timaeus (53A-B, p 51, no. 24)? Or what relation are we to find between “the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up” (Is. 6,1) and the scala amoris of the Symposium (p. 65, no. 32)? Perhaps the author intends only to avoid repetition, for in the first instance he had already referred to Genesis 1 (which is the Biblical reference that most immediately suggests itself) and in the second instance he does later refer to 1 Corinthians 13 (which again is the reference that most immediately suggests itself).

2) The second reservation concerns methodology. The archdeacon describes his procedure thus: “I read through the works of Plato with attention and noted what I thought to the purpose.” Now that is a rather elusive principle of selection! It means that the present collation can hardly be further developed without starting right at the beginning again. Supposing I should want to make the collection more complete? I should then have myself to read all the works of Plato and note the passages which “I thought to the purpose.” I might then, of course, compare notes with Mr. Fox. But I wonder whether one could not choose a more objectively defined procedure, according to which another person might continue the archdeacon’s work without needing to retrace all his steps, particularly since the present work does not claim to be complete. Would it not have been more helpful to select all the passages from Plato which bear on, say, “anthropology” and then compare them — both as to agreement and as to difference — with Pauline passages relating to his anthropology?

The author might, of course, counter with the argument that such was not his intention — or that it would even be impossible. In that case, then, we are to use the book as a source of stimulation or entertainment even, but no more. In that sense, it is more like a scrabble game than a piece of research.

Well, I enjoy scrabble games. And I enjoyed reading Plato and the Christians.

ROBERT SCHARLEMMAN

GENERAL

LEFTOVER LIFE TO KILL

By Caitlin Thomas (Atlantic-Little, Brown, $4.50)

This is the story of what happens to a sensitive, warm-hearted child when her god dies. In this instance, the child is middle-aged and her god happened to be her husband but the summary is accurate, nevertheless. For while that side of Mrs. Thomas which can set the neighbors to snarling “Prostitute! Prostitute!” seems to have matured prodigiously, there is that about her which prompts the same sort of reverence and profound compassion that one feels at the bedside of a suffering child.

The marriage of Caitlin and Dylan Thomas was a tempestuous affair involving two people who apparently could not live without each other and yet had no weapon against each other except infidelity. Dylan’s early death, still inadequately explained, left his widow in a lightless void which she tried to fill with most of the usual escape devices. Her attempts to escape brought her to the brink of self-destruction where, one gathers, she still hovers.

If this were a novel, one might reasonably criticize it as shocking and vulgar for it would be fundamentally indecent for a writer to create a Caitlin Thomas. What saves this story from that criticism is the fact that a) it is the record of what actually happened to one of us and b) that it is told with honesty and with a great deal of literary skill. The ugly truth, honestly told, can not be pornographic for it does not invite imitation but pity. Mrs. Thomas is not a female Casanova or deSade boasting of her exploits. Her book is a Kyrie addressed to the darkness.

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Intense suffering dulls rationality and there are outbursts scattered through the book which, coming from the ordinary person, would have to be condemned as unintelligent and obscene. Some of these are addressed to her husband, some to those who lionized (and, perhaps, destroyed) him, some to the world at large and her own corner of it in Wales, in particular. These will be seized upon by the spiritual descendants of those nice people who brought a woman to our Lord who had been taken in sin, "in the very act."

One hopes that when they bring her to Him she will be quiet for a minute and let Him speak. For He has something to say that she needs very badly to hear: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more."

THE PICK OF PUNCH
Edited by Nicolas Bentley (Dutton, $4.95)

For the best in contemporary humor, laid on week by week, there is no beating Punch or the London Charivaria. Under the brilliant editorship of Malcolm Muggeridge (recently, alas, retired), Punch has assembled what must be the largest stable of first-rank wits so far gathered under any one editorial roof, among them P. G. Wodehouse, Claud Cockburn, H. F. Ellis, R. G. G. Price, J. B. Boothroyd, Lord Kinross, and Alex Atkinson. Add to these a crew of cartoonists of New Yorker level and it must be obvious that Punch is a magazine sui generis.

When, therefore, a connoisseur of wit as competent as Nicolas Bentley chooses from such a magazine the best that it has done in recent years the product is very rich, indeed. Here for instance, is Lord Kinross's amusing vignette of New York, "The City of Dreamless Spires." Here are Hollowood and Atkinson doing a clever and fairly astringent satire on these allegedly objective studies of sexual behavior, "Promiscuity, Lust, and Everything." Here is Folon's cartoon of the artist in the Place Vendome, finger on brush as though to measure the pediments, pillars and lamp standards but painting a picture of the enhanced brush. Here is Alex Atkinson's spoof on Waiting for Godot, "Pyramus and Thisbe."

The humor is highly literate, carefully restrained, sometimes biting. Indeed one may question whether Claud Cockburn's bitter little piece on John Foster Dulles ("Sanctions") can properly be classified as humor at all. But no one could deny that it is incisive.

And this is perhaps one reason why Punch wears so well. Its writers are not gagmen. Behind the humor stand some obvious commitments and some obvious dislikes. In general, Punch dislikes John Foster Dulles, General Nasser, the new literary coterie of "Angry Men" symbolized by Kingsley Amis, the more inane operations of the B.B.C., pompous politicians, all varieties of imbecility, and the devices of modern-day huckstering. It likes Americans (with the exception noted above), Sir Winston Churchill, eccentrics of all kinds, clergy-men who slip anti-freeze into the baptismal font, birdwatchers, elderly spinners who are Prepared to Defend Their Virtue, redundant military types with bristling mustaches and popping eyes, and animals.

This is the book you give to the friend who has everything.

MAJORITY OF ONE
By Sydney J. Harris (Houghton Mifflin, $3.75)

Syd Harris is the crew-cut, chain-smoking, controversial writer of a column called "Strictly Personal" which appears nightly in The Chicago Daily News and which primarily accounts for our dog-like devotion to that paper. (It also runs Lil' Abner and Pogo, the other two reasons why we prefer it to The New York Times.) MAJORITY OF ONE is the second published collection of essays which have appeared in that column.

Harris is a writer's writer which is to say that no one cares what he is like personally or what he would be like to work with every day. He has style, he has a brain, and he knows how to use style to make fairly difficult thought comprehensible to the ordinary reader. In the process, he has managed to assemble a remarkably large army of faithful readers, on whose toes he treads heavily and acidously.

Many of the things which Harris writes about are frankly labeled "Purely Personal Prejudices." It is no exaggeration to say that his purely personal prejudices are Legion. He dislikes all forms of pomposity (except, perhaps, his own), all imitations of the real thing, all kinds of hypocrisy, practically everything that appears on television, "cute" names, fuddy-duddies, pseudo-intellectualism, and Monday mornings.

But it is one of Harris' saving virtues that he is not only prejudiced against things but for certain other things. Side by side with a gift for deadly satire goes an almost childlike capacity for appreciation. When Harris is for something you know he is for it. Essentially, he is an intellectual surgeon — an artist with the knife where the knife is necessary but endowed with a bedside manner that any doctor might envy.

Highly recommended.

THE SATURDAY BOOK
Edited by John Hadfield (Macmillan, $6.00)

With 36 British authors and artists contributing, The Saturday Book, an annual of which this is the 17th edition, most closely resembles a high calibre magazine filled with articles covering a wide range of interests. The subjects covered by the 31 authors illustrate the diversity of the offerings for there are selections on flower arranging, jazz music, doll's houses, engineering as an art, gun collecting, and the history of giants. The success of these pieces lies in the fact they were written by persons whose hobbies they are. For instance, John Nash writes on the aspidistra and Richard Carrington, the zoologist, has the article on giants. The writing in all cases is lucid and light.

Illustrating the volume are almost two hundred photographs, paintings, drawings, and woodcuts by noted artists. All of the art work, and particularly the color reproduction, is excellently done.

The Saturday Book is one of those rare ideal gifts for the person who has everything or for the one who enjoys reading sketches on some unusual subjects by interesting and gifted writers.

THE WILL TO THINK
(Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, $6.00)

This volume carries the sub-title, "A Treasury of Ideas and Ideals from the pages of THINK." The magazine "Think" is published by the International Business Machines Corporation, and has a worldwide circulation. The book consists of a series of essays and articles ranging from as far back as 1938 to the present time. The book is divided into 10 sections with such titles as "Thoughts on Thinking," "Thoughts on Growth," "Thoughts on Education," and "Thoughts on Science." There are several well known authors listed. The articles are all short, averaging four to eight pages. There are some articles that are interesting and stimulating, notably the one by President Vannevar Bush of the Carnegie Institute of Washington. Many of the articles, however, are superficial and can be read very easily and many may offer amusement for a leisure few moments.

In my opinion the best way to describe the book would be to state that almost every article could have been culled from the pages of the condensed monthly pocket magazines that are so popular in America today. I would consider it entertaining reading for a railroad journey or for those in the convalescent ward of a hospital.

HERMAN C. HUSSE

FICTION

ATLAS SHRUGGED
By Ayn Rand (Random House, $6.95)

When Cervantes wrote Don Quixote he was consciously satirizing a system which had become anachronistic and was ready to be laughed away into limbo. Miss Rand, quite unintentionally, has written a minor Don Quixote about a system which she seems to admire and it is only her utter lack of understanding of the nature and functioning of that system that prevents her from making it appear thoroughly ridiculous.
**Atlas Shrugged** is a kind of reverse-Orwellian preview of a not too distant future when the last of the old breed of capitalists, now reduced to a small hard core, retreat from a world of confiscatory taxation, intellectual snears, and religious reubes to a hide-away deep in the Rocky Mountains. There, under the leadership of a Brilliant Physicist, they wait for the "liberals" to brew up enough of their own juices to stew in. Meanwhile, deprived of its tycoons, civilization goes to pot.

One of these tycoons, not yet esconced in the hideaway at the novel's opening, is a hard-headed sexpot named Dagny Taggart. Dagny runs a railroad (actually her brother is president of the outfit but he is a liberal so you can imagine how much he knows about railroading) and she runs it along the general policy line of the late Commodore Vanderbilt whose motto was, "The public be damned." But Dagny does not spend all of her time running railroads.

Well, the book runs to 1168 pages so it's pretty hard to condense all of the action into a brief review. Essentially what happens is that eventually Dagny ends up in the valley with the other tycoons, the world goes to pot, the liberals try to force the tycoons to come back and take over, the tycoons escape their clamy clutches and get back to their hideaway, practically everybody starves to death, and then, at the end, Dagny and the Brilliant Physicist are discovered in fond embrace upon a mountain top and the Brilliant Physicist speaks:

"The road is cleared," said Galt. "We are going back to the world." He raised his hand and over the desolate earth he traced in space the sign of the dollar.

Silly as all of this must sound, it doesn't begin to plumb the dark depths of silliness in this book. Materialism, like halitosis, is an affliction to which we are all subject from time to time and which some of us suffer from chronically. But we don't write novels about the glories of halitosis and we certainly don't blow it up into a Weltanschauung. Moreover — and from the critic's point of view this is the fatal defect of this novel — the kind of materialism from which Miss Rand's capitalists suffer is not, and never has been, the philosophical base of the capitalist system.

If one is concerned with defending a system, surely one would depict it at its best rather than at its worst. If one were trying to draw a picture of the capitalist as Hero, surely one would draw his image from the capitalist at his best, rather than choosing some aberrant type. And who is this archetypical capitalist Hero? We would place in nomination the name of Mr. Herbert Hoover who, going from an Iowa farm, piled up his millions by hard work and ingenuity and then entered public service as the symbol of the business man in government.

But there is no Hoover among Miss Rand's tycoon's. And for a good reason. For Mr. Hoover would not be likely to stay overnight where, from any direction, his eyes would be arrested by a pillar topped with a solid-gold dollar sign. Like most of the most successful products of the capitalist system, Mr. Hoover had considerably more than a knack for making money. He had a conscience and a profound sense of obligation to his fellow man. One could quarrel endlessly with the man's economic and political philosophies but one could never come away from an encounter with him without realizing that he had been in the presence of greatness.

There are no perfectly good or perfectly bad economic systems. Where he is in the presence of a materialist capitalist, the Christian is bound to denounce the many and obvious evils in the capitalist system. In the presence of the materialist communist, the Christian must denounce the many and obvious evils in the communist system. And in the privacy of his own closet, the Christian must denounce the many and obvious evils in his own economic world view, whatever that may be.

The argument for capitalism in the United States has never been that it is a perfect system or that it is man's closest approximation to the economics of heaven. The argument has always been that capitalism is as compatible with the Christian ethic as is any other economic system (and by the same token, as incompatible) and that in the particular historical and geographic setting of American society it has accomplished far more for the general welfare than could be reasonably hoped for under any other system. A part of the strength of capitalism in our country has been the willingness of its champions to make such modifications in the system as circumstances and necessity might dictate. These accommodations have often been the products of long and sometimes rancorous debate but the loudest part of that debate has been between idiots of the extreme Right and idiots of the extreme Left.

And this, too, should be noted: that American capitalism has its roots in a definition of man totally opposite to that suggested by Miss Rand. It was precisely because the tycoons of the late Nineteenth Century believed in a God who rewarded brains and hard work with material wealth that they could find satisfaction in the accumulation of wealth. Say what you like about the American capitalist, it is impossible to argue convincingly that he was an amoralist, a hedonist, or an out-and-out materialist. These were not characteristically the philosophies of the men who had "made good" under the system; rather, they were the philosophies of those who envied those who had "made good." It was not the man who had a hundred million dollars who thought that money could buy anything. It was the guy who wished he had a hundred million dollars.

Maybe Miss Rand would see capitalism differently if she were a capitalist.

**THE TARNISHED TOWER**

By Ann Marbut (McKay, $3.95)

This is supposed to be a novel, but anyone who has been for any while in the academic world will have trouble swallowing the disclaimer that "The characters in this book are fictional. Any resemblance to persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental." Were it not for the law of libel, we could match every character in the book with a living person without going beyond a radius of a hundred miles from our office.

This is the story of Jerry Scott, Ph.D., and his wife, Peg. Jerry is, rather incidentally, a political scientist. What he is essentially is a guy on the make. Not for him, the ivory towers and long shelves of musty books. He is an operator whose field of operations happens to be the campus of Charleston University, although in other circumstances it might just as easily have been Wall Street or the state capitol or one of the mammoth corporations or the Teamsters Union. His big ambition is to Go to the Top, a mission which for him has nothing to do with pushing back the frontier of knowledge or quickening the minds of undergraduates but solely with collecting prestige symbols. He has no friends, only connections. He has no learning, only knowledge. He has no taste, only style.

He finds a congenial setting for his politicking and intriguing on the campus of Charleston University whose president is a handsome, stupid, lecherous front man for the real boss, a mean, grumpy character who runs the show from his office as executive assistant to the president. This eminent grie, Ross Adams, is a study in himself — a man who loves neither pomp nor wealth nor sex, whose only hunger is the hunger for power.

Peg Scott is everything that her husband is not — sensitive, generous, creative, self-sacrificing. Inevitably she finds herself taking sides with the honest souls at Charleston who have not sold out to the Cult of Importance. What this means for her marriage is, of course, almost completely predictable but nonetheless tragic.

Miss Marbut has subtitled her book, "a novel of educational huckstering." To the millions who still hold an idealized picture of the Groves of Academe as some sort of intellectual Arcadia her portraits may seem overdrawn. The real tragedy of the book is that it is so fictional. And that, in turn, is the real tragedy of the modern university.
Mr. Eisenhower seems to lead a rather quiet and orderly life, especially for one who is Chief Executive of a bustling and hurrying American population. He does not appear to make many decisions. He likes to golf, hunt, and fish, and to make trips to his farm. Baseball and football occupy a part of his time. We have been told that he spends many of his evenings reading Westerns and watching movies.

His television appearances are unhurried and relaxed. Most of the time, it seems to me, the President speaks to his press conferences as if the newspaper men were members of the first grade. His latest remarks on inflation and his little lesson to wives with respect to buying do not even meet the standards of Economics in One Easy Lesson.

At times, I think that his decisions are made for him by the Muses who regulate historical events. Apparently all Ike has to do is to sit back and things take care of themselves. In the Little Rock affair, he was slow to act. For many days, I was irritated because of his slowness. He hesitated. There is no question about that. But he wasn't lost.

Suddenly — after much ambiguous talk — there was only one thing for him to do: enforce the Supreme Court decision of May, 1954. If he had done otherwise, he would have been laughed out of school. Then — quietly and peacefully — he went back to his golf, his hunting and fishing, and his Black Angus cattle. He didn't talk much to the Little Rock incident and he didn't talk well — but, for the present, life has become peaceful in Arkansas. The nine Negroes are going to Central High School and Senator McClellan has gone to Washington.

Then came the Russian satellite. It whirled and whirled around the world, even the wide, wide world of Dave Garroway and the soft-sell artists of the NBC news staff. What does this mean, this thing circling the earth? Why, they said, the Russians have beaten us to the draw. Why, they said, this can't go on. What's the matter with our scientists? Why don't they do things like the Russians? Why, even the states-righters were ready to subsidize the scientists.

And what did Ike say? Well — first of all — he felt he and the rest of America ought to congratulate the Russian scientists for a noble achievement. Calmly, he explained that American scientific endeavors were not all wrapped up in one little old satellite program. There are other things to be done, there are other things being done. “Now you-all,” he seemed to be saying, “don’t you-all get excited. Some witch has taken your little old sucker away from you. But Daddy has got some other ones. You know, your old Dad after many years of experience is prepared for emergencies just like this.” Quietly and calmly, he can go on spending weekends out there with the Black Angus cattle.

When I talk to my GOP friends in this manner, inevitably any number of them will ask: “Why get nervous, old boy? Things are going along pretty well. America is progressing. We are building more houses. We have no real economic problems. Of course, we have a little trouble in blighted areas here and there. But those people, even at that, are getting better than they deserved. God (you know that, Hoffmann) only helps those who help themselves. You have had enough education to see that.”

Then, they go back to their golf, their hunting and fishing, and their Black Angus cattle. That's what's wrong with me and the managing editor of this magazine. We can't golf. No one would trust us with a gun, not even in a barn with the doors shut. And, this our wives know, we couldn't even buy a bell for a Black Angus bull.

So all the two of us can do is to pull our little old milk-stools up and read and think. Now and then, in today's way, we try to relax and practice the soft sell and the soft shoe approach.

But we keep looking around that corner. Just what is around that corner?
In the spring of 1956 the President of the United States appointed Lowell Thomas, veteran newsmen, author and globe-trotter, to act as his personal representative - with the rank of ambassador - at the coro-

nation of the King of Nepal. Mr. Thomas has recorded his experiences in this assignment in Search for Paradise (Stanley Warner Cinerama Corporation), the fourth in the series of Cinerama productions which have thrilled audiences wherever this spectacular new medium has been exhibited.

Search for Paradise is an engrossing and exciting travelog. It captures with impressive realism the forbidding grandeur of the towering Himalayas, a danger-paked trip on the turbulent Indus River, the Oriental splendor of the coronation festivities at Katmandu, the soaring beauty of airplanes in flight through space, the barbaric dress and customs of far-distant lands and peoples, and the perils and hardships encountered on the difficult journey to a remote kingdom in the Himalayas. A well-made musical score by Dimitri Tiomkin, superb singing by Robert Merrill, and a fine chorus add to the over-all excellence of the presentation. Again, however, I must report that the sound track is almost deafening and that images on the Cinerama screen are not always free from distortion.

In a brief introduction Alistair Cooke informs the audience that The Three Faces of Eve (20th Century-Fox, Nunnally Johnson) is based on an authentic re-

port compiled by two psychiatrists who are attached to the University of Georgia. This is the factual case history of a young Georgia housewife whose life was disturbed because she was the victim of a multiple personality - a rare occurrence in medical records. In this instance the condition came about as the result of a severe shock experienced in childhood.

Joanne Woodward plays this difficult and taxing role with remarkable effectiveness. She has excellent support from Lee J. Cobb and David Wayne. In spite of obvious shortcomings imposed by a delicate and complex subject, The Three Faces of Eve should hold your attention from start to finish.

The Story of Esther Costello (Columbia, David Mil-

ler), adapted from the novel by Nicholas Montsarrat, also has to do with the physical and psychological effects of shock. Here the child Esther becomes deaf, mute, and blind when her mother is burned to death in an accident - an accident, moreover, for which Esther feels herself directly responsible.

Heather Sears, a young English actress, portrays the girl Esther with exceptional artistry. Joan Crawford is seen as the compassionate American woman who takes Esther from squalid surroundings and, with trained assistance, teaches her to read, to write, and to speak. Rosanno Brazzi convincingly plays the unscrupulous promoter who turns a bonafide charitable project into a sordid racket. The Story of Esther Costello is a dark and depressing film, relieved only by the inspiring sequences which show the methods employed to teach handicapped children to become happy, self-reliant, and useful individuals.

The cycle of undistinguished films that are said to depict the lives of famous show-business personalities goes on and on. Jeanne Eagles (Columbia, George Sidney) stars Kim Novak as the talented actress whose brief and brilliant career ended in her tragic death as a suicide. Ann Blyth is cast in the title role in The Helen Morgan Story (Warners, Michael Curtiz), the sorry tale of another colorful but dissolute figure from the troubled 1920's. Frank Sinatra is the star in The Joker is Wild (Paramount, Charles Vidor), a film biographgy of Joe E. Lewis, a popular night-club singer of the same era. Although these films feature many of the song hits of a bygone day, this seems to me to be small recompense for tasteless dialog, obviously contrived sequences, and the distortion of facts.

By the way of welcome change and sharp contrast, we have The Pajama Game (Warners, George Abbott), a gay and glittering musical comedy distinguished for its fine cast, engaging melodies, and excellent direction.

Movie magazines and fan clubs have done their utmost to keep alive the memory of the late James Dean. The James Dean Story (Warners, Robert Altman) is obviously a last frantic attempt to cash in on public interest in a tragic story. It seems to me that George Stevens, the great director who had much to do with Jimmy's success, summed up the entire sorry business when he said: "Jimmy was just a regular kid trying to make good in Hollywood. Someone's making a pile of dough out of this morbid Dean business, and that's one reason they're working so hard to keep it alive. But the full irony of Dean's plan to win fame and glory was that his fatal accident wasn't a part of the scheme. Yet that really made the legend."
Dear Stephen —

Last night was a strange and memorable night. . . . I want to tell you about it because I believe that it will mean something when these Christmas letters will no longer be a part of life for you or me . . . . My class had lasted longer than usual and when I left the office, the campus was lonely and dark . . . . A light snow was whirling across the cone of light thrown by the lamp before the library, moving swiftly from darkness to darkness . . . . I turned my collar up against the wind and walked up the old, deserted street — so familiar now after almost twenty years . . . .

The house was still with the warm stillness of your untroubled sleep . . . . You have been here five years now and each night baptismal grace is still in your up-flung arm and your quiet breathing . . . . I went to my room and turned the knob on the little black box beside my bed . . . . The midnight news might turn my mind from the little anxieties of the day . . . . Suddenly I froze into total attention . . . . The announcer said: “You will now hear the sound of Sputnik and the heartbeat of the dog.” . . . . In another moment the room was filled with a curious, chilling sound . . . . a long “beep-beep-beep” in a pitch like a wailing banshee . . . . a pause and then a sound I had heard before . . . . the sound of a heart through a stethoscope . . . . the only voice of a little dog whirling through the Universe at eighteen thousand miles an hour . . . .

I turned the sound off and sat quietly on the edge of the bed, my thoughts now too whirling from darkness to darkness . . . . This was now your world . . . . death raining from the unheeding skies . . . . a staggering weapon in the hands of men who play with almost limitless power as you play with your toys . . . . This was — and is — and will be — the world in which you must live your days and your years . . . .

Very slowly I went downstairs again . . . . Perhaps you will remember that we had played our first Christmas carols that afternoon . . . . I turned them on again, lighted a little candle before the Advent angel with the broom, and moved toward my favorite corner before the fire . . . . Suddenly the old familiar sounds flooded the dark room . . . . “It Came upon the Midnight Clear” — “Praise God, the Lord” — “Silent Night, Holy Night” — . . . . For a moment I thought that the contrast — between the sound upstairs and downstairs — would be mortally unbearable . . . . Only one of them could be true and real . . . . but not both . . . .

But only for a moment . . . . These sounds and words — so old now and familiar and lovely — were here long before Sputnik . . . . from all eternity in the counsels of the Holy Trinity . . . . to all eternity in the mind and heart of God Who loved you so much that there was once, long ago, the miracle and mystery of the Incarnation . . . . a hard word to understand, I know, but on Christmas Eve, I am sure, you will understand it as well as I do . . . . The Baby will be in the manger under the tree, very real and very near and all will be well with both of us . . . . For despite Sputnik — just a new way of rattling old swords — He is also the God and Savior of the men who must obey His will and His voice . . . . even after they have made Sputnik . . . .

And so — soon — night, the cold great singing night of the year will come down and surround the well-loved house on Christmas Eve . . . . There will be light and shadows on the snow as they are in my heart tonight . . . . but the light will be greater . . . . Another Christmas prayer for you and me — separated by the years of my aloneness — but together now where we can be together — always . . . .

Be close. Be with me. Hush the days last cries
That echo in my ear.
Put out the light that glitters in my eyes;
The night is here.
Quiet my hands restless and quivering,
Quench the last tear I weep,
Dismiss my voice, blow out my breath, and sing
My heart to sleep.
We shall say that to the Child . . . . and He will do all that . . . . and more . . . .