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The Cresset

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The State of the Union

We suspect that President Eisenhower’s state-of-the-union message will be remembered as one of his best speeches. It was a thoughtful and frank statement of our present situation, a candid admission of certain mistakes that we have made in the past, and an encouraging promise of quick and effective action to rectify these mistakes. The President seemed to know what he was talking about and he sounded like a man who is ready to swing into action. It is to be hoped that the vigor of his action will match the vigor of his words.

We were especially happy about certain things that the President had to say, among them his comments on the present world power situation. Without playing down the potential significance of Russian successes in their satellite and missile program, he reminded us that we have a well-organized security program of our own which, even in the event of surprise attack, could deal such crushing retaliatory blows that potential aggressors would be reluctant to invite them. It has seemed to us ever since this Sputnik-panic swept over our country that much of the hysteria derived from a false assumption that a weapons threat could be answered only in kind. It is not necessarily true that it takes an ICBM to answer an ICBM. We have geographical advantages working on our side which make an ICBM much less potentially valuable to us than it is to the Russians.

We were pleased, also, with the President’s emphasis upon the necessity of maintaining an intelligent program of economic assistance to our allies as a part of the total defense job, and we are glad that he had the courage to condemn criticism of so-called “give-away” programs for the emotional sloganeering that it is. The President displayed a subtlety which we had not thought he possessed when he refuted the isolationism of some of the members of his own party with a comment on the witlessness of isolationism from the mouth of their own prophet, William McKinley.

One of the most gratifying sections of the message had to do with the problem of mobilizing the intellectual resources of the nation. The President made it clear that he does not propose to compensate for our previous under-emphasis upon the sciences by over-emphasizing them at the expense of other kinds of learning. We shall be interested to see how this balanced program of intellectual mobilization works out in practice. For ten years we have been hearing all sorts of people singing the praises of the social sciences and the humanities but the singers seem to disappear whenever the hat goes 'round.

We suspect that we were happier than was the President’s immediate audience at his thinly-veiled criticisms of pork-barrel appropriations and we suspect that this will be one part of his message that will get little consideration in an election year. Nor are we going to put the blame for this on the members of the Congress. So long as voters judge the capabilities of their representatives by their ability to bring federal money into their districts, so long will it be necessary for even the most high-minded members of the Congress to raid the barrel for as much as they can get out of it.

There were a couple of things that we did not like about the President’s address. In the first place, we wish that Mr. Eisenhower would not be so theologically naive as to define the present world power struggle as a conflict between atheists on one side and god-fearing people on the other. It really isn’t that simple, after all, and the suggestion that it is only exposes us to charges of hypocrisy when we find ourselves forced to operate on the basis of prudential ethics. And in the second place we wish that Mr. Eisenhower had given some indication that the realism which he proposed as a basis for our thinking about problems of defense would also be applied to our foreign policy.
In our judgment we are in as much need of a shake-up at the State Department as we are at the Pentagon.

Speeches do not, of course, build missiles or reorganize the defenses of a nation. What is needed now is sustained and vigorous action to convert wise recommendations into law. We have so much confidence in the President's good judgment that we hope, with Miss Doris Fleeson, that he will go into politics.

Back to 1928?

There are, we think, quite a number of good reasons for questioning Senator John F. Kennedy's qualifications for the presidency without resurrecting that old bogey-man of Roman Catholic intrigue. But the religious issue has already been injected into the debate on the senator's qualifications so here, for whatever it may be worth, is where we stand on the matter.

In the first place, we do not agree with those phony liberals who contend that a man's religion is a purely private matter. If a man is truly religious at all, his religious beliefs are the decisive factor in much of what he will want to try to accomplish before he entrusts him with any position that requires him to make decisions which affect other people. We suspect that some of Mr. Dulles' fixed ideas have their roots in certain Calvinistic teachings and that some of Mr. Ezra Taft Benson's peculiar notions can be traced back to some peculiar Mormon emphases. What has saved us the trouble of enquiring closely into the religious background of most of our statesmen and politicians is the simple fact that there wasn't much there to be enquired into. And so with respect to Senator Kennedy it would be necessary, first of all, to know whether he is a Roman Catholic in any very substantial sense of the term. This is a question which we lack sufficient information to answer.

But assuming that Senator Kennedy is a very devout Roman Catholic, we know of nothing in the teaching of his church which would make it any more difficult for him to faithfully execute the office of president than it would be for a devout Lutheran or a devout Presbyterian or a devout Jew to do so. It is no simple thing for any thoughtful, committed Christian to make the necessary compromises that go with majority rule. And this problem is just as difficult for the Protestant who seeks direction from the Bible as it is for the Roman Catholic who seeks direction from papal encyclicals.

Certainly, if we mean what we say about representative government, it is about time that Roman Catholics were allowed a voice in public affairs commensurate with their numbers. Roman Catholics have, as a matter of fact, served in every public office on every level of government except the presidency without, so far as we know, ever having given grounds for suspicion of divided allegiance. Much of Protestant fear of alleged Roman Catholic deviousness is, we suspect, a sublimation of a well-founded fear of the vigor of Roman Catholic theology. If Protestantism would get down to its proper business of setting its own theological house in order it might learn to respect Rome more, to disagree with Rome more strongly, and to fear Rome much less than it does now.

These remarks are not to be construed as an endorsement of Senator Kennedy. But we do hope that other Protestant spokesmen will join us in deploving this resurgence of anti-Roman feeling which can do nothing but divide our people on a false issue and magnify the unhappy divisions within Christendom.

Defense Shake-up

Whoever it was that first described the rhinoceros as "an animal that looked like it had been put together by a committee" said all that needs to be said about the present structure of our national defense establishment. The Rockefeller civilian study group has done the nation a major service by focusing attention upon the present unwieldy structure with its lack of unified authority and its tendency to reward causation and mediocrity.

The recommendations of the Rockefeller committee must, however, be read in the light of the statement ascribed to Clemenceau that "war is too important a matter to be left to the generals." The danger inherent in any scheme to unify the armed forces under any one super-chief is necessarily two-fold: 1) that the super-chief may not be the most capable and imaginative military man available, in which case the whole defense structure may suffer from the incompetence at the top, and 2) that the super-chief may suffer from the delusions of grandeur that have so often in the past gone with military brilliance (Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Wellington, Patton) and that the enormous potential power of his office would represent a threat to civilian control of national policy.

It is essential, in times of crisis, to maintain the long view. It is even more essential, in a time when cherished institutions are threatened, to keep one's attention fixed upon the institutions which one is attempting to preserve lest they be destroyed by the very policies and practises that have been designed to preserve them. It is true in the political order, also, that a nation which is over-concerned with saving its life will lose it. It would be the supreme irony if we were to attempt to preserve our free institutions by converting our nation into a military dictatorship.

Our constitution makes ample provision for unified control of the armed forces by vesting the powers of the commander-in-chief in the President. Let the President make full use of his powers and it will not be necessary to look to any six-star man on horseback.
Neither God Nor Devil

Last week we read a column by a churchman whose wisdom and judgement we have long respected but who has apparently been thrown off-balance by the recent successes of Soviet science. The tone of the column could best be described as petulant, the sort of tone one might expect from a small boy who has just been nipped by his new puppy and can not be comforted with anything less than a mass-slaughter of puppies. He was down on Science.

It happen that at about the same time we got caught in one of those mass streptoccal invasions that hit families with small children right after the first of the year and we spent a considerable part of several days running back and forth to the drugstore to have prescriptions filled or refilled. Probably the children would have recovered without the penicillin and the various mycins that we poured down their throats. But it was a great comfort to know that the stuff was inside them, working, and that we did not have to sit helplessly and wait for nature to take its uncertain course. And in the usual grochly recuperative stage it was a happy thing to be able to distract touchy dispositions with television.

What we are driving at is that it is childish to demand the puppy's death because it bites and it is just as childish to damn science because it gives man greater power than he formerly had to encompass his recent successes of puppies. He was down on fishing fleets. For some reason or other we have been nipped by his new puppy and can not be comforted with anything less than a mass-slaughter of wisdom and judgement we have long respected but he will do the wrong thing with it.

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of Bach. Boys and girls whose parents think that every religious question is answered in the catechism are not going to take kindly to the study of theology.

We have sought the answer to our educational problems in the learned journals and in the magazines of the professional educator. We would suggest that most of the answers have been there all along in the house and home magazines, in the gracious living sections of the women's magazines, and in the family fun articles in the family magazines. Take a look, once, at the floor-plans and full-color pictures of these long, low, radiant-heated, indirect-lighted houses and what is there to suggest that their inhabitants have either personalities or intelligences of their own? Bookshelves, yes, because an expensively-bound set of the encyclopedia is a part of the decor. But apart from the encyclopedia where are the books?

Much the same might be said about records, about paintings, about serious magazines, about good newspapers. They just aren't there. And we're not even going to say that they ought to be there. After all, a man's home really is his castle and we respect his right to make it whatever he wants it to be. But when a man makes a choice he has to accept its consequences, and all that we are saying now is that the consequences are pretty awful.

Footnote: We have had students from progressive schools and from traditional schools. We have had students from "tough" schools and "easy" schools. We have seen little correlation between the nature and philosophy of the school and the quality of work done by the student.

Opportunity for Right Man

While we are on the subject of higher education we ought to note that one of its most remunerative openings had not yet been filled at the time of this writing. This is the coaching position at Texas A and M.

As we understand it, this job is worth something like $60,000 a year in salary and fringe benefits to the right man. This is before taxes, of course, but even so it is a nice tidy figure and one which might tempt any dedicated soul who is interested in the business of character building and healthful recreation. But apparently you can't hardly find people like that nowadays, for the job has been open quite a while.

An interesting sidelight on this situation is that a friend of ours, a Ph.D. in one of the social sciences, was offered a job at that same college last year at a salary considerably lower than he had been getting at a small denominational college. The administration was hopeful, though, that the Texas legislature would appropriate additional funds to permit a faculty salary increase. Whether this hope was realized we do not know.

Before we proceed with these remarks, let us make two observations: 1) that physical education has an ancient and honorable pedigree dating all the way back to the Greeks and 2) that our modern colleges and universities would be much stronger than they are if the demands in the so-called "academic" fields were as high and stringent as are the demands that are made upon the varsity teams. We are not against getting the best coaches possible at a salary commensurate with their abilities.

What we object to is all of the hypocrisy that goes with big-time college athletics. When an institution such as Texas A and M goes out for a big-time coach because it obviously intends to field winning teams, we may question its wisdom but we admire its honesty. What we can't stomach is the kind of rot one hears almost constantly from certain schools that are buying all of the brawn they can find but cross their hearts and hope to die if every letterman on their squad isn't a major in philosophy or Norse literature.

One of these days some college president is going to win a place in educational history by issuing a statement cast somewhat along these lines:

"As of even date, Caligula College has decided to quit living in sin and make it legal. Beginning next semester, therefore, membership on our varsity teams will no longer be restricted to students at this institution. Applications will be received beginning today for positions on the football team, the basketball team, and the baseball team. Salaries will be competitive with those of similar positions on non-collegiate teams and players will share in the college's profits from athletics at the end of the fiscal year. Floreat Caligula!"

To which, if we ever see such an announcement, we shall respond, "Floreat Caligula!"
Who Cares About the Customer?

By ALFRED R. LOOMAN

Economists tell us business is going to be "off" for a few more months, and, during this period, it will be more difficult to sell consumers' goods to the public. As in all things, there is a possibility of good even in this state of affairs. One of the minor improvements which may result is a change in attitude on the part of retail sales clerks.

When any activity becomes too easy, the individual loses interest. This is what has happened in the retail business, when in the last decade anyone could sell anything with no effort except writing out a sales ticket and wrapping a package. The interested and helpful clerk has become a rarity, with the exception of some of the Christmas help who haven't been around long enough to learn the new philosophy that the public is seldom right.

To a teen-ager the uninterested clerk may seem to be normal, but the rest of us will remember what a pleasure it was really to be waited on in a store. What is missing today is the close personal relationship between clerk and customer; and the clerk's interest in his stock and his desire to please have almost vanished.

The most personalized service I can remember, and this I just barely remember, came from the old-time grocery store. There was a typical one just down the street from our house which stocked a good bit more than groceries and was a junior general store. The interior was dark, and groceries, hardware, and miscellaneous goods were stuffed into any space available.

The store was heated by a round stove that stood in the center of the room and was usually surrounded by the retired railroad employees of the neighborhood. A large number of barrels, higher than my head at that time, took up the floor space, and these contained various foods, dill pickles in brine, crackers, and sauerkraut. Barrels must have had some pleasant effect on the kraut and the pickles — as barrels are supposed to have on whiskey — because I have never tasted kraut or pickles so good since.

Shopping in a store of this type was an enjoyable and leisurely business. While the clerk assembled the groceries on a counter, you picked up the news, found the best buys, and generally passed the time of day. The relationship between clerk and customer couldn't have been closer if they had been related.

This type of grocery store changed into a cleaner and neater one with stock carefully stacked, but with the stove and barrels gone. Personal service was as good as ever, and even increased with more credit and daily delivery service. I have the impression that much of the business was run on credit, and this makes sense if most of the groceries were delivered.

I do remember going along on pay day when the bills were paid because then I could expect a treat. The bills were always paid in cash — no impersonal check was sent through the mail — and as soon as the money changed hands, the grocer would say to me, "Well, sonny, what would you like from the candy counter!" You can be sure sonny had already made a choice. In the meat market, when the bill was paid, the butcher would hand me a wiener and I munched this as we continued shopping.

This type of personal service was available in all retail stores. When Mother took me in to buy a suit, a shirt, or a pair of trousers, the clerk spent as much time on the choice of material and the fit as he would on a similar item for his own son. For the Saturday night treat at the confectionery, the soda fountain clerk seemed as interested as I was in the decision whether this week's soda should be chocolate or strawberry. And choosing the right colored thread for the dress on the Butterick pattern was as important to the clerk as to the customer.

One still finds stores where the old type of service exists among the clerks but the number is few, and I think you will agree that, in general, the personal relationship is about gone. The customers are partly to blame, for we are all too much in a hurry and haven't asked for more interest on the part of the clerks. If sales clerks do make a change for the better in the next year, I'll be happy. And, while I no longer expect any treats when paying a bill, I would enjoy hearing some clerk say "May I help you?" and mean it.
I Believe

We make many assertions about ourselves. We say, “I am this,” or “I can do that.” But the two words, “I believe,” spoken by the Christian in the spiritual sense, constitute the loftiest self-assertion the mind of man can make.

The words should, therefore, never be said rashly or thoughtlessly; they should be said only with a sense of commitment, of dedication, and therefore with firmness and finality. When we say, “I believe,” we should mean: “This, for me, is it! This is what I stake everything on!” We should not mumble these great words of a Sunday morning because others say them around us, or only because we have been taught them, or even because, in the one familiar form, God’s people have said them through sunshine and darkness, through victory and seeming catastrophe, through terror and into death, since nearly the days of the Apostles themselves; or, in the other familiar form, since A.D. 325 at Nicea when the Christian Church reaffirmed its steadfast faith that Christ is God of God and Light of Light, begotten, not made. We should say them only because, like Luther at Worms, we can not say anything else than what we do say, and do not want to say anything else.

The words, “I believe,” are indeed a self-assertion so great that no man can truthfully say them unaided. For the assertion requires an enlightenment, first of all, which alone make it possible for us to see what “eye hath not seen” of “the things which God has prepared for them that love Him,” and to know forever that “the things which are seen are temporal” and that only “the things which are not seen are eternal.” We need to be sure of an order of reality which is not demonstrable, which lies outside of time and beyond our senses or any instrumental extension of them, and which is never conditionel by the will of man.

And then, beyond this, we need a courage which we do not own of ourselves. For it involves the courage of trust. When we say, “I believe,” we assert that, contrary often to appearance, God can never be anything else than what he says He is. “I believe” means to take what appears to be a risk. It means to leap out into black darkness, when this needs be by divine will, and still to know that in the rayless night there is a light we cannot see, and that precisely in the void beneath, and nowhere else in the universe, lies the only safety there is — the safety of the everlasting Arms.

Faith is not only the fortitude God gives to walk without sight; it is often the courage to walk at all, to trust when there is nothing to trust but the Word of God! It is what made the feet of the martyrs march to death, though their reluctant legs shook, and their hearts hammered, and their rational minds shouted, “No!” To say, “I believe,” — and mean it — is to believe, therefore, that life often lies only in death, and that sometimes only in the ultimate catastrophe lies the ultimate victory, as Calvary reminds us these Lenten days. To say, “I believe,” means to claim a courage which has to be given by the Holy Spirit.

To say, “I believe,” means to claim, as well, a love which we do not own of ourselves. To believe means to subdue the ever clamourous self, and then, in the silence, to listen to two voices. It means to listen, first, to the Voice that comes from outside space and time and from beyond the reach of sin. It means ever and ever to listen, as well, to a voice that comes from inside of time and from beneath the curse of sin: the voice of the endless sobbing of the world around us that can finally be comforted only by the reign of God in the life of man. It means to look on human hate and to see, instead, and seeing to forgive, a fear that is too afraid to love. It means to look upon the ugly face of envy and to see, instead, the loneliness and loss of self-respect that seeks the cruel way of becoming more by making others less — because it knows no other way. It means to look into the heart of greed and to see a dreadfully empty life that tries to fill its void with gods because it has no God.

But to be able, by the grace of God, to say, “I believe,” means finally to be able also to look upon the strangely beautiful world of the Kingdom of God and to see it as real and right — the Kingdom of God, where no one lives who has not lost his life, and none can be beautiful except those who have seen their ugliness; where the child is the measure for the man, and the servant is lord; where the halt, the lame, and the...
blind are often the strongest and the clearest of sight; where only those who have mourned are comforted, where the humblest are greatest, and the richest are those who have given away all that they have. To believe means to look on the world of the Kingdom that seems upside down and to know it alone is right side up.

And so, when we have finished saying the Creed, we must always pray: "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!"

I Believe in God

These words of the Creed, like all of the rest of its tremendous assertions, from end to end, are in the present tense. They make no reference to any believing of the past, and none to any of the future. They require us to say, over and over again, that we believe in God now! In so doing they ask of us something hard — so hard that we can never do their bidding until the Holy Spirit makes our lives His permanent home.

Most of us have little trouble in believing that God has lived and done His wonders in the past, as in the great days of the prophets and apostles. We have likewise little trouble in believing that in days to come He will show His power again. It is the present that often gives our trouble. To believe that God is always present, even when the hooded hours come draped in their dark habiliments of tragedy that seem empty of God and as alone as our hearts are — this is often hard. Most of all, perhaps, we have trouble seeing God as someone near and real and serene in the trembling hour of fear. That is why, too, in the moment of anger, of greed, or of lust, we may say things or do things that forever leave us ashamed; for if, in the moment of sin, we had seen Christ standing there, would we still have sinned?

So the present has power to make unbelievers of us all, as it did with the disciples in the storm on Galilee. It hides God from us as neither past nor future can. The present can lie to us, and make us lie to God; and only the present can rob us of our salvation. Therefore it is necessary to our peace to obey the Creed, saying always, "I believe in God" now.

God, as we all know, is very real to the child; and one reason, I think, is this that, unlike us, he is not yet skilled in thinking in categories of time, in splitting off the past from the present, and the future from both. The tenses tend to run together for him and so to resemble God's own ageless concept of an everlasting NOW, in which all that has ever been and all that will ever be are simply and forever NOW. This is probably why it is seldom hard to persuade a child that because God has been in the past, as his Sunday School stories tell him, He is necessarily and very really in the present, too. Thus he comes home from Sunday School, as he so often does, to comfort unbelieving parents with a lost hope or to convert them by the simple realism of his prayers, in which God is not only the first Person in rank but also the first Person present in point of reality. Sure it is, as the ministry has long known, that souls called earliest to the Kingdom are also called the easiest.

Oddly enough, to split the past from the present is to make us suddenly aware, too, of the long future all filled with the urgencies and opportunities, the risks and perplexities, of an earthly career. And so the Creed, with its emphasis on the present and its present God, is choked, together with the rest of the Word of God, by the brambles and briars of ambition and anxiety. Only the sense of a God-in-the-present is able to leave the outcomes of the future in the hands of the Father who has never forgotten the lilies of the field or the birds of the air. Else God remains a thing of the past to be forgotten, on the one hand; and, on the other, a thing of the future to be remembered some day perhaps, but not yet when so much of the future remains.

This explains death-bed repentances. They come by shock, so to say — the shock of suddenly having no future left in which to keep God imprisoned away from life and from reckoning, and of learning that He is ever the Lord of every man's present, from whom there is, therefore, no final hiding place.

On the other hand it can be, and by God's intention should be, a blessed thing, as well, to see the future folding back into the present, where it belongs. One of the privileges of my early ministry was to serve one day with other pastors as a pall-bearer at the funeral of a much older and a very saintly and respected minister who had died of cancer — cancer of the throat. His grown son told me afterward that, for days before he died, his father had lost his voice, his vocal chords apparently gone. Then one day, just before he died, he summoned his family and, raising himself up, as he could speak, I do not know — although there may have been nothing whatever miraculous about it. But how he could speak as he did I think we do know. It was because, for him, too, the future had become forever the Lord of every man's present, from whom there is, therefore, no final hiding place.

How he could speak, I do not know — although there may have been nothing whatever miraculous about it. But how he could speak as he did I think we do know. It was because, for him, too, the future had become forever the Lord of every man's present, from whom there is, therefore, no final hiding place.

This, too, is why we must be able to say, every day of our lives: "I believe, now, in God who ever was and is and evermore will be!"
I Believe in Myself

To say, "I believe in myself," is to mean: "I believe in my own worth and in my own potentialities." The question follows: "Ought I, in the decency of humility, to think so or, especially, to say so before men and above all before God?"

Let me say, first of all, that I do not believe that I can do for myself what is commonly called changing oneself. Saving myself means changing myself — changing myself from what I am to what I ought to be. This I cannot do. I can change the appearance of what I am from what it is to what I should like other people to think it is. That is to say, I can change my responses and my self-expressions in word, deed, and manner. But I cannot change what I really am: I can only change what people think I am. It may be that, over the years, for the reason of self-esteem or of social or professional prestige, or perhaps sometimes just out of plain fear of consequences, I have sometimes tried to do this. If so, it may have fooled people. It may even have fooled myself. But it has not fooled God. He and I both know now (and He long before I) that only He can change me and, by doing so, save me.

In the second place, I do not believe that I am worth saving, let alone deserve saving. If I did believe this, I could not possibly prove it. The only thing I can prove, strangely enough, is that God thinks I am worth saving. This is strange because I do not understand why He should think so. Yet He does think so, because He has said so and because, as Lent reminds me, He has proved that He thinks so.

My point today is that what we think of ourselves is not the basic thing. Nor is what other people think of us the determinative factor, for they can be wrong either way. What is important, and what should be decisive, is what God thinks of us. This is what both shook and strengthened Luther when he dared to assert himself before Church and empire and say, "Here I stand!

... Always we have to ask, "What does God think of me?" For what I believe that God thinks of me is, in the end, what I think of myself — and should think of myself. In this sense, too, we live or die by what we believe; and for this reason, too, religious truth is always more important than any other kind of truth. In fact, our estimate of ourselves is always a religious one, finally.

We should believe, therefore, if we don't, that we amount to very much indeed; and we should believe the same thing of every one else. In fact, we are to believe that we are ends in ourselves, never to be used as means to other people's ends; and this is what we are to think of other people. For this is what God thinks of us, and this is how God has always treated us. The awesome thing and the incredibly wonderful thing about Calvary and the Cross of our Lord is that this was what God was doing at Calvary — treating us as ends of immeasurable worth. Therefore He gave His Son for me. That is to say, He made Himself a means that I might be an end. My Lord therefore became my Servant. He humbled Himself and became the means of a redemptive purpose which could not stop until it stopped at Calvary when my Lord's heart itself stopped — for me! What we confront here is the mystery of the words we learned so long ago, and know so well, but have never understood: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Incredible mystery which I shall never plumb, but before which I must worship world without end!

Yet, oddly enough, no one has ever become conceited by knowing what God thinks of him. Rather than that, it always humbles him. For the strange thing is that when I am perfectly sure that God has made me an end in myself and has given me worth and importance, then for the first time in my life I want to use myself as just a means to an end, completely expendable in service to God and man. I shall want to use myself thus, and not be afraid to, because I shall know beyond doubt that God loves me. I shall be sure of that because I shall be sure that, in my sins, I was not worth loving. Once sure of that, I shall be sure of something else, too: that if God loved me, not because of what I was, but in spite of it, then God will never stop loving me because of what I may yet become. I shall always matter to God. Therefore, I shall always matter.

Finally, then, I believe in my own worth because I believe that God — and only God — can still, as at the beginning of the world, take nothing and out of it make something.

I Believe in the Future

We have no choice. We have to believe in the future. That is, we have to believe that the future has purpose and therefore meaning for us. We have to believe this because, if we do not, the present has no purpose or meaning for us, either.

A young man in college, some years ago, gravely questioned whether the future did have any meaning of purpose for him: that is, whether anything he might be able to achieve could possibly make any lasting and worthwhile difference to others or to himself. The result was that he nearly flunked his exams, because there didn't seem to be much sense in passing them. "What final difference will it make?" he asked himself.

The young man's trouble was not with his future, however; it was with his present. There is, after all, only one reason for believing in the future. This is one's faith that God is in the future — although when one says "God", he has to mean "God in Christ", because he has to mean a God who will constantly forgive us our many sins of leaving Him out of our
present. This, indeed, was the student’s trouble: he had no God in his future because he had so little of Him in his present.

This, in fact, is our trouble and our sin, too, when we are troubled about the future. God always has to come into our future through our present. Certain Germans after World War I told me that they didn’t believe that there is a God because, if there were, He would never have let their country be defeated by nations like France and England! For a graver reason some Germans of the present may draw the same conclusion from the frightful incursion of the Russians into their land in World War II. But if they, or any unbelievers, have no God in their present now, it is because they had no God, or had thrust Him out, in some present of their past.

Indeed, if God is not in our present, then neither past nor future make much sense to us. Thus, only with God in our present now can we understand the catastrophies of the past forty-two and a half years in their tremendous wars and tremendous depression and world-wide unrest since the fateful summer of 1914. Only if we have God in our present can we see that in those years God was thundering at the gates of a world which had shut its doors against the still and gentle voice of His Gospel. In its prosperity it had preferred the things of the senses and the attitudes of its own haughty mind to the things of the soul; and God was trying to tell mankind that disaster is what inevitably happens then, by a law of life, because when man rejects God, he is bound to reject and have trouble with his fellowman, too. Now there seems to be a disposition to want God back in our present. The worrisome question is: “How much of God? Just enough of Him to insure a future of peace to insure a future of prosperity again, when once more God can be forgotten and left out?”

The future is very long and its circumstances unpredictable. But if God is in our present, and if by Word and Sacrament we seek His presence always, there is one thing we can predict: that God will be in our future, too. If so, does anything else then really matter?

For if God is in my future, then heaven is, too. Nothing less than heaven, indeed, can finally give the future meaning. Life must lead to life (and to a better life), or there is no meaning in having it at all. It cannot be merely an existence lived under a suspended sentence of death. But if God fills my present, He will fill all the future for me, too; and I shall live under Christ in His Kingdom and serve Him purposefully forever in righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

I know that there is a heaven in my future. Our Lord said so. He said so when He was dying for our everlasting sins of leaving God out of our present. He said so to a man who very plainly had left God out of his present. But when Christ spoke to him, it was to a man into whose life God had just come back; for God’s eternal Son, who is both God and the Way to God, had just found Him. Now the man was asking that God and heaven come into his future, too. He said: “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.” And because God had come back into his present — a present no longer tough and hard and haughty — our Lord replied: “Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.” But when He said this to the thief, He said it also to me, for I, too, am a malefactor made penitent by His death.

On the tomb of Copernicus, first and greatest of modern astronomers, these words are engraved in Latin: “I do not seek the kindness shown to Paul, nor ask the mercy bestowed on Peter, but what Thou gavest to the thief upon the cross I earnestly beseech.” We may be sure that there was heaven in his future, because there was God’s redeeming mercy in his present.

The new faiths founded on evolution or an impersonal ethic are always claiming that they also can produce holiness; and no Christian has any right in Christian charity to deny that possibility. But if the question really is whether the things in question are religions in the sense that Christianity or Mohammedanism are religions, then I would suggest a different test. I should not ask whether they can produce holiness, but whether they can produce profanity. Can any one swear by ethics? Can any one blaspheme evolution? Many men now hold that a mere adoration of abstract morality or goodness is the core and sole necessity of religion. I know many of them; I know that their lives are noble, and their intellects just. But (I say it with respect and even hesitation) would not their oaths be a little mild?

G. K. CHESTERTON, The Common Man (Sheed and Ward, 1950)
Zen, the Soul of Artistic Japan

By Robert Epp

No serious discussion of Japan can long ignore the fact that Zen Buddhism has influenced the whole flower of Japanese life. Providing a matrix for the approach to beauty, Zen functions as a prime mover of Japaneses artistic thought and activity; therefore, anything typically Japanese very likely owes some of its uniqueness to Zen. If Zen is truly this vital to Japan's esthetic spirit, any comprehension of Japan itself must be preceded by some understanding of Zen.

This understanding will be necessary because Japanese life is a continuity reflecting an esthetic viewpoint. To the Japanese the logic of a flower is not only infinitely more lovely than the lisp of Western materialism but infinitely more meaningful. If Zen is the soul of this attitude toward beauty, one might justifiably wonder by what magic Zen has affected the bloom of Japanese civilization.

Zen Buddhism came from India to China in the 6th century, A.D. By the 13th century it had entered Japan, and by the 14th it had not only begun staining itself upon every fabric of Japanese esthetics but had become characteristically Japanese. In the process of becoming a distinct institution of Japanese culture, Zen departed considerably from orthodox Buddhism. To understand the extent of this departure one needs but to walk from a Roman Catholic high mass into a Quaker meeting; the gap is as vast as the nature of the departure.

Orthodox Buddhism teaches ethics, dogma, salvation, and introspection; images are used and temples are likely to be quite ornate. Zen, however, does not indulge in catechetical instruction, professes no doctrine, and uses no images or decoration. Instead, much like the Quakers, Zen devotees meditate; but unlike the Quakers this meditation centers on paradoxical thought problems, problems which demonstrate that Zen's approach to Truth is anti-rational and anti-scholastic. One's concern in Zen is to discover ultimate reality by considering such problems as, What is the sound of one hand? A Buddhist might pray to an image of Buddha or mumble some words over prayer beads for enlightenment, but a Zenist is likely to burn both the beads and the image to warm his meditation. His enlightenment may be mystical but every watt of it is his own.

In fact, anything the Zenist attains is his own. His master might shock him into sudden insight by a kick or a slap, but ultimate enlightenment is not imparted, it is won; the battle is not with sin or flesh but with the furniture cluttering man's mind. There is no attempt to explain Truth, therefore, because enlightenment always results from a flash of understanding, not from mastering doctrines or pyramiding insights. Zen is accordingly not empirical in the sense that it accumulates experience or observations; it does not. Yet the result of this experience of disciplined meditation is an enlightenment which descends not like snow — as in Buddhism — but like lightning.

And this is a unique and limited lightning, lightning not even proffered to the masses or to women. The word of Zen itself means "meditation"; in its fullest expression an exclusive privilege for an exclusive few although in its popular form Zen is the second largest sect in Japan. In his quest for knowledge a meditator disciplines his mind into a state of emptiness, into a state that cannot be spoken; this state is achieved by obliterating the logical symbols which clutter his mind. Always the aim is to achieve primary knowledge: to know nature, to know self. Everything learned through dialectical thinking is secondary knowledge, it is knowing ABOUT, and such knowledge cannot result in either lightning or enlightenment.

Lafcadio Hearn poignantly defines Zen as an attempt to reach, via meditation, "zones of thought beyond the range of verbal expression." Through this strict discipline of self-hypnosis, Zen strives for an enlightenment which will in a flash impart the language of the stars. But it is an intuitive knowledge which cannot be communicated by words or logic anymore than the transcendental soul can be contained in words. Zen is "spiritually discerned" by the "spiritual minded" as it strives not to know about — but to know — God.

Because its nature and method seem enigmatic, Zen appears by Western standards to be no more than nonsense and much less than either religion or philosophy. Nevertheless, Zen has helped produce some of the most virgin beauty and exquisite simplicity the artistic world has known. Zen is not nonsense. It is a quest whose disciples endure years of lonely meditation searching for an emptiness that leads to enlightenment: an illusive goal, but for Zen the only approach to Truth. Immersed in our own institutions, habits, and prejudices, we of the West continue to find Zen a completely baffling type of mysticism. That it is neither completely baffling nor merely mystical can be seen from its gifts to architecture. Though few of us can approach Zen from the inside, that is, through enlightenment, we can approach it through the three dimensional concreteness of a Japanese room.

Zen did not tarry in its ability to affect Japanese
buildings. During the 13th century Zen started to purify architectural forms by purging the ornamental aspects of orthodox Buddhism. The subtlety, harmony, and economy of the Zen meditative discipline were reflected in Zen temples. This style, fresh and native, generated immediate enthusiasm, spreading through the middle class to the nobles until, some decades later, even Imperial structures exhibited the simplicity of Zen.

Perhaps the core of this style is best demonstrated in the tea drinking ceremony. Tea drinking is a form of spiritual discipline which became at an early date a concrete expression of Zen’s devoted tranquility, for a tea ceremony embodies the pureness of mind, the control, and the harmony necessary to effect enlightenment. The tea drinking room was constructed to reflect this fundamental aim of meditation. Soon, tea rooms influenced the entire structure of Japanese homes, inside and out. One of the dominant features of this influence was the Zen concept of emptiness as a state which cannot be spoken. To understand this seemingly abstruse concept, look at a Japanese room; though seemingly “empty” it is strangely satisfying, for it is filled with the emptiness of Zen.

Besides this overall harmony of simple emptiness, an amazing purity — serene but never severe — instills the room with a spiritual, almost reverent atmosphere. It is as though the room itself were the mind of a priest in meditation. Everywhere one finds the subtle and delicate restraint, the fine nuances and understatement, the terse sermons of proportion and balance which Zen inspires in the classical room. As in the meditative trance, there is a hypnosis about the room which makes each square inch appear to hang within a mystical integration of unity. The room is unembellished but certainly not barren.

Unity is a basic Zen motif: the unity of man and the universe, of man and nature, of man and God, and the unity of room space and materials. The classical “empty” room is perfectly harmonized with this attitude of unity, of a “singleness of heart,” so necessary to meditation. The flower arrangement, the hanging scroll, the alcove, the immediacy of the garden: each is a Zen contribution to Japanese architecture, and each is an intrinsic part of the room, considered not as a decoration but as a facet of a fathomless, transcendental unity.

This unity has a spirit and a quality which can be seen in the bold use of blank space in the scroll, in the economy of force and intensity of concentration in the calligraphy, in the suggestiveness of the flower arrangement, and in the deep reverence for ordinary things throbbing from the very texture of the walls. These are all parts of the unified impact of the room and of Zen. Other aspects of Japanese life have been touched by Zen, too, inspiring poetry, the soldier, ju jitsu, and countless other areas. The visual experience of a pure classical Japanese room is, however, still the easiest door into the heart and the mystery of Zen.

Controlled and Spartan, Japanese architecture has a power and a forceful sincerity which have, moreover, profoundly affected certain modern Western designs. The unique articulation of space and the creative utilization of materials in these designs are intriguing because, intuitively aware of the true nature of materials and of space, Zen can wring from the humblest material the noblest of poetry. Thus, into the emptiness of Japanese rooms Zen breaths a fullness which is the very spirit of Japan.

Just as Zen attempts to eliminate the furniture clogging man’s mind in order to confront Truth in person, as it were, Zen has in architecture eliminated decoration and furniture in order to confront the problem of space articulation. The solution seems not only revealing but felicitous, for into the empty mouth of this space Zen has put an ideal tongue: subtle, economical, and infinitely eloquent. It is the soul of Japanese art.
The Theatre

Saroyan, Thomas Wolfe and Minor Incidents

By Walter Sorrell
Drama Editor

No one will be able to speak of this season as arid. It has its share of flops and hollow-sounding sensationalism, but, basically, it is an animated season with great variety, mostly contributed by the off-Broadway theatres. But even such minor incidents and accidents as Aldous Huxley’s “The Genius and the Goddess” proved a point.

In Mr. Huxley’s case it was a severe lesson in how a writer who has something to say, and usually says it very well, can become responsible (no doubt involuntarily) for an insipid play drained of all life. He has, unfortunately, given in to the pressure of those who pretend to know what makes a hit and has diluted an effervescent and strong story with so much water that the whole concoction was difficult to stomach. The basic idea that a genius who is a weakling must live on the strength of his wife who must get it from a youth who happens to be assistant to the genius is in itself very dramatic and exciting. But there was little drama and no excitement on stage. So many people were named as collaborators that it is impossible to blame anyone for the pedestrian writing and pallid production.

“The Makropoulos Secret,” by Karel Capek, one of the great Czech writers of the Twenties, achieved a minor success in exploring the questions of immortality. This play which pales next to Shaw’s “Back to Methuselah” comes alive only in the third act when it stops trying to be a mystery play and settles down to discuss the basic problem of whether a scientific prolongation of life is desirable. All characters finally agree with the author that nothing good can come from outliving one’s predestined span of life. The story was worthwhile seeing only because Eileen Herlie, a great actress, played the 326-year-old singer who hunts a document that contains the secret enabling her to go on living.

One of the more important off-Broadway productions was the biting farce, “Clerambard,” by Marcel Ayme in which the author poses one of the morally penetrating questions of our, or any other, time: What would happen if a man would really start practicing literally the principles of Christianity, or Ur-Christianity, in our world, live a life of utter poverty, love and humility?

Count Clerambard, a mean character if ever there was one, has a vision of St. Francis of Assisi and from that moment on decides to imitate the saint’s life. It is understandable that in the clash between realism and the attempt to live like a saint the entire world is turned upside down. The play develops into a hard-hitting satire, bitter with cold cynicism. It lashes out against the hypocrisy which, no doubt, is part of the pedestal on which we like to see ourselves stand in smug self-complacency. In the last act the Don Quixotic Count and the audience are both quite aware that his vision was a trick of the playwright and the Count’s bad conscience. But at that very moment a miracle seems to happen which everyone sees except the cure of the town. The French actor, Claude Dauphin, gave it the flavor of Gallic authenticity, but Alvin Epstein, as his son, gave the best performance of the evening.

Among those off-Broadway productions which did not keep above water and on the boards was one of the most charming casualties: Noel Coward’s “Conversation Piece,” a deliciously witty dish with a great deal of champagne. It was delightfully staged, with Joan Copeland in the part of the French cafe-singer whose heart triumphs over money. Little gems of bon-mots were thrown around during this evening, but, strangely enough, the public did not feel like joining this conversation piece.

After fifteen years of absence, William Saroyan came to the Bijou Theatre and permitted the skilful director Carmen Capalbo to stage his latest apotheosis on life, love and the little man who rises above all littleness. Saroyan is at his best when he tosses off a play in a week or so, in a kind of improvisation spree.

“The Cave Dwellers” is such a play. It weighs light as any story of no story, as any mood piece would that makes most provocative statements as if in passing. It has one Leitmotif: Love is in all people. It has three variations: Life is wonderful, even if it is miserable; if you have love in your heart you create love in other people; there is always a miracle waiting for you around the corner.

If you believe all this and if you do not mind that the structure of a play as well as its characters are willy-nilly and whimsically improvised, then William Saroyan has written a beautiful play. I personally find a great deal wrong with these assumptions and my enjoyment of “The Cave Dwellers” was seriously disturbed by it. The characters are: A clown who can no longer make people laugh; a great tragedienne who has no theatre to act in; a pugilist who has lost his championship out of good-heartedness; a girl who has no home and is
ready to fall in love and does; a woman who just gave
birth to a child; her husband and his tamed live bear;
a dumb milkman who falls in love with the girl and a
wrecking crew which is supposed to demolish the for­
saken theatre where all these people take refuge from
the cruelties of life. But the wrecking crew also falls
in love with the whole lot of them because they are
such lovable people because love is in all people ac­
cording to Saroyan’s leitmotif which insists that the
milkman from whom the pugilist stole a tray of milk
bottles so that the baby can be fed will not go to the
police but, on the contrary, will bring more milk next
morning because love is triumphant over all poverty
and pettiness in life. The New York critics raved
about the play. I wasn’t quite convinced by Saroyan’s
philosophy nor by his improvised playwriting technique.

I am, however, quite sure that Ketti Frings’ dramati­
zation of Thomas Wolfe’s novel “Look Homeward,
Angel” is one of those rare theatrical experiences which

Martin Luther, that versatile and vivid genius, loved hymns. He was full of what people
often call the “artistic temperament”; which means in this context that he was the kind
of person whom half the world execrates for a perverse and loud-mouthed meddler, while
the other half venerates him as a kind of saint. Luther was a witty, full-blooded, shrewd
person with a dash of the mystic and a very keen intellect indeed. He was capable of sus­
tained and careful reasoning, as you can see in his Commentaries; he was incapable of ex­
pressing himself otherwise than forcefully, as you can see in his polemics; and when he
went wrong, as he did, we must feel, over the Peasants’ Revolt, he went wrong spectacularly
and resoundingly. A stern critic of what he judged, in the light of his experience of the
grace of God, to be ugliness and perversity in the organization of the church, he was not
one of those theologians to whom system and discipline, personal or intellectual, is the
foundation of all things. Less than any of his reforming brethren was he concerned to
prune, to restrict, to canalize; more than any of them he desired richness and fullness of
religious life, and his charge against the peddlers of indulgences and sellers of benefices
was that they withheld it from the common man. Luther was a musician and a poet, and
he would not exclude music and poetry from the church. He was enough a son of the
Renaissance to respect the creations of men, provided the creators themselves were
obedient to and forgiven by their own Creator. It was with reluctance, indeed, that he
abandoned any ceremony of the Roman Mass, so sensitive was he to what drama and art
could do for religion.

Erik Routley, Hymns and Human Life (Philosophical Library, 1953)
From the Chapel

The Remedy of Death

By MARTIN H. SCHEEGER
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And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for foods: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

And the Lord said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Genesis 2:9, 16-17 and 3:22-23.

Your attention is directed in particular to the words, "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." What interests us is the "why" of these words.

According to one of the other passages read, Adam had previously been allowed to eat of the tree of life: "Of every tree thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it." The only exception had been the "tree of knowledge." Eating of the tree of life, Adam had enjoyed the possibility of living forever, and God had found that good.

But now all had changed. Adam must under no circumstances live forever. Why not? Was it, as we usually believe, because he must be punished for his disobedience? Probably. For God had apparently spoken in a tone threatening punishment when He had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We could settle for this explanation, no doubt. In the larger sense, it represents the great tragedy of Adam's (and of our) earthly existence. For, for a perpetual existence of happiness, free from evil and pain, Adam had exchanged a brief life of suffering and sin, ending with a return to the ground from whence he was taken.

But there is a narrower sense in which Adam's fate of earthly death might be taken as a destiny other than punishment. Reading the passage in which God sends Adam forth from the garden, we may detect a note, not only of anger, but of horror in the words, "lest he put forth his hand, ... eat, and live for ever." The thought was so repugnant, that man in sin should live forever, that it was rejected out of hand. Swift steps must be taken to prevent it. So he drove out the man," Genesis tells us, "and placed ... a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

If this analysis is correct, then, earlier, when God had said of the tree of knowledge, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," he was pronouncing not only a warning, but also making a declarative statement: Man, in disobedience and sin, could not live forever; he must die.

But, still, there was the anger mixed with horror. The anger — the necessary reaction of God's righteousness. The horror — a compassionate rejection of the prospect of a perpetual existence in sin. What was the vision that inspired the latter? It is contained in the words, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil ..." Man had become as God in this respect — that he now knew good and evil. But he had not become another god. He had not acquired the power of will to choose good and reject evil. Therefore, he had doomed himself, unless God put a stop to it, to a state of perpetual moral and physical tragedy. Knowing the good, and sometimes wishing the good, he would nevertheless choose the evil and cause others and himself suffering of mind and body. God's love went out to man at this prospect. It could not be. There must be an end. There must be merciful death. Death, as the earthly destiny of man, was to be both punishment and release.

It is supremely important to remember that death, even as deliverance, had in God's eyes its dual aspect governed, as all things, by His justice and His love. If it were to be release, it must be through faith in the atoning sacrifice of His own Son, which His righteousness demanded and His love gave. Yet, however indispensable it is that we bear this fact in mind, our major purpose this morning is to emphasize the nature of this life from which God granted Adam, and us his identical heirs, escape through death.

Taken for itself alone, this mortal life is inevitable failure and unavoidable tragedy. In nothing that we do, in nothing for which we strive, can we completely attain our goals or fulfill our heart's desires. The
It may command the acknowledgement of others, but we know in our hearts (and we know that God knows) what we had mastered has already spirit tarnishes the pursuit of our ends. Evident moment of outward success is the moment of defeat, for hurt and offended another. From our love we are unable to separate out pride and selfish desire. Even the placid existence finds us working at cross purposes and leaves us to discover moral and material futility.

But the placid, peaceful life is not necessarily normal. If we do not realize that, it is time that we do. Sooner or later, each of us is confronted with great danger or pain, with the pressure of great failure or the intoxication of success, with the allure of easy sinful pleasure or gain. We must be clear about what we are in for under such circumstances. The likelihood is very strong that we will succumb. Each of us knows that we have succumbed in some degree to such moral failure in the past. What is stressed now is that there will be more of it — a lifetime of it — and that this is our tragic destiny, that this is the meaning of Adam’s fall in the garden of Eden.

It is a terribly difficult thing to do — to bear in mind that our ultimate goal on earth is not happy marriage, not prosperity, not eminence, not fame — but death! It is, in particular, hard to remind you, young people, of the fact. How morbid it appears to cloud the bright visions of an as yet unfolding youth with the prospects of physical decay. But we have no choice. Our Christian faith demands it. And — we can thank God — that faith speaks the truth. For elders and for youth, only that truth can give our lives validity and our spirits genuine hope.

One final word. The tragic destiny of man, of sin and physical suffering, involves him in his collective capacity as well as his individual. How easy it is to forget that! We are often prone to find men in the aggregate more susceptible of perfection than we would dream of thinking man as an individual. There is our modern belief in progress that helps to explain this. And there is the present world situation, threatening great disaster, that stimulates hopeful expectations of final cooperation among nations. But we cannot look for final solutions. Our fate is set. Truth and Christian honesty require that we recognize it. And here, too, we must realize that, in fact by the grace of God, the death of the race, as the death of each man, is the only release.

Great and repeated effort is required to learn to say without equivocation or mental reservation, but say it we must: Thank God that He has given us all the emancipation of death, through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ!

Letter from Xanadu, Nebr.

By G. G.

Dear Editor:

Our Bible class got into an argument last Sunday and I was instructed to write to Saint Louis for the right answer but since you and I have been friends all these years I thought I would see what you have to say, too, just in case the people in Saint Louis are too busy to write.

We were talking about birth control and Rev. Zeitgeist was telling us that we’re against it but then Polly Phyloprogenites, a convert, started asking some questions that got us all mixed up.

First off, she asked whether a person could be elected to salvation and then not be saved, and of course Rev. Zeitgeist said, “No.” Then she wanted to know whether a person could be saved if he wasn’t born, and of course the answer to that had to be, “No.” Then came the question that stumped us: “If it is impossible to prevent the birth of the elect, wouldn’t it follow that the only people birth control could keep from being born would be those who have not been elected? And if this is the case, wouldn’t they actually be better off for not having been born at all than to be born and go to hell?”

You have to admit that she has a real stumper there. I had never thought about it before but it seems to me that she is dead right. Even Rev. Zeitgeist had to admit that she had him there and that was when we decided to write to Saint Louis.

I was kind of glad this came up because for years we have been sending money to Synod and we never had any occasion to get anything back from Synod. This will give the people down there something to do and maybe it will make them realize that there is some pretty deep thinking going on out in the congregations, too.

On the personal side, I could kick myself for not having thought of this question 25 years ago. Here I’ve had a bad conscience all these years when maybe it wouldn’t have been necessary at all.

Regards, etc.

G.G.
Horowitz Does Memorable Recording of Chopin

By WALTER A. HANSEN

I have vivid recollections of Vladimir Horowitz' first American tour. How I devoured the purple prose with which critics strove to describe the power, the sensitiveness, the beauty, and the magic of his playing! On one occasion I sat in the wings about twenty feet away from him as he was presenting one of his electrifying recitals. I reviewed that concert, and I confess that the prose I wrote at that time had a purplish hue.

But I do not retract a single word of what I put on paper that evening. I was thrilled to hear Horowitz, and I was delighted to have an opportunity to talk with him about the art of playing the piano. In those days his English was halting. But we got along. When autograph seekers gathered about him after the recital, I helped him spell the names.

I remember how Horowitz praised the artistry of Wilhelm Backhaus, the famous German pianist, and with what deepseated admiration he spoke of Sergei Rachmaninoff. One of his encores had been a fabulously brilliant performance of a composition he had based on melodies from Georges Bizet's Carmen. "Has this work been published?" I asked him. "No," he replied. "I have my reasons for not having it published." This composition, you see, belonged to Horowitz alone. Only he could use it.

My admiration of the pianism of Horowitz has not diminished with the passing of the years. In fact, it has been intensified. I was thrilled a few days ago when I received a disc titled Horowitz Plays Chopin (RCA Victor LM-2137).

It is often said that Horowitz' association with the late Arturo Toscanini, who was his father-in-law, did much to improve the quality of his artistry. This is undoubtedly true, and I am sure that Horowitz would be the first to admit it. I wonder, however, whether Toscanini, great musician though he was, could have contributed much to Horowitz' skill and understanding as an exponent of Chopin.

At all events, I urge you to hear Horowitz as he plays the great Polish tone poet's Scherzo in B Flat Minor, Op. 81, No. 2; Nocturne in B Major, Op. 9, No. 3; Nocturne in F Major, Op. 15, No. 1; Nocturne in C Sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 1; Nocturne in E Flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2; Barcarolle, Op. 60; and Scherzo in C Sharp Minor, Op. 39, No. 3.

Some years ago I had an opportunity to speak with Giuseppe Bamboshek shortly after a large part of Gioacchino Rossini's The Barber of Seville had been recorded under his direction. "There is one false note in the recording," he told be. I did not try to find out just where that one false note was. As a matter of fact, I liked the recording so much that one sour note would not have bothered me at all even if I had known where to find it.

Now that recording of Rossini's Barber has been re-recorded (Camden CAL-386). Needless, to say, I have not looked for the one false note. The Barber of Seville is one of my favorite operas.

Another artist whom I have had the good fortune to interview was the late Ezio Pinza, who was the seventh son of a poor carpenter and for a time was a professional bicycle racer. Although Pinza could not read music, he became one of the great bassos of recent years. The Art of Ezio Pinza is the title of a disc (Camden CAL-401) which has captured with gripping forcefulness the artistry of this famous basso as recorded between 1927 and 1939. Pinza was unexcelled in the roles he sang in the operas by Mozart. The disc I have mentioned contains, among other selections, an aria from The Marriage of Figaro and one from The Magic Flute.

Some Recent Recordings

THE LADY FROM PHILADELPHIA. This album, made from the original soundtrack of the recently presented See It Now TV presentation, gives impressive high lights of Marian Anderson's 40,000-mile concert tour through seven countries in Southeast Asia. The television show is reviewed by Mrs. Hansen in this issue of THE CRESSET. RCA Victor. — JOHANNES BRAHMS. Symphony No. 3, in F Major, Op. 90. FELIX MENDELSSOHN. Symphony No. 4, in A Major, Op. 90 (Italian). The Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Holland, under Eduard van Beinum. No other orchestra I have ever heard matches the smooth and mellow beauty and richness of tone produced by the famous Concertgebouw Orchestra. The performances are ideal. Epic. — CLAUDE DEBUSSY. The Girl with the Flaxen Hair, The Sunken Cathedral, Minstrels, The Little Shepherd, Golliwog's Cakewalk, Reflections in the Water, Arabesque No. 1, Fireworks. MAURICE RAVEL. Pavane for a Dead Princess, Fountains, In the Style of Chabrier, Ondine, Habanera, Alborada del Gracioso. Robert Casadesus, pianist. A great master of the piano plays compositions by two Frenchmen whose styles of writing are similar in many respects yet often radically different.
Church in America. The purpose of this work is to lead to an understanding of our culture and so to a more effective ministry to the whole life of society.

Chapter I, "Western Society in Transformation," sets forth the thesis that the basic social structure of the West has been transformed by the process of industrialization; collectivism is more and more becoming the dominant form of social organization. Implicit in these changes is the threat of totalitarianism. The major changes by means of which the new kind of Western society arose are set forth. Special emphasis is put on the Industrial Revolution as a source of a new economic system which changed the patterns of life and ushered in a collectivist society. Accepting collectivism as it exists, the crucial question is the social responsibility of large-scale private collectivism. To whom is a collectivism as it exists, the crucial question totalitarianism a real threat. To this predicament man may respond with a despair of hopelessness or a despair of defiance. Either of these responses is sin before God. False hopes are set before man by the Nihilist, the Christianity of Main Street (golden rule Christianity), Fascism, Communism, and (with reservations) Roman Catholicism.

The Gospel sets forth real hope. The true nature of God revealed in Christ is selfless love for the sake of the beloved, which is the only basis of true community. Meaningful individuality is to be found when man in the right God-relationship reflects the true image of God and loves his neighbor.

"For ego is a dream
Till a neighbor's need by name create it."

This volume attempts to do the impossible. Yet it is an excellent effort. To see ourselves in perspective and analyze our problems at their real center—frequently deeply imbedded in the society or culture itself. He knows what to do over against other individuals; but how does he strike at the more radical evil? William Lazareth of Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia, suggests a dual answer. To the individual in need the Christian speaks the priestly "yes"; to the corrupt society the Christian speaks the prophetic "no." "... he transforms society from within as God's priest, while judging it from without as God's prophet."

Equally useful chapters discuss the Christian faith in its specific application to economic life, political order, and family life. Consistently the authors call for more intensive theological discussion within the fellowship of the church in order that it might communicate the fullness of this faith to the culture on the outside. (At this point the active task of the clergy is to work with the laity in developing both a strong sense of calling and the technical knowledge necessary that the church might intelligently guide. The concept of the ministry is broadened to include a ministry

American governmental system of checks and balances. The results have been poor. The social ideal is the successful individual, but success is measured in such a way that it also leads to disillusionment. America, a nation on the move, has also become "mobile in time" with the effect that roots in the past have been cut off, and being "modern" has become a goal. The reliance on science has led to depersonalization of man, and alienation from the sources of meaningful existence. Modern man's question is whether in the Christian faith he can find a ground for genuine community that will not crush but foster meaningful individuality.

Chapter IV presents "False Hopes and the Gospel." The struggle today is between individualism and collectivism. Mass man has lost both individuality and community. His sense of freedom is in conflict with the determinism of nature which is evident. To this predicament man may respond with a despair of hopelessness or a despair of defiance. Either of these responses is sin before God. False hopes are set before man by the Nihilist, the Christianity of Main Street (golden rule Christianity), Fascism, Communism, and (with reservations) Roman Catholicism.

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"For ego is a dream
Till a neighbor's need by name create it."

This volume attempts to do the impossible. Yet it is an excellent effort. To see ourselves in perspective and analyze our society must, in the very nature of things, always fall short of the mark. But this fact does not excuse us from attempting to search out the specific nature and needs of our day. If nothing else, a careful reading of this book must force one to realize that platitudes and generalizations will not do in proclaiming the Gospel. We must seek to understand the enemies of the Gospel as they confront man today, and realize how important it is to proclaim the Word in words which man today can understand. Existence Today is a worthy effort to do just that.

GEORGE A. LOOSE

LIFE IN COMMUNITY Volume III of Christian Social Responsibility

Edited by Harold C. Letts (Muhlenberg, $2.25)

The instructor asked the large class of Lutheran laymen how the church assisted them in meeting with Christian insight the ethical and religious problems confronting them in daily life. Twenty to one the answer came: The church is failing to offer the guidance and leadership its members need.

Recognizing this challenge ten years ago, the U.C.L.A. asked its Commission on Faith and Life to make a definitive study of the Lutheran approach to Christian social responsibility. It was to be based upon the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. After six years of work, their Director for Social Action, Harold C. Letts, issues this third volume in the series.

The cry of one wing of the Lutheran Church to this study will be: "This is not the work of the Church! The Church's task is to preach the Gospel." The patient theological undergirding of the book should convince all that a social concern is not to be set in antithesis to a theological one. Rather, as Joseph Sittert incisively demonstrates in the opening chapter, the one must inevitably flow from the other. A perspective is given the entire volume in his focus upon the fact that the nature of the evangelical ethical vitality is not love, but faith. It follows, then, that the content of this ethic involves the restorative action of God by which the response to His redemptive work in Christ will issue in a new life active in the midst of the world.

Every Christian wrestling in the arena of modern life senses that, as an individual, he is incapable of meeting many social problems at their real center — frequently deeply imbedded in the society or culture itself. He knows what to do over against other individuals; but how does he strike at the more radical evil? William Lazareth of Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia, suggests a dual answer. To the individual in need the Christian speaks the priestly "yes"; to the corrupt society the Christian speaks the prophetic "no." "... he transforms society from within as God's priest, while judging it from without as God's prophet."

Equally useful chapters discuss the Christian faith in its specific application to economic life, political order, and family life. Consistently the authors call for more intensive theological discussion within the fellowship of the church in order that it might communicate the fullness of this faith to the culture on the outside. (At this point the active task of the clergy is to work with the laity in developing both a strong sense of calling and the technical knowledge necessary that the church might intelligently guide. The concept of the ministry is broadened to include a ministry
of the whole church to those actually occupying the “battle-lines of life.”)

The gulf between the sacred and the secular must be spanned. By definition a “god” who rules over only one aspect of life is a demon; the eternal God insists upon ruling public as well as private spheres of life. If a contributing factor to this situation has been the honest confusion of church leaders who have not led in these areas because of their own lack of training and insight, this three-volume set should at least plot the strategy of advance. The actual battle still lies in the future. DAVID S. SCHULLER

THE ADVANCEMENT OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

By H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson (Harper & Bros., $4.00)

This is the third volume in a series of studies on American theological education in mid-century. It comes as a sequel to The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry, by Dr. Niebuhr and The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, edited by Drs. Niebuhr and Williams.

The very names of the triad of distinguished co-authors of this present volume offer a sufficient guarantee as to the value and validity of this study. Nor will the reader be disappointed as he works his way through the mass of facts and figures that the authors and their staff of researchers have compiled. It goes without saying that this volume is indispensable for any one who is concerned with the enterprise of theological education. It is a work of heroic and historic proportions, and serves as a fitting capstone to the preliminary studies in this area which Dr. Niebuhr and his associates have produced.

The Advancement of Theological Education is a veritable quarry of important, yes, intriguing statistics with regard to the present status of theological education in North America. Do you know, for example, that there are currently some 25,000 theological students in American seminaries (not counting the unnumbered students in so-called Bible schools who will eventually land in the ministry)? Do you know that the average seminary enrollment is 165, and the average faculty-student ratio is 1 to 17?? Do you know that the emergence of the married student is one of the significant phenomena in mid-century theological education, and that in most seminaries married students constitute between 30 and 60 per cent of the total student body?

No less interesting is the light which the book sheds on current trends in theological education. Notable among these is the rising professional competence of theological instructors; the increasingly careful selectivity which is exercised in recruitment of theological students; and the greater emphasis on field work, the internship, and “in-service training” of seminary students.

The co-authors, in analyzing the current seminary curricula, discern five principal tendencies: 1. An increasing emphasis on the relationship between basic theological studies and contemporary life; 2. Introduction of non-theological disciplines which seem important for the interpretation of theology; 3. Introduction of new disciplines in practical theology; 4. An accelerated movement toward an increase of “learning by doing” (i.e., “in-service training”); 5. Development of prescribed curricula consisting of many introductory courses.

Just in connection with the latter point, it was interesting to learn that there is a revived emphasis on required courses — as over against the proliferation of free electives. It is significant, too, to note the current stress on the relationship of “sacred” and “secular” subjects in the seminary curriculum. There is a new awareness of theology as the focal point, to which all human learning must be oriented.

The authors have some sharp but necessary words to say about the tendency of many schools to become spiritually and intellectually “ingrown.” Even more stringent is the comment on page 44 on the subject of “thought control” within the theological faculty, often the result of administrative, ecclesiastical, or social pressures. The authors express a wholesome distrust of those ecclesiastical watchdogs of professorial rectitude who are “certain that they possess not only a truth but the whole truth and nothing but the truth; yet at the same time they seem to have little confidence in the power of God to establish the victory of truth.”

The authors sound a much needed warning also against what they call “the didactic stance” — the tendency of the instructor to lecture, to dogmatize, to pontificate, and to discourage any inquiry into, or critical evaluation of, his a priori assumptions or his blind acceptance of tradition.

Perhaps the best statement in the whole book is to be found on page 160: “Theological education involves the total man.” This applies to the student, of course, as the authors amply demonstrate in their evaluation of the selection and training of the embryo clergy. But it also applies to the theological professor, and we therefore applaud the authors’ statement that the teacher of theology must exhibit personal involvement in his subject and in the whole theological enterprise if his teaching is to be effective. With good reason, therefore, the authors conclude that the “key problem” in American theological education today is “that of providing and maintaining the most able corps of teaching theologians and theological teachers possible.”

In the final section, entitled “The Line of Advance,” the authors list the following desiderata: improved physical facilities; increasing selectivity in the recruitment of students; improvement of teaching methods; and the strengthening of facilities. The authors state that the standard three-year seminary program is insufficient. Acknowledging the fact that a fourth year of study is ordinarily not feasible, they strongly recommend both a year’s internship and a post-B.D. summer school program.

In making these recommendations, which in our opinion are only an inadequate stop-gap, the authors overlook the only substantial method of strengthening theological education and of producing a more adequately trained ministry: to create and maintain the kind of long-range, well-integrated, and comprehensive pre-theological training program as has been operated for over a century by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. THOMAS COATES

LUTHER TODAY

By Roland Bainton, Warren Quanbeck, and Gordon Rupp (Luther College Press, $2.75)

Luther Today is a series of nine essays, three each by Roland Bainton, Warren Quanbeck, and Gordon Rupp, originally delivered as the 1956 “Luther Lectures” at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. As might be expected, the essays are not of a uniformly high quality. But the surprise disappointment is the series by Bainton. Perhaps the excellence of his earlier works causes us to expect too much from him. Fortunately his essays comprise less than a fifth of the volume — a minor fifth, in other words, and — except for the copious Luther quotations — an almost empty fifth!

Bainton collected some interesting but not very significant quotations from Luther’s Table Talk on birds, dogs, and babies for his first essay. The second consists of unrelated and uninterpreted citations to demonstrate the reformer’s use of direct discourse. Bainton took most of these quotations from Martin Luthers Evangelien-Auslegung — one use for this very fine German reference work. The third essay is a report on the 1956 conference of Luther scholars at Aarhus, Denmark.

Quanbeck contributed three lucid and learned lectures on Luther’s early interpretation of the Scriptures. Instead of the “bird’s-eye biography” which usually goes with any discussion of Luther’s “experience,” Quanbeck details the reformer’s Occamist background, his indebtedness to St. Augustine and the influence of Staupitz and Faber Stelpenuens. The latter’s Quinctuplus Pastorium led Luther away from the traditional medieval method of interpretation. Interestingly enough, the key
point in Faber's work was not a stress on the literal meaning of Scripture as opposed to allegory or the medieval Quadriga, but the distinction of a dual literal sense: the "literal-historic" and "literal-prophetic." It was this "literal-prophetic" sense which caused Luther to view the Old Testament as one vast proclamation of Christ. Quanbeck seems a bit hasty when he accuses Luther of reading "the whole Bible as though it had been written by St. Paul" without taking into account a significant study by Anglican J. A. Atkinson on the "Authority and Power of the Word of God" which is an implicit rebuke of a Lutheranism which has frequently forgotten the normative role of biblical interpretation. When we remember that the origin of Lutheranism lay in the rediscovered critical supremacy of the biblical witness over the tradition and theology of the Church, then it is frightening to ponder the similarities between a later Lutheranism and Quanbeck's description of medieval exegesis which "permitted nothing in Scripture to conflict with the teaching of the Church," or "became the science by which the agreement of the Church's doctrine with Scripture was demonstrated." The encouraging fact is that a professor of Systematic Theology has written these essays!

The last three essays, by Methodist E. Gordon Rupp, are delightful sketches of three Luther contemporaries: Andrew Carlstadt, Thomas Muentzer, and Ulrich Zwingli. Where one sometimes wishes that Quanbeck had not written quite so much, one only wishes that Rupp had written more! Rupp's humor never overshadows his scholar's acquaintance with the material. He relates the historical aspects of the controversy between Luther and the three "puritans" without neglecting the theological struggle. That theological struggle was not, as the late Msgr. Ronald Knox claimed, a "family quarrel" among sectarian. The differences were deep and fundamental. "The medievalist," writes Rupp, "... finds nothing very surprising in a ... Carlstadt, Muentzer, or even Zwingli. ... It is really Luther who is the great surprise ... with his poised and balanced Middle Way between Popery and Puritanism." These essays are recommended reading for all Lutherans with an inclination to imbalance in either direction.

WALTER R. BOUMAN

BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGY

By George E. Wright (Westminster Press, $15.00)

George E. Wright is fast becoming one of the best known Old Testament scholars in the United States because of his contributions both to the theology and archaeology of the Bible. This double interest well qualifies him to write a semi-popular account of Biblical archaeology which is designed "to summarize the archeological discoveries which directly illumine biblical history."

The author does not write to prove or to disprove, but to illumine the general thread of Biblical history. He accomplishes this by treating the subject matter chronologically from prehistoric times to early New Testament times. The intertestamental period is also dealt with and the recent discoveries at Qumran are summarized. In two chapters the daily life of ancient Palestine is described. From time to time and particularly in chapter seven the author attempts to relate and to contrast the theology of the Old Testament and the religious thought of Israel's neighbors.

The book is "introductory and selective, the purpose being simply to introduce the main areas of inquiry in 286 large (11" by 8½") pages set out in double column. The text is accompanied by 220 illustrations and is followed by eight maps of Palestine from the Westminster Historical Maps of Bible Lands by Wright and Filson. Each chapter is followed by a selected bibliography of the most significant books and articles written for the most part in English.

The usefulness of the book is increased by five convenient indexes.

The student of the Bible will find this to be a clear and useful handbook to the archaeology of the Bible. A comparison with the works of other important archeologists will show that the opinions and conclusions expressed by the author are cautious and well considered. A certain amount of generalization and simplification cannot be avoided in such a work.

The significance of the archiological evidence gets out of focus to a greater extent in the chapters dealing with the New Testament period. That is because the evidence is for the most part indirect. The archaeology of the New Testament is the archaeology of the whole Graeco-Roman world. There is a somewhat belated acknowledgement of this fact in a footnote on the last page: "There are, of course, many aspects of the subject of this chapter which are omitted. For example, a great deal more could be made of the Greek papyri and their meaning for New Testament times" (274). And this is but one example among many that could be brought forward.

The reader will be pleased to find a theological as well as an historical interest in this book. He will be even more pleased to find that both concerns are kept well enough separated that the latter is not distorted by the former. It may, however, be noted here that the concentration on a theology of history is not central in all the books of the Old Testament and that there is some danger of this emphasis in modern Old Testament studies obscuring other aspects of Old Testament thought. It must also be pointed out that a modern theology of history based on the Old Testament but conditioned by the scientific discipline of archaeology is not in every respect the same as that of the Old Testament itself. A clearer recognition of this would be welcome. And finally we should also like to see the implication avoided that the theology of the New Testament fits so easily into this same pattern.

WILLIAM R. SCHOEDEL

THE TIMES TEST THE CHURCH

By Frederick K. Wentz (Muhlenberg, $1.95)

The author, professor of Historical Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, accepts the theses of K. S. Latourette, that Christian history is like a series of "rolling waves." The present is the fourth, and today the Church not only stands at its highest crest but is also faced by its most severe opponents. With brevity (but not superficiality) the author sketches the advance of the Church, and the simultaneous growth of the forces of evil: secularism, world revolutions, and the "collective age." Sample insight: Nazism, the symptom of a sick, secularized society, threatened the Church as did the barbarians; Communism, the cancerous growth, threatens the Church as did the Moslems.

The next four chapters are questions. "Are Christians Winning the World?" Increased membership, after eight centuries of predominance in the west, leaves the Church facing its most aggressive counter-faiths. The resources of the Church to meet the tests are its laymen, a sense of calling, and the intensity of its inner life. The chapter, "Are Christians Closing Ranks?", notes increasing diversity and new unity, and surveys the ecumenical movement. The author defines the movement's concern as a seeking to know the expansive power of the Gospel, an effort to bring the Christian witness to bear on society, and to consolidate Christian forces. "Is Protestantism Moulding America?" analyzes our current "mass" society, and Protestantism's mere "memory" of individualism. Lack of discipline and fallacious liberalism have sapped Protestantism of its dynamic. Intellectual leadership has passed over to science; life has become "associative rather than communal" (p. 107). "Is America in the Midst of Revival?" Religion is popular, as seen in Graham, Sheen, and Peale. Although much of the religion is vague and ignores the Cross, yet with neo-orthodoxy, and a new sense of the Church as fellowship, there is a definite resurgence of the Gospel.

The merit of the book lies in its sweeping survey with brevity, and yet not succumbing
to superficiality. It is helpful for stimulating thought on the “tests” confronting the Church. This reviewer did not detect a strong enough exposition of the Church as God’s new creation in His work of reconciling the world to Himself, nor a sharp enough call to the Church to be revived in the Spirit through the Word and Sacrament.

KENNETH F. KORBY

GENERAL

THE OPIUM OF THE INTELLECTUALS
By Raymond Aron. Translated from the French by Terence Kilmartin (Double-day $4.50)

This is not, as the publisher immodestly contends, “a brilliant analysis of the modern world and the intellectual’s place in it.” A more accurate dust jacket would call it an evaluation of the role which certain intellectuals have assigned themselves in the modern world. Only certain intellectuals for the Americans are seldom guilty, and the British apparently not guilty at all of addiction to the opium that seems to serve its special appeal for the intelligentsia of France and her cultural colonies.

Raymond Aron is best known in this country as the author of The Century of Total War. But in France he is also a respected political commentator who has achieved fame and, in some circles, notoriety by repeatedly locking horns with the left-wing commentators of the Parisian left-bank (Satre, Merleau-Ponty, et al.) It is to them that this book is actually addressed, and outside the context of their continuing philosophical debate it loses a great deal of its relevance.

Nonetheless, M. Aron has here described for us a narcotic which intrigues many intellectuals even if it does not, among us at least, succeed in making addicts. For Aron is probably correct when he suggests that a tendency to criticise the established order is “the occupational disease of the intellectuals,” and that they are always inclined to judge their country and its institutions by comparing present realities with theoretical ideals rather than with other realities . . . No institution can stand up to such a test without suffering some damage. The intellectual is the man of ideas and the man of science. He subscribes to a belief in Man and in Reason. The culture disseminated by the universities is optimistic and rationalist: the forms of communal life which present themselves for critical examination appear gratuitous, the arbitrary work of the centuries rather than the expression of a clear-sighted will or a considered plan. The intellectual is all too ready to pass a final judgment on the “established disorder.” Hence his peculiar susceptibility to utopias and, more particularly, to the utopia which today presents the livest option on the Continent of Europe, Communism in its Russian form.

Aron is not advocating indifference or cynicism; he commends the intellectual who sets some store by the just and reasonable organization of his society and is not content to remain on the sidelines. But at the same time he hopes for “the end of the ideological age” and prays for the advent of the skeptics if they alone are capable of abolishing fanaticism.

There is not much in this book which is actually new. The American reader will realize that a good deal of this was said by Reinhold Niebuhr as early as 1932. Arthur Koestler anticipated by quite a few years Aron’s pathological analysis of those tragically committed intellectuals who have become martyrs to Lenin’s political version of the Gospel dictum: “Whoever is not for the current dogma of the party is against the proletariat, humanity, and the divine Dialectic of History Itself.”

But both what is new and what is old in this pertinent essay for our times is well said, and there is, in this reviewer’s opinion, a lesson here for every academic person with sufficient humility to listen . . . the man who no longer expects miraculous changes either from a revolution or an economic plan is not obliged to resign himself to the unjustifiable. It is because he likes individual human beings, participates in living communities, and respects the truth, that he refuses to surrender his soul to an abstract ideal of humanity, a tyrannical party, and an absurd scholarship.

The motives for the refusal to surrender can be just as important as the refusal to surrender itself.

PAUL T. HEYNE

A STUDY OF HISTORY
By Arnold J. Toynbee (Oxford University Press)

What can be said about an abridgement? If one is interested enough he ought to read the “whole works.” Yet, Mr. Toynbee does call Mr. D. C. Somervell, the editor of this volume, his “partner.” There are many things that ought to be said about the author’s theories, but one always has the feeling that it is not quite fair to say anything when only one fourth of the evidence is presented.

This volume completes the abridged Study of History. The first half of the Study took us from the genesis of civilizations, through their growth, breakdown, and disintegration. This second half carries us through the phases of Universal States and Universal Churches. This is actually the end of the Study. At this point Mr. Toynbee begins “an expansion of the field of study.” He writes, “We have found that, though a civilization proves to an in-telligible unit so long as we are considering its genesis, and breakdown, it ceases to be so in the phase of its disintegration. We cannot understand this last phase of a civilization’s history without extending our mental range of vision beyond its bounds and taking account of the impact of external forces.” We will agree. This is the most interesting part of the book. He discusses the contacts between civilizations, first “in space” then “in time.” The volume is completed by chapters on “Law and Freedom in History” and “The Prospects of the Western Civilization.” Both of these last chapters have been elucidated in other works by the author.

Much has been said about Mr. Toynbee’s theories. Few will be in a position to make fascinating reading. It is always interesting when a historian, who has labored long in his field, tries to make some sense out of the data of history. In fact this can surely be called “the scientific approach” to the recurring question concerning the “meaning of existence.” And yet as soon as a historian begins to deal out his cards here he himself must admit that he is leaving the “scientific” area of historical study. It is this implicit tension in his work that has caused many to praise the author, and on the other hand, many to condemn him.

We heartily agree with the author’s attempt to restate to overall categories of history. When historians still deal with such categories as “Europe” or “Asia,” or use the terms “east” and “west,” “barbarian” and “civilized” in the same way that St. Paul spoke, they are as poorly oriented to understand “history” as the teacher who includes the whole human race when he speaks of “the dark ages.” Whether Mr. Toynbee’s delineations of groups, or “civilizations” as he calls them, is correct or not is debatable, but they are certainly better categories of historical thought than the ones that come to us from “the Mediterranean world.” These belong to “historiography” now. For a world that is fast attempting to reach “other worlds,” a history that is written in categories that have the feel of the 20th century is most surely needed. If Mr. Toynbee, and many others who think in similar terms, help to create this new framework to understand the history of the earth, they have done a great service.

WALTER W. OETTING

GASLIGHT AND SHADOW
The World of Napoleon III
By Roger L. Williams, (Macmillan $5.50)

This is a book that should be a delight to the amateur and to the professional historian, and also to the devotees of that vanished era, the “dead, dead days beyond recall,” the period of the Second Empire in France; the Victorian era in England;
and the time of emergence of the American national consciousness, from the close of the War Between the States to the First World War. No better description of the book is possible than its title, Gaslight and Shadow, for it deals at once and the same time with the glory and the glitter and the brilliance of the time of Napoleon III, surrounded and encroached upon by the ever deepening shadows that destroyed not only the Second Empire but also the life and the times of that period of history. The fall of the Second Empire and the demise of Victor-ianism, the end of English and American security and self-sufficiency can be compared only to the status of Europe on the eve of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War.

For the historian, amateur or otherwise, the book is excellent for collateral reading, and for filling the voids that a briefer study of the history of the period must necessarily induce; for the layman, it will be self-sufficient, and may induce him to explore the area at greater length.

The volume contains a preface and ten chapters, each concerned with an important figure and his associated contribution; an excellent bibliography; and a most satisfactory index. And this is one of the few books I have read in recent years in which the preface is really a preface, and really means something. The author describes his treatment of the period so effectively that I shall take the liberty of quoting him:

"Not intending this book to be a text, I have abandoned the more orthodox chronological approach in favor of a mosaic; here are ten vignettes chosen to portray the many facets of the Second Empire; the Duc de Persigny, the professional Bonapartist, was useful as a political hack, but a troublesome ignoramus as an ambassador or statesman. Napoleon III's half-brother, the Duc de Morny, was the most glittering ornament on the Empire's facade. Beginning as chief architect of the coup d'etat of 1851, he was successively Minister of Interior, President of the Corps legislatif, and for a few months Ambassador to Russia . . ."

"The Comte de Montalembert, theologian and statesman, was the leading Liberal Catholic of the Second Empire. His liberalism made him few friends in a period when the Church was well disposed to His Majesty's dictatorship. Emile Ollivier was the most critical of Napoleon's enemies, since he modified his republicanism to fit the promised constitutionalism. Early in 1870, Ollivier emerged as leader of the Empire's first responsible cabinet.

"The Cologne-born composer, Jacques Offenbach, was a cellist who chose to live in France . . ."

"The poet Charles-Augustain Saine-Beuve is better known as a literary critic . . ."

"The gap between society and politics is bridged with the Countess of Castiglione . . ."

"The historian Victor Duray rose to imperial favor when His Majesty required professional assistance in compiling his History of Julius Caesar. Ultimately, Duray became Minister of Public Instruction. His zeal to revitalize public education opened an ancient quarrel with the Church, and when he sought to extend education to young girls the sultans of morality quivered in anticipation of the end of the world."

"The tenth person to be included, Louis Pasteur, needs the least introduction, as his name has become a household word. Chemist and humanitarian, he represents the finest tradition of experimental science."

The author finally concludes the preface by stating that:

"We may view the Second Empire as a laboratory period. The men of that time were challenged to redefine liberty in an age which had been sorely upset by a great political revolution; they were obliged to face the social and economic implications of this revolution. To complicate the picture further, industrialization did much more than increase the supply of economic goods available for consumption. It meant the political ascendency of the 'useful people' to recall the Comte de Saint-Simon's parable, and the grave possibility that virtue would become a utilitarian commodity. Traditional values might either be cast aside as outmoded or practiced without understanding. But even as this process was in action there remained the uncorrupted who either practiced or preached integrity. In sum, the Second Empire, confronted with the moral crisis of modernity, should loudly speak of questions still pertinent to our age.

"More important, it was a dazzling, wicked, wonderful and gaslit world. France has not been the same since."

If I have an objection to the book, it is that the author is something of a Francophile. However, he is quite moderate in this regard, far more so than the average apologist. It has always been rather interesting to me to note that English historians, in the main, take a very lofty stand in regard to the history of their country. The attitude seems to be that if it was done in or by England, it must be right. The German historian is usually trying to excuse some of the things that have happened in Teutonic history. The French historian or apologist, on the other hand, is always asking his readers to be sorry for his country, and to sympathize with it and pity it, while it suffers from excesses and errors. And American historians, with the exception of a very few, such as Charles and Mary Beard, still write with that starry-eyed idealism that may prove to be very disillusioning — some day.

Very delightful reading and a must for anyone who has any interest in the past, the present, or the future.

HERMAN C. HESSE

PARADE WITH BANNERS
By Donald Culross Peattie, (World, $3.50)

This volume consists of a series of essays and articles that were originally published in the Reader's Digest. The author is a naturalist who is very much interested not only in the natural resources and beauties of his native land, but also in its history. He has served as "roving editor" for the Reader's Digest. The articles are for the most part comparatively short, but are well written and cover a number of diverse fields: one series on the District of Columbia, including Washington, the White House, the Congressional Library, Arlington; another series on the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights; another covering the author's travels in the far west.

Easy to read; many of the articles are interesting.

HERMAN C. HESSE

FICTION

THOMASINA, THE CAT WHO THOUGHT SHE WAS GOD
By Paul Gallico (Doubleday, $3.95)

Thomasina is a fascinating feline. Since she has descended from a long line of cat gods and goddesses of a distant age, it is only natural that she views her present life of slavery with not a little impatience and disdain. She thinks she has inherited not only certain queenly, but also supernatural, characteristics from her forebears, and therefore considers it to be her duty to order and rearrange the lives of the humans who are nearest to her. These humans include the choleric veterinary surgeon, Mr. Andrew MacDhui, who hates Thomasina; his small daughter, Mary Ruadh, who worships Thomasina; and the gentle Lori, who loves Thomasina. Then there is the minister, Angus Peddie, who actually has only a nodding acquaintance with Thomasina and so does not realize what great plans she is making for the MacDhuis. Mr. Peddie has plans of his own for his friends, and he too is depending on supernatural powers to bring them to fruition.

This is a good book — with quiet humor, tender love, and if you look, a moral. Mr. Gallico does not find it necessary to roar or simper, nor stamp his feet or wring his hands. He says simply, "and the greatest of these is love."

ANNE SPRINGSTEEN
According to the optimistic democratic philosophy of an earlier day the ability of the American people to judge in matters political was seldom denied. With the rise of the Jacksonian man the voice of the people became the voice of God. At the time there seemed to be reasons for the pursuit and perpetuation of such vibrant optimism. It appeared to Americans that Americans had been relatively successful in whatever they had attempted. The English had been defeated in the space of fifty years. Other foreign opposition had been minimized. Daniel Boone, the Conastoga wagon, the Mormons, Jim Bridger, river boats, and all their material and human contemporaries had immortalized the successes of the frontier movement, the defeat of the Indians, and the appropriation of land. The world, it was claimed, now envied the American economic achievements, our inventive genius, and, above all, our Midas touch. Everything the American man had touched turned to gold. Surely we Americans had begun to feel that with America nothing had been impossible. Surely the American man had had the ability to arrange his political and social world.

Although Americans still talk, act, and think as if they had never fallen out of grace in the Garden of Eden, they are no longer quite so certain that the Crown of Life rests in their hands. Perhaps Americans have grown pessimistic about their Manifest Destiny merely because they have now lived longer and have been able to see in tempering perspectives the sins of their youth. Perhaps the wisdom and apathy that come with old age and the longer life have modified and restricted the bragging and ostentatious swagger of the adolescent years.

Lately it has even become popular among Americans to confess their sins in public. The latest fad of self-reproach was intensified by a simple thing like a Sputnik moving around the earth. To say the least, Americans have become excited because the Russians have touched off a series of quick journalistic analyses of American life. In the first place, the federal government had failed. Even some Republicans began to chaste “a see-nothing, hear-nothing, do-nothing, and care-nothing” government. Conflicts among the military services, it was also maintained, had slowed down our scientific efforts. Others charged that our businessman’s government, given to stubborn anti-intellectualism, had relegated the man of science and knowledge to virtual oblivion. In the second place, the schools of America have come in for their share of criticism. Too much education, it was said, has been devoted to personality adjustment, the skills of Dale Carnegie, athletes, and a heavy emphasis on extra-curricular activities. Seminars and conferences have talked loudly of late about the need for curriculum change.

Self-criticism, no one will deny, is a good thing. But in all this self-confession bombast, our insurance on national and personal conceits has not been eliminated. Very few persons have acknowledged the potential and the competency of the Russians. At least the President of the United States was gracious enough to congratulate the Russians on their progress. More often the comments were based on asking what is wrong with us Americans. Americans seemed to be saying: you Russians are lucky we slowed up; if we train and concentrate for several months, we can beat you Russians at anything; after all, no good can really and ultimately come out of Moscow. Americans in general refuse to acknowledge the ability, the potentiality, and the creativity of the Russians.

Here are some examples of such refusal from some sermons of clergymen: “Russia is led by godless atheists. God will not permit them to defeat the Christian nations of the West.” “God has been good to His people for they have kept burning brightly the lamps of liberty.” “We are a Christian nation whose moral principles the Russians do not understand.”

It appears that many Americans, even in high places, still look upon America as the City of God here upon earth. But before such glittering generalities are publicized, we Americans ought to ask ourselves a few basic questions. Where and how do we humans find and trace the footprints of God in history that enable us to say that this nation will win and that one will lose? On what bases do we assume that Russians in general are more corrupt and uncooperative than Americans? Do dictators always lose? Has history proved or illustrated this proposition?

A few people must realize that this is no time to indulge in sugary sentimentalities. This is a time for hard-nosed analysis.
Three Superior Motion Pictures

"Get More out of Life — Go to a Movie." This is the slogan which has been adopted by the motion-picture industry to spark an intensive campaign designed to recapture a dwindling audience. A recent sharp upswing in box-office receipts seems to indicate that the downward trend in movie-going has been reversed — at least temporarily. But I doubt that the slogan has had anything at all to do with putting an end to a ten-week-long decline.

This is the time of year when the major studios release new films to make them eligible to compete for the Motion Picture Academy and the Critics Circle awards. The closing weeks of 1957 have been no exception. This seems to me to be the real reason for the increase in movie attendance.

One of the most noteworthy of the many fine films released in recent weeks is Raintree County (M-G-M, Edward Dmytryk), adapted from a bestseller novel by the late Ross Lockridge, Jr. Raintree County is the first picture to be photographed by a new process known as "M-G-M Camera 65 — The Window of the World." Even though the presentation I saw was projected from a 35 mm. print, the effect was not only breath-takingly beautiful but remarkably free from blurring or distortion as well. Only a fragment of Mr. Lockridge's long novel has been brought to the screen. The action covers a period of approximately six years. It takes us from the happy, carefree days of the principal characters to the tragic aftermath of the War Between the States. There are many memorable scenes — scenes of simple rustic beauty, superbly photographed, scenes of mass movement, scenes of the carnage and the desolation that go with bitter warfare, and starkly realistic scenes depicting life in a madhouse. Much of the excellence of the production must be attributed to the brilliant direction of Edward Dmytryk. The acting of all the principals merits special commendation. Elizabeth Taylor is surprisingly good as the confused and unhappy Susanna, and Eva Marie Saint is appealing in the role of the gentle Nell. Montgomery Clift portrays Johnny, the hero, with sensitive artistry, Lee Marvin is wholly convincing as the town's lovable roughneck, and Nigel Patrick displays a fine flair for comedy in his delineation of the cynical schoolmaster.

Next on my list of distinguished new films is Peyton Place (20th Century-Fox, Mark Robson). I am sure that everyone who read Grace Metalious' sordid novel — which is still high on best-seller lists all over the country — will be agreeably surprised by the wholesome moral tone as well as by the charm and the beauty of the screen version. Peyton Place, photographed in magnificent De Luxe Color in Camden, Maine, presents a vivid and realistic cross section of life in a small American town. It is far more powerful and far more moving than the book from which it was adapted, and it is a clear refutation of the contention that either in writing or in the theater excessive brutality and unrestrained obscenity give added power, realism, and poignancy to a presentation. Peyton Place is not free from sequences depicting vicious cruelty and the utmost degradation, but these episodes are handled with restraint and with a proper understanding of moral values. Each member of a well-chosen cast merits enthusiastic applause for a superior performance.

We come now to Old Yeller, Walt Disney's new film (Buena Vista, Robert Stevenson). It was two days after Christmas, and the theater was filled to overflowing with children of all ages. It was a noisy audience. But it provided exactly the right atmosphere and the proper setting for the viewing of a Disney picture. The appearance of the dog, Old Yeller, was greeted by cries of "Hi, Old Yeller!" and "There he is!" And from that moment on every child actually shared Old Yeller's experiences and those of his human friends. There were shouts of glee; there was gay, carefree laughter and, eventually, heartbroken sobs when Old Yeller had to be destroyed.

Actually, Old Yeller, for all its simple, oft-told tale and its moments of frank sentimentalism, is a picture which will give pleasure not only to children but to all who remember that they, too, were once young. The natural settings are magnificent, the acting leaves nothing to be desired, and Robert Stevenson's direction reveals a fine technique of storytelling for children.

There were a number of outstanding TV shows at year's end. For me the most memorable was The Lady from Philadelphia, a See It Now program produced by Edward R. Murrow and Fred W. Friendly. This remarkable documentary film depicts the high lights of Marian Anderson's concert tour through seven countries of Southeast Asia — a tour undertaken on behalf of ANTA and the U. S. State Department. Miss Anderson, one of the great artists of all time, asked that this program be dedicated to the children of Asia and to her own beloved mother.
Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

You and I know there are ways to twist a phrase, to turn a word, that will color the entire meaning of a sentence, and make it say something it doesn't say on the surface. But it is said, and neither God nor His angels can call it back. It is said something like these new-fangled Subliminal Motion Picture Flashes say it — and just about as deadly.

Well, The Cresset has always tried to dodge this sort (with the possible exception of our chief reporter, G. G. from Xanadu). And some of us have been proud to take part in putting a few words together here and there for its pages. That's why I got stunned a bit by Mr. Harry Huxhold's review of Henry Rische's When the Lights Are Low in your December, 1957, issue, pp. 22 and 23.

Because right there your reviewer did things somehow differently than any reviewer should try to do. He took a book written in a mood, a frame of mind, a spiritual tone designed for a certain disinterested group of people out in Dunsmuir, California — a book of poetically conceived thoughts and images and stories which were to initiate the non-Christian into a self-realization of the need for Christ. And then he went too far and tore the most emotional and the most dramatic climaxes loose from the book, clipped them up, and set them down into the middle if his review.

What else could they do but sound ridiculous? I could do the same thing with your church hymnal, and by the time I had finished you might feel ashamed to confess you ever sang from it. Stuff like: "Fortunately, Mr. Rische, the lamplighter, has described his role . . ." Or this: " . . . just a lamplighter who learned to trim wicks for Edgar A. Guest and company." (Note the play on "lamplighter.") Or: " . . . an invitation to the entire community to attend the 'Sunday afternoon Twilight Hour program of lecture, poetry and song'."

Well, it must have been a lot of fun writing that stuff. Give me an iceberg for a writer, a laboratory for the typewriter, and I'll show you a review of the Psalms that will curl your hair. The only trouble is that no such review accepts the spirit of the book, or even catches it in the first place. You have trouble from the start.

It so happens I know the whole story of this book — its author, its original idea, its meaning. I've read it, and I could never stand Edgar Guest or Norman Vincent (although I wouldn't condemn Norman Vincent Peale for a minute). Rev. Rische is an editor who thinks in terms of meeting people, getting through to them. This is what he says in the Preface of the book: "There was a time when, after working a "hard gravel" parish in a Western railroad town for three months, I found myself with a congregation of five listeners. I saw the people on the street, I watched their children on the playground, I read the vital statistics in the town news, and I said to myself, behind the inscrutable faces of these people there were cares and problems, needs, deep desires, and the inevitable question mark of eternity. I walked past the homes at night and wondered what the story was behind each lighted window."

Your reviewer complains that Rev. Rische "is neither prophet nor evangelist." For heaven's sake, who said he had to be? Isn't there room among us for people who know how to get through? Or would you rather talk forever to a bunch of empty seats and five instead of getting at least some part of the Gospel across to 800?

Besides, I'm not so sure that "When the Lights Are Low" is almost barren of the message of the New Testament. There's an awful lot in the New Testament about faith, hope, love, trust confidence — in just those terms, too, without your dogmatic structures added. And if Rev. Rische doesn't think he has to append a footnote to Elert, bless him for it. He's not trying to pass a thesis course. Some of us keep on writing as if we can't forget we once studied for a degree.

The big point is that the Gospel itself is bigger than the methodology, or even the academic proficiency, that we use to get it through to people. And there's room for all kinds of people, language, and approaches in this. The minute we begin sharpening our claws on each other, we'll have to erect a monument over our Luther and Walther and Pieper:

This Far
No Farther!

And that, as you know, has been tried too.

But Harry, it doesn't work.

Walter Riess

St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Editor:

It is not the advised policy of authors to engage in windmill sorties with literary critics.

Acerbic John Crosby, after a hatchet job on a low-rated TV performance, explained, "I report it as I see it."

So when a Cresset critic attempts to knock the daylights out of "When The Lights Are Low," one does not take issue with his literary lance, nor his cultural yardstick nor his regurgitative distaste for quotes from Guest. In that respect it's a case of "non-disputandum" — every man to his taste. If a gourmand prefers caviar to wall-eyed pike that's his epicurean right — some like both.
On the charge of lacking literary sophistication one bows quietly; but on another point, or shall one say pinprick, one feels moved to respond. It is the charge of the critic that the book is "almost barren of the message of the Christ."

In the answer to that a quote from a letter by Dr. Henry Grueber, a man of aged experience and known pulpit perspicacity, offers an apt testimonial:

"Your presentation is unique, brim full of practical applications, and above all, always leading to the Cross on Calvary."

When an astute doctor of divinity can see Christ in "When The Lights Are Low" one wonders whether the book critic, allergic to Guest, allowed an attitudinal bloc to obstruct Christian understanding.

A footnote on the expression "sentimental trivia": Is there no place for warm sentiment in the intimate matters of heart and home? Must it all be wrapped in the cold linen of sophistication?

As to trivia, a poet - pardon me - had this to say:

An arm of aid to the weak
A friendly hand to the friendless
Kind words so short to speak
But whose echo is endless -
These things are little
These things are small;
They may mean nothing,
They may mean all.

Them's my sentiments. The trendex of Huxhold registers nil; but thanks, pastor, for the more understanding rating.

Yours truly,
Henry Rische

St. Louis, Missouri

Dear Editor:

I was shocked by the postscript to the "Letter from Xanadu, Nebraska" in the Cresset of January, 1958 (p. 15).

It is disgraceful, in my opinion, that a journal which purports to represent the Christian view point on contemporary issues should lend itself, however facetiously, to such an offensive statement on the part of one of its regular contributors.

This is symptomatic, I feel, of the easy tolerance which our society exhibits toward the whole problem of liquor and its attendant evils - a tolerance which, alas, has only too often invaded the domain of the Church.

At the very least, this postscript is in execrable taste. At worst, it is an offense to the Christian conscience.

Very truly yours

Thomas Coates

Fort Wayne, Indiana

The whole point of that particular column was supposed to have been that a rational man facing the new year has his choice between God and the bottle. G.G. chose the bottle. If this point was not clear to the former managing editor of The Cresset, it probably was not clear to a large number of our readers. We are grateful to Dr. Coates, for this opportunity to set the matter straight.

The Editors
Undoubtedly one of the major weaknesses of religion in 1958 lies in the evident fact that so few people seem to enjoy it. . . . In some measure this has always been true. . . . Men have always attempted to reduce the joy and splendor of Christianity to a series of “do’s” and “don’ts”. . . . They are more ready to make rules than to believe. . . . We do not refer, at least primarily, to those saints of sorrow who have been bowed down by the terror of sin, the waywardness of man, and the contemplation of the unceasing pain of the world. . . . We shall always have our Calvins, Inges, and Kierkegaarders. . . . Of course, their emphasis is also wrong. . . . They are, however, far above the shallow pessimism of the modern descendants of the Puritans. . . . It is strange that in the Church of Jesus Christ, the very source of life and joy, there should be men and women who live by a complete negation of life and forget that the greatest joy came through the greatest sorrow. . . .

Clearly we remember a golden spring afternoon, many years ago, when a crowd of youngsters poured pell-mell out of Sunday School. . . . The day’s lessons were done, the sun was warm, and there were marbles in our pockets. . . . Even more clearly we remember the prim ladies on the steps of the church who watched with compressed lips, smiled indulgently, and looked with marked disapproval on the fact that we were immediately joined by Isador Gruenspahn. . . . At that time our consciences were vaguely disturbed by their displeasure. . . . Today I know that we were more religious than they. . . . We were using everything that God had given us, the sunshine, the marbles, and the young winds of childhood and spring. . . . There was no contradiction between Sunday School and marbles. . . .

Somewhere around here lies the deepest problem of the Christian life. . . . All men want to be happy but no man wants to be good — at least of himself. . . . We have come to consider happiness and goodness irreconcilable. . . . We believe that you must either be good or happy, but that you cannot be both. . . .

This apparent contradiction has been resolved by the fact of the Cross. . . . In the Christian life there is no contradiction between goodness and happiness. . . . Goodness consists in doing the will of God and the power to do that has come through the fact of redemption. . . . All the experience of men outside the shadow of the Cross demonstrates that we never attain happiness by the things we believe will most surely bring it. . . . Man has a tragic way of looking for happiness in the wrong places. . . . Only when he becomes a Christian can he know that the ultimate happiness lies in God. . . . There is profound meaning in the intimate union between faith and joy which appears on many pages of the New Testament. . . . Or the music of the 104th and 148th Psalms. . . . Or the lingering melody of the morning stars singing together and the sons of God shouting for joy. . . . Their song is unending, even though momentarily unheard. . . .

I know that this does not solve all problems. . . . Since there is no complete goodness on earth, there can be no complete happiness. . . . The central happiness of the Christian, however, includes this, that he sees God busy with the problems that destroy happiness. . . . Evil speaks of His patience, Nature of His glory, the Cross of the Crown. . . . Perhaps there has never been a time in the history of man when greater numbers of men were more unhappy than they are today. . . . Over against a world of sorrow, the Church must reaffirm that religion is not weight but wings. . . . Men flee happiness when they run away from God. . . . Christianity may have its Good Friday, but it never stops there. . . . Beyond it — and forever beyond it — our faith brings Easter Sunday and Pentecost and the long, steady, happy facing of the Throne. . . .