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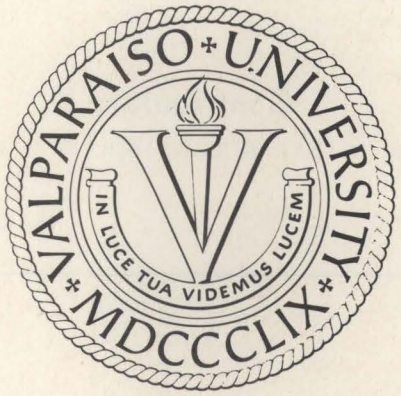
The Cresset

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE,

THE ARTS, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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TWENTY CENTS

JUNE, 1958

The

Cresset

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IN THE JUNE CRESSET

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The Cresset Vol. XXI, No. 8 JUNE, 1958

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Comment on the Significant News by the Editors

A Bad Bill

The desire to kill the umpire is a universal and, we believe, a generally laudable one. But as with so many otherwise laudable desires it becomes much less laudable when it is permitted to burgeon into action. Umpires are an evil because they interfere with our freedom of action. To love them is to value freedom too lightly. But to kill them is to forget that the evil within us requires countervailing evils outside us so that in society, as in our whole troubled world, there may be a balance of terror and, thus, a kind of peace.

Years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was seized by a tremendous desire to kill the umpire. This he proposed to do by what was called, at the time, "packing the court." Mr. Roosevelt felt that the court was calling the plays too close and, thus, preventing him from accomplishing what he considered necessary and desirable reforms. Mr. Roosevelt did not get his way, the umpire was not killed, and the Republic survived.

Now comes Senator William E. Jenner, better and more appropriately known as "Wild Bill," and proposes a new way of killing the umpire. The Jenner proposal, as rewritten by Senator John M. Butler, seeks to curb the power of the court in four areas: 1) in matters of state laws dealing with subversion; 2) on questions of contempt of Congress arising out of the rights of witnesses to refuse to answer questions which are not pertinent to valid legislative purposes; 3) on questions of the application of the Smith Act to persons who advocate the violent overthrow of the government; and 4) on matters pertaining to the powers of the states to decide on admissions to the bar.

The Jenner-Butler proposals would appear to be constitutional if one interprets the constitution as the written document which is enshrined in a case in the National Archives. But they certainly violate the broader constitution — the accumulated traditions of 150 years which cluster around the written constitution. For the effect of these proposals would be to weaken the court and, in the process, to undermine the rule of law. Messrs. Jenner and Butler, like Mr. Roosevelt, want to Get Things Done, law or no law.

It is not too likely that these proposals will become law. But if they reach the floor of the Senate, they will find many supporters, especially in the South. This is a case where men who wish to remain free will do well to resist the beginnings of an assault upon their liberties. This is an obvious attempt to intimidate, if not kill, the umpire.

A Serious Mistake

Lieut.-Gen. Joseph May Swing has made an exceptionally fine record for himself in an exceptionally difficult job, that of U.S. Immigration Commissioner. Two of his accomplishments are particularly praiseworthy: the elimination of the noisome alien detention centers and the admission, in 1956, of over 30,000 Hungarian refugees on parole.

Like many generous men, though, Gen. Swing has a low boiling point. For four years, now, Gen. Swing has been simmering over the case of Mr. William Heikkila, a Finnish alien and former Communist who has been engaged in a ten-year court fight against deportation. On April 18, it appeared that there was finally a legal basis for deporting Mr. Heikkila and Gen. Swing wasted no time in taking action. Agents of the Immigration Service seized Mr. Heikkila in San Francisco, put him on a plane for Vancouver, B.C., and there transferred him to a plane bound for Amsterdam. Ultimately Mr. Heikkila was deposited in the chilly damp of the Helsinki airport without even a topcoat. He had not been allowed to say good-bye to his wife. He had not even been allowed to buy a toothbrush en route.

A Federal District judge in San Francisco, observing that this procedure smacked of "Gestapo, rack and thumb screw," reversed the deportation order pending further proceedings and threatened to have the head of the local Immigration Service office up for con-

tempt if Mr. Heikkila was not returned to the jurisdiction of the court. Thereupon Gen. Swing had Mr. Heikkila flown back from Helsinki. But a week later, in testimony before the House Immigration sub-committee, Gen. Swing swore that he would deport Heikkila "if it takes from now until I get kicked out."

Under our system of government, we must leave it to the courts to decide whether Mr. Heikkila is a deportable alien. If he is, he ought to be deported. If he can avoid deportation by dragging his case out through the courts, it would appear that some sort of legislation is needed to prevent such abuse of the right of appeal. But we can not have administrative agencies, however well intentioned, acting as judge, jury, and executioner.

In the Heikkila case, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the Immigration Service was following the principles of lynch law. These principles run directly counter to the time-tested procedures of our legal system. However deportable Mr. Heikkila may be and however worthy may have been Gen. Swing's motives in trying to deport him, we do not think that we can afford the risk of a reputation of this kind of vigilante action. As the officer responsible for it, Gen. Swing should be asked to resign.

Pentagon Reorganization

The President's proposals for the reorganization of the national defense establishment have run into a debate on the question of just what powers are already held by the Secretary of Defense. A considerable body of informed opinion holds that legislation already on the books vests in the Secretary all necessary power to streamline the Pentagon and to unify command in the armed forces without any additional legislation. Opponents of this view maintain that the wording of present legislation leaves too much doubt as to the Secretary's authority and provides too many loopholes for circumventing this authority.

It would be unfortunate if we got bogged down in an argument on words here and forgot what is actually at issue. The basic question, it seems to us, is whether this giant military octopus which we have allowed to develop through the past decade and a half is to be brought under effective civilian control or not. That it has not been under effective civilian control since the Second World War is obvious. That the cockeyed arrangement of three service secretaries more or less independent of the Secretary of Defense makes for weak administration is equally obvious.

We can appreciate the professional military man's suspicion of civilian leadership in the defense establishment and we know, from experience, the meaning of "pride of service." But we know also something of the intricacies of military politics. For years it has been common practice for the services to butter up weak secretaries and to outwait strong secretaries. Effective control of the military forces is not, and has not been for some time, in the hands of the civilian secretaries but in the hands of inner rings which make or break service careers at will. And these rings are unable to see beyond the privileges and prerogatives of their own branches of the service to the larger considerations of the national welfare.

Any threat to the continuance of this kind of extra-constitutional control brings solemn warnings about the danger of a "man on horseback" and a "prussianized general staff." These same objections were raised years ago to the present army staff.

On balance, though, it seems to us that the greatest danger at the moment is not one of too much, but too little, unified control.

Good Stuff for the Youngsters

The Young People's Literature Board of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod has set up a committee of reviewers to examine the some 1400 different children's books which are published every year. Most of these titles the committee itself will review. But because of the size of the job the committee has made arrangements with the *Bulletin of the Children's Book Center,* issued by the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, for the reprinting of its reviews.

Ultimately the committee hopes to serve all Lutheran publications. At the present time it is directing its efforts towards parochial schools through *Lutheran Education,* the official educational journal of the Missiouri Synod. Since last December, the *Lutheran Witness* has been reprinting some of these reviews. Concordia Publishing House will shortly issue a basic book list for schools and parents under the tentative title, *Notable Books for Christian Children.*

We have seen the criteria by which the committee will evaluate the books which come under its scrutiny and we are pleased to note that its standards require something more definable than mere "wholesomeness." In other words, it is not enough that a book be inoffensive to get the committee's recommendation. It must be well-written and it must have something to say to children who, as the committee notes, "are always brighter than their elders think." Characters must be convincing and must exhibit both strengths and weaknesses.

It should perhaps be emphasized that this committee is not, in any sense of the the word, a censorial committee. It is not the purpose of the committee to draw up an *Index Librorum Prohibitorum.* Rather, its functions are entirely positive — to call attention to good books which do not get either the publicity or the circulation which they deserve and which, therefore, most parents would not even know about if they were not called to their attention.

The committee has undertaken an eminently worthwhile job and we hope that its performance will come up to the high level of its objectives.

AD LIB.

Men Have Become Redundant

By ALFRED R. LOOMAN

Anything you can do a machine can do better. So say the proponents of automation. After a tour through the Oldsmobile plant in Lansing, Michigan, last week, I am somewhat inclined to agree with them. Not since a trip through the Ford plant over ten years ago have I had an opportunity to see a large industrial plant in operation, and the changes that have taken place in that time were startling.

I am not an engineer and my mechanical knowledge goes no farther than assembling premiums ordered with ceral box tops, so I did not always know what I was seeing. It was clear, however, that in the making of the engine for an automobile, the machine has replaced man.

Our tour began in the engine plant which consisted of rows of huge machines, each performing a complex operation with ease. The process began at the point where the conveyor delivers an engine block to the machines. Each machine, with arms and fingers powered mechanically, hydraulically, or by electricity, performed various operations — in some cases as many as 26, we were told — and then passed the block on to the next machine. I could remember from ten years before when most of these operations were performed by man power.

To be sure there were men in sight, one about every thirty feet standing next to a panel filled with lights and switches. Occasionally one of these men would look at a nearby machine without moving from his station, but otherwise the men seemed to be doing nothing at all. I presume they would pull a switch or take some action, however, if one of the machines broke down. Although the noise level was high, and I was with a group of 30 people, I had an eerie feeling that I had wandered into a plant at night where the machines had taken over when the men went home.

Much of the inspection of the engines and various other parts of the automobile was conducted by machine and done more accurately that way. Before the engine was completed and turned over to humans to be tested, only a few live inspectors had seen anything of the engines, but their inspections, so far as we could tell, could find no error in the machines' work.

Over in the pressed metal plant, where tremendous presses stamp fenders, hoods, and bodies out of sheets of steel, men were once more in evidence, though naturally their efforts seemed rather puny in comparison with those of the powerful machines. But there were fewer men than I had remembered from before, for where men formerly picked up the stamped part and carried it to the next machine, now an arm comes out of the press and does that job mechanically.

It was in the final assembly plant that men took over from machines for the most part. This operation has changed little in the last decade, but it is still a marvel to me how quickly a car can be assembled. I am most surprised when the steering post, the body, the wheels, and the hood and front fenders, each of which is painted and becomes a part of the assembly at widely separated points, all end up together with the right paint covering each section.

If I understand the argument correctly, automation is not taking jobs away from men, it is merely making more products possible and diversification will take care of any surplus man power. This may be true, but I would like to get opinions from some of the men who once worked in those areas of the plant where only machines work now.

About the only human touch on this tour was furnished, quite unintentionally, by our guide, who was not a regular guide, I feel sure, but an errand boy who was pressed into service because the tours were so popular that day. He seemed to know little or nothing about what was going on at any point in the operation, and, fortunately for him, it was often too noisy for him to explain anyway. Several times he got lost and we entered four different doors of the final assembly point before he found a man to direct him to the right one.

Since many groups of thirty were going through at the same time, and most of us were part of the same group, it was natural we should get somewhat mixed up. I didn't even see our guide for the last hour of the tour, and my last sight of him came just as we were finishing the tour. There he was with another group, but this time he was following, not leading. His head was down and he trudged along steadily, obviously in the hope that this group would lead him back into the vicinity of the office where he worked. I had the feeling he had better hurry or he might also be replaced by a machine.

The Nature and Function of Christian Discourse

By Stanley L. Olsen
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In all effective communication of the Christian faith, there are three integral elements: language, meaning, and truth. There must be truth, for faith is always more than attitude, experience, activity. Whatever else faith is, it certainly claims to embody a truth content, and in the proportion that one suspects the truth element in faith, one suspects also the ultimate value and worth of it. And if there is truth, there is also meaning, for the faith has always been understood as being amenable to meaning, even though the *whole* meaning can never be grasped. And further, it has always been amenable to a *sharable* meaning, for it is always the meaning of the holy communion of saints. Finally, if there is truth and meaning, there is also language that embodies and communicates that truth and that meaning. It is questionable, if the faith cannot be put into meaningful terms, that it can even be grasped, let alone communicated to others in any effective way.

In much of the discussion now going on about the nature and function of religious language, I feel there is a tendency to separate these three elements. This happens, for example, when religious language is indiscriminately linked with poetry or art or philosophy. This is a very common practice. The reason for classifying the language of religion with these other human interests stems from the desirability of distinguishing religious language from scientific language. This is all to the good. One of the positive gains, it seems to me, is the growing recognition that the languages of religion and of science represent quite different universes of discourse, with correspondingly different kinds of truth and different levels of reality. There is a growing impatience with the view, seriously held by many, that non-scientific language is merely emotive or expressive language, and that such language cannot assume any significant role in the pursuit of truth. Philosophical analysts are becoming more and more aware of the analogical, if not metaphorical, nature of all language, including scientific language itself. It is becoming less popular to say that poetry, art, or religion, which make use of analogies, metaphors and images, are *merely* emotive, lest scientific truth itself be jeopardized by such accusations.

But even when this is done, the lumping together of the language or religion with poetry, art, music or philosophy (usually existential philosophy) has its dangers too. For the problem of meaning and truth is not as insistent and crucial in these areas as it is in religion. Poetry and art may or may not be interested in communicating meaning; may or may not be interested in communicating truth. They may be more interested in expressing or creating moods, attitudes, modes of behavior. But even when they are interested in setting forth meaning and truth, the nature and function of language that sets forth religious truth, and more specifically Christian truth, needs to be more clearly defined.

Attempts to Define Religious Discourse

A few attempts at identifying the nature and function of religious discourse appeared in the *Christian Scholar* for September, 1955. These articles indicate some of the pitfalls one encounters when religious discourse is considered apart from the meaning and truth of that language. These pitfalls, it will be noticed, are evident in the vagueness of the conclusions drawn; in the subjectivity to which these conclusions lead; and finally, in the limitations they impose on religious language.

In an article entitled "The Religious Use of Language," Dr. John Hutchinson says language become religious when it issues out of an existential involvement of man in his basic orientation toward God and the world. This involvement goes to the root of his subjecthood, and its meaning is visualized in terms of analogy, metaphor, poetry, imagination and myth. Though he confesses that many forms of existentialism are not congenial to religion, nevertheless the fact that existentialism deals with man and with his personal predicament leads Dr. Hutchinson to say that "existentialism, like Nicodemus, gives the impression of being not far from the Kingdom of God."[1]

This no doubt is a healthy reaction from viewing religious language on the one hand as merely emotive discourse, or as literal truth on the other. Religious language for him is a language that reflects a serious grappling with real issues of personal faith. But when he goes on to the question of meaning and truth of religious language, he hedges. In existentialist fashion one is faced with a variety of life orientations, expressed in mythical form, and one must choose which makes most sense to him, any one of which would result in a religious choice. Writing for the *Christian Scholar,* one would think that, in the interest of clarity, he would have made more provision for the Christian view, which Hendrik Kraemer calls the "prophetic ap-

[1]Dr. John Hutchinson, "The Religious Use of Language," *Christian Scholar,* September, 1955, p. 183.

prehension of existence," in which both the divine and human are involved, and in which revelation assumes so decisive a role. Certainly, no treatment of religious discourse can be called adequate which leaves one only in the realm of possibilities. A genuine religious faith speaks with the language of conviction, or at least should do so.

Dr. Geddes MacGregor, Professor at Byrn Mawr College, in an article entitled "The Nature of Religious Utterance," thinks that language is religious and serves a religious function when it dramatically sets forth personal faith in God. This is certainly more in line with a Christian approach to the problem. He writes:

"For Christian experience, it can never be enough to talk about God in terms of any natural theology, even for instance, that of St. Thomas. No theological proposition such as God is omniscient can ever be as satisfactory as O my God who knowest all things. It is perhaps for this very reason that St. Augustine's most significant theological work is his *Confessions,* which is from the beginning to end in the form of a prayer to God. Genuine theological utterance must be dramatic. For the word God is to all possible knowledge, including theology, what I is to me. There is no conceivable number of propositions about God that could adequately define Him; nor should this surprise me, since there is no conceivable number of propositions about me that could adequately define me. Yet I am aware, unless I am a hopeless megalomaniac, that I am not an inexhaustible personality in my own right. The mystery of my inexhaustibleness as a person is not only not explicable but even discoverable except in view of my complete dependence on God my creator."[2]

Farther on in the same article, he suggests that religious language in its most authentic form is liturgical, and concludes by saying: "It is only in the context of an address to God that the extremely elaborate metaphorical speech of which religious utterance is composed can even begin to be understood."[3]

This article would seem to limit the use of religious language to such personal confessions of faith. Just where the more formal, propositional language, such as one finds in confessional statements or in doctrinal formulations elaborated in systematic theology would come into the picture on this view is difficult to say. The attempt to distinguish in St. Augustine's writings language which is religious from what is not religious appears to me wholly impossible, and it makes only for confusion to attempt to do so. How could Augustine, given the faith that he had, write *anything* that could be regarded as non-religious? In some way, the more formal, impersonal language that religion often uses must be regarded as part and parcel of religious language. This would appear especially so if religion be concerned with clear meaning and certain truth.

In another article in the same issue of the *Christian Scholar*, entitled "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," Dr. Paul Tillich makes an illuminating analysis of the nature and function of religious symbols (including, of course, language) and further distinguishes between symbols of poetry and art on the one hand and of religion on the other. Let me quote a significant paragraph from that article:

"Every symbol opens up a level of reality for which non-symbolic speaking is inadequate" . . . It is "a function of art to open up levels of reality; in poetry, in visual art, and in music, levels of reality are opened up which can be opened up in no other way. Now if this is the function of art, then certainly artistic creations have symbolic character. You can take that which a landscape of Rubens, for instance, mediates to you. You can not have this experience in any other way than through this painting made by Rubens. This landscape has some heroic character; it has character of balance, of colors, of weights, of values, and so on. All this is very external. What this mediates to you cannot be expressed in any other way than through the painting itself. The same is true also in the relationship of poetry and philosophy. The temptation may often be to confuse the issue by bringing too many philosophical concepts into the poem. Now this is really the problem; one cannot do this. If one uses philosophical language or scientific language, it does not mediate the same thing which is mediated in the use of really poetic language without a mixture of any other language. This example may show what I mean by the phrase "opening up of levels of reality'. But in order to do this, something else must be opened up – namely levels of the soul, levels of our interior reality. And they must correspond to the levels of the exterior reality which are opened up by a symbol. So every symbol is two-edged. It opens up reality and it opens up the soul."[4]

Having said this, Dr. Tillich goes on to say that symbols become religious when they open up the deepest level of reality which would otherwise remain hidden. This he variously describes as "the fundamental level," the "level of being itself," the "ground of every other dimension and of every other depth." They also open up the "dimension of depth in the soul that corresponds with this dimension of reality." This hidden reality disclosed by the religious symbol, he goes on, is the Holy, and the symbols that open up the Holy become themselves holy, since in mediating the Holy to experience, they participate in some way in the Holy itself.

All of this is very illuminating and does suggest something of the distinctive character of Christian language, though expressed in quite abstract style. He seems to avoid the extreme subjectivism referred to in the other articles. And further, he suggests that religious communication in some way actually participates

[2]p. 179
[3]Ibid., p. 180
[4]p. 191

in the power and reality of that to which it points. To put it in more traditional terms, religious language is a means of grace, or at least a constituent element in it.

However, there is a subjectivism — or shall I say a social subjectivism? — in Dr. Tillich's views. When he seeks to answer the question as to how religious symbols arise, he resorts to a sociological explanation. He writes: "Some one asks rightly 'How do symbols arise . . . Out of which womb are symbols born?' I would say the womb which is usually called today the 'group unconscious' or 'collective unconscious', or whatever you want to call it— out of a group which acknowledges, in this thing, this word, this flag or whatever it may be, its own being."[5] One wonders whether Dr. Tillich would have this apply to *all* religious symbols, including those given in the Scriptures. It would certainly not be satisfactory, from a Christian point of view, to say this, for in the Christian tradition Scriptural language is a response to God's revelatory activity and is a product of a divine-human encounter. Perhaps in a more complete description Dr. Tillich would make this qualification.

Are there other clues to the nature and function of religious language that would more precisely identify it as specifically Christian? It seems to me that however helpful it is to approach Christian discourse from the angles of poetry, or art, or philosophy, which certainly have their pitfalls, would it not also be helpful to approach it from the Christian faith itself; to discover if we can elements in the faith itself that would serve to clarify its meaning and truth?

The Language of the Kerygma

One clue in this connection that needs exploration, I think, is kerygmatic language.[6] The Christian movement from its very beginning has been a preaching, witnessing movement. The very term "Gospel" makes this plain. It is good news to be proclaimed, heralded forth, witnessed to. And the Bible itself has often been referred to as a book that preaches, that bodies forth, that points to God and His revealing, saving activity. More specifically, it preaches Christ, and "declares the wonderful deed, of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." This I think, is a helpful clue, for it provides a certain context of meaning and truth that gives this language its peculiar significance. And further, it avoids the pitfalls of the other approaches mentioned earlier. The kerygma, pointing as it does to objective historical events recorded in the Scriptures, avoids the pitfalls of subjectivism. It can make use of parable, metaphor, simile, allegory, myth and other literary devices (as, indeed, it must if it is to do justice to the mystery that remains even after the revelation has been declared) and at the same time insist that these point to objective events and facts. Further, the kerygma lends itself to the more formal kind of religious language of theology and ethics, since these too can be understood as kerygmatic in nature. Theology in the Christian tradition has always been regarded as the outgrowth of, and as instrumental to, the proclamation of the Gospel. It, too, is witness, only in a more formal and impersonal sense. And it has the special function of drawing out the kerygma in more precise and clarified form, so necessary for an understanding of the meaning and truth of the faith. The pitfall here, however, is to over-intellectualize the kerygma, and to reduce it to mere doctrine.

This is not to say that kerygmatic language is only preacher's language, or theologian's language. It seems to me that anyone who seriously wants to communicate the faith, whether by preaching, teaching, writing, counseling, or what have you, is really doing the same thing. He is bearing witness. There is great need today for people who know their way around in contemporary culture and at the same time feel at home in the kerygmatic language of the church to find new and fresh ways to communicate the faith. There is a special need for what Reinhold Niebuhr calls "roving ambassadors" in our sophisticated secular culture to interpret the faith so as to meet contemporary needs. This, or something like it, is one task that the *Cresset* sets for itself. And it is no easy task.

Dealing as it does with parable, metaphor, simile, allegory and the like, the danger of kerygmatic language, as Rudolf Bultmann has been pointing out to us, is that of literalizing this language. This is to confuse the picture or the symbol with the reality to which it points. This ends up by becoming a subtle form of idolatry, making of the Bible, of the cross, of the virgin and so on, objects of worship. It is especially easy to do this when we remember that symbols of the divine do participate in some way in the divine power and reality itself as they mediate that power and reality to us. It is perhaps the keenness with which Protestants sense this danger that explains why we are so reluctant about introducing too many visual symbols in our churches. And besides, we have the specific warning given us in the first commandment against making visual symbols of the divine. That there is a real danger of taking the language of the kerygma too literally is indicated by the shock we feel when we read books like those of Bultmann. By calling attention to the picture language of the New Testament (or as he would put it, the mythological language) he is charged with draining off the substance of the Gospel. Whether he actually does this or not remains a question. To me he seems to do just this. But reading Bultmann is a wholesome reminder of the danger we all run into in taking too literally what is meant to be metaphorical, or analogical.

[5] p. 192

[6] *Kerygma* is the Greek word for "proclamation."

Christian Discourse as Confessional Language

Another helpful clue to an understanding of Christian discourse is to say that it is confessional language. This is simply another way of saying that religious language is never language in general. It is language that grows out of a specifiable community in which the encounter with the divine takes place, and it is a reflex of that encounter. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you . . . that you may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ." (I John 1:3). Only as one participates in the life of that kind of fellowship, in such a way as to experience for himself the divine encounter, can one grasp the language of faith. Just as the language of our homes would lose its color, warmth, directness and emotional overtones were we to substitute for it the general language of psychology, sociology, anthropology, biology, or what have you, so the language of the church would suffer were we to substitute for it other languages, be they of philosophy or of science. This is true, even when these languages deal specifically with religion as they often do. Were it possible to think of religion as some modern people do, as some sort of vague religious feelings or ideals without attachment to specific institutional forms, these languages may suffice. But the Christian faith has never functioned in any effective way except in closely knit communities, where, as in our homes, the language must be personal. In short, there is no substitute for confessional language.

This is not to say, however, that confessional language, any more than kerygmatic language, is free from its own peculiar pitfalls. The danger here is that the language become *too* confessional, and therefore esoteric in character. Both for its own health, and for the sake of its missionary outreach, the language of the church must seek to avoid this. As Richard Niebuhr points out so forcibly, the church needs ever to see itself as others see it, lest it develop moods of smugness and complacency, not to speak of obscurantism; lest, also, it lose its relevance as a redemptive force in the surrounding culture.

Confessional theologians in our day appear to be guilty on this score. Often one reads such expressions as "Faith has nothing to do with metaphysics"; or, "Faith has its own kind of logic"; or, "Faith has its own structure of thought, independent of the thought structure of science or philosophy"; or even more boldly, "Faith finds no point of contact with human reason not nourished by revelation." Such expressions suggest that confessional theology moves in a universe of discourse completely divorced from the controlling concepts of our workaday world. It is something completely *sui generis.* This, I think, is a kind of occupational disease which theologians share with specialists in other fields, and results in a kind of jargon – highly technical and meaningful no doubt to those who are "in the know," but quite esoteric and pointless to those who are not. Dr. Prenter, in an address at the Lutheran World Federation, warned against what he called a contemporary form of gnosticism to which confessional theology can so easily lead. Dr. Pittenger in a recent article in the *Christian Century* says he thinks confessional theology contributes to a kind of high-level schizophrenia in contemporary culture. For a church that holds to the doctrine of a real incarnation of Christ, and for a church that holds that the world in which we live is really God's world, the arena wherein He is functioning to achieve His redemptive purpose for all mankind, this "splendid isolation" must be avoided at all costs.

But having said this, one surely ought to go on to say that confessional language is not necessarily distorted in attempting to relate it in a positive way to the language of secular culture. Here certainly there is room for a creative approach that calls for that subtle thing we call a "meeting of minds" between the mind of the church and of secularized man. This need not be a head-on clash, summoning us to take up the cudgels of argument or debate. Surely, it is not necessary to labor the point that secular culture, despite its ignoring of, even its hostility to the church, embodies in itself many values we would do well to take seriously. But what it does call for is a meeting of minds on the common ground of human need, and for an honest and frank facing together of possible solutions.

Perhaps this is enough to indicate something of the nature and function of Christian language, and of the problems to which it gives rise. Perhaps we should not overstate the significance of the problem of language. The content of the faith is surely of primary importance, and language can never be more than a tool, and only one tool among others, in the effective communication of that content. All of us are engaged in communicating the faith in one form or another. Some of us are trying to do this through the written word. How successful we are will depend upon how well we understand the *language, meaning* and *truth* of the faith and the inner connection these have with each other.

The Paradox of Words

By Walter F. C. Ade

"Words are but wind." — Old English Proverb

If someone were to tell you to-day: "Yesterday at eight o'clock in the evening I shall call for you," you would think with good reason that there was something amiss with that person's mental machinery. Yet it was not always so. In the days when the Goths swept over Europe and finally sacked and burned Rome itself, the above sentence might have been uttered calmly with no questions asked, for in those days the word *yesterday* meant not only "the day *before* to-day" but also "the day *after* to-day." Mistakes in semantics are thus relative; what is correct now may be entirely wrong a hundred years from now, and that which we consider wrong now, may have been quite correct centuries ago. This variability in the meaning of words is sometimes confusing, yet it is highly interesting as a study.

It is strange that in certain basic words the meanings *yesterday* and *to-morrow, the day before yesterday* and *the day after to-morrow,* diametrical opposites, become blended. Old English *geostra, giestra, gystra* all mean *yester* or *the one preceding the present one,* and *geostran daeg* means *yesterday* or *the day preceding the present day.* But the Old Norse *igaer* means *to-morrow* and *yesterday* at the same time, and the Gothic *gistra, gistradagis,* from which obviously the modern German *gestriger Tag* and *gestern,* the Danish *gistern,* and our own English *yesterday* are derived, also means *to-morrow.* Related forms are the Sanskrit *hyas,* the Greek *chthes,* and the Latin *heri* and *hesternus.* The Old High German and Middle High German *egester* (Modern German *ehe gestern* literally, that is, *vorgestern)* has the Latin *perendie* in the old glossaries, that is *the day before or after the day next to the one before or after, the day next to the one backwards or forwards.* The Sanskrit *hyas, yesterday,* was likewise used to express the idea *to-morrow.*

At this time we also take the opportunity to present another very interesting fact concerning this strange phenomenon. The ancient Coptic language also has many words with two diametrically opposite meanings. Thus *at* means *to hear* and at the same time *to be deaf, sneh to separate* and also *to bind, qen strong* as well as *weak.* Under such contrary circumstances to determine the meaning of Coptic words such as this would appear to be virtually impossible, but the hieroglyphic drawings exhibit a distinguishing feature which accurately determines the one meaning or the other. For example, let us consider the difference between *qen - strong* and *qen - weak;* in addition to the alphabetic symbol for *qen,* when it was to signify *strong,* a standing and armed warrior was drawn. When it was to signify *weak,* an idle, sitting man was also represented. In the spoken languages, gestures, which play a significant role in the development of the spoken language and the significance of which it is difficult to determine accurately, and probably also some phonetic modifications, may have shown the distinction in meaning.

Be that as it may, it is by no means necessary to go all the way back to ancient Egypt in order to encounter this striking phenomenon of two opposite meanings in the same word, for we find the same thing not only in the better-known ancient tongues but sometimes indeed in the modern European languages of to-day. We think first of all of Faust's difficulties in his attempt to translate the opening words of Holy Writ in Goethe's *Faust,* Part I, lines 1224 to 1237; shall he translate the Greek word *logos* as *word, thought, mind, spirit, power, deed?* Likewise, the Latin *altus,* for instance, means *high* and at the same time *deep, sacer holy* and *accursed;* the Russian *blagi* means *good* as well as *bad,* the English *down low, below* and *the down, the hill;* the English *lock (to shut securely or bar)* is the German word *Loch, a hole, an opening;* and the German *Boden* designates both the upper part (ceiling) and the lower part (floor) of the room or the house. The reason for this singular occurrence that the accepted, common meaning *floor* as well as its opposite meaning *ceiling* are contained in one and the same word is to be found in the fact that in our thinking process every idea is conceived in close association with its opposite; indeed, it is held by many great linguists that our thinking process is made possible only by comparison, by reference to similar and opposite ideas. Seemingly opposite ideas are explained in the form of more general conceptions; for example, the German word *Boden* is the distance farthest away (the *outermost* distance) in a spacial conception, — on the one hand the distance farthest away from the *floor,* or the *ceiling,* on the other hand the distance farthest away from the *ceiling,* or the *floor.* In other words, here we have represented either the outermost spacial concept in a downward direction (the floor), on the one hand, or the outermost spacial concept in an upward direction (the ceiling, — or also the floor of the next storey), on the other hand.

But the word *Boden* is not the only one which has two seemingly opposite and contradictory meanings. Closely allied to it is the word *Stube,* of which *Boden,* whether interpreted in its extremity with spacial reference in an upward or a downward direction, is a part. The modern German *Stube* (room) originally signified a *heatable space,* indeed, in all probability it designated

a *bathing-room* or *bathroom,* for both the ancient Germans and Slavs used the word *stuba* to designate a "perspiration bath" (Turkish bath); the Laplanders call the same thing *stoppo, stuoppo,* and the Finns *tupa.* This Finnish word *tupa* is thought to be of Altaic origin, and for this reason some linguistic scholars have concluded that the *perspiration bath* (Turkish bath) originated with the Ural-Altaic peoples. In the same word-family as *Stube* is *stofen,* which means *to warm slowly,* and also the English word *stove* (the apparatus or the equipment used for heating purposes); and the corresponding Italian word *stufa* again has a double meaning: (1) *a stove,* and (2) *a warm bath.* The German word *Ofen* (stove) and the English *oven* are also cognate; but the German *Ofen* now means the entire stove, while the English *oven* denotes merely that *part* of the stove used chiefly for baking.

Again, the more common modern German word for *room, Zimmer,* comes from the Middle High German *zimber,* means *building-wood,* and is cognate with the English *timber;* it is for this reason that a carpenter is know as *Zimmermann* (literally a "timber-man"), that is, a man who builds living spaces or rooms with wood. His activity is called *Zimmermern,* literally, "to build with timber" (lumber). Derived directly from the word *zimber* is the modern German word *Frauenzimmer,* a word which has been subjected to a highly interesting semantic change. Quite literally and quite properly too, *Frauenzimmer* first signified *a room for women,* especially for the handmaidens or serving-women of noble ladies in feudal Europe. Later the word no longer designated a *room* or *rooms,* but rather the female occupants of the same, hence serving-women, above all and with particular reference to the female retinue of a queen; still later it ceased to be used as a collective word to designate the "group" of ladies-in-waiting and was used to designate one individual lady, who was in no wise connected with a noble lady or a queen. It is very interesting that the word *Kemenate* is used for an individual lady in the *Niebelungenlied,* that is to say, quite in the same way as the word *Frauenzimmer* is used in Germany to-day. It might be added here that just as we now say *Frauenzimmer* in German and mean a person or persons and not a ladies' room, we also use the expression *das ganze Haus Meyer* and in doing so think not of the house but rather of the people, the Meyers, who live in the house.

Closely associated with the word *Frauenzimmer* in the old days were the *screona,* special houses built beside the actual family homestead, which were designated as the living quarters of the married sons of the master of the house. Such a *Schrein* was already at that time considered as furniture or movable property, since it could readily be removed from one place and set up again in another location. According to Saxon law the husband had to present his wife with such a *Schrein* as the bridegroom's regulation gift to his bride the day after their marriage. In later times this usually served as the dwelling-place of the lady and her female servants, and thus became synonymous with the original connotation of the word *Frauenzimmer* elucidated above. In the case of *Schein* the meaning changed from a married son's living quarters to the living quarters of the lady and her maid-servants. Interesting too is the fact that the word *Schreiner* is used for *carpenter* in South Germany more commonly than the word *Zimmermann.*

Equally interesting as far as contradictory meanings are concerned is the German *Gast,* English *guest,* which is related to the Latin *hostis, enemy, stranger* or *foreigner.* This meaning may at first glance cause surprise, because for us the concept *Gast* or *guest* naturally implies *friend* rather than *enemy.* Yet the connection between *Gast* (guest) and *Feind* (foe) may be quite readily accounted for when the concept *Fremdling* (foreigner, stranger) is brought into the picture. To the ancient peoples the *Fremdling* (stranger, foreigner) is either a *foe* or a *guest,* but first and foremost a *foe* in those days, just as in the German *Elend* originally meant *a foreign or strange land,* and, because of the *hardship, misery* and *wretchedness* oftentimes associated with such a foreign or strange land, the word *Eland* has now gradually assumed these meanings. The same idea is inherent in the Greek *barbaros* and in the Indic *Mlecha* both concepts *strange* and *hostile* are combined. The word *Gast* (guest) for a long time included the meaning *Fremdling* (foreigner, stranger). Thus Luther translated from the Greek, Matthew 25: 35: "Ich bin ein Gast gewesen, und ihr habt mich beherbergt," which the English King James Version renders: "I was a stranger and ye took me in". Here the meaning *stranger, foreigner,* for *Gast* becomes obvious.

The German word *albern* (silly, foolish, stupid) was introduced by Luther into literary Modern High German, and in its Old High German form *alawari* means *friendly, congenial,* and in addition *true, entirely true* (*all wahr*). Here we have an example of semantic change in the sense that words which originally designated nothing ignoble or base, and in many cases rather something noble, have gradually taken on an evil subsidiary meaning; sometimes in fact the original meaning changes precisely into its antonym. The word *albern* with its change of meaning as depicted above belongs in such a long list of words, out of which we choose a few at random: *geil* (formerly *joyous, gay;* now *lewd*); *Schimpf* (formerly *joke, jest;* now *scolding*); *Hoffart* (MHG *hochvart,* i.e. *distinguished manner of living, cultural living;* also *lofty, noble sentiment;* now *arrogant pride*); *frech* (formerly *courageous, bold;* now *impudent, insolent*); *List* (formerly *cleverness, ingenuity;* now *malicious cunning*). The words *Dirne, Weib* and *Maehre* likewise did not have the secondary connotations they have to-day, connotations that have gained the upper hand over the original ones. The

word *Wicht* (English *wight*) is another example; originally it meant *Ding* (thing), of which the German expression "dummes Ding" (stupid thing, wight) is a remnant. The English word *wight* from the Old English *wiht, wuht,* "a creature, animal, person, child, thing," and Middle English *wight, wyght,* is related to the Dutch word *wicht, child,* and to the German *Wicht, fellow,* and is an archaic word which usually means *person.* Compare Shakespeare, Love's Labor Lost, i, 1, 178: "Armado is a most illustrious wight; A man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight."

It is a curious fact that even the German word *boese* (bad, evil, wicked) originally contained no moral judgment, but rather signified *unusable, low in rank, insignificant.* In Hartmann von Aue's *Iwein* a *boeser man* is a man of low social rank, not an evil or a wicked man; a *biederer Mann* (*bieder* from the Middle High German *biderbe*) is a man who is *usable* and *useful,* that is, one who is diligent and honest. Here *bi* is a prefix the same as in *bispel, derbe* in MGH, just as the modern German adjective *derb,* is the stem of the German verb *duerfen; duerfen* however means *beduerfen,* which in turn means *to need,* and thus *biderbe* means *usable, useful.* The word *spel* in MHG (English: *spell*) denotes a *tale* or a *fable.* The MHG *bispel* is a tale with a moral purpose, which was especially common in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The same form *spel,* a *tale* or *story,* is also the basis of the English word *gospel;* we have here an assimilation of the longer form *god's spell,* that is, story of God. The semantic inner relationship between MHG *bispel,* a *tale* or *story,* and the NHG *Beispiel* is to be found in this fact that the didatic story — *bispel* — was supposed to present a model or an example for imitation of the good and the avoidance of evil on the part of its readers or hearers. A significant and striking factor in the case of words such as these is that concrete concepts form the basis of many words which express an abstract idea. Thus too in the original mode of thought there were no moral distinctions between concrete and abstract concepts; hence, that which is useful is good, and that which is useless is bad. In German, just as a man who is *brieder* is one who is *useful,* one who is *tugendhaft* (virtuous) is *one who is worth something* ("einer der etwas taugt"); that is to say, the German words *Tugend, taugen,* and *tuchtig* are all related, with *taugen, to be of value or worth,* as the basis of the other two. Similarly the modern German adjective *billig, cheap, inexpensive,* which should really be spelled *billich,* originally meant *just, fitting, seeming,* but to-day it is very rarely if ever used in this moral sense.

The word *schlecht* underwent a similar semantic development as its synonym *boese.* At first *schlect* meant only *straight, smooth,* — e.g. "was uneben ist, soll schlechter (d.h. schlichter, gerader, ebener) Weg werden" (Luke III, 5); *schlichten* is the same as *to smoothen out, to bring into order,* and, in the related context, it also means *simple,* for which reason it is identical with the word *schlicht.* The biblical expression *schlecht und recht* in Luther's translation naturally means *schlicht und recht.* As *schlecht* retained the meaning *simple,* it was made the antonym of *haughty, distinguished, of high birth* (precisely like *boese!*); thus Goethe speaks of "ein schlechter Reitersjunge", a *simple stable-boy. Schlecht* and *boese* thus first of all signified a lowly person with reference to rank, and then merely needed to be transferred to the realm of psychology in order to designate things morally lower in value. The adjective *edel (noble)* which was formed from *Adel* (nobility), was likewise originally a designation of rank and only later became identified with an ethical concept. Germans still speak of *adliger Gesinnung,* for instance, which is here synonymous with *edel,* thus reminding us of the derivation of this word.

Few readers will probably realize that the German word *Bowle* and the English *bowl* and *bowling* are related etymologically to the German *Bolle, an onion.* All are derived from the Old High German *bolla,* which means *something round, spherical.* In some parts of Germany a round, deep vessel for fetching water is still called a *Bolle.* The German word *Bowle* and the English *bowl* mean *sphere, drinking-vessel;* the word *bowl* in the English *punchbowl* is therefore derived from the German *Bolle,* and in German it is more correctly written as *Punschbolle,* rather than *Punschbowle,* for *Bowle* is really the germanized form of the English *bowl* and *Bolle* is more German. Since we are just now occupying ourselves with "things spherical," the term *Bulle* (bull), a papal announcement or message, should be briefly mentioned. This word comes from the Latin *bulla,* which designated first a *water-bubble,* and later on a *door-knob* — in every case something spherical at least. In the case of the papal bull it is the seal which has the spherical shape.

The German word *Laerm* is related to the English *alarm* through the French word *alarme.* In European towns and villages the alarm or alarum was rung in the event of disaster (fire, flood, accident, etc.) or an attack by an enemy. When the latter was the case, all men who were able to bear arms hastened to take up arms in order to defend the town or village. Naturally there was much noise and confusion, hence the meaning of the German *Laerm* (noise) which has been derived from it. Readers will probably be surprised at the simplicity of the derivation of the word *alarm,* which has also been borrowed in German as a separate word; it comes from the Spanish expression *all' arme,* to arms (French: *auxarmes;* German: *zu den Waffen).*

Another curious example of original opposite meaning is in the modern German *bleichen,* English *bleach,* which means *to make pale, whiten;* in Middle High German, however, *blichen* meant *glow, blush, grow red, redden.* Notker, for instance, speaks of *pleiches gold,* when he emphasizes the *glow* and perhaps even the *reddish tinge.*

The German *Balkon* and the English *balcony* both come from the German *Balken, a beam. Balkon* thus belongs to those words which are German in origin, were borrowed in the Romance languages, underwent orthographic as well as semantic change, and then came back into German in a Romance form which is more often than not changed to such a degree that their origin is not easily recognized. Some other words which belong to this class are: *Liste* (from *Leiste), Fauteuil* (from *Faltstuhl), Boulevard* (from *Bollwerk), Rang* (from *Ring), Loge* (from *Laube), Gage* (from *Wette), Bankett* (from *Bank), Email* (from *Schmelz).* The French *paletot* is derived from the Dutch *paltsrock,* that is *pilgrim's cloak,* and *toupet* from the Dutch *top,* that is *pig-tail.* The French *Trikot* comes from the German *stricken,* the French *equipage* from the German *Schiff,* and the French heraldic term *lambrequin* from the old German word *Lampen,* that is *veil, curtain.* All of these words have in turn been germanized or anglicized and accepted in the German and English languages.

The German *Flitterwochen* or *Flittermonat,* which in meaning corresponds to our word *honeymoon,* probably comes from Old High German *flitarazjan, to flatter, to pet,* and literally means *tinsel or lustre weeks;* it may perhaps also be derived from the so-called *Flitterhaube,* a cap with spangles or tinsel which the young bride was accustomed to wear during the first weeks after the wedding. The Danish word for honeymoon is *hvedebrodsdage,* that is *wheat-bread days,* naturally to designate good days when fine *white* bread is eaten, which is a figurative expression for *high living,* and in this respect corresponds to the German *Hochzeit.* In passing it may be in order to mention that our *honeymoon* is a literal translation of the French phrase which means the same thing.

One of the most interesting expressions in German is probably *Buchstaben lesen,* for which there is no corresponding English expression. Literally we translate: *to read the letters of the alphabet,* but few will probably recall that in these two words the Germans have preserved concepts of a long vanished cultural development. To the ancient Germans the word *Buchstaben* (in New High German: *letters of the alphabet*) were *Buchenstaebe,* that is *rods or staves of beech-wood,* into which runes were carved. *Lesen* in this expression means not *to read,* but *to gather, to collect. Buchstaben lesen* means therefore *to gather or collect beech-wood rods or staves.* This was the duty of the priests, who based their prophecies as soothsayers on the chance combination of the runes on the staves after they had been thoroughly shaken up. The old word *Lesen* thus literally signified a *collecting,* a *gathering.* This original meaning of the word is still to be found in modern German expressions such as *Aehren lesen* (to gather ears of corn; to glean), *Erbsen lesen* (to gather peas), *Nuesse auflesen* (to gather nuts). The word *Buch* (book) is identical with *Buche* (beech-tree) in a peculiar way. The primitive *Buch* (book) was a combination of a number of wooden tablets, which originally were usually made of beech-wood. Because several such tablets were necessary to make a *Buch* (book), in Gothic the word does not occur in the singular but constantly only in the plural form *bokos.*

Before closing it should be mentioned that many colloquial, conversational, and dialect words and phrases, which in bygone times were considered ungrammatical, false or vulgar, have through constant use gained an honorable place in our modern languages. Thus, few people think of the German words *Wind-Auge* (literally: *wind-eye)* when they use the common English word *window.* In this aspect of language development folk-etymology has played no minor part. To illustrate, we offer the German word *Suendflut* (deluge; literally: "the flood due to sin") as one of the best known examples of folk-etymology. The correct form of the words is really *Sintflut* which means simply: "the great, general flood". The masses, however, have interpreted the word in the sense that this great flood was a punishment for the sins of mankind at that time, which it actually was according to Genesis vi: 11-13. Nevertheless, apt and correct as this interpretation would seem, the original *Sintflut* had nothing whatever to do with *Suende* (sin). Accordingly, the accepted form of this world to-day has both a spelling and a meaning which have changed completely under the influence of folk-etymology.

The Cresset is not published during the months of July and August.. To our readers we wish a pleasant and relaxing summer.

The Editors

The Theatre

Poetic Playwrights at Work

By Walter Sorell
Drama Editor

Edwin Justus Mayer's play, "Children of Darkness," was a flop in 1930. It has been put on again at the arena stage of the Circle in the Square with much greater success. It is an interesting play, a literary comedy in the old grand style, in which the language is polished and continues to sparkle even when the action is letting us down.

It is a tale about corruption and treachery at Newgate Prison in the days of Jonathan Wild, the days and place which John Gay immortalized in "The Beggar's Opera." It shows man at his lowest, full of rogueries, cruelty and evil.

The play has weaknesses. It certainly needs actors who can sustain the style and give the speeches that classic sound they ask for. Only Colleen Dewhurst as the hussy and George C. Scott as Lord Wainwright and the most depraved of them all did justice to the script and Jose Quintero's direction toward a high-styled comedy.

The basic weakness of the play lies in its structure which is meticulously designed, but lacks dramatic tension which comes very late, at a point when the too painstakingly prepared ending becomes obvious: the only selfless good deed of a man who is good against his will because he has no other choice.

A new playwright of great stature is the Swiss Friederich Duerrenmatt. "Fool Are Passing Through" is an improvisation reminiscent of Pirandello. In the first two or three minutes one of the main characters is shot. He then turns around and addresses the audience. He tells them that he is actually dead and this is how the play will end. Deurrenmatt interrupts himself all the time and gives his characters a chance to talk to their audience in a most shapeless dramatic form. But there is method in this madness. Much depends on the director and the actors to bring off this eccentric and, in its looseness, tightly knit play. The director, Maximilian Slater, who also adapted the play, saw to it that the unorthodox dramaturgy was underlined by a rather realistic staging, but he lacked the right actors who could play this stylized realism with the necessary tongue-in-cheek attitude.

Duerrenmatt has a great deal to say against man and the world and says it in a matter-of-factish, succinct manner, with Shavian epigrams strewn in between for good measure. It is acid in its wit, deadly in its seriousness. The so-called idealists are the fools in this play and become devoured by the animal instinct of a woman. Two murderers marry each other to atone for their guilt by torturing each other through the mere fact that they would be a living reminder of their deeds. At the end they murder each other. Meanwhile, through the tricks of life, men, no, fools pass through. Men dedicated to some foolishness, to one of the many empty illusions without vision.

Friederich Duerrenmatt is the son of Bernese clergyman. The time for tragedies, he said in an essay on the "Problems on the Theatre," is over. A disorganized world in which there are no longer any established standards of guilt and personal responsibilities, in which we are powerless to resist the course of events bigger than ourselves, calls for comedy – comedy not born of despair but of courage. "The world, as I see it, stands as something monstrous, an enigma of calamity that has to be accepted but to which there must be no surrender."

However, Duerrenmatt's comedy "Fools Are Passing Through" has tragic connotations. Because it exists on two levels, as a froth of dramaturgic mechanics and an outcry from the depth of a satirist's heart, it turns into a fascinating, if not great, play.

Archibald MacLeish is one of our outstanding poets, a man conscious of the plight of his time, a writer devoted to the betterment of mankind.

His modern Job drama, called "J.B.," tells the story of a rich industrialist living with his family somewhere in New England. He is happy, content, and believes himself to be close to God in a kind of humble rather than pious way. He sits at a Thanksgiving dinner with his wife and children. To test J.B., God unleashes horrors which would make any other man waver and doubt the wisdom and ultimate justice of his Maker.

His son is killed overseas after the armistice, violent death for his other children, his factory bombed out, his entire wealth wiped out, his wife deserting him, his body full of ugly boils – an accumulation of horrors, modern in conception and as old as man.

The play begins with two clowns under the tent of a circus who must once have been great tragedians. They now act the parts of God and Satan. It is a play within a play as much as all the senseless, brutal suffering of the world is caught in the corner of a big circus. We expect with Satan that J.B. will break down and curse God. To make things worse, comforters are sent to him with glib words. But in the end his illness is healed as all ills may be healed one day. His wife returns. There is a new life, a new future for them.

From the Chapel

Hold Fast That Which Is Good

By Walther M. Miller
Friedrich Memorial Professor of German
Valparaiso University

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
I Thess. 5:20

Sooner or later almost every Christian is faced by some kind of spiritual crisis. A personal problem or tragedy; a new idea or point of view that appears to be at variance with convictions once regarded as settled or fixed; or a disappointment in a trusted friend or respected leader may cause the Christian to question the validity of his beliefs and even to despair of the goodness of God or the power of God's means of grace to influence and cleanse the hearts of men.

But what will be the ultimate effect of such an experience on a Christian? Since he cannot ignore the difficulty that faces him and cannot at once fit it into the pattern of religious thinking that has become his as a result of his earlier religious training, he may give up and conclude that his old faith is inadequate and ought therefore to be abandoned.

A more intelligent approach to the problem, however, is suggested by the Apostle when he says, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." For if the Christian follows the suggestion of the Apostle, the experience that has disturbed him may even become for him a force for good and deepen his spiritual understanding and make him a more mature Christian.

It should be noted that Saint Paul does not say that a Christian must never modify his religious views; and he would hardly have been consistent or sincere if he had said that. For he himself had been compelled to make a profound change in his own religious thinking. He had been a Pharisee and as such had accepted the law of God as the full expression of the will of God and had also believed that a man might possibly keep this law so completely that God Himself could ask no more of him. But after he had become acquainted with Jesus on the way to Damascus, he had to admit, as he tells the Corinthians, that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." And therefore he preached Christ, against whom he had crusaded so bitterly, and emphasized the fact that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.

Paul's conversion, moreover, affected and changed his whole life and being. The very man, then, of whom the Bible says that he had made "havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison," and of whom it also says that, while on the road to Damascus, he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples" — this man, after he had become acquainted with Jesus, was able, as no else, to preach love and tolerance, as he did in 1 Corinthians and Romans 14, where he told the Christians, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal," and pleaded with them to treat their weaker and less enlightened brethren with consideration and love.

It should also be mentioned, I feel, that this conversion meant for Paul a great personal sacrifice. If he had not followed Jesus, he might well have become a leader in the established church. He had been a student of Gamaliel, the leading rabbi of his day; and his rising prominence in the church is suggested by the fact that, at the stoning of Stephen, he apparently was the representative of the Sanhedrin, since the witnesses of Stephen's alleged blasphemy laid their garments at his feet before casting the first stone, and also by the fact that he had been entrusted with the task of carrying on the inquisition against the Christians of Damascus, who, it was feared, might undermine the authority of the law. His conversion, however, ended his promising career, and in 2 Corinthians he therefore had to tell of the scourings and stonings and the other evils that he was compelled to endure as a follower of his new Master.

But while the appearance of Jesus on the road to Damascus had proved to Paul that he had been wrong in persecuting Jesus and that religion and the service of God were more than a painstaking observance of rules, he did not immediately proclaim his new findings but first retired to Arabia, where in quiet meditation he made it his task to prove or test his new experience and thus reconstruct his inner world. And while this meditation showed him that salvation was not by the law, it also showed him that it was not necessary for him to reject everything in the Old Testament, and it thus gave him a better understanding of this Testament.

If we, then, are made to face a spiritual problem, we shall do well to follow the example of St. Paul. And if he were talking to us now, I think he would tell us to act like mature Christians and avoid the childish extreme of adhering to the old just because it is old and apparently time-tested and the equally childish extreme of adopting the new just because it apparently is new.

Letter from Xanadu, Nebr.

By G. G.

Dear Editor:

Well, I got stuck with the job of district delegate again and I wish I could think of some way to get out of it.

I know it's an honor to be elected and I know that I am the kind of man that the church needs for this sort of thing but the fact of the matter is that I am getting to an age when I just can't take this sort of thing any more.

You know what these affairs are like. Either you stay in a dormitory somewhere and find yourself sleeping next to the Midwest regional snoring champion or else you get assigned to somebody's home and sit up until one o'clock in the morning looking at their slides of their trip to DesMoines. Either way, you lose sleep and I just can't make it on anything less than eight hours of sleep.

Then there's the food. I'm not what you would call a finicky eater but I have a lot of respect for my stomach and I try to treat it right. I never have been able to figure out how you can get a bunch of wonderful cooks together in a church kitchen and end up with the kind of things that you find on your plate at one of these affairs. I'll bet that there isn't a woman in the congregation who would serve up macaroni and cheese, dry and unsalted mashed potatoes, and a wilted lettuce salad to her own husband in her own home. But get a bunch of these women together for a church dinner and that's what you get. And don't tell me that peasants in India would be happy to have that kind of food. I'm a businessman and I live in Nebraska.

And then there's another problem which I don't even like to mention but it's one of those things that make me wish I could get out of this job. I know that the business at these conventions is important and I really want to throw myself into it, but I always have found it hard to listen to anybody talk for any length of time without getting awfully drowsy. It's especially bad in the afternoon, right after lunch, when you get somebody reporting on the condition of the church extension fund and he goes on and on reading off figures that your mind just refuses to take in. I always hate to fall asleep with a bad conscience but at two o'clock on a summer afternoon in a hall that has been practically de-oxygenized I just can't help it.

Well, enough of that. I guess I'll go, but I wish I didn't have to.

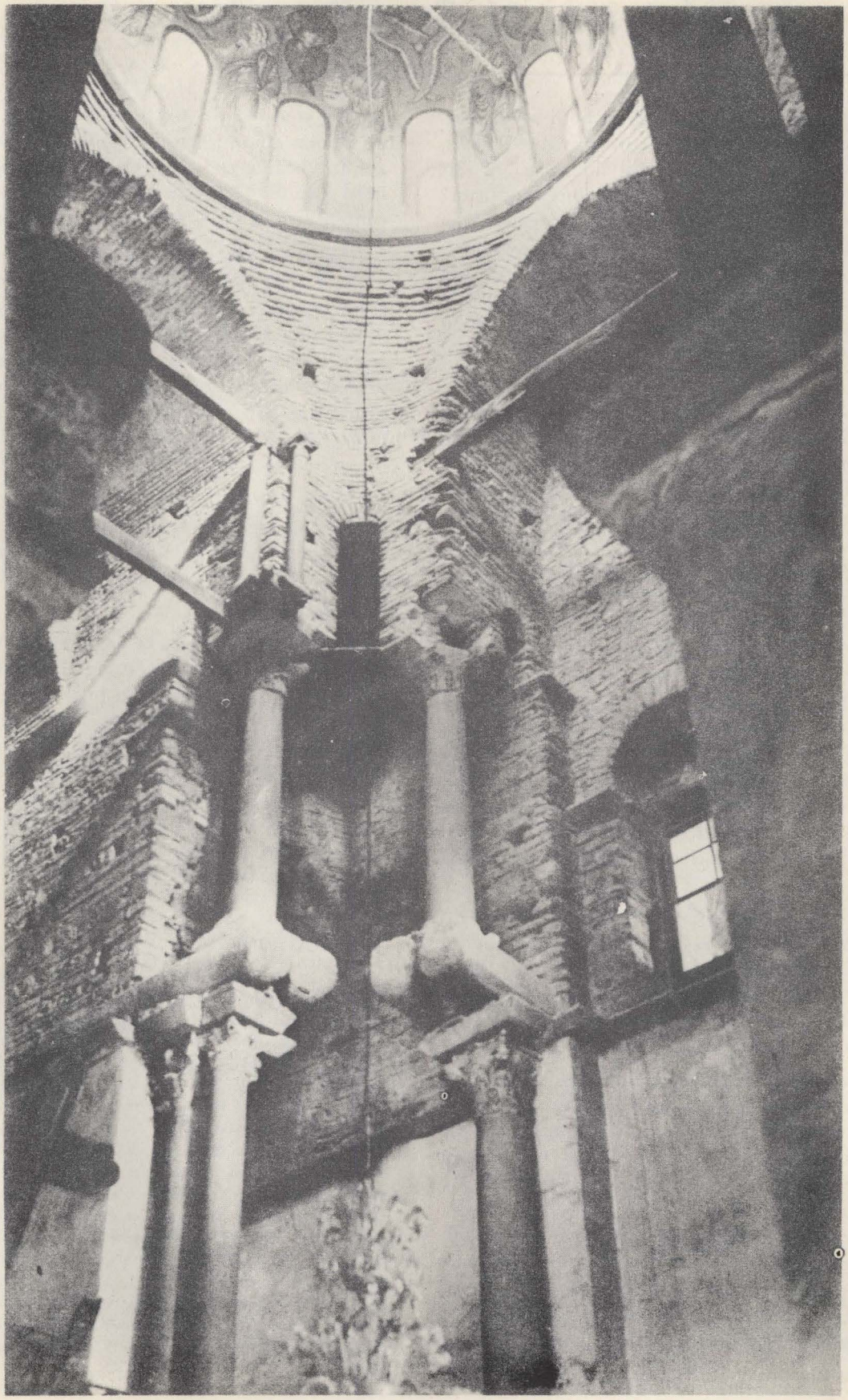
The Fine Arts

Paregoritissa

By A. R. KRETZMANN, LITT.D.

See now the despots of a long dead time,
Whose ashes fill unhallowed graves,
Who live in structures of the daring kind
In which the lesser spirits of our studied course
Cringe back and tremble, shut their eyes and flee.
Look up. For seven hundred years these walls
Have shaped the upward path of prayer —
What if the traces of a hundred wars have scarred
The walls, and pitted pillars up the sun rays' way?
What if the stones have wounds as though
The myriad hands of pleaders from the pilgrimage
Had clawed their way to heaven and to short-lived peace
And had then dropped to earth and hate and fear again?
The loosened Cross leans soft against the wall —
Its altar gone — its worshippers and children
Scattered far and wide, and none to call them back.
The silence of the stones, the light, the dome,
The columns strong, grow into stormy eloquence
When seen beneath the changing summer sky.
The threatening storm, the rising sun, the racing clouds,
The flood of moonlight, like a silver robe,
They all are part of life, and death, and fear, and faith,
Until some voice gives meaning to its quiet and its light.
Outside the hills are as the hills were then
When shepherds grazed their flocks, or rested them,
Beneath the shadows of the Church's wall —
But cross the crest and see the distant inner sea
And all the modern time and age is there —
The brooding care of mother ships that nestle
All the bloody wrong of underwater death,
Alongside giant steel of floating landing fields
That hurl and catch again the filthy death
That wings to find a place for slaughter and for fire —
You, write your book about "the Greek Experience,"*
And you, you tell me all of Athens' lore —
But I — I shall stay cloistered here
And feed my dream, that by the things I love and do,
I shall be able, in the days of death and fear,
To win the peace and love of God, and build,
Somewhere across the world in miles and years,
Another church that shall be home for pilgrim souls,
And hope, and faith, and love engraved in stone.

*"The Greek Experience" — Maurice Bowra



A Selection of Superior Recordings

By WALTER A. HANSEN

It is commonly said that the English, both by temperament and by force of an assiduously cultivated habit, are given to understatements. Is this true of Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart., the world famous conductor? Not if you consider some of the public statements he has made. But can it be said that Sir Thomas understates — or understresses — when he conducts? I do not think so. Nevertheless, the quality of his conducting forces one to conclude that in this field he is gifted with the inestimably important virtue of what we call restraint.

Is it necessary for a conductor to use restraint when he presents Nicolas Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade,* one of the most wonderful examples of orchestral magic ever devised by any composer? Yes. Without it Rimsky's brilliant tone painting is apt to appear overdrawn and even garish. But when a conductor exercises restraint, as Sir Thomas does, the sorcery in Rimsky's writing somes into its own with powerful effectiveness. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra plays this work under his masterful direction (Angel).

I wonder if anyone would venture to doubt that Eileen Farrell has one of the most magnificent voices of this era. On a disc titled *Eileen Farrell in Grand Opera* (Angel) this sincere and richly endowed singer presents a program abounding in variety and sharp contrasts — a program which reveals to the full both the rare beauty of her voice and the many-sided quality of her artistry. She has the assistance of the Philharmonia Orchestra of London under Thomas Schippers.

Prince Igor is not yet as mighty as King David. This is another way of saying that Igor Oistrakh has not yet risen to the imposing greatness attained by David Oistrakh, his father. But I am not trying to disparage the ability of Igor. He is a violinist of whom his famous father has every right to be proud.

Ludwig van Beethoven's one and only violin concerto puts any violinist, no matter how competent he may be, to a stringent test. How does Igor fare as he plays this masterpiece with the Pro Arte Orchestra of London under Wilhelm Schuechter (Angel)? My answer is: He fares very well indeed. So does the concerto. I have heard many violinists play — or attempt to play — this work. Some of them have made me squirm in agony; some of them have moved me to the quick. I must state in all conscience that Igor's performance gives me much joy and edification.

One realizes immediately that Igor has devoted painstaking study to the work. He is aware of its greatness; he knows that, when he undertakes to set forth the abiding beauty contained in its pages, he is treading on holy ground. No other violin concerto demands more concentration, skill, admiration, respect, and devotion.

It seems to me that heartfelt dedication is one of the hallmarks of Igor's reading of Beethoven's violin concerto. Besides, there is technical agility to an extraordinary degree. The intonation is flawless. The phrasing is founded on a keen sense of balance and symmetry. The accentuation is always proper and to the point. In short, this is a performance of which Igor's renowned father should be proud. I must add that Igor plays the cadenzas composed by Fritz Kreisler.

Giuseppe Verdi was a great melodist. At the same time he was gifted with an unerring instinct for what makes good theater. His stature as a composer of operas increases from year to year. Verdi was one of music's mighty masters.

Since I never fail to be fascinated and even thrilled by Verdi's writing in *La Forza del Destino,* I was happy to receive a disc devoted to highlights from this richly expressive opera (Angel). The singers are Maria Meneghini Callas, soprano; Carlo Tagliabue, baritone; Richard Tucker, tenor; Elena Nicolai, mezzo-soprano; Nicola Rossi-Lemini, bass; and Renato Capecchi, baritone. The conductor is Tullio Serafin, and the orchestra and chorus of the *Teatro alla Scala,* of Milan, Italy, take part in the excellent presentation.

Some Recent Recordings

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF. *Piano Concerto No. 4, in G Minor, Op. 40.* MAURICE RAVEL. *Piano Concerto in G Major.* Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli, pianist, with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London under Ettore Gracis Superb performances superbly recorded (Angel). — JOHANNES BRAHMS. *Piano Concerto No. 2, in B Flat Major, Op. 83.* Emil Gilels, pianist, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Fritz Reiner. I disagree completely with those reviewers who state that the phenomenally able pianist from the Soviet Union does not reveal the depth, the beauty, and the poetry of Brahms's wonderful composition (RCA Victor). — LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN. *Piano Concerto No. 5, in E Flat Major, Op. 73.* Rudolf Firkusny, pianist, with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under William Steinberg. A moving performance by a master pianist and an excellent orchestra under an able conducter (Capitol). — FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT. *Symphony No. 7, in C Major.* The Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell. I have never heard a more completely satisfying reading of this great symphony (Epic).

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

RELIGION

LUTHER'S WORKS

American Edition. Volumes 12, 13, 21, 22, and 31. (Concordia and Muhlenberg)

These are, of course, the first volumes to appear of the projected 55-volume American edition of Luther's works: volumes 1-30 to contain the expositions of Biblical books and volumes 31ff. the "Reformation" and occasional writings. Volumes 12 and 13 have selected expositions of psalms; volume 21, expositions of the Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat; volume 22, sermons on the Gospel of John, chapters 1-4; volume 31, "The Career of the Reformer," has selected writings from 1517-1520.

The present review of them is, I may well warn you, not a review in the usual sense of the word. Translations, after all, expect to be reviewed on two points: the importance of the translated work and the adequacy of the translation. Anyone who would not know the importance of having Luther in English would not be convinced by anything I could say anyway. As to the translation, I'll have a couple of petty remarks to make at the end about it, but on the whole the competence of the translators is beyond question. Consequently, rather than comment on the translation, I want to raise a few questions (with answers at least implied) regarding the possible *theological* significance of Luther for American Lutherans.

First, however, the reader should be advised *not* to read the jacket blurbs on these volumes. I made the mistake of reading all five of them in a row. That will account for some of the negative tone of the comments to follow. For example: "When reading (the sermons of Luther on John) one can share the admiration and the edification that must have been felt by the men, women, and children who sat in the pews (*sic!*) of the church in Wittenberg and listened intently while the mighty Luther addressed them"! (And those who stood or slept --?) If any uninitiated reader expects *that* from these sermons and if he is accustomed to present-day preaching, then it is only fair to warn him that he will almost surely be bored by Luther's repetitiousness.

Item: "One senses immediately that (the translators) have done their work with wholehearted respect and devotion." Well, first of all, any translator who does not do his work with wholehearted respect and devotion for the text ought not to be translating but to be writing advertising copy. And if the publishers discover that the translation does indeed disclose respect and devotion, they should not be so surprised about it. If they, nonetheless (in view of the large amount of plain trash that is put onto the theological market these days), are surprised and want to communicate that surprise, then they should emphasize differently, like this: "One senses . . . that the translators *have* done their work, etc." That would at least obviate the impression that the translators of Luther have managed to do something that other competent translators have not. But apart from that (and this is the "secondly" that goes to the "first of all" a few lines above), it is a complete puzzle to me how one "senses immediately" such respect and devotion — but then maybe my intuition is just weak.

Item: "In their carefully annotated translation Luther speaks forcefully to the men, women, and children of our time." What the repeated emphasis on men, women, and children intends is not exactly clear; but, since the issue has been raised, one might as well reply that a) children would undoubtedly be bored by Luther's sermons; b) women would probably find them too 'philosophical"; c) men would be happy that Lutheran preachers do not preach that long any more. The foregoing examples are from the St. Louis volumes. The jacket on volume 31 (Muhlenberg) does a bit better; at least, the "men, women, and children of our time" are not so frequently called to assembly. But even at that, description of Luther's faith "which enabled a humble monk to defy authority of the pope, the church councils, the church fathers (!), canon law and the emperor" rings too much like hero-worship. There were, after all a *few* other people working with him. One wishes that Luther were around to defy some of his advertisers. (Incidentally, the jackets are disposable.)

These quotations point to at least one danger in the appearance of Luther in English, namely, the nature of his audience. If there is the expectation that the Lutheran clergy (or the "men, women, and children of our time") will by some automatic (even if spiritual) process now suddenly absorb the life and strength of the Reformer's theology, that is a grave mistake. Access to the heart and mind of Luther may indeed be for Lutherans somewhat more ready than to the scholastics or to some of the early Church fathers. But there is most certainly not an *immediate* access to him any more than to the depths of other figures past or present. One could properly be suspicious of someone who finds Luther too easy. It cannot, therefore, be too strongly emphasized: Luther in English does not open the breadth and depth of his theological thought any more readily than Luther in German or Latin. The only difference is that now the English-speaking person is freed from the accidental impediment of language. A translation cannot remove the necessity for careful and sustained thinking, nor can it do away with the history of theology that has intervened between Luther and our time. A fundamentalistic approach to Luther is, therefore, as impossible and demonic as a fundamentalistic approach to the Scriptures.

Fundamentalistic or positivistic approaches aside, one can raise some theological issues. The first one can be tied to Luther's exposition of part of the Sermon on the Mount. Commenting on Matthew 5,3, he writes: "We are not to run away from poverty, house, wife, and children . . . This is what the Anabaptist sect does . . . No, He does not want such crazy saints! This is what (the verse) means: In our heart we should be able to leave house and home, wife and children. Even though we continue to live among them, eating with them and serving them out of love, as God has commanded, still we should be able, if necssary, to give them up at any time for God's sake. If you are able to do this, you have forsaken everything, in the sense that your heart is not taken captive but remains pure of greed and of dependence, trust, and confidence in anything" (21,15).

The most obvious question is this: Granting that being "spiritually poor" means placing no dependence in anything earthly, can one apply that to the formulation "justification by faith" itself? If, as Luther insists, we cannot place dependence for salvation (spiritual riches) in anything earthly, can we even place it in the formullation dear to the Reformers but suspicious to their opponents, viz., "justification by faith alone"? In Luther himself, the insistence on this formulation occasionally comes close to a justification by works: " . . . The person who is to be absolved must guard himself very carefully from any doubt that God has remitted his sins . . ." (31,100). It seems to me that if Lutherans take Luther's definition of "spiritually poor" seriously, they cannot avoid asking the question (as Luther apparently did not) of whether the formulation "justification by faith alone" ought not under present circumstances (in view, say, of its widespread misunderstanding both within and without Lutheranism) to be forsaken. Whether the answer to that question is Yes or No, there are only two

alternatives for the theologian who gives the answer: a) either to show that the formulation, or its substitute, is itself an expression of the finality of the Christian revelation, i.e., that it derives immediately from the paradox of Jesus Christ; or b) simply to assert it as dogmatically as it may be denied by an opponent. The latter course has been taken almost universally by Lutherans here and abroad (with the consequence that the Luther renaissance is primarily and almost exlcusively of academic interest). The first course has been taken, and most convincingly, by Paul Tillich, who, however, insists on the fuller expression, "justification by grace through faith."

This leads to the second theological question, which pertains to the distinction — the proper distinction — between Law and Gospel (cf. 22,150ff.). There is nothing in these five volumes of Luther to dispell suspicions one might have of the use some recent Lutheran theologians have made of Luther's assertation that this distinction is focal for sound theology. On the contrary, I should like to suggest that there are a number of important considerations which the distinction between Law and Gospel can*not* adequately treat and which Luther treated only inconsistently with this principle. (This is not to deny, of course, that the distinction may have some limited use.) For the first, it distorts the actual human situation as much as humanism does, only in the opposite direction: "we have been so absolutely corrupted by sin that we not only know nothing about our first and natural knowledge of God any longer, but we have also defected from the righteousness of the Law and fallen into lies" (22,155).

Secondly, since "law" for our era of latter-day nominalists implies only the externality of the source of the law to the person under the law, it is not adequate for describing man's fallen state. It necessarily avoids the fact that he has fallen from somewhere (not literally) and it can, consequently, not do justice to the dialectical nature of the notion of total depravity. Here the words of Professor Volk of Muenster ought to be heeded: "Es ist nicht von vornherein besonders theologisch, von der Kreatur moeglichst schlecht zu reden." Lutherans are most inclined to forget that and to feel that as long as a theologian says nothing good about the creature as such (i.e., as under the Law?), he is theologically safe: "whatever has its origin in human power — all this must die" (22, 158).

Thirdly, the distinction completely obscures the fact that, if there are destructive elements (God's wrath) in every actual situation, there are also saving elements (God's mercy) in any actual situation (cf., e.g., 12,309). In practice it seems to work out that theologians operating with the Law-and-Gospel distinction tend to regard everything non-Christian (or, worse, non-Lutheran!) as absolutely worthless — an impossible notion, if one examines it, and therefore all the more unfortunate if theology tries to use it.

Fourthly, this kind of basic theology is unable to construct an ethics with teeth in it. (For an opposing view, see *The Cresset,* December, 1957, pp. 21f.) However fundamental the free grace of God is (and it should be remembered that it was fundamental also for the scholastics) to Christian theology, when it is set up in such sharp contrast to law, it can hardly avoid appearing as a kind of *Deus ex machina,* rather arbitrarily brought in to rescue from the perplexities of a rational ethics. Theology becomes so absorbed in the assertion (correct though it is): "ought does *not* imply can" that it forgets to say also, "ought does imply can" — and it is one of theology's perennially arduous tasks to delineate the possibility in *both cases;* otherwise, the Christian message appears as an *arbitrary* imposition.

Finally, the use of Law and Gospel as an all-embracing distinction shifts emphasis too exclusively on man's "duties," which are only one part of his situation, and seeks to press home man's perplexity by pointing out his unfulfilled or inadequately fulfilled duties. Perhaps that approach is effective psychologically (though I doubt it), but it is certainly inadequate theologically; for it again arbitrarily narrows the description of man's actual situation. The most recent testimony to this inadequacy is the controversey of the *Gesetz-un-Evangeliumites* against the *Evangelium-und-Gesetzites* (in two recent book titles: *Gesetz und Freiheit* and *Freiheit und Gesetz*): a controversy unresolved and, I submit, unresolvable because it works with false exclusive alternatives.

The third issue to be raised is partly theological and partly historical and has to do with Luther's (mis)understanding of the scholastics. One cannot help feeling that his strictures on monkish theology, the source of much of his profound psychological insight, are about as fair as a pragmatist's disowning of Aristotle or even more so since the pragmatists have never called Aristotle *Bettelbauch* as Luther did Scotus, Bonaventure, and Aquinas. (Most pragmatists are English-speaking!). Again, one wonders about his grasp of the high scholastics. Prof. Broad once made the comment: "I should feel some hesitation in accepting theories about the nature of music and its function in human life, excogitated by a tone-deaf psychologist whose wife had recently eloped with a musician," for his theory "wears too jaundiced a complexion to be completely convincing." Similarly one could say that if Luther's appreciation of Aristotle was as minimal as it appears to have been and if his understanding of the high scholastics was mediated by nominalists, he would not exactly be in a position to give a fair account of the theology of the Middle Ages. The fact that Luther himself understood his theological position as being a simply Biblical one, as opposed to the non-Biblical speculations of the scholastics (cf. 21,32ff.), should not blind present-day theologians (even Lutherans) to the fact that such an understanding is so drastic an oversimplification that it is downright misleading. The scholastics as well as Luther were, by and large, certainly not aware of or intent upon saying things that were not in accord with the Scriptures and sound reason.

I should rather suggest that at least one focal issue between the Reformer and the scholastics is the question of nature and grace with their interrelations and tensions. And on this issue, at any rate, Luther seems to ignore spelling out that relation while the scholastics attempted to go into it in detail. He was content, for example, to assert that, although civil righteousness was good, it was not good in the sight of God and not meritorious of salvation (e.g., 22,99ff.). But how it can be good (really) and yet not good (really) is, to say the least, a very important question. Aquinas spelled it out in detail; and rather than ignore that detail or call it speculation, Lutherans ought first to try to understand it. They would probably find then that Luther's protest on this score was somewhat exaggerated. His strictures against the scholastic maxim that man's natural powers are unimpared and against free will (cf. 12,308ff.) completely ignore a) the role that "nature" played at least in Thomistic thought and b) the distinction between corrupt and uncorrupted nature which was current, though not always expressed, in scholastic thought. But, even if we did not find that to be the case, the very attempt to examine the question would be the start of something sorely missing: a Lutheran systematics which intends to be more than simply a gathering and organization of proof texts (from the Scriptures and the Confessions) under various heads.

All of the preceding comments on Luther's theology are rather negative. That fact should not imply that nothing positive could be said about it. Indeed, since the positive aspects are so frequently proclaimed and exaggerated by ecclesiastical advertisers (of all sorts), I shall omit them here on the assumption that they are familiar enough to be their own corrective to the negative emphasis and that they will thus make possible the dialog without which any discipline becomes sterile. And let it be said as emphatically as possible: No Lutheran pastor should be without a subscription to this edition of Luther's works unless

he can mange the original-language edition. (You can call that *law* if you wish!) Women and children may be excused.

A few scattered comments: 1) Concerning volume 31: The editor's introductory account of realism and nominalism (implying that Aristotle was a nominalist!) — ignoring conceptualism — is so much a caricature that it must be called false. It should be corrected. 2) Couldn't the translators refrain from using the English "dear" in such expressions as "the dear fathers" and "the dear word" and "the dear Gospel?" Let's face it: the "lieb" in such cases is untranslatable and should remain an unseen *lieb* of faith. 3) The two publishers should agree on the material for the title pages: the St. Louis volumes list one publisher and one general editor. The Muhlenberg volume lists both publishers and both general editors. A foolish consistency may be the hobgoblin of little minds, but in this case the consistency would not be foolish. 4) One of the least helpful traits of these volumes is the footnoting, which seems terribly arbitrary and inconsequential, even if it does allow the publisher's advertisement to call the translation a "scholarly" one, i.e., one having some footnotes of a sort. The self-conscious justifications of particular renderings turn out to be obnoxious after a couple of volumes. In fact, in at least one case (21,186, note 33) the footnote leaves one wondering why the original was changed at all: the sense of "carrying the tree on both shoulders" (the original) is certainly at least as manifest as that of "carrying water on both shoulders" (the English rendering)—and the latter can hardly be said to have the status of an accepted English proverb.

Finally, let us hope that this translation, which will be a monument to Lutherans' interest in scholarship even if it does not pretend to be a monument to scholarship, will serve to revive theological interest and discussion among the Lutherans of America. To use Luther's words (21,355): "May Christ grant us this through the intercession and for the sake of His dear Mother Mary!"

ROBERT SCHARLEMANN

MELANCHTHAN THE QUIET REFORMER
By Clyde Leonard Manschreck (Abingdon Press, $6.00

Abingdon Press has again proved its right to be numbered among the foolish virgins. While Lutheran publishing houses carefully trim the lamps of research and limit the publication of scholarly works in order to concentrate on profitable items and to present their Lord Synod with a large "contribution" to its budget, these uneschatological Methodists have brightened the darkness around us with another significant contribution to the history of the Lutheran Reformation. But foolish though they be, we predict that they have again found the jar of oil that does not run dry. And win or lose, the sons of Wesley can comfort themselves with the knowledge that having thus obligated the redeemed to themselves with the mammon of scholarship, the sons of Pieper will be compelled to receive them into their dwellings. In the meantime monolingual American Lutherans have no choice but to indulge in the unionistic activity of learning to know Melanchthon as the Methodists see him.

And see him we must if we desire to understand the Wittenberg Reformation in its totality. Our refreshed awareness of Luther's role in it has brought with it the knowledge that Luther did not work in isolation; on the contrary he was surrounded by a group of men who were extremely competent in areas in which he was not. The most important of them all was the cultured Humanist Philip Melanchthan who died almost 400 years ago (1560). His position as Luther's right-hand man was never seriously questioned and when Luther was on the Wartburg, Melanchthon actually took over as his chosen successor.

This book is his biography. At the risk of belaboring the obvious: it the best biography of Melanchthon that we have in English and as such is must reading for every Lutheran who is interested either in culture or in theology. In culture . . . for Melanchthon set the pattern according to which the Lutheran schools and universities were reorganized. He thus left his mark on the German university for over two hundred years and his mark on the Lutheran cultural tradition forever. In theology . . . for Melanchthon wrote two of our confessions as well as the Reformation's standard handbook of systematic theology. Both have decisively influenced Lutheran theology in every generation. In fact it once seemed that Melanchthon and not Luther would become the theologian of Lutheranism and that its confessions would contain only a collection of Melanchthon's writings. Even though the adoption of the Formula of Concord prevented that, his significance for Lutheran theology remains second only to that of Luther himself. There can be no better recommendation for this book than its subject matter and its uniqueness.

The dusk jacket makes the claim that this book succeeds "in recapturing the true dimensions of Melanchthon's greatness." Obviously it would be very difficult to take the measure of a man of Melanchthon's size in a little over three hundred pages. This book is a biography. As such it presents Melanchthon in the dimensions of space and time. This is ordinarily well and thoroughly done.

The author is well aware that Melanchthon can only be understood within the context of his relations to the humanistic renaissance and to Luther. Occasionally he begins to do that. But on the whole these efforts remain in the beginning stages. Certainly that task will require a whole series of preliminary studies and — we presume — more than three hundred pages. Still after "nine years" of research the author must have more to say than he has said in this book. Whatever the reason for repressing it, we can only regret it. There is, therefore, still need for an extensive study of Melanchthon; we can only hope that it will evaluate Melanchthon from the viewpoint of Lutheran theology.

The author attempts to establish Melanchthon's relative independence of Luther in his first three years at Wittenberg by emphasizing his rejection of transsubstantiation (a year before Luther did so publicly) and his share in writing the Letter to the Christian Nobility. The latter will not bear the weight placed upon it since Melanchthon was not the only Wittenberg scholar who aided Luther in that letter. Melanchthon did publicly reject transsubstantiation before Luther, but the possibility remains that he is only expressing what he had learned from Luther. Luther — who would not have been slow to give credit where due — does not mention learning from Melanchthon in describing how he came to reject transsubstantiation, and Melanchthon's theological work during this period otherwise reveals a heavy dependence on Luther. The latter is almost entirely ignored by Manschreck in evaluating the situation. His conclusions on Melanchthon's relationship to Luther cannot, therefore, be regarded as established on the basis of the evidence presented.

We cannot go into further detail here but similar comments would have to be made concerning the treatment of Melanchthon's failure in Wittenberg while Luther was on the Wartburg, concerning his position in the conflict between Luther and Erasmus, concerning his vacillation at Augsburg, concerning the inner development of the *Loci*, and of his activity after Luther's death. In each case, the author makes his point clearly but does not, in our opinion, provide sufficient evidence to substantiate that opinion.

Material which might have been expected is missing. Melanchthon did teach Luther Greek and the results of that have left their mark upon his theology as well as upon his translation of the Bible. Of this we learn little or nothing. Ditto for such matters as Melanchthon's controversies with Agricola in 1527/8 and with Cordatus in 1536, as well as for the basic theology and philosophy of education underlying Melanchthon's reorganization of the educational system. Most readers would gladly sacrifice detailed accounts of Melanchthon's astrology and Philip of Hesse's bigamy in favor of such informa-

tion. And Melanchthon's biography would have profited in any case.

The author's theological position seems to be Melanchthonian. He approves of the Variata editions of the Augsburg Confession and his changes in the doctrine of the bondage of the will and of the Lord's Supper. That is his right. It is another thing to assert that Luther agreed with Melanchthon's "synergism"; that must be proved and not simply asserted.

The book does not attempt to come to terms with current Melanchthon research. That might conceivably be excused. It is quite another thing, however, to dismiss it as of no consequence. The most extensive treatment received by any other author is given to R. R. Caemmerer's article "The Melanchthonian Blight" in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* of May, 1947. Manschreck's comments must be read to be believed:

> Others have hurled accusations and made generalizations without evidence. In 1947 Melanchthon's use of reason was called a "blight", the "source of the abridgment of the essential vitality of Luther's thought" which led to a cultural and political lag in Germany, the Thrity Years' War, and the collapse of Lutheranism under Hitler! This, of course, is preposterous.
>
> Such ignorance, prejudice, and aspersion . . .

Aside from the fact that Caemmerer's position — which needs no defense against this sort of treatment — is not quite accurately reproduced, it was a mistake for Manschreck to draw attention to the documentation. If he feels justified in criticizing Caemmerer's well-documented essay as being "without evidence," what shall we say about his own repeatedly unsubstantiated assertions? It is in fact "preposterous" that Manschreck considers the truth of his position to be so self-evident. Certainly the tradition of Melanchthonian Humanism requires that theological discussion be carried out on a higher plane.

This reviewer is not quite convinced that Manschreck himself is always completely in control of the factual situation. Thus, aside from typographical errors such as 1507 instead of 1504 (p. 41, 1.20) and Bretten instead of Prettin (p. 78, 1. 6), it must be noted that: the Instruction to the Visitors (1527/28) is not the "first confession . . . in the Lutheran Church" (p. 137) — that honor belongs more properly to the Ansbacher Ratschlag of 1524; Luther did not "carve" (p. 168) on the table at Marburg — he wrote in chalk; Brentz, Osiander, and Agricola did not arrive at Marburg on September 30 (p. 169) but on October 2; Carlstadt's celebration of the mass according to his revised liturgy did not take place on Christmas Eve before the riots (p. 76) but on Christmas Day following. In view of the fact that the chief strength of this book lies in its wealth of detail, we can only regret that closer attention was not given to accuracy. In any case, the author would have been well advised to tread softly in characterizing the work of his scholarly contemporaries.

If Abingdon continues to publish Reformation studies for the English-speaking reader, we would suggest that they do not frustrate them with untranslated and occasionally irregular German. "Oberlander" (236) are South-Germans; and "superstition" may not fully express the meaning of "Aberglaube" but does so better than that German word when used throughout a chapter without translation; finally those mysterious "landsknechts" (187) or "Lanzknechts" (253) are German-variety foot-soldiers.

I began to read this book with great expectations. By the time I laid it down, I felt rather like Jacob must have when Leah removed her veil. It was useful, productive, stimulating — and the best we have; like Leah it will probably prove more stimulating and productive than a more adequate study. Still, I find myself looking forward eagerly to what the coming seven years with their celebration of the four hundreth anniversary of Melanchthon's death will bring. Those who are interested in working while they wait may not know that a six volume Studienausgabe of Melanchthon's works is being published by Bertelsmann in Guetersloh. Three volumes (all major theological writings) have already appeared.

But work and wait or sit and wait, this book is necessary reading for every would-be-well-informed Lutheran.

ROBERT C. SCHULTZ

PREACHING THE CHRISTIAN YEAR
Edited by Howard A. Johnson (Scribner's $3.75)

THE SERMON AND THE PROPERS
By Fred Lindemann (Concordia, vol. i $4.00, vol. ii $4.50)

These books share a common concern: preaching within the liturgical service, and preaching in the Church Year. In the Foreword of *Preaching the Christian Year,* James A. Pike, who was instrumental in bringing the book into being, says that to encourage preaching according to the Christian Year it would seem best to present "a theological analysis of the great themes to which he (the preacher) might address himself during each of the liturgical seasons."

The eight essayists include names which are widely known in theological study and Biblical research. Some great themes of the Church's life and preaching come in for excellent discussion. Advent, with its study of God coming in history, even now in the life of the Church, is helpful. Christmas and Epiphany are treated well by Albert T. Mollegen. Especially delightful was his discussion of Judaism's need for forgiveness and paganism's need for death and resurrection. In the Birth of Jesus Christ in the flesh, His manifestation to Jew and Gentile, and in the true purification by water and blood — Baptism and the Holy Eucharist — both Judaism's and paganism's needs are answered. In Pre-Lent, Theodore O. Wedel does an exciting job with the relation of Lent to Epiphany as Law and Gospel. Original Sin is taken seriously and the preacher also has the task of helping people become sinners. He displays well the connection between the Genesis narration of the Fall and the Gospel of the Cross and Resurrection. Lent, done by William H. Nes, is a fine job of describing the worshipping church deriving her life from and renewing her life in Baptism, the preaching of the Word, and the Holy Eucharist.

From this point on the book becomes sterile, at least for provoking good theological preaching during and in the Church's Year. Although emphasis is placed on Christianity as an historical religion, and J. V. Langmead Casserley again emphasizes the union between Christ's death and resurrection and our Baptism and the Eucharistic celebration, yet much of the balance of the book becomes vague, irrelevant to the needs of sinners for both Law and Gospel, and certainly out of joint with the Biblical proclamation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. W. Norman Pittenger, in Ascensiontide and Whitsuntide, does such a good job of making the Biblical accounts legendary that he loses his power when he talks about the core of fact or meaning that is supposed to remain in the stories.

Taken as a book, this series of essays is a helpful contribution to good liturigcal preaching, and the very excellent treatment of great themes like Sin, Law, Grace, Atonement and Redemption, Baptism and the Eucharist, Church, will be profitable for any student. The book contains a bibliography or recommended readings and indices of authors and biblical passages.

The Reverend Fred H. Lindemann, author of *The Sermon and the Propers* (two volumes), is a retired pastor of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod. In the introduction to his work he states the purpose of the volumes: "to encourage preaching according to the Church Year and in harmony with the appointed Proper." This introduction itself is a delightful piece of writing about the Church's worship, liturgy, Sacraments and Word, and the function of the sermon within the liturgy.

These volumes study the theme of each Sunday's Propers, suggest outlines on the Epistle and Gospel for the day, and repeatedly show the connection between the

major emphasis of the Day or Festival and the Holy Communion. Many fine and valuable, and I dare say, new, insights will come to the reader as he uses these in connection with his own preparation to lead worship or to participate in the service.

Neat little summaries appear from time to time in the books, to stimulate thoughtful and refreshing worship. Some such are at the seasons of Advent, Epiphany, Lent, and Post-Easter. Many of the notes on seasons and particular days are excellent. The historical notes and comments reveal sound scholarship and judgment.

Some might rashly draw the conclusion that this kind of preaching will tend to inhibit the preacher and starve the congregation by giving them such a restricted diet. This need not be the case, and I am confident will not prove to be the case to those preachers who make use of these volumes. In fact, I am convinced from experience and these volumes that the exact opposite will be true. The books contain many key ideas which will trigger original and new insights, and such key ideas lie everywhere in these two volumes.

Among the many valuable helps and ideas in these volumes, not the least are the sermons by Johann Gerhard. The author included translations of these sermons, chiefly to show that the celebration of the saints days has high and good precedent in the Church of the Augsburg Confession and they can be remembered with much profit to the faithful Christians. This reviewer appreciates them for another reason. The devotional writings of Johann Gerhard have always been edifying for the reviewer; now these sermons are added. Just listen to this sentence from a sermon on St. Thomas' Day: "The Spirit, as God's finger, must write Christ in our heart" (Vol. I, page 66.) Or this one from a sermon on the Presentation of our Lord: "We must also moan like a dove in genuine sorrow and penitence (Is. 38:14) and hide in the cleft of the rock, that is, in the wounds of the Lord Christ, the true Rock (Song of Sol. 2:14), that our nakedness and uncleanness may not be exposed before God." Vol I, page 129. There are many more!

In these volumes there is a salutary — and much needed — emphasis on the daily extension of Baptism and the renewal of the Church's life in the Death and Resurrection of our Incarnate Lord, as this life comes to us in Baptism, is refreshed and guided through the preached Word, and is shared and lived in worshipful praise in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The author of these two volumes has made a good and real contribution to joyful and thankful worship, based on clear proclamation and faithful celebration of the Word in preaching and Sacrament. Pastors and laymen are heartily encouraged to use these volumes.

KENNETH F. KORBY

THE BOOK OF THE ACTS OF GOD
By G. Ernest Wright and Reginald H. Fuller (Doubleday, $4.95)

This introduction to the theology and books of the Bible is another in the Christian Faith Series which has Reinhold Niebuhr as the consulting editor. The book is written expressly for laymen. The authors claim that the material is simply a presentation, adapted for laymen of course, of the courses in Introduction they teach at McCormick and Seabury-Western Theological Seminaries respectively.

The book can be divided into four parts. In the first few chapters the source of Biblical theology and the God who is revealed through the faith of the Biblical people are described in great detail. These chapters are provocative. They are of interest not only to laymen, but also to any professional theologian.

G. Ernest Wright then proceeds to analyse the basic literary structure of the Old Testament, surveying the purpose of each book and its basic theological outlook. He follows the higher critical views in presenting the authors and dates of the various books, but differs from many of his colleagues in Old Testament scholarship in reconstructing the history of the people of Israel. These chapters are of a general nature. Many knotty problems of interpretation which plague the student of the Old Testament are omitted. However, his analysis of the literature of the Old Testament should certainly be appealing to laymen.

The third section of the book dealing with the intertestamental period, written by Reginald H. Fuller, is most unsatisfying. Omitting any comment on his interpretation of this era, we feel that the material presented is too sketchy, has no point, and would leave any laymen more confused than anything else. The authors state their theological assumptions in the first chapters. These theories as to the faith of Israel inform all the chapters written by Wright. There is no such thread, obvious at least, in the chapters by Fuller.

The fact that Fuller has translated many of Bultmann's writings and is influenced by the thinking of this German theologian is obvious in Fuller's reconstruction of the New Testament witness. Using a mythical "man on the street" as his straw man (a "man on the street" whom we have surely never met, and a poor literary tool in any case), Fuller sets up certain outmoded theories concerning the life and teachings of Christ. (If any "man on the street" thinks in this way, we ought to be candid enough to realize that this is a result of the teaching he received from the pulpit. Let's trace these notions back to the seminaries from which they originated!) Fuller claims that the New Testament teaches a realized eschatology, that Jesus demanded a "radical obedience", and he (Fuller) severely demythologizes the preexistence and resurrection of Christ. All this sounds so much like Bultmann.

While we have some rather deepseated and agonizing questions concerning much of this, we certainly want to admit that there is much in the book which is worth the effort of reading it. Wright's analysis of the Covenant (p. 89) and of the Messianic idea (pp. 112-118), and Fuller's discussion of our Lord's healings as "signs", his analysis of Pauline theology (which shows us just how Lutheran we are in our terminology), and his reconstruction of the Johannine literature are certainly worthy of close scrutiny.

But now let's proceed to more basic issues.

The title of the book indicates the position of the authors in respect to the authority of the Bible. The Bible itself and the words therein are not, in so many words, the Word of God. Rather the historic actions which the Bible records are the acts of God. The authority of the Bible is not in its words or in the inspired authors, but rather in the events which scripture records. God is not revealing Himself verbally, but rather in the actions which the Biblical writers record. God is a God of history rather than of a book. Certainly one cannot call this rationalism, since these theologians believe that God is acting in history. There is a miracle involved, a once-and-for-all action of God. But the miracle occurs in God's acting through His people and in Christ, rather than in the "supernatural inspiration" of certain authors. It is interesting that the reader can accept all the textual and historical criticism these teachers propound, and still receive the scripture as God's authorative Word.

These statements might be acceptable to the Lutheran since the Confessions are relatively silent on the exact nature of Biblical authority. And certainly this book is a valiant attempt to escape the modernist-fundamentalist dilemma in the Reformed tradition. But as these authors progress with these basic assumptions, conclusions are drawn which deny the historical accuracy of a good share of Scripture. Now we realize that this book was written for laymen and that therefore principles of interpretation are kept to a minimum. However, we feel that many of these reconstructions in Biblical history are not based on these first assumptions, but on hermeneutical principles which are nowhere enunciated. It is unfair to the lay reader for the authors to proceeded in such a manner. We must know on what further basis the authors distinguish "faith" from "fact" in Scripture. Much seems highly arbitrary.

It is interesting to note, however, that

even though the authors deny the historical accuracy of many incidents recorded in scripture, they always conclude with the statement of faith — that even though the writers of Scripture were uncritical, God was acting through the events which they were rather uncritically recording. For example, God really never told the Israelites that they were His chosen people —these were only "assumptions" or "claims" (p. 73) — yet He is actually active in the history of that people to accomplish His purpose. Revelation is therefore not a supernatural epiphany, but rather a revelation through the natural processes of history. First we have Wright claiming

> "It should be observed that the biblical man did not look upon a miracle quite as we do. He did not have such a word in his vocabulary. He spoke of 'signs and wonders.' Any unusual or spectacular happening that was a sign of the direct working of God — this was a miracle. If a modern man could have stood beside him and given a rational explanation of all the events through which he passed, he would not have been particularly impressed." (p. 80-1)

But these remarks are always couched inside statements like

> "God met people while they were needy and delivered them from their opression . . . The great power which had saved them must have a purpose in doing so . . . History therefore was always pointing forward to something. God's purpose and plan always was to be discerned ahead. The purpose involved a vocation in history . . . " (p. 28)

Certainly we, as Luther, would agree that there is a vocation in history as there is a vocation in each of our individaul lives. Much that is written today about "knowing God" is a far cry from the Biblical faith in a God who acts in and through history. While we are critical of certain aspects of this approach, we want to make quite clear that this approach to the nature and knowledge of God is far superior to much that modern Protestantism avers as *revelation*.

This volume is enlightening. It will certainly deepen and mature faith in the authority of scripture, an authority which rests finally in the very nature of God. But here is where it stops. This "having God" rather than simply admitting to His existence is still only the first commandment. It does not approach sin and grace. The authors do think it rather strange that God is revealed as grace in Genesis, and then as law in Exodus. This gospel/law sequence is also seen by them in the preachment of Christ (pp 89,96). There is no clear statement in this volume that the theme of "justification through faith without the deeds of the law", which Luther saw referred to in almost every verse of scripture, is actually the sum and substance of Bibilical theology.

WALTER W. OETTING

ALL THE PLANTS OF THE BIBLE
By Winifred Walker (Harper, $4.95)

A torpedoed ship, the resultant loss of some paintings of plants in Shakespeare's works, appointment as staff artist at an American university, and an earlier study of plants in the Bible all contributed to the beginning of this book.

The author, a well-known British botanical artist, was enroute to this country in 1939 when her ship was torpedoed and her Shakespeare collection was lost at sea. In 1943 she was invited to become artist-in-residence at the University of California at Davis. Familiar with the Scriptures since childhood, she had frequently wondered about the identity of Biblical plants while painting modernday ones. Upon encountering a list of "Plants of the Bible" published by Dr. Harold N. Moldenke of the New York Botanical Garden, she resolved to paint them. Over five years of research and artistic effort resulted in this book.

The plants are alphabetically arranged by common names and selections are made from both Old and New Testaments as well as a few from the Apocrypha. A half page or more of description and interesting ideas about the plant is accompanied, on the facing sheet, with a full-page, life-size picture in black-and-white. Names are given in English, Latin, and Hebrew.

Among the fascinating facts presented, the fig is the first fruit mentioned in the Bible. According to eastern legend, the Aloes tree with dark-colored, fragrant wood is the only plant that Adam was permitted to bring out of the Garden. In the East, it is still called Paradise Wood. The pottage, purchased with Esau's birthright, was made from lentiles, a pea-like plant still grown in Palestine and Syria. The bulrushes, from which the tiny cradle of Moses was woven and among which he was hidden, were probably the famous papyrus used by the Egyptians as the first known material for making paper. It still grows there along the Nile. The Almug tree used by Hiram in building Solomon's temple was the sandalwood, a beautiful ruby-red timber with a sweet fragrance and so sturdy and antiseptic a wood that it is impervious to insect attack. It was also used in making such musical instruments as the harp and psalter and from it was prepared a rich, red dye.

Among the plants of the New Testament both frankincense and myrrh are described and pictured. The locust, eaten with wild honey by John the Baptist, was not the grasshopper-like animal that plagued the peoples of the Near East. Rather it was the fruit of the carob tree, a legume and relative of our own black locust. It is known in the East as St. John's Bread.

The lilies of the field were probably not a lily but the anemone or windflower; a rose turns out to be a narcissus; the rose of Sharon, a tulip; and the sycamore tree which Zacchaeus climbed, a species of fig. The gall mingled with vinegar offered to Christ as He hung on the cross was from the opium poppy. These and many more interesting facts are told about the 114 plants which Mrs. Walker covers in this book.

Strictly speaking the title of the book is somewhat erroneous for the author mentions only seed plants, which, obviously, are not "All the Plants," and Moldenke's *Plants of the Bible*, Chronica Botanica (1952) lists over 230. Her paintings are quite clear and detailed, nearly all done from living specimen, but she offers little in the way of proof or verification of her statements of identity. Moldenke's work is much more authoritative and scientific in its approach, has considerable supplemental material and many cross references. Mrs. Walker's book is a fine addition but Moldenke's provides — and actually did provide — a firm foundation for Mrs. Walker's work, which relied heavily on his research.

ROBERT J. KUSTER

WORSHIPING WITH WOMEN OF THE BIBLE
By Florence C. Brillhart (Revell, $2.00)

This book of devotions contains much material that can be used by women in various church-related groups to assist them in conducting worship services in their own surroundings. It contains ideas for the theme or setting for the meeting, suggests a hymn title, a thought for prayer, and includes a Bible reading and a short "talk". Many of these "talks" are particularly adaptable to seasons of the year, holidays, and the like. Others have no particular association with any event, other than the application of their Christian philosophy. Since Mrs. Brillhart does not profess to be a theologian, perhaps some of the devotions may not be theologically sound on all points. Each one could, however, be carefully screened and the "talks" could be used in many situations, with the proper selection. It should be a good book to help women develop a program on a yearly basis.

BERNICE RUPRECHT

THE RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN
By Victor Obenhaus (University of Chicago Press, $4.00)

It is difficult to explain in a few words why we like this book. It comes out of a wide knowledge and experience of the problems with which it deals. It tells us a great deal in a very few pages of the lessons provided by previous Christian wrestling with the problems of the economic and social order. It avoids platitudinous solu-

tions in favor of full-dimensional description. But more important than all this, perhaps, is the obvious Christain concern with which Professor Obenhaus discusses his subject.

He is not just concerned with human suffering. He is not merely concerned with the Christian witness in the present disorder. Much more basic than both of these, there comes through in the pages of this book the author's own deeply felt conviction that Christian existence is not possible for one who refuses to let himself be shaken by the crises of our time. The farm problem, the debate over the "welfare state," the race question, the problems of organized labor and industrial relations — they are not only the field for Christian action, but they are also and more fundamentally the religious situation, the objective locus of God's grace, the context of the question to which the Gospel is the answer.

The book is written primarily for the layman. The fact that few laymen will read it — or other books like it — is perhaps just one more indication among many that popular Protestantism — and Lutheranism — does not want to hear and has not heard the Law and cannot, therefore, really have understood the Gospel.

PAUL T. HEYNE

GENERAL

DEMOCRACY IN WESTERN GERMANY

By Richard Hiscocks (Oxford University Press, $7.50)

There are two ways of viewing the new Federal Republic of Germany: from the vantage point of eight years or from the perspective of the long historical development of German political institutions. To those predisposed to accept the formalisms of democracy as being democracy the first view will be sufficient to establish the fact. Contrary to much modern political thinking, however, political institutions draw their substance from the past. The past can be outgrown but can never be severed from the body politic. This is particularly well illustrated in the volume under review here. Professor Richard Hiscocks has accepted the thesis that Germany is living through a period of political transition. He has set for himself the task of assessing the direction of this transition. In more specific terms the problem is one of the success of democratic institutions versus German political tradition.

Democracy is more than a set of political procedures. It is a way of looking at life. Its roots go to the depths of society. Western Germany has been given the organization and procedures of democracy but, as the author demonstrates, their roots do not run deep. Political parties have tended to be doctrinaire, uncompromising, authoritarian, and unpopular. On the Federal level, decision-making has been dominated by Chancellor Adenauer's authoritarian conception of his office. The role of the Laender in the federal system has suffered from the overindulgence of the Federal Government and, conversely, from their own lack of interest in defending their rights under the Basic Law.Local government is plagued by the indifference of the average citizen who seems content to leave local administration to the paid *expertise*. The civil service, whose role in German politics is increasing, is generally second rate: conformist, servile, and politically minded. These, in very general terms, are the weaknesses the author discerns in West German democracy. He details the steps that are being taken to correct these deficiencies. These steps seem especially promising at the local and Laender levels. But the problems are fundamental and, therefore, the solutions can be neither easy nor quick. Germany has been asked to shape its society to fit imposed political institutions. This takes more than political education, as the author emphasizes. They take a revolution in political thinking and attitudes.

The Federal Repulic of Germany began its existence in 1949 as the creature of military defeat and cold war. For the development of West German politics these factors have exacerbated the traditional obstacles to democracy in Germany: the central concern with international affairs and the widespread political indifference of the German people. The facts of postwar German political existence were indeed harsh: defeat, territorial division, and occupation. The big issues of any German government were bound to be concerned with the reestablishment of Germany's international status. This concern with external issues has relegated "grass root" politics to a position of secondary importance. This has been especially manifested, the author points out, in the tendency of Chancellor Adenauer to by-pass democratic procedures for the sake of his personal handling of foreign policy. Adenauer's political success itself has rested primarily on his skill in foreign affairs. Thus we have again in Germany a "Bismarckian situation": the people of Germany have given a popular personality political license to meet the demands of foreign relations. The fundamental dangers presented to all the Western democracies by the Cold War are magnified when it comes to Germany which both lacks a solid democratic tradition and is unavoidably in the center of the conflict between East and West.

In addition to this unhealthy concern with international affairs, Professor Hiscocks points to the traditional political indifference of the German people which in the post-war era has been given special impetus from the psychological impact of the failures and excesses of the Nazi government. This passivism has been expressed in the overindulgence of the German people in the task of economic recovery. The voluntary acceptance of the German workers of overtime is cited as a manifestation of this phenomenon. The revival of economic well-being itself "has brought with it the temptation to enjoy life without worrying too much about political problems and duties." Political passivism is also expressed by the unwillingness of the Germans to discuss the recent past and for the tendency, on the part of some, to blame Nazi policies on non-German sources. While neo-Nazism must be minimized as a significant political force up to now, the author warns that the combination of arrogance regarding the past and overconfidence in postwar achievements could have dangerous consequences. The above two factors, the dominance of international issues and traditional political indifference, has led the author to the general conclusion that,

> . . . the attitude of the majority towards democratic government is passive rather than positive. The average German accepts the system without having a live democratic consciousness or recognizing his own responsibilities as a citizen. The fundamental reason for this attitude is the fact that Germany has again received democracy as a gift rather than as a result of a struggle based on conviction.

Those who are looking for a definitive answer to the question of the future of German politics will not find it in this volume nor, it must be added, in any other. What can be found here is an excellent presentation of the facts of German political life along with an objective appraisal of the possibilities for the future. This work cannot be ignored by those interested in this vital area.

ERNEST LEHMAN

WHITE MAN, LISTEN!

By Richard Wright (Doubleday, $3.00)

And he can make one listen! Anyone who has read his *Black Boy,* and then had the courage to read other of his books, especially *Native Son* and *Twelve Million Black Voices,* will perhaps agree with me: Richard Wright can make white men listen.

The author, a Negro, was born in Mississippi and spent his early and teenage life there. As many Mississippi Negroes did at the time, and many are still doing, Richard Wright moved to Chicago. He is now a resident of Paris.

White Man, Listen! is Richard Wright's latest book. Different from his other writings, it is a group of lectures which he delivered in a number of European countries, including Italy, France, Denmark, Sweden, and Germany.

In this book he lashes out unmercifully in presenting the naked truth of what slavery and European colonialism did to Asia and Africa in bringing them and the

Western world into the political, social, and economic dilemma in which we find ourselves today.

The author holds that colonialism robbed the peoples of these two continents of the meaning of their religions and other aspects of their native cultures without effectively supplying them with another culture in which they might find a degree of stability. According to the author, this is especially true of the elite of these countries and continents, the Sukarnos, the Nehrus, and the Nkhrumas. Schooled in the United States, Britain, and France, these men know and understand Western civilization. But they are not fully able to accept its benefits for themselves and for their people, neither can they return to the tribal cultures from which they have come.

The elite of Asia and Africa, according to *White Man, Listen!* know that the industrialization of their countries is an absolute must. It is made necessary by the mushrooming population of their countries. Their people, however, are inhibited from accepting and developing industrialization by their outmoded culture, of which ancestor worship is a remaining powerful influence.

The elite, according to the author, for very good reasons distrust the European powers, fearing that they still have their eyes on these countries and their great unused natural resources. It might be said parenthetically that the elite of Asia and Africa, according to Richard Wright, hold no brief for the Kremlin and that they fear the infiltration of Communism as much as, if not more than, a return of their one-time colonial overlords. Having felt the cruelty of the bondage of colonial rule, they abhor the inevitable serfdom of the Communistic state. Despite the fact that Richard Wright finds the elite of these countries very insecure and fearful, he believes that the solution of the vexing cultural, political, and economic problems of these countries lies in the hands of these men; and if Europe and the United States want to help these countries, and in doing so help themselves, they must try to understand these men, give them the freedom they need, and extend confidence to them.

Although Richard Wright in *White Man, Listen!* proves himself to be a political analyst whose voice should be heard, it is not for this reason primarily that I think the reading of the book can be of interest and helpful to thinking and concerned Christian people. Let me explain.

Richard Wright finds himself in the psychological company of the elite of Asia and Africa. He, like they, has been exposed to Western civilization and Christianity. The white people of the United States, he thinks, have made it impossible for him to identify himself completely with our culture. Embittered and disillusioned, he has rejected the Christian religion with which prejudiced American society is identified in his mind.

Like the elite of Asia and Africa, Richard Wright is lonely, for as a man of color he cannot go with us; and there is no other way known to him to go. Although he writes that he is happy in his loneliness, he is nevertheless looking for a place and a people to whom he can attach himself and with whom he can be identified. Having nothing, he has nothing to lose. For this reason he can very honestly and perhaps objectively look into the past history of 400 years of European colonialism. Having nothing to hold to and for that reason alone having no inhibitions in his search for truth, he can come up with startling analyses of men, their deeds and their follies, while we who are not alone but are part and parcel of European civilization and culture may be so satisfied with our "company" that we stop seeking after the truth. What is more, since Richard Wright is obviously no professing Christian, he can point out our shortcomings and hypocrisy, because he, unlike us, has nothing to defend. One can pity, and admire him, reject his evident godlessness, and yet learn from him.

He writes about the three M's, Military, Missionary, and Mercenary, as the three-pronged approach of western civilization in its colonization process. Now that the smoke has blown away, according to the author, we see a helpless, hopeless people bereft of what they had and unable to lay hold of that which we have. He gives us to understand that the missionary part was an important one because it was always associated with and protected by the military and the mercenary; and social aloofness was practiced by the representatives of the God of love as well as by the military and the mercenary.

If my fellow Christians reading these lines have the stamina to take it, they can learn from *White Man, Listen!* and come out of the fray not only enlightened but strengthened in their faith.

ANDREW SCHULZE

THE GREEK EXPERIENCE

By C. M. Bowra (World, $6.00)

Sir Maurice Bowra, distinguished Oxford classicist of international renown, writes with a pen that is at once both facile and weighty. Any book that bears his name as its author is therefore certain to provide the thinking reader with much pleasure and profit. This is true of the impressive array of the writer's earlier volumes on Greek subjects, and it is equally so in the case of this, his most recent Hellenic publication. For in the *Greek Experience* Sir Maurice, drawing upon his vast store of classical knowledge, has given us in two-hundred spacious pages and several score of excellent illustrative plates a sweeping survey of the Greek view of life and its achievement, and through his incisive analysis and sound, if not new, interpretation thereof he has won for himself still another in a lengthening list of scholarly triumphs.

After a description of the landscape and climate of Greece and some pertinent observations concerning their influences in shaping the character and speech of its people, all the important fields in which the Greeks were active come under the author's sharp scrutiny — politics and war, religion and mythology, literature and the plastic arts, science and philosophy. And in each of the ten chapters of approximately equal length Sir Maurice demonstrates in masterly style how their effervescent vitality and burning desire to excel impelled the gifted Hellenes to expand their many talents, physical and mental, in the creations and accomplishments that have earned for them the admiration and imitation of all nations and peoples who have inherited their culture. Here we find humanism at its very highest level. Here man and his upward reach and striving are ever in the foreground. Action and reflection followed by action — in a word, heroic exploits are the goals of life, whether of the individual or of the state. Mortal man, to be sure, has his limitations, but by appealing to his immortal gods for help, gods to whom he is related by descent, he can at times surmount his human obstacles, rise to even greater heights, and verily approach his dieties in their splendor and beauty and power. Deification itself he admittedly cannot expect. Indeed he does not concern himself overly much with the prospect of an after-life or with a possible lack thereof. The complete fulfillment of his potential capabilities as man is his sole ambition, and its realization, for which he thirsts and struggles, suffices as immortality for him. Remembrance of his worth in time to come, whether expressed in monumental epitaph or on the lips of men, though not mandatory, would however by no means be unwelcome.

This in brief is the view of life on which Sir Maurice correctly centers his attention, the view adopted by the Hellenic people from the time of their earliest beginnings, and from which they did not swerve until the long war (431-404 B.C.) for the hegemony of Greece waged between the Athenians and the Spartans. But this disastrous conflict, which culminated in the utter exhaustion of the warring parties, destroyed the old civic ideals and zest for living and in their wake ushered in the political apathy and general disillusionment responsible for the subsequent conquest of all Greece by Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander.

For the Christian the Greek experiences of rise and fall offers both lesson and warning, which Sir Maurice Bowra, though he does not point them out, yet perhaps would allow him to infer. First, the mag-

nificent attainments of the Greeks and their unflagging zeal and enthusism, motivated merely by a sense of honor and craving for fame, cannot but serve to spur and even shame the passive and quiescent Christian, whose incentive for excelling is far superior to the classical and in fact alone truly valid. Secondly, the experience of the Greeks proves all too clearly that the humanistic philosophy of life, no matter how lofty and ideal in theory, ultimately comes to be unmasked as sheer selfishness. This is illustrated in a most dramatic and tragic manner by the struggle between Athens and Sparta, to which reference has been made. Each of these two great city-states, democracy and oligarchy, through a grandiose self-importance fostered by brilliant success and constantly increasing power, and through a consequent attempt to force its respective will on others, sowed the seeds of its own inevitable destruction. Heroic feats had led to pride and pride to arrogance and arrogance to catastrophic ruin. Of genuine love of the gods there was none, nor ever any feeling of sinful guilt, or of repentance and remorse. Thus the glory of Greece, the achievement of reason and egoism, finally tottered and then crumbled on its human foundation of sand.

EDGAR C. REINKE

FOR LOVE OF MARTHA

By Marjorie Winter (Julian Messner, $3.00)

For Love of Martha is the true story of the Winters' struggle to adopt a child. In the preface "Marjorie Winter" states that her purpose in writing the book is "to tell the people of what is wrong in the adoption field" but that her primary reason is "the wish to share with others a miracle of love." The story is so well-written that one finds it difficult to put the book down. This is no doubt so because the author, who writes under a pseudonym to protect her family, is actually a writer with an established reputation as novelist and playwright.

Four years after the Winters make application to a well-known and reputable metropolitan adoption agency they learn, without being given a reason, that their application has been rejected. Following this, they make application to an agency, which though supposedly state-approved, turns out to be a "gray-market" sort of operation. The type of "social worker" involved in the first interview with the author and her husband, as well as the practices involved in the placement of the child, would appear unethical to anyone who has adopted a child through a reputable agency. However, in their eagerness to adopt a child the Winters are somewhat oblivious to this, and soon after they have made application, the agency places a 5-year old girl in their home. Six months later the Winters learn that the agency which placed Martha is under investigation by the state. The events which follow — the politics involved, the visit from Martha's second cousin, who attempts to get the child back because of her Southern family pride, the legal finagling and red tape, are a nightmare. All ends well, however, when after much effort on the part of the Winters' lawyer, they finally succeed in legally adopting the child.

This is a very moving, tender story concerning a couple's deep desire for a child and the personal sacrifice and love given this child to make her their own, and then the awful legal maneuvering involved to keep her theirs. The author attempts to show, too, how a frightened, poorly adjusted child becomes a healthy, happy, even beautiful child after a year with people who love her.

At the same time the reader is emotionally stirred by this story, his reason questions how intelligent people could allow themselves to become involved in a situation such as this. The author learns in an indirect way that the reason for the rejection of their application by the reputable agency was "overprotectiveness." One might wonder, however, if there were other reasons why this seemingly desirable couple was considered less desirable than other couples with whom this reputable agency placed children. Marjorie Winter feels that there are certain "weaknesses" in the adoption field and, as she states in the preface, "weakness, and worse, wickedness — in the way adoption is handled today. Black and gray markets in child flesh attest that the legitimate channels for adoption need substantial reform." One wonders if laws demanding that all adoptions be made through reputable, standardized agencies might not be a step in the right direction.

DORIS E. SCHERER

A WEEK END IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WEEK
(And Other Essays on the Bias)

By Oliver St. John Gogarty (Doubleday, $4.50)

"Oliver was in many ways an imp, a leprechaun in a top hat. Of one thing you could be certain: he would always say or do the unexpected." Thus in an introductory essay Ben Lucien Burman deftly characterizes this recently deceased Irish-American author who delighted in witty mystification, spoken or written. Especially his gaiety charmed people, the good humor of one who sees the absurdity in all of us but can laugh jauntily and go on enjoying life fully — exactly the opposite of pretentiousness or snobbery.

The provocative title for this book is representative of the 32 light-hearted essays herein collected, each of which is marked by sharp humor and effective eccentricity. Like the almost endless escapades in the anecdote about the house with many chambers whose hostess tried to decide what *is* actually the end or the middle of the week! To me the article "Who Was Dean Swift?" had subtle appeal, in its more than usually sober analysis of the devastating satirist by his reaction to his own times, his attitude toward women, and his anti-British patriotism. Strangely, the book title is taken from the third (not the first) in the series of essays.

The range of subjects, from mundane (e.g., "On Sitting for Your Portrait and Other Forms of Being Sat On") to supersensory phenomena (e.g., "The Most Haunted House of Them All") can best be described in the word "unpredictable." Always, however, the controversial tone predominates in Gogarty's amusing world, as can be seen in the following whimsical excerpt from the final essay:

> An American sat with the driver, and as the driver's pal hove into sight, the first bus driver said, "Excuse me." He dipped down and drew from under the seat a foot of rope and waved it at his pal. His pal's eyes nearly dropped out of his head. He was speechless for a moment, and when the expletives came, the bus had passed out of sight. The bus driver who wielded the rope said to the American, He ain't got no humor. His brother was hanged this morning.

HERBERT H. UMBACH

A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

By Robert H. Welker (Beacon Press, $5.95)

"War is hell."

That was said before the invention of our tremendously efficient modern techniques of destruction, and it has always been true. But there was a time when war could also be said to have a purpose, when statesmen could argue without excessive hypocrisy that war was the arbiter of international disputes and thus, in some sense, the resolution of conflict. That time may well have passed. Robert Welker, young lecturer in the Humanities at Case Institute of Technology and for four years a soldier in the United States Army, is passionately convinced that if such a time ever did exist, it exists no longer.

Welker is an angry man, but his anger is without spite or bitterness. He is in a sense a frightened man, but his fear is the fear of courage and not of intimidation. If his anger and his fear may be said to have an object, that object is the spirit of mankind, a spirit devoid of understanding and mired in its own unimaginativeness.

A Different Drummer pretends to be an autobiography, but rather than the history of Robert H. Welker, it is the history of Welker's world, a history of our world as seen through the eyes of a perceptive and articulate writer. The book concentrates its attention on the years of World War II,

when the author served in North Africa and Italy in a relatively safe Ordnance position. The fact that he never saw the front does not detract from the force of his analysis, for Welker — unlike such war reporter novelists as Norman Mailer — uses the relative detachment which he was allowed to see more clearly and to give form to that which he perceives. Also unlike Mailer, Welker believes that a meaning can be extracted from human action, even the act of war, albeit the meaning is not one which does credit to the actor.

The thesis which finally emerges from this book is one which many people will be unable to accept, for Welker repudiates the balance-of-power concepts which underlie Western foreign policy (in its wiser and less bombastic moments). The unconvinced may even be able to base their rejection of the thesis on an understanding of man and his dilemma which is as serious and as realistic as Welker's. But they ought to read the book, anyway. For Robert Welker thinks coherently, feels profoundly, and writes remarkably well. If the tradition of *Realpolitik* is to be fruitful in our generation and not just the automatic reflex of a sterile intellectualism, its practitioners need to understand the dignity and the creativity of man as well as his baseness and his self-seeking. The author of *A Different Drummer* bears eloquent witness to our time because his portrait of man springs from a genuine artist's understanding of the simultaneous grandeur, misery, and triviality which goes by the name of humanity.

PAUL T. HEYNE

KISSING COUSINS

By Emily Hahn (Doubleday & Co., $3.00)

Although this books bears the sub-title "America Through My Children's Eyes," it could perhaps better have said "America —and England—Through My Own Eyes." *Kissing Cousins* is the story of the American wife of an Englishman who, looking forward to the day when her two daughters will have to choose their own nationalities, brings her English-reared children on an extended visit to the U.S. They travel to Winnetka, Illinois, to Colorado, to Louisiana, and to New York, the girls always meeting new experiences (and relatives) and the mother always recalling memories of earlier ones. Miss Hahn (or Mrs. Charles Boxer in private life) is naturally more aware of her own thoughts and feelings; and these, frequently with little continuity, are constantly coming through her descriptions of America's reception of Carola and Amanda.

Many anecdotes of the Hahn family, both past and present, are understandingly presented, as well as some of their sorrows and difficulties. Miss Hahn, a world traveler and author of several books, also gives much autobiographical material. And last, but not least, *Kissing Cousins* points out many of the contrasts existing between the American and the British ways of life, as seen by a women who was raised in America, but who has lived in England long enough to forget many American customs. *Kissing Cousins* is light but entertaining reading.

STEPHANIE UMBACH

FOSSILS AND PRESENCES

By Albert Guerard (Stanford University Press, $5.00)

One problem shared by all university presses is the making of an ultimate decision about what kind of material they should publish. If popular, why do it; or if specialized, how many readers will truly understand it?

This volume falls into the second class. It is a random harvest of advanced ideas on subjects literary, social, and philosophical. Topics include Dante, Vigny, Alain, Mann, Anatole France, the art of thinking, intellectual treason, and liberty. I found myself asking, does it really matter what Guerard thinks about these things? The 17 scholarship-studded essays have been gathered from his published writings over the last 50 years of his productive life as a student, Professor of General and Comparative Literature (now Emeritus), world citizen, and free believer. Good, Yes; but not particularly significant!

> For those established powers — perhaps once potent for good — which are now a drag in our quest, I have proposed the name FOSSILS. There are elements in them that have ceased to grow, that are no longer relevant — a date, a name, a text, a form, claiming traditional authority, encrusting and stifling the spirit. These powers, past, present, and future, which are helping us and guiding us, I call PRESENCES. . . . Let us prevent words, ideas, creeds, institutions, from becoming fossilized.

Since only CHANGE is certain in our world, says Dr. Guerard ("My faith is now in accelerated gradualism."), it is important to recognize the fossils such as nationalism that date our thinking, and the presences such as justice by which we can determine whether or not our thinking is rooted in the future. If only these philosophers would use specific details, then we could appreciate their elevated principles though not necessarily agree with them.

HERBET H. UMBACH

HOW TO BE A FATHER

By Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr. (Crowell, $2.95)

Anyone purchasing this book as a gift for a prospective father in the hope it will be helpful will be making a mistake. Presumably the advice here is aimed at the man who is becoming a father for the first time, but actually it is meant as a humorous book for fathers of long standing who will be amused at the similarities with their own experiences.

The new father may get a psychological lift from the advice, for the scope is wide and tells him how to react from the moment he first hears a child is on the way until the time the baby is almost ready to walk. Experienced fathers may enjoy some of the advice, such as when to tell the neighbors, how to choose a name, how to act at the hospital, how to react at the first sight of your baby, and what to expect during the first few months the baby is home.

The humor is light and often clever; in fact, in a number of cases it was too clever for this reader. It is a book covering a field of interest long neglected and, consequently, will probably end up as a rather steady seller.

AMID MY ALIEN CORN

By Betty Lussier (Lippincott, $3.95)

This book combines an element of suspense with that of extreme practicality. It is the story of an American woman, married to a Spaniard, whose home is in Madrid. Here she lives in a busy whirl of social activities with her husband and three boys, but comes to the conclusion that this manner of life does not satisfy her.

In trying to find new interests for herself and her family, she remembers her childhood association with her father on a large dairy farm in New York State. Here her family worked together and played together and she vividly recalls the satisfactions of these days, compared to the empty ones she is now experiencing. She yearns for a similar life for her three sons.

When she persists in asking her husband to assist her in experimenting with farm life in Spain, he introduces her to an influential friend who has large holdings of land in Spanish Morocco. Arrangements are completed for her to move to this spot and it is here that she brings her three boys, leaving her husband in Madrid, and returning only for occasional large social affairs.

Her experiences in buying equipment, machinery, furnishing her home, and becoming established in a strange country make quite a fascinating tale. She introduces hybrid corn to the alien people of this land and attempts to teach new farming methods to them. The descriptions of her planting experiences are most exciting, and her adventures and contacts with the Spaniards and Moroccans offer an intimate glimpse into the private lives and cultures of these people who soon become her close friends. The many satisfactions she finds in her new life fill her former unmet need and she is happy in her new surroundings until her sudden return to Madrid.

BERNICE RUPRECHT

FICTION

MOSES, PRINCESS OF EGYPT
By Howard Fast Crown, $3.95)

This novel about Moses' youth owes very little to the Biblical narrative. Howard Fast has accepted the theory propounded by Sigmund Freud twenty years ago concerning the source of Moses' religious principles. Freud postulates that the religion sponsored by King Amenhotep IV of Egypt, who later changed his name to Ikhnaton, was not only the earliest, but the only, example of monotheism prior to the time of Moses. If this principle is allowed, the authenticity of the first six books of the Bible is denied. The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, telling of the covenant between God and Abraham, and of the manner of its fulfilling, contain, according to this theory, extensive and deliberate distortions of the religious history of the Jews, with concomitant changes in their secular history. There were no "chosen people," for, says Freud, there was no God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; He was carefully written into Jewish history about seven hundred years after the Exodus, and it was due entirely to Moses that the Children of Israel ever heard of Him.

In the novel, some brutish slaves living in Goshen, on the east bank of the Nile, set a tiny baby adrift in a basket on the water as a sacrifice to their serpent god Nehushtan, lord of all serpents and more powerful than the Baalim that dwell in high places. These miserable creatures are Jacob's descendants. Their remembrance of things past is limited to racial genealogical data; their hope for the future is nonexistent.

The baby in the basket is rescued by Princess Enekahs-Amon. She tells her brother, Ramses II, self-styled "The Great," that the boy is her own child, naming no one as father, although putative fathers include the god-king himself. The boy is brought up in the royal palace among some hundred of the monarch's children. There the young prince early gains the friendship of a priest of Amon and of the king's master builder. These men, as well as the princess, are secret devotees of the cult of Aton, now proscribed. Having found the conventional Egyptian pantheon neither admirable nor credible, Moses is easily won as a disciple of Aton, the sun, creator and benefactor of mankind.

The prince is not, however, fully satisfied. Amid palace intrigues, during years of war and exploration, or contemplating the groaning strain of thousands of slaves, he continues to grope in spirit toward a god whom he can truly worship. At the book's end, as he and his Levite companion turn toward the desert to escape Ramses' wrath, Moses is beginning to wonder if the principle of justice might be such a god.

The author has made great effort to acquaint himself with details of life in Egypt during the thirteenth century, B.C. His plot is plausible and full of action. He has produced a book which is more easily read than any one of Thomas Mann's volumes about the life of Joseph, for Fast is less verbose and less given to exposition; his penetration into psychological penumbra is neither so frequent nor so protracted as is Mann's. However, if style in writing could be graded like government-inspected beef, this book would be stamped "utility." Management of dialogue seems sometimes particularly maladroit. For example, to express agreement, the word "nodded" is used almost frequently enough to make one wonder if some of the characters suffer from paralysis agitans. The best writing lies in the descriptive passages, especially in those which arouse feelings of indignation, pity, or horror.

The young Moses of this book (he is twenty-three at its close) is by no means capable of the mighty deeds recorded of him in later life. It seems likely that author Fast is not finished with Moses, and that we shall have a chance to watch his conception of the nature of God grow in amplitude and depth during his sojourn among the Midianites.

DORINDA KNOPP

AND SAVE THEM FOR PALLBEARERS
By James Garrett (Messner, $3.95)

This new contribution to the current crop of anti-war stories is a first novel, and quite successful in many respects. Peter Donatti, a staff sergeant with the Army in the European theatre during World War II, feels an unusually strong attachment to the men of his squad. They are fighting a series of bitterly slow and bloody engagements, just in front of the Siegfried Line, when Donatti is wounded and sent back to an Army hospital in Paris. There he falls in love with his nurse and spends his time of convalescence happy in his new love but brooding over the fate of the men in his squad. Declared unfit for active duty and ordered back to the States upon his release from the hospital, Donatti, instead, returns to his old campany just in time for the Battle of the Bulge.

The battle scenes are the best part of the book, where the slogging progress of the foot soldier is agonizingly real. No touch of glamor is added to relieve the somber mood of the novel. The main characters are well realized and believable, and the development of the action builds up well to the climax.

A serious weakness of this first novel is the tendency to achieve realism by the use of profanity and by dwelling on the love life of the principal and subsidiary characters. These attempts by the author to be realistic seem to have been added after the story was written, because they are awkward, unreal, and weaken the total effect. Then, to avoid false association of this particular divison with any that fought in World War II, Mr. Garrett invented European names which make for confusing reading at times.

However, as a first novel, this one is several notches above the average.

SALVATION JOHNNY
By Natalie Anderson Scott (Doubleday, $3.95)

One has, probably without noticing, gone by the Salvation Army kettle at Christmas time and tossed in a coin or two. In *Salvation Johnny,* Mrs. Scott has attempted to reveal the background and the complexity of the lives involved with that kettle — the Salvation Army's way of life. In her novel, the author has concentrated mainly on the family of Major Nealy and its work for the Army, following with special interest the development from boy to man of Johnny, Major Nealy's youngest son. The story is starkly frank, dealing with both the pleasant and the unpleasant in the same stoic manner and tone displayed by all true Salvationists.

One might say that the author's style became somewhat awkward at times. She attempted to be different in her arrangement of participial phrases and their objects and this attempt, instead of producing the desired effect (one cannot be sure what this was), produces a crude, awkward arrangement of words which causes the reader to re-read several times to make sure that he understood the passage correctly. Perhaps the author worked too hard trying to achieve her purpose, for she completely obliterated the purpose as well as the effect.

JANICE BRASS

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Two paper-backs of more than ordinary merit have come to our attention. Both are Pocket Books Giant Cardinal Editions and each one is priced at fifty cents.

Moses, by Sholem Asch, the author of *Mary, The Apostle,* and *The Nazarene,* is an eloquent retelling of the story of the Exodus by a man who was immersed in the traditions of the Jewish people and who had a remarkable command of the English language. It is far superior to any other fictional account of the life and work of Israel's great leader.

The Family of Man reproduces in book form the magnificent photographic exhibition which Edward Steichen created for the Museum of Modern Art. It fulfills the promise made by Carl Sandburg in its prologue: "Here are set forth babies arriving, suckling, growing into youths restless and questioning. Then as grownups they seek and hope. They mate, toil, fish, quarrel, sing, fight, pray, on all parallels and meridans having likeness."

A Minority Report

Discord in the Groves of Academe

By VICTOR F. HOFFMANN

It is sometimes assumed that education and the educational process are and can be conducted without politics and apart from politics. Educators often speak of the non-political orientations of their calling or their profession (as the case may be). They will often say that educators do not wish "to get mixed up in politics." Learning, it is claimed, is non-partisan: it knows no party lines. "We," said an educator some of the readers know, "educate in quiet reflection."

People outside the field of education very often look upon education "as ivory-tower stuff." The outsiders often maintain that educators are long on theory and short on practical wisdom. This implies that education is conducted far above the dusty trail and the din of battle in the marketplace. In short, the egghead knows little about the political manipulation that goes on in the real world.

On occasion, one hears teachers say that there are "no pressures on us." Teachers sometimes claim that they can teach from day to day without any pressures "that zero in on" the teaching process. One teacher told me recently that "I can schedule my life with the assurance that the currents and cross-currents of controversy will seldom touch, will seldom upset my daily schedule."

All this may be so for some people. But this is not the way I see it from my perspective. During most of my life I have been close to education and educators in one form or another, on all levels of education. This includes close contacts with public and private schools. And it also includes the complete range of pre-theological and theological training for work in the active ministry.

Without exception, politics were played at all the institutions with which I had any contact. In many respects, the manipulations in the educational world look very much like the manipulations seen from day to day in the political realm. As in the political world, many different patterns of values, preferences, wants, and demands vie for recognition and fulfillment. In the educational world, too, there are persons and groups of persons who insist that their ways are correct and those who expect the Lord and Truth to follow them. They will evangelize as if an educational system cannot be successful without their unique and substantial approach. There are many persons who feel that way. As a result, educational policy is discussed and formulated in the face of diversity and multiplicity, the multiplicity of many people who claim to be in tune with the divine and the truth.

How can educational policy be created and formulated in the realm of diversity? It comes, and must come, through some system of adaptation and accommodation. In the economic realm, we call it "higgling" and "haggling." In industrial relations, we call it collective bargaining. In the political realm, it is called coalition politics.

Nor is this process of adaptation and accommodation always conducted according to the canons of peaceful persuasion. Blood also flows on the floors of academic institutions and occasionally is splattered on classroom walls as professors, administrators, and students go about this business of human existence. Academic people call one another names and spread gossip and lies about their contemporaries and colleagues just as do their distant neighbors and relatives in the real world. As in the political realm, frauds and incompetents sometimes achieve positions of high estate and status and sometimes give orders and make policy. We teachers often act the part of charlatans in the classrooms and now and then some doctors of philosophy are hardly more than quacks. Nor are the students that fathers and mothers send us with relief and their background always God's cherubic and innocent gifts to mankind. As a matter of fact, some of them are rascals and ill-bred as some of us were before them.

Education and educators are also confronted with pressures from the outside, that is, with pressures from the number one lobbyist, the paying constituent. I have heard many teachers say, "We will give your youngsters the kind of education you want them to have." But what do the people want? The responses of the people, like the discussions of educators, sometimes constitute cacophony, that is, disharmony, discordance, and dissonance. Whose voice is the voice of God and whose the voice of the devil? Contributors who give money to an academic institution frequently expect this school then to take a certain party line for them, to favor a certain economic institution, to push a certain church, to attack another church, to uphold a certain race or to chastise it, or whatever. This is not necessarily to be decried, but this is the way it is.

Sights and Sounds

"St. Louis Blues" A Disappointment

By ANNE HANSEN

On April 4 of this year more than 150,000 spectators lined the streets of New York City to watch and listen as a world-famous Negro musician and composer was carried to his last resting place. The funeral cortege moved forward to the strains of the most popular and widely known blues song ever written, *St. Louis Blues* — played on this occasion by a brass band. William Christopher Handy, the man who has long been acclaimed Father of the Blues, had asked that his music be played at his funeral.

In his excellent book, *America's Music,* Gilbert Chase states that although "W. C. Handy did not *create* the blues, he was undoubtedly a pioneer in *composed* blues as a type of American popular song." Chase adds that "the origin of the blues is lost in obscurity."

Just a week after Mr. Handy's burial in New York City a theater in St. Louis was the scene of the world *premiere* of a motion picture based on his life and career. Mrs. Handy, Pearl Bailey, and Nat "King" Cole were present, as well as many prominent society and civic leaders, including the governor of the state. It was a gala occasion, and glowing tribute was paid to the man whose classic blues song has carried the name of the city of St. Louis around the world.

It would give me unalloyed joy to be able to report that *St. Louis Blues* (Paramount, Allan Reisner) is an honest and inspiring account of the life of the great exponent of Afro-American folk music. But it is not. Anyone who is interested in Mr. Handy's life story should read his autobiography titled *Father of the Blues.* This is a fascinating book; it is far more entertaining and colorful than the largely fictional script concocted for the film. Many highly accomplished Negroe artists appear in *St. Louis Blues* — notably Nat "King" Cole, Eartha Kitt, Pearl Bailey, Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, and Mahalia Jackson.

Brooks Atkinson, the erudite drama critic of the *New York Times,* once wrote: *"South Pacific* is extraordinary entertainment. In addition to the beauty of the music and lyrics and the portraits of character, it has humor, gusto, irony, horseplay, and conviviality." Mr. Atkinson has stated the case with concise and admirable clarity. *South Pacific is* extraordinary entertainment. Some of the most distinguished figures in the American theater had a part in making *South Pacific* an outstanding artistic success. The captivating musical score is by Richard Rodgers, and the appealing lyrics are from the pen of Oscar Hammerstein II. The book for the stage play — based on James Michener's highly succesful *Tales of the South Pacific* — is by Joshua Logan.

South Pacific was an immediate success when it opened on Broadway on April 7, 1949. It garnered all the Antoinette Perry Awards for 1949-50, the New York Drama Critics Award for 1949-50, and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for 1950. Within an incredibly short period of time the hit songs of the play were heard on radio, TV, and discs. Since then road companies have brought the magic of *South Pacific* to every part of the nation. And now *South Pacific* has been brought to the screen in a magnificent Todd AO production.

In recent years we have seen the advent of several revolutionary screen and camera techniques. Todd AO seems to me to be far and away the best of these innovations. Here, on the widest of wide screens, we have a clear, well-defined image free from distortion, superb color photography, and excellent high-fidelity stereophonic sound. In the case of *South Pacific* (Magna Corporation, 20th Century-Fox, Joshua Logan) one must deplore the use of special color filters designed to convey the mood of the music in ever-changing color effects. These obviously contrived and artificial effects detract substantially from the over-all excellence of the production.

Mitzi Gaynor portrays the American nurse Nellie Forbush with fine success, and Rossano Brazzi is convincing in the role made famous on Broadway by the late Ezio Pinza. Incidentally, the magnificent voice of Giorgio Tozzi, of the Metropolitan Opera Company, is heard in the songs assigned to Mr. Brazzi. Juanita Hall and Ray Walston appear in the parts they created in the original stage play. John Kerr and France Nuyen are appealing as the star-crossed young lovers. The principals are ably supported by an excellent cast.

The plea for racial tolerance inherent both in Mr. Michener's book and in the stage play is movingly and effectively presented in the screen version.

Other new films now showing are: *Merry Andrew* (M-G-M), a lively comedy; *Marjorie Morningstar* (Warners), a mediocre presentation of Herman Wouk's mediocre novel; and *Run Silent, Run Deep* (United Artists), an exciting episode of submarine warfare.

The Pilgrim

"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side"
—PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

By O. P. KRETZMANN

A College is a Spirit

This is written the morning after Commencement Day . . . I have now taken part in these occasions for almost two decades . . . I must confess that there is still a strange and fascinating charm about the pomp and circumstance with which an American college sends its graduates out into the world beyond the borders of the campus . . . There are the proud and happy parents — the last farewells under the elms — the sudden hush which falls over the vast audience at the last singing of the Alma Mater — the quiet of the campus about two hours after the Benediction has been spoken — all these have a curious and perennial fascination for me . . . I usually try to spend a few hours on Commencement evening looking back over the years and returning to some of the basic truths which must govern the life of a school. . . .

What, after all, is this strange, charming phenomenon known as the American college? . . . Obviously it is a collection of books and buildings, possibly also a gathering of scholars devoted to study, research and teaching . . . Above and beyond that, however, there is something else which is higher and deeper and greater . . . A college is first and last a spirit . . . Its very essence is of the world of the spirit . . . It is one of the two leaders in the perennial conflict between the world of the flesh and the world of the spirit, between violence and understanding, between ideas and machines, between the world that now is and the world that might be . . . The very essence of an American college, especially one within the walls of the Church, lies beneath the surface of things in the nature and nurture of the intangibles of living. . . .

If it is worthy at all, the college is a spirit of learning, of knowledge, of understanding, of truth . . . It moves in the order of the flesh, the order of the mind, and the order of the will . . . It is its task to know all these, to take them apart and to put them together again . . . Technicians, scientists, historians, humanists, philosophers, musicians, poets and theologians gather in one place and by a strange osmosis become a unified, integrated spirit — the spirit of learning, of curiosity, of understanding, of humility before truth, of charity toward all men, of love to God . . . This is a high and mysterious thing . . . Perhaps that is one reason why "education" is so often misunderstood by those who are not directly involved in its practice . . . It is certainly the reason for the recurring demand, so evident in our time, for the substitution of techniques and skills for true education . . . I tried to remind myself again last night that science, however important, is still only the alphabet of life and not life itself . . . It is to be learned, but it must be illumined by the education of the spirit which alone opens the windows of life toward far and high horizons and permits us to walk under lifting skies . . . Only the college which is really a spirit can do that for its graduates. . . .

And it is a very great thing to do as all American colleges turn to the years of hope and promise . . . With all our weaknesses and failures and shortcomings we still are a spirit in every sense of the word — a spirit which can save the world from losing its soul and choking to death on the husks of the physical and the immediate . . . I believe that it is inconceivable that such a spirit can exist without faith in God . . . . A college is a spirit only when it is informed, illumined and made dynamic by a profound and steady faith in the Creator of the past, the God of the Cross, and the Lord of the future . . . Only in this way, it seems to me, can education promise a full, rich, abundant, free and brave life, illumined and warmed by the life of the unwearied spirit of the living God. . . .

This is the end of Commencement Day and the heart of the matter . . . God is in this fascinating problem of education . . . It must finally bring the golden gift of a stronger faith and surer hope . . . It must bring into the lives of young men and women that strange warmth which comes from the God-given knowledge of the fact that He loves us — loves us enough to bring us face to face with the hard problems of life so that we may see Him more clearly . . . The process of education finally ends in fire and gold — the flame in the mind which reminds us again and again that all things must come under His dominion — that we have here no continuing city — that life is a pilgrimage whose length is uncertain but whose end is sure — in Him. . . .