IN THE APRIL CRESSET - - -

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The Perils of Overeagerness

There is nothing that we would be willing to predict with greater confidence than the unification of American Lutheranism sometime in the next twenty-five years. Whether this unification will take the form of one big church or a close-working federation of two or more Lutheran churches we would not try to prophesy, nor do we think it matters a great deal. But a genuine unity of spirit, belief, and practice is already so close to realization among so many Lutherans that only some enormous blunder or some tragic mischance could prevent it from coming to fruition.

The worst blunder that could be made at this moment would be to become so obsessed with achieving the forms of outward unity that we ride rough-shod over consciences or lose patience with brethren who stand aloof because of honest misgivings. Much has been made of the success which has crowned the efforts of the various bodies adhering to the National Lutheran Council to consolidate into two large bodies. Less spectacular, but just as remarkable, has been the slow, painful, and apparently successful effort to restore unity among the churches adhering to the Synodical Conference. Those of us who believe that the Spirit of God is working to re-unite the Lutheran family in America are profoundly grateful for the success of both these efforts. We believe that the earnest and honest theological discussions occasioned by these efforts toward reunification have moved both the NLC and the Synodical Conference toward a common ground where they will ultimately be able to meet without surrendering convictions or patching up differences with cheap compromises. We fear that any attempt to seize time by the forelock and make it move faster than the Spirit’s timetable will undo much of the real good that has been accomplished and re-open sores that have just begun to heal. This would, in our judgment, postpone rather than hasten the day of true Lutheran unity.

It is no secret that many Missouri Synod Lutherans were unhappy that their president, Dr. Behnken, declined a recent NLC invitation to explore the possibility of arriving at sound doctrinal agreement as a basis for future cooperation between the NLC and the Missouri Synod. We were among the unhappy ones. But we were just as unhappy about the timing of the invitation. With Synod meeting in its triennial convention this coming June, the President could hardly have accepted the invitation and presented his acceptance to the convention as a fait accompli when everybody knows that one of the matters which the convention will almost certainly be giving serious consideration will be the matter of Synod’s relations to the NLC. Then there is the unusual situation of the President himself this year. It is still not clear whether he will be guided by his own apparent inclinations, expressed in 1956, to retire this year or whether he will yield to demands that he seek another term. In either case, it would hardly have been fitting for him in these last months of a term of office to make a basic policy decision which the convention might not have approved and which might embarrass a possible successor.

For ourselves, we are quite willing to state where we stand on this matter of Lutheran unity. We shall feel partial and incomplete until the Lutheran Church in America becomes one fellowship of worship and work. But we want to see that fellowship embrace all Lutherans, including our Slovak, Norwegian, and Wisconsin Synod brethren in the Synodical Conference. We do not think that it is by any means hopeless that these brethren can be brought into a fellowship based upon genuine unity of spirit, belief, confession, and polity. We favor any step, however faltering, that can be taken toward the realization of that unity. But let each step be taken carefully, and let us take no step.
that leaves any of our brethren behind. If our efforts toward unity be of men, they will come to naught in spite of those of us who truly believe them to be God’s will. But if these efforts be of God, they will succeed in spite of even the most honest opposition.

**When Shall a Man Retire?**

Every man who is given the blessing of a long life arrives, at some point, at an age when he ought to retire. It would greatly simplify matters if life were arranged so that all men reached that age at the same time. But that isn’t the way it works. Some men at 75 are as mentally alert and as physically vigorous as other men are at 60. To retire a man when he is still going strong may literally kill him, for hard, interesting work is the nearest thing to an elixir of youth that man has yet discovered.

But there is another side to the picture. Whatever injustices, whatever cruelty there may be in a mandatory retirement age, these are as nothing by comparison with the cruelty of a system which finally makes it necessary for someone to tell a faithful worker, in effect: “You’re washed up, through, done for.” However the message may be disguised, there it is. And it is like a slap in the face.

No man is wise enough to know when changing situations and his own infirmities make it desirable that he retire. And no one with a streak of compassion in his make-up wants to be the one to tell him. The great virtue of a definite, stated retirement age is that it permits a man to retire with dignity when the loss of his services is more likely to be a matter of regret than an occasion of relief. And the title of “honorary” or “emeritus” becomes a token of real gratitude for services rendered, rather than a sop to the pride of a man whose further services have been refused.

The Church has a special obligation to “rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man.” But many a pastor has been allowed to drain the last drops of his waning vigor, only to be unceremoniously booted out when, at last, under-the-surface dissatisfactions broke out into the open. In the past 25 years, at least three Lutheran church bodies have, in effect, booted their presidents out of office when the men themselves indicated no desire to step aside. We can see no substantial difference between this way of disposing of veteran servants and the Eskimo practice of leaving their old folks to die of exposure.

There are good arguments that can be raised against any particular retirement age. Finally, the age must be arbitrarily set. We think that the psalmist laid down a wise general rule when he said that “the days of our years are threescore and ten.” But whatever figure may be chosen, we think that the principle of a mandatory retirement age is sound, and consistent with any practical concept of Christian love. We hope that Synod, next June, will give serious consideration to the Church’s obligations under the Fourth Commandment, and set some mandatory retirement age which will permit her pastors and officials to lay down the burdens of their office with dignity and honor.

**Orbit Me No Orbits**

We’re sorry, we’ve tried our best to get interested in the goings-on at Cape Canaveral, but we just can’t. Maybe we’re just not the Marlborough type, but it seems to us that there is a certain element of escapism in this preoccupation with space, an attempt to get away from the still unsolved and possibly insoluble problems of this world. And we are beginning to get just a little bit irked at the apparently insatiable demands of the space-men for more money, more personnel, more resources, more of everything.

There must be a point beyond which a nation’s capacity to destroy becomes largely an academic matter. Earl Attlee remarked a few weeks ago that once a nation has a weapon that can kill a million people, there would seem to be no urgency about developing a weapon that can kill two million. We feel pretty much the same way about artificial satellites. Assuming that there is some good reason for wanting to put a hunk of metal in orbit around the earth, we can’t see any urgency about putting another hunk of metal in orbit around the sun.

At this point, someone will remind us of the dull clods who considered the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century voyages of exploration boondoggles. We won’t accept that comparison. Expanding man’s area of control over a world whose general form and operations were already known is not at all the same thing as taking pot-shots at other worlds about which we know very little. And let us have no back-chat about how someday we will be able to use man-made satellites to relay television signals from one continent to another: there is no conclusive evidence that the world would be either happier or wiser if “Gunsmoke” were brought, even in living color, to every nation and kindred and tribe.

It is a curious thing that while we are all practically standing in line to contribute money to missile and rocket research, one state after another is teetering on the brink of bankruptcy and harassed state legislatures are taxing every bit of their ingenuity to devise some new tax that will bring in a few more dollars. It is a curious thing that we can find millions of dollars to bring to the launching pad, but not a dime for our rotting prisons and our disgraceful mental institutions. And it is blasphemous for a people that sends gold-plated satellites to orbit the sun to shrug off the hunger and nakedness of their needy brethren with, “The poor ye have always with you.”

**THE CRESSET**
A number of years ago a man belonged to the Men's Club and possibly one civic organization and the women belonged to the Ladies' Aid or the Mission Society. That was about it. Now it is normal to have several meetings every week and, often, several a day. What has happened? I don't know, but I suppose our population has increased to the point where we must be organized to exist. Either that or we have fewer leaders today to decide things or possibly we prefer to run things through the "democratic" process of a meeting.

Whatever happened, it happened in the United States, for our plethora of meetings is a source of amazement to foreigners. Some of our meetings are useless, I think you'll agree, but the majority seem to do some good. Most of the organizations have a good reason for existing, if only to get persons of mutual interest together. So I am not condemning all meetings. But I would like to know how we got mixed up in this merry-go-round of organizations.

Now since we have so many meetings, one would suppose we could conduct one in perfect order. That is not, however, the case. From my experience, most meetings stumble along to conclusion. For example, the chairman calls the meeting to order, not with those simple words, but with a shout loud enough to overcome the conversational volume, and the words, "Shut up, you guys. We're going to get going even though most of the group isn't here."

Normally the first item of business is the reading of the minutes of the last meeting. This is preceded by an apology from the secretary who claims he hasn't had an opportunity to transcribe his notes from last month, which were made on the back of an envelope, but he feels he can give the sense of what happened. In a stumbling way he does just that and those present with good memories doubt that these are minutes from their group at all.

The treasurer also fails to have a complete report, which is evident from what he is saying. He ends up weakly by saying there must be around $80 in the treasury, give or take $20. The other committee chairmen who are called on all say they plan to get their group together tomorrow or the next day and no later than Monday, and all will have something definite to report at the next meeting.

Since the minutes were far from clear, no one knows whether or not there is any Old Business and the floor is open for New Business. This is supposed to be conducted in an orderly manner according to the rules, but if General Henry M. Robert were still alive he would never recognize what has happened to his "Rules of Order."

New Business begins with some person getting up to discuss a project dear to his heart. The chairman, making a valiant but futile attempt to run things correctly, interrupts to ask that a motion be made so this matter can be discussed. The speaker merely glances at him and goes right on. Someone else finally makes the motion and debate commences. The term "debate" is used rather loosely, for this is the opportunity for everyone present to rid himself of all pent-up emotion by speaking on any subject which occurs to him at the moment, regardless of the matter covered in the motion.

To keep things lively, every organization contains one self-styled parliamentarian. He is the fellow who was asked to serve as chairman last year, but declined to run for the office. He now feels it is his duty to confuse both the issues and the chairman. He knows everything about subsidiary motions, incidental motions, privileged motions, and other motions as yet unclassified. In every meeting he will try out a combination of these. First he will amend the original motion in such a manner as to change completely the sense of the original.

When it is time to vote, the secretary is asked to read the motion and the amendment. Since the secretary has written it on the back of another envelope in his own variety of shorthand, what he reads is usually wrong. A debate follows on what was in the original motion. This then is followed by a long discussion on whether the group is now voting on the motion or on the amendment.

This sort of thing goes on all through the meeting but eventually the refreshments committee takes over. Somehow, in the course of this erratic meeting, someone or some group has been helped, but I don't know how. Despite the confusion of a normal meeting, out of it comes some good.
Old Age - A Question of Values

By William T. Eggers
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Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

There was something shocking and ultimate about the scene, a sort of wild desecration of everything divine and human, a sign of the incredible dementia that has descended upon the twentieth century.

We were some hundred specialists in aging: public welfare people, administrators of Homes, social workers, experts on chronic illness, the housing of the aged, rehabilitation, and other allied fields. A gilt-edged invitation had brought us together for a special and private preview of the new annex to a Home for the Aged.

The inspection tour had been deliberately arranged to build up to a telling climax. Because of the Home's cramped quarters this piece de resistance had to be staged in its place of worship.

The values of recreational therapy — the Home was one of the few boasting a full-time therapist as a pride and joy — were demonstrated. We would observe a significant fruit of man's progress through the long centuries — the ultimate in care for the aged.

We did. Staged with His holy House as the showcase, a rhythm band, led by the therapist, entertained us. When like little kindergarteners, ninety-year old grandmothers and grandfathers in varying degrees of senility dully beat out rhythms on drums and triangles and other percussion devices, we experts cheerfully commented to each other about the new and signal strides we were making with the aging and, at the end, politely applauded.

Because several capers by these white-haired performers enlivened the second number, an appreciative chuckle rippled through our audience and our applause for progress grew more vigorous. Suddenly one of the very aged women residents began a spontaneous jig down the center aisle and inspired a second to imitate her. Now we experts roared with laughter, and, when hips began to wiggle, the hilarity dinned against the chapel's walls.

The scene still seems incredible. Engulfed by the laughter that echoed around this vulgarity, one wondered if the world had gone mad, and cheerless questions harassed one's soul.

Is this what man at last comes to in the full dignity of his ninety years? Is this the acme of the development of the image of God in him — beating two sticks together in a rhythm band or with lined face and sagging body jigging down a chapel aisle in a feeble pretense of sensuality? Is this the noble end of man, the "good old age" of which the Scriptures speak? Is this the modern version of Christian "charity" and are the people of God expected in love for their Lord to finance scenes like this?

With aching heart one searched this group of civic leaders for someone else whose face might reflect one's own revulsion at this scene. Blessedly, there was another person not swept along with the laughter of the crowd, just one, however — a Roman Catholic priest, whose dedication and service to the chronically ill had earned the undivided respect of the community. Only two men, both with a Christian theology in the very narrow of their souls, grasped the significance of the scene and were sickened.

A New and Intense Cruelty

That episode, played out in a house of God, reveals the destructive elements in twentieth century culture. Despite its broad humanitarian programs for the aged, our era displays a greater and more refined cruelty to older persons than any era in the Western world since Christianity became its dominant faith.

Even worse, there seems to be little reason to hope that the sharp edge of this cruelty will be appreciably dulled in the near future. Only if Christian theology were again to permeate the West as thoroughly as it once did could we look for any genuine improvement at the core of the difficulty: the Western attitude to the aging. Each year, however, the Christian influence on our culture seems to shrink a little more.

Secularism now dominates the Western approach to the problems of the aged, and their statements indicate that only the rare secularist might agree with the conclusion that our civilization now afflicts its aged with a new and intense cruelty.

Yet it does. Western man has simultaneously erected a structure loosely designated as a "technological civilization" and has deserted the Faith. Both of these historic events have tended to obscure the Christian belief in the infinite worth of man and have, as a result, destroyed the dignified status the aged enjoyed in a once-Christian world. History must yet unfold the full cruelty to older people implicit in these developments.

At this historical moment, however, a curious paradox surrounds the phenomenon of aging. No Christian would deny that older people now apparently receive
better treatment than they did in the past. On the other hand the West seems to have forgotten what the essential nature of their worth is.

Progress and Betrayal

To recite the progress recently made in the field of aging seems almost unnecessary. Old people, who once starved to death, now are well fed; in their sicknesses, once usually unmitigated agony, they reap the benefits of modern medical miracles; housing projects designed especially to meet their needs have replaced the attics and hovels of the past — a fine humaneness toward the aging pervades our civilization. Moreover, the secularists would probably assert, the guilt of children mistreating their aged parents proportionately is no greater now than in the past.

So much of this is true. More significantly, so much of it is also trivial. The new physical security of the aging cannot atone for the new spiritual emptiness they must endure. Our vast federal social security scheme in the last analysis cannot be judged truly social and must leave the discerning old person with a frightening sense of insecurity. All the secular diagnostic and therapeutic help now available to the aged cannot restore the sense of dignity of which a commercial civilization has robbed them. As an example, recreational therapy, a legitimate but often misused tool in work with older people, can never fill the void in the heart which lacks the joy of the Gospel.

The gerontological literature, relatively new and growing rapidly, also reveals our civilization's extensive betrayal of its dying generation. Its authors normally limit their discussions to secular goals and make little reference to theology. Most books on retirement, for instance, probably dispose of that problem without considering even the elementary Christian ethic of work.

Thousands of pages on aging, printed by state and federal governments, blandly ignore the role of religion in the older person's life. Immense studies have been published, which deal with the rational planning society must do for its aged members. These rationalized plans, as a cursory examination of the indexes shows, also leave little or no place for religion as the only absolute answer to the problems which the phenomenon of old age creates.

None of this should surprise the informed Lutheran. Sharply conscious that he lives in a technological society organized around the relentless machine and increasingly rationalized, he should expect that even the life of the aged must ultimately conform to the cold rationalization of industrial production. If, as Juenger has pointed out in The Failure of Technology, the machine dominates adult life, it will of necessity cast its dark shadow over old age as well.

Because society is complex the aged need the rational planning now going on for their benefit. Its cruelty lies in the fact that once these plans have been made and executed many people tend to believe that their debt to the aged has been discharged.

This is not so. Like all of us, older people need something infinitely more important than humanitarianism with its rationalized schemes. Because they are human and immortal souls, who cannot just be comfortably fitted into an arbitrary social structure, our current combination of a secular anthropology, a humanitarian ethic, and technological achievements deeply and often fatally wounds the aged. In her highly individualistic style Mrs. Roosevelt wrote several years ago, "It should not be a dread to grow old." Yet it is, and one of the poignant reasons for it needs elaboration.

The Burden of Futility

A common bromide of the nursing home trade, endlessly repeated with bright, vacant smiles and vigorous head-nodding at trade gatherings, is that the trade must make its older patients feel important. The formulas prescribed to achieve this include all the old familiar stand-bys (nothing new has been added to the list in a generation): making billfolds, weaving baskets, having little parties, and a hundred other external devices intended to give a person some sense of worth. Not only do this suggestion and its practical applications indicate a theological poverty horrible to contemplate but, if carried out, they finally leave the intelligent aged with a terrible sense of the futility of their own lives. How much more cruelly can the young generation deal with the old than to estimate its total worth to be revealed merely in the weaving of unnecessary baskets!

Faced with the fact of their declining powers, the aged have always and understandably felt they lacked worth and burdened others. Repeated experiences have taught every parish pastor that sooner or later his older parishioner will movingly plead in his presence, "I wish God would take me home! I'm no good any longer!"

Our technical civilization has deepened in our older people this feeling of their worthlessness. Production-oriented, our society measures the value of a person by his ability to accommodate himself to the relentless demands of efficient machinery, and it unfeelingly weeds from the production process every man who cannot meet the harsh requirements of the machine. Already at fifty a man may find himself discarded in a mechanical world, which needs youth, stamina, resiliency, and unfailing alertness.

Moreover, the forced retirement of most men at sixty-five often leaves psychological wounds too deep to heal. These men believe the world has defeated them; they no longer measure up to the standards of manhood. They see only a wasteland of futile and empty years ahead.
To determine a man's worth merely by his ability to produce economically, and callously to reject the aging in the business world (a commonplace occurence), discloses the essential cruelty of the West to its aged and its debased dogma of man.

The Criterion of Man's Worth

Our Western culture sorely needs the clear anthropological insights of Lutheranism. Of these the most basic is that the solitary individual per se has infinite worth. Not his monetary value, his possessions, or his ability to produce wealth, can ever serve as the real criterion of his worth. The norm is ethical, religious, Christian — the divine norm. Each man was absolutely and finally valued when God with His endless creative energy made him in His own image and took profound joy in him and, again, when God Himself brought the ultimate sacrifice of the cross to rescue man from his doom.

It is no wonder that in the rationalized wilderness of Western civilization a man may find his greatest solace in the parable of Jesus about the lost sheep or in our Lord's personal concern for a single individual like Zacchaeus. Only this reassurance of the infinite solicitude of God for each person can successfully halt the corrosive effects of an absurd economic criterion of man and heal his soul.

How essential, then, that the aged, normally economic failures, be daily reassured that the test of their worth is this divine test! How appropriate that one of the two major themes of the Scripture passages dealing with old age is the place Christianity and Christian behavior have in it — fearing God, walking in His ways, and honoring parents!

In this century our major responsibility to the aged apparently is to raise up over against the enormous cruelty of a mere economic test of man, creating despair in the aged, the divine evaluation, the expression of God's infinite concern and grace for the individual.

The Witness of Old Age

Living in grace, the older Christian not only has intrinsic worth because of his humanity, but also because of his sainthood, He has worth as long as he lives simply because he lives. His mere continued existence witnesses to the ceaseless grace which supports him. It is doubtful that either he or the Christian community ever fully appreciates this fact.

Forgotten, too, because of our contemporary system of false evaluation is the lasting benefit to the aged and the Christian community of the spiritual growth their new leisure makes possible. Because in modern society even Christians tend to lose the balance between contemplation and activism this truth requires a special emphasis.

In a recent issue of “Geriatrics” Dr. R. J. van Zon­nenveld, the gerontology expert of the Netherlands, writes, “Modern civilization is so active and busy, and it suggests so repeatedly that progress can be made only by activity, that we most urgently need resting places to reflect and to enjoy what we have already achieved. Old people can fill a very useful role by functioning as such centers of tranquility.”

This suggestion evidently made Mr. Walter Alvarez, the American editor of the magazine, nervous enough to feel compelled to devote half the editorial space of that issue to the question, “Should the elderly be encouraged to spend time in contemplation?” One can almost visualize a typically aggressive American fidgeting and doodling while he dictated his answer, “We in America hardly know what contemplation is, and few of us care to spend any time on it. Most of us prefer to be up and doing.” Significantly, he ends on the agnostic note one would expect from a secularist.

He quotes a poem.

“What is heaven? That we should seek it?
Wherefore question, 'How and Why?'
See the roses are in blossom; see the sun up in the sky;
See the land is lit with summer; let us live before we die.”

The nursing home trade perfectly echoes this sentiment for activism; its second aphorism about its clients is to “keep them busy and happy.” The trade ignores the minor difficulty about this advice, the fact that mere busy-ness never guarantees genuine happiness, but only the hollow and passing pleasures of distraction. Activism, as Kierkegaard has pointed out in various places, is the child of cosmic despair.

Certainly a portion of the older person's time will be most valuably used in prayer and meditation on the Word. Nothing could be more natural and normal. Gradually growing more in firm, most older Christians realize that death approaches them. Is not this our Lord's gracious way of helping His children slowly to withdraw themselves from this world and to concentrate on the splendid eternity just ahead of them? Is it not, then, more than unwise to fuss and chafe because the aged person spends increased periods of time in meditation? Is it not even immoral? The twentieth century has much to learn in this respect from Simeon and Anna.

Thus immersed in eternity and thus purifying his life, the aged person has a significant religious and ethical contribution to make to others. Secular literature with depressing consistency seems to discuss the older person as if he lived in a moral vacuum and no longer had a spiritual or ethical role to play in our world. Yet the conviction of Western man under the influence of the Faith has always been that by his saintly life the aged Christian can make one of his supreme contributions to the young generation. In
our shabby and nervous century how captivating is not a serene Christian life!

**The Challenge to the Church**

One cannot help but wonder how severely the church may in all fairness be censured for its lack of leadership to its aged members. A generation ago, like the secular world, the church recognized no special problem with its aging. The standard “Pastoral Theology” of that era made no reference to the aging nor did Reu’s *Ethics* and other similar literature. Some Homes for the Aged existed, it is true, but they were the sole tool the church had to hand. By and large the church at all levels of its life remained unconcerned; it did not widely discuss this new phenomenon already appearing on the horizon; it did not write about it on an important scale, nor did it enlarge its organizations to help those in need. Secularism had already seized its position of leadership before the church uneasily began to bestir itself.

Today the gauntlet has been thrown at Lutheranism’s feet; history will record whether it accepts the challenge and launches an attack on a scale large enough to make a significant difference in the world.

The challenge is not merely to expand our present Homes and erect new ones, nor merely to launch new service programs to assist our own and the world’s aging. Lutheranism is being probed at a much deeper level to determine the adequacy of its members. Primarily it must reaffirm to mankind the supreme worth of the individual; it must under grace seek to re-establish in the central position of Western and world anthropology the Christian dogma of man. Without that, the cause of the aging is lost. The prevalent humanitarian approach to the aging will crumble at the first touch of an evil force, just as surely as it did in Hitler’s Germany.

In addition, at all levels Lutheranism must seek to undo the havoc wrought by those whose goal is merely to keep the aged person comfortable. A consecrated effort must be made to keep our older people uncomfortable, not physically, of course, and certainly not with any malicious purpose. Lutheranism has a debt to discharge to its aged: to spark them to a blazing passion for souls and to intense Kingdom work. About his part in the church’s task no capable Christian of any age should ever feel comfortable, and a full and active participation in the church’s common work is necessary to true serenity of spirit.

It is likely that the church now tolerates a sizable wastage of its manpower because it does not guide at least a portion of its aging membership into increased and more effective work for God. It is likely that the church, somewhat like the steward of the parable, buries the talent of its aged. With millions living longer in relatively good health the church must reassess the potential of its aged Christians and put it to use. Certainly some of the experience and wisdom and strength of its aged members is irreplaceable. Since one of the complaints of the aging is that they have little use in the world and become mere burdens, no one will be more delighted than they to discover the supreme service they can still render God and man, and under God they will eagerly grasp the opportunity.

The Missouri Synod’s LLL guidelines suggest at least some of the essentials of such a program at the congregation level. What might not happen if in our churches and in our Homes for the Aged prayer groups were organized to beseech His blessings on our far-flung mission enterprises! How effectively cannot many an older person still offer personal testimony to the magnificence of the eternity just ahead of him and the Way to it! Who would care to predict that the influence of the aging Christian’s personal piety would be of limited scope? What could not happen if our aging fellow members, financially conservative by reason of their years, with special help reached the goal of sacrificial living! What glorious records our elders would still write, if they could dissociate themselves from the secular goal of being merely comfortable!

According to projections it is likely that within the span of another generation the Missouri Synod will have half a million members beyond the age of sixty-five! That is the size of the challenge confronting the church! Only God can give the Church the grace to measure up to it!

**INSPRITION**

The word hung
like a crumb
on the lip of time.

Then it tumbled
to the poet’s table
to make a rhyme.

**GORDON GILSDORF**

APRIL 1959
Probation -- What Does it Mean?

By Anthony S. KuHarich
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Probation, like police work, is primarily concerned with the protection of society. The early approach to dealing with the offender was through punishment by imprisonment, execution, flogging, and other forms of corporal punishment on the assumption that these would deter the convicted violator from repeating his offenses and others from attempting to commit them. The new philosophy emphasizes treatment and retraining of the criminal to normal community living.

After the defendant has been convicted, the presiding judge has three alternatives. He can impose an institutional sentence, he can suspend sentence without supervision, or he can suspend or withhold sentence and place the defendant on probation.

Society is entitled to protection from the dangerous criminal who must be incarcerated and prevented from harming members of the community. We are unprepared to deal adequately in the community with serious aggressive human behavior, and therefore imprisonment is necessary and probably will continue to be necessary for some time.

It would be impossible to incarcerate every violator. The vast majority of offenders are not considered truly dangerous. It has long been established that, with rare exceptions, correctional institutions, as they operate today, do not improve the ability of individuals to adjust to the demands of free society. There are exceptional correctional institutions here and there, but, on the whole, society cannot rely upon imprisonment to change and modify the behavior and attitude of a substantial proportion of those sentenced to these institutions. Prison authorities inform us that between 50 and 70 percent of those released from prisons return within five years. In a very few progressive institutions, professional persons, through the application of scientific methods and skills, have developed rehabilitation programs.

Unfortunately, our correctional institutions are still overcrowded with men, women, and children who are not social hazards and who could readjust to society without removing them from the community. Even in the best institutions, it is desirable that the number of prisoners be kept at a minimum so that the personnel dealing with institutional activities and programs may pay close attention to the individual needs of each inmate. This means keeping the institutional population down to an absolute minimum; wisely administered probation can assist immeasurably in this.

The Meaning of Probation

Merely suspending sentence is not probation. It must also include a positive method of dealing with the offender as an individual, and provide supervision, guidance, and assistance to him.

Probation is obviously not leniency, nor simply clemency, nor merely giving the offender "another chance" in the community. It is not intended to be in the hands of those with influence to interfere with justice by "fixing" cases and permitting criminals deserving institutional treatment to remain in society and continue their criminal activities.

Probation is not to be confused with parole. When a defendant is placed on probation by the court, he never serves a prison sentence unless his probation is revoked for failure to comply with its conditions. Parole always refers to a period under supervision of a parole officer in the community after the offender has served a part of his sentence in a correctional institution and has been conditionally released. Parole is not a function of the court but is granted by a parole board or authority.

Probation is generally defined as a non-punitive method or technique for correctional treatment whereby the sentence of a convicted offender is suspended or withheld, allowing him to remain in the community on good behavior, subject to the control of the court and under the supervision and guidance of a probation officer.

The Presentence Report

The vast majority of the defendants appearing before our criminal courts require no court or jury trials. They usually plead guilty and the problem facing the court is to make proper disposition of their cases. In order to do so, the presiding judge must have an adequate presentence investigation, which is a complete study of the offender's background and personality. This is one of the functions of the probation officer. It is a form of classification at the court level. Unfortunately, too many courts dispose of cases routinely, without any verified information concerning the de-
fendant or his needs. These courts cannot successfully determine whether the defendant should be placed on probation or committed to a correctional institution and for what length of time. The probation officer renders a service to the court by compiling a thorough presentence report, thus aiding the court in making the best and most practical disposition. In many instances the presentence study proves invaluable to the defendant by bringing before the court favorable information concerning the offender, thus prompting the presiding judge to place him on probation, which may not have been the case without such an investigation.

The presentence investigation is usually conducted after the defendant has pleaded guilty or has been convicted by the court or jury. This investigation generally includes such items as the official charge and the details of the offense; the defendant’s statement of the offense, including his attitude towards it and towards arresting officers, the prosecutor and the court; his prior criminal record; his family background, including relationship with parents, brothers and sisters, wife, children, and others, as well as any tensions which may exist; his neighborhood and other group associations; his educational and work history; his religious training and activity; his personal habits (particularly in reference to the use of alcohol and drugs); his physical and mental health; his military history; his financial status; and his perspective on life. As Walter C. Reckless has said in his book, The Crime Problem: “An adequate presentence not only indicates whether the defendant is probationable; it also gives clues as to the causes of the criminal behavior, the assets and liabilities of the total case, and the needs for a constructive probation program.” In other words, the presentence investigation assists the court in selecting for probation the defendants who are deserving of it and who can benefit by this type of correctional treatment. In the event the court imposes an institutional sentence, the presentence study is forwarded to the institution, where it assists in the formulation of a program of treatment and training in keeping with the individual needs of the offender.

Rehabilitating the Offender

The other function of the probation officer is to supervise the defendant placed on probation by the court. The presentence investigation conducted by the probation officer provides him with knowledge and understanding of the offender, his capacities, problems and needs. He is now in a more strategic position to assist the probationer in his rehabilitation.

More than a half century ago, when adult probation programs were first being developed, the supervisory relationship between the probation worker and the probationer was a primitive one, in keeping with the knowledge of human behavior then prevailing. The probation worker — the “discreet person of good character” — as described in the probation laws — by virtue of his presumed superior wisdom, knowledge and morality, acted as a friendly, but authoritative, guide to the probationer, admonishing him as needed, and sustaining him in his efforts to keep on the “straight and narrow” path by a judicious mixture of threats and exhortations. It is now known that, for most people, neither threats nor exhortations are effective; that persons mature and develop only as they acquire a sense of responsibility for their own actions; that this development must come from within themselves and that it cannot be tacked on from the outside.

The core of modern probation work lies in recognizing that the probationer must participate in the solution of his own problems. He becomes able to deal with difficulties constructively only by coming to grips with them, not by blindly following the advice of others. He must have an opportunity to weigh the alternatives available to him and come to grips with the issues. This does not imply that the probationer does it all and the probation worker has nothing to do. The probationer may need support and help in expressing his fears, his likes and dislikes, and he also may require something tangible and concrete, like a job.

To the extent that he is able, the probation worker helps the offender to see his own problems more clearly and to use his environment more constructively. A change to a new job, a move to a new locality, help with family budgeting, the development of constructive recreational interest — these and many other tangible services are practical down-to-earth aids which, when wisely and constructively used, bring about changes for the better in many probationers. The main consideration is that the probationer be seen as an individual, be accorded the respect due to all human beings, and be given a chance to develop and to improve his strengths so that the end product is a person better able to cope with his own problems and to seek his satisfactions within the framework of behavior acceptable to society. This does not mean that probation work is sloppy sentimentality, or that probationers are coddled.

In some jurisdictions there are no probation departments. There are no probation officers working for the court or available to the court. Should the judge place a defendant on probation, he is required to report periodically to the judge’s secretary, the chief of police, or some police officer, the sheriff or a deputy, the prosecutor, the bailiff, or other person. This is not probation; it is only a system of periodic reporting.

Some courts, which are without a probation system, will refer probationers to local public or private agencies for supervision. How effective this type of service will be depends upon the qualifications of the workers...
and the amount of time these agencies can devote for this purpose. Some such agencies are known to conduct postsentence investigations to determine the needs of the probationer and to assist him with his problems. In other jurisdictions, social agencies have prevailed upon the courts to permit them to conduct pre-sentence studies to aid the presiding judge in making proper disposition. Consequently, these agencies are in a position to screen out those defendants who they believe could not profit by supervision in the community. Still other social agencies are not equipped, nor do they have time, to perform probation services adequately. It is an injustice for courts to request these unqualified agencies to perform such services for them.

Far too often probation as practiced in many of our courts today consists of conducting a very meager, legalistic investigation emphasizing the crime, some few details of the offense, and some factual knowledge of the defendant such as birth data, prior record, names of parents, brothers and sisters, wife and children, grade completed in school, occupation, type of military discharge, etc. The supervision consists of filing routine reports, collecting fines and restitution, providing casual advice and constantly threatening the defendant with imprisonment as a reminder that he must abide by the rules and regulations of his probation.

The Advantages of Probation

Probation has many advantages to the community and to the offender. In the first place, it is more economical than imprisonment. During 1957, Federal probation cost 41.3 cents per day while it cost $3.82 per day for imprisonment in Federal penal and correctional institutions. In the second place, persons on probation are gainfully employed, paying taxes, and supporting their families. They can make restitution to the victims of their violations. During 1957, 16,705 Federal probationers earned a total of approximately 49 million dollars. If confined to prisons and reformatories, these defendants and their families would be recipients of public and private funds. In the third place, the probationer under the supervision and with the aid of the probation officer has an opportunity to regain his self-respect in a normal community setting with normal social contacts and responsibilities. He continues to live with his family, which is not possible in the abnormal prison setting where he would come in contact with dangerous criminals and further schooled in crime. On probation he would not be stigmatized as a convict. He is spared the penal experience which may leave him embittered and be detrimental to his attitude, thinking, habits and character.

Prisons do not reclaim the offender. As previously mentioned, more than 50 percent of those released from prisons continue to be a danger and threat to society. It is imperative that our courts establish probation officers possessing the professional skills and the personal qualities required to work effectively with people who have violated the law. In the performance of their duties, probation officers conduct presentence investigations thereby aiding the courts to determine which defendants would profit from probationary supervision in the community and which should be removed from society and committed to correctional institutions for treatment. As supervisors they use their professional skills to assist the probationer in modifying and changing his behavior and attitude so that he can live as a decent citizen in a free society. In other words, by carrying out the functions of an investigator and supervisor, the probation officer is protecting society in a practical, economical and effective way.

RELATIVISM

Order and revolt, antitheses, antipodes
Law whose voice is Then and governmental We
Liberty whose cry is Now and always I
Square of two and square of three indefinite
Opposites in conflict unresolvable.

Plus and minus charges hinged about the neut
Antithetical but not antipodes
Straining to escape neut’s passive interlink
Striving squares infinite always modified
Bound together in the universe’s chain.

W. ARTHUR BOGGS
The Theatre

In Search of Truth

By Walter Sorell
Drama Editor

A great many shows have lately descended upon Broadway with broken wings, but with the fire of sincerity. Others had "hit" written all over their synthetic faces and concocted hearts.

Gwen Verdon captured the town in "Redhead," a musical comedy which comes alive only when she dances and sings. A little Jewish housewife from Brooklyn conquered a Japanese industrialist and her audience in "A Majority of One," Leonard Spiegelglass' homespun comedy which will probably repeat the fabulous world success of "Abie's Irish Rose." Gertrude Berg brings much human warmth to her role as Mrs. Jacoby, and the underplayed sophistication of Sir Cedric Hardwicke's characterization of the Japanese is remarkable.

Broadway has plunged into an Oriental era. It began with "The World of Suzie Wong" and "Flower Drum Song"; much of it is in "A Majority of One"; and all of it in the successful dramatization of the Japanese movie "Rashomon." An austere fable is wrapped into a lush and spectacular production, and the search for truth in a crime which is interpreted and re-enacted in four different ways is its basic idea. What has really happened and where lies the truth when a young woman has been raped by a bandit and her husband killed? The facts are in all four versions the same, but the light that falls on them has a different color when looked at from different angles. The background is distant in time and place, the viewpoint modern. The traditionally formalized style and abstract mood of the East are still alive in this westernized dramatization in which Oscar Homolka, Claire Bloom, and Rod Steiger give us superb character studies.

It is also a search for truth when two minds clash over questions that may mean life or death to man. Norman Corwin's "Rivalry," in which the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates are turned into theatrical material, has finally come to Broadway. We have become too much used to the small slice-of-life presentations in the theatre, to the little worries of petty souls and circumstances, and now many theatre-goers have difficulties in accepting over-sized problems as historic fare. In the "Rivalry" these problems become drama that is alive because man is still faced with their solutions. Listening to Martin Gabel as Douglas and Richard Boone as Lincoln debating the issues of their time, the questions of integrity and vision, of the means justifying the ends, makes one reflect upon man's time- less search to find the road to truth. Both debaters and Nancy Kelly as Mrs. Douglas help Norman Corwin, who directed his play, to give life to historic chronicles.

Another late-comer to Broadway was Faulkner's "Requiem for a Nun" which had triumphed on many European stages, particularly in Albert Camus' French version which, dramaturgically, is a great improvement over the original. Its faults are manifold: its epic tendency to tell us about people and events of the past, an endless exposition, the author's insistence on presenting us with facts instead of creating them out of the action, and a language which is not poetic enough to defy the norm as much as Faulkner's speech does.

Thus, the value of this dramatized novel must lie in its philosophy. Can we accept the idea that we pay for our sins through the suffering of others? We are shown the spiritual anguish of Temple Drake, a nymphomaniac; we are told of her debased past; we see her maid — the Negro Nancy Mannigoe, whom she befriended in captivity and who was a dope-fiend and prostitute— kill her infant to save the child from being tainted by her mother's sins and to keep Temple Drake from wrecking her marriage which was, at that point, seemingly beyond repair.

William Faulkner approves of the self-sacrifice of Nancy, who approaches the arms of her hangman with spirituals on her lips. When asked about her faith, Nancy replies that, though she does not believe in anything in particular, she simply believes. After two hours of a tough march through human dirt and confusion, the last scene is a kind of ecstatic epitaph on a wasted life and a muddled philosophy.

On a spiritual plane, Faulkner searches for truth. But I am not sure he even came close to it in this play, any more than I am sure of Nancy having found the well of purification. (And this in spite of the fact that Bertice Reading's impersonation of her was extremely impressive.) Faulkner also intimates that, through Nancy's suffering, Temple Drake has become reformed. But knowing the fever of her blood and the weakness of human nature, it left me in a state of doubt. In fact, it left me with the same feeling of puzzlement and incredulity which I cannot suppress whenever I visit Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County.
The Way of Sorrow

So comes the Risen Lord —
What was the darkness and the broken rocks,
The tears, the loneliness, the blood and crosses
Of the blackest day —
They are all gone.
The soldiers with their swords and spears,
The captain, casting lots upon His cloak
With simple guards from countries far away,
The women, with their love and helpless hands,
The lone Apostle, with the Mother of our Lord,
They all are gone.
The bitterness and hopelessness of death,
That hurts the more because it was an act of hate,
Lies like a blight upon the garden and the tomb.
The sight of empty crosses gives no joy
For death has had an easy triumph in their hearts.
The people who had love and hope scarce dare to think,
And those, whose hate has had its bloody victory,
All sleep the restless sleep of those who have no faith.
Jerusalem alone lies still.
Then thunders like the dams of heaven burst,
And Pilate's seal is broken like a fragile glass
Against the greatness of the tomb's last strength,
The guards fall helpless and the angel's voice
Rocks all the earth around and gives the day
The sound of trumpets and the light of God.
For Christ has come alive, "He lives — the place
Where He was laid you clearly see. Go tell His brethren,
Peter too — He lives and goes before you, as He said."
This then was Easter Day so long ago
And down long years, the preachers, and the martyrs
Of this Risen Lord remembered Him and all He said,
And, in the hour of death and tortured doom,
They held this hope alive, — "The Day of Resurrection."
They used it at the close of every plea and prayer,
They sounded it from pulpits great and small,
They told it in the hovels of the poor and in the courts,
They preached it to the nations of the world —
And so the wonder spread — It lies like jewels
Upon fresh mounded graves, and dries hot tears,
It rings from every tower on all our saddened earth
And find its truth in every leaf reborn and every flower—
God lives in Christ — Christ lives in us —
"Thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory in
Christ, our Lord."

A. R. KRETZMANN

The Stations of the Cross are from Westminster Cathedral and are the work of the peerless modern artist, Eric Gill. This Church is not to be confused with Westminster Abbey.
From the Chapel

Our Brother, Thomas

By THE REV. REUBEN C. BAERWALD
Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church
Alton, Illinois

But one of the Twelve, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples kept on telling him, “We have seen the Lord,” but he replied, “Unless I see in His own hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the nail-marks and my hand into His side, I will never believe.”

Just over a week later, the disciples were indoors again and Thomas with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood in the middle of the group and said, “Peace be with you!”

Then He said to Thomas, “Put your finger here — look, here are My hands. Take your hand and put it in My side. You must not doubt, but believe.”

“My Lord and my God!” replied Thomas.

“You believe because you have seen Me?” Jesus said to him. “Happy are the men who have never seen Me and yet believe.”

Jesus gave a great many other Signs in the presence of His disciples which are not recorded in this book. But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, and that in that faith you may have Life as His followers.

—John 20: 24-31 (Phillips Translation)

It seems the same every day. Tirelessly the newspapers, magazines, and television introduce us anew to a world of fighting, bloodshed, corruption in high and low places, tensions, frustrations, unhappiness, greed, pride, selfishness, hatred, jealousy. Therefore with equal freshness Christian people must again and again say to the world in the words of today’s Introtit: “Hear, O My people, and I will testify unto thee.” Almost wearily, God must be looking upon His creation and lovingly saying: “O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto Me.”

And what is God saying when Israel hearkens? He is saying in the words of the Gradual: “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Hallelujah! The angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. Hallelujah!” The tomb was empty. Christ is alive. Victory. Hallelujah!

Or, as the Epistle Lesson tells us: The One born of God has overcome the world. And to you who are the reborn of God the victory is also promised. You, too, can overcome the world in believing that Jesus is the Son of God.

What a message to proclaim to the people of God! The world with its pain and sorrow, its temptation and unhappiness can be overcome. In fact, it has been overcome by Jesus Christ and everyone is offered a share in the victory. Does that sound to good to be true? Listen. “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ... He who believes in the Son of God has the victory in himself ... And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life.” (I John 5:1-12)

In this sort of context we must look at the Gospel Lesson. It speaks of peace and forgiveness from a risen Lord for men who believe and doubt. The disciples saw the victorious Christ and believed. Thomas did not see. He only had the other disciples’ word. He doubted and demanded more tangible evidence. And strangely enough, Thomas got it.

Without pride let us confess that God in His grace has often enabled us to believe by giving evidence without our asking for it. There is the testimony of the Spirit starting from our Baptism. There are the many undeserved spiritual and physical blessings showered upon us. He has also come to some of us in ways not duplicated in others. There is the evidence of His presence in unusual spiritual power and moral courage. There is in some a more mature ability to love and show concern and patience. And because of this evidence our faith is strengthened. Certainly, we are thankful for such gifts. But we also ask for humility. For such faith is not difficult. Let us be clear on this, that the eleven probably had no more or greater faith than Thomas. They were together when Jesus came and saw His hands and side. It would have been difficult not to believe.

So, Thomas is not to be singled out for particular censure because he demanded evidence. The other disciples were saved from this temptation by the appearance of Jesus. Rather, the problem with Thomas was that he demanded the same evidence and did not accept the testimony of the other disciples. In fact,
he threatened not to believe at all unless he even went beyond their seeing and actually put his hands in the prints of the nails.

Without excuses and self-justifications, we must also contest a kinship here with Thomas. We demand of God evidence He has not granted us. We refuse on this basis to believe despite evidence granted to others and despite the testimony of many witnesses to the victory of God in Jesus Christ over the world.

Perhaps I should say it again to make doubly sure. There is no censure for asking to see evidence. Our Christian faith is not to be superstitious or unintelligent. But the doubting Thomas comes forward in us when we ask for specific evidences not available or for an exact duplication of evidences already given to others whose testimony we have. It is not wrong — it is rather a necessity — to inquire into the authenticity of the Biblical records, to subject them to every archeological and literary scrutiny. We do this to give intelligent support to the accounts and confidence in the sources of testimony. We are, after all, staking our lives on God's victory over the world. But the doubting Thomas comes forward in us when we have a word expressly given that “we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” (John 20:29)

We are not, therefore, left without evidences. As with Thomas, God in extravagant kindness gives generous testimony. What an amazing demonstration of sympathy and understanding forgiveness on the part of Jesus to return especially for the benefit of Thomas. Jesus may not walk through your doors and visit you in the flesh. But in Word and Sacrament He comes to you in all your doubt and littleness of faith with powerful evidence and convincing testimony of the Spirit.

In the Sacraments Jesus comes personally, placing His hand on you in Baptism and again and again giving you His redeeming body and blood in the Lord's Supper. There can be no doubt that God is singling you out for His own.

In the Scriptures is the record of Old and New Testament saints who in their lives show God's loving and powerful ways with men. And in the Scriptures, too, are God's rich promises set down for hearing, reading, learning — promises which have kept saints of all generations alive.

One final note. Although what I have been saying holds true for all Christians, I believe it can be of special importance to trained, alert, and critical minds. For as we learn to face our own inner selves more accurately, we are strongly tempted to question our personal spiritual sincerity and our actual adoption as sons of God. As we become more aware of the complexity and difficulty of translating our convictions into life — be it political, economic, or social — we wonder about the power of the Gospel to overcome evil in the world around us. When we begin to uncover the glaring weaknesses and failings of the Church, we often doubt that God will get very far by entrusting to us the evangelization of the world or the teaching of His will.

But in these times also it is true that “this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith.” (1 John 5:4) It is not a faith which believes in evidences of our own choosing. Rather, it is a faith which believes the evidences and testimonies God chooses to give us.
The Music Room

Tribute to a Great Pianist

BY WALTER A. HANSEN

Do you remember when Ruth Slenczynska was acclaimed as one of the most remarkable child prodigies of all time? I do. Recently Ruth observed her twenty-fifth anniversary as a concert artist. In memory of her first public appearance a disc, titled A Twenty-fifth Anniversary Program, has been issued. Here Ruth plays some of the compositions she used to include in her earliest programs.

I never fail to marvel whenever I read about the ability Ruth had acquired long before she became a teen-ager. Such astonishment was understandable. But what about her development as an artist? It is phenomenal. I apologize to no one for my deepfelt admiration of Ruth's artistry. She can play with unusual power and dash whenever the music she presents calls for a large amount of muscular strength. Conversely, she can, when necessary, play with the utmost delicacy. Her performances are prepared with painstaking care and conscientiousness. She has a complete command of the many and manifold resources of the keyboard. She can thunder, and she can whisper. She is keenly aware of the importance of clarity, proper accentuation, and artistically disciplined phrasing. Her scales are like strings of pearls. On top of all this, however, Ruth is a sincere and sensitive musician. Anyone who would venture to question the appropriateness of this or that detail in her readings would, I am sure, be hard put to it to weaken or invalidate her convictions.

No, I have never heard Ruth play a concerto by Ludwig van Beethoven or Johannes Brahms; but nothing keeps me from believing that her performances of such music would be worthy of the warmest commendation.

On the disc I have mentioned Ruth presents the following fascinating program: Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, by Johann Sebastian Bach; Nocturne in B Flat Minor, Op. 9, No. 1, by Frederic Francois Chopin; Andante and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14, by Felix Mendelssohn; Prelude in C Sharp Minor, Op. 3, No. 2, by Sergei Rachmaninoff; Sonata in G (Longo No. 209), by Domenico Scarlatti; Rumanian Folk Dances, by Bela Bartok; Widmung (Dedication), by Robert Schumann-Franz Liszt; The Maid with the Flaxen Hair, by Claude Debussy; Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15 (Rakoczy March), by Liszt (Decca DL-10000).

Learned and unlearned commentators have long been in the habit of speaking of Richard Strauss's Also sprach Zarathustra (Thus Spake Zarathustra) as philosophical music. They are right. But when I listen to this masterfully scored work, I try to dismiss from my mind every thought of philosophy. And I usually succeed. To me Also sprach Zarathustra is a remarkable example of amazing skill in the domain of instrumentation. It contains orchestral magic in every measure. Its melodic content is far from outstanding. But what miracles the orchestra is called on to perform! What a wealth of color this composition contains!

It is by no means easy for a conductor to give an incisively effective reading of Also sprach Zarathustra. But under the direction of Karl Boehm the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra presents the work with careful attention to every detail (Decca DL-9999). The performance glows with life; it is in harmony with the score. A number of months ago I wrote enthusiastically about Boehm's exposition of Strauss's massive and seldom heard Alpine Symphony (Decca DL-9970). The same admiration takes hold of me when I listen to his reading of Also sprach Zarathustra. Philosophy or no philosophy, this is orchestral sorcery. I hasten to add, however, that Also sprach Zarathustra cannot be regarded as one of Strauss's finest works.

Some Recent Recordings

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN. Symphony No. 9, in D Minor (Choral), Op. 125. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, under Ferenc Fricsay, with the Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Maureen Forrester, contralto; Ernst Haefliger, tenor; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone. A stirring performance of this great masterpiece (Decca). — DIMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH. Symphony No. 11 (1905). Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Francaise under Andre Cluytens. Recorded under the supervision of Shostakovich himself. Has this much-discussed Soviet composer finally found himself as a symphonist? I think so. His Symphony No. 11, performed for the first time in 1957, was written in commemoration of the revolutionary movement which took place in Russia in 1905. Its four movements are titled January Ninth, The Palace Square, Requiem, and The Tocsin (Angel).
RELIGION

THE RESTORATION OF MEANING TO CONTEMPORARY LIFE

By Paul Elman (Doubleday, $3.95)

This is another in the Christian Faith Series, which Reinhold Niebuhr serves as consulting editor. It is Elman's first book. Mr. Elman combines a professional knowledge of literature (Ph.D. from Harvard) with both a scholarly interest (graduate of Seabury-Western Seminary) and pastoral experience (curate at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Evanston) in the spiritual needs of our generation. Mr. Elman is now professor in Christian ethics at Seabury-Western.

With this unusual combination of literary and theological competence, the author attempts to understand specifically the "anxiety of meaning" in this generation and what the Christian Gospel has to offer in the face of this anxiety.

It is an adventure to follow Elman through literature as he ferrets out the abundant references to boredom and its horror, expressed in the "contented yawn," "apathy," "monotony," and "melancholy." These references have a terrifying applicability to our day.

Mr. Elman audaciously speculates in the face of modern scientific analysis that all our devices and gadgets which characterize this generation do not make for meaning. He advances the usual explanations for this: that man has fallen into the hands of man, the life process itself, the collective causes. But he also classifies the usual strategies of men to extricate themselves from this boredom by the worship of idols such as material goods, the powers of the flesh, the same songs and readings and art and small talk and buffoonery—all these godlets.

Becoming even more audacious, he suggests that we might be dealing with more than a material reality—specifically the demonic. The reason man cannot extricate himself from his situation is that he is in the hands of demons. The pitch moves from apathy to agony, from a yawn to a scream. This happens when boredom becomes conscious of itself! We dig deeper into the hole of evil "gratified to gain that eternity of pain instead of this insufferable inane." He asks the gnawing question, "What if it should prove true that men are hyg-ridden, appalled by something they have not made? What if the scientists' Given can possess us?" This is the wrath of God—but the author does not say it. How lonely we are, unable to understand that God can be angry, yet gripped by the demonic from below.

And now, in his final attempt to be ridiculous, Elman suggests that the doxology of man, the release from anxiety of meaninglessness, can come only in a confrontation of God's doxa in the Gospel! This is truly nonsense. See I Corinthians 1:23. And then too this doxa is so hard to find. It seems much more important to be "famous with our neighbors than with this absent God; for this God who even in Christ comes incognito. God's doxa is finally not enough as we have it in the conscience, in reason, in courage or in the collective achievements of man.

But here we must leave Elman—at least we think so! Somehow at this point in his book he becomes unconvincing. In the either/or of boredom and glory the either comes off first rate, the or is confused. The Christian Gospel is more than "the possibility of God." Certainly the doxa cannot be ours except through the privilege of God's Spirit. But Lutherans have always found more than "meditation, prayer, and love" in waiting to be captured by this doxa. The spoken Word and sacrament find no pointed expression in this book. The author loses his grip on your hand because for all of his intensity, in the end you cannot quite remember why he is shaking your hand.

WALTER W. OETTING

DAYS OF DESTINY

By Norman L. Nielsen (Messager Press, $1.00)

It is not difficult to understand how this dynamic administrator and pastor was able to guide a suburban Minneapolis Lutheran parish from a struggling membership of 200 in 1948 to nearly 4,000 at the time of his resignation ten years later to become vice-president of his alma mater, Augsburg College. The reasons are clearly evident in his keen appreciation of human spiritual longing as he depicts it in his small but eloquent volume of sermons.

Mr. Nielsen understands people. Also he is gifted with an idiom which vividly translates everyday life of twenty centuries ago to the relevant realities of modern living. Further, he drives home the sameness of human weakness and sin regardless of century or nation.

Treated in the seven sermons are the "days of destiny" in the lives of Matthew, the unnamed woman who appointed the Lord in the house of Simon, the rich young man, Martha, Pilate, Thomas and John.

This reviewer can think of no better little volume for the use of various types of institutional mission work. It is capable, too, of pricking the conscience of one who prematurely considered himself a Christian of long and certain standing.

HERBERT W. KNOPP

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

By Cyril C. Richardson (Abingdon, $3.00)

The thesis of this essay is that the doctrine of the Trinity as expressed by the Church is an inadequate expression of the Christian faith in God. The author claims that it neither illuminates the faith nor guards the essential truths of that faith. Indeed, he attempts to show that the essential meaning of the Trinity in its classical formulations is not necessarily connected with the number three. It is an artificial construct. He writes, "It tries to relate different problems and to fit them into an arbitrary and traditional threeness. It produces confusion rather than clarification; and while the problems with which it deals are real ones, the solutions it offers are not illuminating."

The author shows how the various writers from Gregory of Nyssa to Dorothy Sayers attempt to relate the real problems involved—the difference between the Father and the Son, the paradox of absolute and relatedness in God, and the rather amiable place of the Spirit—to this artificial threeness.

To the rather prosaic answer that after all the Trinity is the obvious testimony of Scripture, Richardson asserts that these symbols for God in the New Testament are in a rather fluid state and the work of the Son and Spirit especially tend to overlap.

This is the value of the book. All modern formulations of the doctrine of the Trinity, whatever they are, are a product of historical development. The history of this doctrine is the history of the Church attempting to express adequately the testimony of the New Testament. To claim that the Bible clearly defines any of the modern conceptions of the Trinity, without the intervening history, is quite arbitrary. Certainly when we hear the "doctrine of the Trinity" denied, it is important to find out just what is being discarded.

Richardson's interesting study will most certainly provoke fruitful thought and discussion.

WALTER W. OETTING
HANDBOOK OF CHURCH MANAGEMENT
By William H. Leach (Prentice-Hall, $6.00)
In this day of renewed interest in religion and the resulting, well-attended churches, congregational work has taken on a new look. Theology has undergone some changes not necessarily forced by this newly found support. But the bulging membership lists have forced considerable alteration in other aspects of church work. What used to be a "collection" is now "church finance." "Pulpit announcements" have been succeeded by "good programs of church public relations." A chat with the pastor is now pastoral counseling. Church architecture knows no schools or precise patterns. In many respects, church work has become — what some like to label growth and popularity — big business!

To fill a not clearly obvious need for better organizational procedures to guide the bulky church through these newly charted waters, Mr. Leach has assembled a sizeable list of "what-to-do" and "how-to-do-it" chapters. He treats building plans, fund raising, care of the physical property, current financing, public relations, church school operations. He also itemizes the multitude of details associated with producing the weekly service. These topics are authoritatively presented by a writer who evidences much first-hand experience. He is actively engaged in full-time work as a consultant in both fund-raising and church architecture, besides editing Church Management, a monthly periodical he has shepherded for 31 years. This book's pertinent chapters serve as a check list for pastors, lay officers, and church workers who need aid in the proper physical functioning of a church.

However, the book is more than a "how-to-do-it" book. In the first chapter the author successfully justifies the task of church administration. He does it by fusing the spiritual and the organizational phases of church activity. This, no doubt, is a point not always reflected on by some of the newly garnered members who forget to put aside the high-powered business world methods each Friday or Saturday to work for the church on Sunday. Too often they consider their task done when they apply known business procedures to church work. This helps but it is the spiritual contribution and benefit which measures the fundamental progress of the church.

Mr. Leach finds it necessary to spend some effort stressing the need for an executive consciousness on the part of the pastor. Even in a democratic social structure, sound, firm leadership is mandatory. Very few executives are required to administer a program through so many people as a modern day pastor. Most pastors find it necessary to exercise a "span of control" far greater than any executive in the business world. The pastors are expected to steer a program to its objectives through and over many more shoals and reefs than most trained and seasoned business skippers. And yet, how well equipped is today's pastor to exhibit such leadership skills? Most of his executive abilities are self-acquired. "The traditional training for the ministry does little to qualify the minister for this executive work." Throughout the book, including suggested reference readings, the author tries hard to close this gap. As well as a book of this type can, it fills the void.

One chapter of particular importance which contributes to the growth of the pastor as an executive is entitled, "Integrating the Congregation." This chapter deals with an "assist" often disregarded by pastors of mushrooming congregations, namely, records. In work that demands so much personal knowledge of the parishioners, the "span of attention" can be stretched to reach all the members only by complete and adequate membership records. Other related organizational suggestions are identified and explained, such as talent ballots, undershepherd plan, geographic parish organization, etc.

While the book often repeats the obvious, it is here that the obvious needs to be repeated. For the new church worker it prevents him from overlooking the important phases of the objective. For the more experienced churchworker, the book keeps him from forgetting the necessary. For all church workers, pastors and laymen, the book is good to own for general reading in the field and also for ready reference for fresh approaches to age-old problems.

RICHARD LAUBE

GENERAL

SOLVING THE SCIENTIST SHORTAGE
By David C. Greenwood (Public Affairs Press, $2.00)

SCIENCE AND EDUCATION
AT THE CROSROADS
By Joseph W. Still (Public Affairs Press, $3.25)

Two more books on the crisis brought to light by the advent of the Sputnik. The first of these books discusses briefly just what the crisis is and to what extent it will be alleviated or aggravated within, at least, the immediate future. In semi-outline fashion, the author lists the various programs currently underway which would tend to improve our situation, and then makes further recommendations in all areas — industry, government, educational institutions of all types, chambers of commerce, etc. — for implementation and expansion of current and possible methods for correcting the present situation. Excellent for anyone wishing a brief picture of the scientific manpower shortage, what is, and what could be done to alleviate it.

The second book is a far more critical treatment of not only the same situation, but of the role of the United States in world affairs. Dr. Still does not hesitate to lay the blame for our deteriorating position where he thinks it belongs. But then he also goes further, and suggests conditions and actions which should improve the position of science and other education in the United States and the position of the United States in the eyes of the world.

Some of his suggestions, for example federal support and control of education, will meet, and have met, violent opposition from some quarters; but at least Dr. Still does not hesitate to suggest medicine, even if bitter, for our educational and scientific ills. Dr. Still also calls for a greater voice for science in government and world affairs. It is interesting to note that some steps have been taken in this direction by the recent appointment of the Federal Council for Science and Technology, and assignment of scientific attaches to several embassies.

Dr. Still's main contention for world peace is that it will be found not through expansion of armed forces of friendly foreign governments, not by perpetuation of existing political regimes, not by lavish handouts, but by helping the underdeveloped countries move toward a standard of living equal to our own. As a starting point, Dr. Still would make full use of our knowledge of science to attack major health problems of the underdeveloped countries so as to get their people on their feet and capable of beginning to cooperate in a self-help program. Winning the respect and gratitude of the people in these countries makes the subsequent steps and goals easier to accomplish.

T. C. SCHWAN

PRINCE OF CARPET BAGGERS
By Jonathan Daniels (Lippincott, $4.95)

Prince of Carpetbaggers is the absorbing story of Milton S. Littlefield of Michigan and Illinois, who rose from a captivity of Illinois militia to become major general in charge of recruitment of colored troops in the Department of the South, and, after the War, a manipulator of railroads and legislatures in North Carolina and Florida. The heart of the book consists of the ninth through the twelfth chapters, which deal with Littlefield's activities in North Carolina as the associate of Virginia-born George Swepson, whose high-handed bond swapping and railroad shenanigans fleeced war-impooverished North Carolinians of millions.

THE CRESSET
Author Daniels, well-known for his *The Man of Independence* and other other books, does not pass final moral judgment on General Littlefield. Though he does not propose to give credence to it, Mr. Daniels records the story that General Littlefield (having returned to the North a bankrupt when his Florida railroad bubble burst) agreed to go back to North Carolina and stand trial for fraud, if others named in his documents were also brought to justice. Mr. Daniels' point seems to be that not only out-and-out carthagers and scalawags profited from ingenious schemes for quick wealth, but that the devious lines of such plots entangled men of all political and geographical loyalties during the chaos that was Reconstruction.

This book has something of the style — metaphorical, allusive, epigrammatic, and ironic — and much of the fascination of a good novel. But the most skillful aspect of the author's writing is his ability to fit together scattered, apparently disparate facts into meaningful relationships, and so to variously illuminate his main narrative.

THE FOUNDING OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

By John Ford Golay (University of Chicago Press, $5.00)

John Golay tries to be fair to the Germans as a nation. He asks: “Can these wholesale indictments of the German people stand the test of reflection in cooler moments?” He believes that periods of making new constitutions offer insight into the moral and political condition of a people. He is well qualified to evaluate the various stages of development which produced the present organization of the Federal Republic of Germany. He holds degrees from the University of Southern California and as a Rhodes scholar from Oxford. He was deputy secretary of the Allied Secretariat in Berlin and Bonn, then American secretary and finally secretary-general of the High Commission in Bonn. At present he is dean of faculties at Roosevelt University, Chicago.

As we must understand conditions in Europe before the two World Wars if we would properly judge the constitution and organization of what is now called Western Germany, Dr. Golay leads us still farther back into German history from the Holy Roman Empire with its 1700 territorial units, the Bismarckian Reich of 25 units, the Weimar Republic with 17, the National Socialist regime with 15, to the present truncated West German post-World War II Federal Republic comprising 11 Laender.

If the present progress and prosperity of Western Germany are considered a miracle of modern times, one is still more amazed that this has been possible when we consider the indescribable destruction and chaos after the war, from which the new organization of the Federal Republic sprang. This speaks well for the sanity of the American and British occupying powers and for the willingness of the new German leaders to cooperate with the victors.

The author takes us through the initial contacts between the non-Nazi and anti-Nazi representatives of a prostrate nation and the British and American military officers, who now also had to consider the viewpoints of the defeated and liberated French. We are taken through the many meetings between the two groups and then through the meetings of the Germans from the various Laender among each other. All this is of great interest and importance to political scientists and students of government, which your reviewer is not.

The “Grundgesetz” or Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany was adopted by the Parliamentary Council at Bonn on May 23, 1949, and is 45 pages long as Appendix A of our book. It was approved by the Military Governors of the Western Powers. Russia had from the very beginning of these negotiations played the “enfant terrible” and would not include its occupied area in the new Germany.

Had the American and British forces not halted in mid-Germany at the end of the war, had they not hesitated to penetrate to the Eastern borders of Germany in the face of an “ally” who had once made common cause with Hitler’s Germany in brutally crushing Poland and the Baltic States, the benefits of this fine democratic constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany would now be enjoyed by a united Germany. There would not now be a Berlin crisis nor a seemingly insoluble German problem of reunification.

Appended at the end of this valuable and important book are brief biographies of the leading personalities of the principal parliamentary parties of Germany.

CARL ALBERT GESELER

NEUMOND

By Herbert Cysarz (Deutsche Volksbuecher)

Years of decision and indecision, death and rebirth of man, mind, and soul — these are the materials with which the author paints a mosaic of great literary achievement. There is no hero in this novel, except perhaps “Ruff,” a decent average individual who is caught in the spider web of history, or perhaps “Schwerdt” who would not consider it wrong to assassinate a “leader,” if this were the only means of preventing devastating war. “Noch halten zahllose Unbekannte die Welt im Lot trotz allen Regierungen — wird ihnen Schwerdt die Kraft einer Verschwörung, eines Menschen­schütesplanes gewinnen?” (p. 370). It is the the story of man, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Mephistopheles and Faust, as well as Gretchen and her hands outstretched for the comforting cloak of God’s mercy and love.

Contemporaries of all parties, refugees from all regimes appear — workers in the factories, managers, white collar workers, professors and students, bankers, priests, criminals, artists, soldiers, parents and children. The author represents a world of crassest dualism, masses believing in the temporary expediency of enforced laws as savage aborigines would bow to dead fetishes. Collapse, ruin, and the stench of death during the days of the Second World War.

At this juncture the author reveals how a miracle occurred in the heart of abused and downtrodden man. The divine spark with which he is born breaks out of its hard shell and the law of God returns. This spark is strong enough to rebuild the destroyed bridges from brother to brother, friend to enemy, man to woman, and nation to nation.

The author draws a panorama so vast and extensive, so realistic and powerful that we are reminded of Gustave Flaubert, Dostoevsky, Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner. They, too, are probing for the essence of man. They all realize, however, that the ultimate answer lies in God.

Herbert Cysarz’s language is of unusual power and poetic strength. Baroque elements impart a strange beauty to the book. The author delights in speaking in aphorisms: “Wo nur die eine Haelt der Mitbuerger reden darf, bleibt die schwe­gende die redlichere.” (p. 562). Cysarz’s language is symbolic and appeals to a universalism of thought within a core of codified ethics.

The final appeal of the author is to all human beings in all climes and nations: *Work for one another and love one another.* On page 658 the author exults: “Familie ueberall, Ruff sieht sie vor Paaren nicht mehr. Allelujah, Festgibimmel, bei jedem Schlag springt ein Laemmchen ueber die Huerde, der Friede hat gesiegt ...” Peace has triumphed. The law of God is once more supreme, and the church bells announce the birth of Christ.

FRED K. SCHEIBE

AN ANTHROPOLOGIST AT WORK

By Margaret Mead (Houghton Mifflin Company, $6.00)

An Anthropologist at Work is an attempt to describe the how and why of Ruth Fulton Benedict’s anthropology. Mead seeks to show Benedict as “a figure of transition binding the broken surcites of a past age to which she was full heir to the uncertainties which precede a new integration in human thinking.” (p. xxii)
To implement her task, Mead presents the bulk of Benedict's written work, i.e., her early experiments in writing (including school girl essays), journal entries and diaries, the Mead-Benedict, Sapir-Benedict, and Boas-Benedict correspondence, plus a considerable number of her poems. Intermingled with these items are Benedict's professional papers. Documentation for each of the above is provided. It is hinted that the limits of modesty have been observed in writing and thus some of Benedict's written thoughts of a highly personal nature have been excluded.

The formal organization of the book consists of six parts: Part I relates how Benedict drifted into anthropology and eventually met Margaret Mead. Miscellaneous papers, the 1922-23 Sapir correspondence and two diaries complete the section; Part II amounts to a collection of journals, journal fragments and additional later Sapir correspondence; Part III contains a rather meandering account of how Patterns of Culture came to be written, plus a few papers and her correspondence to and from the field during the period 1924-34; Part IV is a description of Benedict as Boas' assistant and mother-confessor to Columbia graduate students. Some of her papers and the Boas letters of 1923-40 are added; Part V pictures Benedict after World War II, particularly the background factors of The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, contains her presidential address of 1946 to the American Anthropological Association, and is sprinkled with miscellaneous papers; Part VI concludes the book with selected poems and an essay on Mary Wollstonecraft, a curious 18th-century English female who had captured Benedict's fancy.

Mead states that the sections can be read in any sequence since no strong attempt has been made to achieve an explicit order of integration between them, beyond giving an introductory statement at the beginning of each part. She characterizes her style of presentation by remarking, "My own memory has woven back and forth like an embroidery needle threading together parts of a tapestry [Benedict's life]" (p. xxi).

This stimulating work has left the reviewer with a number of reactions. 1. The title is a misnomer, i.e., Ruth Benedict, Woman at Work would have been more apt since Mead stresses Benedict's role of female over that of anthropologist. 2. Mead feels that to understand Ruth Benedict's work the reader must view Benedict as a woman whose childhood was plagued by deafness and temper tantrums, whose post-adolescent years were lived under the threat of impending spinsterhood, and as an adult upon whom the curse of childlessness exerted an ever-morbid effect. It is highly questionable whether or not this knowledge will lead to such an understanding. 3. The reader is left to create the "tapestry" that was Benedict by attempting to synthesize her correspondence, journals and poems into a consistent meaningful whole. It is suspected that few can do this to their own or any one else's satisfaction, probably because few individuals possess such an intimate knowledge of the pertinent events as does Mead. 4. It must be concluded, however, that Benedict was a remarkable woman, albeit one who contributed to the understanding of man as a humanist and not as a scientist. Her published work and materials relating to the handling of public relations for Boas underlie this contention particularly well. 5. The most perplexing aspect of the book is to what audience it is addressed. Anthropologists as anthropologists will find her poems to be of passing and irrelevant interest. Non-anthropologists will view her papers as tedious and even dull reading. Both may feel a twinge of immodesty when examining portions of her private journals and correspondence. 6. The most valuable contribution of the book is that it gives insight into the intellectual climate of anthropology during the declining influence of Boas, i.e., a period of transition when much of American anthropology was seen to yield sterile results, when functionalism and configurationalism were beginning to flower and when the discipline reflected only partially the immense vitality of those within its ranks. To the younger members of the field, An Anthropologist at Work provides an otherwise-impossible view of this era. To Benedict's contemporaries it is a profound reminder of the complex and admirable person she was.

WILLIAM H. HOOGE

FROM THE HILLS TO THE SEA:
Fact and Legend of the Carolinas

By Archibald Rutledge (Bobbs-Merrill, $4.50)

Romantics will like this book, as I do, for its effective simplicity, its nature settings, and its entertaining mysteries. It has large print plus artistic woodcuts, together with an occasionally epigrammatic style (e.g., "Especially in grief, to do nothing is to devastate one's soul."), and an almost poetic quality throughout the seventeen stories. I prefer to designate these brief, unpotted narratives as sketches, patterned perhaps subconsciously after Washington Irving's method. The four major units are labelled Sands of Time, The Woodsman, Men of Santee, and The Everlasting Hills.

Commendable is the Wordsworthian use of the simple, energizing forces of nature, as in "Blood on the Mountain Laurels" or in "Cherokee Princess." This includes a wholesome respect for living things. The author has lived much of his life in the South Carolina delta where he owns a 2,000 acre tract known as Hampton Plantation. Mr. Rutledge's roots go deep. He knows history, loves this countryside, and has a remarkable sense of heritage. His acknowledged sources are "members of my family, friends, dwellers in the deep woods and the wild mountains, plantation Negroes."

From such elements comes the charm of mysteriousness and sentiment. For instance, suspense is shown in "The Lost Colony," in which a relatively new theory is advanced for this enigma of Roanoke Island's earliest recorded history: not massacre by, but absorption within an Indian tribe — the Croatoans — that had mastered the art of living in the New World wilderness; and thus "Raleigh's colony was lost only in the sense that it was not found."

HERBERT H. UMBACH

THE HONEY-POD TREE

By Thomas Calhoun Walker (John Day, $4.50)

This is the autobiography of a Negro who was born in slavery, who painfully acquired an undergraduate education, who read law under an old Confederate major's tutelage, was admitted to the Virginia bar, and spent his long life in helping the ignorant and unfortunate of his race. He was responsible for reducing enormously the incidence of drunkenness and crime among Negroes in his county; for making it possible for Negroes to buy land and build homes; for befriending neglected or delinquent Negro children, more than two thousand of whom he placed in foster homes, and many of whom he defended legally in court. When over seventy years of age, he became, he says, "a government official responsible for just what I had been trying to do all along by myself as a free lance;" i.e., Advisor and Consultant of Negro Affairs for
Incidental to the struggle to realize civil rights for Negroes and to improve their economic and educational status, the author was, naturally, in frequent contact with white Americans. Many cooperated with him gladly. Among the others, his quiet firmness always won the respect, and often the acquiescence, of men who were at first inclined to decry his efforts and oppose his aims.

"Lawyer Walker of Gloucester" died a short time ago, full of years and wisdom. As seen in this modest autobiography, he possessed not only tremendous will power and energy, but also a remarkable endowment of love for his fellow man, black or white.

**CORNBREAD AND MILK**

By Gordon H. Soles (Doublingay, $3.50)

Now here's a mite-size bit of a book, bound kind of fancy with a passel of fair-to-middlin' hand-drawn pictures chucked in to make you feel like you was gettin' a fair shake for your egg money. Like the feller says on the cover, this here Cornbread and Milk tome is one of them "nostalgic and witty" pieces on country life you keep hearin' about. What I mean to say is, it's nostalgic if you was brung up in the country yourself and had maybe the same kind of experiences, and it's witty if you been lucky enough to inherit the sense of humor of a half-way bright bull-calf. They's sixteen episodes about cornbread — naturally — and chickens in the parlor and overflowin' cesspools and lone-some outhouses (some folks calls 'em privies) and all that other kind of Kansas carryin' - on, and, like was said before, they's told real witty-like. It kind of makes a feller wonder what the book publishin' business is a-comin' to; nowadays any derred fool who grewd up in the shade of a big red barn thinks he's got to set himself down and write a book about his earthly childhood, and then some double-dered city publishin' house has got to come along and encourage him. It's enough to drive a book-lover daft. Mind now, I got nothin' against reminiscences if'n they's full of insights about human folks livin' and doin' their work and dyin' noble — which is what I think writin' ought to be about — but ole neighbor Soles, he ain't got no insights and he ain't got no style and he ain't got nothin' to say that ain't already been better said by fellers like John Gould, or maybe even Chie Sale. Matter of fact — and meanin' no disrespect to nobody — I reckon they ain't many folks right around here who couldn't make up better stories out of their own heads.

R. C. WILSON, JR.

**ARAB UNITY**

By Fayed A. Sayegh (Devin-Adair, $4.00)

Many observers say that Americans are ill-informed. If this is true, then it is certainly true that Americans are tragically ill-informed concerning the Middle East in general and the aspirations of Arabs in particular.

The purpose of this book is to inform. And the author accomplishes his purpose. Sayegh, an Arabian scholar and diplomat, is well equipped to write on this subject. In general his workmanship is academic and is characterized, with one exception, by an almost religious passion for objectivity. This objectivity is especially evident in his references to Israel, a subject which is admittedly peripheral to his main thesis, but one which could easily have evoked chauvinism. The exception to his objectivity occurs in his treatment of the United Arab Republic. This movement is interpreted as being compatible with Arab nationalism, whereas the Arab Union, the monarchies which still persist in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and the desires of Lebanon are summarily rejected.

The work represents a number of notable achievements. The first contribution of this book is to present a concise history of the process of Arab unification. The treatment of the interwar period is especially of value. Closely connected with this historical analysis is the careful differentiation of the processes of Islamization and Arabization — two processes historically related, but far from identical.

Of greatest value was the analytical treatment of the rationale of the Arabian masses and leadership as they struggle to implement the desire for independence and unity. The entire justification of Arab nationalism is predicated on the acceptance of the tenets of western liberal thought, i.e., self determination, sovereignty, equality, and limited government, all of which seem to be a god-given largesse to mankind.

Yet, in this reviewer's opinion, this present volume has a serious shortcoming. Sayegh, using the language of the western world, glibly refers to democratic institutions, limited government, government which is at once responsible and responsive, and the importance of public opinion. Much of the western world has come to accept these tenets after discounting for institutional frictions and human imperfections. However, Sayegh fails to address himself to this basic problem: How does a regime establish a responsible government in a human environment which is largely characterized by ignorance, poverty, and inertia? Isn't the result simply an exchange of one brand of despotism for possibly a new autocratic elite? And, if this must be true in the short run, why not admit this and address oneself to the task of establishing a more responsible government for the Arabians in the Middle East and Northern Africa?

DONALD C. MUNDINGER

**TREASURY AGENT**

By Andrew Tully (Simon and Schuster, $4.95)

With no sarcasm whatsoever intended, it is completely appropriate to quote a statement from a book review by one A. Lincoln and apply it to this volume: "For those who like this kind of book, this is the kind of a book they will like."

This book consists of thirty-five abbreviated stories of crime taken from the files of the Internal Revenue Service, Bureau of Narcotics, the Bureau of Customs, and the Secret Service. It is the story of treasury agents in action from the day of their establishment until 1958, including a brief history of the Treasury Department, which is the offspring of the Customs Service.

The incidents narrated here are drawn directly from the true crime dossiers of the United States Treasury. They number encounters with the Mafia, bootleggers, large tax evaders, moonshiners, kidnappers, diamond smugglers, and dope pushers. Such notorious individuals as Frank Costello, Waxy Gordon, Al Capone, Mickey Cohen, and Dave Beck walk out of the "closed files" of the Treasury Department and across the pages of this book. A check written in the sum of $5.10 by Mrs. Costello leads to the conviction of her husband. A clergyman is found to be the head of a counterfeit conspiracy. Some little-known aspects of the Lindbergh kidnapping are reported in brief. The abortive attempts to assassinate President Roosevelt and President Truman are clearly depicted.

Me? I like detective stories, so I like this book even though it is occasionally punctuated with the unfamiliar (to my eye) jargon of the press. My chief complaint about Tully's book is the frustration I frequently felt when I became enraptured with a crime story and suddenly found I had come to an abbreviated end of it with many of the details of an adequate story of detection and wit-matching left unmentioned.

CHARLES F. TUSCHLING

**MIRRORS AND WINDOWS**

By Howard Nemerov (University of Chicago Press, $2.75)

Howard Nemerov's Mirrors and Windows has the distinction of being the first book of poems published by the University of Chicago press. Readers may feel that, a uni-
versity press being what it is, the chances of its printing first-rate poetry are almost precluded. Nor will they find their convictions changed by the present volume.

This is not to say that Mr. Nemirov is not a competent poet. His diction ordinariness is carefully controlled; his own adjectives, “fastidious” and “severe,” are appropriate. But, all in all, there is too much studied phrasing and too little point. On occasion the poetic idiom can turn as slow and vacant as the idiom of a Hollywood movie; and not infrequently the author becomes a master of the ending that falls flat, e.g., the last line of To Lu Chi, “Goodbye, Lu Chi, and thank you for your poem.” The book, moreover, leaves in the mind scarcely one memorable image — no Byzantium, no shining from shook, no vowed bethes.

These weaknesses in the style are but symptoms of a larger lack of poetic power. The failure of sensibility is suggested by typical themes: the fall from the symbolized world seen through sun glasses; and companion themes: nostalgia for Troy; longing for vital contact with nature; regret for the dilating focus of the war.

In the flickering of a further theme in some few poems, a way out of the “venomous tense past tense” seems almost to open — in the image of the wild birds over the carriion of the town dump, “Their music marvelous, though sad, and strange”; in the image of the spiral shell, “A hollow life is beautiful with shame”; in the contrariety of Christ and the poet, “I suffered Time as He Eternity.” Thus far, however, Mr. Nemirov has not penetrated through this opening to the wellspring of the highest poetry.

J. E. Saverson

THE EDUCATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL
By Alfred Adler (Philosophical Library, $3.50)

EXISTENTIALISM AND EDUCATION
By George F. Kneller (Philosophical Library, $3.75)

Both of these books are signs of the increasing interest among Americans in existentialism to the at least temporary neglect of its country-club cousin, Deweyan pragmatism. Educators seem to have caught the interest about 1954 when a rash of articles appeared in educational journals concerning existentialism’s importance for (American) education. Adler and Kneller have now tried to pursue the subject at more length, but the two books are at opposite poles in quality.

Adler’s The Education of the Individual can be read backwards or forwards, sideways or upside-down, and the effect is the same.

Kneller’s Existentialism and Education is a surprise: the author seems really to have taken the time to understand the basic concerns of existentialism (without all of its subtleties) and to give a reasonably faithful presentation of it. He does not pretend to present anything that is new to the “professional philosopher,” for he is writing to educationists; but even the philosopher can rejoice when misleading formulations like the “doctrine of existentialism” are protected by explanatory modifications. One even dares hope that educators will not try to read the book too fast.

* Robert Scharlemann

FICTION
TO KEEP THIS OATH
By Hebe Weenolsen (Doubleday, $4.50)

Hebe Weenolsen takes us on a rather long and ponderous journey (539 pages) through the years following the reign of William the Conqueror, when land had been confiscated and given over into Norman hands. The vanquished English were pressed into servitude by their conquerors and became bound serfs on their own ancestral lands. The political unrest in England during this century dominates the story until its conclusion when Henry II returns to reign as king, not only by right of inheritance but by choice of the men who sowed the seed and plowed the fields of England.

Woven into the political maelstrom runs the life of Jesu Maria. He is the youngest son of an English lord, and his life as a child living in the great castle, learning to ride and hunt, to train a hawk which would remain at his side, to witness the pursuit and mutilation of one of the serfs, is described most vividly. His later exploits, after running away from his home and becoming a miner in the coal fields of the Silures, sounds too unrealistic to be convincing. Here it is, however, that he learns from an aged monk the methods and procedures of medicine taught to him by Hindu physician-surgeons, and acquired from sources of history of the early Persians and Romans.

Jesu Maria acquires a skill for using instruments in all types of surgery and a knowledge of herbs for medicinal purposes that he uses later after leaving the Silures, to alleviate the sufferings of soldiers of war on the battle fields. His noble birth is challenged because of his lowly profession — the clergy (many of whom were trained for medical purposes) had been prohibited from performing any types of surgery by the Church. Therefore, only the crudest methods were used by men called “barbers.” Jesu Maria’s overthrow of superstition, the respect and confidence which he finally gains from his contemporaries, and his victory in lecturing on surgery at Oxford where a professional chair was created for him is the high point in the book. Through it all a childhood acquaintance appears again and again in his life and the culmination of this romance brings a tone of lightness to a rather gruesome and ponderous, though highly entertaining, novel.

Bernice Ruprecht

THE GODS ARE ANGRY
By Wilfrid Noyce (World, $3.75)

In this novel, Mr. Noyce tries to do two things. First of all, he endeavors to relate the story of the expedition to climb Changma, a 26,410-foot mountain of rock, ice, and snow in the Himalayan range of India. This he does quite convincingly, describing in detail all of the facets of mountain climbing common to the mountaineer, though never considered by the layman. In this way, the novel is a kind of textbook on mountain climbing; although, at times, Mr. Noyce speaks so nonchalantly and matter-of-factly about the equipment and methods employed that one cannot, at first, understand what he means. At times, the reader longs for a glossary with which to explain the terms that Mr. Noyce uses in passing. Especially puzzling are the Indian words used, usually not fully explained by the context. Phrases like, “Dyotialis . . . kneading their chapatties round little fires . . . .” or “the endless search for a kukri (‘for myself, and then the wife can use it’) . . . .” need more explanation. Such details are small, but become rather frustrating when they appear frequently without sufficient explanation. It seems that Mr. Noyce would have greatly enhanced his novel had he taken the time and the words to explain these terms.

Perhaps Mr. Noyce’s second endeavor works out better than his first one. He tries to answer the questions with which the mountaineer is always besieged. “Why do some men seek adventure and danger despite the ties and responsibilities of home and loved ones? What do those who climb mountains or explore wildernesses want out of it? And do they get it?” Harry Hal-lowears learns the answers as he gazes over the world from the uppermost heights of Changma with the wind blowing in his face and the flying snow battering his trousers. Eventually all of the men learn to appreciate what Harry experienced up there alone. None of these men get any monetary rewards for their endeavors, but each of them feels a kind of satisfaction after the trip that is compensation enough. Even the unfortunate Harry possesses a deep satisfaction that only one who passes through such an experience can understand. In answering these questions, Mr. Noyce does quite well. He delves into the minds of his characters, Jim, Brenda, Barton, Bill, and Harry, analyzing their differing atti-
tudes toward the expedition and its outcome. He follows Bill's change from hate and envy to love and admiration for Harry. He reviews Jim's musings about Pamela's love for him — was it real and true? Was Jim right in leaving her and climbing Changma?

Although this is Mr. Noyce's first novel, he handles his narrative, philosophy, and description with ease and dexterity. A few improvements could be made in polishing his general style; but, overall, Mr. Noyce has done a commendable piece of literary work.

**Janice Brass**

**THE LAND GOD GAVE TO CAIN**

By Hammond Innes (Knopf, $3.95)

One would expect a novel built upon savage murder, a secret gold mine, and the attempts of a young engineer to prove his dead father's sanity to be exciting and suspenseful in the best traditions of all good mystery-and-adventure stories. Finding these ingredients set in a land as desolate and forbidding as Labrador, one might fairly expect the tension to be next to unbearable. What a shame that *The Land God Gave to Cain* is only dull and deadly reading.

Ian Ferguson, the hero Mr. Innes has created, is a study in inertia. He has a mission; yet he acts only when he is pushed by others, and never knows what he should do next until someone tells him. The rest of the men and women who people the story with him are stick figures, more caricatures than characters, and all of them — English, American, Canadian, French and half-breed — speak the same literary language, which properly belongs to no one but the author. Mr. Innes has finally depended too much on the atmospheric properties of Labrador to excite his bloodless story-telling, and it is a poor excuse for this book which perhaps ought better to have been called *Hokum of the North*.

R. C. Wilson, Jr.

**MRS. 'ARRIS GOES TO PARIS**

By Paul Gallico (Doubleday, $2.50)

"To the gallant and indispensible daily ladies who, year in, year out, tidy up the British Isles, this book is lovingly dedicated."

Mrs. 'Arris is a London charwoman extraordinaire — friendly and formidable, hesitant and determined, sensitive and stubborn, sympathetic and scheming, timid and brave, sentimental and practical. All of these qualities Mrs. 'Arris displays in her feverish pursuit of the most beautiful dress in the world. The chase begins with her quiet confidence that she will eventually own this dress; picks up speed with the winning of her first football lottery, and moves into high gear with the purchase of her plane ticket, which takes her across the Channel, straight into the formidable House of Dior in Paris.

Mr. Gallico has, of course, succeeded in making this a tale of great warmth and charm — easy to read, easy to enjoy. He has a great feeling for people — and we discover, along with Mrs. 'Arris, that after all, most of us are human. Behind whatever facade of beautiful clothes or high positions or even timid inferiority, we worry and cry and look for love.

Anne Springsteen

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**Letter from Xanadu, Nebr.**

**By G. G.**

Dear Editor:

I don't know whether I am coming or going but I will try to get a letter off to you while I am catching my breath.

This rat-race that I am involved in now all started three weeks ago when the International Lutheran Implement Dealers Association of the United States and Canada had its annual convention down in St. Petersburg. I thought we had a wonderful program worked up and I was looking forward to a lot of fun and fellowship and as a matter of fact everything was swell until the very last day. And then the roof fell in.

What happened was that we had scheduled a square dance for the last evening of the convention and everybody showed up in cowboy clothes and we were having lots of fun when some screwball got the idea of having the orchestra play a waltz and pretty soon we weren't just square-dancing any more but really dancing. Now as far as I am concerned, that's all right. But I knew that some of the boys, and especially their wives, were going to raise Cain about it and sure enough it happened.

The next morning, before I could even get the election of officers underway, one of the guys got up and demanded that we start off with a confessional service and that afterwards the convention apologize to the brothers whose consciences had been offended by the dancing. Well, that did it. Pretty soon there was a regular riot on the floor and if Joe Klug hadn't had the presence of mind to strike up "A Mighty Fortress" on the piano there might have been some real trouble. As it was, things quieted down, but five of the men walked out and announced that they were going to start their own organization, which they did a couple of days later.

So now for the last three weeks I have been trying to work out some way to get committees from the ILIDAUSC and the new organization, the Reformed Lutheran Implement Dealers Conference of North America, to sit down with each other and see whether we can't patch up this affair. So far, there has not been much progress but I'm going to keep trying. I'd hate to have this thing drag on into the summer when all of us have better things to do than attend committee meetings.

Regards, G.G.
What to do about women? We know that men leave behind themselves “footprints on the sands of time” — but woman, ah woman, she moves too fast to leave footprints. She is the phantom to whom man writes poetry, whom he leaves to live among the fleshpots — with whom, they say, he cannot live and without whom he cannot live.

This has been the age-old question: what to do about the woman? Lately it has become an important question again in our discussions about education. In many cases, the answer to the question is still the answer given of old: “I don't see why we should spend so much time educating women! They get married anyhow, become mothers, spend a lot of time at home — then all your money for education has been wasted!” All they need for marriage, it is assumed, they had and possessed before their marriage.

And if they remain single? “In that case, it would be just as good for them not to spend so much money on college and a bachelor's degree. It would be better for them to have some courses in typing, shorthand, business English, and accounting. Then, they'd be better able to take care of themselves.”

Just as often, this is added: “These courses are just as good for the women who marry in case something happens to their husbands.” What they really mean is: in case their husbands die.

No matter how plausible “just in case education” is, it also has its limits. Why don’t we teach our youngsters to use their left hands in case they lose their right hands, teach them Braille in case they go blind, teach them to write with their toes in case they lose their fingers, teach them Oriental home economics in case their husbands sell Coca Cola to the Chinese?

We ought to prepare our students, it seems to me, to think through with wisdom and reason whatever unexpected situations emerge in their lives — rather than to prepare them for specific unexpected emergencies. Only within narrow limits can we teach them for specific situations.

Besides, I personally am not in the business of teaching potential widows. How many of “you girls” approach marriage by telling your husband-to-be “Look, man, I come well-prepared. In case you die, I can take care of myself.”

How negative can you get?

If, following the lines of the argument above, we assume that they are going to get married anyway, why not teach them to learn things as potential wives, mothers, and in-laws?

What would I teach potential wives, mothers, in-laws? I think that a good major to prepare women for these roles is either philosophy, religion, or ethics — or combinations of all three. Or education — if you happen to be at a school where education is taught with wisdom and human understanding.

Why shouldn’t a girl, with an eye to the main chance in marriage, take any major that gives her a tough work-out under a tough-minded intellectual?

I would like to add at the risk of offending a lot of people: many of the so-called practical courses (home economics, business, nursing, and elementary teaching) do not of themselves prepare a woman for being a mother or wife. Knowing how to decorate a living room might simply make for a more ostentatious stage on which to conduct marital battles. Knowing how to sterilize surgical equipment for a delivery does not necessarily lead to the wisdom of motherhood.

If I had a choice between a woman who is a good cook and one who could speak wisely to her children, I would choose the latter. In case of an emergency, I could do the former.

I am fortunate: my wife is a good cook, a wise mother, and many things more.

I could be forced to this position: if your girl is asked to take the practical courses, it might be wise for her to pick up some wisdom and understanding on the side. You would probably be surprised to know how little of this many parents are handing out these days.

Isn’t it true that the mother is expected to answer some of the basic questions youngsters ask, especially in their earlier years? “Where did I come from?“ “What am I going to do when you die?” “What happens to me when I die?” “What is God like?”

These questions come at the mother a mile a minute. Why not prepare her for such discussions?

She is forced to be a father, a mother, a pastor in the home, and a half a dozen other things while the husband and father is out at nights, on a business trip to Kansas City, or at a convention in Miami.

Come to think of it, the woman can use a little of this kind of education for purposes of her own!
Sights and Sounds

Preview of a Movie

By Anne Hansen

One bright morning, several months after I had moved to St. Louis, I undertook the long bus trip to the down-town shopping district. Since most of the city was still strange to me, I decided to try a new route via a special Shoppers' Express bus. We had gone only part of the way when suddenly our bus was stopped by a police officer. Imagine the feelings of an erstwhile small-town gal when I realized that we were on the fringe of a truly terrifying scene. All traffic had been halted. Crowds thronged the sidewalks and the streets. The sound of gunfire and breaking glass filled the air. Police whistles blew like mad, and squad-car and ambulance sirens screamed their penetrating warnings. The scene of this commotion was the area around the Southwest Bank of St. Louis, and it was obvious that a robbery was in progress.

Fortunately, before I stopped breathing altogether, the bus driver said, "Keep calm, folks. It's only a movie." Then, since we were detained for a good twenty minutes, he told us that the Southwest Bank had been the scene of a daring robbery a few years ago and that an enterprising producer had decided to re-create the event. It isn't at all likely that The Great St. Louis Bank Robbery (Charles Guggenheim, United Artists) will win an Oscar, but for a low-budget film it is a surprisingly effective melodrama. The acting is good throughout, the direction is excellent, and it is fascinating, for St. Louisans at least, to see familiar locales as the background of exciting action. Incidentally, the police officers who take part in the picture are not only St. Louis policemen but the same blue-coats who captured the daring robbers during the holdup.

It may come as a surprise to you to learn that India has the third-largest motion-picture industry in the world. The United States is first, and Japan is second in terms of the number of films produced. Bombay — with twenty studies, in which 300 films are made annually — is the center of India's cinema world. Most of the releases are designed to satisfy India's 750,000,000 movie-goers. They seldom reach the screens of other lands. Pather Panchali — The Lament of the Road — is a notable exception. Produced in Calcutta in 1955 by Satyajit Ray, this tender and moving tale of life in a small Indian village has won many prizes and honors in Europe and Asia. Many critics both here and abroad have called it a masterpiece. Although American exhibitors were reluctant to book Pather Panchali, the film broke attendance records in New York City and is now being shown in art theaters throughout the country.

Both Gigi (M-G-M, Vincente Minelli) and Separate Tables (United Artists, Delbert Mann) have been nominated for the best-picture-of-the-year award. Based on a novel of dubious moral tone by the late Colette, Gigi is a gay, tuneful, and utterly lighthearted musical with book by Alan Jay Lerner and music by Frederick Lowe. Lavish settings in glowing technicolor, beautiful natural French background locations, a cast of distinguished players, and Mr. Minelli's expert direction have made this one of the most popular and financially successful pictures of 1958.

Separate Tables is in sharp contrast with the scintillating Gigi. Adapted for the screen from Terrance Rattigan's highly successful stage play, Separate Tables presents a somber and generating study of lonely people caught up in a frustrating and cheerless existence. David Niven portrays the discredited war hero with superb artistry, and Deborah Kerr plays the timid and neurotic spinster with shattering pathos and complete authority. Burt Lancaster, Rita Hayworth, and Wendy Hiller are the other principals in the outstanding cast. Much of the credit for a truly noteworthy production must be attributed to Mr. Mann's restrained and sensitive direction.

Many fine TV programs were on view during the month of February. Probably the most memorable, and surely the most moving, of these was Meet Mr. Lincoln, a special tribute designed to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Great Emancipator. The beautiful words spoken in the Congress by Carl Sandburg, Lincoln's famous biographer, were unforgettablely impressive. An excellent adaptation of Hamlet and absorbing programs presented on Omnibus, Small World, the new Wisdom Series, Ask Washington, Meet the Press, and in regular news reports not only entertained viewers but kept them abreast of significant developments in a perplexed and perplexing world. In addition, music lovers rejoiced in Leonard Bernstein's appearance with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York and in a special Voice of Firestone hour featuring the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.
The Sign of His Presence*

Few stories in the entire Sacred Record are more dear to the Christian heart than the story of Emmaus... Here in a few sentences all the comfort and glory of Easter are applied directly to the problems of life and living... Here we see, clearly and finally, the meaning of the open tomb for our own journey toward the last sunset... The entire story is a striking parable of human life... It began in confusion and pain and ended in faith and joy... It began in darkness and ended in the white light of the Sun of Righteousness... It began in loneliness and ended in the magnificent truth that since Easter morning no believing heart need ever be alone again...

The story of Emmaus has been repeated countless times since that first Easter evening... Its courage and victory can come also to us, who live so far down the ways of time... “Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.”

One of the dark marks of our time is its uncertainty... Men are not sure of anything... In fact, it has become fashionable to doubt... It is considered smart and sophisticated to be uncertain... The result has been ruin and death... In such an age nothing is more desperately important than the question: Is there anything that is sure and permanent in life?

The answer lies in our Easter faith... There is nothing vague or mysterious or indefinite about it... Its message is: Christ lives... He lives with us... He lives for us... A believing child can understand this... It is clear and sure... It is a fact witnessed by history and certified by faith...

Although He ascended into heaven on the afternoon of Ascension Day, He did not leave the disciples afraid and alone... Within a few days they became a conquering host... Confounded and appalled by the tragedy of Good Friday, huddled behind locked doors in hidden houses in Jerusalem, they became the indomitable bearers of the Cross, the men and women before whom the Roman Empire began to tremble... They lived “under the long looks of God and His glances of a thousand years.”... Why?... Because He had answered their prayer, “Abide with us...” with the great sentence which ends all loneliness and fear for the Christian heart: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”... It is true that we cannot see Him with our eyes or touch Him with our hands... He has His own way of being with us in the world... It is a great and a sure way... It stretches beyond and above the noise of the world and the dark highways of men as the great, shining highway of the King of kings...

Everything our Lord does is done for us... We are the objects of His eternal love... When He comes to us and abides with us, He has certain definite purposes in His mind and heart... He wishes to give us something... His presence means something great and beautiful... The disciples at Emmaus knew that... Their plea “Abide with us” was based on the statement “for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.”... It was growing dark... The Stranger who had opened the Scriptures to them would be good company for the coming night... As they had listened to Him, their hearts burned with a new courage and a far hope... They wanted Him to stay with them because in His presence they had found a new understanding of the counsels of God and their meaning for history and life...

Our weary hearts cry out for the living God, for the calm peace and sure rest which can be found in Him alone... The Easter message of the abiding presence of the risen Savior is the only possible solace and comfort for our ills... It tells us that we can now live with him who took all our troubles and sins up to Calvary and buried them in the forgiveness of God... It assures us that through the forgiveness of sins we can begin each day anew... As we walk with His nail-torn hands in ours, life begins to move and live... In His presence we cannot be afraid, because He is not afraid; we cannot be dismayed, because He is not dismayed; we cannot be conquered, because He will not be conquered... Facing all the storms and tears of life, there is always Someone by our side who knew them all and suffered them all for our sakes...

This is the continuing power and glory of our Easter faith... As the shadows of time lengthen and the hour of man grows late, we shall need this faith more than ever before... Much work remains to be done in the world so that the message of the risen Savior may be brought to new millions sitting in an old darkness.

*Excerpt from The Sign of the Cross (Concordia)