THE CRESSET

a review of literature, the arts, and public affairs
Cover: And Jesus was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. Matthew 17:2. Kuni Nuechterlein. Valparaiso University student. 1968.

Detail of liturgical banner made by using the batik technique. Karen Miller Scott, Valparaiso University student. 1969.

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On Living in Revolution

By the time one has reached middle age he should know at least two things: 1) that the very essence of life is change and 2) that resistance to change is an apparently inevitable, although regrettable, aspect of the aging process.

In Henry F. Lyte’s great hymn, “Abide With Me,” change and decay are coupled together almost as though they were natural concomitants. We who have survived the middle years of the twentieth century are, happily, spared the temptation to look back upon the past as any kind of Utopia from which there can be only descent. We know all too well what mean and dishonest years they were; we know how preoccupied our generation was with things and how little concerned we were with justice and mercy and love and sensitivity to the needs of those who had a rightful claim to our concern. And we can, therefore, entertain a reasonable and lively hope that out of the turmoil and travail of these revolutionary days may come not decay but something better than anything that we have so far known. Certainly those of us who spend most of our time in close association with young people see something new and promising fermenting in their hearts and minds, a blend of personal freedom and social responsibility, of integrity and sometimes brutal frankness which might just possibly be the medicine which our sick world needs.

Meanwhile, though, we who are middle aged are what we are, and it may be that we can serve best by accepting ourselves, as God for Christ’s sake has accepted us, “just as we are.” We know by what values we have lived, what loyalties we can not abjure without surrendering the better part of our selves, what style of life has proved itself in the alembic of our own experience. We can, without seeing all change as a form of decay, remain faithful to those beliefs, convictions, and certainties for which we need offer no other defense than that they have stood the test of time. And we can trust that the Lord Who knows those that are His is at work in our children just as lovingly, and as mysteriously, as He was at work in us in those days, seemingly so long ago, when we were the despair of our parents.

This is not a counsel of stand-pattism, still less any advocacy of that loveless permissiveness which is, in reality, a rejection of the responsibility which those who have lived for a while owe to those who are still experimenting with life. It is intended for the comfort of those who feel obsolescent if not actually obsolete in a world which has moved faster than most of us can run in middle age and as an encouragement to those who, in their weariness, equate all change with decay. “Behold I do a new thing, saith the Lord.” And we answer with weary old Eli, “It is the Lord. Let Him do what seemeth Him good.”

Sentinel or Bogeyman?

The military wants to sink five billion dollars in some thirteen “Sentinel Installations” of hydrogen-tipped anti-ballistic missiles. These ABMs are intended to attack and destroy any inter-continental ballistic missiles that might be launched against us by a hostile power, presumably the Chinese People’s Republic.

At this writing, the project has been held up as the result of vigorous protests by concerned citizens and members of the Congress who do not like the idea of placing these dangerous weapons on the margins of densely populated areas. There is no reason to suppose, though, that the men in the Pentagon will abandon the project. As a matter of fact, what they really want is a fifty-billion-dollar “thick” ABM screen and have only reluctantly settled — and that, one suspects, for the time being — for the five-billion-dollar “thin” screen.

It is worth noting that neither of these projects has any significant support from experts outside the military whose opinions would have been worth considering. Indeed, in a number of places where hearings were held on objections to proposed Sentinel sites scientists who are knowledgeable in the area of nuclear missilery...
testified that the proposed system would not only be ineffective as a defense against ICBMs but would increase the hazards of nuclear destruction in the very metropolitan areas which they are intended to protect.

These hazards are threefold. In the first place, the very fact that the ABMs would be located within metropolitan areas would make these areas prime targets if a hostile power should choose to attack us with ICBMs. In the second place, if the ABMs were successful in hitting and destroying the ICBMs as they approached their target, the fall-out from the resulting explosion would be almost as devastating as the radiation resulting from a direct hit. And in the third place there is a risk — negligible, perhaps, but a risk nevertheless — of accidental explosion of the ABMs themselves.

These hazards might be acceptable if there was good reason to suppose that a foreign power seriously intended to launch a nuclear attack upon us. It is very hard to find any such good reason. The Russians are as vulnerable to nuclear attack as we are and are fully aware of our two-to-one lead over them in ICBM power. The Chinese — much as they might like to vaporize us — recognize that any attack upon us would be suicidal. So we are being asked to ante up five billion dollars to scare away another of those bogeymen that seem to haunt the Pentagon. It is our judgment that the money can be put to much better use.

**The Pueblo Inquiry**

No man, we are happy to say, has made us a ruler or judge in the Pueblo inquiry and we have no intention of usurping that role.

One can hardly help speculating, though, how he might have conducted himself had he been in the place of Commander Lloyd Bucher. Allowing for the fact that no one who has not actually been in such a spot can really say what he would have done, our best guess is that we would have handled things pretty much as Commander Bucher did. At least we hope that we would have.

We would have done so, of course, in the full knowledge that we were violating Navy regulations and were, therefore, subject to the penalties provided for such violations. We think that we would probably have hoped that the Navy would recognize that we were in a situation which the framers of those regulations could hardly have anticipated and that we might, therefore, also hope that we would be judged by some more realistic and humane standard than the bare letter of the law. But even if that should not have turned out to be the case, we hope that we would have chosen to sacrifice our career and even accept a period of confinement if that was the price for bringing the men under our command safely home to their families.

All of which, perhaps, may merely be clear evidence that we are unfit for command responsibility. There is a case to be made for the contention that it was not Commander Bucher's first responsibility to bring his men home but to carry out his orders and to take all possible measures to ensure that his ship did not fall into the hands of a hostile power, even if that meant sacrificing himself and his men. There are situations and circumstances in which it is a man's duty to die or to send other men to their death. Any man who accepts command knows in advance that he can find himself in such circumstances and he knows what is expected of him if he does.

Public sympathy is overwhelmingly on Commander Bucher's side and in this case our sympathies are with the majority. But we can sympathize also with those whose duty it is to examine his conduct and pass judgment on it. If men must go to war, they must know what they can expect of each other. In some situations this means that one must expect that men will die rather than imperil the success of a mission or the lives of their comrades. So the Pueblo case raises some agonizing questions and the Navy brass has to make some very hard decisions — decisions vastly different in kind but not all that different in degree from those which Commander Bucher made.

**Black Anti-Semitism**

When the legitimate demands of an oppressed people are denied, the next step is revolution. And when revolution breaks out, there is no predicting its course.

Who, for example, would have imagined that the Black Revolution would have taken on an anti-Semitic cast? For as long as anybody can remember, Jews in this country have been among the most vigorous champions of the oppressed, especially the black. If any white ethnic group seemed relatively safe against the hostility of the black man, it was the Jew, his friend and companion in the struggle for a just and open society.

But, ironically, it is now the Jew that has been singled out for the role of Super-Whitey, the focus of black hatreds and resentments. Not everywhere. Not yet by any large number of black people. But the warning signals are there and a succession of nasty incidents in New York should serve to warn of possibly more serious disturbances to come.

Why? Alistair Cooke has suggested that as the black man recovers his pride in his blackness and comes to identify himself with the African, particularly the Islamic African, the Jew becomes in his view more than just another variety of Whitey. He becomes the particular kind of Whitey who is the special enemy and oppressor of the Islamic Arab nation. (Comparatively few blacks have embraced Islam, but black solidarity is a more potent and unifying force than religion, especially among younger and more militant blacks, so that even those blacks who have not converted to Islam are likely to stand with their Muslim brothers against those — especially the Jews — who are considered hostile to the Muslim, Arabic peoples.)
Another reason may be that, particularly in our large
cities, the Whitey with whom the black man is most like­
ly to come into close contact is the Jew. To the black man
living in the ghetto the Jew may, indeed, symbolize the
whole white power structure. He is the landlord, the
neighborhood grocer, perhaps the welfare worker or
even the policeman. As such, he is the visible symbol of
all that the deprived black must do battle with in his
struggle for freedom. It is unfortunate that the black
man should allow himself to take the symbol for the
reality, but we can hardly fault him for doing what all
of us do all of the time.
Meanwhile, it is the urgent task of all men of good will
— white and black — to make every effort to check the
spread of this virus of anti-Semitism. There is already
too much hatred brewing in our society. Any more
might kill us.

Why “Medieval”?  

The January 20 issue of the Manchester Guardian
Weekly reported, in a tone of altogether justified out­
rage, the executions by the Iraqi of nine Jews and five
others by hanging in the public squares of Baghdad and
Basra. “It was,” Baghdad radio reported, “an eternal
day in the life of Iraq and the Arab nation.” “It was,”
the Guardian reporter said in an icily apt paraphrase,
“an eternal day that the Arab nation ought to remember
with shame.”

But then, farther down in the story, he went on to say
what strikes us as a very curious thing: “This medieval
spectacle can only do harm to the prospects of a Middle
Eastern settlement.”

What strikes us as odd about this sentence is its charac­
terization of an almost unbelievably brutal spectacle as
“medieval.” Why medieval? Why, in an age as bloody
and brutal as our own, should we look back into the past
to find a word adequate to describe the near ultimate in
barbarity? No doubt medieval man possessed his own
expertise in the arts of cruelty. But what, after all, can
he show to compare with the kinds of cruelty which we
have brought to such a refined state of perfection in our
own century? He had the Iron Maiden and the rack,
boiling lead and flaming arrows, it is true. But what
are these to napalm and the thermonuclear bomb? He
had the pogrom, but it was little more than a test run for
Warsaw and Buchenwald and Belsen and Dachau. He
could and did bring cities to their knees by siege and
bombardment, but he lacked the tools (and perhaps the
will) to reduce cities to the desolations of Coventry and
Dresden and Nagasaki and Hiroshima and Hue. He
slew his thousands, but we have slain our millions. And
we are investing thousands of millions of dollars,
pounds, rubles, and francs in research for even more
sophisticated weapons that will allow us to slay thou­
sands of millions.

So surely it would have been more appropriate, if the
man from the Guardian wanted to point up the full hor­
ror of the Iraqi hangings, to have characterized them as
a “twentieth-century spectacle.” For ours is, by all odds,
the darkest and bloodiest century of which history has,
as yet, any record. True, our children may outdo us,
but that still remains to be seen. Meanwhile, we are the
undisputed champions and, whether for reasons of
pride or shame, we ought not to concede lightly to the
medieval period, or to any other generation, the one in­
contestable claim that we have to the remembrance of
those (if any) who will come after us.

Ralph McGill

Ralph McGill was born and bred a Southerner and he lived all of his threescore and ten years in the South. He
was also one of the first white men to speak out loudly,
boldly, and clearly for the black man’s right to enjoy all
of the rights and privileges of American citizenship.
And he did so in the pages of the Atlanta Constitution —
at the time as unlikely a platform as one could have
imagined for the airing of such opinions.

It was a costly thing to do. He paid for his integrity
with harassment, with threats on his life, with accusa­
tions of having “betrayed his own people,” with the deep
and inconsolable pain of having the frankness of love
mistaken for the peevishness of hostility. But he took it
all as a gentleman takes it, without complaint and with­
out returning railing for railing, confident that time
would vindicate him and that the day would come when
his critics and accusers would recognize that he was a
better friend to them than those who pandered to their
fears and reinforced their self-destructive prejudices.

Journalism is, taken on the whole, a fairly shabby
business — much of it a form of intellectual harlotry.
The temptation is great to tell people what they want
to hear rather than what is true; to feed them titillating
trivia rather than the hard facts that no one really wants
to look at straight on; to mirror community opinion
rather than to subject it to the scrutiny of reason and
justice and morality. The temptation is particularly
strong when one has a deep affection for those to whom
he is writing and from whom he hopes for a return of
affection. More than one editor has sold his integrity
for the sake of winning local acclaim as “the town’s best­
loved citizen” which, being translated, means the man
who used his skill in words to make the people to whom
he owed leadership happy and comfortable in their un­
examined thoughts, attitudes, and lives.

Ralph McGill loved his part of the country, his city,
and his newspaper and he served them well, as love
knows how, by giving them straight, if often unpalat­
able, talk about the conditions of their hearts and minds
and public institutions. In his later years, a few people
came to realize how much he had done for them and the
South and took the trouble to express their appreciation.
In years to come, many more will come to recognize
his greatness and maybe even one of these days there
will be a monument erected in his honor. But in a larger
sense, he has already built his monument — Atlanta, a city where a very great deal remains to be done toward reconciling the races but which Ralph McGill did much to lead to the forefront of American cities that are at least trying seriously to create an environment in which whites and blacks can live side by side in a spirit of understanding and good will.

Toward Denver — VII

We hesitate to suggest that The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod take another look at its traditional teachings concerning the role of women in the church. Every time the suggestion is advanced, we get another study commission, and these commissions always come up with the same conclusion: “Paul says that women are not allowed to teach or to usurp authority over the man, so that rules out everything from ordination to membership in the Voters’ Assembly.”

It has always seemed to us that this is reading more into the Pauline prohibitions than is actually there. Clearly Paul restricts the pastoral office to men, but there are ministries other than the pastoral on which he either does not pronounce at all or which, at least by implication, he encourages women to undertake. The notion that Paul was a misogynist who thought that women had no role in the church other than that of passive recipients of the Word is contradicted by all that we know of his own ministry, in which he relied heavily upon the support of godly women, and by explicit references to “those women who labored in the gospel with me,” among them Phoebe and Prisca.

It takes a particular kind of tortured logic to extend whatever Paul might have said or intended to the question of women’s suffrage in the church. There were, of course, no Voters’ Assemblies in the early church, and one rather suspects that if anyone had suggested them Paul would have viewed that idea with even more of a jaundiced eye than the idea of women pastors. So the notion that women may not lawfully participate in the ordering of the temporal affairs of the congregation seems to us to be wholly lacking in apostolic authority. It should be observed that the prohibition against women speaking in the congregation stands in the context of a larger discussion of speaking in tongues, and has nothing to do with the question of governance. Indeed, if one wants to strain a point and take the modern-day Voters’ Assembly as analogous to “the multitude” of apostolic times the case for giving women a voice equal with that of the men in the governance of the congregation becomes even stronger, for there is every reason to suppose that women participated in the proceedings which resulted in the election of Matthias to the apostolate and there is no reason to suppose that they did not participate in the election of the seven “men of good reputation” who were set over the distribution to the needy in the Jerusalem congregation.

We suspect that the disenfranchisement of women in the church has roots that are more easily traceable to 19th Century Germany than to First Century Jerusalem or Ephesus. If that is the case, it is time for us to reform our polity.

Letter to a Businessman

Dear Harry:

Yes, things are a bit rough on campus these days, but not, perhaps, quite so chaotic as you seem to think. The great existential question that I have to deal with is that of student interviews is still what it has always been: “What do I have to get on the final to get a C out of the course?” — hardly the sort of gut question that sends a man home to a sleepless night of self-examination.

But you are right; we have our full quota of tough, bright young people — white and black — who are asking questions and making demands that you and I, in our campus days, would have considered not only impertinent but close to blasphemous. Our generation got its kicks out of chipping away at the Sixth Commandment, but we never seriously challenged the awful majesty of the Fourth. The present generation sees only rubble where the Sixth Commandment once stood and it is directing its energies against the Fourth.

You will not, I hope, misunderstand me if I say that your suggestions for “straightening things out” brought a rueful smile to my face. I guess that the corporate office can be as much of an ivory tower as the professorial study. Let me only say — and here I have to presume on our friendship to be completely frank with you — that if you think that we can handle what you call the “militant students” the way you handle your office people you are really out of touch. Our students have not, like your people, reconciled themselves to lives of quiet desperation. Sometimes I think that they are afflicted by a pretty deep vein of despair, but it is certainly not quiet. And neither soft speech nor the big stick seems to hold much promise of making it so.

I think you had better try to understand this, Harry, because I have a suspicion that it is going to be your turn next. Now don’t start spluttering. All I’m saying is that not too many years ago we would never have believed that the colleges would erupt as they have. To all appearances, the faculty and the administration held all of the cards, including that ace-in-the-hole, the grade card. But all of a sudden we found ourselves playing in a different card game. (I am tempted to say that it is a game with deuces wild.) May be when these kids move on from our shop to yours you will find that you are in a new game, too.

In any case, Harry, you had better get braced for that possibility. Because there really is a new breed coming through the colleges these days and if you think that the paycheck is going to be enough to keep them from giving you a hard time I’m afraid that you are not quite with it, old boy.

The Cresset
My Grandfather never met Charles A. Lindbergh nor did he want to. His attitude struck me as being extremely strange since Lindy, from the day he made that solo flight over the Atlantic, became a hero to every American boy, including me. To me, Lindy was that proverbial knight in shining armor, but to Grandfather he was a reckless, foolhardy young man. I realized later that this was my first experience with what is known as the generation gap, or, in this case, a double generation gap.

Years later I understood that my Grandfather was not objecting to Lindbergh's taking his own life in his hands so much as he was resisting the knowledge that that flight ushered in the age of aviation, an age and a change for which he was not prepared, having come from a generation which felt that if God had wanted men to fly, He would have given them wings.

If I can believe what I read, the generation gap is wider today than it has ever been. I am inclined to believe this since it supports a theory I have held for a number of years. The generation gap is not caused by the current fads of the young in such things as dress, music, or actions. It is rather a development which is produced by the willingness or unwillingness of people to accept change.

If you will permit me to state, rather crudely, my working hypothesis on this subject, I would put it like this: The generation gap develops as the result of change and its width is determined by the rate at which change takes place. The Now generation, as Time aptly calls today's youth, is willing to accept any change that comes along, while those of us in the 40-and-up age bracket resist change as much as possible. As a result, the gap not only exists, it is a wide one, primarily because we are in an era of extremely rapid change.

When I was growing up, change came slowly, but I can recall my impatience with adults who seemed to be against anything new, the very things that seemed most exciting to me. Our neighborhood was against paving our street, the town was against the new and brighter lights the public utility installed on Main Street, and most of the elders were against the tractor's replacing the horse on the farm. Now, of course, we look back with longing to those days, not because our creature comforts were greater then or because we were better off generally, but because change in those days, if any, was extremely slow. Since we look on the present as too brief and the future as somewhat frightening, the past appears more desirable in retrospect if not in actuality.

As our generation passed from the younger to the older, circumstances prevented our becoming conditioned to change. We grew up in the deadening sameness of a world wide depression, were thrown into a world war, and then were tossed out into a post-war world characterized by drastic social, population, technological, and knowledge explosions.

Why we resist change is apparent. Change requires that we make adjustments in our thinking, revise our set of values, and bolster our self confidence to the extent that we are able. All of these tasks become more difficult to perform as the years pass. We do try to preserve what has been good in the past and seems good in the present by setting up institutions such as our system of laws, government, and organized religion.

When change is threatened in these institutions we are inclined to react violently. This explains some of the rancor which has been generated by a number of the decisions the Supreme Court has made in the last decade, and why it has been difficult to change something so antiquated as the Electoral College. And show me a man who does not think organized religion resists change and I will show you a man who has never attended a synodical convention.

One cannot help but wonder if as the members of the Now generation become older they will resist change. I am inclined to think they will and that the generation gap will continue at its present width. The gap is no cause for alarm; in fact, it is an aid to meaningful progress.

Those who might be concerned about the generation gap should realize the gap has always existed and only its width has changed. There is no solution to the problem of the gap. The only one I have heard I do not care for, and it is one I hope none of the current crop of activists hear about. It was proposed by a young Communist in Russia shortly after their Revolution. He made a recommendation to the new government that everyone over 25 be shot. The half of us in this country who are over 25 are not likely to end up facing a firing squad, but I think you will agree we are spending an unconscionable amount of time with our backs to the wall.

April 1969
Jesus' Death and Resurrection

By NATHAN SOEDERBLOM
Translated by C.J. Curtis
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Chicago

What do we mean by an historical fact? Men have been born and have died. They have eaten and drunk, worked and rested, and a great many events have occurred daily and hourly on this earth. But in order for an event to be counted as an historical fact, it is necessary for it to have impressed itself noticeably on the course of history. It is not the isolated or single event alone, but the event together with the clear or unclear effects and ramifications that gives to the same the character of historical fact. Therefore, many of the greatest historians of our time have made two connected statements in almost the same breath: "The resurrection of Christ is a fact of world history." "There is no event in world history more far-reaching, and for this reason nothing more certain than Christ's resurrection." This historical insight is indispensable for one who is reflecting upon the bare and obvious facts.

A Jewish Rabbi from Nazareth is condemned and is cruelly and ruthlessly killed as an insurrectionist and blasphemer. His disciples and admirers are scattered as chaff in the wind. They feel bitterly disillusioned. They are helpless. Instead of coming forth in power and glory as the deliverer and benefactor the supposed Messiah-King was stricken from the records of his people. If one should seek his name it would be found in the files of the criminal records. Thus was his life at an end. He was not the only one who had posed as a Messiah and a deliverer. We read in the New Testament about other insurrectionists. The teacher of law, Gamaliel, reminded the Sanhedrin of Theodias, who had gathered about him four hundred men, and also about Judas from Galilee, who at the time of the census persuaded large crowds of people to revolt under his leadership (Acts 5:36, 37). Barabbas had been put in prison for a riot that had taken place in the city, and for murder (Luke 23:19).

Many similar deeds are recorded in the history of the Jews. They are forgotten. But the story of Jesus was not forgotten. Out of the impenetrable semi-darkness those figures who were frightened out of their wits have faded into insignificance. No longer are they crude, confused, and frightened friends of the master. Now they have become his dedicated disciples and inspired champions. The crucified malefactor is upon their tongues. They profess to belong to him. What is more, they are confident of his victory. The memory of him is filled with exultation and joy. They are ready to go out and make all men his disciples, and they meet with success as they go out to convert the world. Their work has continued down through time with increasing success. The story of Christ's life and suffering will become known to the whole human race within a reasonably near future.

What has caused this change? To see this, and not to inquire into the reason for it, is to deny the simplest ability of being able to interpret and understand history. There is no doubt about the answer. Were we to inquire of the disciples, they will say with Peter, in Acts 3:15, "You killed the Author of life. But God raised him from the dead and we are witnesses to this."

One place was empty in the circle of the twelve. Matthias took the place of Judas, together with the eleven, as servant and disciple. What does it mean then to be an apostle, or disciple of the Lord? What does this mission contain? We read about this in the first chapter of The Acts of the Apostles. "Peter stood up and spoke to the brethren, who were assembled together, to the number of one hundred twenty. So, then, a man must join us as a witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He must be one of those who were in our group during the whole time that the Lord Jesus travelled about with us, beginning from the time John preached his baptism until the day Jesus was taken from us into heaven — someone must be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection," (Acts 1:21-22).

Apostle means a witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "And with great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and God poured rich blessings on them all." Peter and the other disciples witnessed before the Sanhedrin, "The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead, after you had killed him by nailing him to a cross, and God raised him to his right side as Leader and Saviour to give to the people of Israel the opportunity to repent and have their sins forgiven" (Acts 5:30,31). Stephen was the first among them who gave his life for his witness.

Peter spoke more about the resurrection when he visited at the home of Cornelius. "He was not seen by all the people, but only by us who are witnesses that God had already chosen. We ate and drank with him after God raised him from death" (Acts 10:41). Nothing in the history of the human race had caused
effects comparable to those that resulted from the appearances to the stunned and scattered disciples. It burned beneath the ashes in the hearts of the disciples. Darkness enveloped them. The flame of faith was hidden and almost choked. A spark from above was needed to rekindle the fire.

Even Paul underwent a conversion. He was not one of the disciples won by Jesus, who because of the shameful death on the cross lost his faith and then at the resurrection found a new and living power through faith. Paul had persecuted the seducer's followers with the intense passion of his temperament. He himself wrote, “You have been told of the way I used to live when I was devoted to the Jewish religion, how I persecuted without mercy the Church of God, and did my best to destroy it. I was ahead of most fellow Jews of my age in my practice of the Jewish religion. I was much more devoted to the traditions of our ancestors” (Gal. 1:13-14). Suddenly he was changed and became the Lord's greatest apostle. There is no doubt but that the gospel had become powerfully effective in his soul. Bitter animosity and vehemence in his persecution was a convulsive attempt to defend himself from the spiritual power of the Nazarene. He kicked against the pricks. But it was clear that the change in Paul depended upon a special event. As he was on the road to Damascus, suddenly a light flashed from the sky and enveloped him. He heard a voice saying, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Were we to ask Paul the secret of his life, he would reply, “Christ's resurrection.” Perhaps Paul had known Jesus during his days here on earth, but now he knew him spiritually. In the resurrection chapter (I Cor. 15) Paul expresses himself explicitly to be a witness of the resurrection (I. Cor. 15). “Last of all he appeared also to me — even though I am like one who was untimely born” (I Cor. 15:8). The suffering of Christ took place in the open market place of the world and was seen by all. His resurrection was reserved for a chosen few witnesses: “Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you too shall live” (John 14:19).

Here was a struggle between light and darkness. Yet the light was victorious for all eternity.

**Easter Morning**

No one was present on the morning of Christ's resurrection. No one had seen what had happened. No one had witnessed the objective occurrence. Pictures that portray the Saviour arising out of the grave or stepping out of the grave are but pure imagination, however not as offensive and objectionable as the pagan reproductions of God, the Father, in the so-called Christian art, but which wars against all that the New Testament relates of the resurrection miracle.

The certainty of the resurrection included already for the Apostles two factors. One negative, the empty grave, the other the positive, appearance of the Risen One.

**The Empty Grave**

1. According to the Gospel of St. Matthew, the Jews sought to explain away the empty grave by saying that the disciples had carried away the body of the Crucified One. “The chief priests met with the elders and made their plan: they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers and said, ‘You are to say that the disciples came during the night and stole his body while you were asleep, and if the Governor should hear of this, we will convince him, and you will have nothing to worry about” (Matt. 28:12-14). (Today's English version A.B.S.) It is true that in Matthew we read that this report was spread around by the Jews and prevails even to this day. It has been accepted by the Talmud. But this explanation did not seem to have been believed at that time even by the Jews. The disciples in the Book of Acts are agreed in their main point, that of the Saviour's victory over death. Their expressions were aimed at the Jews. In these words they refuted the contradictions of the Jews. If the explanation, that the disciples had stolen the body, had been believed, there would surely be some references of it in the Book of Acts. The disciples would then have refuted this view. Furthermore, it is altogether unthinkable that the same disciples who had carried away the dead body should then appear before the world with such a courageous and victorious message of the appearance of the crucified one. Such a crude betrayal lies outside of the realm of real possibility. The women went on their way with aromatic spices and ointments. Neither they nor the disciples had any idea that the grave was empty. Just as little did they expect the Master's appearance to them. This much is unmistakably clear in all the accounts to any unbiased reader.

Attempts have been made to explain the empty grave without support of the narrative in another way. The mind always seeks to imagine how the occurrence actually happened. Research will never cease to combine cause and effect. No wonder then that the ingenuity of the mind has been tested by the mystery of this historical event to a greater degree and more effectively than by any other. It has been conjectured that the disciples from Galilee and the women made a mistake, and even on the day after the Sabbath sought the remains of Jesus in another grave. This is not consistent with the accounts of Luke: “The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee went with Joseph and saw the grave and how Jesus' body was laid in it” (Luke 23:55).

It has also been pointed out that the friends of Jesus belonged to two separate groups. The Galilean fol-
lowered had little in common with the councillors or other Jews of high standing who, more or less secretly, were followers of Jesus. One, Joseph of Arimathea, or a Nicodemus, could, therefore, during the night taken necessary precautionary steps with the body of Christ in order to safeguard it from the ill will of the leaders. Others have also called to attention another motive. Joseph of Arimathea was desirous of bestowing upon Jesus the last service. But he did not, they infer, want to keep the body of a crucified man in his family burial place. For this reason he took the body of Jesus in secret after the Sabbath day was over and buried it in an unknown grave. But such an attempt at interpretation is purely imagination and could hardly be made to coincide with the inescapable historical fact, which constitutes the faith in a resurrection. Joseph could not have been unconcerned about this. The memory of Jesus was holy for him. Had he removed the dead one he would have once more been courageous enough to speak the truth about the matter.

2. The second general and most important explanation of the open grave comes entirely from the women and the disciples, who hastened there on Sunday morning — namely, that the Crucified One had left the grave, in spite of guards. It has two main divisions.

A. Had Jesus actually been dead? There have been instances when contemporary friends including the most learned have believed that life had departed from a person. Arrangements had been made for burial. But the dead one had returned to life. It might even have been possible for him to leave his confinement and to step out of the sepulchral chamber. It is quite natural that the question has arisen whether Jesus in spite of all was not merely apparently dead. The forces of life might have been awakened in the cool tomb of the rock. He arose and stepped out. Attention from ancient times has been fixed upon the fact that the soldiers on Friday afternoon had already found him to be dead, but that the blood gushed forth as from a living person as one of the soldiers stuck a spear in his side. However, the fact of the water has not been explained. The supposition of merely apparent death is already made impossible by the three following circumstances:

1. In tradition it lacks every support. Had Jesus awakened to life and walked out of the grave then one can be convinced that his adversaries used this fact to permit the punishment of death to be executed more thoroughly. The evangelical tradition is without a doubt in accord with this point: Jesus actually died on the cross and this earlier than his comrades in the execution, and earlier than the ones crucified usually expired from the suffering. To make the statement doubly sure, much later were these words of confession of faith added, “descended into hell,” in order to emphasize that Jesus had been actually dead. However, these words did not direct an attack against the apparent death hypothesis, but against the teachings of those who regarded suffering and death contrary to God’s chosen instrument and the divine Saviour of mankind, and who, therefore, in the ancient church interpreted the suffering and crucifixion as a sham or guise. They inferred that the true (real) heavenly Savior did not experience anything like this. The evangelical story is, however, completely in agreement that Jesus died. Not even the Jewish adversaries have attempted as a last resort against the apostles’ testimony of the resurrection to assert that the crucified one was only apparently dead. However attractive such an explanation may be, and no matter how convincing one could be of its authenticity, it lacks every support in the sources.

2. Still more questionable is that explanation, which is rare, that the open grave is accounted for by accepting a still greater mystery. One may set forth the general scientific rule than an explanation that only moves the problem to another point, and thus complicates the same, can hardly be regarded as an explanation, but rather becomes the opposite of an explanation. What happened to the apparently dead Master when he stepped out of the grave and continued his life on earth? How could he then walk through closed doors? Paul did not even see the Resurrected One. A light from heaven shone about him. He fell to the earth. What he was aware of, and that which convinced him, was a voice. The men who were traveling with Paul stood speechless with fright. For they heard a voice, but could not see anyone. Can anyone really believe that Jesus had returned to life and continued his wanderings on earth and, according to this story, met Paul on the way to Damascus? Every man must die. His life on earth must end. If Jesus’ life on earth did not end on the cross, we would ask ourselves how and when and where did it end. The merely apparently dead would have to die sometime. The story of the Ascension could not signify Jesus’ actual death, because Paul’s conversion on the Damascus road occurred later, but is placed on the same level as the appearances of the crucified one to the apostles and the women. The story of the Ascension must therefore signify the end of the period within which the conclusive appearances for the resurrection faith appeared. The apparently dead one’s continued life on earth is not compatible with what we know. That man showed that he could not be concealed. He asserted himself with power wherever he was found. To presume a continued life on earth after the body had been laid in the wealthy councillor’s tomb is to replace a question mark with a still greater and more puzzling question mark.

3. Could Jesus possibly, after his feigned death and presence in the grave, have conveyed to his disciples the idea that he found himself to be in a state of extraordinary ethereal existence, but that in reality he had simply awakened and left the tomb? This...
refutes everything we know about the man in the gospels and should therefore indicate an assumption in direct opposition to psychology and reality. However broken down he might have been, he could only be the scrupulous, conscientious Master.

Something of the same difficulty is attached to the belief in the resurrection, in that this same body that had been laid in the grave left the grave on the third day and continued an earthly existence, until this body laid in the grave ascended into heaven. Such a materialistic conception may seem to have a certain support in Luke's story about a piece of cooked fish and part of a honeycake which the resurrected one ate before the disciples (Luke 24:42). But this refutes the fundamental idea of all the other stories and Paul opposes this with power and conviction. A comparison with Lazarus is striking and revealing. Lazarus had, according to John's eleventh chapter, at the recall by Jesus, returned to life. They had untied his grave bindings and the cloth over his face and let him go. His continued life on earth contained no mystery. After the time Lazarus had spent in the grave, he had really gone back to the same life on earth as before. Here is found no suggestion of the fact of anything similar to the appearances of the Risen One. The brother continued his existence with his sisters in Bethany. The incident had caused a sensation. The Jews came in droves to Bethany to see Lazarus so that the High-priests decided to kill Lazarus also (John 12:10). Thus is placed equally, without any uncertainty or doubt, the plan to do away with Jesus by death with the desires of the same Jewish magistrates to kill Lazarus. They wanted to kill Lazarus who had lain in the grave. But no one came up with the idea to kill Christ, since after the crucifixion and the burial he had been seen and heard in visions and appearances by the disciples, the women, and Paul. We do not have in the New Testament, nor anywhere in Christian literature, the suggestion that Lazarus is a proof for the Christian of the resurrection hope and of eternal life in Christ's fellowship. Paul speaks of this in detail (I Cor. 15:19): "But the truth is that Christ has been raised from death as the guarantee that those who sleep in death will also be raised." They shall all be made alive in Christ, all those who belong to him, each in his own order.

Were you to place side by side the existence of the resurrected one with the continued life of Lazarus after his resurrection, then there arises for such a materialistic belief in the resurrection the same problem as for the hypothesis of the merely apparent death. Lazarus continued his earthly life with the body that once had laid for a time in the grave. Nothing like this is related about Christ. He revealed himself in what Paul calls a glorified body. No one with any ability of discernment and critical judgment in reading the gospels can refrain from noticing the radical difference. A coarse materialistic interpretation which permits Jesus, after his sojourn in the tomb, to continue his earthly life is excluded from the evangelical story. The belief of the Church and research must dismiss it as heresy or delusion. Jesus' existence was no longer physical or "psychical" but "spiritually" pneumatic.

B. At last we arrive at the only understanding that corresponds to our sources and to tradition, as far as we are able to penetrate the same. Paul maintains the notion with great firmness that the body of Christ that had lain in the grave was the one that showed himself later to the Apostles. Paul writes, "My brethren, this is what I mean; what is made of flesh and blood cannot share in God's Kingdom; and what is mortal cannot share in God's Kingdom, and what is mortal cannot possess immortality" (I Cor. 15:50). Should anyone believe that the resurrection takes place in the same body that is laid in the grave, then he is foolish. It is not an earthly body, not even a soul that looks like a body that is resurrected, but a spiritual body, a heavenly person, a heavenly form. "For the first Adam was created a living being; but the last Adam is the life-giving Spirit" (I Cor. 15:45). How does Paul then explain the open grave? He does not speak a word about it.

Many have sought to explain the empty grave in the manner of Paul and the true Christian resurrection belief. They have said that a spirit that has the body completely in his power is in a position to destroy the earthly covering and to change the material to a spiritual organ. He who writes these lines finds it difficult to accept such easily understandable but never satisfying explanations. Human life has its mysteries. History has its mysteries. Before the incontrovertible and mighty truth that is called faith in Christ's resurrection, we cannot but acknowledge our inability to penetrate the darkness of night. Light comes on at Easter morning.

The Miracle of the Resurrection

Faith in the resurrection does not rest at all upon something that is lacking, on something negative, on an emptiness, an open grave that does not any longer hide the dead body. Belief in the resurrection is based on something positive, on a miracle, on that which the disciples and the women experienced even when their minds were enveloped in darkness just as the body of their beloved Saviour was, even if their tender affection was still very much alive. Faith in the resurrection rests upon the appearances of the Crucified One to his disciples. Even here the field is open for the human mind to make an honest attempt to place these appearances and visions in relation to our general experience, and in relation to the experiments and conclusions of science, in questions which are similar or even of remotely related phenomena.
It is of little avail to stop here, with these attempts at explanation and interpretation of how the faith of the disciples, by means of a divine intervention, arose from the grave of disappointment and despair to a new and glorified existence. The fact remains. Should science find it difficult to explain, there is no cause whatever for erasing it from the annals of the race as being impossible and unthinkable. If this were done the whole history of Christ's life on earth would be radically changed. The glorified Lord re-captured the power in the souls of the disciples and has through them and other weak instruments secured and spread his reign and dominion in our genera

tion. "Now is the time for the world to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown. When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to me" (John 12:31,32). The Saviour's work is not ended at the cross. He passed through death into life and takes those who are His with Him through death into life. Every knee shall bow in Jesus' name. But even the Son is the servant to Him who is greater than he and everyone. He will surrender the reign to God the Father. After Christ has overcome all spiritual rulers, authorities, and powers, he will hand over the Kingdom to God. For Christ must rule until God defeats all enemies and puts them under his feet. The last enemy to be defeated will be death. God puts all things under his feet. But when it says that He has put all things under his feet then it is apparent that Christ is the exception for He will put all things under his feet. But when all things have been placed under Christ's rule, then he himself, the Son, will place himself under God, who placed all under him; and God will rule completely over all (I Cor. 15:24-28).

Christ lies a corpse dead in the heart. A corpse lies still — does not move even a fold in the grave-clothes — everything in its place, except life. But when the movement begins, then the questions arise from every direction; that which laid so still and orderly is moved by questions, only questions, and as it seems, by doubts. Then one becomes despondent, the grave is empty, the corpse is gone, there is no corpse upon which to depend. But Christ himself is present with the stirring of life in the soul. Easter awakens an eternal movement.

The Meaning of the Resurrection Hope

The Christian Easter has a double meaning.

1. It confirms the victory of Christ. The Lord appeared to the disciples who had lost hope that he was indeed the one who should come. The cross was not the end, but a beginning. Now for the first time the disciples began to understand something of Christ's mission. Now Christ entered upon his reign in the hearts of the faithful. Compare Peter, who had denied the Master and stood helpless far away from the cross, with the other Peter who, according to the Book of Acts, testified, "And so you killed the Author of life. But God raised him from the dead and we are witnesses of this" (Acts 3:15). The empty grave had been a sign interpreted many ways. But the risen one had revealed himself to his own unmistakably. They were favored by heaven in seeing and hearing Him. He continued to be the crucified one, marked with wounds from the nails and the spears of the soldiers. But the degradation, the death pangs, and the anguish were at an end. The Lord of life had conquered death. He was the same as before, but glorified and mighty. Their hearts burned within them — and remained thus in his presence. The world saw the empty grave, but not the living Saviour (Acts 10:41). Paul summarizes the evidences in I Cor. 15. What does he mention here? Christ showed himself to Cephas first and later to the twelve. "Afterward he appeared to more than five hundred of his followers at once, most of whom are still alive, although some have died. Then he appeared to Peter and later to all the apostles. Last of all he appeared also to me, even though I am like one who was untimely born" (I Cor. 15:1-8). Paul counted himself as one of the resurrection witnesses. For Christ had overwhelmed him on the way to Damascus. Christ showed himself to Paul as living. No event has made a deeper impression on the history of the world. For this reason the victory of Christ over death is recorded in world history as a fact. This confirms Christ's claim and the truth of his teaching.

2. Easter morning confirmed the victory of the Saviour and the cross. It is meaningful also in the history of the individual. It awakens in the individual a soul-searching and strengthens faith in Christ's power. Faith in Christ's resurrection at the same time gives incomparable strength to the certainty of eternal life. Paul writes about it in I Corinthians (15:53-58). The apostle pits against the power of death, the power of sin, and the power of slothfulness and suspicion the certainty of eternal life in accord with Jesus' words in the Gospel of John, "I live, you also will live" (John 14:19).

(a) Paul does not build his certainty on the natural forces of life. He does not depend on the beat of the frail heart or upon anything else that is mortal. That which is placed in the grave is, according to Paul, a soul enveloped by a body, that is, a living being equipped with spiritual faculties which has died. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. That which lives is spirit. God is a spirit. Our spirit lives in Him, if the sovereign himself is living. That which arises to eternal life from the seed of the body is, according to Paul, a spiritual organism. Then these words are fulfilled: "So when what is mortal has been clothed with what cannot die, then the Scripture will come true as it is written: Death is destroyed, victory is complete" (I Cor. 15:54).

(b) The sting of death, the bitterness of mortali...
ty is the result of sin. Sin gets its power from the Law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! (I Cor. 15:56-57). Faith in eternal life, or rather the eternal life which the believer already here possesses, has support for its certainty in the faith in Christ's power over death. "If our hope in Christ is good for this life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in all the world" (I Cor. 15:19). The new life is the resurrection life. It is a life through death, through constant death. "For we know this: our old being has been put to death with Christ on the cross, in order that the power of the sinful self might be destroyed, so that we should no longer be carnally minded is life and that we will also live with the power of sin.

not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually slaves of sin. For when a person dies he is set free from end. A sublime expression for this hope of the future shall live for God eternally in righteousness and holiness. We are born again to eternal citizenship in heaven. We are children of God's children, but it is not yet clear what we shall become. But this we know: when Christ appears, we shall become like him, because we shall see him as he really is. Everyone who has this hope in Him keeps himself pure just as he is pure" (I John 3:2,3).

(c) We are not certain if Paul knew the Lord during his lifetime. He never expresses it in so many words. It is more than likely that he did. But for Paul it was not the most important point that he had contact with the Galilean Master. If he had not, the earlier disciples would have had an undeserved preferential position. The question is, "Do you know Christ spiritually? Are you joined together with the glorified Lord?" Paul answers, "If we at one time judged Christ according to human standards, we no longer do so" (II Cor. 5:16). That which is unheard of happens here. Prophets and apocryphal seers awaited the coming age when the power of sin and death should come to an end. A sublime expression for this hope of the future is found in the Bible's last book (Rev. 21:1-4): "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished. And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a bride dressed to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne. Now God is at home with men! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them and he will be their God. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief, crying or pain. The old things have disappeared." (Rev. 21:1-4).

The old shall disappear. A new existence shall break forth. According to Paul, the new age that had been foretold was that which was united with the living Lord and had already come with Christ's resurrection. "The old is gone; the new has come" (II Cor. 5:17). The prophets and the apocalyptic classical words about the future coming were used by Paul about the present. The great, determinative event had already taken place in the world of the soul. Not as though sin and death had ceased to exist and exert their power. Paul cries out: "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death?" (Romans 7:24). But Christ is shown to be Lord with power. His resurrection is the guarantee for the eternity of the new life and immortality! "Oh, Death, where is thy sting?" Martin Luther wrote, "This life is not a state of health but a state of recovery, not a being but a becoming, not a rest but an exercise. We have not arrived at this as yet but we will one day. It is not yet the end, but it is the way." Even we shall be freed from the chains of corruption. "My dear friends, we are God's children, but it is not yet clear what we shall become. But this we know: when Christ appears, we shall become like him, because we shall see him as he really is. Everyone who has this hope in Him keeps himself pure just as he is pure" (I John 3:2,3). "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that what you do in the Lord's service is never wasted." (I Cor. 15:58).

Christmas and Easter are life's great festivals: birth unto Life and birth to Eternal Life. The Saviour opened his Father's door in order to come to us. When the day ended, the Father opened the gate to receive his beloved Son back to himself after The Great Day's work. A ray of light shines down upon us from the open doorway to the Father's house. And this light will shine eternally.
In the days of the Greeks the critic was the handmaid of the Muse. Today the critic has moved into the temple and the Muse has been evicted. Art has certainly come a long way. The advent of the critic was foreseen. The 19th Century produced so much spirit and wrote so much good poetry that it was inevitable that the pendulum should swing toward the middle again. After all, moderation is good — even for poets; however, the pendulum continued to swing past the middle and today we find the clock all but run down because the counter-weight of criticism has outchimed the melodies of pure sound.

Hardly any poem is safe. Consider the poem "Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams:

so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow
glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens.

The critics have considered this grist for their mills for a long time. The number of critics who have attacked this little poem for this or that ambiguity, paradox, or tension is staggering. A fantastic number of critics refuse to let the poem alone; to let it stand as a simple statement of the goodness of things, of the innocence of things. Immediately they want to know WHY so MUCH depends upon a red wheelbarrow? Why should anything indeed depend upon a homely wheelbarrow? Has the poet lost all touch with reality so that to him, then, a red wheelbarrow becomes the end all of existence? Has the poet flown to Karma in the shape of a wheelbarrow? or chicken? A wheelbarrow is okay, say the critics, but is it reasonable to assume that one could evoke so much emotion as to cause a poet to throw up everything in favor of one and publicly say so MUCH depends on one?

And why is it red? Why not blue? Obviously the color red conjures up whole cartloads (cartloads?) of imagery. The color red symbolizes blood, war, violence. Therefore, the critic says, the red wheelbarrow of W.C. Williams probably stands for his admitted violent tendencies; his need for vengeance; his craving for punishment. The fact that the red wheelbarrow is glazed with rain water gives the critic much to gloat about. Rain water is pure water. The red of man's nature needs to be covered with a gospel-glaze of purity. Therefore, the rain water symbolizes Williams' subconscious need for expiation. You cannot have the one emotion without the other, say the Freudian critics. The well-known fact that Williams was an obstetrician obviously comes into play here. He of all men must realize the need for new birth — the rain water — or else all will be lost in the red tide of man's destruction. Obviously that is why SO MUCH depends on just such a wheelbarrow. Now it is probably unfortunate that the red wheelbarrow glazed with rain water stands beside the WHITE chickens. Had the chickens been black or red it should be much easier to consider them critically. Now all that can be done is to consider them poetically — the last thing most critics are willing to do. In the final analysis a critic will snub the last phrase as of no moment and cast it from his mind. He will, no doubt, attribute it to weakness in structure on the part of the poet.

A random wild case? Not at all. Take a look in your library — especially in your college or university library — and weigh the difference in volume between creative works and critical works.

The Freudian critics are especially adept at this sort of bungling criticism. When Emily Dickinson wrote "A Narrow Fellow in the Grass," little did she know that she would be providing the Freudians with enough material to last for decades. The sudden snake that frightened Miss Dickinson in her garden and which led to one of the most powerful images in all poetry — "and zero at the bone" — is all but forgotten in the straining and grunting and groveling of the Freudian critics to see whip-like phallic symbols in the snake, in the grass, and even in the way the lines of the poem fit together.

The list is endless. When Robert Frost wrote "Stopping By the Woods on A Snowey Evening" the race was on. The typewriters fairly clacked: Did Frost mean to say that the snow that filled the farmer's field represented a death wish? Did he? Well it really doesn't matter, say the critics, for, once written, the poem's meaning is out of his hands. He probably meant the white snow to represent a death wish whether he thought so consciously at the time or not. After all, if the rest of the poem confirms their premise well, then, they are right! And later Frost admits, mind you, that he has "miles to go before I sleep, and miles to go before I sleep." Sleep,
say the critics, is death. Why would the poet repeat the line if not to reiterate his subconscious wish for death? Why indeed? Frost, when asked that very question, said he repeated the line because he liked it. Naturally, the critics politely scoffed at that and went right along with their clacking.

Novels are not safe either. Take the case of the celebrated piece of criticism that has Huckleberry Finn in the list of the great homosexual novels of our time. You will recall the section in the book where Huck has just been washed overboard by a huge wave from a passing boat. It is foggy and dark. Jim, trying to pick the frowning Huck out of the Mississippi calls out “Huck, honey. Come back to the raft.” There it is. Proof! Enough at least to set one critic to work on his magnum opus, and enough to convince one of the “little magazines” to pick it up and honor the essay in print. It boggles the mind.

It is not enough to take random bits and pieces of poems, novels, and plays out of context and then use these bits and pieces as springboards for your own private theories of criticism. One does not have to look too far to see mountains of evidence of Robert Frost’s rock-ridden New England hardihood in his poetry, to know that a death wish was as far from Frost’s mind when he wrote that poem as homosexuality was from the mind of Samuel Clemens when he wrote of the trials of two people on a raft on the great river. One must read all the way. To be satisfied that one has found a critical base from which to espouse half-baked theories before a thorough examination of the whole is arrogance of the worst kind and worthy of the meanest pedant.

Lest we take a chapter from their book, it needs to be said that criticism does have its place. The work some of the Freudian critics have done with Hamlet, for instance, has unearthed much new insight that may help explain Hamlet’s seeming indifference to the ghost’s command for revenge. Help, not do. There is a world of difference there. For criticism, no matter how astute, cannot nor should it try to define the nature and soul of something creative. For it should be obvious to most writers and readers that Freud has done more harm to literature than he has done good. To see endless phallic symbols in snakes, grass, vines, anything connected with running water, is so much bilge. If one must have a rule of thumb for interpretation then it is simply this: read the poem, novel, or play for itself. Enjoy it or hate it. Think about it or dismiss it honestly, but do not search beyond what is there. Go with the given — then stop.

There is so much criticism afoot today that the beginning has merged with the tail and the critical worm (hear the clacking?) is devouring itself. How many pages in the “little magazines” (aptly named) have been devoted to a verbal barrage between critics concerning points of difference in a poem or novel? The critic who looks for ambiguities in a poem may be at odds with the Freudian over the meaning of a single word or line. Their dialogue becomes bitter and long-drawn out in the scholarly journals. Unfortunately their cases must be decided by the students in the classrooms and in the seminars because the instructors have taken up the hue and cry and have entered the fray as tyro critics and have all but forgotten their role as teachers and as guides into the realms of gold. Rather, they have become encamped in this or that critical army and stand ready to fire ridiculous salvos over the heads of their students with an eye to the research paper that had better be well-salted with the latest critical spillage. It is no wonder that the best minds in schools today have long since gone into science. The humanities programs have just about frozen themselves into immobility because a student’s reaction to anything creative, on the gut level, is poison to the teacher-critic. Unless a student can document his honest reaction to a poem he is better advised to keep quiet.

It is time that the pendulum started its swing back again. It is time for the critics to remember their place: it is to comment, not to judge with the air of an Olympian god. Perhaps then the clacking will stop and something approximating the renaissance in music which we are experiencing in America today will take place in literature.

The Romantic age in England produced a great deal of good poetry after an age in which the creative impulse was hampered and stifled by the unnatural iron of the heroic couplet. The 19th century produced poetry: the 20th century is producing criticism. When the Time Capsules are opened in that far-off day, I would hope the reader of our literary heritage would sit down under a tree and, amidst the ever-increasing madness of his age, enjoy, delight, and love what he reads. If, however, what he finds there is an essay on the probably Edwardian release of emotion in the middle section of “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” then I think we can forget about the tree, the restful pose, the enjoyment. I think the most we could hope for in such an event would be a wistful sigh as he threw the critical essay in the dirt and kept on digging, hoping to find something that would speak of the vital juices of America, her greatness, her imagination, and her uncontrollable creativity.
Portrait of the Artist as . . . Christian

By M. FREDERICK GROTH

Part of the problem, of course, lies in the polemic. The Vision isn't the Commercial. Or, perhaps better stated, Proclamation can't become Propaganda. And yet here is this man — call him whatever you like, poet, saint extraordinaire, CHRISTIAN ARTIST. At any rate — man of unique charisma, man of habitus — if you will — and he is faced with a very curious dilemma: the Seer must not become the Crier. In other words, how then — possessing a special vision as he does, indeed, a rare and highly personal vision — can he both pay his debt to his Baptism and the Book of James and at the same time maintain his integrity as artist?

The answer is cultivation of and adherence to an uncompromising self-honesty. The artist must checkmate two things: his art (or vision) and himself. First of all, he must know the bounds of his revelation. If he has seen Vision A sub-1, he must not say he has seen Vision A sub-2. Secondly, he must know that regardless of wherever his vision takes him — from psychology to politics to theology — he is neither psychologist nor politician . . . nor theologian, but artist. Ignoring this latter rule is as illogical as the proverbial athlete promoting the tobacco industry, and disregard of the first is, at best, self-deception and, at worst, artistic fraud.

Now, of course, along about this time the spiritual pragmatist puts in his customary appearance. An antagonist wherever he is to be found, this gentleman is particularly obnoxious when he tries in the name of some sacred tradition to effect a utilitarian entente between art and theology. What this ecclesiastical wheeler-dealer usually has in mind is some form of the sacred soft-sell, a kind of coffee house Christianity whereby simply thousands will be marched into glory at the mere drop of a folk mass. Typically, this Madison Avenue Man of the Hour — I hesitate to call him either artist or Christian — sees his mission in life as one of putting art to work for God: harnessing artistic rivers for the sake of turning beatific dynamos. Unfortunately, the result is neither electricity nor salvation but amperes upon amperes of static.

Where then should the Christian artist go with his product? Is he simply dead weight to a Church already obese with similar cadavers? Should he fling himself to the opposite end of the pole, chock years and years of artistic discipline (to say nothing of Confirmation classes), and throw in with the Da Da School? Should he grab for the coattails of Oscar Wilde and proclaim a dated, if not to say boring, aesthetic theory based upon the principle of art for art's sake? Or, on the other hand, should he turn to Shaw and become what our Madison Avenue Theologian suggested — polemicist, hack for hire ("Let me disguise your doctrine with dactyls")?

A good deal of the answer lies in the peculiar nature of the artist's vision. What he has seen is no different than what the mystic or even (even!) the theologian has seen: the Sacred, the Holy, God. But unlike the mystic who is incapable of communicating his vision, and unlike the theologian whose vision is traditionally translated axiomatically as a body of dogma (hence, the divine right to be Official Crier), the artist — Christian genre — can only describe his vision kerygmatically. Using whatever is at his command — whether it be paint and brushes or lithe body in dance or words in meter, he describes what he sees. And there he must stop. It is Proclamation in tableau.

Now if this particular revelation — via appearance on stage or oil on canvass — is shared and an extra­neous but sensitive individual realizes an aesthetic Aha Experience, then Christian Art can be said to have a "pragmatic" function. But only then. And lest someone think that now, on the basis of this, he can go to art for a set of community rules in life, it is necessary to remember that Prudence, as St. Thomas said, falls outside the category of artistic vision. This finally, for instance, is what makes Turner's later play, Cry Dawn in Dark Babylon, greatly superior to the earlier Christ in the Concrete City. Turner's agent, the priest in Cry Dawn, has often been criticized as being drawn too spineless, a man without the answers, so to speak. And yet Turner's artistic aim was far more accurate and in keeping with the entire nature of art in Cry Dawn than when he tried to make dogmatic hay in Christ in the Concrete City. The priest's concluding ontological speculations are far more articulate and honest, if not to say convincing, than Peter, James, and John continually making oblique reference to the Sermon on the Mount in Christ in the Concrete City.

The conclusions can be said to be somewhat tentative, but are summarized thusly: if Christian art is to go anywhere at all, it must take the path of integrity, not inculcation. The Artist can be Christian, and the Christian can be Artist, but such a man, the Christian-Artist, walks a tightrope of delineation unique to any vocation in the world.
What would you do if I were to stand here and say that there is no such thing as the "Christian" way of life? Would you rise to challenge my statement — this is, after all, the week for that sort of thing — would you rise to challenge me and give as the substance of your argument the example of this university, a "Christian" university which exists to teach us a certain kind of living that is uniquely Christian, itself the foremost model for a Christian community? Would you challenge me by pointing to the Christian Church, declaring that it will teach me the "Christian" way of life? Or, would you readily accept my statement, saying that you knew it all along, and would you then find in it the excuse to live as an ethical vegetable in a thin, confused soup of life in which right and wrong melt together, a soup whose noodles most likely spell out: "Aw, what the hell?"

The fact that there is no such thing as the "Christian" way of life is what makes the Christian ethic such a revolutionary one when a person compares it with other kinds of ethics. Now, by the term "revolutionary" I do not mean to conjure up visions of radicals in weird get-ups raising their voices in insult and polemic and working to overthrow existing patterns of life in order to replace them with a new and perhaps more interesting code of their own invention. No, the Christian ethic is revolutionary in a different sort of way. Here we could question if it is even possible for us to talk about a "Christian" ethic, for to use the word "ethic" implies a certain system of values, a certain set of moral principles, a certain model of existence, indeed, a certain way of life. But the context in which we find ourselves as university students offers us no better alternative, so we shall attempt to talk about the Christian ethic however imprecise and inadequate the term may be.

What is so revolutionary about the Christian ethic is that it does not require man to revolt against his world, to revolutionize it in accordance with a beautiful ideal set up by Churchly doctrine or social philosophy. Rather, the Christian ethic involves something that revolutionizes man himself and thus his way of life. And it places in new perspective those in our society who would call us to their way of life as they define it: reactionaries with an unbending code of puritan morals mixed with a warring patriotism; radicals with a libertine code, just as rigid in its own way of excessive permissiveness; ethical vegetables — like us perhaps — to whom it hardly matters whether or not norms are established which demand that we either be straight-laced or ignore all inhibitions, just so long as we are able to live as we please, free from the demands of the government, free from the demands of Valparaiso's faculty, free from the demands of parents back home and free from the implicit demands of the introverted, sad-eyed person who lives down the hall. Although Christians may follow the way of life lived by reactionaries or radicals or confused students, none of these are the "Christian" way of life. There is no such thing as the "Christian" way of life because there are as many ways of living under grace as there are people who call themselves Christian. We can count on Christ's presence in all cultures, in all ways of life.

There is no need to waste our time getting hung up on whether or not we are living the "Christian" way of life. Above all, there is no need for us to examine, bit by bit, the lives of others with the intention of labeling their actions as Christian or non-Christian. Such anxiety and such criticism reduces the Christian ethic to an abstract principle that we apply to our lives and to the lives of others — a generality whereby we evaluate human action and then either praise or blame it on the basis of whether it is Christian or not. When we place ourselves in such a position of judgment over our friends, over strangers — be they hippies or those over thirty — and even over ourselves, we are holding ourselves aloof from any vital way of life. When we become mere spectators and critics, we ruin our chances for full participation in life, for sharing with the people around us the life we have in common. More often than not, this kind of judgment impedes our actions, preventing us from doing anything at all for the community.

We have no certain knowledge of one way of life that could be called Christian. Our knowledge of ourselves and our relations with others is confused and fragmented. We rediscover that every time we sit down and try to figure out what the heck is going on in our lives, every time we stare into the mirror and try to understand what lies behind those tired eyes. How we are to live rightly is a riddle that cannot be solved by any amount of rationality, by any personal opinion of right and wrong. Our knowledge is a knowledge measured by how many pages we have to read before next Tuesday's test. If there is no such thing as the "Christian" way of life, how muddled and ambiguous the course of our life becomes: What does one do about white racism? What does one do about the draft? What does one do about the person we've
been dating for whom we feel such a strange mixture of love and hate?

The Christian ethical message does not solve any of these confusions, it gives no guarantee of right to our actions. Life remains an ambiguity in all its expressions. The one problem the Christian ethical message does solve is our own identity crisis. It gives us a knowledge of who we are, of who everyone is. It gives a knowledge that cannot be learned by reading a certain number of pages. Once we know who we are and who man is, we can accept the ambiguity of life and live it as no mere spectator ever can.

First of all, we are not bubbling springs of love just looking for an outlet to shower our benevolence upon others. No, we are immobilized by compelling fears, indecisions, complexes, and inhibition after inhibition. We do not hear the needs of those whom we say we love, of those whom we hate, and of those whom we do not even know—we do not hear them because we translate everything we do hear into a tale about ourselves. And thus we miss the Word that gives us a revolutionary permission to live and to act in spite of our opinions, in spite of our doubts, in spite of our certainties, in spite of our morals, yes, in spite of our Christianity. The Word that inspires in us the confidence that life is good in spite of its evil and the realization that our own life is evil in spite of its good.

Simon and Garfunkel sing: "We are voices out of rhythm, couplets out of rhyme, in syncopated time." The Word that is Christ revolutionizes the whole poem, transforming us and freeing us from the "dangling conversation" and from the "superficial sighs" that reveal how wrapped and warped up we are in ourselves. The Word itself enters the conversation, making it possible for us to be vital participants in that conversation, carrying that Word to others through our own speech and action, helping them to live life more fully.

There is no such thing as a prescribed "Christian" way of life because the Christian God is a god who says over and over again, "Behold, I am doing a new thing." He did a new thing when his Word revolutionized man's destiny so that man's life could become a life of always doing a new thing. What is this new thing of ours? How can we ever do anything new in the routine of student life, broken only by Weeks of Challenge and vacations? Being free to do a new thing means being free to do what is needed in every new situation that confronts us. Our course of action can be found in the facts of our neighbor's situation. It is a fact, not a decision or opinion of ours, that everyone we encounter has a right to demand something from us, to ask that we give what we have to his particular needs in his particular situation.

Our commitment as revolutionized men is to live for what the neighbor needs. Here is where our critical faculties, our knowledge, and our sensitivity come into play. We need everything we have got intellectually to examine the facts and realities of a situation to determine what would best fulfill the needs of those involved. The revolutionized man listens to the complex but mundane voices around him, but after listening, he does not withdraw deeper in the shadows of his private world of opinion, he leaps out into the sunlight of needed word and action. And the "Christian" way of life for each individual takes on a new face with each new day.

The Christian ethic of doing a new thing for our brothers means that we must turn some part of our lives to them. Who knows what will become of it?

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**Seward Courthouse**

The floors, hard marble, ring the click and shuffle down the dreary corridors; all the big wide-bladed fans whirl in the high-ceiling offices where all the little men sit on the high stools or wooden rockers, with eye shades (some with sleeve holders) and count the pigeons on the statue below in the courtyard.

The courthouse has rooms that wear the quiet like a shroud and each hall runs into the massive side of granite that is a wall; the drinking fountains remain on (both of them) all day.

High in the dome, the empty dome, the pigeons skitter among the smooth rafters, while inside, the long shadows lick the same musty smell of old places, tortured books with brass plates, and the fans whirr sliding blade after blade across the webbed ceiling. The men sit, stare at the round plastic eyes that stare back from the rain gutters.

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JACK TRACY LEDBETTER
Do the Poor Have Rights?

Do the poor have rights? What is the role of the poor in our society? How should society handle the problem of the poor?

These questions are being answered and argued from different perspectives, and often in the current circumstances of American society.

Poverty: Power and Politics, a series of essays edited by Chaim I. Waxman, professor at Central Connecticut State College, (Grosset and Dunlap, $6.95), sees to it that the reader confronts most of the questions, arguments, and answers.

In the first essay (by George Simmel, a well-known German sociologist who died in 1918), the reader is confronted almost at once with a discussion of the conventional approach to poverty, almsgiving, as old as begging in the Middle Ages. If the poor are approached from this perspective, "the motive for alms then resides exclusively in the significance of giving for the giver." In the case of Jesus telling the rich young man, "Give all that thou hast to the poor," he seemed to be thinking primarily of the young man's spiritual condition, according to Simmel, such Christian giving represents hardly more "than a form of asceticism, of 'good works,' which improve the chances of salvation of the giver."

If one emphasizes only the giver, this might lead, as it very often has, to "the senseless distribution of alms," the demoralization of the proletariat through arbitrary donations contrary to all creative work, and to the making of sacrifice for the sake of the giver a senseless symbol.

It might be argued, however, that the giving of alms must be of some benefit to the recipient. Simmel points out that assistance of the poor could just as well be designed to "alleviate individual needs." If it is personal, assistance to the poor will take into deepest consideration the circumstances of the poor. In line with this our assistance to the poor would be concentrated on placing individual poor families into homes and on jobs. We would be interested then in giving individual personal beings a good education and the kinds of lives they hope for and desire. In such cases, we could perhaps become as interested in their future as in the future of our own friends and relatives. We would want them to go as far as possible on their talents and with their will.

If we committed society to that, society would be forced to promulgate a thoroughgoing social welfare program that would inevitably lead to a more equitable distribution of wealth. Simmel suggests rather strongly that the average society is not that interested in alleviating the problems of the poor.

On the contrary, Simmel asserts: "The goal of assistance is precisely to mitigate certain extreme manifestations of social differentiation, so that the social structure may continue to be based on this differentiation." "But since the focus is the social whole," continues Simmel, "— the political, family, or other sociologically determined circles — there is no reason to aid the person more than is required by the maintenance of the social status quo."

By this time, the reader must be asking once more, "Don't the poor have rights?" "Don't we do something for the poor simply because they are alive, warm, human persons in need?"

Very often we find persons and institutions talking about their duties and obligations to the poor and the needy but apparently there is most often "no corresponding right to assistance on the part of the poor." Whatever the relations between rights and obligations they seem to exist and to be located "above and beyond the poor." Under this principle the poor must sit there and there and there and simply and quietly take whatever comes their way. It might be a half-hearted program from the state; or charity programs impregnated with the reluctance of status quo people; or indiscriminate almsgiving for the welfare of the giver's soul; or some other nonsense.

Yet — somewhere in this swamp-land of ambiguities — George Simmel manages to help us, me at least, to see the obligation to maintain the rights of the poor, and not only to maintain those rights but also to extend them and guarantee them against the subtle opposition of the dominants in our society. The poor can and must lay their claims to the fruits of society and its potential as any other citizen has that right. In the final analysis, we are not dealing with the poor. We are dealing with citizens. "To deprive those who receive alms of their political rights," concludes Simmel, "adequately expresses the fact that they are nothing but poor." And members of society, not poor and even when helping, are helping to keep the poor poor.

In the essay, "Poverty, Race, and Politics," S. M. Miller, on the faculty at New York University, echoes Simmel: "Poverty, then, is an American problem, but it has not yet reached its stature as a political problem." This essay, sometimes in a subdued dramatic manner, sets out "the possibilities of political awareness and action among the poor."

That Americans have not reached stature in the handling of poverty is evident in a number of other areas if clues are read rightly from Poverty: Power and Politics. We have not always researched poverty in a commendable manner. We have not always wanted to research the problem. We have had considerable trouble with the questions that give directions to our research. What is poverty? What does it mean existentially and really to be poor, away from all the abstractions of social science talk? And what about the conceptual apparatus by which we investigate poverty? Is it sufficient? Will it do the job? Does not the determination of who is poor depend on who is doing the defining? Is Lewis A. Coser, author of The Functions of Social Conflict, right: "Historically, the poor emerge when society elects to recognize poverty as a special status and assigns specific persons to that category."

Have we elected? And around we go. However, the chapter on "The Proper Study of Poverty: Empirical vs. Normative Perspectives" by Deborah I. Offenbacher, on the faculty of the New School for Social Research, helps us around many a tortuous curve.

By this time, the reader must be understanding that the pursuit and implementation of any one of these ideas would lead to conflict. As even the cursory reading of a newspaper tells the reader, the poverty problem in the United States has led to conflict and will continue to involve us in controversy. From the essay, "Social Conflict and The Theory of Social Change" by Lewis Coser, the reviewer has gained some basic impressions. Conflict, like social change, is inevitable. Where social change takes place, and that is everywhere and all the time, conflict is omnipresent. Conflict is necessary inasmuch as every social system needs conflict "to renew its energies and to revitalize its creative forces."

This all seems so self-evident and elementary but you would be surprised.

To this last point particularly Coser cites John Dewey: "Conflict is the gadfly of thought. It stirs us to observation and memory. It instigates to invention. It shocks us out of sheeplike passivity, and sets us at noting and contriving. . . .Conflict is a sine qua non of reflection and ingenuity." In these terms and with respect to poverty, it may therefore be dangerous to keep emphasizing the "human relations" approach which accentuates the 'collective purpose of the total organization'
Ombudsmen for American Government

Edited by Stanley V. Anderson (Prentice-Hall, Inc. (paperback), $1.95)

Despair at the prospects for post-industrial societies is a pandemic malaise of the day. This despair is vividly expressed in the stark imagery of an impregnable government ombudsman - the watchman of the day. This despair is vividly expressed in the societies is a pandemic malaise of the day. The United States is moving inexorably toward a competent, affluent "unity" between groups who find themselves still with us in a competent, affluent society. In these questions is the haunting melody of the factory" and pursues a "search for mutual adjustment, understanding, and 'unity' between groups who find themselves in different life situations and have different life chances." Coser, it seems to the reviewer, appropriately quotes William G. Sumner, one of the pioneering students of the social sciences: "We want to develop symptoms, we don't want to suppress." For American Society to take notice, the reviewer would like to belabor the obvious. The symptoms of poverty are all present and being accounted for. This book will see to that and provide some embarrassment along the way.

The foremost question remains: in the conflicts and the controversies, who speaks for the poor? Almost no one.

In "The Politics of Poverty," Douglas Cater, author of The Fourth Branch of Government, intimates that the question will hang around for a long time for "the distressing fact" is "that at least one-fifth of our population still lives in rather abject conditions." More distressing is a report from the Council of Economic Advisors quoted by Cater: "in the future, economic growth alone will provide relatively few escapes from poverty." Why should it when four-fifths of our population continues to do better or, at least, to hold its own?

This is the paradox of an unusually affluent society: in the midst of plenty, the poor are still with us. The questions are still relevant, significantly so. Why are the poor still with us in a competent, affluent society? Who works with the poor? Who speaks for the poor? Do we ever see the poor really? Is it not more difficult to be involved with the poor in an affluent society?

In these questions is the haunting melody of failure and futility!

But the preacher keeps saying that we always will have the poor with us. Is this our way out? Our rationalization? Can we get out of the matter by insisting that it is simply and irrevocably a matter of the metaphysics of human existence? As we ask what has been done about poverty in the past, we get phrases like "paternalism," "welfare systems contribute to the problem and not to the potential," "inertia," "apathy," "failure of government bureaucracy," and the matter of agency red tape - but never quite do we lay the charges at our own feet.

We can top all this with the shortcomings of the middle class. As members of the middle class we can use our verbal skills to conceal the distressing aspects of our society. We can use the magic of the word (and of The Word) to make ourselves comfortable. In a very sophisticated manner we can make this add up to a minimal attention and contribution to the plight of the poor. It all adds up, really, to a nefarious bargain to deprive the poor of their proper role in society.

These contentions in some form or another appear on nearly every page of Poverty: Power and Politics.

The last section deals with "Possible Solutions." The suggested solutions can be read in some of the captions: "The Need for Objective Reporting and Evaluation", "OE0 Research"; "Planning-Programming-Budgeting System"; "Cost Effectiveness"; "The Responsibility of The Academic Community"; "How Do We Involve the Poor?"; "Power, Policy-Making, and The Poor"; "Employment of The Target Population"; "Planning for Institutional Change"; and "The Weight of The Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty."

The book, a delightful and humiliating adventure, ends with the last, "The Weight of the Poor: A Strategy to End Poverty." That chapter, by Richard O. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, both at the Columbia University School of Social Work, begins with "How can the poor be organized to press for relief from poverty?" How can a broad-based movement be developed and the current disarray of activist forces be halted?" By way of a first-step answer to these questions, the authors write: "It is our purpose to advance a strategy which affords the basis for a convergence of civil rights organizations, militant anti-poverty groups and the poor. If this strategy were implemented, a political crisis would result that could lead to legislation for a guaranteed annual income and thus an end to poverty. The force for that challenge, and the strategy we propose, is a massive drive to recruit the poor onto the welfare rolls."

This strategy will certainly put the fat into the fire for "even activists seem reluctant to call for national programs to eliminate poverty by the outright distribution of income." Play this statement from the authors on your affluent guitar: "A federal program of income distribution has become necessary to elevate the poor en masse from poverty."

And for the politician: "And those seeking new ways to engage the Negro politically should remember that public resources have always been the fuel for low-income urban political organizations. If organizations can deliver millions of dollars in cash benefits to the ghetto masses, it seems reasonable to expect that the masses will deliver their loyalties to their benefactors."

This brings contemporary society and the potential of poverty into focus: the name of the game is power.

All this and more is written into the title of the book, Poverty: Power and Politics.

The alleviation of poverty and the discovery of potentials for the poor, citizens all, will come with power and politics.

Do the poor have rights? Who speaks for the poor?

The poor may have something to say about their problems and potentials over the long haul.

Along with this important book, the reviewer is casting his vote for this "effective crisis strategy... to secure an end to poverty."

VICTOR F. HOFFMANN
has a distinguished history of service to the cause of fair play for all at the hands of government. Some dozen other states have either an official similar to the ombudsman or agencies which perform a comparable function. The chapter on the history and development of the ombudsman is especially good and is recommended to those readers who desire an authoritative description and analysis of this office. The thorough investigation of the potential political problems in the United States which adoption of the ombudsman will create is one of the finest expositions extant in the literature. The inclusion of the model statute is a very important addition — one which many of us have found very helpful. The book is well done. The American Assembly selected a competent and balanced team of distinguished scholars for this effort. The resulting volume has contributions of uniformly high quality — insightful for the American scene — and they hold the promise to influence U.S. government at all levels. But this should also be pointed out: “A more perfect union” is indeed obstructed by public oligarchs. But then, it is also obstructed by the tyranny of too many laws, and indeed increasingly complex laws, and by the quantity, or lack of it, of this participation. Those of us who live in the industrial, urban and managed societies have, I assume, opted for this primarily because of the benefits to be derived from this form of society. As we seek to improve this society, we will find many interesting problems and contradictions with which to wrestle; and the ombudsman, albeit a partial answer, is really only that — a partial answer.

DONALD C. MUNDINGER

“The ombudsman concept has a contribution to make to the current situation on the American college campus. Specifically, the university ombudsman, as I see his responsibility, is a campus protector. He is charged with the responsibility to stand above and beyond the campus to listen to complaints and frustrations in a dispassionate and sympathetic manner, to investigate their accuracy, and to suggest remedial action where necessary. Under this system the harsh confrontation between student and administrative officer is avoided, potentially explosive student situations defused, and the escalation to disorder, strike, and riot controlled. To be sure, the ombudsman works only in a community where the participants attempt to make the existing polity function as it was intended. If students are determined to change the fundamental nature of the university, no mechanism, procedure, or official will satisfy their demands. But in those instances where individuals or groups on campus have a bona fide disagreement about a specific condition, the campus ombudsman, cognizant of the principles of academic freedom and responsibility, can contribute to the establishment of understanding and accord.”

From “The University Ombudsman.”

an address by Donald C. Mundinger

On Second Thought

By ROBERT J. HOYER

“Mark them who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them.” One of the standard proof texts. The trouble with a standard proof text is that custom fixes the meaning so thoroughly that it is virtually impossible to achieve another viewpoint. Custom states that anyone who departs from the doctrine we have learned causes divisions and offenses. Such a doctrine changer we must avoid. Then the argument starts. How specific do we get on that doctrine question? The number of angels on a pin? The teaching that “engagement is tantamount to marriage”? The “fundamental doctrines” — at least those enumerated in Romans, to which chapter 16 has been affixed? If so, who is to say what those doctrines are? If the Lutherans use the passage to protect their stated past, why should not the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Romans? Then we have solidified the divisions with which we have offended one another. Maybe the words mean something else. Paul was greatly concerned with the unity of the church. Perhaps he meant that we should avoid anyone who, contrary to the doctrine of unity in Christ, causes divisions and offenses. To cause a division you need to say, “I am right, my side is the correct one, follow me.” You need to suggest that those who disagree with you should leave your fellowship and join someone else. You need to be content or even happy with the shattered character of the Body of Christ, content that Christian can regard Christian with disfavor. You need to feel that color or creed or culture separate those whom God has called one, you need to will that those who do not look and talk like you should gather to their own kind in order to worship Him who knows no different kinds.

What would happen if Christians did avoid such dividers of the church? It might be possible for us to accept one another in the grace of Christ, if none among us is claiming rightness and judging others. It might be possible for us to sing our praise together in the joy of forgiveness, if we have left those who call another Christian’s praise faulty.

It will do no good to judge or condemn those who try to gain a following in the church. That would be divisive. You can’t really call another man wrong without also implying that you are right. Let a man try to divide us. If no one follows him he is adequately corrected. But the criterion by which we mark a man is his attempt to separate Christians, not the error of his teaching. We sing, every Sunday, “Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord.”
Pierre Boulez has included among the programs of his current tour of U.S. orchestras one which is devoted wholly to music of the twentieth century. The composer, whose works of the fifties were leading examples of the music of our age, has become a conductor of more reputation than that earned him by his compositions. His influence in this role upon the experience and developing discriminatory powers of audiences is great. The audience at his Chicago appearance in February remained to the end of the concert not from any sense of compulsion but out of genuine fascination with the works presented.

He began the evening with the sort of performance of Debussy's *Jeux* for which he has become famous. At his direction the orchestra threaded its way through this score, filled with traps for the unwary ensamelist, with ease and confidence. *Jeux* is late Debussy (1913). Its innovations have remained almost unheard since the premiere because they are veiled in Debussian understatement which seems tentative next to the boldness of the work that two weeks later roused an audience to frenzy — Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Boulez, however, demonstrates that the modern age of music began in Debussy. In *Jeux* is development without theme, structure without reprise, designed by internal cohesion rather than linear progression and overall dependence upon color expressive apart from the other musical elements.

The Bartok *First Piano Concerto* (1927) seemed at first an illogical succession to the Debussy piece. Certainly the concentration upon percussive sounds from the solo instrument as well as the orchestra betrayed the eastern-European roots of the composer. Rhythm separates itself from melody, preceding rather than shaping the latter. Scales, though exotic, are relentlessly tonal, not anti-tonal as in Debussy. The Frenchman, however, was a necessary predecessor to the Hungarian. Debussy cut music loose from its functional-harmonic anchors; Bartok chose to use traditional forms to explore more freely the new worlds of Slavic rhythms and non-western melody.

After intermission Webern's *Passacaglia*, op. 1 (1908) and his *Six Pieces for Orchestra*, op. 6 (1928) received definitive performances. It is difficult, having heard Boulez's realization of the scores, to imagine performances more attuned to the composer's intentions and the expressive potential of the music. These pieces are quintessentially expressionistic. That German-Austrian phenomenon of musical thought and taste so like the concurrent style of painting called Expressionism is distilled by Webern into liquors so potent that they can only be imbibed in the smallest of doses.

A program which sends the entire string section off stage for the final number is notable for that fact alone. The mystical crashes, tinkles, drones, and blasts interpreting selected passages of Scripture having to do with the resurrection of the dead which are Olivier Messiaen's *Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum* (1964) are designed for large buildings or outdoor performances and dispense with the gentle, intimate violin family. A more bizarre mixture of Hindu rhythms, bird songs, and French cafe music is hard to imagine. The listener keeps his program notes close by to guide him, as Vergil led Dante, through the mazes of allegory, cryptic epigrams, and seemingly disconnected sequences. He concludes the composer is either mad or inspired and suspects he is meant to learn the synonymity of madness and inspiration.

The program was a triumph of planning. Excluding any music composed previous to the Debussy revolution freed the ear from the distractions of traditional harmony and design. Mixed programs mostly impress the listener with the boldness of twentieth-century adventure and give not enough time to appreciate its achievements.

Several days after this fine concert, however, an alarming thought thrust itself into consciousness. The impression left indelibly by every composition on that program was of its own time. Every piece was an experience of the world at the time of its composition; each sounded out of date. Even the Messiaen seemed so contemporary that it must remain identified only with the sixties. The concert hall had been in reality a museum of musical testaments to times gone by.

The twentieth century cultivates style as a thing apart. Innovation means a new mode of expression rather than new meaning. The artist today is asked to realize the spirit of the present unconcerned for universals.

The concert hall was at one time a center for the transmission of visions of humanity having some claim to universality. At its worst it became a substitute temple. At its best it was a stimulus to life lived more fully. If the exigencies of money and time require orchestras to embalm repertoires and add upon occasion only established testaments, then music as a lively, engendering force in society must be experienced elsewhere. Is not the Church such a place?
This has been a lively season in many respects, although none of the new plays would fit the mental framework of the Pulitzer Prize judges. All that has been going on so far has had the quality of a pleasing, rarely of an exciting, mediocrity which may be what our time asks for and deserves. I'll report about some of the plays in detail next month.

There are still many issues of general nature more dramatic and significant for the development of the theatre than the plays themselves. The latest Ford Foundation report gives us a rather dark picture as to future subsidies for the theatres. It also calls our cultural explosion a myth, a fact I have always suspected. The good mediocrity play with its popular appeal will show rewarding results at the box office. The unusual play, however still faulty, needs subsidy badly. Fortunately, there have not been many around in the last few seasons, or their authors could not get them produced.

Walter Kerr chided the off-Broadway producers for raising their prices from six to ten dollars as soon as they get good reviews and their houses sell out. This questionable practice deprives off-Broadway of its real and original purpose of being “avant-garde,” but, let’s be honest, show business is contagious and the financial struggle in those small theatres so great that even the most devoted theatre producer may easily succumb to the temptation to milk the public with little human kindness towards those who have not yet reached middle-aged affluency and that kind of boredom which seeks mere amusement in the theatre.

Off-Broadway and the legitimate avant-garde is needed to keep the theatre from turning sterile. The young and yet unproven need attention, and attention means a chance to be heard, and this asks for subsidies. Nowadays there is no longer much difference between drama and dance, as evidenced by Clive Barnes, who was appointed as dance and drama reviewer by The New York Times. I happen to like his reviews because they are highly readable and, without any pretenses, passionately personal in their relatively good judgment. New York has always been the Mecca of the dance, but Barnes has put the dance on the map of America.

The role of a critic is often a critical and mostly a crucial one. Barnes as well as I have put great hopes in a young dancer-choreographer, Yvonne Rainer, who created a storm that spilled over the proverbial tea pot. To spite the squares and heterosexual majority she ran a stag movie during one of her dance evenings sponsored by the Ford Foundation. In my review I called her presentation “pornographic Kindergarten.” Mr. Barnes not only attacked her, but also and mainly the Ford Foundation for having lent its ear and money to the producers’ choice of Yvonne Rainer. This caused a storm of protest which will continue, since Mr. Barnes, in his defense, asked to end all “subsidy of mediocrity.” Money should “only go where it will do the most good” which excludes the “unproven artist,” who, in Clive Barnes’ opinion, will find in not being supported “a fine incentive...to prove himself.”

This is a well chosen clarion call against mediocrity which is now and supposedly always has been rampant, but if heeded — and after the Ford Foundation’s latest report there is no doubt that it will be heeded — it may easily have the sound of a death knell for some struggling young artists of great potentialities. For instance, there are several organizations, supported by Foundation money, which give the yet unproven dramatists badly needed guidance and a platform to prove themselves.

What Yvonne Rainer did in a prankish mood was only a logical consequence and extension of the orgies of The Living Theatre’s “Paradise Now” and of Richard Schechner’s “Dionysus in 69” — which both received a friendly nod, even though with some reservations, from the dance and drama critic of the Times. The news about “Paradise Now” being filmed, a non-play whose pulse beat entirely depends on spontaneous audience participation, made me shudder. By its very nature, its cinematic version must belie the very message it pretended to have and can only glorify the phony and the spiritual depravity of our time.

We must not forget that we live in the Philip Roth age of Portnoy’s Complaint, whose author made $1,000,000 on this book before it was even published. It is an apo­thecary of spermatic filth, it sees the tests in life in life’s testes, but it is well written with the inky bile of self-hatred. It is a potential potboiler for the movies and perhaps television since it proclaims that sex does not pay. Well, even at the risk that Portnoy’s Complaint will be dramatized for the stage, and it very well may be, and that Yvonne Rainer will come up with another spilt and spite, let us not try to draw a line between the proven and unproven artist because too often mediocrity hides behind the former and a great talent may wait to unfold in the latter. Companies and individual artists need the patronage of Foundation money which, in the last analysis, is the money of the people, whose everyday existence should become more meaningful through the arts.
Archetypes of Wholeness

By RICHARD H. W. BRAUER

Wholeness includes both light and dark, sin and virtue, beast and spirit, and humanity lies in the very experience and realization of it.

Jerome S. Bruner
The geometric point ... the ultimate union of silence and speech.

Wassily Kandinsky

Last December, for our major Advent vespers service, the interior of the huge University Chapel was ringed with a horizontal stream of hundreds of tiny white and gold lights. Two vertical streams of the same lights descended in the back of the chancel, so that in the darkness of the evening an irregular, delicate circle of light united several thousand people into a heightened sense of oneness. Absent were such Advent symbols as the Rod of Jesse or the Key of David; absent were pictures telling the story of the Annunciation or even the Nativity. Perhaps we were the poorer for not having had those pictures and symbols, but during the service the prophecies were read, the Nativity story was told and sung, so that the facts of our faith were served by the words. But perhaps the intimations of divine oneness of the encircling light (the halo has always evoked holiness) spoke to our psyche more directly than literary symbols and story-telling pictures would have.

Many people, I'm sure, were not conscious of the symbolic circle but were caught up in the sensation of hundreds of sparking points. Such experiences with the excitement of visual effects have led many artists to abandon all representations and even all symbols for the creation of visual moods and "abstract" settings for worship. Such decorative art can strongly bring into play the senses and feelings and can provide stimulation for private meditation. At worst, however, such art can be an expensive, trivial ornamentation, or an irrelevant distraction.

My point is that there is an alternative to the primary use of non-objective design, archaic symbols, or story-telling pictures for worship situations. The alternative I have in mind is an art of archetypal forms. Archetypal forms are basic geometric shapes such as the circle, square, triangle, and cross; or basic organic shapes such as the egg or seed oval, or the plant branching pattern. The great student of human psychology, C. G. Jung, has pointed out how the geometric shapes touch on and spring from a common psychological base in all humanity.

Jung's attention was called to these forms when certain seriously disoriented patients drew concentric patterns of circles and squares in an effort to restore their sense of wholeness. Curiously, Jung found such expressions of wholeness scratched on the walls of prehistoric caves, in the Christian art of Romanesque Europe, in the art of the high religions of the Far East, and in the sand paintings of the southwest Indians. (These paintings, the Indians believed, had power to restore the wholeness and health of the sick person for whom they would be created.)

The circle, square, triangle, and cross all evoke a strong sense of order, yet each has a distinctly different character and connotation. Time and again the circle has been used as a symbol of divine perfection, of heavenly cosmos. It is the absolutely minimal shape; the utterly one thing without parts, without top or bottom or sides, whose edge is without beginning or end yet which separates with utmost compactness the inside from the outside — creating the "charmed circle". As a central point it assumes the role of the ultimate oneness, the source point of energy with the potential for expanding and contracting, for endlessly spinning, spiraling, multiplying and breaking up while ever remaining one, eternally being and becoming — a light, a halo, an eye.

When this point starts dividing into two centers, an oval or spheroid (the egg or seed) forms. When three points move and trace three equal straight lines enclosing an area, the triangle is formed. The triangle is visually aggressive, spare, the minimal rectilinear figure. With its center it becomes for the Hindu an archetype of divine form-making power. And the intersecting upward and downward moving triangles in the Sri Yantra form a power diagram of divine creation; creation being thought of as God's play.

Of greatest interest to me, however, is Jung's idea that the cross is the archetypal symbol for the self. For him, the psychological self is a very tense balance of opposites; such as a balance of the conscious and the unconscious, of the male and the female, of the unique and the universal, of the temporal and the eternal, of the spiritual and the earthbound, of the good and the evil. The cross form is a violent collision of right angles which stresses the opposition of up-down, right-left and the break-up into four parts that nevertheless maintain the unity of the whole in a tense truce. As Jung says, there is a completion but not a perfection.

Certainly, this is not news to the Christian. As the Bible indicates, every desire for good seems to make clearer the counter existence of our tendency for evil. The image of Christ on the cross between two crucified thieves, one personifying damnable evil and the other the effects of the grace of God, makes the cross the symbol of strained wholeness rather than of easy perfection — a symbol that describes the condition of man even at his best. This suggests that the imagery of archetypal forms could be used to express Christian truths at basic levels.
Emil Steffan, Franciscan Church, Cologne. Photo by Konrad Mahns.


Sri Yantra, painting, Rajasthan, Late 18th century. Private collection.
Early in 1968 a group of pastors from three Lutheran congregations in Milwaukee (the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church of America, and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) suggested a meeting of delegates from these congregations and others to plan "some things" with respect to social action. The idea was to create and maintain some cooperative efforts for Lutheran social action. Except that it was more than a Lutheran effort. Non-Lutherans joined in from the Church of God, the Baptists, and the Methodists. A Catholic or two is also in the group.

Out of this initial effort came the Lutheran Social Action Conference of Milwaukee.

On October 1, 1968, the articles of incorporation of this organization were accepted and filed in the office of the secretary of state of the State of Wisconsin.

According to the articles of incorporation, the major purpose of the corporation “shall be to work with residents of Milwaukee's Central City in solving problems of housing, job opportunities, education, and human relations, with emphasis on the awareness that improvements in human relations are needed throughout the entire metropolitan complex.” The articles further assert that our major purpose is to be guided by the following commitment statement: “The guiding principle of the Conference is that the Christian Commitment is to love one another which is challenging and demanding. Besides prayer, mandatory sacrifice and personal morality, the Christian must act constructively, responsively and vigorously to relieve the critical and desperate needs of his fellow man in recognition of God's making of one blood all nations of men.”

Under this major purpose and these guiding principles, the Lutheran Social Conference is committed to “inform members of our church of the need for social action in the Central City”; to create and maintain task forces in housing; to create and maintain “a resources committee to meet with the Superintendent of Schools, Chief of Police, Mayor of the City, Director of F.H.A., Director of the Housing Authority, and other individuals who would be prime movers in assisting the Conference to establish” its purposes and goals; and to set up “an information center to serve as a clearing house for information on the availability of housing, financing and job opportunities.”

On the operational level, the committees that implement the program goals of the Conference were appointed: on housing, education, jobs, and information. During the past year, the housing committee, chaired by a well-known church architect, has been the busiest. The committee on education, led by a former mayor of Milwaukee, is just now getting into high gear. A former painter and union man urges the Conference on in the area of jobs and employment. The information committee (really a speakers bureau) is run by a professor at Milwaukee Technical School.

The Lutheran Social Action Conference faces the usual opposition. Some people say it is not the job of Christians to organize in this manner for social action. Some argue that by helping people in the Inner City the members of the Conference merely add to and perpetuate the problems. Some insist that the job of Christians is simply and merely to preach the salvation of souls. And, insist others, if the Conference does help people, it ought to help Lutherans primarily. And so the story goes.

Beyond this kind of opposition, the Conference has internal problems of its own. They are like this: 1) some disagree on a number of matters; 2) the difficulties of maintaining a span of control over thirty or forty volunteer workers; 3) discussions about priorities; 4) never enough money and help; 5) busy people who must find additional time, energy, and money for the work of the Conference. The personal costs for this kind of dedication comes high. But the Conference, in spite of it all, is still in existence and working hard.

Most of the work of the last year has been in housing. The committee (in the main, its chairman) has placed over thirty families in homes. The housing program has been conducted with the help of the housing coordinator of the Milwaukee County Department of Public Welfare (also a member of the Conference) and the director and staff of the Federal Housing Authority for the state of Wisconsin. The housing committee is now planning a rehabilitation project and a program for housing the elderly.

As far as this columnist is concerned, the Lutheran Social Action Conference of Milwaukee was one of the real joys and landmarks of 1968. Because of this Conference, the columnist’s hopes about the Lutheran Church’s role in social action is being revived again.
The American Cancer Society appears to have hit on the ultimate weapon for use in its fight against the Dread Disease. The Society has begun to strike directly against what it believes to be a major cause of cancer. Its target is not some teeny virus, nor a complicated constellation of contributing factors. It's the Average Somebody who Smokes (A.S.S.). And the Society is giving the A.S.S. a pitiless dose of its ultimate weapon: the commercial.

A lovely Mozart concerto is followed on the FM by a racking cough, and then: "This message is brought to you by the American CANCER Society..." Another spot offers glowing reports by ex-addicts on how they don't miss it at all, followed by stumbling statements from A.S.S.es as to why they smoke. Or a girl distributing free cigarettes is rescued from her wayward ways by the reading of the Surgeon General's Report, which presumably deserves a spot alongside the Gideon Bibles in the country's motel rooms. Over and over the message comes, each time making the A.S.S. a little more uncomfortable. After all, there might be some truth to what they're saying — and besides, who needs it? (Then he answers, meekly, "I do."). Still, maybe if I gave it another try... .

The anti-smoking campaign being waged by the Society shows every sign of success. Of course, this judgment may strike some as being hasty, and based on insufficient research. I concede that my research sample is relatively small (actually, it's just me, and I'm small relative to what I was a month ago, before the late-winter diet began), and that the conclusion is hasty even on the basis of this sample. (The fact of the matter is that I haven't quit smoking yet. Nevertheless, I have cut my consumption of cigarettes in half, and I plan soon to halve that number, and then halve that, and so on until I'm left with one thin strand of tobacco per day, at which time I intend to make the big leap.) So if my resolve holds up, and if anybody else is as bugged as I am about these commercials, the Society's commercials may eventually eliminate at least some pains in the A.S.S.es of the world.

But where will it all end? What silly habit will be the next target of some well-meaning and well-financed philanthropic organization? What is the range of products which can be peddled by commercials?

Stan Freberg has done his best lately to merchandise religious belief. Though his efforts don't appear to be especially promising, the lack of appeal in Freberg's commercials for God stems as much from his hard-sell approach as from the intrinsic difficulty of the task. The blast of horns which ends each of Freberg's pitches seems peculiarly unsuited to facilitating the slide of words from the auditor's ears to his mind. When a commercial is directed toward prompting a certain line of thought in a person, it seems that it should elicit thought by being oblique enough to encourage a listener to try to figure out the point of the commercial, while yet confirming the listener's suspicion without bringing his train of thought to an abrupt end. The point, after all, is not to drum a brand name into people's heads, but rather to penetrate their thick skulls with an idea to which, under other circumstances, they might even be hostile.

If you can get people to stop smoking or to go to church or believe that the Republicans are going to clean up the mess in Washington, is there any limit to the uses to which commercials may be put? There appears to be none. But this is merely a testimony to the power of words and pictures. What makes the fact noteworthy is just that the mass media enable interested parties to put their words and pictures before virtually whomever they please, given sufficient money and the approval of the media-managers.

In point of fact, "thought-commercials" such as anti-smoking, pro-God, pro-seat-belt, and anti-drinking-if-you-drive ads are run without charge to their sponsors. They qualify as "public service announcements" and though individual media are free to decide which spots to run and which to decline, the FCC requires the media to run a given number of such commercials upon peril of loss-of-license. And the FCC likewise retains the right to decide what is, and what is not, a "public service announcement." With this double vise in operation, it is obvious that there is no chance of your ever hearing a free ad urging you to smoke, to shun the pew, to unbuckle your seat belt and relax, and the like. One may wonder why it is that "equal-time" provisions don't apply to ideas as well as to political personalities. Apparently persons in our society are accorded a freedom denied to ideas. It may seem too extreme to call this phenomenon thought-control, but that description is not as inaccurate as it may at first seem.

Thought-control is not, of course, intrinsically bad. But it does not square very well with some of our more exuberant beliefs about what we are up to in America. It is just this sort of disparity between our protestations and our practices which fuels the radical fires among us. And of course the most obvious way to check that blaze is not to crack down on dissenters — and thereby to give the lie to yet another of our professed beliefs — but either to stop the practice or, what is more plausible, to be more honest with ourselves about what we really believe.
In Soft Garments

Once a year, usually as winter moves sluggishly toward a lagging spring, all the people on the way with me develop an astonishing unanimity. . . All of them — family, friends, superiors, colleagues, students — agree enthusiastically that I should go away, far away. . . . The specifics vary — a slow boat to China, a journey to the Antartica, a stay in the Florida Everglades, or in the hills of Arizona — almost anywhere, only away. . . .

They are fearfully right. . . . The wheels have been creaking and the machine has begun to stagger. . . . The symptoms are clear. . . . Minor things have become major things, I have been yelling when I should smile, and I have laughed when I should have been weeping. . . . I write bitter letters and forget to tear them up; I say bitter things and forget to apologize. . . . God is not in His heaven and nothing is right with the world. . . .

And so again this year as spring stumbles in, I find myself beside a small Southern lake a thousand miles from home, and in the company of a hundred coots, three geese, and an unknown number of screaming gulls. . . . I also have a book — the story of Martin Luther from 1483 to 1521, the strange odyssey from a cradle in Eisleben to an emperor in Worms. . . . It is an illuminating story — but often it falls from my hands as I turn to watch the ways of coots on a pond or the doings of three geese hiding from the wind out of the North. . . .

The gander in charge acts like a college administrator — a gentle nudge here and there, an angry honk now and then, and a benign illusion that his is the best academy in the world. . . . His is a private school, one instructor for every two students, and he surveys, with lordly contempt, the coots who are obviously the products of Florida State. . . .

It is a good place to dream, clothed in the soft garments of the warm wind and the sun. . . . Perhaps it really is not dreaming, but neither is it thinking. . . . It is perhaps a wavering and unknown number between the two like the first moment of waking in the morning. . . . The dream of the night and the thought of the new day are curiously interwoven and one can hardly know where one ends and the other begins. . . . To clarify the situation and to draw me from dreaming a crow has joined me. . . .

Our eyes focus on a single coot paddling alone close to the shore. . . . Curiously, I seem to remember seeing him yesterday. . . . He is larger than most coots, with a white spot on his back. . . . Clearly, he is a loner, a nonconformist, and my friend beside my chair is interested because this aloneness makes him a possible target for a quick swoop with reinforcements for him far away. . . .

I cannot tell what my black companion is thinking. . . . We are not completely integrated and there is a lamentable separatism about him. . . . As for me, my nonconformist coot leads to a half-dreaming, half-thinking review of my own experiences with nonconformism — in my life, my Church, my times. . . .

And yet the nonconformism of my contemporaries interests me — if no one else. . . . In a way, it is a very good thing. . . . The time of change is upon us and the years of the locust cast a long and dark shadow on the road before us. . . . Perhaps it is good that we break with the faithless years and now go our own new way, but neither my crow, living for food, nor my coot, paddling far and alone from his fellows, are the answer. . . . Nonconformism, just for the sake of the momentary sense of bravery which it brings is stupid, incredibly and unintelligently stupid. . . . It, with its historic amnesia, leaves life rootless and aimless. . . . Only when it is rooted in a wise awareness of the evil and the dark of the past can it hope to do anything great and good for the present and the future. . . . This is a law which our generation has forgotten, especially the so-called New Left. . . . To be new and/or left just to be new or left is a poor, very poor answer for the problems which now vex and destroy our souls.

I turned to my friend beside me. . . . He seemed to have fallen asleep. . . . “Look,” I said, “why don’t you just go away? The coot out there is forever beyond your reach. Go away!” With a sudden caw of fright he flew to the low branch of the oak behind us. . . . I was alone again. . . .

And yet not quite alone. . . . Perhaps I had crossed again the thin line between thinking and dreaming, but I remembered again all the roaming, restless, wandering nonconformists whom I had known these many years. . . . There was still hope for them but it would not come from the black nihilism of against-ness. . . . It would come from Him Whose eye was again on the sparrow — and the crow and the coot — and Who would give them to us as the mysterious example of His abounding love, dressed, now and again, in the soft garments of the warm wind and the sun. . . .