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The time required for the printing and mailing of The Cresset demands that we write our essays on "current" issues seven to eight weeks in advance of anyone reading them. This means some temporal disorientation for us, living out of time present toward time future as we must. For example, on this day of Saints Simon and Jude we are writing for that issue which will appear at Christmas.

However, we find we are unable to make the full leap from this late date in October to that late date in December. We are only moved far enough to reflect upon the human condition of living out of time present toward time future. We wonder whether what is so trivially part of our occupation might be profoundly the condition of man.

We wonder what fantasy is necessary to make the future of man imaginatively present for reflection? For our part, we are helped by imagining a little god. By no means the God of gods of whom the Christian faith speaks, but of a little, imaginable god more vulnerable to our reflection.

We are curious about this little god. He promises to direct more and more of the course of human evolution right down to our genes. He promises to make men physically different from ourselves, and mentally different too. He promises to make the insides of men's minds available to them for adventure and exploration as splendid and awesome as the exploration of outer space and the adventure into the ocean depths.

He promises to enable communications among the planets on intensified beams of light. Communications among men and animals and plants on special codes. Communication among men, too, in ways few know how to do now beyond our usual senses. He may enable men to listen and speak to every living thing in his now known world and to living things out of his now known world. He may enable men to place new works of art into the sky and here below new works of art projected in every dimension of space and time onto air alone.

He may enable men to learn more quickly, less forgetfully, perhaps directly in their brain cells, chemically. He may enable them to build a world brain, electrically. He may give to men a new supply of energy near to the power of another sun. He promises to make machines harnessed to that power learn, remember, seek goals, adapt and perfect themselves. He promises to make the symbiosis we now live in with our machines one in which machines become more like men and men become less like machines. He promises to release more energy of men into play, not escape but expression, which loves the life in themselves.

He may call men into another lifetime by delaying the aging and decay of body and mind men now know and by making double the lifespan men now live worthwhile. He may enable men to regenerate diseased parts of their bodies and produce children by conserved seed after their deaths. He may transform the generation and generations of men.

He may enable men to mine the sea, turn inorganic matter into food directly, temper the weather, control gravity, and reduce time to a less and less significant limit to existence.

He may bring upon men a psychological mutation,
taking men far enough out of their environments of thought and speech, time and space, so they can return to themselves in new ways and name themselves and the creation differently. He may enable men to organize that new ignorance of themselves and shrink it until it is less than their new knowledge of themselves. He may even enable men to rise above the past thousands of years of technology into adventures of the spirit for which there are no techniques.

He may enable men to see that overlapping of the ages in their own time. He may enable men to put the human spirit before all techniques in world wide solidarity. He may so warm the gathered cocoons of homo faber that homo humanus emerges with laughter and tears of joy. He may enable that man to praise the God of gods in new ways as that man creates more and more like that great Creator. More out of fullness and freedom and less out of need and necessity. More out of a selflessness which is of ecstasy rather than emptiness. Our little god may enable that man to offer up to the God of gods a new world which He awaits without surprise to bless as a brother.

...Man?

As little as we can know of this little god, we ought not regard him lightly. The possibility exists that we are his distant ancestors and primitives. That little god may be man of the future. And in our fantasy he could be seen seeking his nativity in us and in our children's children and their children's children.

Also, in our fantasy, that long, long birth may abort. Indeed, it seems likely, so near are new maps of hell. That little god may be born badly, a "devil" in the literal sense of "little god." Entropy and evil are so much easier to imagine than the emergence of creativity and sufficient grace.

But he may be born whole. There is that possibility too. A right fantasy for the future could call us to our present duties at his ongoing birth as clearly as our knowledge of the past. Happily, strict knowledge of the future man does not seem to be required. None seems to have been known to our distant ancestors, the primitives before our own transformation. A vested interest in the future of man seems desirable, however, as the means increase to shape the future in each age.

At least if anyone should experience any of the first few pangs of the birth of a little god in our own time, we agree he needs surely to take thought for the mothering man of time present who always suffers in such a birth. But we also believe he needs to think of that little god of time future who yet may be born a man.

Perhaps thinking about what it means to be born a man is a way of devoting part of a late October day to the anticipation of Christmas after all?

A Modest Proposal

When we turn back to time present we are not without some disorientation either. A London public health officer, Dr. J. V. Walker, has lately urged upon medical research the development of pills which will retard sexual maturation. Such pills he wishes to administer to young people until they are graduated from college and readied to take on adult responsibilities. While on the pills college students would act like children before puberty, as very happily intellectually curious creatures with sexuality only latent. The public health service of these pills, according to Dr. Walker, is to keep college students from becoming socially aggressive and a nuisance.

We admit we lack both Dr. Walker's psychopharmaceutical competence and British reserve. Therefore we can wonder whether he is not being much too cautious. Wouldn't a bolder man have pushed his principle of retarding physiological processes to solve social problems a little further. Perhaps toward solutions of some of the problems which concern the young and make them so socially aggressive and a nuisance?

Of course, in the case of his own modest proposal we are assuming he is further prepared to administer tranquilizers to students who may be overwhelmingly overcome by sudden new physical and emotional developments as they take their degrees. At such a time in his own country they will have just moved beyond the public health regimen of soccer and cold showers in the schools. Certainly he would not wish on any of us anywhere in the civilized world the nuisance of socially aggressive adults, teenagers over twenty or even thirty.

As a sometime teacher and counselor of college students, we must observe that Dr. Walker might open a whole new world to them. If one is over thirty the mind boggles and if under thirty it is blown as the logic of his proposal works on it.

Take only three of the readiest examples. Have we fully researched the possibility of pills to retard the appetites of the hungry among the poor? Even now, with primitive amphetamines, the rich could part with some of their pills minimally to keep the poor from feeling hungry. At least until such a time as the poor were graduated from college and readied to take on adult responsibilities. If they become socially aggressive and a nuisance about the pills, we could always go back to letting them eat cake.

Or take our problem of racism. Could we not develop pills to retard pigmentation in the black, brown, red, and yellow among us pinks? No one need know
who is on such pills and latently colorful, and we might all be seduced into the public health of treating one another as equals in dignity and opportunity. At such a time as a man might take his college degree and earn the deviancy of his own color, he would be more understanding of us with whom he was reared and educated in all our wiles and ways. Undoubtedly, to know us is to love us, and he would be much less socially aggressive and a nuisance.

**A Leary Response**

Lastly, there is this problem of moral outrage. Could we not pop the young with pills which will retard those processes of the brain wherein conscience operates? Pills to truncate consciences would leave college students free for trivial consumption, fads, busy work out of the job market, military service otherwise arousing conscientious objection, and other minimal daily adult requirements of the young without adults leaving the young filled with loathing.

True, this birth of conscience control pill might be tricky in its side effects. Educationally, it might trouble some colleges which yet try to teach students relationships between the good and the true before they take their degrees.

**On Second Thought**

The deepest chasm in the generation gap is that across which the young accuse the old of hypocrisy, teaching one standard of right and wrong and practicing another. The chasm is deep because the accusation is quite correct. The chasm is unfortunate because the hypocrisy is not quite that simple.

Since the Garden of Eden we have known that we do not achieve our likeness to God or create our paradise through the knowledge of good and evil. Since the Garden of Eden we have had no choice except to try. There are no simple rules by which a society of men can be ordered, not even the new commandment of love. There is no other way to order a society of men except by simple rules. Even the new commandment of love, when it is used to order a society, becomes a rule and fails. On that paradox every civil dream breaks. In that paradox despair and rebellion are born, and pragmatism begins to favor the hard and the strong. That paradox will destroy the pride of the next generation as it has shattered every human vision of peace thus far.

The chasm is there, the accusation of hypocrisy is true. Not just because we were unfaithful to our dream, but because we tried too hard to make it real. We have given our young a vision of love and peace and equality, the glory of Apollonian order. We did not open their eyes to the other side, the Dionysiac irrationally which is just as real. We were able to say “These are the rules, follow them.” We were unable to say, “This is man, make the best of it.”

The new and now generation will face impossible ambiguity when it must accept the responsibility of order. Not because it is weak or stupid, but because the ambiguity is in the nature of things. Then the new generation will need the understanding of an older generation which has learned to live with disillusion. Their need will be particularly great when their own hard and strong are the first to see the impossibility of the dream and begin to enforce their private concepts of order on men.

Let the younger generation proclaim the gap. Let them paint it wide and deep with their new forms of communication, dress and life style. We who are older know that there is no gap which will not be bridged by time. It is true that we have failed. God knows the evidence for that is irrefutable. It is also true that those who follow us will fail. Then perhaps through the horror of our failure, on the other side of the death of our proud dream, we may see and taste the Tree of Life, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. As long as that is spoken, there is hope. There is no other hope.
"I hear it's so cold in New York the pedestrians are sticking to the sidewalk," a man in front of me had remarked, waiting in line to buy duty-free cigarettes and whiskey at London Airport. When I got to New York, I realized he hadn't been exaggerating. There was still a freezing wind blowing hard along 42nd Street as I walked crosstown from Manhattan's Eastside Airlines Terminal.

It was the night after Christmas. And in spite of fuel shortages and an epidemic of Hong Kong flu, the city's holiday lights continued to burn brightly: stylized angels mutely serenading, blinking trees, Santas, Holy Families. Festively-dressed, life-size representations of Dickensian men and women stood outside the shops at Rockefeller Center, and towering over the skating arena was a massive evergreen decorated with lighted bells that nodded in the sharp wind. Carols emanated from loud speakers at intervals along the frozen streets; shop windows glittered with tinsel. Christmas already past and the streets as good as deserted, the electronic display carried on twinkling cheerfully and tirelessly.

Meanwhile, members of the Modern Language Association were jamming by the hundreds into the posh, high-priced hotels just south of Central Park. The new, flashy New York Hilton and its equally new and flashy competitor across 53rd Street, the Americana (single room, per night, $28.00 plus taxes), were housing the 1968 meeting of the MLA, an organization of college English and foreign language teachers who yearly come together to conduct committee meetings, deliver scholarly papers, pass resolutions, elect new officers, and attend social gatherings.

To Beard or Not to Beard

But for three years I had been teaching the freshmen in my composition classes to recognize stereotypes as obstacles to clear perception and thinking; surely I could trust the members of my own profession to have learned that themselves. Only the year before, a fellow English TA with a beard the likes of Allen Ginsberg had been discovered, like Lana Turner at that proverbial Hollywood soda fountain, and offered a plum job by the University of Washington, even before the convention. "Let's face it," an Indian friend told me, shrugging his shoulders with Hindu-like resignation. "everyone of them has an idea of what kind of person he wants to hire. The most we can hope for is that our idiosyncrasies will somehow match theirs." So I kept the beard, and at the least it was protecting my face from frostbite as I walked uptown, too cold to wait for a bus.

My unwillingness to appear at MLA clean-shaven did not mean I had neglected other details, or rejected other advice. I recall a spring day, sitting at the back of a barn-like classroom with a group numbering two hundred or so in one of the old mock-Italian Renaissance buildings at UCLA. My office-mate Dick was presenting the results of a Graduate English Club questionnaire circulated among those who...
had been job-hunting at the 1967 convention, another post-Christmas affair that year held in Chicago.

As a teacher, he was meticulous, conscientious, and thorough, and his 10-page report made it clear that unless you were all of these, you could have little hope of landing a job. To his statistics were attached the comments of those who had been in Chicago, the sort of frank remarks that do not lend themselves well to statistical form:

On the letter of application: "The trick is to sell without appearing to sell."

On letters of recommendation: "What counts is the reputation of the recommender rather than the eulogy." "Do not have too many letters; every letter over the three required allows for one mediocre, and it only takes one to ruin the dossier."

On the service of the Placement Office: "They seem to know less than the candidates about positions at Universities and Colleges."

On handling interviews: "Do not express doubts; be definite." "Know your thesis." "Know your views on research, teaching, publishing." "Ask about their library; if you don't, they will know you have no special interest in research." "You might be prepared to explain why you want to leave our sun for their snow."

Later, sitting across the front of the room and adding to their printed comments, those who had been through it all, the "veterans" of Chicago, grimly and specifically told the rest of us what to expect.

Taken together with the horror stories passed around during previous months in the Humanities Building coffee lounge, the interview experience was beginning to take on the aspects of nightmare. An interviewer visiting UCLA from a school in Texas, for instance, had been especially rude according to reports, exhuming tired, old psychological devices like offering a cigarette and then watching what the interviewee does when he discovers there is no ash tray, lapsing into silence instead of indicating that the interview is over, belittling the professional plans of single women, and so on.

Some told of having interviews escalate into qualifying examinations. Others spoke of them as demoralizing and humiliating; in more bitter moments of insight, the convention was referred to as a slave market. "The last of the migrant workers," another of my three office-mates remarked, "are braceros and college teachers."

Grad Grind Meets Moloch

But I might have been better instructed that day had I paid closer attention to the comments of the faculty who were present. Having recruited for the UCLA English department themselves in years past, they were asked to give us insight into the minds of the people we would be confronting. Their answers were disappointingly vague, halting and unspecific. On the importance of personality, one confided to us that an eminently qualified young man was passed over by the department one year solely because of his "mincing manner". "Don't volunteer too much," another advised, "Don't tell them how brilliantly you teach freshmen English." After a moment, he added, "And don't ask stupid questions."

It became fairly evident that either they had no hiring policy at all or they were holding back. If they had been honest that day, I think they would have confessed disliking interviews as much as the rest of us. Only a sado-masochist (and I suppose there are some in every profession) would take pleasure in confronting ten, twenty, thirty fingernail-bitten and ulcerated candidates desperately trying to please and second-guess, while the interviewer carries on to the bitter end, trying to appear encouraging when he knows most of them haven't a prayer. Had they admitted this, they would have dispelled much of the mushrooming anxiety among us as well as corrected what had become a misrepresentation of their roles as interviewers, i.e. pagan dieties requiring human sacrifice. But they missed their chance.

I relied instead on the general tone of the Graduate English Club report and did everything it suggested. I began by putting together a dossier for the UCLA Educational Placement Center. The dossier is a file of detailed biographical and academic information about oneself, including letters of recommendation; copies of it are sent upon request to prospective employers.

The director of Educational Placement, launching into a discourse on his own travels when he learned I was to be spending the year in England, accepted my credentials and tried to sum them all up in a word or two for his notes. "Your specialization is seventeenth-century English literature," he said, "Would you call that the Renaissance?" It seemed that when requests came for candidates specializing in the Renaissance, he wasn't sure what they wanted. "Late Renaissance, I suppose," I told him. He dutifully marked that down, but apparently his office never got or kept the term straight. In November, news of an opening for a Renaissance specialist got sent to a friend of mine who is a devoted student of the Romantic poets.

Next, I spent days in the library, reading guides to American colleges and universities. There are thousands of schools in the United States and Canada, and choosing from them was not easy. Disillusioned by the departmentalized, depersonalized, computerized multiversity of California, oppressed by the urban sprawl and smog of Los Angeles, I yearned to find a job at a small, primarily undergraduate college. It would be a college where I could give myself to being a good teacher without the guillotine of publish-or-perish suspended over my neck, where class-
es would be small and students recognized as something more than numbers on IBM cards, preferably not a tradition-bound school suffering from hardening of the arteries, but a changing, growing school, alive with possibilities, a place also where there would be more grass and trees than concrete, and the air did not turn brown every day nine months out of the year. Simple wishes, all of them. But at a time when schools are valued for their size, the celebrities of scholar-ship on their faculties, and the number of graduate degrees they produce, it is difficult to locate the good schools that don't lay claim to any of this business. Harder yet is it to find an opening in such schools.

The Supply Exceeds the Demand

But more or less resigned to accepting whatever fortune had in store, I compiled a list of about 200 colleges and universities, which I narrowed down to 85. I carefully composed a letter of application, which was read and edited by a member of my doctoral committee. And I left a one-page condensation of the information in my dossier (a vita sheet) with the secretaries in the English office to have 100 copies run off on the department's new Japanese-made photocopy machine.

On a day in early September, I personally took my letter, the list of 85 addresses, a box of English department stationery, and a departmental order in triplicate to Central Steno, where my letter was to be inscribed on a tape and fed to a typewriter, which would automatically type errorless originals and envelopes for everybody on the list.

All went well. A few days later, my wife and I folded letters together with vita sheets, sealed them in envelopes, stamped them, and at the Santa Monica post office, mailed them. September 12th found us on a charter flight to London; we had forsaken the California sun for the gloom of Oxford, where I was to edit a Restoration comedy as a Ph.D. project and await replies to the letter I had composed so carefully.

Based on the statistics in the Graduate English Club report, I calculated that out of the 90 letters (I had sent a few more) I could expect about 25 requests for a dossier and 65 rejections, few of them outright, most of them holding out a hypocritical ray of hope: "In the event that such a position should open, I shall immediately inform you," meaning that if our man in your "area of specialization" drops dead or the department gets more money (equally unlikely) we'll reconsider your application.

Out of the 25 requests for a dossier, assuming that it did not have a "mediocre" letter, damning me with faint praise or damning me period, I calculated that I could expect about eleven or twelve offers for interviews at the convention. And out of those, ultimately two or three job offers.

But in this age of discontinuity, last year's statistics are soon obsolete. A year later, we have ample evidence that the number of people seeking jobs as college teachers is increasing faster than the demand for them. Major universities, prestige colleges, even small schools who have been overlooked in years past found themselves deluged by letters of application. The very strain of receiving, answering, and filing these letters was evident in most of the replies I received.

Although I had clearly given an Oxford address in my letter, many replies went instead to UCLA. Many more letters addressed to me in Oxford had been sent with only a six-cent stamp and had to be returned for insufficient postage before they ever got out of the country. Even though dock workers went on strike and a lot of trans-Atlantic Christmas cards didn't get delivered until the end of February, letters were confidently posted by surface mail and of course didn't arrive until well after the convention.

One letter arrived without a signature. Two of the schools in the new New York system feverishly airmailed promotional material and were never heard from again. And while few chose not to reply at all, one college in Colorado rushed off two responses to my letter worded exactly alike but dated two days apart.

After the initial flood of rejections, there was a modest trickle of requests for dossiers. And as I walked up the frozen, deserted streets of New York, I had letters for five interviews in my pocket, a number which would increase to eight before the convention was over. The UCLA English department had contributed $232.00 for a roundtrip plane ticket to the convention, leaving $167.00 as my share, total: $399.00. Add to that $16.50 for fees and dues, $31.50 for a hotel room (convention rates), $20.00 for food and incidentals, and $9.00 transportation to and from airports. Grand total: $476.00. Or $59.50 per interview. Confident that the statistics would not let me down, I did not let this amaze me.

The Aging Modern Language Association

What I had neglected to consider was that I was dealing with MLA, an institution which is at best inoffensive but not without its faults, and I doubt now that playing a major role in the job market was ever conceived to be one of its purposes. Its main function seems to be the publication of PMLA (Publications of the Modern Language Association), a periodical which has been thrust to the apex of scholarly literary journals by the madness of publish-or-perish. The most prestigious journal of its kind, its articles are predictably ponderous, stuffy, dry and unread. The story is told of a university professor somewhere who contributed an article intended as a parody of...
Pensable to me as an undergraduate whenever term of scholarship and published. PMLA is its yearly bibliography, which was indispensable to me as an undergraduate whenever term paper time came around. And over the years my image of MLA was generated by those long library shelves of PMLA's bound in fat, sturdy, maroon volumes, dating back to the nineteenth century. I came to think of it as dependable, harmless, grandfatherly, though at times stiff and a little dull.

MLA was in for some ungentlemanly treatment, however, in its old age (or dotage, as some would have it). Because of its huge membership, MLA is thought of as synonymous with The Profession. And a good deal of restiveness over conditions and attitudes in the profession had surfaced in the months before the 1968 convention, taking the form of a protest against plans to hold the next meeting in Chicago. Mayor Daley's club-swinging police had upset and outraged many MLA members, and there was pressure to move the next meeting to another city. There was even talk of a counter-convention in New York with sessions at Columbia.

Though I didn't have time to attend any of these sessions, I expected to collect fistfuls of protest literature to take home and read at leisure. Surprisingly in this age of mimeographed and xeroxed campus polemic, there was little to be had beyond rumor. And rumor had it that the counter-conveners would execute a policy of disruption, shifting the subject of discussion at committee meetings away from the usual cerebral topics of "Participial Frequency in George Fenimore Cooper" and "Medieval Agrarian Theory in Eighteenth-Century Nature Poetry" to Vietnam, urban problems, and the morality of ivory tower scholarship.

Whether any of these plans materialized I do not know. But the Association was to find itself just a little embarrassed by a small-scale demonstration in the lobby of the Americana, which resulted in the arrest of three people. And on the first day of the convention we were to witness the bizarre spectacle of a hotel full of English teachers surrounded by uniformed police and plainclothesmen. If MLA didn't go to Chicago, it looked like Chicago was willing to come to MLA.

At any rate, the issues tearing apart the campuses had found their way to MLA, and there were the beginnings of a squaring off between those grumbling about relevance and betrayal of humanistic traditions and those sputtering about divisiveness and confusion of politics with considerations of policy. It was a microcosm of the American campus, with just one exception: the rebels in this drama were not undergraduates but members of the hallowed profession.

Those who have ever had to deal with church officials would have recognized the tenor of MLA's response to the dissenters. A month or two before the meeting, the Association mailed out a sheet of "opinion and fact" on the feasibility of alternatives to Chicago. Its tone of injured self-esteem (which even my B and C plus composition students would have noticed without difficulty) was a classic example of that testy paternalism found in old, large, bureaucratic institutions where those in charge have never before had their authority challenged or their sense of what is Right and Proper questioned.

Facts and Factions

Clinging to long-established routines and comfortably familiar attitudes, these worried defenders of truth and reason are capable of tactics usually ascribed only to purveyors of darkness and confusion. It was clear from the way the Chicago issue was handled in MLA's sheet of "opinion and fact" that the writer, for one, had already made up his mind; for him it was a simple choice between a feeble public gesture and avoiding the damage (specified) such a gesture would inflict upon the institution. (There was some suggestion that backing out of long-standing agreements with the Chicago hotels would cause ill-will and jeopardize any future attempts to book a convention in that city, which implies that MLA is more easily intimidated by hotel managers than threatened by dissent in its own midst.)

The "facts" indicated that moving the convention would result in a) higher cost for members, b) smaller attendance, c) general inconvenience. Checking up on MLA's "facts," a group from Montreal discovered and proceeded to reveal that a meeting in their city would result in a) lower cost for members, b) perhaps larger attendance, c) similar convenience, and d) the added advantage of holding a meeting of English and foreign language teachers in a bilingual city.

For those who came to the New York convention looking for jobs, these issues were largely "academic"; there were more immediate concerns. And MLA was to prove as inept at assisting these people as it had at handling dissent. Representatives of departments seeking faculty, for instance, conduct interviews in their hotel rooms, but until they actually check in to the hotel, there is no way of knowing where they or the interviews will be.

MLA could easily remedy this situation by publishing an "instant directory," listing the room numbers of interviewers. Using two typewriters and two mimeograph machines, a staff of fifteen student aides could collect and disseminate this information with a minimum of effort and expense. It could even be called a Publication of the Modern Language Association.

Instead, MLA has devised a cumbersome service of dubious merit called The Faculty Exchange, which...
promises for a fee of $5.00 to file one's credentials at the meeting, where they will be perused by department chairmen seeking faculty. This quaint scheme, unfortunately, disregards how people actually go about getting interviews.

There are a handful of fair-haired boy wonders every year, whom the prestige schools court like college football recruiters, but the vast majority of interviews result from initiative taken by the persons being interviewed. There is nothing to be gained by passively waiting for opportunity to knock, which is what makes the Faculty Exchange such an unpromising proposition. Getting interviews requires perseverance, fearlessness, and an occasional act of aggression.

While I was talking with the chairman of one of the New York state colleges, a young fellow practically burst into the room, and with a prepared speech that had somehow turned into an agonized flood of half-articulated phrases and pleading gestures managed to get the promise of an interview later that afternoon. "You know," the chairman said, shaking his head in admiration after edging the kid out the door, "last year that young man was so shy, he talked to me for ten minutes and couldn't bring himself to ask me for an interview."

**Aggressive Academics**

This kind of desperate aggressiveness produced an undertone of grim urgency at the Americana. In the lobby, people milled like crowds waiting to flee across a border. On elevators they jammed shoulder to shoulder, stealing suspicious glances at one another's block-letter name tags, seldom exchanging a look or word. A funereal silence filled the carpeted corridors upstairs, where knots of interviewees stood nervously small-talking outside doors that occasionally opened, ejecting one person midst smiles and handshakes and ingesting another with equal alacrity.

But in spite of this urgency (or maybe because of it) one felt a certain anxious exhilaration while waiting outside those hotel room doors, straightening one's tie and wondering what the process that had begun months ago was about to produce. Expectant mothers on their way to delivery rooms and accused fathers on their way to bar examinations, students whose interests were all too evident in their eyes, and others to ask barbed questions, or the condescending one who affected an ignorance of one's field? And in that same thing. Would the door open, I wondered, or would the interview be a joke? A blank when a third interviewer blandly asked me if I knew whose opinion would ultimately have the most influence in determining which candidate was offered a job. Was it that bellicose fellow who interrupted others to ask barbed questions, or the condescending one who affected an ignorance of one's field? And what was going through the minds of those who just sat there, smiling benignly? The more players, the more complex became the game, and the temptation to play it diminished as one realized the extent of the rules he did not know.

As usual, the temptation to opt for the former would be strong, considering what was at stake, but this game was not an easy one to play. Since there seldom seemed to be agreement among interviewers about what sort of person would make a good addition to the faculty, the implied answers to all their questions were often wildly contradictory, so that the interviewee who had chosen to sacrifice self-esteem and give the expected responses was faced instead with the task of seeming consistent while still pleasing everyone. After I had soberly attempted to convince two interviewers of my high regard for scholarship and my intentions of pursuing it with all seriousness, I drew a blank when a third interviewer blandly asked me to relate my most amusing experience as a teacher. Perhaps serious scholars look to teaching as a source of amusement. At the time, it seemed, to have been ready with an animated anecdote would have rendered my previous assertions ridiculous.

While a single faculty member was often ostensibly in charge of the interview, it was impossible to know whose opinion would ultimately have the most influence in determining which candidate was offered a job. Was it that bellicose fellow who interrupted others to ask barbed questions, or the condescending one who affected an ignorance of one's field? And what was going through the minds of those who just sat there, smiling benignly? The more players, the more complex became the game, and the temptation to play it diminished as one realized the extent of the rules he did not know.

The Cresset
Overviews of Interviews

Honesty, in most cases, was clearly not the best policy either. It is nothing wildly radical to feel, as I do, that departments in large universities turn too much freshman and sophomore teaching over to graduate students. But what was I to say to one midwestern interviewer who informed me that his department had over 100 teaching assistants and needed even more, or to the fellow from an eastern school who explained that it was indeed possible for members of the faculty to request assignments to first or second year courses if they desired, although none of the eight or ten people present had apparently ever done so?

What was I to say to the men from a school in the southwest who waxed enthusiastic not about their department but about the low cost of real estate in the area? Or to the faculty members from one state college, who praised the spirited camaraderie and sophisticated social life of the staff, the proximity of urban amenities, and the high salaries, but could say no more for the students than that they were “sweet.” Candor at moments like this would have made me appear the academic misfit I was beginning to feel I was.

One midwestern university attempted a variation on the “firing squad” interview out of a desire, I’m sure, to be more humane and less formal. Instead of finding the faculty lined up across the room from him, the person being interviewed was ushered into a situation as diffuse and unstructured as coffee hour at the faculty club. Interviewers came and went or moved around the room at will, chatting with whomever they pleased. If you did not keep talking, you would likely be ignored.

Two, sometimes three persons were being “interviewed” in this fashion simultaneously. The effect was something between good-humored confusion and chaos. While one junior faculty member plugged a journal he was editing and another tried to pick my brain for a black literature course he was preparing, the chairman kept saying, “Well, I suppose we’ve answered all your questions.” Afterwards, walking through the freezing slush back to my hotel, I wondered whether the department went about all its affairs with such lack of organization and waste of energy.

Two other universities, by no means disorganized, capitalized on the interviewing process to accomplish something else entirely, and indirectly demonstrated a remarkable capacity for wasting other people’s time and energy. One, a relatively prestigious Canadian school, set up an interviewing schedule that reportedly permitted three men working separately to interview up to twelve people per hour, or about 85 a day. When the department could have had no more than three or four openings, this policy of overkill seems questionable. Was the department simply trying to be fair, granting interviews to as many people as possible, or was the whole thing just some kind of market research project rendering all of our attitudes, accomplishments and future plans into graphs and statistics for the Committee on Hiring and Retention?

Another university in the midwest also interviewed an unnecessarily vast number of people for its two openings. “Pardon me if I repeat myself,” said the interviewer sitting across from me, “I’ve said this all so many times today already that I can’t remember what I’ve told to whom.” And with eyes fixed on the empty chair to my right he proceeded to recite a laudatory promotional lecture that would have tried the patience of the most loyal alumni. A small university, located in one of the corn belt’s more colorless cities, it apparently took advantage of the job interviewing process at MLA to get in some free advertising.

If the whole process leading up to the convention interviews had its element of uncertainty, getting the results afterwards was hit-or-miss at best. Assured by every interviewer that I would hear from him within ten days to two weeks, I was amazed by the clumsy and unhurried responses that finally found their way to me.

The Cavalier Leviathan

The cavalier attitude of a department chairman at a university in Illinois typified this general state of affairs. I received a letter from him, explaining that although he had been unable to see me at MLA, would I write, wire, or call him collect if I were interested, and he would have me flown to his campus for an interview. I wired (from England) yes, of course I was interested. Six hours later, Her Majesty’s trans-Atlantic telegraphers went on strike, and when two weeks had passed without a reply from the man, I wrote to ask if he had ever got the wire. Yes, came the answer, he had, and he was taking “this first opportunity” to say the position had been filled.

Somewhat annoyed at this half-truth and stuck with the bill for a trans-Atlantic cable, I wrote back that had he been able to talk to me by phone, surely he could have answered a wire just as quickly, and would he consider reimbursing me the six bucks it cost to contact him. Again there came no apologies, no explanations; only a signature on a personal check for six dollars. Aware by now that I had been somewhat mishandled by the process I had just gone through, I felt that I had managed to strike back.

In the meantime, I had accepted the offer of a position at a college in Pennsylvania. Ironically, after jousting with the big universities and the flashy, burgeoning New York state colleges, I found myself in precisely the kind of school I’d been looking for in
the first place. The opportunity came unexpectedly, and the elements of circumstance and coincidence that played a central role in the series of events that led to it made the whole story too cumbersome to relate. I can say, however, with some sense of assurance that the whole process I had put myself through did little or nothing to lead me to the job or the job to me. If anything, it was a case of serendipity.

The paper storm that my letter of application stirred up back in September lasted well into the spring of the new year. On a warm June day, sitting in a pub at Picadilly and reading the mail that had caught up with us at American Express in London, I came across one letter from a Canadian college announcing that there was no opening on the staff there. Why these people felt obliged at such a late date to send this gratuitous piece of information, I don't know. They did not interview me, and they had not to my knowledge requested a copy of my dossier, but like the last convulsive spasms of a great leviathan stranded on some unlikely shore, the whole awful business had managed to produce one last tired scrap of paper. And then it was all over. Requiescat in pace.

Confronted with the inefficiency, the confusion, the waste that make the great job scramble what it is, one wonders how it works at all, if it can be said that it still does. Humanists that we professors of the humanities claim to be, I suppose it's an assumed matter of principle that people are best at doing the jobs that effect other people most personally. Next to sex, spiritual consolation, and medical attention, providing someone with employment is surely one of the most personal functions one person can perform for another. It's a man's bread and butter, and it helps determine how satisfying his life will be. Perhaps in an ideal world this system would work, but after MLA, I'd be willing to turn the whole thing over to a computer.

The Loneliness of Barns

(For Old Frank)
The loneliness of barns is great at night when lunging through the hills on 34—the light from town hanging in the trees along the hill—
the hollows hide the farms like secret bowls set down to catch the drift and splinters of star-flung wrecks;
the rigid beams from the car catches at harrows in the yards, old corn wagons empty, and a wheel beside the road,
and cows stand close behind the wide-board fence, the blink not seen, just open painted eyes that catch the glint of light if not the sense of time and people passing by.

And low groves of trees and weather fronts to pass, then the flats again toward Seward, flat and straight, the tires humming along the blacktop. In the flat stretches the farms rise up along the road—the two story frames with smaller shades of night clustered close like chicks—the summer air is feather-light-heavy with that wheat-honeyed smell of alfalfa.
The miles tick by with barely noticed change of hill; a swath of blacker night passes on the right and deep inside the Little Blue chugs along its muddy banks.

Some smaller towns you know are here by dusty roads rushed by—there is no sound, no sign, just a road and gone.

The bars are there, black and great; some full of nothing, a few pigeons; they stand, lean, are great and silent, and the car rolls on, drilling past the big barns; so many barns, so much emptiness, so much awful quiet.

The radio in the car plays softly and the low violet dash light is weak moving among the barns. Then the dip, long and curving, a small town rises with the hill and as thick among the trees. They part to the car that drills past the old bridge, disappearing in the leaves that keep the hill alive.
The town sleeps. Some dull-white clouds stripe the rising moon; the light falls in shuttered steps across the hills behind the town.

The farms are there, the fields, the dark barns. The town takes you in by a shudder, and you lie in your bed with the moon on the curtains, knowing it seeks the deep places in the hills; it will find the barns, and those old shapes will have to give out their secret—they must stand forth in light as the shadow of their standing reaches toward the sliding moonlight. The light reaches unafraid toward the farms, uncovering the black grounds. The barns wait, their breathing only sensed; and as the shadows react to the light, the barns wait—you sleep.

Jack Tracy Ledbetter

The Cresset
Mark Twain's Misanthropy

BY HERBERT L. CARSON
Professor of Humanities
Ferris State College

Never has humor, Yankee or otherwise, been put to such devastating use as by Mark Twain. This writer delineated the corruption of the human being himself. According to Twain, all of mankind is sick, and that sickness is his normal condition.

The Twain of the later years — of "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," (1900) "What Is Man?" (1906) and "The Mysterious Stranger" (published posthumously, 1916) — is bitter and almost humorless. These tales show man as part of a mechanistic and corrupt universe, acted upon by forces which he can neither control nor comprehend. The stories portray man as lacking any desire or strength to influence those forces.

The same misanthropy, less conscious and more humorous, is apparent in earlier works such as Innocents Abroad (1869), Roughing It (1872), Tom Sawyer (1876), the latter part of Life on the Mississippi (1883), and most brutally in Huckleberry Finn (1885). Huckleberry Finn, possibly America's most important contribution to world fiction, depicts mankind as a compound of the Seven Deadly Sins, with Covetousness (or Greed) as the deadliest Sin of all. Except for Huck and Jim, every character is portrayed as weak, inept, or corrupt. Except for Huck and Jim, every soul is bought and sold.

The novel does depict brief moments of idyllic life, particularly in the raft scenes when Huck and Jim are innocents who are cleansed and purified by their daily swims in the river. These two innocents achieve a stature and a mutual respect that is the beauty of the novel. Everything else is viewed through the cruel glare of misanthropy. At the end, even Huck and Jim are "sold."

Can misanthropy fulfill the human need for affirmation? One must remember that Huck and Jim had achieved a state of grace aboard the raft. If this can be done once, it might be possible again. One might also consider just what Twain does in the otherwise tedious and painful final section when Huck and Jim seem to have permanently left the river and its cleansing force.

The raft episodes are idyllic but cannot be expected to last. The river itself, if followed, empties into the vast and turbulent ocean. A raft cannot voyage safely on such waters. Thus, the raft must be left. The demi-Eden must be deserted. This is man's awful fate.

Indeed, what was this demi-Eden? It was a social structure of two. One of the two is a white boy, uneducated, superstitious, insecure. This ignorant lad, with a bright wit and a superb facility for "stretchers," is also a moody and lonely child, beset by desires for companionship and for death. He muses early in the book, before join-
irritate the reader so much. Twain once had considered having the escape scene climaxed by a wild elephant ride. The reader may have a sigh of relief. The elephant was allowed to remain on the rampage only in Twain's short story "The Stolen White Elephant."

The essential story of Huckleberry Finn and of his companionship with Jim ends when the two leave the river. A characteristically sly action by the King and the Duke forced Huck and Jim to leave their innocent paradise. On the raft, Twain has shown Jim as a creature of admirable stature — loyal, sacrificing, and dignified. Huck has been able to achieve a great moral decision, to decide to help his friend despite the socially imposed belief that he is doing wrong, as summarized in the boy's statement: "All right, then, I'll go to hell."

There is, perhaps, little more that can be shown. If the ocean is too vast for the raft, and going upstream to Ohio is a physical impossibility, then what is left after the two have drifted into the dreaded territory "down the river?"

Mark Twain does not stop his story here, but what the author goes on to do is another matter. Indeed, it is another story. The greatness of the book, its affirmative depiction of human potential in the raft scenes, cannot be ignored despite the lack of artistic integrity in the final section. It is not immaterial that Huck joins the social charade proposed by Tom Sawyer, nor is it forgivable that Jim sells his dignity for forty dollars (just as the King and Duke had sold Jim for the same price). But Twain seems to be on a new track. He has left Huckleberry Finn and Jim behind — although characters by these names, and occasionally having some of the same traits, continue in the story. In the last section, the author is the Mark Twain of later days. In Huckleberry Finn, Twain may be less consciously the misanthrope, less significantly the nihilist, less vocally the determinist. But still, he is Mark Twain at his most pessimistic, Mark Twain at his least effective.

The Mischievous Conformist

In writing the last section of Huckleberry Finn, Twain the novelist is again the victim of society as well as its bitter critic. He resurrects the all-American boy, Tom Sawyer — the mischievous conformist. Twain neglects and almost abandons Huck Finn, the ignorant independent. It is as if the author is Tom, grown up, looking into a mirror, hating what he sees. The voice of the narrator is not the same as the voice that apostrophized the river and the raft in almost breathless tones, when the days and nights "swum by...so quiet and smooth and lovely." This is not the companionable narrator who sat after a hot fish breakfast, pulled almost miraculously from the waters, and with Jim watched the lazy beauty of the river. This is not the tranquil character who sighed, "It's lovely to live on a raft."

In the Phelps' farm section, the mask of the narrator slips. The voice is no longer that of Huck Finn but is the voice of the author, Mark Twain. Twain's voice has been heard before in the novel, shunting aside and ridiculing the sympathetic Huck, in order to satirize Julia A. Moore's school of poetic sassafrass. It was really Twain who saw Colonel Sherburn casually shooting down the obnoxious and drunken Boggs. It was Twain's voice that told how the Colonel, in tones cool and firm denounced the mob before his house: "The average man's a coward." It is Twain's voice that describes the subdued men and dares to say, "The pitifullest thing out is a mob; that's what an army is — a mob; they don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with a courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers... If any real lynching's to be done, it will be done in the dark... Now leave..." Colonel Sherburn here speaks the ideas of a Tom Sawyer, grown up sour and disillusioned. Although the words are reported by Huck, the diction is Mark Twain's.

On the Phelps' farm, Huck — once independent and honest — gives way to a stereotype of Southern youth. Twain sheds Huck and assumes the character of Tom. Even the narrator senses his loss of the earlier independent identity, saying "It was like being born again, I was so glad to find out who I was." The narrator even takes the name of Tom Sawyer, first in order to deceive the Phelpses and to free his friend Jim; later, because the real Tom Sawyer arrives and sustains the joke as a matter of personal and selfish delight. Yet, what is the narrator now but a foil for Tom Sawyer (under any name)? What is he but a story-teller, idolizing and adoring the socially adept Tom, a youth whose clean-cut romanticism is the very ideal of the Southern cavalier and gallant? Huck Finn has left the story.

A Southern Exposure

Although Huck has left the story, Mark Twain is there, as he has been throughout. Now, he is the author of Tom Sawyer's story. But Twain is older and disillusioned and bitter. He almost seems to hate the Tom who dares dominate the idyllic tale of escape, who perverts its very meaning, who dupes and entraps its pair of innocents. With almost savage intensity, Twain displays the ideal Southern youth and his society as a complicated structure that entraps men, keeps them in bondage to stupidity and ignorance, and arranges complicated schemes which justify the cruel imprisonment of these weak and fluttering creatures. Tom's jokes are the stuff of present cruelty.

Huck sees the last of his river companions disposed of. The King and the Duke are tarred, feathered, and ridden by rail out of town, "a dreadful thing to see. Human beings can be awful cruel to one another." Useless nonsense can be cruel, too. For now the reader is compelled to accompany the two Toms into a futile and foolish undertaking, the freeing of a free slave.

The exhausting last section of Huckleberry Finn becomes a tedious rendition of human stupidity and frail-
ty. Huck (now using the name of Tom) can’t even figure out where Jim is. It is the real Tom who recognizes that if a handyman brought food into a locked shed, and that food included watermelon, there probably was a man in the shed. Huck weakly comments, “I never thought about a dog not eating watermelon.” Huck has almost completely stopped thinking: “I went to thinking out a plan, but only just to be doing something; I knew very well where the right plan was going to come from.” The right plan for freeing Jim comes from the real Tom. Here, away from the raft, all action is determined by the socially acceptable Tom. The once-clever Huck is merely a dupe.

The right plan is a product of romantic and literary imagination. It is a plan that prolongs Jim’s imprisonment, although the concocter of the plan knows that Jim has already been freed legally. It is a plan that causes people to worry and to fear, that has dangers in it, and that exhausts the perpetrators of the plot and the recipient of their unnecessary rescue. In simple terms, releasing men from bondage is merely a matter of striking off chains, of bursting through restraints. But the chain is not merely filed off, nor does Jim use the escape hole as soon as it is dug, except once to leave his prison in order to help the boys with some of their more arduous labors. This is an example of Twain’s humor, but it is also foolishness.

Indeed, merely to strike off Jim’s chains is not enough, as the real Tom often emphasizes and as Huck often accepts. To be honorable and regular, the real Tom explains, “You got to invent all the difficulties.” Instead of solving problems, the good Southern youth, full of cavalier sentiments, invents further complications. Tom speaks of honor, but his actions forestall honor. And the old Huck is gone. He is Huck as Tom, a passive follower, an appeaser of the worst sort, a conformist, a dupe, a willing second. Huck as Tom “don’t wish to go back on no regulations…” What a terrible reflection of Southern society Twain draws!

Mark Twain has Tom justify his method of freeing a “state prisoner,” as Tom calls Jim. The method is long, arduous, and unnecessary since the slave has already been declared free. But, says Tom, “it don’t make no difference how foolish it is, it’s the right way — and it’s the regular way. And there ain’t no other way, that ever I heard of, and I’ve read all the books that gives any information about these things.” The rules are followed, at the expense of an imprisoned Jim and a credulous Huck.

The only remorse the real Tom feels is that even with the added complexities of nonsense, the solution must eventually be reached. Huck reports Tom’s greatest wish: “If only he could see his way to it we would keep it up all the rest of our lives and leave Jim to our children to get out.” Such activities can not, however, be maintained. Jim’s rescue occurs, Tom has the glory of being shot, and the futility of the whole thing is revealed. Jim is a free man, as Tom well knew all along. The romantic, useless, complicated nonsense is at an end.

The Two in Twain

The end of the novel gives only one word of hope. Tom early in the story had lured Huck back to civilization, promising that Huck could join Tom’s band of robbers. At the end of the novel, Huck breaks the bonds that have made him a slave to the Tom Sawyer mentality. The humor and independence that asserted itself on the river are again present. “But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she’s going to adopt and sivilize me and I can’t stand it. I been there before.”

Despite further stories in the Tom Sawyer series, we don’t know for certain whether Huck escaped bondage and made it to the Territory. We hope he did. We hope he escaped the fate of Mark Twain. For Twain, infused with the idealism and the independence of Huck, but constrained by the mischievous conformity of Tom, finally got “sivilized.” As a mischievous Tom who longs for the roughness of Huck, Twain turned more and more bitter.

Instead of innocent idyllics, Twain found himself an aged and bitter Tom, writing in the gloomy years of family tragedy that long tale of hopeless horror, The Mysterious Stranger. A supernatural visitor comes to a medieval town, where he encounters a gang of boys (Tom’s gang placed back in time?). Dubbing himself “Satan,” the stranger works wonders for the credulous boys. Finally the entire situation grows tedious for the stranger, and he makes a revelation:

It is true, that which I have revealed to you; there is no God, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell. It is all a dream — a grotesque and foolish dream. Nothing exists but you. And you are but a thought — a vagrant thought, a useless thought, a homeless thought, wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!

If one can only get back on the raft and go on forever, avoiding the erupting ocean, ignoring the threatening shores, perhaps he can escape the harsh realities of civilization. But Twain chose not to escape. He is the socially acceptable mischief-maker, Tom.

But when the Tom has some of a Huck’s sensitivity, when he has tasted the freedom to be found in close companionship unencumbered by social rules, then growing up within the confines of civilized society can be damaging.

Thus Twain encountered personal tragedy. He felt self-reproach. And he sought to armor himself against reality. Ultimately his disappointments and tragedies led him to one inescapable belief about life’s aim. He saw everything as nothing. All was to be extinguished. The Twains of this world, dominated by a Tom but always having some of the spirit of a Huck, wander “forlorn among the empty eternities.” And in Sam Clemens’ wandering is expressed more and more the misanthropy of Mark Twain.
After ten months in office, one can safely assume that the roles and the personnel of the Nixon administration, if not the policy, have been set. The executive branch of our government, alone among the three branches, is capable of mustering the resources, the legitimacy, and the authority to deal with the glaring problems facing the American political system. Even after only ten months in the presidency, some evaluative generalizations are possible on the basis of President Nixon’s use of the men and offices around him.

For one observation, Nixon appears to be more actively involved in policy initiation than were his two immediate Republican predecessors, Presidents Hoover and Eisenhower. In fact, his energy and personal hand in policy initiation comes closest to John F. Kennedy among those executives of recent memory. This characteristic of Nixon’s style is evident in his use of the personnel of the White House Office.

This staff office is physically closest to the President and has been used in contrasting ways by recent presidents. President Eisenhower used this staff primarily as an aid in controlling and checking his Cabinet heads and departments, to whom he had extended a good deal of leeway in policy initiation and execution. Kennedy, on the other hand, used his White House Office as an alternate source of policy initiation, sometimes to the embarrassment of his Cabinet heads. Sorensen, Bundy, O’Brien, and Salinger became as well known as some Cabinet members. Kennedy’s style kept decision-making so close to the White House that he could intervene personally at many stages of the policy initiation process. Nixon comes closer to the Kennedy style in this respect.

The glaring domestic problems of poverty and the cities have been moved very conspicuously to the White House with the creation in January of this year of an Urban Affairs Council in the Executive Office of the President. The recent shuffling of Daniel Moynihan, the executive secretary of this Council and an Assistant to the President in the White House Office, from operational responsibilities to planning may indicate that the President is reserving for himself an even greater role in shaping these domestic policies. One doesn’t hear much about the roles of Secretaries Finch, Romney and Volpe in domestic policy initiation. It appears that sometimes their role is confined to that of obedient executors of policy. The overall picture is one of firm White House control, with an energetic and informed President Nixon in the center.

This activity and command add credibility to the President’s opinions in the view of the mass public, regardless of the content of those opinions and policy. In mobilizing public opinion, a second aspect of presidential style, Nixon has more followed the lead of the Eisenhower presidency.

C. Peter Magrath in an article in the June, 1965, number of Yale Review suggests that the President in the role of chief of state is the natural object of many of the diffuse expressions of loyalty and support for the nation that are expressed by the masses in the United States. As long as he can appear to be above the everyday partisan struggle he can maintain this support. At the same time, it is probably not possible to appear non-partisan if the President moves too far ahead of the Congress. This means that if the President wants to lead policy rather than follow Congress he has to be covertly political or partisan at the same time he appears to be above this sort of struggle.

This is very risky and difficult. Lyndon Johnson was successful in living this paradox for at least the first two years, 1964 and 1965. He played the broker of interests and got Congress to adopt many policies they had been unwilling to follow with Kennedy at the helm. At the same time, especially in the campaign against Goldwater and in the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, he was able to appear non-partisan. However, he could not continue to play these contradictory roles well and people began to talk about the “credibility gap.” Johnson left office as an unpopular man.

Eisenhower was able to maintain a high level of popularity by non-partisan behavior and very limited aspirations for policy leadership. So far, Richard Nixon has been adept at the non-partisan pose. Attending party functions and engaging in partisan and derogatory talk have been the tasks of Vice-President Agnew, who seems to more than make up for the President’s neglect of this area. The President’s speech on Vietnam on November 3, 1969, was a masterpiece of non-partisanship. Public reaction in general appears to consider less the content of that speech or the policy it defended than it indicates general support for the President.

Although it is still too early to judge, the irony of the Nixon administration may be in what it does not do in the area of policy. Political scientists and New
Deal liberals have expressed their admiration for “strong” presidents. In his personal activism and his evident public support, President Nixon has some of the style of the strong president. It is possible that these attributes will be spent on retrenchment — either because the risk of policy leadership with its broker-age and partisan demands will seem too high to Nixon or because his personal preference is to withdraw the national government from the solution of national problems. Nixon may decide to limit his presidency to style. We will give him another year before we judge what his Presidency has accomplished.

**Editor-At-Large**

**The Proper Place for a Cross**

By JOHN STRIETELMEIER

Skinner’s Butte is a public park overlooking the city of Eugene, Oregon. Several years ago, it entered into the hearts of some of the Christian people of Eugene to erect on the butte a huge cross, visible from all parts of the town. But there were others in Eugene who felt that the presence of a large religious symbol on public property constituted a violation of the principle of separation of church and state and they went into the courts to have it removed. Several weeks ago, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that the cross had to go.

It is hard to see how the court could have ruled otherwise. Our national forefathers did not found — nor did they intend to found — a Christian nation. And the writers of most of our state constitutions took great pains to spell out what they considered the First Amendment to allow and forbid in the area of Church-state relations. “We are,” Justice Douglas has said, “a religious people.” But there is no constitutional or legal sanction for calling ourselves a Christian people. And we who are Christians should bear in mind that we live in this country under a social contract which gives us no advantage or preference over the Jew, the Moslem, the Buddhist, the free-thinker, or the agnostic.

It is always distressing to hear fellow-Christians advance the argument that, since Americans are predominantly Christian in religious affiliation, we need not be over-sensitive to the rights of those among us who are not Christians. This is the same argument that was used against our fathers in God in the days of the Roman Empire when the pagan majority refused to countenance the “eccentric” refusal of the small Christian community to throw a pinch of incense on the Emperor’s altar. Rome, at least, was justified in proceeding against our fathers because they were clearly in violation of the laws of the state. But our laws recognize no state religion and show neither favor nor disfavor toward any religious profession.

One might properly ask why the good people of Eugene felt it necessary to erect a cross in a public park. Was it their purpose to provide their city with a place of public execution? This seems hardly likely in a state which does not allow capital punishment. Their reason must, therefore, have been religious. But if it was, they had no right to use public property to further their religious ends. And in arrogating this right to themselves they demeaned the very symbol which they had intended to honor.

The incident itself is not important enough to warrant giving a while column to it. But as an example of a certain kind of religious chauvinism it raises the much larger question of how Christian people should conduct themselves as citizens of a state which has, as a state, no religious commitment. That we must, at all times and in all places, witness to the faith that is in us goes without saying. But the nature of this witness is not so easy to define. The question of strategy enters in and greatly complicates the question. My own feeling is that we do little to advance the faith by being overly explicit — by tacking up “Jesus Saves” signs or making public displays of piety or erecting Christian symbols on public property. The man who wears his heart on his sleeve is always suspected (and usually rightly) of not having his heart in the right place. In matters of the faith, as in most other matters, understatement usually speaks more loudly than overstatement. And the Cross is truly glorified, not when we set it up in a park but when we bear it cheerfully and gallantly as men and women who have obviously been given a strength greater than their own.
The name of Jerzy Grotowski has become legendary by now. His Polish Laboratory Theatre is being looked upon as the source of a new theatre art and a novel stage craft. Grotowski's influence is equated with that of Stanislavski and the Moscow Art Theatre by many theatre connoisseurs. About a year ago, after having read a great deal about him and his revolutionary ideas, I saw his Acropolis on television. Now I have been one of the few privileged people admitted to one of his productions at the Washington Square Methodist Church. I saw The Constant Prince, for the price of ten dollars and had the humilitating feeling of a spectator who was lucky to have been admitted at all.

Relatively few performances have been scheduled. Grotowski first condescended to let a hundred people observe his ritual, then he reduced the figure to eighty and, while I am writing this report, he may reduce it to fifty or even one spectator. The ticket is in your name, and the way you are admitted reminded me of European war years when people were standing in long lines for a loaf of bread. You stood there with a feeling of whipped-up excitement alternating with that of dulled apprehension that the store might run out of bread before you get there. Well, finally I was let in and shown to my seat, but not before having to wait in an anti-room with no seating accommodations except the steps leading to the sanctuary.

The arrangement of stage and audience is something between a circus arena and an operating room. Grotowski says, "What one sees below can be regarded either as a cruel game in a Roman circus or as a surgical operation in the manner of Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr. Tulp." A wooden scaffolding was erected around the playing area and long wooden benches ran in a semi-circle around the stage enclave. The set consisted of a single raised board, a ritual bed. The manner in which the spectator is forced to look down to watch the "operation" is highly uncomfortable. The actual ritual lasted about fifty-five minutes. When the lights went out and immediately came on again, the hero alone is left covered on stage (as one covers a dead man). The ushers whisked behind the audience, whispering as if in a funeral parlor, "Mr. Grotowski asks you to leave at once."

I mention all this, because, I feel, this is part of the torturous experience which leaves you stunned and numbed, with your mind lacerated and your emotions in convulsions. Jerzy Grotowski is, no doubt, a genius of the theatre who gave Antonin Artaud's concepts their final stage realization — something Artaud never achieved himself. Grotowski disclaims being the sole creator of "his" theatre. What he accomplishes can only be achieved with the co-operation of the actors and their total surrender of soul and body. Each single performance is only possible in complete harmony with the other actors' performances, a feat which goes far beyond what we call good ensemble acting. Each performer is totally beyond himself and appears like acting in a trance.

Grotowski's is an actor's theatre, cutting deep down into our nervous system, to the thin edge of our mental capacities. The result is an experience that goes far beyond endurance. The Polish Lab Theatre knows why there can be no intermission, no applause, no performance running for more than an hour. Considering the pitch of intensity on which the production is kept throughout, no actor and no spectator could last much longer. In its masochistic and sadistic demands on the actors, this theatre has a medieval quality. With its ritualistic groans and grunts and its rhythmic howls accompanying choreographed movement patterns, it is also reminiscent of primitivism.

Grotowski's theatre is a non-literary, perhaps anti-literary, theatre. He chose Calderon's The Constant Prince as a point of departure. I cannot even say it is the basis of his production. The original has a haunting loneliness almost throughout. It is the story of a prince who has been taken prisoner and suffers terrible indignities, yet is determined not to yield to his captors' demands. Calderon painted an arresting picture of inner strength and devoted gallantry to the point of death. Grotowski's play is almost abstract. The Constant Prince faces the people which may be his people for all we know and endures their vile treatment inflicted upon him. Through his strength of non-violent submission to the maltreatment of the multitude, he conquers while conquering himself. The multitude is symbolized by four people in odd attire which could be of any time and any land. Almost. An umbrella — fitting and jarring at the same time — functions prominently as the symbol of a weapon or of a scalpel with which the prisoners are castrated. The feelings of the people toward the prince alternate between fury, anger, violence and adoration.

In a more remote sense, this production is deep-
ply religious, showing man's crucifixion, a human saint within inhuman society, man's endurance despite all suffered humiliation and desecration. Grotowski expresses it in the program note, “The Prince's ecstasy is his suffering, which he accepts by offering himself to the truth as in the act of love.”

Grotowski has many disciples and imitators which we can now find all over the stages of the civilized world upon whose uncivilized state they feed. Among them is Peter Brook. Having seen Grotowski, Brook's *Marat/Sade* looks in retrospect like a palatable version of the real Grotowski. Brook made acceptable and even enjoyable what Grotowski has dreamt of as a fantastic, unendurable realization of man's nightmares at their weirdest theatricalized sophistication of anti-sophistication.

Music

*When the Gift Was Wagner*

By WILLIAM F. EIFRIG, JR.

I was a student in a foreign land in 1959. It was my first Christmas separated from family. Through the agency of an association of scholarship fellows I was given the name of a friend of the fellows in Germany. A letter went out to her announcing my holiday in Bavaria and requesting an audience for advice on matters touristic. At some time between the posting of that letter and receiving her reply the good woman ceased to be Frau Doktor and became Tante Dora.

It was all arranged. We would celebrate Our Lord's Nativity together. She would instruct me in the ways of a German observance and I would be family to one who had outlived her own. The intricate folding of paper stars for the tree was relearned by older fingers and taught to those of the novice. The proper degree of solemnity with a dash of gaiety was cultivated when the tree was alight. The removal, one by one, of gilded nuts and candies from that small but noble evergreen counted the days of the feast.

Christmas Eve we froze through the midnight mass at the Frauenkirche (the central heating system was the pride of the rebuilders) while lost in the endless chanting of Psalms which gave way to the music of Mozart. At the Benedictus the Quaker and the Lutheran knelt with the Catholic archbishop in adoration of the One who had come again that very night to be called Lord by all sorts and conditions of men. Back home we welcomed the hot grog and our celebration increased.

The next day brought to a climax our celebration. The exchange of some memorable gifts, the eager ingestion of foods authorized by tradition, and finally - the opera! The opera?

Well I recall with what confusion I greeted Tante Dora's plan. Even before my arrival she bubbled with excitement at her gift to us. She had had the good fortune to acquire seats in the Prinz-Regenten Theater. It would be *Lohengrin*! I was young and knew too much. The impropriety of the conjunction of Wagner and Christmas was obvious. Bad enough to let the world intrude upon the feast with its commercial theatrics, but the pseudo-religious nature of Wagnerian opera was blasphemous. However, I would not spoil the old lady's surprise. It was Christmas after all. (I've grown a decade older and know much less about things today.)

I'm not sure how good the performance was. It seems now that there has never been a more wonderful presentation. This year the enjoyment of that afternoon is possibly greater than it was then. In any event the opera was indeed the crown of our celebration. Tante Dora's eyes sparkled more than was their wont even before the curtain went up. We followed every line sung and watched every gesture on the stage. Elsa's triumph over her accusers at the thrilling appearance of the Swan-boat, the abhorrent evil that ruined her with doubt and separated her forever from Lohengrin, his heartbreaking farewell tempered by the magical transformation of the Swan — it was all full of wonder and of joy. The wonder and joy of that afternoon in the theater characterized all our Christmas celebration. The enjoyment of every thing in our world, the cherishing of things for what they are in themselves had been made possible by the birth of the Babe. No longer was there fear of environment or the desperate enthronement of self over all else. God lives among men; their world is redeemed.

Beware of those who would sell you a pious celebration. Many of the good souls who want to "put Christ back into Christmas" have in reality the worst sort of idolatry as their intention. God doesn't need our presents of phony, moralizing tales and bad presentations of nativity scenes. His gift to us is a world of delights for new eyes to see and redeemed ears to hear. Even Wagnerian operas come in for their share of redemption.

I hope, Tante Dora, that the angels are rehearsing a special presentation of *Lohengrin* for your Christmas this year. I know it will be wonderful.
Theology and the Church in the University


Julian Hartt is not very well-known in America outside the fraternity of professional theologians. Too bad for us! For a quarter of a century on the faculty of Yale University, he now holds the office of Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies in the university and Professor of Philosophical Theology at the divinity school.

"In this essay," he says, "I have tried to think about the university as a unique arena for theological argument." This is so whether a university advertizes itself as Christian or not — and Hartt is harsh on allowing the adjective "Christian," to apply indiscriminately to any university. For if it only means "sociological identification" ("who pays the bills") or only labels the "catalog piety" of "Christian attitudes, values, and morals... we can afford to be suspicious."

"A university is Christian if it preserves significant elements of Christian worship and Christian belief as a significant and formal commitment of the university as such."

But what is the university — especially in these days of the chasm between students and faculty as well as the profound disagreement over that end of the university hitherto identified as the rational life? Reason is suspect these days by virtue of its attachment to detachment, its antipodal relation to passion. Commitment, passionate commitment, these days lays claim to being the valid end of human life. Away then with detachment, the choice of the coward. And if the masters of the power structure, with whom such commitment conflicts, claim to have reasonableness on their side, either they lie, or Reason is a whore.

Because Christian faith is just such a passionate and unreserved commitment which actually invites, not stifles, the critical life, and the outrageous and outlandish proposal is still reasonable: "that the cockpit of the university become again the arena of explicit premeditated theological argument in which Christian perspectives, as metaphysical as the very devil, must take their chances."

Although a previous age saw the life of reason and any unreserved commitment as antitheses, proponents of each side often misunderstood both. "The rational life is that one in which appearances and plausibilities are sagaciously and relentlessly tested, in the hope that the realities will be - veraciously disclosed in the process." Whatever commends itself as worthy of acceptance and commendation will be accepted and commented. "The rational life is one in which the right things are rightly enjoyed." The man of critical reason emerges as a man of faith; "he has faith in the instruments and the benefits of the critical process."

Likewise the man of unreserved Christian commitment emerges as critic. For he too draws upon reflection for analytical rather than for world-exploratory purposes and concentrates in his criticism upon those creations in which the distinctiveness of human life is exhibited. Like every critic he "tests the creations of his civilization for their humanity."

In the process of pushing down to the lineaments of the genuinely "human," one brushes against the popular dogma that a university provides the optimum context for the critical spirit when it is institutionally indifferent to religious options. That might be true, says Hartt. But let that dogma too be tested just like any religious dogma. "If criticism is a good thing, it is good for the university as a whole. It is not enough for us to imagine that religious commitment is wrong, or a threat to critical inquiry. We must somehow seek to show that it is so. The issue, accordingly, is not only the conflict of metaphysical beliefs. It is also the matching of metaphysical arguments."

The Sifting Sieve

Hartt uses this construct of commitment plus criticism as a sieve to shake down the reasoned facts of what's going on at the university. He sifts through the contemporary university with profound and brainbending chapters on "The Arts and the Sciences," and the theme of "Involvement vs. Detachment." What is finally left in the sieve is the perennial debate over man's being and good. Yet that debate today is muddied by many elements of university life (the pervasive academic pressures generally labelled "Freudianism" and "Positivism"). And it is trivialized by many elements of religious life on campus (including theology professors and swinging chaplains) so that "the university audience does not expect very much by way of direct address to the absolutely fundamental concerns of human existence, and it is not getting much."

Hartt is very critical of the generation of campus theology professors and chaplains who have willy-nilly muted Christian dogmatic convictions on these fundamental human concerns in favor of some supposedly more palatable or promoteable more-or-less Christian proposal. What God was doing in Christ, what human existence is when separated from this doing, what God has in mind for all of human history — on these issues Christian dogma has explicit positions ("metaphysical claims") and appropriate supporting arguments. To avoid expressing these propositions and arguments by restricting theological discussion to "current movements" or confusing the curriculum to the scientific and philosophical study of religion "is arbitrary and unnatural in any institution that calls itself Christian in any sober sense."

Even though the university gains some benefit from such "informal" or "disguised" theology, no one's true interests are properly served by making Christianity "a respectable creed without encouraging its people to lock horns in doctrinal controversy. The time for muting theological difference has past. The time has come to seek overt theological confrontation within the framework of the Christian university."

Much of Hartt's argumentation does confront fads in the intellectual community, theological ones included. He carries his argument forward with the precision and substantiation to be expected of a philosophical theologian. E.g., on the theologian sticking to his own trade: "It is not the business of the proper theologian to tell his contemporaries what they believe or to guess how many of them believe this and how many that, or how difficult it really is for them to believe what he tells them they do believe. His business is to propose what might and what ought to be believed and why. There is no virtue in his not knowing what sentiments persist or perhaps prevail in his precincts. Knowing what does not make him a theologian. Not knowing it might make him an unprofitable one."

The same precision and tongue-in-cheek balloon-pricking are to be seen in his concluding chapters on the university chapel as agent for just this confrontation. The chapel must exploit its three-fold office of preaching, priesthood, and teacher of the truth of God.

On the "sins of the (current) preaching office of the chapel... we have an interesting spread running from the most self-righteous trumpeting of the preacher's opinions on the immoralities of the national government to the most stubbornly entrenched concealment of the preacher's opinions behind the opinions of others, ranging from Paul to William Faulkner, a distance I seem to find rather more considerable than others do." If the chapel is Christian in its preaching it must be the "Gospel in and of Jesus Christ." What is at
Origen, "It's served. " So sort of religion in general, the gospel remains a grave offense, since it is an issue that is the proclamation is declarative and indicative. The commitment that is both particular and unrestricted."

In Default of other Angels

On the chapel's priestly office and the rising tide of counseling by chaplains: "The chapel has no religious warrant for serving as a dressing station for the casualties of the university. The church has something to say about sin and about its forgiveness. . . . Before the church becomes a dispenser of comfort to the afflicted it must first be a teller of this truth. The church is peculiarly equipped to deal with some kinds of suffering, or there is not likely to be a surplus of elements of suffering. . . ."

The Knowledge of Things Hoped For:
The Sense of Theological Discourse

Jenson moves through an impressive array of thinkers and hammers out his logic in theological language logic employed by various theologians and analysts bend and curvely structured reality which undergirded their particular type of language logic has been destroyed by the triumph of the scientific method and the discovery of the historicity of man's being. Therefore a hierarchy of images to bridge the ontological gap between this world and the transcendent (Origen) or an "analogously descriptive" language pointing to the likeness in unlikeness of God and his creatures (Thomas) can no longer be creditable methods of theological discourse. But Jenson uncovers hints in Origen and Thomas (after all, they "have not been chosen at random!") pointing in the direction of the two main emphases Jenson himself wants to make: Thomas jealously guards the continuity of theological language with ordinary fact-stating language, and Origen insisted that the actual historical life of Jesus Christ was the "image" of God that made theological talk meaningful. The investigation of Origen and Thomas, in addition to its intrinsic value, is thus really a springboard to put Jenson into the middle of the two major dialogues of the book: the dialogue with linguistic analysts on the continuity of theological language with fact language; and the dialogue with the hernauteuicists on the relationship of the history of Jesus to theological meaning or proclamation.

In a time of fragmentation in theology, it seems particularly important that Jenson addresses at least two theological "schools" with the same basic question: the meaning of talk about God. We would have liked to see the question addressed also to theologians who have a different way of talking about God, e.g., the process theologians, Catholic theologians, etc. Obviously these theologians could not have been included in this particular study, but the impression is occasionally given that the verifiability problem and the hernauteuicists are the only real elements in the question about the meaning of talk about God.

But Jenson does accomplish an impressive analysis of at least those two problems. He sharpens his tools of linguistic analysis in dialogue with Flew, Hare, Paul Schmidt, Hepburn, and others. His fundamental critique of them is that they simply assume that theological utterances are not really intended...
as "assertions". Jenson contends that this is not satisfactory as an analysis of the language of the Christian faith, for "within Christian theological language the fundamental utterances, evocative or expressive as they are, are all historical narratives". Picking up and running with suggestions from Wisdom, Austin and Wittgenstein, Jenson demonstrates that language can do two things at once: express an attitude and precisely so create the reality of our lives. It is like grasping the meaning of a drama; one pattern of meaning is the pattern of expectations raised and satisfied. Theological utterances are verdicts on the meaning of the "drama of Time." It is when Time is complete, when all events are presented to us as one great drama, that the issue of God will be settled.

**Christ as Conclusion**

The direction of Jenson's solution to the logic of theological talk is already indicated by his description of reality as a drama, a story. For a drama must have a conclusion. And talking about Christ as this conclusion and Wittgenstein, Jenson demonstrates that of the Christian faith, for continuity of adjudicability, where no reliability of language can do two things at once: express an attitude and precisely so create the reality of our lives. It is like grasping the meaning of a drama; one pattern of meaning is the pattern of expectations raised and satisfied. Theological utterances are verdicts on the meaning of the "drama of Time." It is when Time is complete, when all events are presented to us as one great drama, that the issue of God will be settled.

**With his tools of linguistic analysis honed.** Jenson turns to the hermeneutical question: how does the historical tradition bring God to understanding? Bultmann's project, he finds, ends in a history-dissolving concept of eschatology. All that needs to be proclaimed is "that the end of history has happened" — a claim, in other words, that direct language of personal encounter with the Christ of the proclamation is informative apart from any impersonal verifiability. Help comes, though, from Ebeling and Gadamer, who look at language as accomplishing something. Tradition narrates to us the matter of our heritage and in that same act initiates us into the language by which the language of our heritage is interpreted. Interpretation of the tradition is an act of further appropriation of the living tradition by which we always already live. But Jenson is not satisfied with Ebeling's answer to the question of the relation between the history of Jesus and the proclamation. Ebeling seems to say that faith has its basis in what comes to words in the historical Jesus, and the proclamation of Jesus as the eschatological event is meaningful only in this existentiell situation. Jenson's solution is to insist that the Gospel does not yet come to word in the "historical Jesus," but only in the narrative of the resurrection as the conclusion of our own life story. The historical Jesus — and all historical research — is in the realm of Law.

**A More Radical Dualism**

Finally, to sharpen the focus on Law and Gospel, Jenson enters into dialogue with Ott and Pannenberg, both of whom attempt to overcome Bultmann's problematic by elimination of the dualism of history and meaning. Ott makes existential confrontation with the tradition absorb the historical question, while Pannenberg insists that objective historical research is itself the way to the meaning of the past for us. With Ott, Jenson says there is an existentiell project involved in objectivizing historical research itself. It could be repentance, in the sense of apprehending the given reality of life with no illusions of finding any justification or meaning for the future in it. Apart from faith, objectivizing research can be "secularized repentance," a form of civil righteousness.

With Pannenberg, Jenson affirms the basic idea that the Christian language is meaningful only within a projection of the total story, that research depends on some projected outline of history in which the end is viewed proleptically. But Jenson rejects Ott's lack of sensitivity to the problem of verifiability, and he batters down Pannenberg's monistic view of history and proclamation by showing that it flounders on the problem of the ascertainability of the resurrection. The attempt to abolish the dualism of historical research and proclamation fails, and Jenson proceeds to replace that dualism with the even more radical dualism of Law and Gospel. History is done under the Law, and this is the ultimate reason why the resurrection cannot be affirmed within the historian's version of the past. Jenson outlines this dualism in this way:

Thus it is God who addresses us in the narration of history. And we have now learned the existential content of this address: By it we are called into ever more desperate self-assertion and into repentance, in complete ambiguity. The Word from God that does this is God's Law. This ambiguity of the work of the Law is overaken by the proclamation of the Gospel. . . . What comes to word in the "historical Jesus," in Jesus's existence prior to the Resurrection, is the Law. It is Jesus in the event of proclamation — that is, Jesus' life including the Resurrection — in whom the Gospel came and comes to word.

**The Circle Remains**

Jenson is to be thanked for making it clear that his analysis is a proposal, and a decision about it can only be made from within the tradition of the Christian faith. In the final analysis, the circle remains. One wonders just what was accomplished by insisting that Christian language be continuous with non-religious language. His proposal does in fact reflect a particular theological tradition which might be identified as a strongly Lutheran theology of promise, in which the dialectic of Law and Gospel provides the logical structure. He disqualifies the image/analogy language of Original Sin and Thomasian Eschatonomy, and thrusts "epistemological works-righteousness." He puts the Law-Gospel dualism in place of Bultmann's fact-meaning problem. Jenson is obviously analyzing the Lutheran language game. And — surprise! — that is where he comes out:

Whether the Lutheran character of this solution is a recommendation must be left to the reader. I am led to it by what seems the logic of the matter. That the logic of the matter lands me with Luther is for me a satisfaction. For it does seem that the view taken here is closely related to Luther's own view.

A couple of questions come to mind. Is there no distinction at all between the language of proclamation itself and the language of theological construction? At one point Jenson seems to identify exegesis with historical research, and dogmatic theology with proclamation or God-language. Another question concerns the strong christocentric character of his logic, to the point of insisting that
all God-language must be informative statements about the man Jesus of Nazareth. He seems to have brushed aside too quickly Hepburn's objection to such a christological solution of the logic of religious language.

In spite of some problems, Jenson has accomplished a mammoth job. Simply following him as he cuts through much of contemporary theology is a trip well worth taking. His suggestive proposals deserve careful attention. And here at last is a logical analysis by which the somewhat confused "theology of hope" constructions can be measured. The question "What do you mean?" receives a workable answer here for those who identify themselves with Jenson's position in the tradition of faith.

But that raises a final difficulty which Jenson proposed to meet but which obviously remained outside the scope of the book: the skepticism implied in the question "What do you mean — if anything?" By refusing to relate Christian language to "religious language," by restricting his interest to "the Father of Jesus Christ," and by staying basically within the Lutheran theological tradition, Jenson has managed an impressive theological language proposal. But for those same reasons, the question "So who cares?" goes unanswered. Perhaps Jenson's promised book, God After God, will begin to grapple with that question.

THEODORE M. LUDWIG

Worth Noting

Books for Children at Christmas

For many, Christmas would hardly be Christmas without books and children. Somewhere on everyone's shopping list is at least one child's name, followed by the word "book" and a question mark. While the gift book need not be a book about Christmas, some are so very charming they should be mentioned first.

Christmas in the Stable by Astrid Lindgren tells the old, old story with a quaint and original setting. Her illustrations are characteristically in water colors painted by children around the world.

Away in a Manger by the National Council of Churches illustrates the Christmas story in a style that children will enjoy. Her illustrations are in soft pastels.

The Joy of Christmas, an anthology of stories and poems pertaining to the Christmas season, is edited and illustrated by Tasha Tudor. Her illustrations are characteristically delicate and soft and are right for the season and subjects of this anthology.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss is a brief tale told with a wry twist and an appealing moral.

From Christmas stories it is only a step to children's bibles. Only one of the following is fully a bible, chapter and verse. The Young Reader's Bible is the Revised Standard Version with explanatory notes to make bible study easier for the beginning bible reader. It is profusely illustrated, and wherever possible the picture is adjacent to the text, making it especially useful for reading to small children.

Small Rain derives its title from a verse in Proverbs. It matches the most beautiful and beloved passages from the King James Version with simple and yet descriptive pictures which cannot fail to move many children. It is the work of Jessie Orton Jones, long known as an able illustrator of books for young children.

It is doubtful there has ever been a more difficult time for growing up in America than the present. Thanks to the invasion of the home by mass media, children can no longer be "innocent" in the sense of being unaware of tension, danger, and social upheaval. The safe world of childhood is fast becoming a nostalgic myth. We may long for some kind of magic to weave an invisible shield about them, but we know it cannot be done. If we are to grant a degree of security to the young in troubled times it must be through knowledge and understanding of their world and the forces that surround them. Some fears and anxieties decrease in proportion to their acquiring of knowledge and understanding, even very early.

We can help them early to see the worth and dignity of people who differ from themselves. And what better time to do that than the season of "good will toward men" in stories and songs?

In the September issue of English Journal, Dorothy Serrling indicts the inadequacy of the public schools in providing texts and literature which present a true picture of our American heritage, the heritage of all Americans. She does more than indict. She presents an extensive bibliography for presenting a course in black studies to elementary and junior high pupils. With some revisions, that bibliography could be useful for family reading with children at home. To mention a few of the titles:

Great American Negroes by Afro-American Publications is a good beginning for understanding the contributions of black men and women in a variety of occupations and public services to our common life. Each page bears a portrait and a short biographical sketch.

Color of Man discusses the nature of prejudice for children at the fifth grade level of understanding and upward. A good treatment is made of the simple differences in skin color and their causes, and the illustrations are impressive.

Langston Hughes is a biography by Milton Meltzer for children at the junior high level and upward. It is an excellent biography, written with vigor and clarity, about a writer whose life was a testament of his belief that it is a proud thing to be black. It is fascinating reading because of his travels, his friends in the literary world, and his involvement in causes. Another gift for the same age group might be Langston Hughes' own editing of Best Short Stories by Negro Writers.

These books go some of the way toward dispelling misconceptions and intolerances among white children, to say nothing of the respect for themselves they can arouse in black children.

Such reading can not be thought of as an escape, save as an escape from ignorance of the world in which the children are growing up. At Christmas time, shoppers might think of helping them with all their getting, to get understanding.

Sylvia Swarner

December 1969
Protestants are often uneasy when asked to discuss their view of the Virgin Mary. Much of this uncertainty would be eliminated by reading Luther's *The Magnificat* (1520-1521). This brief tract is an analysis of Mary's hymn of praise to God. According to Luther, to show Mary proper honor, we must regard her low estate, and not make of her an idol. When we regard her low estate, as she asks us to, we are moved to put our hope and trust in God's grace. Luther criticized artists who do not render Mary as a humble servant of God. He wrote:

"But the masters who so depict and portray the blessed Virgin that there is found in her naught to be despised, but only great and lofty things — what is it they do but contrast us with her instead of her with God. Whereby they make us timid and afraid, and hide the Virgin's comfortable picture, as the images are covered in Lent. For they deprive us of her example, from which we might take comfort; they make an exception of her and set her above all examples. But she should — and herself gladly would be — the foremost example of the grace of God, to incite all the world to trust in this grace of God and to love and praise it..."

We conclude from this passage that there are artistic renderings of the Virgin Mary that Luther would keep and others he would discard. The touchstone for selection is summarized in the phrase *soli Deo gloria*. "She does not want you to come to her," wrote Luther, "but through her to God."

In Luther's description there is something very human in the Mary who goes about her household tasks, "milk­ing the cows, cooking the meals, washing the pots and kettles, sweeping out the rooms." Such a humble and earthly view of Mary is consistent with what is called the "German Madonna." This interpretation of the Madonna, found in the writings and art works of many Germans, strongly reflects northern pietism at the time of the Reformation. The Weimar editors compared Luther's treatment in *The Magnificat* with the artist Albrecht Duerer's *Marienleben* (*The Life of Mary*), a series of quaint woodcuts portraying the life of the Virgin (rendered between 1503 and 1510).

Albrecht Duerer (1471-1528) is considered one of Germany's most outstanding artists. He became more and more critical of depicting the Madonna in any manner that placed emphasis on her instead of the Christ child. This can be seen by comparing Duerer's treatment of the Madonna during his last ten years. In this period Duerer became greatly interested in the writings of Luther. As early as 1518, one year after the 95 theses, Duerer was a member of a study group that aligned itself with Luther. In this same year the artist sent Luther some of his art work as a gift.

In 1519 Duerer was deeply involved in Luther's teachings. That year a young artist, Jan van Scorel, came to Nueremberg to study with Duerer. Scorel found Duerer so preoccupied with the "teachings by which Luther had begun to stir the quiet world" that he decided to study elsewhere.

In a letter written by Duerer early in 1520, we learn that the artist had been helped out of spiritual distress through the writings of Luther. Also, in 1520, Duerer wrote or copied on the back of a drawing a statement of the new doctrine that had become so influential in his life. It states:
"Seeing that through disobedience of sin we have fallen into everlasting Death, no help could have reached us save through the incarnation of the Son of God, whereby He through His innocent suffering might abundantly pay the Father all our guilt. . . . There is nothing good in us except it becomes good in Christ. Whosoever therefore will altogether justify himself is unjust. . . ."

During a trip to the Netherlands in 1521, Duerer learned that Luther had been abducted after leaving the Diet of Worms. Not knowing that Luther had been taken and hidden by friends, Duerer suspected hostile forces within the Roman Church. He wrote a long passage in his diary criticizing the "unchristian papacy" which stood against redemption in Christ. He was critical of the "deceiving cry of human error" that pulled one away to trust in something other than Christ.

This strong emphasis on the primacy of Christ in the matter of grace and redemption is seen in the visual treatment of the Madonna after 1518. In 1518 Duerer rendered the Madonna being crowned by angels, a typical theme used by many artists at that time. In 1519 and 1520, during his spiritual "crisis," Duerer produced two engravings which show a simpler treatment of the subject. In the 1519 engraving we see the Madonna breast feeding the Christ child (a theme Duerer had rendered before). In the 1520 engraving we see the Madonna and child without the pomp of heavenly hosts. These approaches characterize the way Duerer treated the Madonna in humility in his last works.

We find this attitude not only in Duerer's art work but also in a written statement. In 1523, two years after Luther had finished his tract on The Magnificat, Duerer wrote a similar view on the back of a woodcut by Michael Ostendorfer. The woodcut portrayed the Virgin in a pompous manner, and was used at the pilgrimage center in Ratisbon. Duerer wrote:

"This specter has risen against Holy Scripture at Ratisbon with the permission of the Bishop, and has not been abolished because of worldly gain. Lord help us that we should not dishonor His dear Mother by separating her from Christ Jesus. Amen."

We do not know if Duerer read Luther's The Magnificat. We do know, however, that Duerer's treatment of the Madonna after 1518 and his statement of 1523 firmly align him with Luther's view on how the subject should be treated by artists.
A Christmas Fairy Tale

By DON A. AFFELDT

For over a century Christmas has been a time to remember, among other things, Dickens' immortal story about Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, and Tiny Tim. *A Christmas Carol* will be read again this Christmas, but chances are that if you drop Tiny Tim's name during Christmas week, 1969, people won't be thinking about the crippled boy of yore. Instead of recalling a charming fable, they'll be thinking instead of the biggest Fairy Tale in a decade, starring the 1969 version of Tiny Tim — a hirsute proboscis whose quivering queerness has endeared him to millions.

Christmas, 1969, will go down in history as the time Tiny Tim married pubescent Miss Vicky in prime time on the Johnny Carson show.

This bizarre spectacle will be watched by countless sniggering, incredulous viewers. And every one of them will be wishing that instead of watching the wedding, they could be watching what, if anything, will be going on in the hotel later that night. The Viewing Public hasn't been treated to such a circus since...since...well, maybe there is a first time for everything.

On the off-chance that you're not familiar with the Tiny Tim of the Twentieth Century, let me describe him to you. Or rather, let me tell you what people take him to be. What he is is another matter, shrouded in mystery. But it makes no difference, really, what he is. It's what he *seems* that counts. Even he knows this. He's made a fortune out of seeming. We may never know how difficult, or easy, this was for him.

Tiny Tim is the Silent Majority's contact with the mysterious, terrifying, titilating world of The Homosexual. You just *know* he's queer. After all, he has long hair, his eyes flutter, he sings in a falsetto, he addresses his frequent talk-show host as 'Mr. Carson' and refers to his fiancee as 'Miss Vicky,' he blows kisses, he 'just loves' baseball — the whole bit. He's flagrantly, outrageously, unmistakably gay. And if you can't see that, Carson and his audiences will make it plain to you by their responses to him. He's the queen of the late-night talk-shows.

And now he's getting married. His engagement, strangely enough, was announced via the newspapers. But not consummated there. He waited until his next appearance on Carson's show to present his fiancee with her ring. And it was then that Carson invited him to be married on nationwide television. He jumped at the invitation.

I don't doubt that the wedding ceremony will be conducted with all the dignity that can be mustered in studio 6B of the NBC building in Rockefeller Center. It may even occur to people sometime during the program that they really *are* watching two human beings promise themselves to each other for life. No doubt the whole thing will be, in the last analysis, very touching. But viewers will not be watching in order to see something that's touching. They want to see the freak-show.

Two things stand out in the whole Tiny Tim phenomenon: its intrinsic obscenity, and its manifest unfairness to homosexuals.

The obscenity does not lie with Tiny Tim. He is what he is — whatever he is — and that's all there is to it. It lies, rather, in the popular interest which has made him a person of note. His appeal does not stem from his voice, though one may, I suppose, find that pleasing; thus, unlike Allen Ginsberg, a self-proclaimed homosexual, his claim to fame does not rest on his bona fide talents. Rather, his appeal derives from his suitability as an object of derision and disgust, curiosity and strange excitement. As such, he appeals to the obscene instincts of the Straight Silent Majority. Why obscene? Because the Silent Majority, while it prides itself fiercely on having all the right sexual predilections, nevertheless procures peculiar delight in sampling — at a distance, mind you — the sexual pleasures of the Rebellious Minority. Smug in its own straightness, the Silent Majority is nevertheless turned on by the aberrations of the Enemy. The widespread, wild-eyed castigation of Hippies which is common in our society is not just a passionate, objective assessment of other people. It's a reaction to a threat, a threat in which the sexual insecurities of the Silent Majority play no small part.

Tiny Tim is Unfair to Homosexuals. His presence on Queer Street encourages nothing but the most slanted and unfavorable view of homosexuals. Surely there are homosexuals who flaunt their differentness as much as Tiny Tim does. But the vast majority of homosexuals are not like this. They are people who do not appear to be homosexuals, who would not want to appear this way. Not because they deeply desire to be otherwise, though they may desire this, but rather because they *are* just like you and me, except for their sexual preferences. So Tiny Tim's representation, in the popular mind, of what it is to be a homosexual, does homosexuals no good, and indeed does them harm.

Tiny Tim — 1969 — is a focus for obscenity and a gross misrepresentation. May he marry, sire, and fade rapidly from the scene.
I have studied American church-Christians pretty closely for a number of years, risking paralysis of mind, and one thing I know about them is that at Christmas time they do not read magazines.

They do read other things. They read the Sears Christmas catalog to see what new stuff the stores have got this year. They read how many shopping days left, so as to get truckloads of that stuff out of the stores in good time and into muddy station wagons and through the slushy streets into cluttered closets.

They read instructions for assembling fruit cakes and egg nogs, postal rules for shipping clumsy wrap-resistant objects, and checkbook balances. They read last year’s Christmas card list, trying to figure out which of their invisible cross-country kin have turned into negligent finks.

And they read lots of signs: TEMPORARILY SOLD OUT Merry Christmas NO PARKING Joyeux Noel NO RETURNS WITHOUT RECEIPT Holiday Cheer from Us to You KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS Pres­tine.

But one thing they are not reading during this annual month of fiscal irresponsibility is a magazine.

This is thus a salutary season for me to attack the most cherished slogan on one branch of Lutheranism and to get several years’ accumulated pique out of my system while insulting nobody.

I am, of course, referring to “A Changeless Christ for a Changing World.” Now there is nothing wrong with this slogan except that it has fallacy in its core, which puts it in about the same refrigerator with a number of other corrupt Protestant vegetables, treated with cyclamates and glutamates and other convenient injections and preservatives.

The adulterated Christ of this slogan is one whom I think we would not wish to know. Who of us cherishes changeless friends or Gods? Day by day I myself change, usually for the worse, and I expect my friends to keep up. My world changes too — I do not want my Christ back in Eisleben or crossing Kidron. Change itself changes, as they told us after we reduced Hiroshima to waves of radiation and the vicious women and children of the enemy to white dust and ashes.

Consciously or unconsciously, we regard change as mainly evil. Lots of little memory verses contribute to this aberrant notion. “Change and decay in all around I see; O thou who changest not, abide with me.” We set up Jesus Christ on one side of the tennis net and Change/Decay/World on the other. Jesus Christ wins the match. There is probably even some proof text in the Small Catechism that says, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

Of course it does no good to fulminate against this absurdity. In one way He is the same eternally, but in the immediate sense of living day by day with us in Harlem or Scarsdale he had better not be the same, world without end. He is with us in each new crisis, or He is not what we claim him to be. It is a measure of the church’s failure that the Christ we automatically think of, the Christ we have been conditioned to respond to, is the changeless one. The one in whose name we condemn recent changes in the American scenario: militant blacks, anti-war students, rock-loving youth, activist ministers, and angry writers.

Pinned to the wall by logic, we would admit that change can be either good or bad. But from the swampy depths of our indoctrinated Christian souls we firmly believe it is mostly bad. To a nonbeliever, casting a cold eye on the changeless church, this is a nonsensical notion. And he is right.

We will shortly be celebrating His birthday, a tiresomely changeless celebration of the irrelevant and changeless Christ. Though marvelous new song books and contemporary hymnals exist we will not let them intrude. We will sing the same hymns and carols and read the same Luke story, because we love stasis and changelessness — precisely the things He rejected as he changed water into wine and disease into health and urged his followers to be born anew. God knows we are heretics all year long, but Christmas is when we outdo ourselves. So let us be about it.
The Pilgrim

"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side"

Pilgrim's Progress

Come, Come to Bethlehem

I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isaiah 57:15).

It is, indeed, not one of the show places of the world, to which travelers are drawn by the fame of stately buildings and splendid works of art. . . . Nor yet is it set amid surroundings of great natural beauty. . . . No, Bethlehem is “little among the thousands of Judah.” . . . It is only a poor straggling village on a stony ridge. . . . But on this humble, unlikely place it pleased God to confer an honor and a dignity far beyond any to which the great capital cities of earth can lay claim. . . . Here God reached down from heaven to reknit the close tie which united Him with mankind until Adam’s sin broke it on that woeful day in Eden. . . . Yes, here at Bethlehem, God entered into an even more intimate relationship with man than Adam had ever known, for whereas God in the beginning made man in His own likeness, He now reversed the process and made Himself in the likeness of man. . . . God was born into the world as a human infant. . . .

How could He so humble Himself? . . . How could the Lord of eternity step down from His throne, lay aside all His glory and majesty, and, like any other helpless babe, become dependent on the ministrations of an earthly mother? . . . That this could take place is the greatest marvel and mystery of the universe. . . . It is to adore this mystery that we are invited to come to Bethlehem. . . . How it could be, we cannot explain. . . . That infinitely transcends our powers of comprehension; our reason can make nothing of it. . . . But when in the divine Word the secret of God’s boundless love for mankind is revealed to us, we can gain an understanding of the meaning of what took place at Bethlehem. . . .

The key to that understanding lies in the nature of love. . . . True love wipes out all distinctions of rank and position; it does not depend on the merits of the loved one, for it creates its own values and is guided by them. . . . True love finds its reward in the welfare of the beloved, and therefore it does not weigh any sacrifices that may be required against gains that it seeks for itself, but only against the benefits which it hopes to convey. . . .

With such unstinting love God loved us in His Son, for only such a love could come to our aid in the extremity of our need — lost as we were to all hope of redemption from the power of sin and death, grooping helpless in the night of our exile from heaven and God. . . . To regain for us a place in Paradise, Jesus took our place on this sin-cursed earth; that we might become children of God, He became a child of man and there­with set His feet on the way that led through untold suffering to the Cross and the grave. . . .

Let us, then, go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. . . . Let us look in faith on Him who came down from the high and holy place, in which He dwells by virtue of His Godhead, to lay His homeless head in a stable and to win for us a home in the mansions of His Father. . . . Humble shepherds were the first to be inv­ited into His presence. . . . Only the humble will ever find their way to Bethlehem and the newborn Babe. . . . Only those who are of a humble spirit because they know how worthless and helpless they are. . . . Only those who are contrite, brokenhearted, and sorrowful because of their sins. . . . But when they — when we — come in that spirit and worship the incarnate God, our Savior, He will fill our empty hands with the riches of heaven. . . .

We see and believe the divine in Christmas: The Christ of God lying in the manger, the glory of God on the plains of Bethlehem, God’s messenger announcing the good news, the hymn of the angelic chorus which gives glory to God, God’s power working faith in the shep­herds, and the praises of these shepherds directed to this same God — and Christmas becomes a festival of inexpressible and abiding joy. . . . For then it means that the Infant lying in the manger is man’s only Savior, that He is the Savior of every sinner, that only God’s love for a sinful world moved Him to send into it His only Son, that man becomes a believer in the divine message because God Himself created that faith, and that this faith lays hold on eternal life. . . .