THE CRESSET

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In Luce Tua

A Layman’s Guide to Infinity

“Do we have too much money?”

Imagine a scene in which this question could plausibly be asked. Aristotle Onassis and H. L. Hunt have gathered in Nelson Rockefeller’s hacienda in Venezuela. After a pleasant summer’s repast, featuring unbown lamb, the gentlemen have retired to the rare book room, where Havana cigars and Napoleonic brandy have been passed. Always the card, H. L. opens the conversation with a gambit he knows will draw a laugh all around. Indeed it does. Nelson, in fact, guffaws so loud that Ari spills his brandy on the leopard-skin rug.

So we failed. Even here, in this rarefied atmosphere, the question is ridiculous. No one ever has too much money. Some suitable object can be found for any largess. Ari has Jackie, the original Gold Drain. H. L. has The Free World to Save. And Nelson must buy New York every four years. Sufficient to the paycheck is the challenge thereof.

Maybe the question would lose some of its preposterousness if it were refined. Maybe, if refined, the question could be applicable to some real-life situation. It is even conceivable that the question could be understood in such a way that it could properly be asked of us. You and me. Just typical participants in a bourgeois market economy. Your average American Joe.

No way! Me? Too much money? You must be kidding. Would you like to see my checkbook? My oh-so-fragile savings account? Or better yet: would you like to see the stack of bills on my desk waiting for the first of the month?

“We face tough going. How could one make out a case that a middle-class man with children to educate and a wife to Midi-fy and a house to pay for has too much money? And what perversity would lead anyone to press the question in the first place?”

No special perversity. Just a recognition of two facts. 1) Like as not, the son or daughter of American Joe will raise the question sooner or later. Sure, he or she will probably be in college when that happens, living handsomely off the checkbook Papa worked all those overtime hours to whip into shape. But for all of that, Joe’s kid might really take the matter seriously. And one day Joe may get a letter from his kid bearing a return address that turns out to be a commune. It’s happening.

2) Even if the issue is never joined in so dramatic a fashion, Joe may still confront the question some time or other. It may be that one day he will travel to some less-developed country, like India or South Chicago, where he will encounter at close range the disparity between his affluent, if bill-plagued, life-style and the marginal life-style of others. He then may wonder whether the question of having too much money is adequately answered by a simple balance between income and outgo. He may, indeed, wonder whether there is not some independent standard by which his financial deserts could be calibrated.

But is there? Is there some standard which will work as a measure of whether we have too much money? Some possibilities come to mind.

Perhaps the most natural measuring-rod for determining whether we are making too much money is the standard of needs. What are our needs, and is there enough money in our coffers to satisfy them?

The Standard of Needs

This was Plato’s beginning point when he took up the question of the ideal social organization. Plato sketched a state which was geared simply to the satisfaction of the needs of the people in a certain geographic area. There was the need for shelter, clothing, food — and not much more. Further, Plato envisioned satisfying these needs in the most economical way; the clothing was to be rough and functional, not elegant and ornamental; the shelter was designed to protect man from the elements, not to be a thing of beauty in its own right. The needs Plato envisioned, then, concerned simply the maintenance of life at a level sufficient to allow productivity for the general satisfaction of needs.

This simple vision was immediately ridiculed as comprising a “City of Pigs,” for it promised none of the amenities to which man (even in Plato’s time) had become accustomed. The life style of citizens of such a state seemed barely better than that of animals. Surely no such state could be ideal.

That is a powerful criticism, but there is another rejoinder to Plato which might have been raised. Assuming we want a society in which the citizens function maximally as human beings, and not just minimally as producers and consumers, it is far from clear just what the standard of needs actually dictates. That is, if we consider man as also a “spiritual” creature, whose psychic well-being is a valuable thing in itself, what shall we say are his needs? Is the dance necessary? Shall there be music? Time to worship one’s God, and tax-exemption for one’s religious group so that an inspiring building can be built and maintained in which to do one’s worshiping? Shall the workers have vacations, the better to refresh their spirits, and is this to be accomplish-
ed by allowing two weeks, or six months, of respite per year? The questions have barely begun.

"The baby needs a new pair of shoes." Even supposing the kid is barefoot, one can ask: Does he need a new pair of shoes? What will happen if he doesn't get the shoes? Will he die? Will his feet become deformed? Will his parents be embarrassed? Will his, or his parents', humanity be compromised if he must go barefoot? Or is it that we simply want a new pair of shoes for the baby?

Confronted with the spectre of a City of Pigs, Plato revised his organizing principle for the state to include not only the needs of the citizens but also their wants. The immediate result, Plato was quick to observe, is that we now have on our hands an infinite, rather than a finite, state. It is at least arguable that the list of man's needs is probably short and certainly has an end; but it seems likely that the list of a man's desires is long, and may not have an end at all.

The Standard of Wants

Even if we grant — what is by no means obvious — that most of us have a limited set of wants, one still can ask whether there are any limits on the way in which these wants can be satisfied. Suppose a man wants a good, home-cooked meal at the end of a hard day's work. Fish and rice are offered. Will they do? How about meat loaf and mashed potatoes? Steak and French fries? Caviar and boeuf bourguignon? All qualify, and tastes have a way of escalating.

The usual way of coping with the satisfaction of wants is to relativize our choices. What do we want more, a new sofa or an air conditioner? So considered, the problem (sometimes) becomes manageable. But there is a sliding scale here that poses a real threat. This year we want the air conditioner more than sofa; next year we'll want the sofa more than the vacation in Mexico, and so on. The net result, of course, is that by next year we'll have both the air conditioner and the sofa — which means that we will be able to study the Mexican travel folders while seated splendidly in cool comfort.

The Dialectic of Consumerism leaves unasked the question "Do we really want a new sofa?" Furthermore, it completely obscures the question "Should we want a new sofa?" Yet this normative question is the heart of the matter. If we fail even to raise the issue, the escalation of expectations will know no end. A layman will confront infinity, bit by bit. Taken in small doses, infinity is quite manageable. Not at all scary, so long as the bills come in one at a time.

Perhaps some wise man knows how to apply the standard of needs, or the standard of true wants, to each situation he confronts. But few of us are so wise, so perhaps we should cast about for a different standard against which to measure the propriety of our plenitude.

The Standard of Ability

This is the guideline most of us use to determine the limits of our expenditures. How much money do we have, and how far will it go? When we run out of money, we call a halt — or, more often, just a pause — to our purchasing. When more comes in, off we go, keeping a wary eye on the flickering balance in the checkbook or the gurgling child who will be college material (of course) in just eighteen more years.

One difficulty with this approach is that personal income is generally rising at a regular pace and seems destined for no particular ceiling. The Dialectic of Consumerism meets its co-conspirator in the Spiral of Inflation. To be sure, some few unfortunates fall by the wayside; but then, that's progress, and besides, we all need worthy objects of pity for our rampaging charitable instincts. Our only worry in the matter is that we will find ourselves left off the escalator. (No doubt this worry is prompted by our sincere desire to give rather than to receive charity.)

The rude fact of the matter is that those already on the wayside, or those (like most of the people of the world) who were never privileged to share the wealth to begin with, perceive that we have already long passed the point where our national and personal wealth is obviously justified. To them, the plea that we are not spending more than we are earning sounds hollow indeed, for they wonder why we should be earning so much in the first place. I'm not so sure there is any satisfactory answer to that question.

The answer is not that our ability to spend and earn is a simple function of our abilities simpliciter and that these abilities are much greater than those of people in less wealthy nations. The claim that Americans are generally more able than Chinese, Indians, or Africans is manifestly absurd and completely unworthy of consideration.

The same can be said — though perhaps less quickly - about the claim that the poor among us are relatively lacking in simple ability. But even if it were true that the poor among us were poor because of a lack of ability, it doesn't follow that they deserve to be poor on that account. After all, none of us has the remotest control over his own ability; this is a genetic matter, not a matter of choice. But what we deserve can hardly depend on our genes.
Upgrading Our Wants

The question I am posing — namely, what is the proper allocation of one's resources? — presupposes some ideal against which the allocation of one's resources might be assessed. If this ideal is not embodied in a fixed standard or rule — and we have found none which works very well — then perhaps it is embodied in an image. The image of the man who does all things well.

Forget it. There is no such man, so the image of him is chimerical. But some men may do some things well. So part of the image may be viable.

Consider the man who has the right wants. This is a man who has taken to his heart persons, causes, and institutions whose worth he can affirm and whose activities he can support. This is a man who will invest himself and his property in the on-going life of persons, causes, and institutions he believes in. This is a man whose wants are not centered wholly on himself, or on his family, or on his estate. He lives also for others.

Well, how will he know his wants are right? He may not know; there are, however, ways for him to find out. And how will he determine how much of himself or his plenty to give to them even if they are right? He will give as much as he can — consistent with the sort of person he is.

No solution. A problem, a question, but no answer. Quite so. How do you create the Good Man? Not by formulas, rules, abstract standards. It's less precise, more intuitive than that. But not unimportant. No less worthy of our concern, for all the difficulty it involves.

New men don't have to be begun at birth. They can, as the saying goes, daily come forth and arise. One must take a hard look at one's wants, one's commitments, one's goals. One must measure them against one's ideals. And be ruthless in the conclusion one draws. (Do it.)

On Second Thought

We have been told to proceed "with extreme caution" as we implement a decision to move the church in a new direction. The phrase demands second thought. "Caution" is not a word to say to men who move by faith in conviction of the forgiveness of God. "Extreme caution" sounds strange when spoken to men who have heard their Lord say "Launch out into the deep, cast your nets on the other side."

The second thought is always evaluative. By what criterion do you evaluate a statement in the church? You look for the model of God in it. When you say "Proceed with extreme caution," what do you think God is like? Do we expect thunder and fire if we move too far? Do we tentatively insert a toe for fear His water is too cold for us? Or too hot? Are we afraid that He won't go with us, are we looking over our shoulder to see whether He will follow? I'm sure we do not mean that He is too slow to follow us!

We are not using that criterion, of course. It's people we are afraid of. We move with extreme caution lest the cry of "Shame" grow too loud. We are afraid that people will not follow. But that too needs evaluating. Why aren't we using the criterion of the model of God? Do we really mean to say that people are more important? If God calls us then we do not proceed with extreme caution. If God does not call us then we do not proceed at all. We do not look across to see what others will do. We look ahead to see where Jesus leads.

The advice to proceed with caution is very old. Moses was called, he urged caution. God said "Go!" Gideon said, "Let's consider this carefully." God said "Do it now." Jeremiah said "I'm not ready yet." God said "Be an iron pillar and a bronze wall against the whole land." Peter said "Wait, I can't do that." God said "Don't call unclean what God has cleansed. Go!"

Jesus told a story about a man who moved with caution. He knew his Lord was hard, one who reaped where he had not sown and gathered where he did not winnow. So the man took his assignment and buried it safely in the ground where he could not lose it. His Lord finally asked him why. He said that he was afraid of the judgment of error, and had used great care.

His Lord said "Take away from him what he was so cautious about. Give it to a man bold enough to use it." A cautious man has nothing left of God. Whatever we have from God must be ventured into danger, it must be placed in jeopardy. Whoever does not dare to do this had better invest his talent with the bankers who do, for the Lord to receive His own with interest.
The Literary Genius of Martin Luther

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One usually thinks of Martin Luther as a great theologian and a deeply religious person, and that is what he was. Joseph Lortz, the foremost living Roman Catholic student of the Reformation, recently wrote that Martin Luther unquestionably stands beside Paul and Augustine as one of the three greatest Christian thinkers of all time. The indispensable background for our understanding of the literary genius of Luther is Luther the supreme master of theology. The deepest things Luther had to say and the things he said most splendidly and poignantly are on matters of the Christian faith and life as he so memorably and movingly understood it.

Luther could and did write forcefully about almost every subject on earth as well as in heaven. His extraordinary eloquence ranged from the roughest and coarsest vituperation in controversy to the most refined and delicate sentiments about the Virgin Mary. Luther played masterfully on the vast instrument of language, using the whole scale of it. But he wrote most unforgettably in the realm of the sacred, whether as an author in his own right or as what he also was and still is: the foremost translator of the Bible.

Let me single out the Bible for special treatment. I quite realize that it is not yet possible to do justice to Luther's greatest literary achievement, his German Bible. We simply do not know enough about it and are apt to take it too much for granted. Perhaps only the philological scholar and literary student are in a position to see Luther's linguistic achievement as a translator in its true perspective. If that is so, then the philologist has a special duty and pleasure to show the abiding literary genius of Luther's Bible to the general reader.

First, I should like to sketch some of the relevant background of the age before Luther. Let us scan the second half of the fifteenth and the first two decades of the sixteenth century. The most famous German literary work of that era was Sebastian Brant's Narrenschiff (Ship of Fools) of 1494. Brant, a leading humanist, severely skeptical and critical of man and his follies, is not likely to exaggerate when he has something favorable to report, which is seldom enough. And one of the very few favorable things he has to say about his century is that it had made the Scriptures available and other religious writings such as Plenaria and Specula humanae salvationis. Brant wrote:

All land syndt yetz voll hellyger geschrifft
Und was der selen heyl antrifft /
Bibel / der heylgen vaetter ler
Und ander der glich buecher mer /

“The whole land is now filled with the Bible and sacred writings of all kinds.” Sebastian Brant does not insist that these wholesome works were eagerly or even widely read. Still less does he assert that their moral precepts were followed. All he is saying and all I am suggesting here is that the Bible or parts of it, the gospel and epistle lessons primarily, were by the end of the fifteenth century readily available in the vernacular.

If we move from Brant's significant statement to the actual record, what do we find? We find that Germany, then the land of Gutenberg, was the first European country to print not only the Latin Vulgate — the famous Gutenberg Bible of ca. 1450 — but also the first Bible in any European vernacular. I refer to the first printed German Bible published in Strassburg in 1465 or 1466. This exceedingly rare folio, found in this country only in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City and the Newberry Library in Chicago, was followed by as many as thirteen other editions of the Bible in High German. The last of these appeared in 1518, only four years before the first edition of Luther's New Testament of 1522. In addition to the fourteen High German Bibles there were also four Low German Bibles that came out between 1478 and 1522. It is noteworthy that none of these eighteen pre-Lutheran High and Low German Bibles was ever reprinted after the Luther Bible appeared on the scene.

Beyond these complete Bibles there were numerous editions of important parts of the Bible, most of which can still be seen in leading European libraries, some even in the Newberry and Pierpont Morgan libraries in Chicago and New York. The decades just before Luther as well as the years of his youth and early manhood were anything but indifferent to the spread of the Scriptures in the vernacular, in spite of a number of official Bible prohibitions issued by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. In fact, Germany, soon to be known as the land of Luther, was the undisputed leader in getting the Bible to the people in the people's own language.

The Land of Gutenberg and Luther

If one compares Germany to England, for example, one finds in England only one pre-Reformation translation of the Bible, John Wicliff's of about 1382, revised by Purvey. This translation existed only in a variety of manuscripts and remained unpublished till the middle of the nineteenth century. The first printed English New Testament, by William Tyndale, did not appear.
until 1526. It was inspired and significantly influenced by Luther's pioneer work of a few years earlier. The first complete printed English Bible, by Miles Coverdale, did not come out till 1535, again inspired by Luther's German Bible and even more massively indebted to it than Tyndale's New Testament had been.

Fifteenth and early sixteenth century Germany was far ahead of other countries in printing the first as well as the largest number of vernacular Bibles. It is safe to say that the decades before the Reformation in Germany were filled with an intense, though often misdirected, religious life and an abundance of spiritual activities, not the least of which was the frequent printing of vernacular Bibles.

Of course, I am speaking of quantity, not necessarily of quality. Most of the things that were to make Luther's German Bible so memorable and unique, unique even today, were singularly absent from the pre-Lutheran Bibles. Although some of them, such as the Zainer Bible of 1475 or the Koberger redaction of 1483, both High German, as well as the Luebeck and Halberstadt Low German Bibles, showed some improvement over the first translations of the 1460's and early 1470's, none of them even approaches the genius of Luther's Bible. Why not? There are at least two or three important reasons.

First, the pre-Lutheran Bibles — not only those in German but also those in other European languages — were based not on the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, but exclusively on the Latin Vulgate. They were thus, in reality, translations of a translation, hence twice removed from the original. In fact, for parts of the Old Testament there were three times removed from the original. For instance, the Psalms in the Vulgate were translated not from the original Hebrew but from its translation into Greek, the Septuagint. The pre-Lutheran Bibles, therefore, even though printed in the Age of Humanism, are not responsive to the cry "Ad fontes" — "Back to the sources" — uttered by the New Learning. In this regard they are definitely pre-Renaissance works.

To cite but one example: the first verse of one of the most beloved of all Psalms, the Twenty-third. The Vulgate reads as follows: "Dominus regit me," "The Lord rules me." The pre-Lutheran German Bibles have accordingly: "Der Herr regiert mich." Similarly, Wiclif, in his fourteenth-century translation into English, has "The Lord governeth me." Luther on the other hand has "Der Herr ist mein Hirte," just as the King James Bible and the Revised Standard of 1952 after him have "The Lord is my shepherd." This is a correct translation of the original. Both Luther and the Authorized Version are clearly based on the Hebrew, not on the Latin Vulgate as all pre-Lutheran German, English, French, Italian, Bohemian, and other renderings had been.

The second reason why the pre-Lutheran German Bibles fall far below Luther's achievement is that the anonymous translators had but moderate literary skills at best. They were, especially the redactors of the revised editions of 1475 and 1483, fairly competent people to be sure. But one cannot really expect mere talent, even talent above average, to reach the heights of genius. The pre-Lutheran Bibles would doubtless be rather more respected if Luther's Bible did not exist. For it is a simple fact that all these renderings of the Scriptures pale when seen against the majesty and tenderness of Luther's German Bible.

The pre-Lutheran Bibles are at best routine translations, often hard to understand, especially in such difficult parts as the Pauline epistles and the Psalms, where more than ordinary competence is required to make the complex original text intelligible in another language. And Luther is at his very best in the intricacies of Paul's theological thought and in the religious depth and poetic beauty of the greatest of the Psalms. The most remarkable thing is that even the less than great Psalms partake of his religious and literary genius.

The third reason for the ultimate inadequacy of the pre-Lutheran versions is that their translators were apparently not so profoundly and personally gripped by the Biblical message as Luther indubitably was. Their renderings, compared with his, are simply not alive. Luther's is permeated with his own compelling personality. Both the religious experience and the remarkable literary ability so characteristic of Luther are just not to be found in his predecessors and, for that matter, not in his successors either.

This then was the state of the Bible before Martin Luther. There were many translations by men of average and above average ability, bent on doing a good job, but unable to read either Hebrew or Greek or to write better than mediocre German most of the time. Luther was perhaps not altogether unfair to these anonymous translators when he once remarked that he would not have put his name to these translations either if he had done no better than they had.

The Writer in his own Right

Let us now turn from the German literary scene before and during the youth of Luther to the literary achievements of Luther himself. There is no question in my mind that Luther is still, almost 500 years after his birth, Germany's foremost writer. That is saying a great deal, because as a student of German literature I am quite aware that such authors as Goethe and Schiller, to name but two, are usually held to be rather serious literary rivals of Luther.

However, whenever professors of German literature are asked to compile a list of the greatest works of this literature (for purposes of a library exhibition, for example), Luther's German Bible is invariably number one or at least number two on every list. This means that today, about 450 years after the completion of the German Bible, this work is still regarded by profession-
als of diverse backgrounds and various religious persuasions as standing in the very front rank of German literature. This is a remarkable verdict because, in contrast to Goethe's Faust and Schiller's Wallenstein, Luther's German Bible is not an original composition but only a translation, albeit what I would be bold enough to call a creative translation.

Even if Luther had never translated the Bible into German, he would still be among the foremost German authors because of his original writings. And these were very numerous, prodigiously so in fact. His works fill more than fifty printed volumes. They consist of sermons, lectures, treatises, essays both in Latin and German, and several hymns, some of which are still sung today not only in Lutheran and Protestant churches but now also in Roman Catholic churches. It is a life work for a mortal merely to read Luther's literary production. It is simply unbelievable that a single man could have written it all, let alone performed simultaneously the arduous and time-consuming duties of a university professor, long-term dean of the theological faculty, much-sought-after preacher, and — last but not least — moving genius of the Reformation.

In addition to all these activities, Luther was the head of the first Lutheran parsonage and led an active home life. He enjoyed making Hausmusik and relaxing with his large family. Besides that, he and his wife entertained numerous guests at almost every meal — guests who sometimes forgot to eat because they were so busy writing down the words of wisdom, wit, and vituperation that flowed unendingly from the master's lips. It is fortunate for us that Luther's disciples devoted themselves to this semi-stenographic task, thus preserving these famous conversations for posterity in the celebrated Tischreden (Table Talk).

Over all this long list of accomplishments Luther's German Bible reigns supreme. Has any other "mere" translation ever been ranked so high? Yes, for I understand that English scholars do not hesitate to mention the King James Bible in the same breath with Shakespeare. This is not greatly different from German scholars' speaking of Luther's Bible in the same breath with Goethe. As far as I can see, these high evaluations of the English and of the German Bible on the part of philologists are primarily if not almost exclusively literary. It is the language of the English Bible that is ranked with Shakespeare's, and the language of the German Bible that is ranked with Goethe's.

Luther as an author in his own right carried on impressive literary activities for three decades, from late 1516 to early 1546. Rather than attempt the impossible task of surveying the vast bulk of Luther's oeuvre apart from the Bible, I would like to focus upon his first independent book, Die sieben Busspsalmen (The Seven Penitential Psalms). In a literary as well as a theological sense it is a good early representative of Luther's literary and religious work as a whole.

In comparison to other literary geniuses, Luther started publishing comparatively late in life. He was well over thirty when his first book appeared, an edition of a mystical treatise usually called in the English tradition Theologica Germanica. Luther was almost thirty-four when The Seven Penitential Psalms came out. Why such a late start? The answer to that question must be sought, I believe, in Luther's early life. A quick survey would show that the young Luther, devout monk with all his heart and mind, soon to be a hard-working professor, simply had no time for publishing.

I rather think that the meticulous preparation he made for his first university lectures on the Psalms and on the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians more than filled his days and nights in those early years before the Ninety-Five Theses of 1517. While he was not publishing in his early years, he was fully engaged in serious writing, namely his first academic lectures at the University of Wittenberg. That these early lectures were a tremendous achievement is proved by the sensation they created throughout the learned world of Europe and America when Luther's Lectures on Romans were first published in toto in — please note the date — 1908. I cannot recall any comparable scholarly event: a hitherto unpublished early work of a sixteenth-century author first published in the twentieth century to the great interest of all of the Christian West.

Publish or Parish?

What all this means of course is that Luther actually began writing, so far as we can reconstruct the dates, about five years before his first publication. That he did not see fit to publish right away what he was writing is due to a variety of causes, not the least of which was his sheer lack of time. We should not forget that young Luther was not only an industrious professor but also a busy administrator of his own monastery and a little later the supervisor of a number of Augustinian houses. The important thing to bear in mind is that the well-published man he was soon to become had been a tireless writer years before he laid a single line before the public. In those five quiet years, often called the "quinquennium before the storm," Luther was actually writing one of the major scholarly publishing triumphs of the twentieth century. In that pre-publishing period the young Luther was becoming a theologian. The years from 1512 to 1517 were important years of basic reflection and the formation of the profound religious insights that were soon to reshape the Christian West.

This searching Christian thinker and articulate writer is even more amazing. The university lectures on the Psalms and on some of the major Pauline Epistles were written down and delivered in Latin. Except for occasional short phrases in German (the most famous, or notorious, of them being the angry outburst "o ihr Sautheologen") we have no connected literary German
from Luther's hand before his first publication. In other words, Luther's genius as the greatest German writer emerged practically fully developed at the very outset of his publications.

I am of course overstating the case somewhat. It did take him about a year, perhaps even two years, to hit his full stride as a writer. Yet even the first book, The Seven Penitential Psalms, in which Luther tried his German wings, showed clearly that the new author was learning at great speed. Here was unmistakably a new voice that spoke not only with authority but also with felicity. The people responded eagerly. They had discovered a new star on the literary horizon. Luther had found an immediate reading public, which not only remained faithful but increased tremendously as the years went by.

As early as 1520 Martin Luther was the most widely read author in German-speaking Europe, a rank he never lost during his lifetime, even after the unhappy schism of 1521. And I have not even mentioned his Latin writings which were read all over learned Europe. As early as 1518 a Swiss publisher brought out an edition of his collected Latin works which sold out at once and necessitated a second printing the following year.

What was it about Luther's Seven Penitential Psalms that so caught and held the imagination of his many readers. In very large part, it was certainly the substance of what he had to say. The book is a profound analysis of the profoundest of the Psalms. But it was also the manner in which he said it. How did Luther say what he said?

There is first of all the vast articulateness of the man. He is able to put into well-chosen words anything and everything he wanted to say. His vocabulary is immense. It is probably larger than that of any modern German author. In fact, the meaning of a number of Luther's words is no longer clear. The greatest German dramatist of the twentieth century so far, Bertolt Brecht, has expressed his great debt to Luther's rich vocabulary. I have also been fascinated by it, and some twenty years ago I started to compile the Luther Word Index. By this time it has grown to 360 file drawers filling a good part of a large room in Boston known as the Luther Linguistic Laboratory. With all occurrences of each word listed in the Index, I myself and Luther scholars from all over the world can look up a difficult word in all its contexts and generally get at the meaning in this way.

Beyond the unusually large vocabulary there is in all of Luther's writings a lively sense of the dramatic. Luther is never dull. Whatever subject he may discuss, he invariably has his readers on the edge of their chairs. He always addresses the reader personally. He can exult and cry, be humorous and dead serious, boisterous and gentle, violent and subdued, dramatic and lyrical — in short, he delivers in words whatever the situation requires. Only Shakespeare in language and Bach in music are his peers in universal articulateness. The reader is clay in the hands of Luther, and the reader is not likely to lay one of his books down before it is finished. And then he is more than ready to start a new one.

There are at least two other elements to enthrall the reader. Luther's language is pictorial and rhythmical. The imagery is varied and always illuminating. There is a natural rhythm in everything Luther wrote. It seems a part of his biology. He does not seem to have to look for it. The elemental musician that Luther was comes through in the melody of his language.

To offer a single example chosen from one of his most famous works, Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen (On the Freedom of a Christian), I cite one of the greatest perorations in all literature:

\[ \ldots \text{eyn Christen mensch lebt nit ynn yhm selb, sondern ynn Christo und seynem nehsten, ynn Christo durch den glauben, ynn neehsten durch die liebe: durch den glaeben feret er uber sich yn got, auss got feret er widder unter sich durch die liebe, und bleybt doch ymmer ynn Gott und gottlieber liebe. Sihe, das is die rechte, geystliche, Christliche freyheit, die das hertz frey macht von allen sundenn, gesetzen und gepotten, welch alle andere freyheit ubirtriffen, wie der hymell die erdemmn,} \ldots \]

This is perfect German. No German author known to me has surpassed it. In some sort of English it would read:

A Christian man lives not in himself, but in Christ and in his neighbor, in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love. Through faith he is lifted up into God, from God he descends through love, yet ever dwelling in God and divine love. . . . Lo, this is the true, spiritual Christian freedom, which frees the heart from all sins, all laws, all commands, which surpasses every other freedom as the heavens surpass the earth.

But German is only one of Luther's languages. His mastery of Latin was just about as remarkable as his mastery of German. We are fortunate enough to have Luther's On the Freedom of the Christian in both German and Latin from his own pen. Knowing and handling both languages extraordinarily well, he did not actually make a formal, exact translation from one to the other. Rather he appears to have written both versions semi-independently. A worthy example of his Latin would be the same passage quoted above in German:

Concludimus itaque, Christianum hominem non vivere in seipso, sed in Christo et proximo suo, . . . in Christo per fidem, in proximo per charitatem; per fidem sursum raptur supra se in deum, rursum per charitatem labitur infra se in proximun, manens tamen semper in deo. . . . Et haec [libertas] . . . superat omnes alias libertates externas, quantum coelum superat terram . . .

The lines I have quoted above were written by a master of German and, so far as I can judge, by a master of living Latin as well.
The Masterpiece of The German Bible

Having examined some aspects of Luther's original writing in German and Latin, let us now return to his work as a translator of the Bible. What made him undertake this immense work? In part at least it was the urging of friends, particularly Melanchthon. The time of decision was late 1521, which the excommunicated and outlawed Luther spent on the Wartburg, with brief, secret visits to Wittenberg. It was probably during one of those secret visits that the momentous decision to translate the whole Bible into German was reached.

Luther did not enter upon this major undertaking without preparation and actual experience as a translator. His very first published book, The Seven Penitential Psalms, had contained his own new translation of these psalms. It is exciting to note that in his initial effort at translation Luther was already going beyond the Vulgate. Though his knowledge of Hebrew was still too elementary for him to translate directly from that language, Luther did his best to get as close to the Hebrew as possible. He made use of Jerome's non-Vulgate special translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew, the usually neglected Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos, also known as the Psalterium Hebraicum. But even this definitely scholarly move did not satisfy him. He turned in addition to a then recently published work by the most famous Hebrew scholar in Europe, Johannes Reuchlin's Septem Psalmsi Poenitentiales, which contained a new word-for-word translation of the seven Penitential Psalms from Hebrew into Latin. Young Professor Luther, leading representative of the New Learning, thus availed himself of the latest scholarly tool for going beyond the Vulgate.

But it was not only bold and responsible scholarship that marked his first effort at translation. It was also the manner in which he rendered the famous Penitential Psalms. While he had not, in 1517, attained the artistic height of his later formal German Bible, Luther was certainly on the way. I have compared his first rendering of the psalms with the translations in the fourteen High German and the four Low German pre-Lutheran Bibles, and I have found all but Luther's wanting. Small wonder he did not see fit to use any of them in his analysis of the fundamental meaning of the Penitential Psalms. In short, his own earliest version is vastly superior on both scholarly and literary grounds to what any of his predecessors had achieved.

Besides the Penitential Psalms, Luther produced, before 1522, renderings of a number of individual Scriptural passages of varying lengths, all of them achievements of an excitingly different, highly gifted translator.

I mention these matters primarily to show that the man who in December 1521 decided to translate the entire Bible was anything but inexperienced as a translator. The vastness of the project he had undertaken is perhaps best appreciated when one remembers that it took him more than twelve years to finish it. Beyond the mere task of finishing it, he constantly and conscientiously revised his text, frequently calling on his learned Wittenberg colleagues for criticism and suggestions. One can safely say that Luther's German Bible in its final form is the result of nearly thirty years of the most devoted labor imaginable, from late 1516 to early 1546.

The first section of the Luther Bible to appear was the New Testament. There were at least two reasons for this. First, the New Testament was easier to do in the solitude of the Wartburg without the ready help of his Wittenberg colleagues and without access to more than, at best, a handful of books. It is utterly amazing how Luther accomplished what he did accomplish, having apparently only the barest Greek and Latin tools before him.

The Greek text was in all likelihood the second edition of Erasmus' Novum Testamentum, published in 1519. (Luther had used the first edition of 1516 the moment it reached Wittenberg when he was in the midst of lecturing on Romans.) A virtual prisoner on the Wartburg, he somehow saw to it — we assume — that the more recent, revised second edition was in his hands. As a matter of fact, we do not know for sure whether he had Erasmus' weighty tome on his table or merely a modest little reprint of the Greek text alone. The reprint was sent to him in 1521 by its editor, his friend Nikolaus Gerbel, a Stassburg humanist of note. Whenever he had, it would have been the most recent edition of the Greek New Testament, whether the Erasmus work itself or just the Gerbel reprint.

As for Latin translations, he probably had two on his desk. We may safely assume that one was a copy of the Vulgate. There is more uncertainty about the other Latin text. It all depends upon whether he had the Erasmus edition or merely the Gerbel reprint with him, for only the Erasmus edition contains the great humanist's new Latin translation, printed in a second column alongside the Greek text. The Gerbel reprint did not reproduce Erasmus' new Latin translation but limited itself to the Greek text of Erasmus' second edition. Thus it is quite possible that Luther may have had only the bare Greek text and the Latin Vulgate before him.

But let us suppose that he did have the full Erasmian edition at his disposal: compare this meagre textual equipment with what later translators have had available, including modern lexical aids of all kinds. Luther's achievement is simply breathtaking, especially if we bear in mind how marvelous is his rendering. The chief if not the only reason why he could do it was his long familiarity with the Bible. (The official name of his Wittenberg professorship was Lectura in Bibliâ.) Not many professors have devoted themselves so thoroughly to their chosen fields of study as did Luther. Of him it can be said without exaggeration that he lived, moved, and had his being in Scripture. This is why he could translate without ready access to what we today

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expect to have available in the way of scholarly tools. His contemporaries as well as posterity have put their stamp of approval on his achievement. His German Bible has had to be revised both less often and far less extensively than the English Bible, the King James Version. This record, I submit, speaks for itself.

The second reason why Luther rendered the New Testament first is probably because it was needed first, as the specifically Christian document par excellence. As for the time required to translated the entire New Testament, it will forever remain a wonder how he performed this feat in less than three months. The explanation is again his phenomenal knowledge of the text. If one adds to that basic fact his equally phenomenal mastery of the German language, one can at least begin to grasp how it was possible.

**Luther's Beloved “Little Bible”**

Right after finishing the New Testament and, in the same year of 1522, seeing a revised second edition through the press, he embarked upon the translation of the Old Testament. The Pentateuch came out as early as the following year, 1523. However, I should like to focus on Luther's rendering of the Psalms, his beloved “little Bible” within the Bible as a whole. Luther's German Psalter appeared first in 1524, once as part of an installment of the Bible and again as a separate publication. Luther or his publisher, or both, must have been aware of the extraordinary significance of the new rendering. The German Psalter is Luther the religious poet speaking. Excellent though the first version of 1524 was, Luther revised his work again and again. The major revisions were undertaken in 1528 and above all in 1531. The last revision represents the acme of Luther's art of rendering Hebrew poetry in his own language.

Let me offer just one example of the evolution of Luther's translation of a short passage from the Psalms — Psalm 73:25-26. The King James Bible, the Authorized Version, translates the passage as follows:

25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

26. My flesh and heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

This is a rather literal translation, even though as many as six words have been added by the translators to produce a smoother version. The Revised Standard Version of 1952 made only a very few changes: “There is none upon earth” was replaced by “There is nothing upon earth,” and “My heart faileth” by “My heart may fail.” The makers of the most recent revision of the Authorized Version did not think they could improve upon the King James Bible in this celebrated passage.

Now let us look at Luther's first version of 1524:

Wen hab ich ym hymel? und auff erden gefellet myr nichts, wenn ich bey dyr byn.
Meyn fleysch und myn hertz ist verschmacht,
Gott is meyns hertzen hort,
und meyn teyl ewiglich.

This is rather less literal than the Authorized Version, the chief difference being Luther's freer rendering of the second part of verse 25, “und auff erden gefellet myr nichts, wenn ich bey dyr byn.” The English Bible had “and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” Both Luther's first version and the King James Version are excellent, of course. Luther's is even more correct than the King James' in that it has “nichts,” “nothing,” for the King James' “none,” which, as I indicated above, was replaced by the word “nothing” in the Revised Standard. It would seem that Luther himself was quite satisfied with his original translation, for he did not feel impelled to make any changes in this particular passage in the revision of 1528. However, when he decided to subject his whole Psalter to a thorough-going revision in 1531, the following rendering — I hesitate to call it just a translation — emerged:

Wenn ich dich hab, So frage ich nichts nach hymel und erden.
Wenn mir gleich leib und seel verschmacht,
So bistu doch Gott allzeit meines hertzten trost, und mein teyl.

This reads like an original German poem of great religious depth, cast in beautiful, rhythmic German. Luther, God-intoxicated, “gottrunken” as the medieval German mystics put it, took the ancient psalmist as a starting-point and then proceeded as it were on his own. This may not be poetic creation itself, but it is at least poetic re-creation in another language. Some, myself included, would even say that Luther's lines can stand on their own merits and definitely rival the original, at least in the shape in which it has come down to us.

I realize this is a daring evaluation, but as a non-theologian and as a literary scholar, I can do no other than express my individual response to such a passage as this. The five lines above are as great as any lines in Goethe or Heine. At the very least they come close to the perfection of original poetry of the highest rank. And Luther's Bible abounds in passages of this sort.

Let me conclude with another daring statement. Luther combines, in his own person, the linguistic power and elegance of St. Jerome with the religious depth and insight of St. Paul and St. Augustine. Luther the religious genius is matched by the Luther the literary genius, or to put it the other way around with the same force, Luther the literary genius is matched by Luther the religious genius. No Christian writer laying claim to orthodoxy can ask for more than the depth of a Paul or an Augustine and the language mastery of a Jerome or an Erasmus. Luther had both. Fortunately the whole Western world has at last begun to recognize the stature and measure of the man.
``Have you any objection to participation in the church through church membership?'' I asked Paul Tillich in his apartment in Chicago, January 31, 1959.

``Oh no, not at all. In fact, I am a member of the Evangelical and Reformed church which ties together some of Luther's and Calvin's ideas. No, I have no complaints against church membership. It is different in this country than in Germany. You see, I don't think it matters whether I am in membership in the Lutheran church or in the Evangelical and Reformed church, because the Evangelical and Reformed church incorporates Luther's teachings,''' Tillich answered in the interview.

He noted that the fusion of Luther's and Calvin's ideas took on even more marked institutional form in the new United Church of Christ. Time magazine's colored cover painting of Tillich on March 16, 1959, correctly captioned Tillich's *mediating theology* with the large banner, ``A Theology For Protestants.''

Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Seminary in New York deserves most credit for bringing Tillich into the position of prominence on the American scene in the Evangelical and Reformed church of which Niebuhr was also a member. Reinhold Niebuhr's own position was classified with that of Luther in Richard Niebuhr's book, *Christ and Culture*.

As those of us in the Protestant churches of the Calvinist and Lutheran heritage now seek for mediating theological guidelines, Tillich's pioneer work serves as a beginning. His system provides us with a modern point of reference. The basic ecumenical tensions are found in Tillich himself as he struggles over the doctrine of God in light of the Reformation heritage.

Tillich saw the replay of an old theological drama in the fight between, (1) modern Barthians who stress the other-worldliness of God so much that they are continually throwing stones at a culture which they do not understand, and (2) the naturalists who reject the transcendent nature of God. Tillich tried to find a middle position between these two extremes.

In Tillich's *Reply to Interpretation and Criticism* in Kegley and Bretall, *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, he speaks of the naturalistic trend in Charles Hartshorne: ``My resistance against this doctrine (not against the positing of the finite in God) is rooted in the overwhelming impression of the divine majesty as witnessed by classical religion. This makes any structural dependence of God on something contingent impossible for me to accept. The justified religious interest in Mr. Hartshorne's concept of the divine finitude is much better safeguarded by Luther's symbolic statement that the intolerable 'naked absolute' makes himself small for us in Christ'' (p. 340).

By Tillich's reference to his agreement with "classical religion" he meant his favor for Luther and Calvin. Tillich said that he favored the rich, dynamic view of God in the Reformers over against the static view of God as "actuality" as seen in the theology of Catholicism and Thomas Aquinas.

But Tillich would not go so far as to say that man can have a monopoly on God as he feared occurred in the views of the pietists. In his lectures, *A History of Christian Thought*, Tillich said, "...In Luther and the other Reformers the main emphasis is on the distance of God from man. Therefore, the Neo-Reformation theology of today — people like Barth — emphasizes again and again that God is in Heaven and you are on earth. This feeling of distance — or as Kierkegaard has said, repentance — is the normal relationship of man to God" (p. 197 in Peter John's edition of the class lectures).

Two extreme emphases on God are to be avoided. The first overemphasizes the transcendence of God and thereby puts God out of reach of man's human experience. The second overemphasizes the local presence of God and thereby limits God to what can be observed here and now in the universe. The first view has been held by so-called "theists" in Tillich's language, and the second view by "pantheists."

**Above All and Through All and in All**

In answer to these extreme views of theists and pantheists Tillich points to "...Luther's *concept of God*, one of the strongest ideas of God in the whole history of human and Christian thought. ... Now here (in Luther's view) you have formulas in which the old conflict between the theistic and the pantheistic tendency in the doctrine of God is solved, in formulas which show the greatness of God, the inescapability of His presence, and at the same time, His absolute transcendence. And I would say, very dogmatically: Every doctrine of God which leaves out one of these two elements doesn't speak really of God but of something which is less than God" (Ibid, p. 203).

The teaching about God which Tillich took over from the Reformation heritage was developed in two directions in order to be useful for us in the twentieth cen-
tury. The first and perhaps best known direction in which Tillich developed this view of God was in his translation of the greatness of God into the language of "Being-itself." God's greatness as Being-itself made it possible for Tillich to say today what Luther said when he spoke of God being present in all creatures. Tillich quoted from Luther at this point: "All creatures are God's masks and veils in order to make them work and help Him to create many things."

When Tillich spoke of God as Being-itself he had the broadest possible term which he could thereafter use in relating God to the classical teaching of the Trinity. The life of God as Being-itself takes on definite form in the persons of the Trinity. Tillich here agrees with the doctrine of the Trinity held by Catholicism. Gustave Weigel, Roman Catholic theologian, could appreciate the language of God as Being-itself as made definite in the Trinity.

Tillich's general term for God as Being-itself enabled him to open up a dialogue with the non-Christian religions which he was pursuing at the time of his death five years ago this month.

But most important for Tillich was the usefulness of the Reformation teaching about God as centered in Christ. Tillich spotlighted Luther's statement that Christ revealed to us the heart of God. Modern man finds his Reformation insight useful because God reveals his mercy and charity in Christ.

Tillich said concerning Luther's view of the incarnation of Christ: "Without knowing Him (Christ) we are not able to stand God's majesty and are driven to insanity and hate. This is the reason why Luther was so much interested in Christmas, and has written some of the most beautiful Christmas hymns and poems. The reason is that he emphasizes the small God in Christ, and Christ is smallest in the cradle. And so this paradox — that he who is in the cradle is He who is Almighty God at the same time — was for Luther the real understanding of Christmas. This was Christmas for him, this mystical paradox of the smallest and most helpless of all beings, having in himself the center of Divinity" (Ibid., pp. 205-206).

The Reformers correlated the helpful grace which comes from God as made known in Christ with man's needs. Tillich also said that Melanchthon, Luther's co-worker who put Reformation thought into systematic form, stressed the "benefits" of Christ for us, making Reformation theology relevant to man's needs. Tillich said of Luther's use of correlating God's benefits to man's needs: "Now this is a correlative speaking about God. Calling Christ God means, for Luther, having experienced Divine effects which come from Him, namely forgiveness of sins" (Ibid, p. 204). Tillich went on to develop the relationship of "correlation" between Christ and all of human needs in the second volume of his Systematic Theology, entitled, Christ and Existence. This application of theology to human needs has made his thought so popular with people who have searching minds.

**God Appears When God Disappears**

Another area in which Tillich appropriated the rich heritage of the Reformation was on the topic of the meaning of the cross of Christ. Tillich said that the classical Reformation emphasized what God has done for us in the cross as having central meaning for us, not what we can do in suffering cross-like misery. Tillich said, "And it is clear that those of us who are influenced by the Reformation tradition emphasize more the objectivity of the cross, as the cross of Christ, as the self-sacrifice of God in man" (Ibid, p. 197).

The result of Christ's cross and resurrection for us is that we are restored, recreated, or, to use Tillich's term, made new creatures through Christ's "restitution." Tillich attributes his Christ-centered emphasis to the Reformation. He said in one of his sermons in his book, The Shaking of the Foundations, "One of Luther's most profound insights was that God made Himself small for us in Christ. In so doing, He left us our freedom and our humanity. He showed us His Heart, so that our hearts could be won" (p. 148).

One of the most inspiring and wholesome results of Tillich's thought is that he has encountered the doubt of our time and spoken to it in a profound Christian witness. His witness is both profound in its searching analysis of philosophical questions and in his perceptive insights into the tremendous power of the Reformers. When the reader follows Tillich's brilliant thoughts the God who has disappeared in the fog of modern skepticism reappears in a form which he can recognize as the God who worked in the saving history recorded in the Bible and in the history of the reformation of the church. God makes sense for us again, and we again find him real and everywhere present.

We can again feel joy and confidence in our faith when we read Tillich's interpretation of Luther's and Calvin's affirmation of God's power and action, a "divine power through which God is creative in and through everything in every moment. . . . The 'right hand of God' is . . . everywhere, since God's power and creativity act at every place. . . . God is in everything, in that which is central as well as in that which is peripheral" (Systematic Theology, Vol. I, pp. 273, 277). When we grasp Tillich's buoyant assurance our faith in God begins to mean something again and the foundations are laid for a life of God-centered action. Tillich ended his popular and profound book, The Courage to Be: "It (Reformation courage) returns in terms of the absolute faith. . . . Within it all forms of courage are re-established in the power of the God above the God of theism. The courage to be is rooted in the God who appears when God has disappeared in the anxiety of doubt" (pp. 189-190).
Music

It may be the Beethoven year but Mahler is getting the audiences. The works of the Bonn master are, of course, being heard. But the nervous genius of the late-Romantic period strikes more sympathetic chords in the hearts of 1970 concert goers. Bernstein may be responsible for the renewed interest in Mahler. He pushed the cycle of symphonies in the New York seasons of three and four years ago. He has recorded most of them. Solti in Chicago has scheduled all the works over several seasons and will record them. More often than not I have Mahler with my breakfast because the radio station has programmed his music throughout the day.

Mahler is not my idea of music for dining. The music, instead of aiding the digestive processes with gentle optimism and regular continuity, has a tendency to encourage stomach spasms and acidity. Exaggerated contrasts and overblown gestures are set in nervous harmonic progressions and virtuosic orchestrations. Mahler's music reflects a personality and an age afflicted with an irresolute combination of faith and doubt, of hope and despair.

The composer was born a Jew but converted to Austrian Catholicism as much for professional advancement as for spiritual convictions. He became the outstanding conductor of German and Austrian opera houses in the last years of the nineteenth century. It is said that his tireless attention to details in rehearsals set standards of musical perfection at the Opera in Vienna which have never been surpassed and continue as a guiding star for that house. From 1909 to 1911 Mahler was conductor of the New York Philharmonic, his last post.

While he conducted matchless operatic productions, he composed only symphonic works. In Mahler the Romantic urge to couple music and words even while transcending the confines of literal meaning finds feverish expression. Beethoven had included the human voice in his Ninth Symphony. Almost all of Mahler's symphonies use solo singers and choruses. The texts are never dramatic but lyric and mystical. The orchestras are gigantic, some of the largest machines ever assembled in a concert hall. The famous Eighth Symphony is called “The Symphony of a Thousand” for it requires an orchestra augmented by extra winds, brass,

Gustav Mahler:

S e e - i n g

Three newspaper items of recent months have been sticking in my mind, and I think the reason is fairly clear.

They all deal with the question of whether man has a future. Or to put it more chillingly, whether the fourth-grade children in my Sunday school class have a chance of reaching the age of their parents, and whether the conditions of life in 1990 or 2000 will be such that they will even want to.

Obviously this sounds like another one of those alarmist topics right out of the effete liberal Eastern press - tiresome gloom and doom, when what we want to do in October is relax, smell the leaves burning, and pretend that all's right with the world.

But consider a bit further. Item number one from the newspaper goes back to last December. There was widely reported in the papers a speech delivered at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in which a scientist put forth his conviction that we have got about thirty years left on this planet before one of two things happens. Either environmental destruction - via waste, pesticides, hydrocarbons, fallout, overpopulation, overconsumption, and other nice things - kills us decisively, or else the mess we make will let us go on living but under practically intolerable conditions.

Keep this in mind to link up with the second item, which has to do with Walter Lippmann. Now Lippmann is the Eastern Establishment personified. But we are not going to take up his social philosophy or his political views. One observation only - from an interview this past spring with the retired Lippmann vacationing in Paris, and published originally in the International Herald Tribune.

It deals with the possibility of a revolution in the near future, and it goes about as follows: Just because a lot of people are talking about a revolution - whether flower children or Black Panthers or Weathermen or the Rolling Stones - this doesn't mean they are necessarily the people to bring one about. There may be a revolution in our generation, guesses Lippmann, but longhaired freaks and acidtrippers probably aren't the ones with the energy or dedication to bring it about. All they do is talk revolution and perpetrate random violence.

As for where the revolution will come from, consider

Fall Leaves Cancelled

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and percussion as well as six or seven soloists and three choirs. He somehow was able to find time to get notes on paper for these enormous forces in between the rehearsals and performances of his grueling conductor's schedule.

Mahler's music, though, has always saddened me beyond the obvious pathos and grief of the sounds themselves. (Sadness I don't need with my breakfast.) Like most cinematic extravaganzas, the giant machine often fails to convince. The ideas, the experiences, the thoughts expressed are less stupendous and profound than the means by which they are expressed would imply. In the masterpiece, Das Lied von der Erde, expression and means relate in a better proportion than in Mahler's other works. The short songs need no development, and the lyric genius is not led into contrived symphonic extensions.

Mahler is for me a symbol of the modern man, racked by the conflict of his aspirations and his self-criticisms without the salvation of divine knowledge. He would make a better future but envies the past too much to give it up.

October, 1970
It has become customary in some circles to urge social concerns upon a congregation by telling the following story: While communists were meeting in Moscow in 1917 to plot the Russian revolution against centuries of Czarism, the Orthodox bishops were meeting down the street to debate the length of their vestments.

If the congregation is especially slow or if it's a pastoral conference, the speaker may embellish the story considerably. One can imagine the optimum effect. Even the most stiff-necked and uncircumcized in heart may be moved to cry out: "Fathers, brothers, we repent, what can we do?" To which the speaker replies: "Christians, arise!" to some social action.

What are we to make of this? No doubt it's a cracking good story. It suggests in an easily understandable and convincing way the blindness of the Church to its world, caused partly by its parochial concerns. But how far do we wish to go with the story?

The Church spends most of its time with tasks unrelated to its mission. The Church, in fact, often seems more diverted from its mission that almost anybody else is. There are, indeed, "revolutionary" declarations pouring out of church conventions, but they often only catch congregations yawning or the world dying. (This is not to say the churches are never active. For example, there are those speedily created white parochial schools to ease the integration problem. Now there is social action more gratifying than debating the length of vestments! The paradox of biblical fundamentalism may be its deep commitment to "culture Christianity.") In any case, the charge sticks. Score one point against the contemporary institutional Church.

Why were the bishops arguing. To avoid the pressures of the present? The anti-incarnationalists! Score another point against the Church. The bishops are still arguing and still avoiding.

Or, were they arguing because they thought history and tradition important? Did the quarrel about the length of vestments actually reflect an effort to balance memory and hope, the past and the future? It may seem, as we Monday-morning-quarterback the revolution and the vestment debate, that their stance reflected too much memory and too little hope. It may occur to us in our own time that after a ten hour day learning history and strengthening our memory, we are too tired, late at night, to feel the pull of the future. Perhaps for a few years we could all put in our ten hours working on the future (and its pull on the present) and spend only our evenings reading history and thinking about our past.

Score a half point for the Church, past and present, more inclined to the past than the future. But remember why we score only a half point. The bishops had a point too.

What should the bishops have been doing? Perhaps they should have been meeting with the communists. Or they should have scheduled their own revolutionary planning meeting the night before and beaten the communists to the draw. Or they should have been alert enough to blow the whistle and have the communist meeting raided — perhaps even shot up — thus gaining valuable points from a grateful government. Or they should kindly have requested the communists to postpone the revolution until the outcome of the vestment controversy, when the bishops would be free to meet with them. Or they should have postponed the vestment debate until after the revolution or until they had met with the communists and worked out a compromise offending neither the government, nor the church, nor the revolutionaries. Or the bishops could only have talked about vestments, there being no hope for the liturgical churches.

Multiple choice ambiguous. Score no points for or against anybody until someone comes up with something more constructive.

But what games the story now brings into play! If you remember the story and repeat it while wringing your hands and sighing, you will never lose an argument. At the appropriate moment in a vigorous debate in which you are being worsted, tell the story, then twist your face into anguish and blurt out passionately: "The world's going to hell in a handbasket, and you guys can find nothing more important to talk about than..." Score a psychic victory over whatever or whomever you are against and exit quickly before the vanquished asks for suggestions.

Or, if you have a positive contribution to make, tell the vestment story with bitter intensity. Then say without fear of successful contradiction: "Nothing is more important for the Church now than..." Be sure to fill in some safe, road-tested bandwagon. You have scored. (The rhetorical escalation of steps V and VI can, however, leads to overkill. You invariably end up asking:
"Why were Jesus and his disciples living it up at that wedding in Cana while the poor begged in the Jerusalem ghettos?")

VII

Finally, if we wish to score all the points on one (our) side, we must turn apocalyptic. Damn the past, burn the bridges, see the four horsemen on the horizon, and rush full speed ahead (and don't ask where; there isn't time). It may be that a good many more of us have become apocalyptic than we think. Is Billy Graham apocalyptic? Is hard rock? Is the New Left? Is Better-dead-than-red? Is We-had-to-destroy-the-village-in-order-to-save-it? The little-red-book? The newer part of the holy-black-book? Everybody-under-thirty? Even (unwittingly) Pope Paul?

The apocalyptic road, however, has a fork in it. One can take the left fork, sell the vestments and give the money to the poor (or use it to buy guns). One can take the right fork, agonize over these “last days” and hurry to help as many souls heavenward from their bruised bodies as possible.

Or one may discover he is on the wrong road altogether. One may be content to learn rather than score points for a moment. The Church of biblically and liturgically refreshed memory would see that hers is a mission to the world which God gives her. Score all the points for God. And let the Church be busy reforming herself by looking to God-and-man-together-in-Christ for her cues for her mission and not to men on each side of the apocalyptic fork in our culture.

VII

We must, as an epilogue, discover a moral for telling the story with which we began. Whatever the moral of the story, the moral in the telling of the story may be this: Like all good stories, the moral of this story too depends upon who is in control of it.

The Mass Media

**Women's Lib and The Glass Teat**

By RICHARD LEE

"The image of women in commercials is one of stupidity!"

"They show women either as mindless domestics or sexy bedhops!"

"Commercials are legal pornography!"

"They are virtually erotomaniacal!"

When the women of their liberation movement protest the demeaning image of women in TV commercials, they are but halfway into the issue. As accurate as their charges are indeed, no mere touching up and filling out of the “image” of women in TV commercials will be very liberating. It is possibly only further homage to the commercials themselves to believe that a little or even a lot of “cosmetic” work on the “image” of women is all that is needed.

The issue, sisters, like true beauty, is more than skin deep.

To put more of the issue before us all: Human beings and human relations in TV commercials are necessarily mediated by the marketing of things. Both men and women must be consumers of products in commercials and put themselves into the products body and soul. That is apparently why they are there in the commercials — armpits, nasal passages, gullets, guts, and all the inward parts. And to put ourselves into the products as totally is presumably why we all are here in front of the commercials.

Any effective commercial, by definition, is one which entices us to consume. In our society it is also one which spurs us to competitive consumption. There may still be a vestigial gap between competitive production for men and competitive consumption for women in our society, but it is closing fast. Many of us now buy some part of our very selves in products on the market, and it is beginning to be far more important to too many of us what we consume than what we produce.

This makes it deliciously easy for the maker of TV commercials. Enough corruptees eagerly anticipate his corruption. He need only be a clever parasite.

First, he takes much of your product purchase money to pay for his commercials and the programs in which he wraps them. (Does it seem strange to you that women who know there is “no free lunch” can still believe there is “free” TV in this country?) Secondly, he adds nothing to the intrinsic value of the product in his commercial. (Does it seem strange to you that women will pay ten times the production and advertising costs of a sheep-fat emulsion for their skins if it rhymes even remotely with hope?)

Thirdly, he exploits and manipulates the most trivial and privatized desires and cares, wishes and fears. (Does it seem strange to you that drudging mothers appear more anxious to leave their children a phosphate white wash than clean streams and lakes?) Fourthly, he saps and pillages whatever is vital, naughty or nice, in popular culture for symbols to associate with his products. It isn't only your bodies being degraded, ladies. (Does it seem strange to you that one feminine hygiene product celebrates “women's new freedom” and another, which
I assure you does not stand for Females for a Democratic Society, is named FDS?

Fifthly, from time to time, he must advertize his advertisements, assuring us in our effortless viewing that his commercials are preserving our freedom. Your love-it-or-leave-it conservative sister is maintained in her belief that product choice exists and that is all there is to freedom. (This is like your husband telling you that your freedom lies in your divorcing him.) Your civilization-of-the-dialogue liberal sister is maintained in her belief that the great conversation continues, as if commercials were rational arguments which debate one another until the unassisted truth triumphs. The psychological truth is more likely that commercials support rather than oppose one another. (Could you break out of the Pepsi Generation by joining the Dodge Rebellion?)

The deeper issue in TV commercials is not whether they are true or false in image or information. Only a few commercials are informationally false, and not one really needs to be to do its job. A few commercials parody themselves and are faintly amusing if you like that sort of thing. A few are just vulgar. (The commercials for most dog and cat foods ought to feed a rebellion among any self-respecting welfare mothers.)

But most TV commercials merely mislead with truths by distraction upon distraction, allying Orpheus with Pavlov. (You have "come a long way, baby" — dumpling, honey, cookie, kitten, cupcake — but that has nothing to do with Virginia Slims.) Motivational research into the hedonic processes has come a long way, too, since Benjamin Franklin could publish the helpful news that two barrels of very good salted fish were now on the wharf.

TV commercials do not so much inform our choices with truths (or even falsehoods) as they together create an unreal and more or less diverting "other world" to the one we actually live in. (Any liberating woman want her womanhood joined to that commercial Negro mother chiding her daughter for believing they still are eating butter when they obviously have gone forth to margarine?) Those who remark that the commercials are the best part of the glass teat could profitably ponder such a righteous judgment on the whole. I should guess that the "other world" of all the TV commercials together is more drugging and dulling of our remaining sensibilities than the "other world" of religion could ever be to a hardened Marxist.

Admittedly, most TV commercials are only as antidemocratic as anything saturating us in irrationality must be. But, singly and together, many go more deeply against our freedom in their continual distraction, hyped excitement, planting of spurious needs, absorbing of novelty, hiding of alternatives, and encouraging of passivity for economic and ecological concerns other than consumption. (Does it seem strange to you that all those militant brunettes seem to have nothing better to do than invade blonde territory?)

No, sisters, the liberating woman will not soon be seen in a TV commercial. Her presence would shatter the tube. (The swinging, sleep-around chick of some male fantasy of women's liberation will, of course, be seen selling men on themselves.) For you are not up against the wall but the giant American tar baby. The blows TV commercials cannot absorb amorphously or twist to their own purposes they hold in their own stick. Your liberation movement is already creating quite a market. (What is the "liberated" woman wearing this fall?) In an entrenched patriarchy the fathers are forever sacrificing their sons or selling their daughters in one way or another.

So, sisters, fortify yourselves for the season. TV newsmen will be dismissing women's liberation with cocked eyebrows as the "Lesbian Left" or a mere battle of the bra uprising. And the TV commercials will roll on like that relentless, pesky female always trying to get her man's Silva Thins. Until such a day when you and your sons and daughters do not watch the commercials and do not buy their products? The hand that rocks the cradle and the cash register . . .

Meanwhile, back at the fort, there is hope for the duration. Happily, many women of the liberation movement discern the equal importance of psychological and cultural transformations to the extensions of any earlier political and social reforms. This means we can hope that your analyses and proposals will be more penetrating, your discipline in your alternatives more cunning and ascetic, and your manner more winsome with your sisters who are bewitched by old "marshmallowed meatballs" and understandably have no idea what you are screaming about.

One male hope for all of us is that whatever God could redeem commercial television and television commercials (Do I repeat myself?) will bless you and keep you and make Her face shine upon you.

Interstices

In the time of year, before
Trees bud, and the air is
Deceptively cool, winter is

Tired, half grown into spring.
There is a rhythm, a magic
In the swirling gestures of

Open mesh as branches
Sway exuberant in hectic
Movements of the wind.

EDITH SUSLICK

The Cresset
Rational Behavior in the Middle East

By ALBERT R. TROST

To men of good-will and rationality in the United States it seems all too obvious that the present crisis in the Middle East could be easily ended if only the Arabs and the Israelis applied some of these same virtues. They look at a map which shows Israel as a small sliver of land on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea surrounded by many, larger Arab neighbors. The natural question arises: “Why can’t the Arabs allow the Jews such a small claim to land?” Even if one throws in the now-occupied Sinai peninsula, from a distance it seems irrational for the Arabs to covet such a barren place even if they did possess it only a short time ago.

From this same standpoint one might ask: “Why doesn’t Israel give up those lands in Sinai and up to the west bank of the Jordan River which she has occupied since June of 1967? Why provoke the Arabs over territory of little apparent value?” Senator Fulbright may have been speaking for the frustrations of a large number of Americans a few weeks ago when he proposed that the great powers use their position in the Security Council of the United Nations to impose a solution.

The major point is, however, that Israel and the Arab nations are no more capable of rational action that is the United States. This is because neither Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, nor even Syria are totalitarian or monolithic systems. They are all, to a certain extent, pluralistic societies that must resolve conflict among domestic groups by such nonviolent methods as compromise and negotiation. This generalization is of course more true of Israel, a pluralistic democracy, than it is of Egypt, a system dominated by a strong leader and the military. Even Nasser finds that he must satisfy the military leaders, orthodox Moslems, and secular economic planners in Egypt at the very least. In any pluralistic political system, policies are more likely to resemble least-common-denominators than the product of deductive logic.

This demand for rational decisions is even more frustrated in those political systems, whether pluralistic or not, which are affected by an ideological component in the domestic political debate. This ideological tone is common in new nations or “developing nations.” It is characteristic of all the parties in the Middle Eastern crisis.

To better understand the impediments to a peaceful settlement in the Middle East, we might take a brief look at one nation’s domestic political situation — Israel.

Israeli parties conflict over two basic issues. The first issue, common to most Western political systems, is the question of who has the major responsibility for economic and social development, the state or the individual. We usually use labels “left” and “right” respectively to characterize these alternatives. The second issue is more specific to Israel, or at least it is no longer an issue in most European nations. This is the issue of the relationship of religion, Judaism, to the state. The sides to this issue are the orthodox Jews and the “secularists.”

Because Israel is a multi-party state — about a dozen parties have seats in the Knesset (parliament) — it is common to find political parties which are only concerned with one of these major issues. A good example of this category would be the so-called “religious bloc,” parties representing the Orthodox community. One of these parties, the Religious National Party, participates in the coalition that governs Israel. The concern of this bloc in the Middle Eastern conflict is that Israel remain a Jewish state where it will be possible someday to make religious law and public law the same.

The parties of the “right” seem most concerned about secular matters like economics. They come together in the second largest party in the Knesset, the Gahal, under the theme of individualism and free enterprise. Their stand on the conflict with the Arabs is largely determined by the largest wing of the Gahal party, known as the Herut bloc. This stand could be characterized as militantly anti-Arab and dedicated to keeping the occupied lands. Although this party participated in a coalition of national unity from the 1967 war until a few months ago, they are best characterized as the parliamentary opposition to the Government. The present “hard-line” stand of Israel in the negotiations on a peace settlement might be better appreciated when it is noted that it was the “right” and the religious bloc which gained seats in the 1969 election to the Knesset.

The biggest share of the remaining political parties could be characterized as the “left.” About all this means is that they all accept the need for a planned and directed economy. They range from a pro-Peking Communist Party with four seats in the parliament (out of 120) to the party that has governed Israel since the nation was formed in 1948, the Mapai. This latter is the party of David Ben Gurion, Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan. It is the party that sees itself as the party of Zionism, the movement of Jews back to Israel. Its position on social and economic questions is similar to the Labor Party in Britain.

The Mapai is the largest party in the Knesset with 56 seats. It needs the co-operation of both the Religious National Party and a small party of the right, the Independent Liberals, to maintain a majority in the parliament. This, of course, means compromise and bargain-
Books of the Month

A Look at Two Important Books for Reformation History

In studying history or church history Protestants have been satisfied with acquiring a more or less thorough knowledge of the Protestant Reformation, while in general they have shortchanged the developments within the Roman Catholic Church of the 16th century. The book most often used for any study of these developments was Kidd’s Counter-Reformation,1 which was not a bad book when it was first published, but which even at that time really could not do justice to the complexity of 16th century Catholicism.

One reason for the rather sketchy and haphazard knowledge of 16th century Roman Catholicism on the part of Protestants definitely is the lack of easily available source material. There are, of course, the official records of the popes, of the Jesuits, and of the Council of Trent, and the critical editions of some of the writings of some of the important theologians (the Corpus Catholicorum); this material is comparable to the great critical editions of the writings of the Protestant Reformers. Missing, however, are well edited and translated selections of materials typical of 16th century Catholicism2 which the student might use in survey courses, or the interested reader might use as a first introduction to the issues, or as a help to bridge the language barrier.3 As is known, an abundance of those selections are available for the Protestant Reformation. It is typical of the situation that the so-called Library of Christian Classics concludes with “classics” of the 16th century Protestant Reformation, and thus simply ignores 16th century Catholicism.

The situation is the more deplorable because Reformation research of the last half-century has made increasingly clear that Roman Catholicism in its totality is the primary key for a proper understanding of the Protestant Reformation. As a result of this observation European and American scholars are making every effort to elucidate late Medieval Catholicism, and these efforts have resulted in outstanding scholarly works, beginning in the 1920s with Gerhard Ritter’s studies on late Medieval Scholasticism,4 and continuing at the present with the work of Heiko Obermann5 (once at Harvard, now at Tuebingen) and his students. Now a reader of late Medieval Catholicism makes available a selection from some of the most important primary sources of that period.6

Meanwhile the study of 16th century Catholicism has remained almost exclusively the domain of Roman Catholic scholars, and the results of their efforts have been restricted to the highly trained specialists. One of the few exceptions is John C. Olin’s The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius of Loyola. Reform in the Church 1450-1540. Documents Illustrative of the Main Facets of a Vital Movement.7 This book fills a real need in the class-room and in the study, and for this reason alone the book would be welcome; it is doubly welcome, however, because of its outstanding quality.

After a general introduction of 26 pages, Olin presents a cross-section of materials which illustrate the dynamics of 16th century Catholicism. Savonarola is represented by an 1495 sermon on the renovation of the church; John Colet is represented by the Convocation sermon of 1512; “liturgical life” is illustrated by the Oratory of Divine Love; “monastic life” is illustrated by the Theatine Rule of 1526, the Capuchin Constitutions of 1536, and the Bull of Institution (1540) for the Jesuits; official church policies, either on the papal level, the episcopal level, or the curial level, are illustrated by the famous 1522 instruction of Pope Adrian VI to his legate to Germany (sometimes called a papal confession of the church’s sins), the great reform proposal of 1537, Giberti’s Constitutions, Contarin’s On the Office of a Bishop, a papal reform bull of 1514, and Egidio da Viterbo’s address to the Fifth Lateran Council, 1512. In addition to this material we find Erasmus’ Silvius Alcibiadis of 1515, Lefèvre’s preface to his commentaries on the Four Gospels, and Ignatius’ Rules for Thinking with the Church (an appendix to the Spiritual Exercises).

Each text is prefaced by an introduction in which the author of the selection and his importance for 16th century Catholicism are briefly evaluated. A bibliography and an index (unfortunately only) of names conclude the volume. Spot-checks of the translations, some old and adapted, some newly made, left the impression of competency for and excellency in a task which is not among translators’ easier assignments. All in all — a very impressive book, for which we owe gratefulness to the editor, who, as far as I can see, is the first to make available such a reader. I eagerly look forward to Olin’s subsequent volume, which is to make available documents of the movement commonly called Counter-Reformation.

Olin clearly differentiates between “Catholic Reformation” and “Counter-Reformation.” His pending volume will “carry the story [i.e., of the Catholic Reformation] through the era of the Council of Trent and will force deal more extensively with Counter-Reformation manifestations and problems” (pp. xiii f.). The present “volume focuses on another and lesser-known aspect” of 16th century Catholicism, namely “the movement for renewal and reform which remained within the Catholic Church and which sought to reform the life of that existing hierarchical institution and renew devotion within the framework of its teaching and authority” (p. xiii). Just as we all are accustomed to think of it, so Olin sees the Counter-Reformation in that movement with which 16th century Catholicism responded and reacted to the “Protestant challenge,” a movement marked by “hostility and opposition to Protestantism” (p. xiii). The Catholic Reformation, on the other hand, was a “call for remedying the evils that had come to pass in the occupied lands. To reconcile these conflicting elements again requires compromise and bargaining.

Democracy in Israel means concession in Mapai, concession to other parties in the coalition, concession to other parties in the Knesset, and finally, serving popular majority rule as it is expressed at election time. We, in the United States of all places, should realize the costs of pluralism and majority rule that go along with the democratic political system. We should especially realize the obstacles it presents to rational and realistic action in dealing with other nation-states.
Catholic Renewal or Reformation?

The author brilliantly succeeds in illustrating this "Catholic Reformation," this religious renewal within the Roman Catholic church, a movement which becomes the basis for the Council of Trent and for that other movement which is commonly called Counter-Reformation. Obviously another editor might have chosen some other material. I certainly would have included in a volume such as this some material concerning the Theologia Deutsch, or the Devotio Moderna, or the reform movements within the monastic orders, especially the Augustinians. For whatever reason, Olin did not include any of this material; this observation in no way limits the value of his work.

Olin begins his selections with Savonarola (1495) and ends them with the 1540 bull by which Ignatius of Loyola won papal approval for his new order. What are Olin's criteria for this time span? He wants to illustrate the character and thrust of Catholic reform in the early 16th century. As Olin makes clear in his general introduction, a reform movement was more or less active throughout the history of the church, and as Oberman's late Medieval reader makes clear, this reform movement was especially active throughout the 15th century. Savonarola is, then, a somewhat arbitrary beginning for a volume of selections which should illustrate renewal and reform within Catholicism. Olin has safeguarded himself against this possible charge by emphasizing renewal in the first half of the 16th century, this period "of great religious ferment and upheaval" (p. xiii). That is, Olin sees his reform movement as the orthodox reformation, in contrast to the heretical Protestant Reformation.

It is at this point that one has to ask whether in this frame the term "Catholic Reformation" is appropriate. The answer depends on an understanding of the term "Reformation," which Olin does not clarify. For him "reformation," "reform," "renewal" are identical. Unless otherwise stated, however, the term "Reformation" designates that movement which, based on Luther's revolutionary call for a total religious, churchly, and ethical reorientation, brought about the Protestant church in its various forms. The term "Reformation" connotes a heretical movement if this movement is evaluated from a Roman Catholic viewpoint. Bypassing this meaning then the term "Reformation" connotes a religious, theological, ecclesiastical-institutional, and socio-political movement.

This observation raises the question whether one may make the same statement about the parallel movement within Roman Catholicism. Is it not rather that the movement which Olin calls "Catholic Reformation" was a cry in the wilderness — in some cases (Savonarola, Lefevre) experienced by the churchly establishment as being just as revolutionary as Luther's appeal — which occasionally, here and there, was heard by the establishment (reform bull of 1514, Adrian VI, reform proposal of 1537) and was received into the structure of the institutional church (Theatine Rule, Constitutions), but which was never totally institutionalized in church and society until the Jesuits were sanctioned by the papacy and the Council of Trent began its work, work which then stood under the double sign of reform within the church and hostility against Protestantism? Catholic renewal, Catholic reforms, Counter-Reformation — yes. But Catholic Reformation? After this terminological consideration, there is a theological one which might add further weight to the terminological consideration. Olin's book is a major contribution to the Roman Catholic-Protestant dialogue. It is irrelevant whether this was Olin's intention. It is open to debate how deeply Luther was at home in this movement of Catholic reform; but it cannot be denied that he was quite thoroughly acquainted with some of the major elements of Catholic renewal. His order was dedicated to the highest ideals of monastic life; and as a professor in Wittenberg he studied Lefevre, Erasmus, and the Theologia Deutsch. And yet the spiritual dynamics of the renewal within Roman Catholicism did not provide an answer to his death-or-life question: "How do I find a gracious God?"11 And further, the Catholic reform of the first half of the 16th century did not remedy the scandalous conditions dominant in the church which forced Luther as a shepherd of souls to speak out.

Why? Regarding the second observation an answer is simple: The Catholic reform simply could not overcome the Renaissance spirit which pervaded large circles of the hierarchy, so that it became necessary for the "wild boar" from Wittenberg "to break into the Lord's vineyard."12 Regarding the first observation the answer is much more complicated. We are here confronted with the theo-logy of Catholic reform and the theo-logy of Luther, and thus we are forced to make theological value judgments. In the present context it has to suffice to conclude this analysis by posing the question: What would have happened in 1517/18, insofar as Luther was concerned, if he would have been confronted with the spirit of Catholic renewal rather than with the spirit of the Renaissance papacy?

This question raises two other questions. Looking back at Olin's understanding of the term "Reformation" one would have to ask whether there was any possibility at all that in 1517/18 Luther might have been confronted with the spirit of Catholic renewal, a question which in my opinion has to be answered negatively. Looking forward to the dialogue between Rome and Wittenberg one would have to ask whether Luther's God question was asked at all, and how it was answered in the theology and piety of the Catholic reform.13 That Olin's book makes a significant contribution to this complex of problems marks its importance beyond its purely academic value.

Was Luther Right or Wrong or Both?

The second book to be discussed here is Harry J. McSorley's Luther: Right or Wrong? An Ecumenical-Theological Study of Luther's Major Work. The Bondage of the Will.14 The book is the author's slightly revised and translated dissertation written under the guidance of Michael Schmaus (the well-known Roman Catholic systematician at the University of Munich), and originally published in German as the first volume of a very promising series entitled Beitrage zur oekumenischen Theologie.15 Thus McSorley's work is something of a landmark, and this the more so since the English version is the joint venture of Augsburg Publishing House and the Newman Press. How ecumenical can you get?

I frankly admit that I approached the book with some aversion to the title, which in view of the rather sober and scholarly title of the German version has, of course, to be considered a market captatio benevolentiae. Nevertheless there are only three answers possible to the ostentatious question of the title: Luther is right; he is wrong; he is both, or neither, depending on the criteria to be used for answering the question. It would be bad ecumenical sportsmanship if Luther would come out as being totally wrong. In view of the fact that McSorley is a Paulist Father and worked under one of the most eminent Roman Catholic systematists of our days one may hardly anticipate that Luther would come out as being absolutely right. Ergo — he comes out as being both right and wrong.

If seen from a scholarly point of view McSorley's book is one of the best Roman Catholic contributions to Luther research; in fact, I dare to say that Otto Pesch's work on Luther's understanding of justification16 and McSorley's book are the best Roman Catholic contributions to Luther research of the past decade. The scholarship that went into McSorley's book is stupendous and can only cause our admiration. A brief review of the contents will justify this statement.

The book is divided into three parts of unequal lengths. Part I, entitled "The State of the Question" (pp. 25-273) is a highly detailed theological-historical introduction to the Erasmus-Luther controversy on free will. The author analyzes the biblical understanding of freedom and bondage (pp. 31-55), and that of the pre-Augustinian Fathers (pp. 57-61). Then he concentrates on Augustine's teachings concerning free and unfree will (pp. 63-110). Then he surveys "Early Conciliar and Papal Teaching on Free Will and Unfree Will" (pp. 111-127), a chapter which exists.
produces much material not commonly put into the mainstream of Protestantism. Then he looks at early Scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas, and late Scholasticism (pp. 129-215). Thus the background for the Erasmus-Luther controversy is established. One expects this part to end with an analysis of the positions held by Luther and Erasmus on free and bound will prior to the actual encounter. Unfortunately the author zeroes in only on Luther. He analyzes "Luther's Early Reaction [i.e., to late Medieval Semipelagianism]" from Liberum Arbitrium to Servum Arbitrium (pp. 217-273); as cut-off point the author establishes Luther's Assertio omnium articulatorum (Dec. 1520) and Grand und Ursache (March 1521).

In part II, entitled "Erasmus: De Libero Arbitrio" (pp. 277-293) the author presents Erasmus' position in his writings in connection with the controversy on free will, and restricts himself almost exclusively to this body of material. (One has to seriously ask whether such a tunnel-approach can do justice to Erasmus, or whether the author is not handicapped in doing justice to Erasmus by a somewhat preconceived judgment which places Erasmus in line with the Semipelagian tradition of the later Middle Ages. Since at the end of Part I the author gives a genetic study of Luther's position, one wonders why he avoided doing this in the case of Erasmus.) In Part III (pp. 297-366) the author then concentrates on Luther's The Bondage of the Will by analyzing "Luther's Doctrine of Unfree Will According to His Main Work, De servo arbitrio, with Reference to His Later Teaching and to the Development of Lutheran Theology." A set of 20 concluding theses, a "Select Bibliography" of 18 pages, and an index (unfortunately only) of names conclude the book.

As one might anticipate, Luther is neither absolutely right nor absolutely wrong, though the balance is definitely and strongly tipped in Luther's favor. What is startling and what is a very promising sign is the courageous radicalism of which McSorley spoke, which McSorley concludes is in his central concern regarding the servum arbitrium, and in his biblically orientated argumentation against the Semipelagian understanding of the liberum arbitrium Luther is Catholic and therefore right, in contrast to Erasmus who "did not do justice to the traditional Catholic doctrine" (p. 369; Theses 16-19). Luther is wrong because he is no longer Catholic in his "necessitarian argument" since "it makes it impossible for (Luther) to explain in a convincing way that man alone — and not God — is the cause of sin." And furthermore, this argument "leaves no place in (Luther's) theology for a personal decision of faith" (p. 369: Thesis 18).

One is tempted, then, to see in this "necessitarian argument" something non-essential for Luther's theology, which Luther added to his argumentation at a later time (i.e., beginning with the Assertio omnium articulatorum of 1520), while his fundamental argumentation was from the beginning a highly justified biblical-Augustinian. Catholic reaction to the doctrine of which Luther had learned from his so-called "Catholic" teachers, the late medieval Neo-Semipelagians Ockham and Biel. That is, initially Luther's argumentation for the servum arbitrium was a (one is tempted to say absolutely necessary) "movement from an un-Catholic outlook to a Catholic one" (p. 368: Theses 13, 14); later on, a non-Catholic element was introduced into the Reformer's thought when he used also the necessitarian argument in his attack of the liberum arbitrium. Regardless of the way how one evaluates these results, the book certainly has established the author as one of the outstanding Luther scholars of our day.

What is the "Catholic Tradition"?

The general reaction to the book has been highly favorable. While I am impressed by the book — I think that the theological-historical analysis of the free-will-problem from Scripture to the later Middle Ages ought to be a must on the reading list of everyone who professes interest in the history of theology (and this notwithstanding the fact that I have the feeling that the section on the pre-Augustinian Fathers has turned out to be somewhat thin) — I nevertheless have to agree with Robert W. Jenson's highly critical review of the book, published in the summer 1969 issue of Dialog. In a review it might sound unorthodox to refer the reader to another chapter for a critical evaluation of the book under discussion. Yet Jenson is correct when he states that the book fails as an interpretation of Luther, that McSorley does not grasp the core of Luther's theology, of which the servum arbitrium is only a partial issue: "McSorley does not attempt to interpret Luther's doctrine of the enslaved will from within Luther's particular grasp of the gospel and the gospel's God, nor as a clue to that grasp." 17

Jenson elaborates on his view by looking at the central "location of Luther's theologizing," that is, "the event of the saying of the gospel and its hearing by a man concerned for his own existence," 18 he is unable to grasp the full dimension of the total unity of Luther's argumentation for the servum arbitrium, but rather quite artificially, and certainly under the influence of concepts not originating with Luther, separates a biblical-Catholic, from a non-biblical, non-Catholic argument in Luther's position. In addition to Jenson's observations, and by looking at the problem from a different point of view, one might point out that the author's approach to Luther by way of the historically developed tradition regarding free will has kept him from any possibility of grasping the primordial brunt of Luther's God experience. In this connection it is of interest to note that McSorley argues that Luther's interpretation of man as the horse being ridden either by God or the devil has to be abandoned if one wishes to affirm the Catholic tradition (pp. 335 ff.). To understand Luther primarily in terms of this "Catholic tradition" means simply to short-change Luther as homo religiosus. Luther's argumentation in The Bondage of the Will has to be seen first of all against the background of Luther's God image, 19 and not, as McSorley does, against the background of the historically developed understanding of "freedom of the will" or "bondage of the will."

Finally a word about the term "Catholic tradition," the criteria with which the author measures Luther. Since the work of Joseph Lortz, it has become fashionable to exclude the late Medieval Nominalists from that tradition and to make them the whipping boys for the Reformation. Reading between the lines of McSorley's book it becomes quite clear that it is the author's opinion that if Luther had known the Catholic tradition (which, roughly speaking, is epitomized in Thomas) better than he did, then, of course, Luther would not have been led into the turmoil regarding the free or bound will. Since, again roughly speaking, the author aligns Erasmus with the un-Catholic late Medieval tradition, he certainly would strongly disagree with Olin, who placed Erasmus among the representatives of a true renewal within the Roman Catholic church.

I am not debating whether Ockham, Biel, and Erasmus were un-Catholic or half Catholic, but I would like to focus on the content of the term "Catholic tradition" in the historic setting of the 16th century. May one restrict the term "Catholic tradition" to doctrinal statements, made either by councils and thus of a binding, legal quality (see McSorley's Part I, Section 5), or by individual theologians and thus of an opinion quality (Thomas)? Or does the term "tradition" not also include the total life in the church, the piety and the religious habits which developed in the church and were tolerated or even promoted by ecclesiastics? If the latter is the case, then certainly Nominalism and the way in which it shaped religious life in the late Medieval church is a part of the Catholic tradition, which thus would be a highly complex entity consisting supposedly of a "real Catholic tradition" (Augustine, conciliar decision, Thomas) and a supposed "pseudo-Catholic tradition" (late Medieval Neo-Semipelagianism).

In this tradition would be a fundamental discrepancy between lex credendi and lex orandi, and in some cases also a fundamental discrepancy between the lex credendi and the theologizing of certain people. When Luther spoke out in a supposedly honest and justifiable attempt — clumsy though it may have been — to call attention to this discrepancy, and also to call back the church to the supposed "real Catholic tradition," no one in the church would listen sympathetically, or, at the very least, no one would admit that...

The careless habit of personifying such institutions as governments, corporations, and universities is a prolific source of confusion in the discussion of social issues. If we wish to analyze institutions in order better to understand and control them, we must begin with the recognition that the "behavior" of institutions is the complex resultant of actions by individuals. We recognize this implicitly in our penchant for scolding institutions. We scold because institutions seem so utterly unresponsive to rational proposals for change. What is implicit should be made explicit: Institutions can only be reformed through alteration of the incentives impinging upon individual decision makers.

This is the lesson cogently taught by James M. Buchanan and Nicos E. Devletoglou in Academia in Anarchy: An Economic Diagnosis. The problems of the contemporary university have been created by the actions of its personnel. This is an important book because it explains these actions as rational responses to existing structures of cost and benefit. It is also for this reason a hopeful book. The structure of incentives that currently shapes behavior in the universities is not immutable. It can and will be changed when a sufficient number of significantly affected individuals understand what is happening. This book could go a long way toward creating that understanding.

Unfortunately, the authors say too much. "We do write from indignation," they warn in the preface. As one who has himself spilled considerable ink on this subject in the indignant mood, I hesitate before condemning. Yet I think Buchanan and Devletoglou would have been wiser to conceal or suppress some of their opinions in the interest of gaining a more sympathetic hearing for the core of their argument. Part II of the book struck me as excessively speculative, purplish in prose, and largely superficial. An abundance of mixed metaphors is a warning that conclusions may be running ahead of logic and evidence. The two paragraphs on pp. 168-69, for example, will arouse fear only in the hearts of English teachers.

But Part I, the first four chapters and 84 pages, can and should be read in an hour by every legislator, philanthropist, foundation executive, university administrator, student, and parent of students. Professors should be able to read it in slightly less time, but I do not recommend it to professors for the same reason that I would not urge Fidel Castro to read the works of Milton Friedman. What's the use?

Universities are in a muddle today because the students are consumers who do not buy, the faculties are producers who do not sell, and the taxpayers and private donors are owners who do not control. Elementary economic analysis can predict the consequences which have in fact ensued. Students receive education at below cost prices. Once admitted through the screening process, the student gets something for nothing. Quite predictably, he proceeds to treat the services of the university as if they had no scarcity value, because for him they in fact do not. Moreover, the prevalent policy of providing this benefit through subsidies to universities (rather than to students directly) stifles interuniversity competition. This leads to the authors' second main charge.

The faculties of universities produce a product to satisfy their own tastes and preferences, because they are the effective dispensers of the free or below-cost good called education. Cartel-like agreements among universities further diminish the probability that interuniversity competition will work to lessen the net advantages derived by faculty members from the higher education industry. Meanwhile, those who are paying for all this have been seduced into accepting the myth that external (i.e., non-producer) control of the academic enterprise is inconsistent with freedom, learning, liberalism, light, and progress. So the banner of academic freedom continues to cloak all sorts of academic license.

Buchanan and Devletoglou present a case that will be hard to refute: the manner in which university education is today organized and financed has long been an invitation to anarchy. The invitation was accepted with enthusiasm in the 1960's. Academia in Anarchy could persuade us to withdraw the invitation by re-ordering our financial organization of higher education.

PAUL T. HEYNE
The profusion of monumental figurative images on public display in the environment has interested me for some time. Figures from the very mixed bag of church, state, commerce, and private sources provide possible media for reading popular culture. Here I have selected several examples of female imagery from my own locale, the twin cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

My experience indicates a numerical dominance of female over male representations in the environment. This dominance raises several questions about our society. Is our society matriarchally controlled? Is this enthusiasm for female forms expressive of the male point of view which continues to steer the popular and fine arts? Was Strindberg right when he maintained that woman is man’s mortal enemy? Are male artists getting even by hanging up public effigies of women?

Will the women’s liberation movement in fact be able to remedy the many abuses in this area?

While mulling over the underlayers of meanings in the illustrated examples, I was struck with the realization that the seeming opposition between sacred and profane categories often becomes blurred. A statue of Many surrounded by flowers and sheltered in her grotto does take on the qualities of an earthly mother and earth-mother. But the mermaid with her completely frontal cruciform pose has all the attributes of a primary cult image, too. Frankly, each time I drive by the mermaid on Highway 10 it is surprising not to see her followers kneeling in veneration before her.

Again in the less obvious but slightly more primitive facade of the Copper Squirrel Lounge the combination of elements bears a formal similarity to a church reredos, utilizing a large figure applied to a textured screen and topped by a canopy.
The uneven quality and profusion of contemporary figurative images even raises the question of idolatry. These public portrayals might be considered a vestigial manifestation of fetishism and superstition. Our sophistication and modernism have not brought an end to the primitive vigor and pretentious vulgarity of the medieval tradition.

Mondrian looked for the day when humanity would achieve fulfillment through good total design in the environment, thereby outliving its need for sculptures on pedestals and paintings with frames around them. Supporting his partially realized dream is the iconoclasm of the contemporary avant-garde with its quest for minimal abstraction and environmental works like earth art and street art.

It seems to me that this tendency to do away with symbolic and figurative imagery is founded on the hope that someday men will reach perfection for themselves and by themselves. On this view, man himself would be the image of perfection.

Man may be progressing, but the edges of his perfectability remain most rough. There is now enough cultural uncertainty about our perfection to sap the conviction of artists and art committees alike. I believe that it is man's innate imperfectability and therefore dependence which is the greatest wellspring of creativity. Perhaps the most universal self-image of man is that of the worshiper. In all religiously informed cultures from the Sumerian Tell Asmar figurines to the "Praying Hands" by Durer the attitude of dependence is the one most often expressed. On looking carefully you may still find a confessional image of this type in your own neighborhood.

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Mary Statue, St. Laurence Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Mermaid Lounge, Mounds View, Minnesota.
The London theatre still believes in the theatricality of the word. It also has some experimental theatre which is off-off-Broadway-inspired, but it does not dominate the scene. The atmosphere of traditional theatre makes it possible for young writers to grow in their craft and art. Almost season after season one meets new and impressive talents. This season I am becoming better acquainted with David Mercer, David Storey and Donald Howarth.

Mercer's new play Flint continues the Shavian tradition of biting social criticism in a well-structured tragicomedy filled with stunningly brilliant dialogue. Mercer's heroes are usually outsiders in fruitless rebellion against the very society of which they are a part. Flint is an Episcopalian pastor of seventy years of age who is a disgrace to the church and his profession. But there never was a more charming, disarming, old roue than this ordained atheist. This fact is paralleled by his marriage which he never consummated. His wife, satiric symbol of puritanism, escapes into a wheelchair existence during her nuptial night out of sexual fear and disgust. Her sister who takes care of this imagined invalid takes her place in the pastor's bed until the satyr in him lusts for younger blood.

The play opens with Dixie, a teenage girl and drug addict, just released from prison, who faints in the pastor's church. His desires go beyond doing his pastoral duties. While amusing himself with her in the vestry, his wife manages to set the church aflame, a deed of which he is accused. His confrontation with his Bishop has the most delightful Shavian wit. The dismissed pastor, whose wife is meanwhile murdered by her sister, drives Dixie on his motorcycle to Rome in fulfilling her greatest desire. On their ride to the holy city he loses his life while she gives birth to his son whom she will call Prometheus in fulfilling his last wish.

Mercer has Rousseau-like thoughts and strongly believes that human nature is endowed with natural vital energy which is stifled and destroyed by society and its institutions. Sexuality and intelligence of which his hero has a great deal must unfold without being inhibited. This image of the noble savage is preferable to most products of modern psychology. Flint is one of those irrepresible, strong creatures who break through the barriers of all conventions, from religion to naming his child. Prometheus will bring fire and light to the world, even though he may suffer for it, as his father did.

Much of Mercer's wit is based on paradoxes and the juxtaposition of religious strength and blasphemy, of the religious rhetoric of past centuries and the explosive thoughts of our time. Mercer's dialogue is mercilessly intelligent and original. We realize that there would be no Flint if there were no church against which he can rebel. However right or wrong he may be at certain points of the play, we cannot help being joyfully entertained by him and his antics, by his sins and endearing exaltations.

Two new plays by two young British dramatists are startling in their approach to the theatricality of an idea, or a stage gimmick. But what matters is that it works in both cases which have this and nothing else in common. In his play, The Contractor, David Storey has his actors erect a huge tent under which the marriage of the contractor's daughter is celebrated and after which the tent is struck. The mounting and striking of the tent absorb two acts in which nothing else happens. Or does not happen a great deal? The working class and the bourgeoisie, the feelings of the workers towards one another, the past and present of the members of the well-to-do family, their love and hatred for each other — all are pitted against each other and unfolded while the tent goes up and is brought down.

Even more poetic in its dramatic impact was Donald Howarth's Three Months Gone in which reality and imagination imperceptibly interweave. As in The Contractor the plot action is reduced to a minimum. The obvious plot action is a girl called Anna Bowers preparing for her brother's return. But, in fact, she and a young boy called Alvin Hanker get ready for bed.

These two persons are really the only ones on the stage. But there is Alvin's mother (unforgettably played by Diana Dors) and Anna's brother as well, in minor parts, a doctor and milkman. Both Anna and Alvin project their thought-feelings onto the reality of the stage by bringing the non-real but existing persons into the action. They walk in and out through the relationship of the two main characters: the frustrated, hesitant Anna and the shy, inexperienced Alvin. The non-real persons have their own relationships with one another as imagined by Alvin and Anna.

Pivoting around the tiny plot idea of an older girl and a younger boy preparing to go to bed with each other, the inner world of the two unfolds before our eyes. There is particularly the boy's liberation from his mother and the girl's dependence on her brother-idol which is destroyed within her when she imagines him sexually involved with Alvin's mother. Both free themselves in finding each other. The real as well as the imaginary tableaux result in a highly dramatic entertainment.

The British theatre is to be envied for having found three great dramatists again.
Nobody has solicited my views on the Women’s Liberation movement, but on the principle that that gift is best which comes unasked I shall volunteer some opinions which I hope will irritate extremists both on the right and on the left.

The greater part of my life has been spent on a college campus. Against such a background it would be impossible for me to subscribe to any popular myths about female inferiority. From what I have seen of female colleagues and faculty wives, I am forced to conclude that women are as bright, as tough-minded, as perceptive, and as objective as any male. One of the great names in my own field (geography) is that of Ellen Churchill Semple, whose writings are still a model of clarity and evocative imagery. And in the related field of anthropology probably no male has yet equalled the contribution or reputation of Ruth Benedict. The fact that more women have not yet made distinguished names for themselves in the arts, sciences, and technology is readily explainable: there has, as a matter of fact, been a long history of sexual imperialism with the woman cast in the role of a drudge. “Women’s work” has meant, in effect, any kind of labor that the male found disagreeable and confining. One of my persistent sorrows as a college teacher has been to see several generations of highly gifted young women disappear from the campus into lives that offered them no opportunity to stay alive intellectually and I have often marvelled that they could allow themselves to be conned into a life of bovine submissiveness to some male who, in many cases, was clearly their inferior in everything but physical strength.

To pile wonder upon wonder, western civilization, at least since the Age of Chivalry, has insisted that its drudges must not only be drudges, but ornamental as well. Television hammers the message home in a hundred commercials every day: tote dat barge, lift dat bale, Woman, but when Himself appears at the front door after eight exhausting hours in an air-conditioned office, be there in a low-cut satin dress with your hair piled high and a dab of My Sin behind each ear.

When leaders of the Women’s Liberation movement say that this definition of femininity has to go I am right there cheering them on. Let’s be done, once and for all, with the Kinder, Kirche, and Kueche business. Let’s give everybody, male and female, an equal opportunity for self-realization in the use of whatever gifts he may have been given.

But two things may be equal without being identical. Indeed, the concept of equality presupposes separate identities, and the separateness may be one of nature or of function or of both. In a situation of true equality, individuals may freely choose different roles, depending on all sorts of considerations such as gifts, inclinations, historical conditioning, or biological inheritance. There is nothing intrinsically degrading in any honest work, including what our society has chosen to define as “women’s work.” What is degrading is to be forced into and limited to a role which one has not chosen freely and which prevents one from realizing his full potential as a human being.

I do not know — and in any case it would not be for me to say — what the proper role is for any individual woman. I have a feeling — but perhaps it is only a manifestation of residual male romanticism — that women ought not to be combat troops or bulldozer operators. But if there are women who want to do these things, I see no reason why they should be prevented from doing them simply because they are women.

I suspect that, once women have the freedom to choose, they will choose a role not too different from their present role in our society. Most of us, men and women, relish that separateness of roles and identities which underscores the joyous fact that there are two sexes. But the joy would be increased by this fact’s being accepted freely, rather than by compulsion. So, Women’s Lib, “Right on!”

October, 1970
The Pilgrim

The Periods of the Pilgrim

Or — His Having Told Me Where To Go.
Let Me Tell You Where Father Comes From.

By JOHN KRETZMANN

The Pilgrim, it seems, is vexed and distraught. Hic et Nunc stands accused, with the kind of shrill inconsistency symptomatic of hysteria, of treasons and heresies too numerous to list, of hates and hang-ups that consume even apple pie, leaving only Mom untouched.

In the midst of the shouting, we sometimes lose perspective on who we (partly) are, and where we (partly) come from. As Peter Berger notes in Invitation to Sociology, "society defines us, but is in turn defined by us." It is a notion at the same time humbling and liberating, one with which some Christians have a good deal of trouble. For this series of columns, though, my father and I wish to take it at face value, exploring both the social contexts which formed us and continue to define our horizons, as well as our visions for their future.

Technically, my father and I are separated by two generations — due to his rather late start at propagating the species. As I think about the times and circumstances which formed my father's thinking, I fear that neither his experiences nor the precepts he has fashioned out of them equip him for wise and moral engagement with our present crises.

Within a militantly ethnocentric church body, he has fought the battles of all enlightened ethnics who find themselves dropped into the midst of a suspicious and potentially hostile America. He has fought for acceptance, assimilation. It is difficult not to sympathize with him and his fellow warriors. They fight on even today, currently engaging a frightened and confused bunch of Bible-thumpers who are, at the least, rather embarrassing to have around. Yet one has difficulty viewing this skirmish as anything but a possible footnote to a future volume of church history.

For most Christians have already been assimilated in the areas where it counts, seduced by the pursuit of comfort into a somnolent chauvinism, an acquiescent racism. When Christians decide to lead lives which drive their kids to Woodstock, they are not, needless to say, responding to the nuances of doctrinal debate. The limits of this battle, so important to my father, seem confining and shamefully parochial to a younger observer.

There are other areas in which my father's background serves ill to prepare him for the realities we face. Though he himself has wielded considerable power as a university administrator, he shares with most Americans a peculiar, almost touching naivete about the concept of power. On the one hand, power is to be honored, regardless of its uses. On the other hand, power a-building or power sought after is dirty, immoral by definition. I sometimes think that what offends him most about the struggle of black people for liberation, for instance, is simply its air of worldly-wisdom. Political and economic power is the name of the game, open, up front, no bones about it. That's not only bad manners, it detracts one's heavenly gaze.

There is, too, in my father a series of understandable misapprehensions about our nation's role, past and present, as a force for good among men. The truth here is complex and difficult to assess, containing considerably more darkness and evil than our popular mythologies would suggest. Yet we must get on with the task of re-educating ourselves if we are to save ourselves. No black man, for example, will allow us any longer to view slavery and racism as mere exceptions, oversights in an otherwise gloriously democratic tradition. As we grope toward a new definition of ourselves, of our national past, only our humility will be reinforced.

Finally, I fear that my father suffers intellectually from a rather single-minded theological bent, the remnant of a dying model of "classical" education. One cannot expect theology to continue as a kind of jack-of-all-disciplines. One must be prepared first to engage science, politics, economics, the arts on their own terms and in their own (sometimes painfully tortuous) languages. I am not here arguing for the separation of disciplines in curricula, or anything like it. I am simply asking for some clear thought about the limits of theological discourse: the "world" wisely refuses to listen to someone who considers himself above it, apart from it, anything but of it.

So the Pilgrim and I will be hassling through these and other points of disagreement in the months to come, each of us trying to transcend the limits of our respective pasts. It will be my view that the trumpets summon us on this side too. They call us to name our saints and stand by them, fathers and sons together craving justice, waging peace. It is a modestly glorious calling, I think, altogether worthy of a people who will answer finally the trumpets of our Lord.

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The Cresset