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The Cresset
A REVIEW OF LITERATURE,
The ARTS, AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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OCTOBER 1956
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Calling All Idiots

The ritual of every political campaign requires the candidates and the various patriotic organizations to urge the citizenry to "get out and vote." In years when there is a tight race for the presidency, this plea may be effective to the extent of getting something like seventy percent of the sovereign voters into the polling booths. In years when only state and local offices are at issue, the percentage often runs under fifty percent.

The ancient Greeks had a word for the free citizen who showed no interest in the affairs of the commonwealth, a word which we still use but with a slightly different meaning. The word is "idiot." And surely it is not too strong a word, even in its present-day meaning, to apply to the citizen whose life and fortune and liberties are every day more profoundly affected by government, and who yet refuses to discharge even the bare minimum duties of a citizen.

At the same time, we must confess that we have often wondered why any sort of intensive effort should be made to persuade such idiots to turn out on election day if their interest in public affairs is so slight as to require pressure of one sort or another to get them to vote. What, after all, is gained by persuading reluctant, uninformed citizens to troop to the polls if they are going to do nothing there except scratch their ballots eenie-meenie-mo fashion? Perhaps the common good would be better served by advising such people to stay at home and study their Racing Forms or their horoscopes or whatever it is such people are actually interested in.

Meanwhile, how about giving a break to the concerned citizen who wants to do his part in preserving freedom by exercising his franchise intelligently?

Lessons From Suez

The international crisis over President Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal presents us with new and tragic evidence that we have not yet begun to learn the lessons which two world wars, a cold war, several "police actions," and half a century of alarms should have taught us.

In its simplest terms, the Suez crisis has arisen out of a conflict between the needs of all mankind and the petulance of an immature sovereign state. The Suez Canal is more than the British "lifeline of empire;" it is the funnel through which the normal and necessary
movement of people and goods from all over the world must pass. It is intolerable that such a vital passage-way should be allowed to pass into the hands of any one state.

Unfortunately, the nations which are most exercised over President Nasser's seizure of the canal are hardly in a position to criticize him on any sort of moral or philosophical grounds. What he did was what practically every European state has done somewhere along the line in the past; he asserted the right of a sovereign state to expropriate property lying within its national territory.

Now the logical grounds for criticizing such an act would require an assertion, by the Western powers, that in the small and inter-related world of 1956, the independence of nations is a more significant and more weighty consideration than is the independence of any one of them and that, in the light of that fact, it simply does not make sense to permit any one nation to make decisions of international consequence without consulting with other nations.

But, of course, neither Sir Anthony Eden nor M. Pineau nor Mr. Dulles would dare to say any such thing as that. For if President Nasser can not do what he has done at Suez, Sir Anthony's government can not do what it has been doing on Cyprus and M. Pineau's government can not do what it has been doing in North Africa and our government can not set off H-bombs whenever it pleases out in the Pacific Ocean.

Even the Russians have hesitated to raise the question of the sovereign right of a nation to act irresponsibly. They, too, want to do certain things without consulting other nations. And so we are all in the same boat: all indignant because our oxen have been gored but all insistent upon the right to gore other men's oxen.

Clinton, Tenn.

As the South goes about its unwilling and painful task of integrating its two large racial groups into one society, it becomes daily more apparent that the people of the South tend to divide themselves into three groups, each of which must be understood and treated separately.

The first, and most obvious, group is the large and patient group of peace-loving Southern Negroes who long passionately for the full enjoyment of all of those rights which they consider themselves entitled to in a society which calls itself Christian and Democratic. Patient as they have been in the past, these Negroes are not disposed to tolerate forever the status which has been forced upon them in the past. But neither do they propose to wreck the very society to which they seek admittance by insisting that three centuries of tradition must be undone by tomorrow morning. They have been content to move carefully and deliberately, operating through persuasion, through the courts, and through passive resistance. This has required a very large measure of self-control, but they have already accomplished much by such non-violent methods.

The second group is the equally large group of Southern Caucasians who fear the consequences of a change in traditions which are as much a part of them as their language, their race, and their pattern of life. There is every reason to believe that many, perhaps most, of these people recognize that the relations between races are subject to the same laws of change that govern all cultural patterns. They are reconciled to the eventual liberation of their Negro neighbors from the degrading customs of the past. Like Augustine, who wanted to be virtuous—but not yet, they want to get the painful job of integration over with—but not yet. One should be very reluctant to condemn such people until he has thoroughly immersed himself in their culture and way of life.

It is, unfortunately, a noisy but numerically insignificant third group which is getting all of the attention just now. In the South, as in the North, there is an irresponsible, unruly element which cuts across racial lines and which seizes upon any opportunity to go bawling and brawling through the streets. Such people come crawling out of the woodwork whenever society faces a crisis. We have seen them in the North, looting stores in flood-stricken cities. We have seen them in the East, fomenting violence around strike-bound factories. We have seen them in the West, terrorizing communities which had not yet had time to organize civil governments. We see them now in the South, descending upon communities which are engaged in the big job of trying to make integration work.

We have seen what these gangsters can do to a pleasant little town like Clinton, Tennessee. Let us hope that what happened there will prompt the Northerner to sympathize more understandingly with the problem of the responsible Southerner of both races, and let us hope that it will prompt the responsible Southerner to stiffen his determination that, whatever the new pattern of things may eventually be in the South, it will not have been set by the violence of the mob.

It was the governor of Tennessee who concluded a recent address with the prayer: "Precious Lord, take our hand and lead us on." Assuming that the prayer was more than mere rhetoric, where is the Christian leadership in the South (and in the North) that will take the Negro and the Caucasian by the hand and lead them on?
Ask almost anyone what it takes to be a leader of men and you’ll likely get a meaningless answer. While we can list qualities a leader should have, we still don’t know why some men with less than half those qualities can lead while others with more than half can’t. The military services give courses in leadership, but these consist mostly of rules and hints, because even the military isn’t certain why one man can lead and another can’t. While personality and certain qualities of character have something to do with it, it is the fusion of these two which one seems to inherit that makes him a leader.

While all of us either lead or are led, we are never sure why we get response or respond. Occasionally we meet an outstanding leader whose qualities for leadership are evident. While the military still has its share of these men, most of the outstanding leaders today are in business and industry, in education and government. Some of the best are hidden behind large staffs, but their personalities seep through the chain of command.

It’s more difficult to spot leaders in peace time and even then they can’t be given the final test. For it seems to me, the final mark of a leader is whether you trust him with your life; whether you believe that what he does is right, when, if he is wrong, your life is at stake.

I knew one man who was a leader above leaders. He was a Commodore heading a flag staff on our ship. The rank of Commodore, comparable to Brigadier General in the Army, is used by the Navy only in war time. This Commodore was in charge of a task unit of twelve attack transports and six destroyers. His responsibility was to get these ships safely to their destination. The responsibility was tremendous.

The strange thing about the Commodore was that he didn’t look the part of the leader. Leaders pictured in history books are over six foot, broad, muscular, with a jutting jaw and fiery eye. But the Commodore was less than average height, slight of build, and his voice was soft and his eyes had only a warm look. He gave orders in a low voice but the response to them was immediate, not only because of his rank but because something in the voice made a man want to respond.

One of the best illustrations of his leadership occurred in December, 1943. We had picked up part of the British Eighth Army in Naples and were to take them to England, which most of them hadn’t seen for six to eight years. The Commodore was responsible for getting the eighteen ships and 55,000 men to England safely, but between us and England was France and the Nazi submarine pens on the Bay of Biscay.

The first day out of Gibraltar we had positions on seventeen enemy subs spotted by planes. These were formed in a crescent pattern and right behind us. We ran for it and eventually we ran so far that at one time we were closer to New York than we were to England.

On the third night out, I was on duty in communications at two in the morning when the day’s last spotting report came in. I took it to the navigator’s “shack,” just off the bridge, where the Commodore had made his headquarters in the last three days without sleep. Before him was a chart showing our position with pins representing enemy sub positions. With the information in this latest report, he moved a few pins and added others. When he finished his staff groaned. We were surrounded. The Commodore’s only word was “well.” Suddenly it didn’t seem such an impossible situation. Everyone aboard knew the situation and we were all jumpy to the point that any object dropped on the deck caused us to leap for the overhead. Still we knew we were going to get through with the Commodore in charge. Although not a part of the ship’s company, the Commodore began showing himself around the ship more than ever. He would appear in places he was sure to be seen and he had the appearance of a man taking an ocean cruise for pleasure.

If he was tense and sleepless and if he felt the impossibility of our position or the responsibility that he carried, he didn’t show it. In the next days he led his ships on an erratic course, running one day in one direction and doubling back during the night right through the submarine circle. We all had to go along, of course, but strangely enough we didn’t feel we were going along because we had to, but because we wanted to be going where the Commodore wanted to go.

Our trust in him was justified, for we did arrive in Scotland safely though behind our intended date of arrival. How we got through is still a mystery. But equally mysterious to all of us, was why we had felt and responded to the Commodore’s leadership as we had.
Theatre Roundup

“The Best Season in Years”

By WALTER SORELL
Drama Editor, The CRESSET

There was great joy and jubilation in the producers’ offices and, more surprisingly, in the Sunday columns of the New York theatre reviewers about the great season Broadway has had in 1955-1956. Brooks Atkinson devoted one of his columns to the “difficulties of accounting for the success of the Broadway season.” The word passed around among the initiated was that Broadway has not had such a good year, quantitatively and qualitatively, since 1929.

Nevertheless, in comparison to the season of 1954-1955, Broadway has hardly gained quantitatively, though there were eighteen more entries. But there were seventeen more revivals, eight fewer musicals and only five more plays than the previous season. If we consider that the little theatres flourished as never before and that about ten of their productions saw more than a hundred performances and our only repertory theatre, “The Phoenix,” alone produced eleven shows— I simply fail to see the great success Broadway scored.

Most of my readers will be as little impressed by figures as I am. After all, it is the quality which counts. Looking back over my shoulder I undoubtedly recall a few outstanding theatrical experiences. But what left the impression of richness was a vast variety constantly stimulating our appetite.

From the angle of production—I think of the acting, singing, dancing and the sets—it was a rewarding year. But our purely technical skill has advanced to such a degree that we expect the audience to applaud with the rise of the curtain because the stage sets usually are a piece of stunning craftsmanship.

New Faces

But we fall shamefacedly silent when asked who the new American dramatist was, a dramatist of stature or only of promise, whose contribution enriched this season. The spice of the theatrical fare came mainly from France and England. Even the triumph of the musical, “My Fair Lady,” is due to the Shavian genius. Let us quickly run over the list of the new authors.

There was the strange case of Bill Hoffman whom the Theatre Guild unfortunately billed as the dramatist coming closest to Shaw’s wit. But his epigrams fell flat and the entire thing was a blown-up bore. The fact is that he treats in his “Affair of Honor” a Revolutionary War story about a British major who intends to hang seven Yankees for spying unless a girl who enamored him yields to his desires. True, Shaw’s “The Devil’s Disciple” also deals with desire and love in the Revolutionary War, but there the comparison stops. For Shaw, sex is never the sole dramatic purpose. It only serves as a means to make his comments on some vital point he had set out to prove. In Mr. Hoffman’s hands the pen does not get beyond the rhetoric epigram and the story moves between the Scylla and Charybdis of pretentiousness and pornography.

There was the even stranger case of Carolyn Green who wrote a Noel Coward comedy without the master’s wit, routine and elegance. It pivots around a seasonal romance in which sex is blended with literature. But literature, unreliable as it is, creates a conflict for sex. The *deus ex machina* appears in the disguise of a tax collector. “Janus” totters just one inch away from the recipe for soap-operas, which undoubtedly explains its popular success. Its wit culminates in such remarks as, “Adult education leans heavily on adultery.”

Two entries, mixing suspense and melodrama, belong with the documentary type of play. “A Hatful of Rain,” by the actor-dramatist Michael Gazzo, treats sentimentally the case history of a dope addict in juxtaposition to his marital problems. “Time Limit!” by Henry Denker and Ralph Berkey, scratches the surface of a serious problem. When is a brave man expected to yield to the pressures of brain-washing and can he ever justify the betrayal of his country to save his fellow prisoners? The melodrama is stronger than the drama, and the influence of radio and television writing seems to be obvious and detrimental to the penetration of the problem.

A newcomer to Broadway is also Paddy Chayefsky, the Euripides of TV and the Shakespeare of the little man. In his “Middle of the Night” he tells the story of a middle-aged man who falls in love with a young girl and marries her. Chayefsky is a master of the thin “slice of life” technique. Everything his characters do or say is typical and sub-average. TV needs this kind of microcosmic close-up. But the theatre demands more abstraction than realism and must go beyond the size of life to give us the essence of life.
Two comedies which make use of old and almost fool-proof formulae have been quite successful. George Axelrod was so afraid of writing a second play after his "Seven Year Itch" that he took all the ingredients known to Hollywood and stirred them well until the dough was just ready for "Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?". I am only afraid the second success with shallowness will spoil Axelrod for good, though not for worse. "No Time for Sergeants," based on Mac Hymen's novel, dramatized by Ira Levin, uses the good-natured, calm, gentle soul of a Georgian boy who loves everybody and wants to please everybody in contrast to the complicated, exasperating, trying machinery of military life. The result: a hilarious low comedy.

Those who like whimsical humor, seasoned with eccentricity, Southern style, may find Eudora Welty's "The Ponder Heart" a slow, in spots absurd, and still enchanting comedy of rural manners. Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov have tried to save the charm of Miss Welty's novel and half succeeded. Thornton Wilder has great success with his "The Matchmaker," an adaptation of his own "Merchant of Yonkers" which was the adaptation of an excellent Johann Nestroy play which was an adaptation of a rather mediocre one-act play by the 19th century British dramatist John Oxenford. People seem to like "The Matchmaker" which, in my opinion, reverts to mediocrity. It is a boisterous performance, but the play lacks the satirical finesse without which a play of this kind remains antiquated.

Miller Misses

Arthur Miller's entry, "A View from the Bridge," his least successful drama so far, was, after dragging along on Broadway for a few months, sent for repairs and a new tryout into summer stock. It is a drama of great potentialities which are not fully utilized. It has the sweep of a Greek tragedy, but the people remain thinly drawn, though one realizes that Mr. Miller knows these Italian people from Brooklyn intimately well. The reporter and the imaginative dramatist seem to have written this play without getting together often enough for a story conference and its treatment.

The Undervalued

Two American dramatists, though no longer neophytes, have fared badly and, as I think, undeservedly so. Leslie Stevens' "The Lovers" did not get beyond four performances, because most of the critics kept their thumbs too much down on their typewriters. Mr. Stevens has great talent; he is a poet of the theatre. He wrote a drama about the medieval custom of the "first night," the ius primae noctis, and it may have been this multiple-flashback technique which made the play somewhat heavy going. Nevertheless, there is intensity and the inner glow of great theatre in this struggle against a primitive law and custom. It is distinguished writing, four performances or none.

Andrew Rosenthal, very successfully played in England, is gravely neglected and misunderstood by his compatriots. His drama, "Third Person," is one of the subtletest, most penetrating and absorbing stories of male affinity and its disturbing influence on a marriage. It gives a clear picture of how situations bring human beings together and create major conflicts. It makes a proper study of characters without being "psychological." The "Third Person" was not as successful as it should have been.

The Great Plays

A really great play of this season was "The Chalk Garden" by the British writer Enid Bagnold, one of the wittiest, hardest hitting, most entertaining comedies in the tradition of the Restoration comedy with a most polished style. Miss Bagnold seems vitally interested in the people she writes about, but she is even more interested in the symbolism behind the story. Her people are selected oddities, precious and original, so very far from all normalcy and yet so believable. She is a sharp observer of human frailties and follies. An aging woman, upper-class society, tries to grow plants in chalky soil which, of course, does not nourish them. This is a symbol for her daughter and grand-daughter, reared without love. But this is only the background for a stirring dialogue about man and the world.

Anouilh's "The Lark," the drama about Saint Joan, is a deep, truth-searching play. It is not, as is Shaw's "Saint Joan," filled to the brim with intellect and the burning power of Shaw's own crusading spirit. Anouilh's play is rather a reverie in thoughts. "God has not come to make things easier, he has come to make them harder." When the Maid defends herself against the charge that she does not believe in God's power to perform miracles, she says, "God is economical. When two sous worth of good sense will do he doesn't go to the expense of a miracle." The original play is far more thoughtful than Lillian Hellman's adaptation. The French playwright is inclined to digress and to lose himself for minutes in provocative thoughts, many of which were deleted to make the play theatrically more effective. And, without denying Anouilh his genius, Miss Hellman gave us a gripping and fascinating version of his play.

Giraudoux' "The Trojan War Will Not Take Place" was performed under the title of "Tiger at the Gates" in Christopher Fry's beautiful language. It may be called a satire on the recurrence of war, but it seems to suggest much more than this. It shows, in the light of each character, the many aspects of destiny and the
manner in which the characters face reality. There is little of the Homeric grandeur in them, perhaps with the exception of Cassandra. The people are only too human the way they are. Helen is a stupid little girl who loves to flirt and Paris is an easily excited bravo who is intoxicated with his own feelings. Hector is a disillusioned man. Giraudoux wrote a very serious play and found he could best say what he had to say in a satiric manner.

Sean O'Casey is one of the great writers of our time, and even his minor plays are still major in comparison to the better crop. “Red Roses For Me” has his singing poetry and his biting wit; it has his discussions on politics and religion; it has his mystic belief and his bitterness and despair. The hero of the story is an artist, an actor and mystic who forsakes Shakespeare, his mother, and his girl to lead the transport workers in their strike. He is shot down and dies during this rebellion, but his belief gives courage to his fellowmen.

The Most Tragic Play

Belief and courage and, above all, hope in the ultimate goodness of man was expressed by a young girl who experienced the epitomized martyrdom of six million Jews who became Hitler's victims. “Anne Frank’s Diary”—those loose notes written by a young girl forced to live in a garret in close quarters with many other people who were with her in hiding—this diary, a bit watered-down to make it theatrically acceptable, was skilfully dramatized by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. This play has a great deal of pathos con sordino. Even the most tragic moments, foreshadowing the inevitable doom, do not cry out loud. Time and distance are erased for these few people who spend years without dates and every day in waiting and fill it with the little joys as well as with the bickering which is unavoidable in such close quarters. There is much furtive beauty in the dawn of awakening as experienced by Anne Frank. It is probably the most tragic play of this season and it leaves you with bitterness in your heart, with pity and horror at belonging to the same species of man as those who killed Anne. But the play also fills you with courage and hope that this young girl may, after all, be right and that there is goodness in man.

A Theatrical Miracle

Not very far from such experience, though on another tragic plane and leading to much broader conclusions, lies Samuel Beckett’s “Waiting for Godot,” a play about nobody in particular except about everybody. In the center are two characters, two men who can neither live with each other nor leave each other. The nothingness they have in common ties them. They are battered and bewildered human beings with symbolic universality and chaplinesque overtones. Here is Everyman in disguise, waiting without hope of any final fulfillment, but he goes on hoping for the great dream to dawn without really knowing why he lives or what he dreams of. There are two more symbols: man, the intellect, reduced to a puppet, and the power that is in the shape of man who has what he needs and goes blind. There is, finally, the innocent boy, messenger of Godot, who does not know why Godot is so nice to him and beats his brother.

Five characters and no woman. Characteristically so. On the one hand, the author shows us man long after his sinful Fall where the woman has done what can no longer be undone; on the other hand, the appearance of a female character would, in such bare writing, involve the problem of love and propagation—two undeniable facts of life, two vital forces whose mere existence alone would refute the basic philosophy of the play, however unpleasant, weird and even revolting their connotations sometimes may be.

If we can overlook in such a basically philosophical play this one omission, we must admit that what is left is more than impressive. Samuel Beckett wrote a play without a plot which moves like a symphony, composed of the most ordinary words, to the heights of poetry. Hardly ever before have I seen a stage, almost bare and most of the time commanded by only two people, so full of life, of living experience, and yet absorbingly elusive in its meaning and movements. However, if you have eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart to feel, they cast a strange and powerful spell over you.

Some people may say the whole thing is a hoax. I am inclined to think that it is a rare theatrical miracle, composed of contrasts, of reality obscured, of the irrational made limpid; and while emerging from nowhere and going nowhere it throws its devastating message with loud laughter into our lap.
In the job which I am called upon to do as a director of a college theatre, I make certain assumptions, among them the following:

1. That the theatre is an art form and, as such, attempts to give meaning to life through the emotions and the reason by utilizing all of the elements of art and presenting them within a rational framework.

2. That there is no theatre without an audience and that, in order to have an audience, the theatre must be entertaining. (I take “entertaining” to mean “engaging the attention” rather than merely “amusing.”)

3. That the productions of the theatre must be directed toward perfection—nothing less—and that perfection or any approximation of it is the product of ability, discipline, specific training in one’s role and medium, and an infinite amount of hard work.

4. That at the center of every production stands the director, for whom anything short of a complete knowledge of the theory and practice of the theatre is a handicap.

With these assumptions clearly stated, I should like now to set down my views of the nature and function of the college theatre and of the director’s job in this particular form of the theatre.

I. The Selection of the Play.

The college theatre has three obligations: 1) to provide entertainment for the students and the public in general, 2) to present the best in classic and contemporary drama as a part of the cultural heritage and development of both spectator and performer, and 3) to provide suitable plays as learning vehicles for acting, stagecraft, costuming, lighting, and the other technical aspects of production. In the selection of a play these factors should serve as a guide.

As for entertainment, this must be thought of in its highest sense. For example, Getting Gertie’s Garter may be more “entertaining” to some than Murder in the Cathedral, but there should be little hesitation in selecting the one rather than the other for college theatre presentation. We in the college theatre have a further obligation: to build a discriminating theatre audience. What the public thinks is the most entertaining type of play is not the criterion. The idea is to do Murder in the Cathedral so it will truly entertain the audience—a difficult job, but not impossible.

Speaking to the second point, I feel strongly that it is the duty of the college theatre, as an educational institution, to produce the great dramas of the past which cannot be or are not being produced by the professional theatre. Part of any liberal arts education is developing and creating an awareness of our cultural heritage. The theatre plays a most important part in this phase of education. One should also be exposed to the best in contemporary drama; so this, too, is a consideration in the choice of a play. I am always somewhat disturbed when a college theatre has John Loves Mary, Junior Miss, Yes, My Darling Daughter, or similar shows on its season’s bill. While these have been commercial successes, I fail to see how they can be justified for production in a college theatre. Comedy, to be sure, has a definite place in the college theatre, but it seems to me that this theatre should look for plays with literary or historic merit rather than merely looking for Broadway successes.

The selection of a play must be determined, to some extent, by the technical courses being offered in the college department, and also by the previous season’s offerings. If courses in costume are offered and only modern plays are produced, then the students have no “workshop” where they may obtain practical experience in the design and construction of stage costumes. The same point applies to stage design and construction. A one-set, contemporary show is fine, but to confine one’s learning in stagecraft to this alone is not fair to the student. Historical periods and styles of production must be varied enough to give the student of dramatic art a chance to put what he has learned in the classroom into actual practice.

The availability of crew personnel, the size of the theatre, stage, off-stage area, and workshop, the mechanical equipment, and the budget are a few other very real items which must be considered in the selection of a play. One simply cannot do Cyrano on a stage 14 feet wide and 12 feet deep, or without very large costume and stage crews, and an adequate budget. There are countless examples with which one can illustrate these limiting factors. The budget consideration, however, is not nearly as formidable as it sounds. When one is forced to invent ways of doing things because the conventional method is too expensive, the outcome is often more original and exciting and artistic than if there had been an unlimited budget.

Another consideration must be the number and quality of actors who may be expected to take part in the theatre’s activities. I do not believe in out-and-out precasting, but, to my way of thinking, it would be foolish to decide to do Medea unless one saw a possible
Medea among the student-actors. With six actors and fifteen actresses available, Richard III would be out of the question. The director must see a potential cast when he decides to do any play.

All these items having been duly considered, a play is then chosen. The perfect play fulfills all the above requirements. It has “perfect” meaning, perfect for the college theatre. It is desirable but not absolutely necessary, I believe, that the director choose the play he is to direct. If a director is very enthusiastic about the play, chances are it will be a better show than if his reaction is passive. Nevertheless, a good director with integrity will not do a bad job on any show simply because he is not tremendously excited about it. He must, however, want to direct. A passive attitude toward the theatre or toward directing will most certainly be reflected in his production.

II. Pre-casting Duties.

The first job for the director before he begins to think about casting is to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the play. The outcome must be a thorough understanding of what the author is trying to accomplish and a general idea of the way in which this can be transferred into visual and auditory terms. The director should be able, in not more than three sentences, to say: “This is a play about... who... etc.” The core, central idea, main conflict, or whatever designation one may wish to use, must be expressed in terms of the protagonist and specific happenings in the play, not in vague generalities. Style is another important decision, involving as it does both the style of the play and that of the production. Many times this is quite obvious, but the director must be able to verbalize his ideas on this point.

The characters as individuals in relationship to others, and as they are related to the play, should be carefully investigated by the director before casting. Failure to do this or the inability to express these ideas can make casting next to impossible.

It has been my practice in the past to design my own sets and costumes. This assures the director of having what he wants and of knowing exactly with what he has to work. The concept of a unified production, which is a paramount factor in the twentieth century theatre, makes a knowledge of the technical aspects of theatre obligatory for the director. If he does not actually design and supervise the construction of sets, costumes, and lights, he must at least know what he wants. Perhaps more important, he must know what he does not want. The matter of verbalization of ideas, a prime requisite in any director, is as vital in this area as in those previously mentioned. When there are separate departments handling scenery, costumes, lighting, and props, I feel it is a wise plan to have weekly production meetings where the general

and specific aspects of the play are discussed and where various ideas are integrated into a unified and artistic presentation. Points of disagreement should certainly be discussed pro and con, but the final judge in all matters pertaining to the play must be the director. If an original script is being done, the playwright will surely be in on the meetings, and matters of interpretation will be discussed with him. Still, the director's decisions must be the final word. All too often the playwright cannot see the best points of his own play, much less the weaknesses. There is no need to have the production details worked out before casting, but I do believe work should begin on this phase as soon as the play has been selected. A ground plan is certainly essential before the first rehearsal.

III. Casting.

I prefer the tryouts held as a group to those using the interview technique. When there is a difficult casting problem, both methods may be employed.

At best, tryouts are a gamble and one can never be completely sure of getting what he thinks he is getting. It is a constant surprise how many really fine actors cannot read a simple sentence with feeling during tryouts or, on the other hand, how many good tryout interpretations never progress beyond this initial point. What I usually look for is a certain vocal quality which fits the character, a spirit or vivaciousness which will carry to the audience, an ability to take suggestions and change, and a degree of intelligence. Of course, any definite physical attributes which the part calls for must also be considered. When the initial readings are finished, certain persons are called back for another hearing. Just how long this continues depends upon the size of the cast, the quality of the tryouts, and the number of people to be heard. When finally the choices have been made, it is necessary to set a rehearsal schedule. I like at least four full rehearsal weeks or longer, particularly if the show is a classic or has more than three acts. All casting is done with the stipulation that nothing is final until the curtain goes up on the performance.

IV. Rehearsal Procedure.

Usually while tryouts are being held the director is also engaged in “homework” preparing his script for the actual rehearsals. For me, this consists of dividing each scene and act into small units which contain a single main idea or objective. This particular technique of dividing the script into units and objectives works very well as a study and rehearsal device.

In reading and re-reading the play certain scenes block themselves or form their own movement pattern. I tend to visualize strongly the climactic or otherwise important scenes. I never sit down and move chess-
men to work out the blocking, nor do I make diagrams and a preconceived prompt book for the entire show where all movement is on paper. The great majority of my blocking is done on the stage and is subject to change by either the actors or myself until about two weeks before the performance, when everything should be set. I feel it is helpful to have the actors try things out and add their ideas to those already expressed by the director. The actor should feel natural and comfortable in his stage position and movements, and the director should comply with the actor's feelings regarding the blocking whenever possible. My chief concern with blocking is never with the conscious formation of beautiful stage pictures, but rather with dramatic values, character relationships, and a sense of style or "rightness" for this character in this scene in this play.

The first two rehearsals, at least, I like to devote to reading the play through and discussing the individual characters, their peculiarities, drives, desires, and the like. Giving background material, especially if the play is a period piece, is often helpful. I usually tell my actors that up until the second week before the performance the creation of their character rests with them and that I will give only general suggestions and criticisms of their ideas. They are free to try anything: what is good I ask them to keep, and for what is not right I ask them to find something else. When their initial creative period is at an end, or when things are not progressing as rapidly as I feel they should, or when the actor is completely on the wrong track, then I step in with specific directions regarding interpretation, gestures, business, and the like. With amateur actors I feel it is impossible to wait longer than two weeks before the opening for their characterization to "jell." It is just as important, if not more so, to give the actors a chance to develop and create a character using their own faculties rather than to have one, complete with voice and gestures, super-imposed upon them.

The rehearsal schedule is a variable thing changing with each play and depending upon the amount of time one has for rehearsals. After the two days or more devoted to discussion of the play, the reading of it for story and character value, and an explanation of my ideas concerning style of production, general interpretation, and the environment for the setting, I am ready to begin blocking. This first blocking usually takes about six days. An act is blocked one day and repeated the next. Interpretation of character is not stressed at this time except in talking with the actors individually. The first week belongs chiefly to me. One of the most important extra-play jobs of the director at this time is to get to know the actors, how they react to direction, which approach is most effective, and the personal problems or idiosyncrasies on which work must be done. My approach to an actor is based on his experience, age, intelligence, and talent.

Each one is an individual and there is no pat formula which a director can apply to actors in general. I believe there is a time for reasoning, a time for inspiring (most of the time), a time for demanding and a time for pleading, a time for gentleness and a time for harshness, a time for sincerity and a time for sarcasm; there must be much softness and a little loudness, much bringing out and a little driving in; in short, the technique includes almost every possible approach. It is unwise to set a routine of when and how these should be used, but I tend to follow a general pattern: the first two weeks I use reason, inspiration, softness, and encouragement; the third week loudness, driving in, harshness, and insistence; the final week a combination of these with pleading, much demanding, and much encouragement being foremost. The first dress rehearsal is quiet and gentle; second dress is demanding and harsh; final dress is encouraging, inspiring, sarcastic when necessary to make a point, but on the whole positive and optimistic. Needless to say, no rehearsal schedule ever follows this pattern precisely, but it does give some indication of ups and downs. I do feel that it is psychologically vital for the director to explode sometime, provided it is not done in anger on the spur of the moment. The explosive evening should be followed by a quiet, calm, intense evening.

During the second week of rehearsal I like to concentrate on motivation of action and the encouragement of the actor's own work on his character. He should get to know the play in detail, and work to fulfill the objectives in his units. By the end of the second week lines should be learned and the characterization should be roughly recognizable.

I deal with pushing the character toward my conception during the third week. This is a very trying, intense period. It is here that I begin giving the actors definite movements, timing, precise interpretations, and begin emphasizing intensity of emotions. By the end of this week the blocking, lines, characterizations, and emotional values should be in practically the final form.

Polishing begins the fourth week. I am concerned now largely with pacing, rhythm, continuity, building of climaxes, the nuances of timing and interpretation, and bringing the show to performance level. Rehearsals consist of complete run-throughs with as much of the set and as many of the props as possible. Besides the general rehearsal periods, I like to work with the individual members of the cast and on special problem scenes. The pieces must begin to fall into place during this last week.

If possible I prefer to end the four weeks on a Saturday, have Sunday free, and then go into technical dress on Monday. This rehearsal is given over to the mechanics of the performance—lights, props, scene shifts, costumes, music, etc. It is usually extremely trying and consequently little pressure is exerted on the actors. Tuesday's rehearsal is devoted to smoothing out the
difficulties encountered by the actors the night before, last minute work on difficult scenes, and correcting technical problems. Scenery, props, and lighting should be used; no costumes or make-up, unless involved in significant business, are necessary.

Wednesday’s dress rehearsal is complete and pressure is applied in no uncertain terms where necessary. A straight run-through with notes at the end of each scene is my aim; but if things get too far off, the performance must be interrupted. This is the director’s last chance to get things set. No large changes should be attempted, but the cast must be pushed to the farthest point.

The final dress rehearsal is in reality a pre-performance. I like to have a small, selected audience on hand and the show must run without interruption unless something catastrophic occurs. If a scene or an act is too horrible, it should be repeated after the entire play has been completed. I believe the director must end his actual association with the cast on an encouraging, optimistic note, even if he has misgivings about the show—as is usually the case. The cast should be congratulated, thanked, reassured, and encouraged to rest the following day.

On opening night I make it a point to be at the theatre especially early in order to check the stage, confer with the stage manager and technical director, and reassure myself that all is in readiness. Then each actor, no matter how small his role, is spoken to and given some personal encouragement, compliment, admonition of a pleasant kind, and anything else which will bolster confidence. It has been my custom to stay backstage during the actual performance and to personally oversee the costuming, make-up, and scene shifts. In recent years, however, I have forced myself to watch the play from the rear of the theatre. This is like watching the birth of your own child, thrilling but utter torture.

Before successive performances the cast receives a pep-talk and admonitions not to let the performance level fall. Actors who have been given bad notices in the papers need special attention along this line.

A few final thoughts come to mind: 1.) if it is a period show I like the girls to have long practice skirts of the style required as soon as possible; 2.) the men should also have any unusual items of dress which require special handling as soon as possible; 3.) levels, stairs, ramps, and the like, should be used from about the second week; 4.) substitute props need to appear about the end of the second week; 5.) rehearsals should last no longer than three hours—except where special problems occur such as in technical rehearsal or shows with extremely large casts; 6.) rehearsals should have an element of fun occasionally, but discipline must be maintained; 7.) visitors, as long as they are out of the way and very quiet, do not bother me at all—they may, however, disturb the cast; 8.) and finally, the director must remember: “This, too, will pass away.”

In Defense of Players, Wisely Veiled

By PATRICIA KRIEGER

Group 20 Theatre-on-the-Green
Wellesley, Mass.

The woman in the blue shantunged suit with shoes to match wagged the lady finger and her own as she crowed, “I told you that none of them would dare to show their faces after being part of that shameful spectacle. Can you imagine any decent person wearing those kind of costumes? No morals at all—that’s what’s wrong with these acting people!”

The “shameful spectacle” was Walpurgis Nacht and it was meant to be just that within the three walls of the play and the four provided by the mind’s eye, as testified by my wearing my first act beggar’s burlap over the pink appropriately-shaded and red-scarfed leotards which represented a naked witch, wisely veiled. I left the patio and leaned up against the light shack. In a wash of moonlight the outdoor set was Gothic arches and fifteen foot platforms and no longer home of Dr. Faust and Mephistopheles and the revelers. It was now almost clearly a composite of bleached muslin and rubber base paint and five-by-threes, as the acting company was a collection of people with ideals and dreams and idiosyncrasies and foibles.

How strange it seems that theater-goers and more often those who stay at home accept the early American adage that actors are “wrong-uns.” It is true that Maxwell Anderson has said that Art is Beauty, that it is an Absolute, that if we but give ourselves and our being to the Theater, she will make us men—great men. But is Art an Absolute? Or is not Art, like everything else finite, in itself a multitude of things and subject to changeableness and corruption? David Belasco understood this. He writes:

One of the wisest of dramatic critics—perhaps the one who was not only a master of the art of criticism but who also had mastered the mechanism of Acting wrote: “Behind the artist always stands the individual.” It is a simple but significant truth. What the artist does—and ultimately,
the manner and effect of its doing—always will be determined by what, essentially, the individual is.

Kierkegaard, progenitor of Christian existentialism, writes about the "individual"—the solitary individual. Translator Douglas Steere tells us that Kierkegaard means the individual as separated from the rest, the individual as he would be if he were solitary and alone, face to face with his destiny, with his vocation, with the Eternal, with God himself who had singled him out.

This isolation of man from men, this separation of man from the masses and the realization of himself as an individual alone before God is the one thing that matters. Man's ultimate goal is salvation. Therefore, the individual in essence—the soul—is its own highest end and aim. Kierkegaard maintains, "Purity of heart is to will one thing." He asks the Christian, "In your occupation, what is your attitude of mind? And how do you carry out your occupation?" The end of life is God, and man's reunion with God. The means of life is man's occupation, man's vocation, man's calling. The Danish philosopher continues:

What means do you use to carry out your occupation? Are the means as important to you as the end, wholly as important? Otherwise it is impossible for you to will only one thing, for in that case the irresponsible, the frivolous, the self-seeking, and the heterogeneous means would flow in between in confusing and corrupting fashion. Eternally speaking, there is only one end: the means and the end are one and the same thing. There is only one end: the genuine good; and only one means: this, to be willing only to use those means which genuinely are good—but the genuine good is precisely the end. In time and on earth one distinguishes between the two and considers that the end is more important than the means. One thinks that the end is the main thing and demands of one who is striving that he reach the end. He need not be so particular about the means. Yet this is not so. ... Without exception, man is eternally responsible for the kind of means he uses.

Hence, morality—the principles of right and wrong as determined by our relationship to our God of creation, redemption, and sanctification. Man evolves by moral striving. The individual is eternally obligated to attempt to be a Christian every breathing moment of his life.

Christian man—man who realizes that ultimately he is a solitary individual answerable to God—may find his calling in being an actor-artist. Acting is then but his means to the eternal end. In his life of art—the interpretation of reality through the medium of sensuous forms—he is first an individual belonging to his Maker, and then an artist.

Only in the knowledge that we are men of God can we hope to make this craft an art. Arthur Symons, in his *Studies in the Seven Arts*, writes about Mme. Eleonora Duse:

The reason why Duse is the greatest actress in the world is that she has a more subtle nature than any other actress, and that she expresses her nature more simply.... Other actresses seemed to have heaped up into one great fictitious moment all the scattered energies of their lives, the passions that have come to nothing, the sensations that have withered before they flowered, the thoughts that have never quite been born. The stage is their life; they live only for those three hours of the night; before and after are the intervals between acts. But to Duse those three hours are the interval in an intense, consistent, strictly personal life; and, the interval over, she returns to herself, as after an interruption. ...It is a disturbance, not an end in itself. ... Duse's art, in this, like the art of Verlaine in French poetry; always suggestion, never statement, always a renunciation. It comes into the movement of all the arts, as they seek to escape from the bondage of form, by a new, finer mastery of form, wrought outwards from within, not from without inwards.

Therein lies the secret of what an actor is and of what an actor tries to be. This conflict of actor-artist is the conflict of man. Only by becoming a Christian who works with his hands in the world of his calling and waits with his heart for the world of Eternity, can man and man the actor-artist come to know his God-given gifts of creation. Art is then more than an interpretation of reality; it is in essence as Jacques Maritain reminds us:

... The ardent desire, the earnest prayer of the mind, taken in its pure state, to beget a living creature in its own likeness.
The imitators are the curse of the artist. A genius for handling light and color arises so rarely that he is immediately followed by a host of those whose dreams are all black and white and whose imagination is all dull and gray. Some years ago, when faced by the problem of a semi-circular window, in a most conspicuous spot in the Lutheran Building in Saint Louis, we had the chance to work with and watch Siegfried Reinhard develop a stained glass masterpiece which is worth a trip to Saint Louis alone.

Glass is a strange and wonderful medium for the true artist. In fact, the field of stained glass work today carries the highest highs and the lowest lows artistically. Discriminating taste is rarely found in Building Committees and is still more rarely spent on closing up the openings which we call windows. Architecture, in some of its earlier modern forms, felt that color in glass was a work of the dreaded traditionalist and so completely avoided it that we reverted to the Meeting House coldness and hardness again. The better men in the profession have made a cautious turn back asking only for a truly sensitive hand and heart to have respect for line and function. This is where a great and good craft finds itself today. Always a pioneer in truly impressionistic presentation, the stained glass artist now has a chance to rescue his craft from the fetters of good forms, copied and recopied over the centuries, and bring back light and glory to the new architecture.

The window reproduced here is semi-circular in form and rests happily above a completely uneclesiastical, but functional, revolving door. You see about one third of the window from any approach which gives you an interesting sense of vistas and depths which are very gratifying. No structural lines on the great window were touched; they were simply and honestly incorporated in the composition.

The basis for the design was “The Second Advent.” Christ, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is shown above the world, with sun and moon and stars about His feet. Familiar symbols meet the eye as you separate them into units. On the right side is the angel of revelation holding the Open Bible which has proclaimed Christ as the Alpha and Omega from the beginning. On the left side is the angel of judgment with a tremendous sword in his hand. These are not the weak and sweetly feminine angels of the Christmas Card but the mighty leaders of the legions of heaven.

Around them, on the outer right and left, are the figures symbolic of the races of man—the red man, the yellow man, the black man and the white man. All have turned their backs on their idols, occupations, and distractions, to face prayerfully toward Him Who comes again. Around the edge of the window run the reminders of the Seven Advent Antiphons with which the Church welcomes her Lord.

Fully as significant and interesting as the general plan and design of the window and its symbolism is the glory of its color. Everything that is color at all has been brought into a subtle blend and has been muted down or brought up like a trumpet call until the window literally sings the centuries old “Veni, Veni, Emanuel.” The richness of the kingly robes is rippled by the winds. The wings of the angels are like great rocky cliffs to make you feel secure in their care. The details of the native dress of the races of men are so rich and yet so restrained that you are sure of them even while you scarcely notice them. The lead lines add a pattern all their own to make a background that conveys some of the thought of fear and confusion that will attend the day of the Saviour’s Second Coming. Even the shadings of the back-ground, difficult to discern in a mere black and white reproduction, help give a setting to the main figures as well as carry a significance of their own.

“It is as though the sun were shining through a star, As though a star could cast its beam through gold Or I could see the glory of Da Vinci’s world Through his discerning eye ................”

YOUR COOPERATION, PLEASE

In the process of constructing our new mailing list, it has been impossible to avoid some duplication of names. The circulation manager therefore requests subscribers who are receiving more than one copy of the CRESSEY to inform us so that we may correct our files.

Changes of address should be sent to us at least a month in advance so as to ensure uninterrupted delivery of the CRESSEY.
From the Chapel

“A Pattern of Timeless Moments”

By Martin H. Schaefer
Assistant Professor of History
Valparaiso University

Let us now praise famous men; and our fathers that begat us.
The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning.
Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies,
Leaders of the people by their counsels and by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions,
Such as found out musical tunes and recited verses in writing,
Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations.
All these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times.

—Ecclesiasticus 44: 1 - 7

On the twelfth of this month, four hundred sixty-four years ago, Columbus discovered America. This sentence, “Columbus discovered America,” and the year, “1492,” are so familiar as to begin to carry little meaning, or none at all. Not only that, the fact that every schoolboy has memorized the event and the date gives the phrase, “1492—Columbus discovered America,” a flavor of slight whimsey. It is a bit funny, every young generation learning by rote, “1492, Columbus discovered America” and all the while we know that Columbus was not looking for America and did not believe in its existence when he had found it. There was something “comic opera” about it all. But we agree: the fact that our nation exists is traceable to the discovery of this continent. And we generously wish that full regard be given its discoverer. So Columbus, his ships, and his first voyage have naturally found a foremost place in our cultivated national memories.

But the formal recognition, the slight boredom, the faint amusement associated with Columbus and his achievement often give rise to deeper reflection. There are twinges of conscience, touches of shame at being so superficial or so cavalier with the memory of the man. That is as it should be. Behind self-questioning and a desire to feel genuine respect, there is a principle of human dignity involved. We need, we feel, to give full credit to every man as a being like ourselves, whatever his time, wherever he lived. We sense a truth, indeed, that ought to be more consistently applied, in our dealings with our neighbors and contemporaries, to be sure, but also in the attitudes with which we take notice of the past.

We call the past “history.” Therein we often err. For, as it is generally conceived, there is no such thing as “history.” What we usually mean by the term is a process that has led to us—a drama of achievement in forms of government, in types of social structure, in economic change—all of which has had one supreme goal, to reach the present, to arrive, with more or less of triumph, at ourselves. But that is all false. There has simply been this: With the passage of much time (which we try to designate chronologically), human beings have lived on this earth. They were born, they lived their span of life, and then died. Each generation of them gave birth to another. And yet each life, each generation, was sufficient unto itself. It existed, because God desired its existence, in order that it might inherit eternal life. Each was to experience the joys and the deep sorrows of mortal life and to have an opportunity to seize the saving promise of the Redeemer.

None would be a climax to a previous generation, none should be a bridge or stepping-stone to another that should follow.

“Every epoch,” as von Ranke said, “is immediate to God.”—We do violence to God’s intent and an injustice to our fellow men who have lived before us if we refer to them as “history” and mean thereby a mere process that culminates in our time. We should extend our respect for our fellows, a respect justified by our Lord’s resurrection, to those who no more walk the face of the earth. For they were prime objects of God’s concern. We must assume that they were like us and think of them and judge them as we do ourselves.

The point is not academic. More of our attitudes than we realize involve the past. The past begins with us, with our parents, with our elders in general. The latter are most noticeably already partly behind us, of the past. But we have no right to consider them as mere means that were instrumental in our attaining the present and our moving on into the future. We owe them an imaginative respect that sees them fully as ourselves and not one whit less important before God. And when occasion presents itself, we must ap-
ply this respect to the men and women of the broader and more distant past. That belongs, as a colleague of mine has put it, to the "integrity of Christian personality." It is not merely a matter of "split personality" to honor the present and hold the past in contempt. Respect for the full humanity of both the immediate and remote past enhances our integrity in the present.

But what, then, shall we make of "history" as the recital of "economic forces," "constitutional development," "emergence of the proletariat," "age of imperialism," and so on? Not for a moment should we neglect that kind of history. To do so would be to admit an intellectual sloth and poverty. For we cannot appreciate man of past or present unless we understand the complex conditions and relationships that qualify his action. As a utilitarian device, "history" which takes cognizance of such things does exist. Perhaps, indeed, it must comprise the chief content of all study of the past. But we must never forget that that is not its substance or end. These can only be found in man as an individual, as a priceless single soul before God—whose successes, trials, and many failures as a mortal we would do well to share for the broadening and deepening of our own Christian comprehension.

"History" is a term which we must, no doubt, continue to use. But, if we must, let us think of it in terms of T. S. Eliot’s definition: "History is a pattern of timeless moments." All time is, paradoxically, eternal. The moment in the past, the moment in the present are much the same. For each exists under the aspect of eternal grace.

What is, then, this Word that bestows such high grace, and how shall I use it? Answer: It is nothing other than the actual preaching of Christ as it is contained in the Gospel. The purpose of this preaching is that you should hear your God speaking to you, telling how all your life and works are nothing before God and how you and all that is in you would perish eternally. If you truly believe how sinful you are, you will despair of yourself entirely and confess that the words of the prophet Hosea are the truth: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help" (Hosea xii. 9). But in order that you may be saved from yourself and out of yourself—that is, out of ruin He presents to you His dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ and bids you, through His living and comforting Word, yield yourself to Him with a cheerful heart. For the sake of such faith all your sins will be forgiven, your ruin overcome, and you will be just and true, content and devout, fulfilling all His commandments, and set free from all things.

—Martin Luther, On the Freedom of a Christian (1520)

Letter from Xanadu, Nebr.

By G. G.

Dear Editor:

I’ve just gotten back from a two-and-a-half-hour session with Rev. Zeitgeist and I’m so burned up I can hardly write.

To fill you in a little on the background, our Men’s Club has decided to take as our project this year the sponsoring of an all-Lutheran pinochle tournament here in Nebraska. We had it all organized and Zeitgeist was in on all of the planning but now, all of a sudden, he gets cold feet and wants us to call it off.

I tried to pin him down on just what his objections are, but the most he would say is that it might not look good if we started crossing denominational lines this way. He is afraid that it might set a precedent for activities which might be organized in the future by groups in the other synods and he’s afraid that the whole thing might be understood.

Now I will admit that he has a point there, and if he had brought it up right at the beginning we probably wouldn’t have gone ahead with the idea. But we’ve already put a lot of money into this thing what with postage and prizes and all and it seems to me that it would be better to go ahead and take our chances on trouble than to back out and write off our investment.

Anyway, I don’t see how a little friendly pinochle is going to hurt anybody. We’re not going to open the sessions with prayer and we don’t have to conduct them on church property if that is going to embarrass anybody. As for the possibility that they might end up in arguments on doctrinal differences, I have never yet known a bunch of pinochle players to talk about anything at the table except their rotten luck and the mistakes of their partners.

Of course, I am just blowing my top to you. I know as well as you do that if Zeitgeist says No, it’s going to be No. But doggone it, he could have saved us a lot of trouble and expense if he had done his thinking six weeks ago instead of dropping this bombshell on us now.

And then he talks about stewardship!

G. G.
Memorable Performances of Great Music

BY WALTER A. HANSEN

New recordings have been descending upon me thick and fast. Some of them bring into one's home memorable performances of the world's greatest music.

In my leisure moments I have been restudying Mozart's Requiem (K. 626), one of the most uplifting compositions ever written. Mozart's workmanship is literally breath-taking. Shall one say that he was far ahead of his time when he wrote the Requiem and many other works? Certainly. But such a statement, true though it is, does not do full justice to Mozart's awe-inspiring genius; for the Requiem and other compositions represent a manner of expression which the adjective "prophetic" does not even begin to describe with adequate pertinence. To me it is infinitely more important to realize and to state that the prophetically dumbfounding workmanship exemplified in Mozart's Requiem and in many other compositions from this mighty master's pen is of such a nature that it is bound to retain perpetually all its potency, all its pointedness, and, shall I say, all its magic. I am sure that Mozart's Requiem is a timeless masterpiece.

I myself have never head a more stirring—nor a more truthful—performance of this great work than the one presented by the Choir of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra with the following soloists: Irmgard Seefried, soprano; Gertrude Pitzinger, alto; Richard Holm, tenor; and Kim Borg, bass (Decca—Archive Production 3018 and 3049). Eugen Jochum is the conductor. This recording was made in Vienna on December 2, 1955, in St. Stephen's Cathedral on the occasion of a memorial service held on the anniversary of Mozart's death. The fact that those parts of the Missa Quotidiana pro Defunctis which Mozart did not include in his setting are chanted in connection with the performance makes this disc-presentation particularly engrossing. The celebrant is Domcurat Monsignor Penall. At the beginning Alois Forer plays an organ prelude; at the conclusion he plays a postlude.

Besides, you hear the famous chime of the Pummerin.

I recommend with wholehearted enthusiasm another new release in the epoch-making Archive Production, recorded by the Deutsche Gramophongesellschaft and issued in this country by Decca (ARC-3045, 3046, 3047). This is a memorable performance of Johann Sebastian Bach's St. John Passion by the Thomanerchor and the Gewandhausorchester of Leipzig with the following soloists: Agnes Giebel, soprano; Marga Hoeffgen, alto; Ernst Haefliger, tenor, as the evangelist; Franz Kelch, bass, as Jesus; and Hans-Olaf Hudemann, bass, as Peter and Pilate. Guenther Ramin is the conductor. Students of music should put forth every effort either to own or to hear this deeply moving performance of Bach's St. John Passion, which, like Mozart's Requiem, is both prophetic and timeless.

In many respects Joseph Haydn's The Creation is different from the two masterpieces I have mentioned. But do not overlook the fact that it, too, is a masterpiece. Haydn's The Creation abounds in writing that is vividly and strikingly picturesque. Like Mozart's Requiem and Bach's St. John Passion, it contains many examples of musical symbolism. In my opinion it is an infinitely greater work than Felix Mendelssohn's popular Elijah.

I am sure that you will become keenly aware of all the stirring beauty of Haydn's The Creation when you listen to a performance by the Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Igor Markevitch. The soloists are Irmgard Seefried, soprano, as Gabriel and Eve; Richard Holm, tenor, as Uriel; and Kim Borg, bass, as Raphael and Adam (Decca DX-138, two discs, boxed). The work is sung in German.

RECENT RECORDINGS

David Oistrakh, the phenomenally brilliant Soviet violinist, with Lev Oborin and Vladimir Yampolsky at the piano, plays Beethoven's Sonata No. 10, in G. Major; Vitalii's Chaconne; and transcriptions of Hungarian Dance No. 11, in D Minor and Lullaby, by Brahms, and Mendelssohn's On Wings of Song (Columbia). — Igor Oistrakh, David's son, plays Mendelssohn's Concerto in E Minor and Wieniawski's Concerto No. 2, in D Minor with the Gewandhaus Chamber Orchestra of Leipzig under Franz Konwitschny (Decca). The son, I believe, may soon overtake the father in the matter of sensitive artistry.

Robert Casadesus plays Beethoven's Emperor Concerto with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York under Dimitri Mitropoulos (Columbia). This recording was made in Paris. Casadesus, whom I have interviewed more than once, is one of the great pianists of our time. — The Boston Symphony Orchestra, under Charles Munch, plays Beethoven's Leonore Overture Nos. 1, 2, and 3; the Fidelio Overture; and the Overture to Coriolanus. It is a boon to have all these overtures on one disc (RCA Victor). — The Philadelphia Orchestra, under Eugene Ormandy, plays Debussy's Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun and Nocturnes (Clouds, Festivals, Sirens) and Ravel's Daphnis and Chloe — Suite No. 2 (Columbia). Sorcery in the music; sorcery in the performances. — The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, under William Steinberg, plays Brahms' Symphony No. 1 with stirring eloquence and truthfulness (Capitol). — The Orchestra of the Paris Opera plays Paul Dukas' La Peri and The Sorcerer's Apprentice and Saint-Saëns' Omphale's Spinning Wheel. Robert Benedetti is the able conductor. — The London Symphony Orchestra, under Emanuel Young, plays Bizet's Symphony in C Major and Jeux d'Enfants (Capitol). I am always eager to lock horns with those who, for some strange and completely warped reason, deny that Bizet was a great master.
REVIEW
EPISODE TO THE SKEPTICS
By David Wesley Soper (Association Press, $2.50)

Many keen observers have commented that there is very little difference between virtue and vice. Given a moment's time, a new situation, a flip of the mind or emotion, a commendable virtue becomes a contemptible vice. Good eating becomes gluttony; a social drink becomes drunkenness; devoted research becomes intellectual snobbery; Christian humility becomes pharisaical pride.

This truth is pointedly applicable to the volume here under review. For skepticism, according to philosophy Professor Soper of Beloit College, is a most desirable virtue.

There can be no doubt that he states his case lucidly and brilliantly. But he becomes so intrigued and excited over its value that ultimately, so it appears to this reviewer, he turns it into a vice.

The arrangement of the book is most appealing, particularly to people who are accustomed to listening to Sunday morning sermonic presentations. His text is the biographical data of his own religious development. There are the familiar three parts, pre-skeptical religion, pre-skeptical irreligion, and post-skeptical faith. Each has its penetrating and illuminating application to the life and thought of contemporary man. His basic theme, worked and re-worked in many interesting ways, is “skepticism is neither more nor less than man’s necessary effort to distinguish between sense and nonsense in every dimension of his world.”

There can be no denying the fact that this is a most necessary assertion for modern humanity. In this age of conformity and mediocrity, where we have more knowledge and yet more ignorance, more involvement in life and yet are closer to death, there skepticism and critical investigation are vitally necessary. Necessary are they not only in journalism, politics, courtship, but also in the too frequently isolated concern for religion. Even though devoted Christians may be reluctant to admit it, Soper is right when he states, “...what one thinks is true and what is true are not identical.” The Scriptures do assert, as Soper points out, that we are to “prove all things; hold fast to that which is good”; that we are to “try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” An intellectually mature faith invariably is preceded by honest doubt and critical investigation. Luther phrased it this way: “Prayer, meditation, and temptation (doubt) make a theologian.” “God is not afraid of human thought,” comments the Beloit professor. Therefore, nor ought we, his children, be. Fearless invasion of all human thought means critical investigation, skepticism, and even doubt. Rightly understood, “skepticism is the ally of faith.” It is a virtue.

But this virtue of skepticism seems to become a vice in the hands of philosopher Soper. “Skepticism is always faith’s necessary ally,” he says. But is skepticism always necessary? Must doubt always be present? Is there not a divinely given, Spirit-produced certainty of faith which surpasses all human understanding? Does not the Apostle Paul, who speaks of proving the spirits, more frequently engage in such exclamation as “I know” and “I am persuaded”? As a matter of fact, while the New Testament has references to “trying” and “proving,” its vastly more numerous references and its whole atmosphere embrace the certainty of faith. The vast majority of devoted Christians hold this certainty without too much criticism and skepticism. While Christian intellectuals may constantly press for a more critical understanding of the Faith, they cannot deny without being guilty of intellectual snobbery that the faith of innocency, of uncritical simplicity, can still be faith which produces the vibrant resurrected life.

Philosopher Soper has made a significant contribution to the understanding of the Christian personality, particularly in the area of its theological development. While he presses his skepticism too far, his presentation is thought-provoking and ought be read and pondered especially by conservative Lutherans.

EREHARDT P. WEBER

SERMONS ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE
Edited by John C. Wynn (Abingdon $2.75)

This is a collection of sixteen sermons selected as the best from almost four hundred that were submitted to a special committee of the Joint Department of Family Life in the National Council of Churches. The table of contents includes such notables in their profession as Halford E. Luccock, George A. Buttrick, John A. Redhead, Jr., W. Norman Pittenger, and Harold L. Lunger. The editor, in his selecting, did a remarkably thorough piece of work in covering the many facets of marriage and family life.

If the reader approaches the work with the hope of gaining somewhat of an expository insight into what Scripture has to say on the matter of marriage and family life, or if he is looking for homiletical gems, he will be disappointed. Since the authors, almost without exception, wield a facile pen the reading is pleasant, informative, and in spots, inspirational. One sermon entitled “A Christian Understanding Of Sex,” written by Harry H. Kruener, is worthy of special mention. He handles a delicate subject with unusual skill, keeping it at the same time within the framework of Holy Scripture and the discipline of accepted sermonic practice.

OTTO W. TOELKE

POLITICS, AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE

By Paul Simon (Moody Press)

We live in an age in which a vast number of society’s problems and opportunities must be confronted and addressed by the people through their governments. In a democracy, government is simply the body of elected and appointed persons who exercise authority, enact legislation, and administer law for the people. Politics is the management of affairs of public policy, and in the United States this management is exercised through political parties.

Christians are citizens of God’s city and of the nation in which they live, the state. Since both church and state are established by God, Christians are responsible members of both and owe service to both. Though church and state are distinct, each with its own sphere of activities and unique functions to perform, they cannot be utterly separated. For the same person who is individually a member of the church is also individually a member of the state.

Paul Simon has rendered a distinct service to Christians and to the nation in writing this slender, popular book—a Moody-ette. As a state representative of the 47th district of Illinois he has had personal experience in the rough-and-tumble of politics and government. As a Christian he has caught the vision of service to man through good government and of the many opportunities there are for Christians to be influencing agents and to help our country remain loyal to its heritage and to its motto, “In God We Trust.” He recounts some of his own experiences as campaigner, representative, and newspaper editor.

Simon brings politics to the local level without partisan pleas. He makes it clear who can serve in politics, provides specific suggestions on how individual Christians can serve effectively through government even without holding public office, and tells of the many people who can be served...
and benefitted by good government. In consonance with the American and Protestant tradition, he appeals for political participation by every individual Christian, not by organized church bodies.

This is a forthright booklet on a topic that often has been neglected by Christians. It may be read in a very short time and with pleasure and profit by all Christian citizens. It is a fit booklet for study and discussion by youth and adult societies and educational groups of Christian congregations.

**ALL OF THE WOMEN OF THE BIBLE**

By Edith Deen (Harper, $4.75)

All of the Women of the Bible has been greeted as the first definitive study of every woman mentioned in the Old and New Testament. Indeed, Mrs. Deen not only includes 52 exhaustive biographies of the more famous women, but 125 shorter sketches of women named in the Bible and more than 125 sketches of nameless women.

The author has lavished careful scholarship on her singular project. The volume is admirably edited and indexed. One senses that she attempted to restrain impulses to editorialize about her women. Here she does not succeed. For all its other fine qualities, this book bears an air of Ladies Aid book reviews that intrudes upon its encyclopedic aspirations. As an example, Anna was “one of those who had time to enjoy all of God’s beauties, such as the stars that lighted the sky at night, the dawn that brocè in all its effulgent color over the Temple, and the setting sun as it dipped behind the tall spires shadowing the Temple’s rugged stone walls.”

As a matter of fact, All of the Women of the Bible would make a fine review for a Ladies Aid.

**FICTION**

**ZONE OF EMPTINESS**

By Hiroshi Noma (World, $3.95)

A barracks in the Osaka, Japan army camp is the zone of emptiness of the title, and its particular vacuity—the separation from all other society and the life completely out of contact with the outside world—will be familiar to anyone who has gone through the experience of being transformed from a civilian into a soldier. But the similarity ends there for the Japanese relied less on rigorous training than on sheer brutality.

This barracks is the background for the story of Kitani, who has just been reinstated in the Army in 1945 after a two year prison sentence, and his honorable and philosophical friend, Soda. Kitani returns from prison broken and almost inarticulate from the sadistic treatment he has received and his mind can focus only on revenge for the officer who had him court-martialed unjustifiably and on a return to the geisha girl he thinks he loves. Before the inexorable Army pressure overcomes him once more, Kitani partially succeeds in one of his goals.

Most of the conflict and action in this novel is mental as Kitani’s mind centered on revenge rejects Soda’s philosophical advice. But there is interest enough in this insight into Kitani’s strange and complex personality. This is the fifth novel for Hiroshi Noma, one of Japan’s “modern” writers, who must be writing partially from experience since he was drafted into the barracks at Osaka and then spent a tour of duty in the Philippines.

**AFTERNOON OF AN AUTOCRAT**

By Norah Lofts (Doubleday, $3.95)

This is the story of a family and a house in transition. The time is the turn of the century from the eighteenth to the nineteenth. The family is the Shelmadine family, one of those old families which still, at this late date, enjoyed essentially feudal privileges over the land and the people of their estate. The transition arises out of the succession of an heir to the old autocrat at a time when feudal England was gasping its last as enclosures broke the last ties between master and tenant.

Miss Lofts portrays, with the force derived from the application of a vivid imagination operating upon a sound base of factual knowledge, the complicated pattern of people and problems that characterized the pre-industrial English landscape. One gets from her novel a feeling for the anatomy of a truly organic society and an understanding that organic societies are as subject to the laws of change and death as are other organisms.

**HIGH IS THE WALL**

By Ruth Muirhead Berry (Muhlenberg, $3.50)

When Faith marries Neil she has few misgivings about signing a prenuptial contract which requires that she, a Protestant, raise her children in the Catholic Church. But as their family increases Faith comes to realize that she, too, had a religious heritage to pass on to her children, and the marriage becomes a tragedy.

The novel also is a tragedy. In the first place, using story form for a treatise on the misery of mixed marriages is a poor choice. The author has accumulated so much evidence against such unions that it does provide rather a complete survey of the subject. Yet just so many statistics can be crowded into two people’s lives before they become totally unreal.

Perhaps the main fault of the book is that the Protestantism that Mrs. Berry evokes is a chilly sort of stuff: the swelling of the heart over an old hymn, pride in freedom to think as one pleases. Nowhere is there any evidence that Faith accepts Christ as her Redeemer. And most astonishingly, she is—despite the fact that she tries so hard to see the Catholic viewpoint—continually repulsed by such institutions as baptism and parish schools, hardly the sole property of the Catholic Church.

Frankly, this book should not be put into the hands of young people considering an inter-faith marriage themselves. It may get them so riled up that they would elope promptly to spite the author.

**THE PROSECUTOR**

By Bernard Botein (Simon & Schuster, $3.50)

When John Peabody assumed the duties of district attorney of New York City, he was happy enough to appoint Ed Bailey to his staff. It was an opportunity to repay a debt of gratitude to Bailey’s father who had given him his start. Peabody knew that Bailey was a brilliant young lawyer with a promising future. He did not know that he was also a cold-blooded opportunist, lacking entirely in emotions and scruples. Bailey—competent, ambitious and clever—wanted to use the district attorney’s office as a ladder to a high elective office. Perverting the function of his office, he uses any means at his disposal to further his ends. By the time the overly indulgent Peabody realizes the dangerous implications of Bailey’s acts and decides to take a firm stand, Bailey has cleverly impaled him on the horns of a dilemma. Regardless of his choice, Peabody must seemingly come out as the vanquished and Bailey as the victor.

The author of this relatively short novel is a judge in one of New York’s appellate courts. His previous experience in the prosecutor’s office lends a tone of authenticity to his story. The book reads quite a bit like a lawyer’s brief. The language is straightforward, unembellished and designed to make a point quickly and clearly. There is literally no character development; there are no subplots; there is not the slightest deviation from the central theme. The approach is reminiscent of the documentary-type movie so popular a few years ago. Its application to literature is not particularly exciting. Judge Botein has injected a substantial amount of material explanatory of the different facets of criminal prosecution. This type of thing can do nothing other than slow down the pace of the narrative. For the informed it is so much surplusage, and I doubt seriously that its elimination would affect the understand-
ing of the uninitiated to any significant degree. Judge Botein's effort is anything but great literature, but it is fairly interesting, it is not unduly labored, and it does give an informed and informative peek into the operation of a big-city prosecutor's office.

GENERAL

CROSS-CURRENTS

By Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein (Doubleday, $4.00)

The authors of this book endeavor to show that there are "cross-currents of religious prejudice" at work in the United States, in Germany, and in the Middle East which can become "violent rip tides capable of capsizing the vessel of state." They depict certain persons and organizations in the United States as "anti-Semites" who are "hatemongers" and therefore of great danger to free democratic processes. According to the sources quoted, these "anti-Semites" not only work against our own freedom but are supporting like-minded people and organizations among Neo-Nazis and those forces at work in the Arab states intent upon the destruction of the state of Israel. The "anti-Semites" of the United States, according to the authors of Cross-Currents, maintain a close association through correspondence and other contacts with neo-Nazis, and Arab leaders who are determined that the state of Israel shall be destroyed.

The 382 pages of the book are devoted largely to quotations from materials in the files of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. It is upon this material that the authors of Cross-Currents depend for the presentation in this book of their case against anti-Semitism in the United States, and their expressed purpose is to alert America against organized anti-Semitic activities.

Much of the material presented is, according to the authors, taken from extremely confidential correspondence and records of confidential conversations between persons and organizations whose objectives run completely counter to those of the Anti-Defamation League. Although this reviewer has no reason to question the integrity of those who have produced the proof for the argument of Cross-Currents, it would seem to be a bit naive merely to accept all this "proof" without having had opportunity to investigate it, which is quite obviously all but impossible.

If, however, the hundreds of quotations found in the book are authentic and have been quoted in keeping with their context, the book is a serious contribution to a study of current anti-Semitism in the United States which is both anti-American and anti-Christian.

ANDREW SCHULZE

THOREAU OF WALDEN

By Henry Beetle Hough (Simon and Schuster, $4.00)

PASSIONATE SEARCH

By Margaret Crompton (McKay, $3.95)

The art of modern biography is very much alive, but it seems to be much more restrained than formerly. For instance, here are two recent, moderately long, well-phrased and intelligent treatments of eminent Victorians. The facts are clear, the interpretations reasonable, and the judgments valid indeed. Missing, however, are the challenge and sparkle that once designated the psychography of earlier decades of the twentieth century. I shall restrict my brief comments to the respective quality that is best achieved in each book.

The British author whose purpose is correctly titled a passionate search emphasizes her fellow-womanly conviction that Charlotte Bronte's shortcomings were superficial because fundamentally she was a compassionate person. Important personal associations form the substance of the eight chapters, notably her erratic brother Branwell, her safety-valve girlfriend Ellen Nussey, her teacher and adviser Constantin Heger, and her (all too soon widower) husband Arthur Bell Nicholls. I found a fresh realization of the lonely sensitivity of this novelist who used the pen name Cur­rer Bell.

By contrast, the editor-publisher (of the Vineyard Gazette newspaper) uses frequent quotations from Henry David Thoreau to flavor his eulogy. The topic sentence of the final paragraph is characteristic of Mr. Hough's style: "After having lived momentously, he lies buried, Thoreau of Walden, on a ridge in Sleepy Hollow cemetery at Concord, under a stone not large or heavy enough to keep down his fame." Instead of critical analysis or motive-seeking diagnosis, this book gave me a pleasantly popular portrait of the famous nonconformist in all his venturesome moods.

HERBERT H. UMBACH

OF CARRIAGES AND KINGS

By Frederick John Gorst with Beth Andrews (Crowell, $4.00)

Frederick John Gorst is one of the last of a vanishing breed—a breed immortalized, if only in caricature, by P. G. Wodehouse. Born into a large lower-class home, he was forced at twelve years of age to take employment as a page-boy in a theological seminary, from which post he rose to service with the gentry and ultimately the nobility. In his last post, in the household of the Duke of Portland, he enjoyed the status of a royal footman.

The world which he describes seems long ago and far away. It comes as some­thing of a surprise, therefore, to be reminded that it was upper-class England of fifty years ago. For those who, by accident of birth or shrewdness of manipulations, had risen to the top of the social and economic ladder, it was probably as pleasant and comfortable a world as man has ever known. For those who, like Gorst, had attached themselves to the "nobs," it was an almost equally pleasant and comfortable world. For the industrial worker it was purgatory and for the small business man it was a jungle. (One of the horrifying things in this "charming memoir" is the author's inability to feel any indignation over his father's bankruptcy.)

People who dote on stories of upperclass living may find this account engaging. Those who approach it from a background of concern for the unprivileged or underprivileged will probably find it an eloquent, although unintended, argument for the social revolution which has reshaped English society.

THE VALUE JUDGMENT

By W. D. Lamont (Philosophical Library, $6.00)

Mr. Lamont is of the opinion that the value judgment is best approached, not from the consideration of the things valued or the person who values, but of the "activity occurring within the mind of the subject who values." He spends 329 pages in the attempt to convince the reader.

Briefly, his approach is this: the value judgment is a choice between two or more alternatives. It is an act, of will, choosing what it feels is better or best for the particular situation in question. Values are dealt with in this text as unidentified quanta, and principles are asserted which, it is argued, are implied by the value process.

It is certainly laudable to reduce a discipline to principles. But Mr. Lamont has given little consideration to the question of whether the value field is reducible to principle. The crux of this problem rests, in the final analysis, on the nature of value itself, not on the nature of the value process. Does valuation lend itself to quantitative measurement or not? This is the primary problem, a problem Mr. Lamont does not solve.

In terms of his system, he is able to separate the value judgment from the moral and the aesthetic. But he cannot get them back together again. He sees an analogy between the science of economics and the value field. The analogy is there, I dare say, because it is the same field. Economics has not faced up to the problem of value, at least not recent economics. Is a system of quanta, related according to principles, in short, a mathematical system, capable of producing a science of economics? Mr. La-
The authors take up first of all the matter of who should invest, where is the money to come from, and what proportion of income or capital should be invested. They make clear at the outset that they did not prepare this book as a guide to speculation and that not everyone is in a position to invest. They are cautious and conservative in this approach and they make it evident that though the dust jacket says "planning for profit" they have in mind a long-term profit and not a get-rich-quick scheme. Having laid down the basic requirements for an investor—and they demonstrate that more people than are could be investing—they go on to a consideration of the one investment type that obviously appeals to them: equity stocks. The term equity in connection with common stocks is used to indicate an equity of ownership in the business or corporation itself. The authors do, as I have stated, discuss other investment fields but it is not difficult to tell where their hearts are—the stock exchange.

This is a very commendable attitude. Too few people in the United States understand and appreciate that the heart of the free capitalist society that we have is the continuing need for the broad investment of "risk" capital by American people in the American economy. "Risk" investment is the purchase of an ownership interest, an equity, and with ownership comes the possibility of profit and loss. There is no absolute security in equity investing but then there is no absolute security in investments of any sort. An indebtedness investment (where there is no debt, just risk) will, in the last analysis, be only as safe as the ability of the debtor (whether a private individual, business, or government) to pay at due date. If the economy of this country should run down then equity investment would be unsafe. By the same token indebtedness investment would be unsafe because a business that is bankrupt can no more pay its debts than it can refund its ownership shares. If this economic depression would be large enough and extensive enough it would probably be true also that governmental units would experience difficulty in maintaining debt payments. In the short pull an indebtedness investment may be safer but in the long pull equity investment will be the spark plug to continuing economic prosperity. The authors say,

If you believe that America is a vigorous and expanding country, then you probably would like to have a monetary stake in its growth. Everybody can't participate directly by starting a new factory or inventing a new drug or synthetic fibre. But here is one thing you can do. Buy the common stock and thereby become part owner of certain well-managed companies that themselves seem destined to share largely in America's next period of expansion.

After considering the factors that play an important part in making a choice to participate in equity investments, the authors pay considerable attention to the legal structures surrounding investments of this sort. They explain the function and work of the broker and the brokerage office, the organization and operation of stock exchanges, and the work of the various specialists and governmental agencies that combine together to make the whole process one that works smoothly, efficiently, and safely. They discuss the "policing" elements at work in the investment fields. The internal policing that is present in the New York Stock Exchange, as well as the external policing by the Securities and Exchange Commission—a department of the Federal Government that is not always understood. The authors point out that the SEC does not pass judgment on the quality of investments, it has a different function.

Many an investor thinks of the Securities and Exchange Commission as a government agency set up to protect him. Actually, however, the biggest part of the agency's job is to enable the investor to protect himself. The SEC won't guarantee that any stock is a good investment or worth the asking price. It will insist, however, that when a company proposes to sell new stock to the public it give the correct facts about its operations and financial position. If a prospector has a gold mine that has caved in and is full of water and wants to sell stock to raise money to put it back in operation, the SEC won't stop him. But it will insist that he be frank and tell the truth about the cave-in and the water and how much it will probably cost to fix things up.

One of the most interesting parts of this book, to me, is the section devoted to investment clubs. This is a new development in this country and it may be that it is something with which some CRESSET readers may have had some first-hand experience. In an investment club the members agree to invest a set amount apiece each month, say $5 or $10, in equity stocks. The club meets each month to discuss and select the purchase for the month; this of course means that a small club (ten to fifteen) will work best since it will be easier for them to meet together in a home or office and there will be no real need for any officers or centralization of authority for anyone should participate to the fullest. Each month there is a report by a research committee which changes its personnel for each meeting on a rotating basis (two or three members would be best), this report is received and

Wm. Lehman, Jr.

SUCCESS WITH YOUR MONEY

By the Staff of Changing Times, Edited by John W. Hazard (Prentice-Hall, $3.95)

It was inevitable that the do-it-yourself fad would ultimately reach the subject of money. The staff of Changing Times, the Kiplinger Magazine, with an editorial assistant by John W. Hazard (Senior Editor of the Magazine) and an introduction by the boss (W. M. Kiplinger who publishes the weekly Kiplinger Washington Letter which finds its way to the desks of many businessmen in this country), has compiled this book on investment planning for profit and security for the average citizen. This is an ambitious book because it treats many subjects that are intricate (and does it well) and because it covers the high spots on all of the principal investment areas: real estate, insurance, bonds, stocks, bank deposits, and building and loan funds. Each area is discussed briefly and enough information is afforded so that an average investor could decide for himself whether he wanted to enter that area although the authors do not make specific investment recommendations. They have, instead, laid down some basic guides and they do encourage the investor to arrive at his own specific judgment on any given particular investment.

RED PLUSH AND BLACK BREAD

By Marguerite Higgins (Doubleday, $4.00)

Miss Higgins' excellent report of her trip through Russia was no sooner published as the book, Red Plush and Black Bread, than her magazine articles of a later trip through Russia began appearing. Her movements were so much less hampered by the Soviet government on the later trip that the magazine articles provide far more informative reading at far less expense to the reader.

Robert Donsbach
discussed by the group. In this report the committee offers information on a number of stocks that look "good" to the committee members. The group then arrives at its own decision and the purchase order is executed in the customary way with a brokerage house who keeps the account in it at its own decision and the purchase order in them—to pool their money, knowledge, and experience to buy a stake in America, to borrow a term from the authors. I think that such a club could do much to help American people to educate themselves about some of the basic facts of American economic life; to give them an opportunity to have an idea of what is going on in this country; to make themselves better-informed citizens; to afford them an opportunity of doing investment planning on their own for security and long pull profit. This book contains the information on how to start these clubs, run them, etc.

This book is easy reading, the language has been kept as free of jargon as possible and where it is used it is carefully explained. There are illustrations, graphs, and charts and they are all understandable. Finally, the authors and the editor have been cautious as I have indicated. All through this book they warn of pitfalls that exist and have always existed in the investment area but they keep restating the same propositions: look around, do not act hastily, seek expert advice, ask questions, use reputable reference works, avoid unknown dealers, stick with licensed brokers, and the one great caution that is not observed by many an investor who has seen his investments go sour: do not be greedy. Tremendous profit may be a reflection of good luck in a particular investment but it may also be an indication that there is something amiss.

This book can be a source of profitable information to the man or woman who is just reaching the point where there is a little more money coming in than going out—or where this could easily be true with a little planning. Profitable dollar-wise for the individual and his family and profitable country-wide for the increase in knowledge and understanding of our economy that would be promoted by a broader investment basis by the American people in the American economy.

THE RAPE OF THE MIND

By Joost A. M. Meerloo (World, $5.00)

Joost A. M. Meerloo, a psychiatrist, was a native of Holland at the outset of World War II. After the start of that war the Doctor several times had some personal experiences with brainwashing as practiced by the Gestapo. He fled Nazi-occupied Holland and ultimately reached England where he served with the Netherlands Forces, Psychological Department. At the conclusion of the war he had an opportunity to help in the rehabilitation of citizens of his own country who had been subjected to thought control by the occupying power. At present the Doctor is an instructor in psychiatry at Columbia University as well as a lecturer in social psychology at the New School for Social Research. In the years since the close of that great war he has given considerable time and thought to the effect of what he calls "menticide"—to kill the mind—a word he coined. The Doctor was an interested observer of the cases involving American military personnel who "confessed" to North Koreans after being taken prisoners of war in Korea. He was present at the trial of one American military man for his acts and testified as an expert in the field of thought control.

Dr. Meerlo has given considerable thought to this entire matter and has now set down his collected thoughts and ideas in this book with its provocative title. He divides his work into four main areas: individual submission, mass submission, unobtrusive coercion, and defenses against thought control.

He first takes up the matter of the techniques used on a single individual. He asks and attempts to answer why an individual will, for example, confess a crime he has not committed—Cardinal Mindszenty for instance. He discusses the use of drugs to accomplish menticide and in general surveys the relevant psychological factors involved in individual submission to brain washing.

In the second main division of his book he discusses the techniques of mass submission. He points out that many of the techniques and methods of individual submission that he discussed in the first part of his book can exist and be used even in a free society as well as in a conquered one. What can be done to one individual can be done to many.

Only blind wishful thinking can permit us to believe that our own society is free from the insidious influences mentioned in Part One. The fact is that they exist all around us, both on a political and nonpolitical level and they become as dangerous to the free way of life as are the aggressive totalitarian governments themselves.

In his discussion of mass submission I found of considerable interest his concern over the danger that an improper use of law and law components may have in as far as promoting menticide.

To a psychologist, perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Moscow purge trials between 1936 and 1938 was the deep sense of moral shock felt by people all over the world, whose trust in the judicial process was shaken to its foundations by the gross perversion of justice. Discussions about the trials always concerned themselves less with the question of guilt or innocence of the accused than with the horrifying travesty of justice that the trials presented. Somewhere deep in the soul of men lies the conviction that a judge is, by definition, a righteous, impartial man, that an appeal to the court is the road to truth, that the law stands above corruption, degradation, and perversion. Of course, we recognize that judges are human beings like ourselves, that they make mistakes, as the rest of us do, and we are even willing to accept temporary injustice because we believe that there will be eventual vindication and that the rule of law and justice will remain triumphant. The moment the judicial process becomes a farce, a show to intimidate the people, something in man's soul is finally affected. When justice is no longer blind, but has her eye on the main chance, we become frightened and alarmed. To whom shall a man turn if he cannot find justice in the courts?

The Doctor is also concerned over the dangerous potential in investigative committee hearings.

Let me first state I firmly believe that the right of the Congress to investigate and to propose legislation on the basis of such investigation is one of the most important of our democratic safeguards. But like any other human institution, the Congress, in its efforts to investigate can be abused and misused. The power to investigate may become the power to destroy—not only the man under attack, but also the mental integrity of those who, in one way or another, are witnesses to the investigation. In a subtle way, the current wave of Congressional investigations may have a coercive effect on our citizenship. Some dictatorial personalities are obsessed with a morbid need to investigate, and Congressional investigations are made to order by those who do not agree with them, who does not bow low and submit, is suspect, and is subjected to a flow of vilification and vituperation. The tendency on the part of the public is to disbelief everything that the demagogue's opponents say and to swallow uncritically the statements made by those who either surrender to his brow-beating or go along with it because they believe in the aims he pretendsto stand for.

In the third main division of his work the Doctor takes up what he calls "Unobtrusive Coercion." In this section he is disturbed about the tendency that exists in this country, and that appears to be growing, to standardize everything including thought processes. He is particularly concerned over the creeping coercion of technology.

The world of tomorrow will witness a tremendous battle between tech-
nology and psychology. It will be a fight of technology versus nature, of systematic conditioning versus creative spontaneity. ... Driven by technology, our own world has become more interdependent, and through our dependence on technical knowledge and devices, we ourselves are in danger of delivering our people to the more brutal totalitarians. This is the actual dilemma of our civilization. The machine that became a tool of human organization and made possible the conquest of nature, has acquired a dictatorial position. It has forced people into automatic responses, into rigid patterns and destructive habits.

The Doctor discusses the effect of radio, television, and movies in this area of the unobtrusive. Finally, in this section, he takes up the difficult problem of the meaning of treason and the danger involved for this country in the careless use of the word traitor. He points out that "In a world stifled by dogma and tradition, every form of original thinking may be called sedition and treason."

In his last principal division the Doctor takes up the subject of defenses against brainwashing. He discusses the matter of indoctrination against indoctrination and whether and to what extent it might be helpful. He discusses the role of education in increasing and maintaining a higher morale among the people. Finally, he discusses what is to him the greatest source of strength against menticide and that is freedom and a belief in freedom. He deals with what he calls the paradox of freedom.

Freedom and planning present no essential contrasts. In order to let freedom grow, we have to plan our controls over the forces that limit freedom. Beyond this, we must have the passion and the inner freedom to prosecute those who abuse freedom. We must have the vitality to attack those who commit mental suicide and psychic murder through abuse of liberties, dragging down other persons in their wake. Suicidal submission is a kind of subversion from within; it is passive surrender to a mechanized world without personalities; it is the denial of personality. We must have the fervor to stand firmly for freedom of the individual, for mutual tolerance and dignity, and we must learn not to tolerate the destruction of these values. We must not tolerate those who make use of worthy ideas and values only to destroy them as soon as they are in power. We must be intolerant of these abuses as long as the battle for mental life or death goes on.

I found this book exceedingly interesting and informative. The Doctor has obviously given a great deal of thought to his subject and his insights impress me as being sound. A thoughtful book for a thoughtful reader particularly coming in a year when books of this status have been rather rare.
A Minority Report

Two Able and Popular Figures
Contest This Year for Presidency

By Victor F. Hoffmann

The Republican National Convention of 1956 was devoted mainly to lauding and magnifying the name and person of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Day after day, minute after minute, the Convention repeated in various forms what Richard Nixon had said about four years ago: "Ladies and Gentlemen, don't we have a wonderful presidential candidate?"

This columnist understands to some extent what has gone into the making of this hero-worship. Ike Eisenhower has been and is a great man. He has been and is a popular public figure. Democrats are wrong in saying that the past four years have been chaotic, inefficient, and degrading. As a matter of fact, one sometimes finds it easy to agree with the editorial judgment of The Chicago Sun Times: The 1952 and the 1956 presidential campaigns have brought to the foreground two able and popular figures. Under either, said The Times, the nation will do well. But a Messiah who does not pay off in bread and fishes will easily be deposed and crucified by the people—no matter who he is.

I did not particularly enjoy the emotional consummation of the Democratic Convention for the same reasons I did not appreciate the hero-worship of President Eisenhower. When Stevenson appeared, friend and foe mounted the platform to be recognized with Stevenson. There was much grabbing of hands and lifting aloft of hands in the traditional symbol of the boxer's victory. But the Democrats were not about to create a personality cult around Stevenson. Harry S. Truman is not about to be "madly" about Adlai. He took care of "cult-busting" in certain preliminary remarks he had made in behalf of Harriman. Kefauver had also criticized Adlai in clear terms during the pre-convention campaigns. Clearly, human and honest and aspiring individuals are bound to fight and struggle. It is human to err and often it is also human to forgive and sometimes to forget, especially when the antagonists are members of the same party.

There is absolutely no question about the tendency of the Democratic Party to split apart at the seams. No right-minded person would try to hide the fact. Party politics and party organizations are created by coalitions and compromises. And the Democratic Party has much to coalesce: the Southern conservatives with the Northern liberals, the self-confessed cosmopolitan Easterners with the Mid-Westerners who for some reason are often proud of their provincialism, labor with agriculture. And so the brawling, fighting story goes on.

On the other hand, the Republicans certainly gave the impression of peace and harmony and the not-to-be-forgotten security of incumbency. Honestly, however, I feel about this a little like I feel when someone tells me that he and his wife have not fought in their entire married life. I want to ask: "What? No ideas in your family?" The Republican Party is a coalition and must be a coalition if it is going to win votes. And it certainly has done that lately.

The Republicans certainly do have their splinter groups that do not fit well together. How many Republican areas are really going to support the May 17, 1954, desegregation decision of the Supreme Court? I certainly have not heard any enthusiastic support in my Republican town. For how long will the Republican Party stifle the likes of Jenner, Bricker, Mundt, McCarthy, Butler of Maryland, and Dirksen? Many persons are not sure about Nixon and Knowland. Do they or do they not represent the right wing of the party? Eisenhower is closer to the idea of a welfare state than a lot of these people are. It seems too much to expect that all parts of the Republican Party have been convinced of the middle-of-the-road welfare state advocated by Ike.

If Eisenhower can weld together a coalition of the Old Guard and the Progressives, of labor and agriculture, of the civil rights and the anti-civil rights people, of the isolationists and the internationalists, he will have built an amalgamation that will last for years to come. This is the trick of all politics from the top level down to the precinct. This is the essence of political victory.

All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awefully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author, and founder of Society. This principle ought even to be more strongly impressed upon the minds of those who compose the collective sovereignties, than upon those of single princes.

—Edmund Burke, The French Revolution
On September 30, 1952, a revolutionary development in the art of the motion picture was introduced when *This Is Cinerama* had its premiere showing in a Broadway theater in New York City. Because Cinerama—originated and developed by Fred Waller, a veteran film technician—employs three cameras, three projectors and a curved screen of giant proportions, only twenty-two theaters, located in major cities, have been adapted to show this miracle-working new process.

Since I had been eager to see Cinerama, my first visit to a St. Louis theater was to the Ambassador to see Lowell Thomas’ fabulous technicolor film *Seven Wonders of the World*, produced by the Stanley Warner Corporation. Space limitations make it impossible to list all the famous names and organizations that appear on the program. Nor can I attempt even a brief resume of the action on the screen. Mr. Thomas himself ably sums up this fascinating film in the words: “I have spent forty years of my life in wonder-hunting. Now you can share a new adventure with me through Cinerama. You can be with me on a long trek to the remote and the remarkable in the story of our planet.”

If you live in a city which shows Cinerama, do not miss it. I am sure that you will find it a rewarding and unforgettable experience. Minor technical imperfections—notable in the joining of three separate frames—are offset by the many remarkable aspects of Cinerama.

Let us turn now from the famed wonders of the world—both ancient and modern—to a phenomenon of the contemporary scene. At least I believe that one may justifiably call Marilyn Monroe a phenomenon. Here is a girl who began her career in show business with nothing more than a blowsy prettiness, uncontrolled curves, and uninhibited manners to recommend her to motion-picture producers, directors, and audiences. Yet she has become one of the highest-paid and most widely publicized screen players in the world. Her recent marriage to Arthur Miller, the well-known playwright, elicited as many headlines as did the Suez Canal crisis.

Although it would be a gross exaggeration to say that the glamorous Marilyn has become a finished actress, *Bus Stop* (20th Century-Fox, Joshua Logan) does indicate that she has developed and polished a natural flair for comedy. Adapted to the screen from a hit play by William Inge, *Bus Stop* is not only raucous and rowdy but often wanders far beyond the borderline of good taste. Some of the sequences clearly point up a new laxness in screen censorship.

*Away All Boats* (Universal-International, Joseph Pevney) depicts with documentary fidelity the wartime adventures of the men who served on the attack transport “USS Belinda.” Clips from actual government combat films made during World War II make this picture a moving and impressive tribute to the men of the U.S. Navy.

Here is a brief survey of current film releases: *High Society* (M-G-M, Charles Walters), a sparkling remake of the highly successful *The Philadelphia Story* (Grace Kelly, Bing Crosby, and Frank Sinatra are the stars); *Partners* (Paramount, Norman Taurog), which features Martin and Lewis in a satire on the ubiquitous horse opera; *The Fastest Gun Alive* (M-G-M, Russell Rouse), a drama of the old frontier; *Santiago* (Warners, Gordon Douglas), an adventure yarn set in Cuba in the days preceding the Spanish-American War; *Unidentified Flying Objects* (United Artists) and *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (Columbia), two films for those who enjoy science-fiction fantasies; *The Eddie Duchin Story* (Columbia, George Sidney), in which Tyrone Power plays the title role; *Invitation to the Dance*, Gene Kelly’s entertaining experiment which presents a picture made without dialog; and *Johnny Concho* (United Artists), which shows Frank Sinatra in his first western.

Whether you loudly proclaimed yourself to be “madly in love” or proudly wore an “I Like Ike” button is not, in itself, nearly so important as the fact that during the middle weeks of August you were privileged to see and to hear what happened at the national conventions of our two major political parties. I have followed other national political conventions by way of the radio, but this is the first time I was a spectator through the magic of TV.

I admit freely and willingly that I was fascinated by the proceedings. Yes, there were dull moments, just as there were times when one was bored with, or disgusted by, the antics of some of those who were assembled in the International Amphitheatre, in Chicago and the Cow Palace in San Francisco. But I wonder if any viewers or listeners ever lost sight of the fact that they were witnessing happenings that will determine the shape of the future.

I tuned in all the networks available to me, and it seems that the over-all coverage was excellent—both on the radio and on TV.

*B y A N N E H A N S E N*
CHILDS QUEST

The tiny village claims a vast estate;
surrounding land is for a child's delight.
Far from his five-room house a boy roams late
to tell from sounds of birds, to tell from flight
if it be lark, if it be whippoorwill;
he can be joyous laughing or when still.

The creek that runs to meadows from a town
is where he teaches self to swim, to float,
to build a board and expertly dive down
fresh ways of water. Thought then forms a boat;
though it be only rough logs nailed together,
he paddles forth in his own April weather.

A town and country somehow blend as one
when any child goes forth exploringly
up higher peaks to study in the sun
the quiet river flowing to the sea,
to study over land and water here
cloud-boats that take him from the hemisphere.

—JOSEPH JOEL KEITH

WIND

The lion lurches,
Roars the bleak tundra,
The wide plains,
The low grasses.
A red hyena howls the Sahara,
While a blue wolf
Fangs the Canadian Rockies.

—ORIAN DE PLEDGE

GROUND-FOG

Hidden are early daffodils.
Each manikin tree wears a misty gown
And shawled are the little old lady hills
That crouch above the town.

—LUCIA TRENT

MANDARIN MOMENT

This mandarin moment in the dusk
My heart laces tightly when I behold
The canary of the sinking sun
Going to sleep in his cage of burnt gold.

—MARION SCHOEBERLEIN

AUTUMN MEMORIES

Aloof, I walk the pavements. All day long
I am remembering in the noisy throng
Flamboyant beauty of October hills.
I know today the scent of wild grape fills
The countryside, the hazel nuts are brown,
And squirrels scamper when the nuts drop down.

The streets are stone to one whose feet have trod
Paths fringed with gentian and with goldenrod.

—ETHEL PEAK

THE QUIET END

Sounds are made by great things,
Bigger things than I;
Firs that crash the timberline
Deafen with their cry.
Panthers break the marshes
Roaring, when they die.

Flaming temples crackle,
Wounded martyrs scream;
But I shall end unheralded,
Soundless as a dream.

No more than a feather
Falling in a stream.

—RITA LAUDENE COCHRAN

SOMETIMES

Sometimes when a bird calls out
Or the wind travels through the boughs
Or a dog barks on a distant farm,
I must stop to listen, long and in silence.

My soul flies back again:
As long as a thousand forgotten years ago
The bird and the blowing wind
Were like me and my brother.

My soul becomes a tree,
An animal and a cloud.
It changes and returns as a stranger
And questions me. How shall I answer?

—Translated from the German of
of Herman Hesse by
CHARLES GUENTHER
JOEYXY INTO JOY***

There were several cool, rainy days in the Wisconsin woods during August. . . . The patter of the rain on our roof, the unseasonable fire in the hearth and the glistening drops of rain on the pines conspired to turn the mind inward and the soul upward. . . . It was a gracious, comforting interlude in a summer of lectures, conferences with architects and interviews with prospective inhabitants of my own little academic grove. . . .

One result, too, was the reading of a few books—an unusual, even startling event in the life of a college president. . . . A further result is that this monthly last page, expiring groan of the new Cresset is a book-review. . . . I imagine that by this time every literate person in the English-speaking world has been touched by the Oxford don who has become the most effective apologist for Christianity in our generation. . . . When his remarkable "Screwtape Letters" came to the attention of readers beyond high-school age about a decade ago, there was general agreement that a new and eloquent voice for God was being heard in the land. . . . Since that time a succession of little monographs on religion, as well as two curious novels, have kept him in the center of the growing group of men and women who have successfully interpreted Christianity to the worn, weary mind of the twentieth century. . . .

The present volume is subtitled "The Shape of My Early Life". . . . For the first time the general reader catches a glimpse of the tortuous road over which Mr. Lewis came from our wasteland to the still waters of the Gospel. . . . It is a winding and moving story. . . . Born at Belfast in 1898, Mr. Lewis was the second son of a solicitor (lawyer to us) and a clergyman's daughter. . . . An imaginative, day-dreaming child, shut away from reality by the early death of his mother, he built a world of his own, constructed with astonishing intelligence out of much reading and day-dreaming. . . . In this respect Mr. Lewis' story is probably not typical. . . . Few children, I suspect, have the soaring, yet curiously logical imagination to create an entire nation and people which were such accurate reflections of the realities he encountered in his omnivorous reading. . . .

Early in the book the keynote of his years, "Joy", begins to appear. . . . Since it became the Holy Grail of his years of quest, Mr. Lewis should be permitted to define it himself: "I call it 'Joy', which is here a technical term and must be distinguished sharply from Happiness and Pleasure. Joy (in my sense) has indeed one characteristic, and one only, in common with them: the fact that anyone who has experienced it will want it again. Apart from that, and considered only in its quality, it might almost equally well be called a peculiar kind of unhappiness or grief. But then it is a kind we want. I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power and pleasure often is". . . .

The quest for "Joy" is the central theme of the book. . . . It winds in and out but is never far away. . . . Mr. Lewis is moved by the "Dream of the Road," "intoxicated" by Donne, deeply satisfied by Thomas Browne, alarmed by George Herbert because he was so obviously Christian, impressed by Roland's great line in the Chanson—"Christians are wrong, but all the rest are bores." The most important chapter is the one he calls "Checkmate"—the most brilliant analysis of the process by which God seeks a human soul and checkmates all his efforts to flee from the ultimate "Joy". . . . There is one last desperate flight into idealistic philosophy—and then the end of the pursuit by the Hound of Heaven.

His own words again:

"In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England. I did not then see what is now the most shining and obvious thing; the Divine humility which will accept a convert even on such terms. The Prodigal Son at least walked home on his own feet. But who can duly adore that Love which will open the high gates to a prodigal who is brought in kicking, struggling, resentful, and darting his eyes in every direction for a chance of escape? The words compel me to come in, have been so abused by wicked men that we shudder at them; but, properly understood, they plumb the depth of the Divine mercy. The hardness of God is kinder than the softness of men, and His compulsion is our liberation."