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MISSOURI SYNOD

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Above: Charles Burchfield, Bare Trees, 1920. Watercolor. 24 x 18". Frank
K. M. Rehr Galleries, New York City.

Cover: Charles Burchfield, Luminous Tree, June 25, 1917. Watercolor. 20 x
14". Sloan Collection of American Paintings, Valparaiso University, Burch-
field Foundation Grant, 1974.
Valparaiso University is related to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, though not under its direct jurisdiction. The University is operated by the Lutheran University Association through a self-perpetuating Board of Directors.

For nearly 50 years we have cherished our relationship to the Synod, and the opportunity we have had to educate thousands of the Synod's young people. Not every one of our faculty or student body is a Lutheran. But all of us are grateful for the benefits of our affiliation with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

It is in this setting that the University community has been watching with sadness and concern the agonies of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Many of us are bound by strong personal and professional ties to members of the Seminary faculty and student body. We are deeply moved by the present distress being experienced by a sister institution, as well as by the Synod.

It is not our role as a University to sit in judgment of all of the events that have caused the difficulties which have engulfed the Church and its Seminary. Individuals among us have our own opinions about the matters in controversy, and are encouraged to express them. Our calling as a University is to serve as a marketplace to which all may freely bring ideas, and each has the right to speak his mind. This is in the very nature of a University. It is also a corollary of our freedom as a Christian people. The University as such is not partisan in matters of controversy, whether they be doctrinal or political, but it opens its doors to wide-ranging discussion in the search for solutions and for truth.

Nevertheless, as members of the University, we appreciate and support academic integrity. We recognize the values of diversity and the need to be responsive to change. We welcome and sustain the endeavors of scholarship, even as we hold confidently to our convictions. We believe that freedom of thought and expression must be accompanied by a disciplined responsibility for informed and thoughtful analysis.

Our special quest at this University, which rejoices in its Lutheran tradition, is to discover what it means to acknowledge more fully the Lordship of Christ in our daily life and work. As we search His wisdom, we strive to find the richness and fullness of all those things which are given for our learning.

Even among us on this campus there are sharp divisions about the issues now confronting the Synod and how to resolve them. But these divisions need not destroy or mitigate the mutual respect we have for one another. In this spirit we would call for an attitude of patience and forbearance in the Synod. Our fervent hope is that its members will deal gently with one another, even where differences on fine points of theological opinion are pronounced, so that the unity and fellowship of the Gospel are preserved among us.

As individuals we have an obligation to speak out against all that would hinder academic honesty and spiritual growth in the schools of the Church. As a University we offer our services to the Synod to be a forum for the evaluation of matters at issue and as a place for the reconciling of differences in the Synod, before the bonds that tie us together are torn beyond repair.

With the mutual interest of the Synod and the University at stake, we call for a new vision of what can be achieved in the cause of Christ's Kingdom, and a prayer for God's blessing on all constructive efforts toward the re-establishing of peace in the Synod and within the whole Church of Christ.

A. G. Huegli, President
Among my early works, my most beloved and cherished ones are these very short stories and even now I want to present these to a number of my readers. I wrote almost all these stories in my twenties. Many literary men wrote poems in their young days, but I wrote these very short stories instead of writing poems.

* 

Translated by

Kiyoshi Hasegawa

Yasunari Kawabata, from whose very early work the following short short stories are presented, is one of Japan's most eminent writers. In 1968 he won the Nobel Prize for literature. He is best known in the United States through translations into English of his Snow Country, Thousand Cranes, The Sound of the Mountain, and The Master of Go. He died in 1972 by his own hand at the age of 78.

Kiyoshi Hasegawa, the translator, attended Rikkyo University, Valparaiso University (A. B., 1955), and the University of California at Los Angeles. He is Professor of English at Ochanomizu University in Tokyo and is currently Fulbright Visiting Professor of Japanese Language and Literature at the University of Illinois. He is a translator, the author of numerous language studies and textbooks, and is also a popular teacher of English on Japanese television and radio networks.
The Weaker Vessel

The antique shop was at a corner of the crossroads. A ceramic figure of Kwannon, the Merciful Goddess, was standing on the edge of the road just outside the shop. It was about the height of a twelve-year-old girl. When streetcars rumbled past, the cold glaze of the statue seemed to quiver delicately, together with the glass front doors. Each time I passed by the shop, I was afraid that the statue might tumble to the ground. And one night I had a dream.

The figure of Kwannon came falling straight toward me. All of a sudden, it stretched out its long, white, rich arms and clung around my neck. Startled by the eerieness of the arms of a lifeless object coming to life and the feel of cold ceramic on my skin, I jumped back.

Without any crashing sound, the statue of Kwannon broke into pieces, falling in fragments on the road.

Suddenly, the next moment, I saw my girl gathering the broken fragments. She was crouching small, absorbed in picking up the glittering pieces of the shattered statue. Astonished to see her, I opened my lips to say something apologetic. Just at that moment I found myself wide awake.

All of this seemed to have taken place in that instant after the fall of the small statue.

I tried to draw meaning out of this dream.

"Thou shalt treat thy wife like the weaker vessel."

This particular verse from the Bible had come persistently into my mind in those days, and I always associated the words "the weaker vessel" with a ceramic bowl and then with my girl.

A young girl is very fragile indeed. Falling in love is in a sense the evidence of her fragility. Such was the way I had been thinking.

Now, in my dream, I wonder if she isn't frantically gathering up the broken pieces of her own being.

The Umbrella

It was a spring rain drizzling like a mist, not soakingly wet, only somewhat dampish on the skin. The young girl, dashing outside, saw the boy's umbrella and became aware of the rain for the first time.

"Oh, it's raining, isn't it?" she said.

Actually, the boy had opened the umbrella to shield himself from the shyness of passing the shop where the girl was sitting, rather than to shelter himself from the rain.

Without a word, he held his umbrella over the girl, but hesitantly she put only one of her shoulders under it. The boy was too shy to nestle closer to the girl, though he himself was in the rain. The girl seemed to be restless and kept trying to get out from under the boy's umbrella, although she really wanted to help him hold it.
The two went into a photo studio. The boy’s father, a government official, was to be transferred to a new post far away. So they wanted to have a picture taken in memory of their parting.

“Please sit here side by side,” said the photographer, pointing to a sofa. But the boy was unable to bring himself to sit next to the girl, so he stood behind her. With his fingers resting on the back of the sofa, he gently touched the coat of her kimono, so that they would be somehow connected with each other. This was the first time he had touched her. He felt her warmth faintly coming up through his fingers, and it seemed to him as if he were holding her nude body tightly in his arms.

This photograph would never fail to remind him of the warmth of her body for the rest of his life.

“How about another picture. This time let me take a close-up of the two of you side by side?” the photographer asked.

The boy simply nodded, and whispered to the girl, “What about your hair?”

The girl glanced up at the boy, her cheeks flushing; then, her eyes sparkling with delight, she pattered to the powder room like an obedient child.

When she had seen the boy passing the shop, she had hurried out to the street, having no time for tidying her hair. So she had been conscious of her hair, tangled as if she had just taken off a bathing cap. But she had been too shy to tuck up her loose strands of hair in the presence of the boy. As for the boy, he had feared that it would be embarrassing to her to suggest that she arrange her hair.

The bright look of the girl hurrying to the dressing room also made the boy bright. Sharing that brightness, they sat down on the sofa close together quite naturally.

Just as he was leaving the studio, the boy looked for his umbrella but he couldn’t find it. Then he gave a casual glance around, and found the girl already standing out in front with the umbrella in her hand. Conscious of the boy’s eyes on her, the girl suddenly realized that she had taken his umbrella, and she was startled. This unconscious act clearly revealed her feeling that she belonged to him.

The boy could not say that he would take the umbrella, and the girl, on her part, could not hand it back to him. Nevertheless, on the way back, both of them were feeling suddenly mature like a married couple . . . only because of this trifling business of the umbrella.

**A Lily**

When she was in primary school, Yuriko thought to herself, “Oh, poor Umeko! She has to use pencils that are smaller than her thumb and carries her brother’s old satchel.”

So, in order to have the same things as her dearest friend, Yuriko took the cutter that was attached to her penknife, and cut her long pencil into several pieces. As she had no brothers, she cried until her parents relented and bought her a boy’s satchel.

When she was in high school, she thought to herself, “How beautiful Matsuko is. Her ear lobes and fingers are bright red from frostbite and are so charming.”

And, to be like her best friend, Yuriko soaked her hands in a basin of icy water for a long time, and leaving her ears wet with water, she went to school in the cold morning wind.
After school days she married and, needless to say, Yuriko drowned her husband with love. And then, in order to imitate the person she loved most, and be like him, she cut her hair short, put on a pair of strong glasses, tried to grow a beard, chewed on a seaman's pipe, called her husband "Hey You!", walked vigorously, and even tried to enlist in the army. To her astonishment, however, her husband would not allow any of this. He openly complained at her wearing underwear like his. He made a disagreeable face when she neglected to put on rouge and powder, simply because he did not. So her love, suppressed of its freedom, gradually withered like a plant whose buds had been nipped.

"He is merciless. I wonder why he won't let me be like him. It's too lonesome for me to be different from the one I love."

Then Yuriko devoted herself to God. "Oh, God," she prayed, "please show Yourself to me... and do something for me. I would like to be the same as You and to do just as You do."
And from the heavens above, the resounding voice of God answered:
"You shall become a lily flower. Like the lily flower you shall love nothing—and love everything."
"Yes," she replied, obediently. And so saying, Yuriko turned into a lily.

From the Son's Standpoint

His mother is really slow to catch on.

"My mother has been urging me to marry a man she chose, but I've already promised to marry another man."

When Tazuko came to seek his mother's advice in this way, she should have realized that it was her own son whom Tazuko had chosen to marry. Yet she babbled on thoughtlessly, as if it had nothing to do with her.

"Oh, there's no reason to hesitate. By all means marry for love, even if it means you must run away from home. I'm telling you to do so from my own experience, because I went through the same thing myself. But I made the wrong choice when I married, and since then, for thirty years, I've been unhappy. I feel that my whole life has been ruined.

Tazuko completely misunderstood these words and thought that his mother was well aware of their love, and was giving Tazuko indirect permission to marry her son.

"Then are you going to let Ichiro marry as he likes?" she asked, flushing brightly.

"Of course, I am." said the mother.

Tazuko went home filled with joy. Ichiro, who had overheard the conversation, immediately wrote a letter, telling her that he was breaking off the engagement. He even wrote that she should marry the man her mother had chosen for her. But this he could not bring himself to add, "I hope you will be the mother of as good a son as I am."
The Death Mask

He did not know how many lovers she had had before him. But it was clear that he would be her last, for her death was near.

“I didn’t realize I would die so soon. I wish he had killed me then,” she said lying in his arms and trying to smile gaily. There was a look in her eyes which seemed to reveal she was recalling her many lovers.

Even on the verge of death, she could not forget her own beauty. She could not forget her many love affairs. She did not know that these memories made her look all the more pathetic.

“All my men wished to kill me. They never said so, but in their minds, they always wanted to...”

Compared with her previous lovers who had to tell themselves that the only way to keep her heart was to kill her, he might possibly be a happy lover with no fear of losing her as she was dying in his arms. And yet he was a little tired from holding her. She had always longed for passionate love, and even on her sickbed, she was no longer able to sleep in peace unless she felt her lover’s arms around her neck or on her breast.

But, when the last moment finally approached, she pleaded, “My feet... hold them tight, dear. I feel very lonesome there.” She kept complaining of the loneness of her feet, as if death were stealing up from them. He held her feet firmly as he sat at her bedside.

Her feet were as cold as death itself. Suddenly, he found his hands trembling with sensation. Unexpectedly, he felt her sensual womanhood in those tiny feet in his palms. Her small, cold feet gave him the same pleasure as he would have found in caressing warm, sweaty soles of a woman’s feet. He was ashamed of this sexual feeling which he feared might violate the solemn moment of her death. Yet, at the same time, he wondered if her pleading, “Hold my feet, dear,” was not the last of her acts of love-making in this world, and he became horrified at the way she clung so tenaciously and disgracefully to her female sensuality.

“I know, dear, that you have been feeling a bit disappointed, because there’s nothing any more between us that excites your jealousy. But, I tell you, after I die, your rivals will appear to make you jealous. Surely, from somewhere.” So saying she breathed her last.

It turned out just as she had predicted.

A stage actor who came to attend the wake made up her face. It was as if he were trying to revive the blooming beauty she had enjoyed when she was in love with him.

The make-up made her dead face so vividly attractive that, a little later, when an artist covered her face thickly with plaster, he seemed to be smothering her to death out of sheer jealousy of the actor. Perhaps the artist also wanted to cherish his memories of her by the death mask.

Since it was too clear that the bitter rivalry among her lovers had by no means ended with her death, the man realized that it was only a momentary victory to have had her die in his arms. So he went to the artist’s home to take the death mask away from him.

To his dismay, however, he found that the death mask looked like a woman’s in some ways, and a man’s in other ways. It also looked like that of a little girl and, at the same time, that of an old woman. Then he said in a depressed voice as if a flame in his heart had suddenly died out, “This surely must be her mask, and yet I can’t recognize her. I can’t even tell whether it is the mask of a man or a woman.”

“That’s it,” replied the artist with a sad look. “Generally speaking, you can’t tell the sex of a death mask if you don’t know whose it is. The impressive death mask of Beethoven, for example, seems somehow womanly when you keep staring at it. But I expected that her mask would really look like that of a woman, because she was more feminine than anyone else. But, as you can see now, even she could not overcome the power of death. Death, I think, puts an end to all distinction of sex.”

“Her whole life of pleasure in being a woman was a tragedy. She was too sensuous even at the very moment of her death. If she has now escaped from that tragedy completely,” the man said, feeling refreshed as if he had awakened from a nightmare, and giving his hand to the artist, “there’s nothing to keep us from shaking hands... here in front of the death mask, is there?”

The Cresset
This somewhat obscure picture took life when an Armenian Orthodox bishop reminisced about his early days: he remembered that the goatskins used for storing wine in his village could be used once, perhaps twice, when they were soft and pliant. But when they became hard and cracked, the skins could no longer hold newly fermenting wine; both skins and wine were lost.

But the wine of the Gospel is still wine and we, its bearers, are still the skins that carry it.

The Gospel remains the Gospel, the good news that God in Christ has saved all men. It still calls for all to be reconciled to God. That Gospel remains rooted in the Scriptures. The panorama of God’s people, from Moses to eternity, still unfolds before us.

That Gospel is like wine that ferments and expands, bursting old wine skins. It forces us into thinking of the whole man, the whole church, and the whole world. As we look back at the roots in the Scriptures we find that they don’t constitute the problem of old wine skins: Moses had the liberation bit long before “Frelimo” had been coined; our Lord gave healing, sight, hearing, and speech to make people whole in His day. The Scriptural panorama of the Spirit’s work among men, the power of a living Gospel, shows patterns ever new and ever the same reaching out to everyone, even to those for whom the Gospel seems to have nothing to say. The wine is ever new in every age—and yet it is still wine.

The Church’s story is one of finding an ever-expanding and barrier-breaking Gospel in the human condition. The struggles of every age were strewn with split skins amid spilt wine, but the path always led by the Spirit to new wine in new skins. The struggles of persons and places too numerous to mention lie as a panorama of history before us.

So wine skins must be soft and pliant, responding to the pulsating beat of the Gospel in each day. That means a number of dangerous moves. Are we ready to speak about liberation theology without closing our ears because it sounds Marxist or violent? Can we listen to the prophets who make the conscience sensitive and hear them speak against our closed cultural patterns as well as for an openness to human need and aspiration—and not simply attacking the Gospel delivered to the saints? Can we see in apparently open rebellion against the Gospel an opportunity to replace the caricature of the Gospel against which the rebellion is directed with a new vision of its fulness?

New wine is waiting for new wine skins in many parts of God’s world. In Madagascar, a government decision to pursue education in the Malagasy language in place of French has presented a challenge to the churches which are best equipped to lead in this effort. In India, a consistent government policy of discouraging foreign missionaries and their money has challenged the church to do what Hinduism and Islam have done all the time—to be their own wine skins in their own land. In Ethiopia, mass movements to Christianity combined with unbelievable poverty bring a challenge for explaining and showing this Gospel to the whole man. In Chile, the phenomenal growth of Pentecostal churches through the efforts of marginally trained leaders throws the gauntlet down both to a small but entrenched Protestant community and to the Roman Catholic majority of the land.

Examples could be multiplied, but the message is the same. Do we draw on the strength of the Gospel through the Spirit to be continually renewed wine skins, flexible and pliant to the vivifying forces of the Gospel?


This presentation is based on an exhibit of the early watercolors of Charles Burchfield held at Valparaiso University from February 11-March 4, 1974. The exhibition was sponsored by the Sloan Fund with the cooperation of the Burchfield Foundation and Mr. Clancy of the Frank K. M. Galleries, New York City.

THE EARLY WATERCOLORS
OF CHARLES BURCHFIELD

The early watercolors of Charles Burchfield present a world familiar, in many ways, to the people of small town mid-America. It is a world of railroads cutting through town; city streets sided by vacant lots and skinny buildings; sunflowers accenting semi-rural backyards and alleys; and flat, wooded landscapes responding to the changing weather of the seasons. Burchfield saw and often painted these scenes on his lunch hour and while walking to and from work at his cost accounting job at the Mullins metal fabricating plant in his home town of Salem (pop. 10,000), Ohio.

At that time (1916) Charles Burchfield was 23 years old. He had just finished four year's training on a scholarship to an art school in industrial Cleveland, 65 miles to the northwest. The Mullins plant was along the Pennsy railroad on the south part of town, and Charles lived with his widowed mother and some of his five brothers and sisters on the rural fringe to the north. This early period in his painting ended in the Fall of 1921. By that time he had become engaged to a girl from a nearby farm, and around Thanksgiving moved to Buffalo to take a job designing wallpapers for the Birge Company; a job his 1917 paintings helped him to get.

In looking at these early paintings one can see that what struck Burchfield about such ordinary subject matter were the moods and feelings they seemed to embody and provoke. As when he was a child, he not only attended to the look of things, but also to their feeling, their spirit. Now, fifty years later, we can encounter his images and be taught by them to see again and feel again the riches in the ordinary world around us.


Railroad Track In Spring, 1920. Watercolor, 14-1/2 x 16-1/2". Frank K. M. Rehn Galleries, New York City.

Moon Over Village, July 2, 1917. Wc., 19 x 22". Frank K. M. Rehn Galleries.
GWENDOLYN BROOKS: TINTINNABULATION

JUMP BAD, A NEW CHICAGO ANTHOLOGY. Broadside, 1972. 182 pages.

"Gwendolyn Brooks can do much more with words than entertain. She is more than the decorated cardboard cake in the baker's window—for display purposes only."

I HAD EXPECTED A DIFFERENT kind of presence—a distant and aloof manner—but I encountered an amiable woman who shoved a few giant images through her soft voice into that jumble of faces, a papered hoop burst through by figures so animated that one could not merely nod in polite, measured 'appreciation. The response to Gwendolyn Brooks' poetry the night of her reading at Valparaiso University was emotional and dangerously similar to the Retired Ladies' enthusiasm at their annual Poetry Circle Tea. A few in the audience had expected more. In fact, Gwendolyn Brooks can do much more with words than entertain. She is more than the decorated cardboard cake in the baker's window—for display purposes only. For much of the audience poetry had been a mystery. That night the poet split right out of her poems and, suddenly, poetry was no longer an abstraction. It was real; it could actually be tasted—even if it was only icing. A standing ovation? Well, yes, but let it be for Gwendolyn Brooks, one of the best contemporary poets; let it be for her Art, that huge and wonderful mélange of recorded experiences; but do not Red McKuen-ize her by applauding only the frills. Like one of those squirming marginal notes in a book of popular poetry lent to me by a friend, the audience seemed to breathe one sonorous and giantly bland "How true!"

Gwendolyn Brooks deserves more than this, but part of her beauty and mystery is that she probably does not care about the reasons she is lauded. In the introduction to Jump Bad she writes, "These black writers do not care if you call their products Art or Peanuts. Artistic Survival, appointment to Glory, appointment to Glory among the anointed elders, is neither their crevice nor creed. They give to the ghetto gut. Ghetto gut receives. Ghetto giver's gone."

Gwendolyn Brooks, however, cannot escape her art nor does she really want to. Desiring a larger audience than many of her earlier works would afford, she has become more interested in reaching her sisters and brothers than in being the subject of scholarly research. This is, perhaps, one of the reasons her poetry goes beyond mere personal statement. One finds few confessional

Jill Baumgaertner received her BA from Emory University (1968) and her MA from Drake University (1969). She has published previously in The Cresset.
elements. Her poetry is the scene recreated, a series of images, pictures, vignettes, which allow the reader to see her world and her people. One collides with her experiences. These accidental jostlings push the reader into her scenes.

**THE WORLD OF GWENDOLYN BROOKS** is a collection of her major works, most of which have been out of print for a few years. *A Street in Bronzeville*, her first published collection, is a picture of life in Bronzeville, the black section of Chicago, which in 1945 was still defined by a few boundaries. Through these poems one is able to feel a part of what it means to be black and to live in a black world. "The mother" says, "Abortions will not let you forget" and after attempting to rationalize out of conscience her "dim killed children," concludes with the matter-of-fact, but startling realization:

You were born, you had body, you died.
It is just that you never giggled or planned or cried.

"Sadie and Maud" presents the personifications of life and death in Bronzeville. Sadie, "one of the livingest chits," also gives life.

Sadie bore two babies
Under her maiden name
Maud and Ma and Papa
Nearly died of shame.
The death Sadie finally suffers is merely her "last so-long," a natural extension of her special approach to life, accepting each grimy, beautiful moment, scraping life "with a fine-tooth comb." College-educated Maud lives on, "a thin brown mouse," alone and scuttling, probably quite sensible and grim-faced.

In the same volume the hunchback girl dreams of a "straight," "regular," "planned" heaven where she will become the "princess of properness." Another child, protected and limited in her "front-yard" life, yearns for the back-yard weeds, the "wonderful fun" of the charity children, and the romance of the alley.

My mother, she tells me that Johnnie Mae
Will grow up to be a bad woman.
That George'll be taken to Jail soon or late
(On account of last winter he sold our back gate).
But I say it's fine. Honest, I do.
And I'd like to be a bad woman, too.

And wear the brave stockings of night-black lace
And strut down the streets with paint on my face.

The child speaks as a child, demonstrating the rhythm Gwendolyn Brooks uses so well. There is little artificial use of meter; rather, the speech, with all inflections and intonations, is the meter.

The energy of "Satin-Legs Smith" is controlled, feline, and deliberate. Living with a grace and style that does not include Brahms or fine sculpture, he "squires his lady to dinner at Joe's Eats." He is Art.

He looks into his mirror, loves himself—
The neat curver here; the angularity
That is appropriate at just its place;
The technique of a variegated grace.

**MAUD MARtha** (1953), Gwendolyn Brooks's autobiographical novel, is a resplendent piece of poetry. Here, in thirty-four chapters, one finds a study in conciseness and concrete image. With language that is more than pleasant prose, Maud Martha's world breaks into being and the entire work becomes an affirmation of life. In the last chapter, Maud Martha concludes: "It was doubtful whether the ridiculousness of man would ever completely succeed in destroying the world—or, in fact, the basic equanimity of the least and commonest flower: for would its kind not come up again in the spring? come up, if necessary, among, between, or out of—beastly inconvenient!—the smashed corpses lying in strict composure, in that hush infallible and sincere."

**ANNIE ALLEN**, ONE OF GWENDOLYN BROOKS's most compressed collections, received the Pulitzer Prize in 1950. One finds some very carefully worked poems, but not much spontaneity. Here is form, discipline, and restraint. Her sonnets are masterly examples of the ways a poet can use form to enhance meaning. In the best poetic tradition, meter and rhyme do not seem artificially imposed, but very naturally merge with the sense of the poems. These are poems for the literate, who, in leather-bound libraries, can civilly discuss and deplore social problems without ever smashing into them on the street. In Annie Allen Gwendolyn Brooks has not yet learned how to address the black man, although she seems profoundly aware of the need for black men to unite. She understands the message of the
white society which "knows how to be discreet." Manners become masks.

... What
We are to hope is that intelligence
Can sugar up our prejudice with politeness.
Politeness will take care of what needs caring.
For the line is there.
She concludes *Annie Allen* with a plea and a realization.

Rise.
Let us combine. There are no magics or elves
Or timely godmothers to guide us. We are lost, must
Wizard a track through our own screaming weed.
The weeds of the back yard have lost their romance. The charity children have grown up. There is no more waiting.

Bitterness skims the surface of a few poems in *The Bean Eaters* (1960). "The Lovers of the Poor," pink-painted, padded, nail-polished, scented Ladies from the Ladies' Betterment League, properly trained to love the poor, have never seen the poor. When they do, they find:

The stench; the urine, cabbage, and dead beans,
Dead porridges of assorted dusty grains,
The old smoke, heavy diapers, and, they're told,
Something called chitterlings. The darkness. Drawn Darkness, or dirty light. The soil that stirs.
The soil that looks the soil of centuries. And for that matter the general oldness.
Old old old.
The Ladies retreat at a canter, disturbed that poverty is not beautiful. They will avoid further visits. This indifference graces other poems. The worlds of the white insurance man and Mrs. Small coincide briefly when he comes to collect. But, except for money, there is no exchange. He merely "would have to glare idiotically into her own sterile stare a moment..." Other encounters are not so restrained. Indifference becomes hate when Rudolph Reed moves into a "street of bitter white". He is harassed and finally murdered by his neighbors.

*IN THE MECCA* (1968) REVEALS SOME changes in Gwendolyn Brooks's approach to poetry. She seems more socially conscious, but these poems are not in any sense didactic. This is leaner language, more direct, and rarely labored. With no wasted space or energy, she creates the tragedy of Pepita, who was not old enough to realize that "black is not beloved." The search for the murdered child proceeds through many rooms in the Mecca building and there one finds the streaks and hums of life: Boontise De Broe, "a Lady among Last Ladies"; Prophet Williams, who "advertises/in every Colored journal in the world..."; Great-great Gram who "hobbles, fumbles at the knob, mumbles..."; Marian, who "Sings/but sparsely, and subscribes to axioms/atop her gargoyles and tamed foam." One is drawn back to Maud Martha's definition of Tragedy: men who had no future—and no memorable past. Again in "The Second Sermon on the Warpland" one finds the weed and the flower.

Big Bessie's feet hurt like nobody's business
but she stands—bigly—under the unruly scrutiny, stands in the wild weed.

In the wild weed
she is a citizen,
and is a moment of highest quality;
amirable.

It is lonesome, yes. For we are the last of the loud.
Nevertheless, live.
Conduct your blooming in the noise and whip of the whirlwind.

Gwendolyn Brooks has acted upon her own exhortation. She has conducted writers' workshops with the Blackstone Rangers, traveled to Africa, and lived through the shootings of King, Evers, Malcolm X, Mark Clark, and Fred Hampton. By 1972, with the publication of *Report from Part One*, she had redefined herself. The most enlightening part of this book is her account of her trip to Africa. She had already met the New Black and she was quite concerned with discovering just where she fit in. In Africa she listened to the Swahili rhythms, admired the soft-spoken women, and finally realized just how far from their roots the American black had been transplanted. She also felt alienated; she was the foreigner. She writes: "THE AFRICANS! They insist on calling themselves Africans and their little traveling brothers and sisters 'Afro-Americans' no matter how much we want them to recognize our kinship."

She speaks of visiting Part One and Part Two of a game park. In the first section the
animals are confined, vulnerable, and fearful. The second section is a natural environment for the animals and they are allowed to roam freely. This analogy connects obviously with changes and developments in her own life, but her actual report of Part One is not successful. It is haphazardly thrown together and generously padded with twenty-four pages of pictures of her family at various stages, her dog and even her dog-sitter. Her actual account of her early years, Part One, covers only fifty pages of 215. The Prefaces by Don Lee and George Kent are helpful, but general. Two interviews are reproduced. An Appendix of "Sources and Illuminations" is included and, finally, a "collage" tacked onto the end. Perhaps these are random pages from a writer's journal. At any rate, there is no organization, no unity, and no real effort to discard insignificant detail. One must chop through an entanglement of her baby-book statistics, including chapter lists and sentence notes for a "book-not-to-be," describing her children's development. At one point she does say, "I realize how private is family pleasure." One wishes she had heeded intuition and left these bronzed moments in the closet.

Gwendolyn Brooks is doing much to encourage the Black Voice. In Jump Bad she introduces several young black writers with fresh voices and more than just good images. They write poems which tickle and pierce.

Part Two of Gwendolyn Brooks's life was heralded by a switch from Harper's to Broadside Press. In 1969 "Riot" was published. These three poems were derived from the events that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King. A revealing contrast can be made between John Cabot in the first poem of this volume and the Ladies of the Betterment League. The world has changed. John Cabot, "all whitebluerose below his golden hair," cannot, as did the Ladies, "avoid inhaling the laden air." He finds the Poor "sweaty and unpretty" and, besides, "...they were coming toward him in rough ranks. In seas. In windsweep. They were black and loud./And not detainable. And not discreet." The Riot breathed "the fume of pig foot, chitterling and cheap chili." And he fell amid the blood and glass. This is no clucking Lady trotting out the door. No more can one merely exit and dismiss. The Black Voice is louder, much louder.

Gwendolyn Brooks is doing much to encourage that Voice. In Jump Bad she introduces several young black writers, all fresh voices with more than just good images. Their work has rhythm and language which folds, entwines, twists, and slaps across, under, and beneath the senses. These are poems which tickle and pierce.

Carolyn Rodgers strikes her scenes into action and her poems strut across the page. Sigmonde Wimberli's "Fear Came Early" is a masterfully written, chilling account of a lynching of a child as seen by another child. Don Lee's poems are, as usual, energetic smacks of lusciously chewable words.

Gwendolyn Brooks's influence is extensive. She has plunged into a stream of Voices, and has captured a few silver Shimmers. Of course, her own voice resounds.

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**CONTEMPLATIONS**

of an

**EARTH RODENT**

following the

**WINTER SOLSTICE**

Blink? Blinded? Shadow! Shambles!
Cold continues. Dismay. Dejection.
Snow submits. Branches bud.
Deed done. Depart. Descend.
Sleep slumber sleep slumber.

Gilbert Lehmann
Voluntarism: Salve or Solution

As a nation dedicated to the principle of democracy, we tolerate an inordinate number of contradictions to our claims to liberty and justice for all. As a people, on the other hand, we have established a record for dedication to humanitarian causes that stands without equal anywhere in the world. Americans are big on voluntarism. Over half are presently involved in the work of one service organization or another. Of that half, one third supports two or more at the same time, a recent sociological survey states. Since recorded memberships list only those who are actively or supportively engaged, there is no way to estimate the number of anonymous thousands who might be counted by way of their digging down annually to keep the good work rolling. It is safe to say that we all have had or are having our own voluntary experiences. Whether we live in small towns or great metropolitan areas we find abundant opportunities for demonstrating extra-curricular Samaritanism vis-a-vis agencies-by-the-score whose lives and objectives depend upon voluntary participation.

In Valparaiso, a city of modest size, the Chamber of Commerce has compiled a staggering run-down of organizations which may be classified as service-oriented. One-hundred and thirty in all, ranging in nature from civic betterment, fraternal and political, to health and welfare. Nearby Chicago provides a list which quadruples that within the city area alone. For those with time and energy and the yen to do some good, it’s merely a matter of signing up.

The larger organizations which are familiar to us all—Red Cross, Salvation Army, Peace Corps and VISTA, the “Y’s”, United Fund, Rotary, Kiwanians, etc.—are only the beginning. Over the past thirty years the specialized needs of our society have inspired the establishment of ever more specialized organizations. We now count out on fingers and toes those groups which pay heed to the problems of alcoholism, drug addiction, mental health, abortion counselling, family planning, and the dozen and one specifics of poverty. While the patriotic, professional, and hobby are popular in every community and do perform definite services for it, the majority of the organizations maintained by voluntary support have a “helping-people” characteristic.

For the past two months I have read all I could find on the subject, collaring friends, students, family, and near-strangers for opinions. Wanting to believe that the technological expectations of this age had not obliterated the humanitarian impulse, I asked: “What do you think of when you hear the term ‘voluntarism’?” Research results affirmed my faith. Without exception a hundred answers fell into line: HELPING PEOPLE. Even my young son co-operated. A “Volunteers of America” commercial had just flashed across the screen when I placed the question squarely in his face. “What’s that all about, Mark?” With simple faith and pure eye he shot back “Helping people!” My spirits soared. All’s right with our world.

Gray-haired ladies in the pink pinafores of our local hospital Guild; blue-jeaned twenty-year olds in V.U.’s Urban Semester Program; briefcase-carrying professors; a clergyman; carpooling mothers; straight-faced businessmen and lawyers; my own boss at the Holiday Inn and the maids who stopped long enough to see if I was serious—all agreed. Voluntarism certainly has to do with helping people. Half used the interview moment as a means of getting my name on the dotted line. Half had a pet charity which was in need of expanded membership and wanted me at the central office within the hour. But this was

Lois Bertram Reiner, a graduate of Valparaiso University (BA 1952) has published before in The Cresset.
purely academic, I reminded them. I had my own allegiances.

Then a second question had to be asked. What needy people are we talking about? Who, specifically, requires our help? One researcher, in describing the mechanics of voluntary organization administration, created an easy label by which the lay person could understand the nature of the person these organizations mostly deal with: DEPENDENT PEOPLE. With that in mind, we might quickly run through the conditions which determine such dependence: crippling diseases, blindness, advanced age, alcoholism and drug addiction, imprisonment, hunger, inadequate housing, educational handicaps, cultural deprivation, emotional disturbances, economic problems, unemployment, limited access to legal counsel, to name a few.

The general consensus proved to be in agreement with this classification of dependent people. Each condition does, without a doubt, attract the sympathetic attentions of the run-of-the-mill volunteer, whether in the name of local or government-funded agency assistance.

Scanning the list a second time enables us to get more on target. If voluntarism exists as a demonstration of positive concern for dealing creatively with the dehumanization of such dependence, it would seem that voluntarism is primarily dealing with one particular segment of American society. Which segment is it that the majority (if not all) of these conditions refer to—inadequate housing, hunger, imprisonment, educational handicaps, cultural deprivation, unemployment, economic problems, alcoholism and drug addiction, and limited access to legal counsel? Poor people. And indeed, poor people obviously need all the help American voluntarism cares to extend. Not only at Thanksgiving and Christmas, but on a daily plugging-away basis. If this is not what half of America had intended, then we must turn this over to a more realistic author. But, for the time being, let us just take the steps, beginning with the premise that we Americans certainly want all of our brothers and sisters in this land to benefit from the abundant resources it has to offer.

“HELPING PEOPLE” DOES have quite an equalitarian ring. Non-salaried efforts in that behalf are uniquely American and illustrate an awareness by the private sector to the limitations of government. For the government has its hands full enough, encouraging scientific research, technological expertise, and programs that will benefit the most at the greatest level of efficiency. It is up to Mr. and Mrs. America then to be alert to the needs of those its massive programs are not reaching.

Harriet Naylor in Volunteers of Today defines voluntary service as

What needy people are we talking about? Who, specifically requires our help?

“that imponderable gift viewed as vital to the preservation of the democracy.” Other authors, dealing with the same topic, call it “civic commitment,” “demonstrating good citizenship,” and “participating in the democratic processes.” Since there is a built-in assumption that the volunteer is well acquainted with the needs which require tending, and has an intelligent grasp on the good-of-the-community, all that remains is familiarizing oneself with goals and objectives of the various organizations and zeroing in on one which has at heart the client of one's choice. If righting injustice be his/her bag, make a decision in favor of the League of Women Voters or ACLU. The plight of the aged? Senior citizen organizations. Medical research? Heart, Cancer, Muscular Dystrophy Funds. Human response to physical incapacity? Hospitals and foundations for crippled children. Concern for the motherless? Day care centers and orphanages. Educational imbalance? Tutoring centers. Ad infinitum. Democracy at its best.

The ready-made opportunities for humanitarian and democratic performance in this country are undeniably without equal around the globe. And judging from the impressive catalog of service organizations, which is presently sliding off the edge of my desk, those opportunities are expanding. The dependent people are obviously in good and well-organized hands.

Who's hands they are in seems to be a matter of major interest. Doctoral dissertations, government surveys, sociological studies, and popular periodical features (including one niftily entitled “How to be a Volunteer Without Eating Cucumber Sandwiches and Wearing White Gloves”) dealing with “The Volunteer” are myriad. Since American expertise is to be for everyone, no exceptions, the call for voluntary assistance is becoming increasingly louder. Voluntarism value to the democracy is immeasurable, for the presence of the needy is something of a social embarrassment and must be dealt with publicly.

But whether an embarrassment with their failure to perform as productively as the mainstream has inspired a shying away from public attention on the part of poor people, or whether their predicaments have simply been overlooked by a mechanistic dedication to the masses, is not the question. Those predicaments are apparently as deeply entrenched as the will to attack them voluntarily. Therefore, we would investigate the nature of those who are taking the offensive on the battleground of Dependency to find out what wars are being won.

FOR A START, WHO EVEN has time in these days of competitive economics? Back to the data... back to the people on the street—the young mother getting some needed zip from her third cup of coffee; the matron on the go; the contemplative theologian; the humanities major; the supermarket manager; the harried administrator; the program co-ordinator; and more.

January, 1974
No secret at all, each proclaimed. Volunteers are simply kindly people with time. Incorporated in the answers were phrases like “charity-minded” and “committed to a cause.” Boiled down for clarification, however, it came out in one way or another that the number one characteristic of the modern volunteer today is TIME.

Who has leftover moments for anything other than surviving the marketplace? Women’s Lib or no? Economically speaking? In reference to age?

Taking them on by one we come up with women, the rich, and the young. Or, as Naylor capsules it: “... the ardent young, the retired business and professional person, the able and self-sufficient person.” Women, who statistically fill the ranks in the majority, must fall into each slot, and they do. Men take second place, but Rosemary Radford Ruether has her ideas on why that is so. More on that later.

The young, the women, and the rich then are those the service organizations are vying for all over the land? So it seems, from my own observations of twenty-plus years (after the college degree and the beginning of enlightenment) and a strong degree of verification from academically-motivated sources.

Four of the volumes checked out of Moellering’s Library deal exclusively with modern approaches to enticing, training, and maintaining socially-aware recruits. Complex public relations programs were outlined and suggestions for balancing the apprenticeship period’s “drudge tasks” with plentiful “meaningful inter-personal experiences between volunteer and staff, volunteer and client.” It is that training period which receives the authors’ primary thrusts.

In pursuing the goals of the organization, paid professionals must not fail to nurture the allegiance which “conscientious, competent, skillful, educated, human, unique, and satisfied sub-professionals” bring for strengthening those goals. Every effort must be made to insure “satisfying experiences for the volunteer... if that core of idealism is to be preserved... if we are not to be de-humanized and voluntarism is not to go altogether.”

A friend who happens to be deeply involved in the administration of several of our local groups backed all this up. “In this day and age, we thank our lucky stars so many angels are still willing to serve,” she exclaimed. “To keep them, however, we’ve had to change many of our procedures, cut down on strategy sessions... and bend over backwards to accommodate them with a wider variety of tasks from which to choose.” This bending over backwards is apparent in the PR approaches, membership drives, service awards, and a dozen guarantees handed today’s volunteer that his service is warmly welcomed.

The number one characteristic for the volunteer today is time.

Rule books and training manuals which many volunteers take in hand upon indoctrination have been restructured to eliminate the aura of “organizational dictatorship.” While having at heart primarily the welfare of the client who brought them all together, there seems to be an unusual emphasis on the happiness of the recruit. “Dissatisfied volunteers can undo expensive public relations efforts,” one researcher puts it. And in that case, it is presumed, the client can be just as easily undone?

Whatever might be said about motivations, voluntarism as we view it today is still geared towards serving the dependent—in body, mind, and condition. If membership in one organization or the other elicits a civic slap on the back or a raise at the office, so be it. If a hunger to be engaged in charitable work with like-minded people is satisfied, good enough. Nor should we get picky over whether volunteers are just a bunch of do-gooders getting their kicks from “belonging.” Not at all. What is important it seems is that the whole lovely “ism” has a built-in happy ending for all. The dependent are receiving many benefits, and there’s nothing illegal about the warm feeling one gets in the belly from helping out.

In fact, one sociologist points out, “The stepped-up use of volunteers is one of the most promising areas of program in the field of public welfare today. The potential benefits are great and come in the form of a two-way street: the volunteers get done a variety of jobs that need doing; and in the process they come face to face with needy men, women, and children who make up the welfare rolls—thus bringing better understanding in the community of public welfare problems and activities.”

From the sum of available data it should consequently be deduced that the plight of the needy is being daily diminished. With so many putting so much into the needle, it seems only logical that much of dependency which we relate to poor people has responded favorably to the injection.

But poor people are worse off than ever before, educationally, socially, economically—another one of those expertise-defying diseases which has not yet enjoyed the results of the lab. Could it be that we are not trying hard enough? Or approaching the problems with sufficient creativity and innovation to keep up with available modern techniques? Are the wrong people being charitable?

Since a new agency is formed almost monthly, and old ones are receiving encouraging support from the public sector, we can’t say we’re not trying our hardest. Financial assistance from private and federal sources ensure availability of the most up-to-date material. The exuberance of youth, the talent and sophistication of the wealthy, and the compassion and wisdom of women should most certainly guarantee heady results.

But the results are not obviously heady at all. Whatever good results voluntarism may lay claim to, it cannot, as it presently stands, claim to be about social change. The ardent
young, the retired professional and business people, all the self-sufficient and able people currently donating x-number of hours and dollars and energy units on behalf of helping people might be trying valiantly to make dependent people comfortable, but the fact remains that the condition of the needy is still one of incredible discomfort.

We subsidize a canned ham for their Thanksgiving, and by Advent they're hungry again. Our Adopt-A-Family, through the local welfare office, gets them through one Christmas, and by Easter their son is in jail. Our weekly tutoring sessions make See-Dick-See-Jane gloriously clear, but have little to do with moving them out of their day-to-day despair. We read, sing, paint, solicit, and pack up goodies on their behalf only to awaken the next morning and discover they're still undereducated, undernourished, dismally housed and maltreated everywhere.

Could it possibly be that our charitable efforts have no viable impact on the total situation because they are, in reality, only serving to strengthen the very institutions which effect dependency? Ninety-five per cent of all voluntarism is serving as adjunct to those prisons, hospitals, government agencies, programs, educational systems, and civic charities that, while giving the impression of helping, only serve as instruments by which problems of poor people are focalized, eliminating any view of the dimensions of the totality.

We would demonstrate humanity while it seems we only perpetuate chaos. Our performances in the specific areas of need do not require investigating the causes of despair, nor, apparently, do they require much thinking in depth at all. The organizations serving the various institutions and agencies have gained status from supporting the latter and are invested with the dubious privilege of strengthening their own structures via co-operative piggy-backing. Thus, the volunteer beefs up the "helping" myth by simply falling into line, performing loving tasks, adhering to the rules and regulations of the organization, never questioning to what extent participation in the whole venture is actually helping the clients' total situation at all.

IF VOLUNTARISM IS TO BE equated with humaneness, I feel that somehow it should be urgently pursuing ways for reordering human priorities in the social structure so that living humanely together is made possible. To begin to recognize what social priorities are responsible for rendering the poor inactive in the democracy should be of primary importance to the voluntary organizations. There is instead an emphasis, whether unconscious or not, put on poor people which reduces them to "object status," and on their predicaments a stigma which reduces treatment to one of manipulation and domestication. How lovely it would be if voluntary service could be employed as that activity which would free us all to view one another simply as human beings.

For that to happen, however, critical analysis of the WHOLE and dialog with the poor themselves is called for. But how can that happen when our nose-to-nose experiences with needy men, women, and children are sifted through organizational administration almost exclusively? Who, in fact, really wants to plunge into all the strenuous "Whys" of their socio-economic shortcomings? Or give up our hold on a lifestyle to which we've grown accustomed by necessarily adjusting our priorities? Our adoration of scientific-technological training and expertise has diluted any appetite for private investigation of the WHOLE, and yet we would grow white-on-the-knuckles were we assured that our every overturing via charitable service not only acts to further dependency, but is anesthetizing us all.

How this is so gets us into the theological realm, a little over my head.

Yet, I don't see how being a compassionate Candy Stripper, or a just coordinator of welfare programs, or a loving broth-feeder, or a charitable solicitor of money and members has anything to do with God's primary will for us: To be one with another, as the Son to the Father. To be, in fact, just, compassionate, loving, and charitable beyond the agency's expectations. If we have been freed by Christ to manifest those characteristics in our daily life, it appears that we should be busy scrutinizing the realities surrounding man-beyond-the-institution.

Jacques Ellul manages to describe quite well what our non-involvement in the Whole is doing to our humaneness. The comfortable and efficient order which our mechanistic advances have provided the world make personal decisions with regard to the value of that order increasingly unattractive and unnecessary. Everything has been zapped out on the IBM, proved and packaged for easy consumption. There is an answer for everything, a miracle cure, a ready program, an expert department—until we get face to face with poor people on their own turf. Only then can we begin to demythologize. Only there can we recognize chaos and begin to question our part in it.

As Christians, Ellul says "our calling is an entry into disorder established by man (although apparently 'ordered'), and this disorder will be upset and put into question each time we attempt to express that calling."

I don't know about Ellul. I read him and could hug him on the spot—but my own realities come between us. The thought of upsetting all that lovely disorder—to even question it—lines up with Christian freedom-demonstration, but, at the same time, it makes my hair stand on end.

But if our voluntary efforts aren't producing any commendable results in the arena of justice and liberty for all, or even bringing us a step closer to being one with another, why do we persist in filling the ranks?
Rosemary Ruether (we promised you we would return to her) suggests it's all "an integral part of the pacification of alienated work and political relationships which send us on an increasingly obsessive search for compensation in our private inter-personal lives." As she sees it, and I rather agree, today's emphasis on, and the compensatory experiences which are almost always seen it, and I rather agree, today's emphasis on, and the compensatory of alienated work and power, but in the disciplined who experience really personal humanized society. It is, as she sees big business, and 'enlightened' government agencies which send personal values and community, all of which have been fractured by mobility and technical management have deprived us of old warm patterns by which we once lived. It is only sensi-bly to seek out those ready-made opportunities for humanitarian service which presently shoulder the responsibilities of parish, home, and community, all of which have been fractured by mobility and modernization. We must settle for that brand of concern and employ as much time and talent left over from our workaday worlds to keep it firm. Right?

Wrong, if we still equate voluntarism with "helping." For help con-notes an active participation in eliminating the need for Band Aids. It means scrutinizing the Whole so that the causes for dependency are finally revealed, dealt with, and eradicated to the tune of some serious restructuring of our personal and social priorities.

But where can this happen, if the private person is so powerless, so decisionless in this mass society? The Church? That would seem the logical place to start. Its preaching, teaching, fellowship, and sacraments are there for encouraging the faith-ful to be just, loving, compassionate, and charitable. It is there we gain courage to love people to the point of sacrifice. For the work of the Church is one of enabling its sons and daughters to resist the world's solutions . . . of freeing them for preserving life rather than perpetuating myths and chaos. Who knows what fantastic creativity would manifest itself in the life of the Church in-the-world once it acknowledges its gift to the world? Its programs would no longer be carbon copies of the secular approach, and its message would fill the brothers and sisters with the courage to actually volunteer in new ways—like talking and sharing with poor people, living next door to them, worshipping with them, initiating brand new lifestyles by which to implement it all. According to James, chapter 1, it's all so simple: "... to be uncorrupted by the world." One friend actually envisions getting to the point where we're not giving the traditional basket at all, but rather something that on December 25th we give to our real friends . . . a bottle of booze (Christian Brothers 100 proof?). I know. It sounds good, but don't I know we're now talking about pain?

"To live in this world as witnesses to the Incarnation by taking the initiative to become involved in the incarnation in a manner which can never again be repeated" (Ellul) presents a ghastly threat to that comfort and security which we aren't apparently thrilled about relinquishing . . . unless we can together stand the pain of discovering humaneness and get on with LIVING.

Already I hear the snickers from the sociologists, and they've probably got a point. But if voluntarism is not about social change, or if it cannot offer anything other than accelerated dependence on society by the poor and heightened fragmentation in an already super-fragmented culture, what then is it good for?
LETTER FROM ABROAD – WALTER SORELL

THE DAY THE POPE WAS KIDNAPPED

and

OTHER TRIVIALITIES

IN A WORLD OF TOTAL moral bankruptcy, a world in which piracy flourishes as a new lucrative business conducted by individual criminals and mad kings who bluff and bludgeon a stunned mankind, bewildered and frightened by its own bewilderment, the daily routine of existence deteriorates into trifling with trivialities. And yet, the leaves have fallen from the trees and covered the ground for a few beautiful sunny days. With them comes a late autumn feeling for a colorful farewell. An early snowfall has covered the withering leaves according to the imperturbably cyclic motion of nature or the thing per se.

Winter and old age need not have anything frightening about them. The City of Zuerich invited the pianist Artur Rubinstein—not to play but to speak and read from his memoirs, The Early Years. The spirit of this almost eighty-eight-year-old artist is unbroken by the years, by the experiences he has accumulated, and by the obvious closeness of death. He still walks with the lightness of a young man and chats (one of his favorite words) with the ease of a professional entertainer.

Rubinstein is a storehouse of anecdotes which he unpacks with skill and wit. What impressed me about him was the simplicity of his wisdom, the nobility of his mind, and, above all, the humanity hidden behind his love for music and life, the seriousness of his humor, and the intensity with which he still embraces the dark and light shades of existence. Perhaps it is irrelevant that he still feels young with young girls, as he admits, and looks at them with the same enthusiasm now as he did in his youth. On the other hand, it tells of a never-ending belief in the beauty of life and a sublime (even though sublimated) feeling for the love of living. Although Rubinstein often has given hours of musical excitement and exhilaration to many, his appearance as one who likes to chat and tell stories from his past gave courage to all to go on living.

I HAVE OFTEN WONDERED about the sound of speech, the change that words suffer when being translated. I saw Israel Horovitz's The Indian Wants the Bronx, produced by Zbigniew Stok's Kammertheater in Zuerich together with a short play, The Rats. Both one-acters are frightening exercises in human aggression, the latter symbolically dealing with rats fighting over a baby rat in a slum-like background, the former (well-known and now often produced by a number of European theatres) dramatizes violence emerging from boredom. The Indian Wants the Bronx in particular, badly needs the slang peculiar to its environment. Although the young actors tried valiantly to set the scene afire with their hostilities and numb feelings for human lives, Rudolf Stoiber's German version lacked the bite and intensity of the original. It may not be his fault at all. The German language has no equivalent for the precision and sharpness of the English. The German tongue is heavier, the words longer, the way of expression more circumstantial. The nonsensical brutality dominating the play was somehow lost in the German idiom, however colloquial it tried to be.

What happens to Harold Pinter and James Saunders when spoken with a German tongue? The Ham- burg Thalia Theater presented two short plays by these English dramatists, Pinter's The Lover (first shown at Arts Theatre in London ten years ago) and Saunders' Alas, Poor Fred. Bourgeois boredom (the word bourgeois is not used in Marxian terms and may easily be exchanged for affluent) need not necessarily lead to violence caused by the lostness of youth no longer finding any sense and usefulness in society, as in the plays by Horovitz.

Pinter not only lampoons the old triangle situation when the husband takes on the role of the lover and sneaks into his own house to have an extramarital relationship with his own wife. There is a great deal of wisdom in this euphoric triviality reflecting the despair in a life of routine, the needed excess of imaginative stimulation to keep a relationship from sagging, a relationship of two people who appear to have everything except a true measure of their own being. The trivial and only seemingly banal in Pinter's dialogue, with its pregnant pauses, become in the German idiom heavy with meaningfulness or glib as in a Neil Simon comedy. The difficulty seems obvious when the program bill states that we face “a newly revised version after the translation of Willy H. Thiem.” Poor Thiem and even poorer Pinter.

Boy Gobert and Ingrid Andree played a very entertaining boulevard comedy in Feydeau-esque fashion. They also did a superb acting job with a minor Saunders in his most Ionescoesque mood about a couple grotesquely aged and reminiscing about the murdered Fred, first husband of the wife. Saunders' idea may very likely be that people change, that Mr. Pringle remembers having killed Fred, a fact for which he tries to find a trivial reason (like love) without really finding it. But Mrs. Pringle has not yet quite severed the umbilical cord with her past and asks the key question of this slight and absurd playlet: “How can one be something at one time, and then again something else?” Here the dialogue moved beautifully.
Hilde Spiel who translated the play did a superb job.

**THE KARL MARX PLAY,** a musical by Rochelle Owens and Galt MacDermot, came to Europe as it was done by The American Place Theatre. I missed this musical when it was premiered in New York. Now, partly induced by my conscientiousness and partly by my curiosity to witness the reaction of a European audience to it, I went, witnessed, and winced. Even the illogical must make some sense onstage, but Karl Marx, portrayed as a nebbich being in debt all the time, suffering from hemorrhoids in public throughout the play while trying to write *Das Kapital,* was only whimsical in spots and a fragile triviality throughout.

It might have been slightly better had The American Place Theatre seen fit to send a more skilled cast to Europe. The audience was partly amused, particularly those spectators who thought this must be some kind of a daring avant-garde musical coming not only from the New World but also a world that is new. The others detested its vulgarity, poverty in ideas, and boring banalities in text and music. I sided with this latter group of Europeans.

**A GOOD THEATRICAL FARE** was the German version of Jason Miller's *That Championship Season,* as produced by the Schauspielhaus Zuerich. This play about the moral bankruptcy and phoney dreams of nonexistent greatness in the past found an interpretation by the director Michael Kehlmann which proved an astounding understanding of the American scene. The dialogue in Jan Lustig's translation ran smoothly, the actors gave a penetrating characterization of their parts.

With this play, and especially with *The Day The Pope Was Kidnapped,* the Schauspielhaus has scored two hits. The Brazilian humorist and dramatist, Joao Bethencourt, wrote a farcical comedy about the world's latest entertaining feat: Kidnapping. Why not kidnap a Pope who happens to be in New York and why not have a Brooklyn taxi driver, named Samuel Leibowitz, do the kidnapping? Sam, as it turns out, is a screwball, does the oddest things, but impresses His Holiness with having his heart at the right spot. He does not demand money as ransom but peace on earth for at least, twenty-four hours during which each nation must see to it that no one is tortured and killed. It is a heartwarming idea, utter Kitsch on the surface, but full of irony and depth as it rolls off.

Bethencourt has written a workable comedy with a sure ear for brief realistic dialogues and good curtain lines. It has all the sentimental ingredients needed in order to make out of man's despair and rottenness a laughable matter. We laugh and enjoy this triviality because we would love to cry about the tragic truth beneath the fun.

This comedy will be a great hit on Broadway because the American actors can make Sam Leibowitz and his family credible, which is not the case here. A poor Brooklynite family in its typical American Jewishness is a bit remote from the Swiss conception of it. But the humor of the play and its satiric bite comes through, even though the characters on stage remain two-dimensional. Some of the lines are well conceived, for instance when at the end the Pope must come up with credible proof that he has known the Leibowitz family for a long time and says: "I have known them for two thousand years." The Pope is portrayed by Heinrich Gretler, a very very old actor with a grotesque nose, who succeeds best in being himself, a simple peasant who exudes wisdom and warmth.

The triviality of this comedy with its stereotype characters and some obvious and obviously good lines is lovable because of the sincerity and sad truth which prompted it. It is as lovable as any Kitsch can be when you experience it yourself and your emotions run away with you. The Pope kidnapped for the purpose of twenty-four hours of love and peace on earth, cannot help being a blessed triviality.

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**BOOKS**

*The Cresset*
THE EVOLUTION OF HITLER’S GERMANY:
THE IDEOLOGY, THE PERSONALITY,
THE MOMENT.

A little over four decades ago Germany began her descent into Nazism. It is why the Germans turned to such a severe answer to their problems has been the subject of an endless number of books. Still the topic merits further investigation, for Nazism was not simply a careless mistake that can be lightly dismissed today. As an historical phenomenon it stands as one of the phenomena that is only partially understood event. To an older generation, it is frequently a puzzlement that is only partially comprehended. For these reasons the subject merits continued investigation and analysis, and it still awaits a classic synthesis.

In the present volume, Horst von Maltitz provides a summary of a wide range of the writing and documentation that is available. To this he adds his own mature thought and evaluation. He concentrates on the ideas that formed the National Socialist ideology, the basic conditions that brought that movement to power, and the extraordinary personality of Hitler. Although not an historian by profession the author is well qualified to undertake such a book. He spent the first twenty-three years of his life in Germany where he studied at the universities of Berlin, Marburg, Hamburg, and Jena. Moreover, he leaves no doubt that he is widely read in the literature of his subject.

The Evolution of Hitler’s Germany is divided into three main parts. The largest section of the book is devoted to the various ideological components that explain the roots and the nature of the National Socialist movement. The author’s discussion of anti-Semitism is of particular interest. The German-Jewish relationship is placed in a wide setting and is analyzed from a variety of angles, including the sensitive aspect of the destructive tendencies that can be found among the German Jews themselves. Altogether the ideological components are presented in an intelligible and convincing way, and they reveal the book’s main contention that the ideas used by the National Socialists were not new. National Socialism, Mr. von Maltitz claims, was a lower-middle-class movement that exploited many elements that were a part of the cultural heritage of post-World War I Germany. Hitler provided new dressing for old ideas. He intensified and vulgarized them, and he molded them into a promise of a future utopia. He appealed to German prejudices and sanctified vague longings. And he adapted his ideas “to the needs of mediocre men and of the young.” (p. 270) The result was a National Socialist ideology that integrated an entire system of delusions about the German past and occasioned a quasi-religious fervor supported by a sense of historical mission. Accepted on faith, it seemed to generate an emotional verification of its own.

The second major part of the book concentrates on Hitler’s personality. Incorporating psychological interpretations of Hitler by men like Erich Fromm, Walter C. Langer, Henry A. Murray, and Erik Erikson, this section is especially interesting. Hitler’s childhood and adolescence, his relationship with his parents, his sex life, and his religiousness are all examined along with his basic character traits. He is described as an irrational and highly destructive person, an “eternal adolescent” dominated by a mother complex and driven by current characteristics of religious fanaticism. The author sharpens his description of Hitler by showing how his thoughts deviated from those of many of his associates and supporters. We are presented with evidence that suggests that one of history’s most powerful men was also one of its most abnormal. What is missing from this section, however, is a concise but scholarly biographical sketch of Hitler to provide balance and background for psychological opinions expressed. The author claims that since several excellent biographies have been written on Hitler, he sees no reason to repeat here what has been told elsewhere. His omission is unfortunate.

In the last and shortest part of the book, entitled “The Helpers,” the author investigates special groups within and without Germany “who by words and acts of commission or omission did much to help National Socialism to come to power or to retain it.” (p. 406) The German communists, the nobility and big businessmen, the educators and students, and the Western powers, he claims, particularly must share part of the responsibility for Hitler. With the exception of his comments on the educators and students, this section lacks the development of the previous two. Too many basic questions about why “The Helpers” gave Hitler their support remain unanswered. In fact, the material he touches on here would form the substance of a second volume.

Interwoven between these major sections are several short and unsatisfactory chapters. One, “A Prelude: The Earlier Genocide of the German-Herero War, 1904-1905,” is a brief account of the German destruction of the Herero tribe of German South-West Africa early in this century. The entire chapter is based on one source, Helmut Bley’s Kolonialherrschaft und Sozialstruktur in Deutsch-Suedwestafrika 1894-1914. Although the account of German brutalities toward the Hereros is suggestive, it is not well enough substantiated to support the author’s contention that long before the advent of Hitler “race doctrines had become well established in the German mind and were already being applied in practice to justify the mis-
treatment and extermination of a small, weak, racially different group.” (p. 312) Another brief chapter, “Economic and Political Conditions after World War I,” contains neither the breadth nor the depth that the topic demands. Since the first section of the book delves back into decades before World War I, a consideration of economic and political conditions should be equally extensive. Furthermore he provides only a cursory treatment of these conditions during the days of the Weimar Republic. Although he warns us in his Introduction that he will present only a “limited discussion” of a few events of the time, he still should have explored deeper than he did. His failure to do so allows him to make reckless generalizations, such as his claim that the Weimar Republic “lacked statesmen who had a true ability to lead.” (p. 399) But as characteristic of the statesmen of the period he cites the aged Paul von Hindenburg and the aristocratic Franz von Papen; he makes no mention of either Frederick Ebert or Gustav Stresemann. Consequently he weakens the believability of a possibly true generalization.

Elsewhere in the volume, generalizations are advanced that require more support than the author provides. For instance, he contends that “the main source of Hitler’s ability to enchant . . . millions of Germans probably was that his sadomasochistic character structure was so much like their own, no matter that he towered above them in intelligence and leadership qualities.” (pp. 319-320) Or, in summing up the effects of Hitler’s Germany, he states: “It is conceivable, also, that this example gave some stimulus to such atrocities as American massacres of civilians in Vietnam.” (p. 272) Such statements, no doubt, contain an element of truth, but they lack the weight of evidence needed to establish their validity.

There is also a tendency toward incompleteness in the book. Mr. von Maltitz claims that National Socialism was by no means inevit-

able, but he does make it appear as the logical outcome of the German Past. Working his way through nineteenth and early twentieth century German history, he kept his eye fixed on that for which he was searching. Sometimes the wandering eye serves the historian well. There were aspects of Bismarck’s Germany, even of pre-World War I Germany, that were removed from the development of the roots of National Socialism. Even if there existed during Bismarck’s time what Frederick Meinecke once called “the hidden dark spots” from which disaster could spring, as they undoubtedly did, what has to be explained is how and why those “hidden dark spots” could come to blot out so much that was admirable and progressive among the Germans. At least the catalytic effects of World War I, without which, the eminent historian Hans Kohn warned, National Socialism would not have succeeded, should have been explained at length. The transformation of broad aspects of twentieth-century culture, particularly the evolution in mass communication, and the organizational and promotional devices employed by the National Socialist Party also should have been stressed. In short, once the author moves away from his account of the evolution of the ideas behind National Socialism (and that account covers the first two-thirds of the book), his explanation of how Hitler’s Germany evolved lacks thoroughness. It is the ideas rather than the events of history that have attracted his interest, and he alerts us to this approach in the Introduction. But one might question if the ideas and events of the past can be so easily divorced. Are they not a part of an integrated whole?

Notwithstanding these criticisms, The Evolution of Hitler’s Germany is a highly worthwhile book. It would serve either as a companion volume to standard works in the field or as sound reading for anyone who has some knowledge of German history. The book clearly and categorically presents and analyzes the cultural and intellectual currents of National Socialism. For the most part the author thoughtfully handles evidence and he is especially successful in evaluating the opinion of others who have written on the subject. He also is careful to lay to rest many of the myths that are associated with National Socialism. For example, he attacks and destroys the idea that National Socialism and other authoritarian systems of government have “a degree of efficiency, orderliness, stability, and speed of action which no democracy could hope to rival.” (p. 284) In dealing with the National Socialist disaster in retrospect, Mr. von Maltitz has a great deal to say; his treatment of this debatable chapter of history is absorbing. Few would quarrel with his final observation. What the Germans need now and seem to be acquiring, he says, “is clarity of sober unromantic thought; intellectual and emotional self-restraint; . . . a sense of reality; an ability to see not only their many admirable qualities but also their faults; a genuine effort to shed their contempt for other nations and to see the good points that others may have.” (p. 457)

People who scoff at the value of historical study should ponder the contents of this book, for it has many lessons to teach. Reading it one witnesses the terrible consequences that can result when tendencies of romantic ecstasy are allowed to rage unchecked by rational restraints of wisdom. It provides a warning of what can occur when our schools and universities lose their independence and neglect their fundamental purpose, the emancipating and training of the mind. It shows the peril that can result from either propagandized or radicalized thought. Clearly portrayed are the dangers risked by a people when they indulge in delusions of self-righteous grandeur and conceive of themselves not as members of the human race but as a chosen, superior, and an infallible entity. Furthermore, the volume underscores what can happen, even among a people like the Germans who have given so much to civiliza-
tion, when the real past remains unknown or distorted. Most of all, it reminds us that the search for the meaningful past is, after all, the search for the objective past.

JAMES D. STARTT

BURDEN OF PROOF: THE CASE OF JUAN CORONA

Invariably I am suspicious of a book dealing with some event of history that comes into print too quickly after the event it is commenting on. Such a book is bound to be either a collection of newspaper reporting or a statement of some person's pre-conceived bias about the cause and/or meaning of the event. Seldom can such a book be a serious reflection on the events. My suspicions were not allayed by Cray's Burden of Proof.

Ed Cray was an aide to Richard Hawk, the defense lawyer for Juan Corona. Corona, as you may recall, was the man convicted in January of 1973 for the murder of twenty-five migrant workers in California.

Burden of Proof is the chronological reporting of the Corona case, beginning with the uncovering of the first body in the Kagehiro Orchards and proceeding to the delivery of the guilty verdict by the jury. Although written chronologically, the book avoids reading like a newspaper serial. Cray is well organized and writes well, making for fascinating reading. Had Cray been un-associated with the case, he might have written a good book.

However, he was associated with the case, and therein lies the flaw. The book is hardly the objective analysis of a courtroom case, but rather a very prejudiced report on the affair. Trying to figure out how Corona (and lawyer Hawk) lost the case, as Cray has written the book, would be like trying to figure out why Humphrey lost the 1968 election, had one heard only Humphrey's speeches and rebuttals and nothing else that year (it would also have to pre-suppose that Humphrey's ego was a hundred times greater than it is). Cray strives to paint the law-enforcement agents, the prosecutors, and the judge as the most black-hearted people alive, while on the other hand, he attempts to paint Corona as an old immigrant grandfather who made it in the new country (Corona's innermost thoughts, as Cray has it, the morning before his arrest were all of mother, the flag, and apple pie). In short, the book is a slick sales job for a defense which failed, an attempt to restore dignity to a criminal defense lawyer who blew a case.

If your interests run to reading lawyers' defenses of their defense, this is your book. My sole recommendation would be to wait until Publishers Central Bureau has their annual $1 clearance sale of books that didn't move. The wait shouldn't be long.

DANE E. PETERSEN

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S AMERICA. His Transatlantic Travels and Writings, Volume I, 1896-1945.

This is the first of two volumes in which Barry Feinberg and Ronald Kasrils have collected the writings and described the travels of Bertrand Russell during his long association with America. Covering the period between 1896 and 1945, this volume is an extremely valuable contribution to the understanding of Russell's social and political theories. The book also contains a number of articles he wrote for magazines and newspapers, some of which the authors believe are published here for the first time.

In his autobiography Russell wrote:

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

Born in 1872, Bertrand Russell himself had come from a radical, free-thinking background. His father Lord Amberly, had lost his seat in the Parliament as a result of advocating birth-control. His mother was accused by the Duchess of Cambridge of "only liking dirty Radicals." His parents had also visited America during 1876 where they had befriended the liberals of Boston. With these unconventional influences and his brilliant mind, Russell was not content to remain active solely as an academic, and his energies and concerns were directed over the whole social and political field. They are reflected in the following expression of his attitude toward that great country during the years covered by this volume.

America will inevitably be forced into a kind of non-territorial imperialism, but I have considerable confidence that American influence will, on the whole, be exercised wisely and humanely. Indeed, in this field I have more belief in Americans than most of them have in themselves.

His first visit to America was in 1896 when he was twenty-four and just married to Alys Pearsall Smith. This journey was primarily to meet her relations. They stayed at Bryn Mawr where he gave lectures on non-Euclidean geometry, whilst Alys caused immense controversy with her outspoken support of the
feminist cause. She was an astonishingly liberated woman for her time. Russell became fascinated by the country and by the people. He found in them an innocence which he hadn't seen in British people. For example, he found himself being asked what it was exactly that Oscar Wilde had done and why had he been imprisoned.

He saw, too, in America an immense force for good or bad. He was bad. In a letter to a friend he described an astonishingly liberated woman for her time. She was an astonishingly liberated woman for her time. He found himself being asked what it was exactly that Oscar Wilde had done and why had he been imprisoned.

In 1920 Russell visited Soviet Russia with a British Labour delegation. Later in the same year he went to China to take up an invitation as visiting Professor of Philosophy at Peking University. During the years to come he was to become involved with the development and relationships of these three countries.

In 1927 Russell visited America for the purpose of raising funds to support a school he had founded in England. His advocacy of ideas concerning child-rearing, education, and trial-marriage caused considerable stir and brought him into conflict with sectors of American opinion. However, there were also sympathetic sectors in American opinion.

Russell was in America again when the second World War started. In February, 1941 he was appointed Professor of Philosophy at City College of New York. This appointment was bitterly attacked by the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of New York, Dr. William Manning among many others, who saw in Russell's views a threat to the stability of American life. The Jesuit weekly journal, America, went so far as to describe Russell as "a desiccated, divorced and decadent advocate of sexual promiscuity." However, he received support from Albert Einstein, Aldous Huxley, and many other distinguished figures. Russell commented: "... I believe I was hired to teach philosophy, not morality." In the end his opponents succeeded in getting his appointment annulled through the courts. He appealed without success.

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The second World War caused Russell to modify his Pacifist views.

He wrote:

I realised that, throughout the First War, I had never seriously envisaged the possibility of utter defeat. I found this possibility unbearable, and at last consciously and definitely decided that I must support what was necessary for victory in the Second War, however difficult victory might be to achieve, however painful its consequences.

This was a very stressful period for Russell. He felt alienated; he really wanted to be at home during the war years. He was, of course, by this time too old to be able to volunteer, even if he had been able to afford passage back. He offered his services to the British Consul in California, but his services were refused. At that time he had his three children with him and he was falling into financial difficulty. He thought he would have to live on the generosity of friends, when Dr. Albert C. Barnes, an American millionaire, invited him to lecture at the Barnes Institute. Russell accepted and delivered a series of lectures. His wife, Patricia, attended some of these classes, to the displeasure of some of the students and Barnes himself. In the end the two men disagreed over Russell's giving outside lectures of a controversial nature and Barnes dismissed him. The result of these lectures at the Barnes Institute was his great work, A History of Western Philosophy.

Russell returned to England in 1944. The bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were to have a profound effect on his views of America and of the future. He wrote:

I go about the streets and see the monuments of our civilisation, and in my mind's eye I see a vision of heaps of rubble and corpses all around. That is what we have to face as a real possibility throughout the cities of the civilised world unless we find a way of abolishing war.

The book has been researched carefully and the authors have made good use of the vast material available to them. It will, within its own sphere, remain a definitive and invaluable work, useful to scholars and the concerned public all over the world who find in Russell a source of inspiration.

SUSAN WILLOCK

The Cresset
Nonesuch is building up a library of recordings of organ literature which displays, at least so far, much discrimination in choice of organs and organists. The organ chosen for this recording was built during Buxtehude's lifetime, and has the necessary incisiveness and shine to serve the composer's music well. The repertoire included on this disc includes three large-scale works—the Toccata in F major, the Prelude in F-sharp minor (each being multi-sectional works), and the Passacaglia in D minor—and several shorter pieces in various forms. Worthy of special mention among the short pieces are the expansive, improvisatory Magnificat primi toni, and the brief but perfect little E-minor Canzonetta.

Hansen's performances are restrained but musical throughout. Pieces such as the quiet chorale prelude on "Von Gott will ich nicht lassen" and the Canzonetta mentioned above, fare quite well. A little more rhythmic freedom in the playing of the larger-scale works would have displayed their baroque character better.

The lengthy jacket notes by Joshua Rifkin are readable and really helpful in getting into the music. A few words about organist Hansen, not well known in this country, would have been appropriate.

LUIS DE PABLO: MODULOS V, VERSIONS 1 ET 2. XAVIER DARASSE: ORGANUM I.


France too has its distinguished series of organ recordings, designed to include ultimately a veritable history of organ music. Number 24 in L' Encyclopedie de l'orgue, this disc contains two works of the avant-garde, one by the Spanish composer Luis de Pablo, well-known in European circles of contemporary music but not in the U.S.A., and one by the performer himself, Xavier Darasse, professor of organ and composition at the conservatory at Toulouse, France. They are recorded on a new but classically-designed organ in the spacious church of Notre-Dame in Rolyan, an edifice widely known for its striking architecture.

These works belong to the branch of contemporary music-making which rejects melody, harmony, and pulsed rhythm, and instead works with tone clusters, sonorities, and irregular movement through time. Pablo's Modulos also involve the principle of indeterminacy: his "modules" or musical fragments may be assembled by the performer in any order he chooses, and even certain elements within the fragments are left to the performer's discretion. These features are hardly new—Bartok's piano music and string quartets are studies in sonority, and tone clusters are already a 20th-century cliche. They were brought together for the first time into a major work for organ by Ligeti in his Volumina (1962). Pablo and Darasse continue in this direction, and if neither work can claim the spell-binding forward movement of Volumina, they make impressive use of the fine Boisseau organ and the cavernous reverberation of the large edifice.

A three-page folder, unfortunately in French, supplies information on the composers, the compositions, and the organ on which the recording was made. A few introductory paragraphs by Olivier Alain describe the dilemma of the present-day composer for the organ, and provide some comfort for the listener whose ears have trouble accommodating sounds such as these. "It is the price of liberty," he writes, "that one takes the risk, having rejected the old skin, of not finding a new one. One recalls that hardly twenty-five years separate the Litaneies of Jehan Alain from the Volumina of Ligeti."

PHILIP GEHRING

LUIS DE PABLO: MODULOS V, VERSIONS 1 ET 2. XAVIER DARASSE: ORGANUM I.
An Open Appeal to the District Presidents of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Christian higher education under the auspices of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is under grave threat today. A fine academic tradition wrought over many years is in danger of suffering such damage as will require the labors of another generation to repair. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, an eminent institution which has contributed a generation of outstanding clergy to Christendom, has been severely disrupted in its work and may be disabled for a long time to come.

At Valparaiso University we, the undersigned members of the Department of Theology, write you from a distinctive perspective. We are not under the direct sponsorship of the church, and, as faculty members, are outside the scope of ecclesiastical supervision. Nevertheless we maintain a voluntary fidelity to the sacred Scriptures as a glad act within our academic freedom and as foundational for our work. We have found no necessary conflict between that commitment and the process of critical inquiry central to a University’s life. We are troubled by any threat to the delicate internal balances essential to the best Christian higher education.

The Seminary is properly under ecclesiastical supervision. On the basis of the facts known to us, which we think sufficient and adequate, it appears that ecclesiastical supervision there has become unwarranted and unconscionable interference. This is destructive of those internal balances as well as of the healthy tension which ought to exist between the church and her educational institutions. Church and school may predictably misunderstand each other from time to time, or call each other to more responsible activity. But the kind of disruption we witness at St. Louis is far from the brotherly and evangelical dialogue that proper supervision may require.

Many aspects of this matter disturb us. The use of a hastily composed, theologically defective document such as “A Statement” for purposes of enforced conformity, is one of them. The contempt for excellent Christian higher education is another. But we have on our minds now a pastoral concern. We live in a deeply troubled and confused world. An increasing number of our laity is college-trained. We know something of their problems and potential. We sympathize with their dismay at Synod’s deteriorating credibility. If ever we needed a well-trained ministry of the highest dedication and gifts, it is now. The kind of theological education the seminary has been giving approaches these needs. In the best of times it is difficult to prepare ministers for an intelligent ordination vow and for a pastoral ministry in a complicated world. From our counseling with preseminary students it is quite clear that good students will not attend a seminary under ecclesiastical harassment. They know that good teaching and learning, the hard task of scholarship, and personal formation require other kinds of conditions. In consequence the church will not be able to supply ministers who can ably relate the Gospel to modern life, and that is serious for the future of the denomination. Denominations can perpetuate an outward form, having lost their inward vitality. We do not want this to happen to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at a time when Lutheranism in America needs the evangelical and confessional churchliness which has characterized the best in our Synod, expressed so well in the Mission Affirmations of Detroit.

Therefore we appeal to you, as men have often in the past appealed to leading churchmen to provide the positive and evangelical leadership needed in pivotal moments. Our educational system has been a precious gift to the church. Do not let the labors of our fathers come to naught. Do not let the credibility of the Missouri Synod be destroyed. The work of destruction may be swift; the work of building is long and arduous.

We pray that the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ may give you the strength and insight for the hour.

The Cresset