IN LUCE TUA

A New, Improved Christmas

It has not been our habit to read other people’s mail. We have noted, however, that the practice has received the blessing of several agencies of our democratically elected government. Consequently, when one of those agencies deposited in our mailbox a letter not intended for our eyes, we merely hesitated briefly—homage to a homely custom—before perusing its contents. Imagine our pleasure when we discovered that the theme of the wayward epistle was so delightfully apropos. The writer lacks, perhaps, some of the refinements of a syndicated columnist or other extravagantly compensated observer—I almost wrote obfuscator—of the passing scene. On the other hand, we find her remarks nonetheless perspicacious for their informality and we pass them on for your reflection during the holiday season:

Dear Jasper,

Your father and I came home safe and sound but I must say it was not the nicest trip we was ever on. It ended just fine for your father as he made every green light from the freeway to the house. I guess the county board finly fixed them lites but your father says it was his good driving and you know your father would not say a good word about the county board if they paid our taxes for the rest of our days. We sure want to thank you and Alice for such a nice visit. It was so good to see you agen and the kids who are growing up so fast and we hated to leave so soon but as you know your father is not much for waring out a welcome as he would say so we came back before the rose bushes froze.

I must tell you about the strange thing that happened on the way home. As we was driving into Nazareth or Bethlehem or one of them towns in Pa. the car broke. Your father told me what it was but I forget but it was bad because we had to stay all night. The hotel was ok but not the best as your father was worried that he could not pay the gas station for the car. Well after supper we had just stepped out of the dining room and was going back to the room why it was just natural to look at what was going on but of course we know it was not our business. We looked inside and there was close on to 100 or 200 people shoutin and spittin and carryin on with a frenzy. I never saw the like in my life and I am sure I will be in heven before I ever do

December, 1975
fellows idea that Christmas came
got over when it seemed like it come
was fed up with Christmas. The
big wood hammer and it was this
and there was a lot of people shout­
ing second and so moved and then
He said he wanted it
every third year because every second
the man with the hammer hit it on
the hammer must have banged it
he was looking for ways to save
taxes and he said he found a way. He
people was always complaining
about postal rates but we should think
of how much it cost to mail Christ­
mas cards. If we just would forget
about Christmas cards we would
save ourselves a lot of taxes. Besides
not sending cards would save lots of
hours for other work. Well they
picked at him pretty good about
facts and figures which he had but
some he didn’t have he worked on a
black thing he had strapped on his
belt and after a while everyone
seemed ok and and the man swung
the hammer and said past agen. Then
things got quite as every one waited
for some more ideas and finly a
young man and his wife and son
stood up and he said they had some­
thing to say.

They said that a lot of the ideas
had a lot going for them but they
did think that a lot of them went
sort of over the board. They said
Christmas would be just fine if evry
family tried to celbrate it as a family.
They said it would be a good idea to
read the Christmas story together
and then have some friends or an­
other famly over for supper and
that it would be alrtrie to give gifts
as long as the idea was to share and
not just get some thing for nothing
He said after all Christmas was
God giving his holiest gift. And
then he said family and frends could
go to church together to worship
God and thank him for this holy
gift.

Now Jasper you will not beleve
the frenzy and the carring on that
got up after that man and his wife
and son sat down. That man with
the hammer must have banged it
for ten minits or longer it seemed
like. And after he got them to slow
down some one after the other got
up to say what a silly idea that was
and how it was not in the nations
interest and not relevant to the times
and was not big enuf and that he was
not facing facts and that it was not
the purpose of the meeting to deal
with such things and I do not re­
member what all. But I do remem­
ber two or three people carried on
about such a blatant attempt—them
was the words for I looked them up
—to make Christmas into a religious
holiday. And finly after some more
shouting they voted and the man hit
the hammer real hard and said
the motion fails. And then there
was two or three more shouts and he
hit it agen and said the meeting a
jernd. And then a real strange
thing Jasper a lot of the same peo­
ple who shouted about what a silly
idea that family talked about came
up to that man and his wife and son
and said that it really was a good
idea but that they did not vote for
it because they had promised other
people not to bring up the religious
side of things.

Well about then your father pulled
my sleeve and said it was time to
got to bed so as to get an early start
the next morning so I did not lern
how the whole thing finly ended.
But I must say that I sure felt sorry
for that young man and his family
and felt it was shamful the way the
others talked about his idea for I
felt it was a pretty good idea myself.

Well I must stop now as your
father wants me to help cover up
the roses as he seems to get stuck by
the thorns. Have a merry Christmas.

Love,
Your Mother.

The Cresset
We have read no other account of this truly remarkable convention though we expect that any day the sponsors will call a press conference to issue their demands for a new, improved Christmas. We find in this letter nothing inconsistent with our observations of human behavior at similar gatherings. Collecting large numbers of people in hotel rooms to solve problems or change old customs has always seemed to be an exhausting enterprise. As our correspondent reveals, the convention—a ritual in its own right—tends to encourage either the outlandish and the extreme or the bland and the vague. Somehow the simple, the sensible, the elegant, succumb to the shouting and the hammering.

We sincerely hope the conferees in that hotel never agree on a final report.

Christmas, as we celebrate in this country, has its faults, but on the whole we like it the way it is. The time from one Christmas to the next may seem to shorten; the effort to make Christmas pay may start earlier; it may seem easier to fret about the hassle of Christmas than to rejoice in the spirit of Christmas.

Where can you find the spirit of Christmas? We agree with our correspondent: that young man and his wife and son had a pretty good idea. Certainly they will have a merrier Christmas than anybody else at that convention. We hope you do, too.

—AFS

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**TYPEWRITER**

full of idiocy
possibilities full
of iii's that see
everything or teeth
on a toothbrush.

you must imagine
everything for it
to mean something,
like Kazantzakis
said at his grave:
the rest is worth
less.

the ageing clerk
has rattling toenails,
loves too much
coffee; baroque night
messages descend down
his sleeve like telegrams
which he grabs. but they
break and their edges
only draw blood.

at best it reflects off
the land of the living
full of idiocy, full
of distortion. here
Kazantzakis roars through
his sixteen teeth spitting
out ships and toothbrushes
through his huge laughter.
or is this choking? asked
the mirror.

**PETER BRETT**
C. S. LEWIS: 

RECIPROCITY AND HUMAN FREEDOM

TWENTIETH-CENTURY AUTHORS HAVE raised a uniform lament that modern man has imprisoned himself in a self-imposed isolation. The reasons for the self-imprisonment are many. One may cite the Romantic revolution with its inexorable determination to seek an experiential validity within the self as a cause. Or one may point to the bleak pessimism of Naturalism with its view that man is threatened continually by external forces. Or one may consider the rise of modern technology and scientism, forces which threaten to rob mankind of his humanity and which lead to what C. S. Lewis called "The Abolition of Man."

With candid fervor modern authors and critics speak of this state as a spiritual wasteland, but nonetheless they maintain that it is a necessary one. T. S. Eliot pointed out that instead of the spiritual mandate of Dayadhvam, to sympathize, we have bleak self-immurement:

I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and turn once only
We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison.

The creative imagination has struggled to enforce the bars, building a room for the soul with No Exit.

One may argue that this imprisonment is a good and necessary thing in our age, an age of fractured meanings in which the old pathways to truth seem to have become windy alleys. Nathan Scott calls our age a "desolate frontier," and Eliot says that "the desert is in the heart of your brother." But is this necessarily the unique and immutable spiritual trait of our age? I am reminded that in the mid-nineteenth century Charles Dickens agonized over this state in his novel Little Dorritt, in which he incisively points out that man shapes spiritual prisons by greed and jealousy. Have we come no further in a hundred years than to proclaim Dickens's prophecy an ineluctable truth?

Not so, at least in C. S. Lewis's view. Lewis maintains that modern man is surely not, as Camus thought, condemned like Sisyphus to his rock, to a struggle without hope or expectation of success. In a crucial concept, which I have chosen to call Lewis's Doctrine of Reciprocity, Lewis maintains that there is a response to our struggle, that there is a divine response to man's groping, a response which finally snaps the bars of the prison and liberates man.

Lewis's use of reciprocity serves both a theological and a literary function in his fictional works. Reciprocity is not spelled out clearly as either a theological tenet or a literary device in Lewis's writings, yet it repeatedly surfaces as an ordering principle and the principle toward which order moves. Stated briefly, the Doctrine of Reciprocity maintains that the harder one reaches out for God, the more this searching is reciprocated by God; the more steadfastly one seeks God, the more clear the seeking becomes. Man must make the choice to seek God. Man makes the motions on the pathway toward God, but God not only provides the pathway, he lends aid and direction to the traveller. The goal is clarified as one struggles to the goal.

In Lewis's view, we can never, in this life, achieve the Christian's ultimate joy of full union with Christ; but according to the Doctrine of Reciprocity we can begin to experience the joy of the Body of Christ in this life. We can not only break the bars of the prison, we can discover and begin to tread the pathway toward joy. With each step on this pathway we begin to realize more keenly that this is the pathway toward joy, that life here does have eternal direction.

HOW IS THIS BELIEF REVEALED IN THE FIC­tion of C. S. Lewis? Its most explicit statement is in The Great Divorce, with examples in numerous other works. In The Great Divorce Lewis lays out his Either/Or of spiritual choice. Lamenting the fact that mankind perennially attempts the marriage of heaven and hell, attempts essentially a rationalization and justification of an evil or uncommitted way of life as good, Lewis proclaims a divorce in this marriage. No court of law decides to whom the children will go, however. We are the children of light or darkness and we must decide to whom we go.
Lewis’s Doctrine of Reciprocity maintains that there is a response to our struggle, that there is a divine response to man’s groping, a response which finally snaps the bars of the prison and liberates man.

To detail the spiritual conditions attendant upon this choice, Lewis pictures a host of wanderers in a gray town. It is raining in this place, and one has the idea that it has always done so as shapes scuttle about restlessly in the fog. The mood is bleak as a “greasy stream” exhales its thickness upon the people. Is this hell? No, this is life, the spiritual life of man. Here the scene is dominated by demands for individual recognition and rights. Elbows jab, thick shoulders shove in an effort to establish Me First.

The people are lined up for a bus ride. Not until later do we realize the significance of this bus, whose brightness shatters the gray mist and offers an exit from darkness. Even here, in this desperate state of affairs, a bus is provided, a means of escape is available. But it is finally man who must choose to step aboard that bus. Some choose not to. Napoleon, for example, has removed himself millions of miles from the bus stop, where he paces the veranda of his mansion in desolate loneliness. For him, the gray town has become inescapable— it has become hell. Napoleon has removed himself irrevocably from the possibility of choice.

Those who have decided to board the bus have made the first motions in reciprocity. Not only is the bus provided, but once the passengers are aboard, the bus, without the full realization of the passengers, begins its exodus from the gray town.

This movement of man to God and God to man provides both the theological backbone and creative impetus of the tale. The reader will consider what steps man must take toward God and in what manner God responds to these steps. Concomitantly, these considerations give the tale both pace (or motion) and coherence. Lewis uses suspense to sustain the pace of the tale and to point to its ultimate significance. Alfred Hitchcock once graphically depicted a director’s options in utilizing suspense in a film. He may call, for example, to have a bomb suddenly explode in a packed auditorium in the film. Thus he causes five seconds of excitement, but not necessarily suspense. Or he can let the viewer know there is a bomb in the auditorium at the beginning and keep the audience wondering when and where the bomb will explode, what its effect will be, and who will escape, thus drawing out the suspense for the duration of the film. Similarly, Lewis plays out options. Man struggles to the point where the reader believes that surely human resource must fail him; at that point God intervenes and aids that limited resource. The significant factor here is that this earnest struggle is finally, and always, reciprocated. Man does not struggle without response. The suspense lies in the questions of when and in what method the struggle will be reciprocated. It is in response to these questions that Lewis’s energetic imagination provides a never-ending source of delight.

To probe this, let us follow the bus trip a few miles farther.

Characteristic of the gray town and the early sojourners on the bus trip is a demand for human rights. We may, in Lewis’s view, position our self as either supreme or subject totally to God. This, in effect, is his Either/Or. The artist Cyril Blellow, a traveller on the bus, believes that “he was going where, at last, his finely critical spirit would no longer be outraged by an uncongenial environment— where he would find “Recognition;” and ‘Appreciation.’” As long as he uses the bus for an ego trip, he will not complete the trip in any definitive sense. He will merely reach a place, without knowing what that place is, until he realizes finally that he has arrived where he has been all the time. For such as the artist, there is never an escape from the gray town. The passionate demand for human rights precludes righteousness, a right relationship with God.

The bus, however, delivers them from grayness to a land of light. And this is a cruel light. Because light exposes, the travelers realize for the first time their paltry thinness. Here is the completion of one stage toward salvation, for exposure to the light reveals the hollow grayness of the human condition. At this relatively early stage of God-discovery, man sees his true condition by the light, but he is hardly able to look upon the source of light. He must grow into this, and with this growth the reciprocity continues.

As the passengers, blinking, shakily step forth from the bus, timidly expectant, they find the going rough. The grass blades puncture and slice their feet. Yet, just when the going seems utterly impossible, they catch a glimpse of “Solid” creatures coming toward them: “The earth shook under their tread as their strong feet sank into the wet turf. A tiny haze and a sweet smell went up where they had crushed the grass and scattered.
For those who, like that artist, demand “Recognition” and “Appreciation” there is never an escape from the gray town. The passionate demand for human rights precludes righteousness, a right relationship with God.

The narrator is granted a special Reciprocity in his quest, for as he attempts to puzzle our way through the new experiences, he is granted a clarifier in one of the Solid Persons—George MacDonald. The narrator is delighted with the aid, confessing that “to lean on the arm of someone older than myself was an experience that carried me back to childhood, and with the support I found the going tolerable.” We begin to suspect that here is a man who might make it. He realizes the need for help, for that arm to lean on.

As the narrator pushes onward he witnesses scenes of Reciprocity in action, such as that of the Ghost and the Lizard, which clearly and concisely depict the Doctrine. In this scene a Ghost is cursed with an ancient tempter in the form of a “little red lizard, and it was twitching its tail like a whip and whispering things in his ear.” The Ghost is keenly aware of his long-standing tempter, yet even though the lizard prevents the Ghost from moving on, the Ghost is incapable by his own power to rid himself of this tormentor. In fact, he begins to give up and head back to the bus in despair of ever being delivered, when an Angel greets him with perfect cordiality. Though the Angel flames in radiant beauty, the Ghost is less terrified of the Angel than of his hated nemesis.

On the spot the Angel offers to kill the lizard. He cannot kill the lizard, however, unless the Ghost wills that he kill the lizard. The Ghost must choose the deliverance provided. After a torment process of rationalization and retraction, the Ghost finally breaks down in pathetic agony and relinquishes his nemesis to the Angel:

“Have I your permission?” said the Angel to the Ghost.
“I know it will kill me.”
“It won’t. But supposing it did?”
“You’re right. It would be better to be dead than to live with this creature.”
“Then I may?”
“Damn and blast you! Go on can’t you? Get it over. Do what you like,” bellowed the Ghost: but ended, whimpering, “God help me. God help me.”

Help is provided entirely beyond expectation as the lizard is not merely destroyed, but actually transformed into the means of deliverance. Before the narrator’s eyes the ugly red lizard undergoes a metamorphosis into a wildly beautiful stallion as solid as the land which the hard hooves tread: “At each stamp the land shook and the trees dindled.” Whereupon the “new-made man” leaps upon the stallion’s back and is carried rejoicing into the mountains of light. The Reciprocity continues into a joyous ecstasy: “I saw them winding up, scaling what seemed impossible steeps, and quicker every moment, till near the dim brow of the landscape, so high that I must strain my neck to see them, the vanished, bright themselves, into the rose-brightness of that everlasting morning.”

The Great Divorce provides startling examples of this Reciprocity which seem to follow the Either/Or of choice with a syndetic Both/And in which both man and God join in the human sojourn to spiritual fulfill-
ment. To indicate just how pervasive this artistic technique and theological belief of Reciprocity is in Lewis's works, one must consider several other examples. I find Reciprocity clearly established in one of Lewis's earliest works, _The Pilgrim's Regress_. In Book Eight John finds himself in a bleak desolation, a spiritual wasteland, a mental congeries of shame, confusion, and sorrow. The time has come, John is convinced, to forsake the quest. Vertue has run on ahead, up out of the gorge of despair. From the direction in which Vertue disappeared, suddenly appears a man who seems to have appeared for the single purpose of urging John on, and who also climbs down, _descends_ to John's level to physically help him:

"I will give you a hand," said the Man. And he came down till he was within reach of John, and held out his hand. And John grew pale as paper and nausea came upon him.

"It's now or never," said the Man.

Then John set his teeth and took the hand that was offered him. He trembled at the very first grip he was made to take but he could not go back for they were speedily so high that he dared not attempt the return alone: and what with pushing and pulling the Man got him right up to the top and there he fell down on his belly in the grass to pant and to groan at the pains in his chest. When he sat up the Man was gone.

The theological side of Reciprocity becomes manifestly clear in _The Screwtape Letters_. Here Lewis explores the same motif which is crucial to _The Great Divorce_: Man must give up his notions of human rights in order to discover true freedom in Christ. Screwtape is, of course, a thoroughly knowledgeable Devil and he too is keenly aware of this fact. As he holds forth on the methods of the Enemy, Screwtape explicitly points to this Reciprocity: "When He talks of their losing their selves, He means only abandoning the clamour of self-will; once they have done that, He really gives them back all their personality."

RECIPROCITY SERVES ITS CLEAREST ARTISTIC function in Lewis's works which are more clearly fictional and less explicitly allegorical than the ones mentioned above. Some use is made of the technique in the _Narnia Chronicles_. In _The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe_, for example, the children Susan and Peter must flee from the Evil White Witch who has shrouded the world in icy snow as a symbol of her terrible reign, and who has lured the children's brother into captivity. Aslan the lion is reputed to be the one source which can break the awful spell of cold and misery. Desperately the children race along wintry trails seeking Aslan. As they seek him, a miraculous thing happens; the snow begins to melt, small flowers appear, brooks babble, as Aslan also draws near to them. Finally, in this tale, Aslan symbolically enacts our final hope of deliverance and the greatest act of Reciprocity in Christian belief: Christ's crucifixion which poses man's ultimate freedom.

Reciprocity broadens man's theological horizon, and it stretches the horizon of the artistic imagination. In the first novel of _The Space Trilogy_, _Out of the Silent Planet_, Lewis establishes the pattern of a grim struggle which operates on two levels: first, the man of idealism (Ransom) pitted against the man of unscrupulous scientism (Weston); and, secondly, the struggle of the man of idealism to validate his beliefs in an eternal Principle.

_Out of the Silent Planet_ is woven with wild escapes and miraculous deliveries. Midway through the novel, however, Ransom sets out not on an escape but on a quest for discovery and certitude. This sojourn toward an Ordering Principle in a seemingly disordered world comprises the movements toward Reciprocity. Ransom leaves the _hrossa_ who have harbored him after his escape from Weston, and sets out through unmarked wasteland.

The quest is physically exhausting, and Ransom pushes through valleys and into mountains until he is at the end of his physical resources. Wandering in a daze, Ransom suddenly discerns a light, which he follows. Light is an image of rich significance for Lewis, as we recall from its use in _The Great Divorce_. Light is always associated with two things: a revelation or realization of human frailty and limitation, and a nearness to God, the source of spiritual light. Ransom follows this light and discovers that:

In Perelandra Ransom discovers the dynamics of this Reciprocity in the realization that God has allowed him to do God's will, to be a ransom for others in life as Christ was for all men.
it was firelight. He came into the mouth of the cave and then, unsteadily, round the fire and into the interior, and stood still blinking in the light. When at last he could see, he discerned a smooth chamber of green rock, very lofty. There were two things in it. One of them, dancing on the wall and roof, was the huge, angular shadow of a sorn; the other, crouched beneath it, was the sorn himself.

Is this frightening confrontation with the sorn the mad ending of a wild and pointless quest? Lewis teases out the tension here, and the direct significance of that tension is that the sorn is indeed a reciprocation to the quest. He imparts to Ransom the first information about the spiritual framework of the planet and the universe. But he does more than this. He literally lifts Ransom to his back and carries him further on the journey so that Ransom may discover the true significance of Light. This discovery, in fact, paves the way and is the subject matter for the rest of the trilogy.

In *Perelandra*, the most lovely and spiritually haunting of all Lewis's works, the Doctrine of Reciprocity is spelled out with special emphasis. The novel raises crucial issues: To what extent can man work out God's will? Can man survive his struggle with evil? To what extent does God aid man in this struggle? In this novel Ransom comes to a clearer perception of these questions and their answers. God reaches into man and touches his life, and man becomes liberated to serve God by this touch. Man gains his freedom in recognition of God's absolute and unwavering power.

In a sense, then, Reciprocity has no decisive finite goal. This freedom of service discovered by Reciprocity provides the dynamics for life's journey into eternity's way. In *Perelandra* Ransom discovers the dynamics of this Reciprocity in the realization that God has allowed him to do God's will, to be a ransom for others in life as Christ was for all men.

The action of Reciprocity culminates in this vision of freedom. Not only is man's seeking reciprocated, but man is given final direction and authority in life which snaps the bars on the human spirit, which brings forth springs in the wasteland of self-immurement. By his use of Reciprocity, Lewis affords us too a glimpse into this vision of spiritual freedom.

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...I drew the moon up, full, tonight and met it at the edge of town, where first I cleared the sky of all but stars and then performed my solitary art:

I hung the gold ball on the tip of a pine
and, next, on a telephone pole;
'I slashed it in two with a black line of wire;
I rolled it on the ridge of a barn; I sliced it up, like a round yellow cheese, with a willow's drooping whips ...'

And now I'd conjure, at the sound of your name, you, to stand here and see how the moon, neglected, alone, grows distant, pale and bleak.

ROBERT HILLEBRAND
FROM THE DIARY OF A GREEK JOURNEY

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL JOURNEY through Greece is a visual feast during which one's imagination is challenged. Centuries, as a matter of fact millennia, arise in front of your eyes if you are able to see what is no longer there and if your 'mind's eye' is willing to rebuild palaces, temples, and citadels from the few remaining stones of what must have been the seat of grandeur and a tower of tragedy. Some sites—few and far between—are still intact and surprise one with the ingenuity, magnificence, and nobility of a period in which man tried to reach for the ultimate of his intellectual resources.

"I can't look at a torso any more or a face without a nose and ears," a young co-traveller said after three days of rushing through museums and over ruin-esque places. Perhaps the pleasure of such a journey boils down to one's attitude towards the fragmentary in the arts—and life. People who have to possess and hold the reality of their dreams and desires in their hands will fare badly. Those who have learned that quicksilver escapes the hands that try to keep it will show a more philosophical attitude towards it. Only those who realize we cannot and must not hold on to human beings and things forever will also appreciate the greatness of the fragmentary.

Perfection in any work of art stuns and overwhels us. But any perfection carries with it a feeling of finality. It stops our thoughts with the surprise of its beauty, making us feel great and small at the same time. It certainly terminates what there is in us that wants to go on dreaming, stimulated by what the artist had to conjure up for us. We grant the artist of a perfect objet d'art that he knew how to filch a spark from the Creator and that he beautifully got away with it. But those who believe in the inconclusiveness and indefiniteness of everything created by human hands and minds will miss the windows opening to new dimensions and not yet surmised vistas. When I saw the Hermes statue of Praxiteles in Olympia I felt gratified to learn that this masterwork may, after all, only be a Roman copy.

WHAT A STRANGE FEELING it is to walk over the grass-covered stones of the agora, the Athenian market place! Here the people sold and bought the things for their daily needs. I suddenly stopped and, looking in the direction of the Acropolis, thought of Socrates standing right there and addressing a young man with one of his lapidary questions to which the answer seemed simple and yet defied definition.

Pausanias, who in the 2nd century A.D. wrote the first Baedeker, admonished me to look for the altar of Compassion on the agora, erected for the god honored most by the Athenians since he was considered most useful for man's daily life and the changes in one's fate. The ancient Greeks had a strange way of blending lofty and realistic attitudes, superstition, and belief. They seemed to have had gods for almost any occasion and feeling. Pausanias stressed that they not only nurtured a strong feeling of compassion, they honored the gods more than any other peoples. They had the altar of Aidos, protector of moral bashfulness, of Horne, blessing man's carnal lust, and of Pheme, the incarnation of the divine voice. All these altars could be found on the agora where one met and talked to people and the gods, where in the midst of the din of many voices one could buy goods from hawkers and favor from the gods. Pausanias thought "it is quite obvious that those who are more pious than others, also enjoy greater well-being."

BEFORE JOURNEYING TO Delphi I had one more look at the theatre of Dionysus. There are quite a few statues of playwrights to be found; Euripides is there and Sophocles, but also many others whose faces and names are unknown to us. Contrary to Pausanias's snap judgment, I would refrain from calling them minor. To begin with, who judges what is minor? And how dare we grade their works which are among the many hundreds of plays produced in Athens and lost in the flow of time? Long after his death, Aeschylus's statue was put up. Pausanias tells us that Aeschylus wanted us to believe that as a boy, while guarding the vineyards, he had fallen asleep and the apparition of Dionysus approached him with the command to write a tragedy. At break of dawn he tried to obey the god, and—lo and behold—he could do it with the greatest of ease. It would be a neat story about our histrionic beginnings. But we do know that the Greeks of the Hellenistic period told the very same anecdote about Sophocles.

Travelling through the rich fields
of Boeotia and beyond Thebes we looked down at the crossroads where, as the legend goes, Oedipus encountered and killed Laius. I wondered how much these ancient people travelled and how cumbersome and hazardous such journeys undoubtly were. How simple and wonderful it must have been for them that they could believe in the gods deciding their fate with merciless inevitability, while we—racing on highways—are at best subjected to the whims of chance and death by an automobile, a thought often explored by Friedrich Dürrenmatt.

The people came to Delphi from all over Greece. They came in droves to submit their tributes and questions to the oracle. Apollon first, then Apollon and Dionysus dominated the spirit of Delphi. But Pythia, a woman of at least fifty, endowed with the aura of virginity even though she may have left her husband and children, became the mouthpiece of the god. The prophets loved to interpret Pythia's vague words in even more ambiguous hexameters. The most famous example of ambiguity was the case of Kriosos who was told he would destroy a great power when going to war with the Persians. Of course, he believed, poor man, that the oracle could have only meant the defeat of the Persians, not of his own state. This is probably the shrewdest way of soothsaying, highly recommended to all our modern fortunetellers. Oracles at that time became the biggest business in Greece. From the original one-day-a-year, the Delphians soon prophesied nine times a year and later added two assistants and then a lottery—oracle to satisfy innumerable poor people. The admission to the Pythian oracle was an expensive ritual from which the prophets profited.

Delphi was full of treasury houses, a veritable little Switzerland for all rich Greeks. The reputation, wealth, and power of the Delphian sanctuary grew to fabulous proportions. Several holy wars were fought about it, the place was ravaged and rebuilt, but only once, in 83 B.C., was the eternal flame extinguished when the whole site was torched by Thracian barbarians. It was rebuilt. Later, Nero stole 500 statues, but Pausanias still found it full of treasures. When the Caesars became Christians, Delphi had lost its raison d'être.

What a drama of human follies and frustrations! And all that is left are a few stones and columns, the Delphian theatre and stadium, the well of Castalia, and a few treasures in its museum. Among them are the statues of two young men, Kleobis and Biton. Herodot tells their story: A priestess had to be at the temple at an appointed hour but her oxen were missing. Her two sons stepped into the yoke and dragged her mother's carriage over many miles to the temple in time. In her desire to reward her sons, she asked the goddess to give them the most beautiful gift which they deserved. The sons went to sleep and did not wake up any more. Menander thought that those favored by the gods die young, and we have the same idea expressed by Plautus. Did they not err? Was it to sweeten the thought of death on the battlefields, or did the people believe in such philosophy? Was it their existentialist wisdom accepting the futility of life? Have they never experienced the beauty of autumnal ripeness or the elating sight of a sunset as reward for a day's toils and tribulations and the lingering taste of a sweet hour or an ecstatic minute? Dylan Thomas rightly sang many millennia later: "Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage..."

WALKING AROUND THE sites of Mycenae is somewhat frustrating when one cannot help recalling the tragic stories enacted there. We surmise through which door Orestes fled, and we are not sure on which spot Clytemnestra killed Agamemnon. And yet one cannot help feeling gripped by the mere thought that you stand on a few square stones where Electra may have waited for Orestes; where Orestes may have contemplated the deed waiting for him.

Schliemann was here! He unearthed some of the wonders of Homer's tales. The Greek archaeologists of his time permitted Schliemann to dig since they were so sure he would not find any traces of what Homer sang. A myth becomes a silhouette of stones, guarded by the famous lions at the entrance gate. There are the six graves from which Schliemann took treasures of a mythological past. But how real are these remains?

When the Dorians came and conquered Mycenae they destroyed to rebuild. They played history's repetitious game. This coming and going, these huge waves of civilizations emerging and perishing instilled in me a feeling of resignation without bitterness. Guests of life, how do we measure our own being against the background of all these ruins which are mighty symbols, though symbols only? Suddenly, how insignificant become our daily laughs and tears—and yet against all spectres of futility we cannot help but hold to this moment, even if it means facing the shambles of history. The lesson learned: to take oneself even less seriously than ever before, while strongly believing in the God-given breath of being that we ought to enjoy—and every second of it to the full—with a grateful prayer.

The Dorians called themselves the Heraclides and justified the cruelty with which they treated the conquered by saying that they were the descendants of Hercules who accomplished his twelve labors, without scruples. Do we not all to this very day exploit mythology as the Dorians did in their way? In an Athenian street I saw the replica of Praxiteles' statue of Hermes decently covered with a shirt: "Buy the Hermes shirt!" We have commercialized the gods of mythology in an unheroic way.

"You see in Greece nothing but olive trees and tourists," someone remarked. Some disappointments
are unavoidable, and commercialized tourism, the plague of the 20th century, is one of them. The theatre of Epidaurus certainly makes an impression one can hardly forget. But I will never be able to think of it without seeing that ugly woman standing in the centre of the orchestra and shrieking: “Joe, can you hear me?” Another disappointment is the industrialization of an environment which was once associated with something esoteric. The Eleusian mysteries have always had for me some incredible magic about them. Nowadays Eleusis is surrounded by the technological mysteries of our civilization.

TODAY’S GREEK CITIZEN does not particularly help us to feel the grandeur of the past. As everywhere else, I suppose, the people in the country and smaller places are friendlier than in the bigger cities.

Ezra Pound maintained that culture is made by twelve people; it might be made by twelve hundred today. But the populace is very much alive in its fashion. The coffeehouses are full. Only men are around, debating vehemently the political scene. One feels the effect of military tyranny that lasted seven years. The innumerable kiosks are full of newspapers and most surprising are the many men selling lottery tickets.

Perhaps one must forget the tourists and the industrialization of a few cities; perhaps one must overlook some stubborn clinging to a primitive way of life which, in fact, has its charm. What is so unforgettable are the remains of a past reminding us of all that our bookish knowledge and our imagination have helped us to live with. The ruins are incomparably beautiful when seen in the midst of their landscape; mostly they are built on high hilltops offering the view of an austere, almost bare mountainous landscape sometimes embracing vast plains. It must have been the same almost four thousand years ago, though perhaps the hillsides were covered with more trees. Clytemnestra must have looked at the same hills and sky when waiting for Agamemnon. At moments the far away seemed so unbelievably close and the poetic and legendary seemed almost real. But I shall never forget how we drove over the Peloponesian mountains for hours. Most of us in the bus were very tired, some even slept although the landscape was very exciting. Many, many curves on a winding road. And suddenly the triumphant voice of our young driver broke through the stillness: “Thalatta!” was all he said. The sea was lying at our feet. I then knew for sure I was in Greece.

EXCURSION

Chained by iron necessity
Strands of wandering people
Proclaimed yet undefined
In a ceaseless linking to link
Leading in the end to the end
Of the end

After such snowy beginnings
All is swirling with soot
Filling lungs and eyes
Blowing the queen in a closet
So that she’s totally out of the room

Now we regress to all fours
For none can stand upright
Fumble and tumble and crawl
In a game of blindman’s buff
Giggling as we fondle each other
Cursing as we butt the walls.

WILLIAM M. WHITE

December, 1975
IN OUR LESSONS FOR THIS DAY, AMOS AND Paul are speaking to the expectations of God’s people.

Amos’s people expect the Day of the Lord to be a day when the Lord rewards them for their solemn assemblies and sacrifices. The people of Israel judge their worship worthy of a blessing, but Amos knows they like nothing better in their solemn assemblies than the sound of their own voices, and in the midst of their sacrifices they’re already licking their lips for the roast beef.

So Amos tells his people their Day of the Lord will be darkness and not light, a fast and not a feast, judgment and not blessing, for God is not amused. He takes no delight in their solemn assemblies and He despises their sacrifices.

Amos does not go on to say the people of Israel should enter more heartily into their worship. Amos is no cheerleader. Someone else can shout, “Bring on more bulls!” Nor does he urge them to feel their worship more deeply. Amos is no therapist. Someone else can lead the primal screams. No, for Amos, true worship begins deeper than enthusiasm and sincerity.

TRUE WORSHIP BEGINS IN TRUE LIVES. What was lacking in Israel’s ceremonies and sacrifices was not enthusiasm or sincerity, but truth. And so Amos arouses Israel to be up and about seeking justice and righteousness among the people. Perhaps then they will find true lives to join to their lips in serving the Lord.

Otherwise, says Amos, the Day of the Lord for the people of Israel will be a great irony. They will get the opposite of what they expect. Just as one thinks he has

Richard Lee, a member of the faculty of Christ College at Valparaiso University, served The Cresset as editor and has written a number of film reviews.
escaped a lion, he runs into a bear. Just as he thinks he is home free and leaning on his wall, a snake will strike. Updated, that irony is like a professor who receives a raise in his wages only to discover the cost of living has gone up twice as much, or like a college student who finally achieves his degree only to discover that jobs in his field are not to be had.

Paul also speaks to the expectations of the people of God in his day. The Christians at Rome are expecting the Day of the Lord to be a day of judgment. Indeed, some Christians are so eager for the Lord's Day that they are already doing His work of judgment for Him. In Paul's letter to the Romans we see Christians judging one another more or less Christian by what they eat and drink, or do not eat and drink, or what days they keep as holy days. This judging, they think, is doing the Lord's work until He comes. This judging, they sincerely believe, is what is expected of them while they are expecting Him.

Paul is appalled, and he appeals to them to wake up, get their Christian clothes on, for the Day of the Lord is at hand. This means loving their brothers by being far less careful to judge them and far more caring to build them up. Let each brother honor Christ in his own way, for the Day of the Lord does not mean food and drink, who eats and who fasts, but "righteousness in the Holy Spirit."

BOTH AMOS AND PAUL CORRECT THE EXPECTATIONS of the people of God about the Day of the Lord, both their expectations of God and their expectations of themselves. The people of God are always tempted to confuse judgment and justice, making judgment their work and justice God's work. They judge themselves worthy and right and ask God to seek justice in the world and edify their neighbors. Thus, prophets and apostles find full-time jobs reminding God's people that judgment is God's work in his own good time and justice is their work all the time. "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream."

Certainly that is a prophetic and apostolic word the people of God also need to hear today. And perhaps another word too. For Amos and Paul, at least the people of God had some expectations of God and themselves, as wrongheaded as those expectations were. But there is something worse than false expectations, and that is no expectations at all. False expectations can be corrected and idols can be cleansed. But where the people of God expect nothing there is the deepest sadness. It's like a University celebrating fifty years of being disturbed by Christian auspices, but its chapel, like this one today, is adorned only with pictures from its past and no picture attempts a vision for its future.

THE WHOLE WORD OF THE LORD, THEREFORE, is to remind the people of God that they can live expectantly on their gracious God and have some great expectations of themselves. For the people of God gathered at a University, this means being reminded to expect Christ in the general studies of the University where new dimensions of human possibility and human need are revealed, and to expect Christ in the professional studies of the University where a vocation for rising to those human possibilities and meeting those human needs may be revealed. Surely we are not solemnly assembled to pursue mere careers.

For today is not only the first day of the rest of our lives. Today is also a Day of the Lord, and tomorrow is a Day of the Lord, and so on day by day—until that last Day of the Lord when we rest from our lives in Him who is no surprise.
Teaching Art to children, I have been told, is a waste of time. After all is said and done it is soon discarded and the art experience that once took place is lost forever. It is hard to believe that anyone would draw such a conclusion, because I have found quite the opposite to be true. Children's Art is a delight to teach simply because the end result is so satisfying; therefore the experience which the child encountered is not lost. The Art happenings which children have are a means of expressing themselves at a specific level. It is through these happenings that they develop into more expressive, creative human beings than they were before.

Something new happens each and every time Art is experienced. New experiences, after all, can be delightful and exciting as well as rewarding. Every new piece of Art a child creates is refreshing in its own way, and beautiful, because it is the child's expression and his alone. With each individual child, there is the promise of a new experience, a new excitement, a new image, and a new expression.

Children, like most artists, are capable of helping us appreciate what is beautiful. If that were the only reason for teaching Art to children it would be a good one, since every human being who has ever lived has had the desire to experience the beautiful. If children are able to produce objects of beauty, and I believe they are, then each and every child ought to be given the opportunity to do so.

At Immanuel Lutheran School, Art is a means of expressing oneself in a variety of ways with a variety of materials. The whole Art program at Immanuel, in fact, has been developed using a variety of art materials at specific grade levels with self-expression in mind.

Self-expression is an important factor in any good Art program for children. It is, in fact, at the heart and core of any good Art program.
which is interested in freedom of expression or in developing creativity in children. Self-expression does not come from using coloring books and ditto masters which restrict children in their choices of subject matter as well as in their modes of expression. Staying within the confines of lines is “out” as far as creativity is concerned. The child who is led to free expression will gain in creativity, while the child who is dependent on the ideas of others will become frustrated and will be less capable of independent, creative expression. Through self-expression, children come to know themselves as individuals and are led to adjust to new situations easily and can, therefore, understand themselves. Without self-expression, the very essence of creativity is lost. But self-expression in art cannot happen unless the children also understand the medium through which they are working.

In order to express oneself creatively, it is imperative that the right materials be available at the right time. Experimentation with the right materials, it seems to me, is the KEY to self-expression. If one gives children enough art materials to handle on their level, they will express themselves because the excitement of handling the materials will lead them to do so. Children are fascinated by new, interesting, and exciting materials, especially if they can use them to create something.

It is therefore the responsibility of schools, teachers, and parents to lead children to new and interesting materials. It is, I believe, the first step which leads to a fascinating Art program.

Self-expression, though, depends on a wide variety of materials and on the procedure and the techniques used to motivate the child.

A fundamental procedure used to motivate children to create consists of explaining the various steps the child must use with a certain material. Carefully explaining the procedure frees the children to express themselves with that material because the explanation enables children to see the possibilities for self-expression and helps to determine the creativity of the art experience.

I have found that the following factors strongly influence self-exp-
pression in children: (1) Appropriate materials must be introduced by the parent or teacher when the child is ready to use them. Linoleum blocks at grade two, for example, would only suppress the child's creative expression. Through experience with a wide variety of materials, the parent, teacher, and child soon discover which materials work best at any given level. (2) All materials must allow the possibility of producing a creative Art object. If they do not lend themselves for the creation of an Art object, they shouldn't be used. The child will lose interest unless the medium is workable. (3) Children must be allowed to develop their skills with each new medium. Until the child feels comfortable with the medium, only by accident will creativity result. Many experiences with the same medium are necessary before children can work with ease and feel comfortable in expressing themselves. (4) The medium used must encourage the urge for self-expression. When a child gets excited about a particular medium, there is a greater chance of self-expression which results in creativity. (5) A wide variety of materials will increase his sensitivity to different ways of developing a technique.

The most important factor towards self-expression, I believe, is the recognition of the Art objects children create. Art objects ought to have an important place in the home, the school, and the museum. They must be displayed attractively where everyone can enjoy their beauty. The display usually serves several purposes which are important to the child: it reveals what the child has accomplished; it reveals the child's self-expression on specific levels; and it inspires and encourages further expression because the child discovers that people can find enjoyment in his finished work. It develops a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction. If children believe that their work is not important they will give it less attention, and self-expression and creativity will be lost. When Children's Art is enjoyed, it does what it is supposed to do: it makes life more beautiful to those who enjoy beauty.

The examples of children's art shown with this article and at Immanuel Lutheran School demonstrate the materials which were used and techniques which were applied.
THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY: A Gift from God

One need not read extensively today before one runs across an article, sermon, or book on the demise of the Christian family. In fact, the idea of a creeping corruption of Christian principles seems almost popular among the alarmists of our church. We think that there is a better way to view what is happening to contemporary Christians and their families. We would like to share our view and have you reflect with us on the Gospel at work within the Christian communion we call the family. It is not our intention to write a prescription for good Christian family life, but rather we are presenting the general situation as we see it, sharing some of what we are doing, and offering the challenge to you.

If we are to understand what is or is not happening in Christian families, we had best first reflect on the processes through which we learn what a family is and how it functions. Our initial course occurs as we grow up. All sorts of learning about family takes place during these formative years. This learning may be, and generally is, both positive and negative. This learning undoubtedly makes its mark on our family and parenting style, and a broader understanding of family can grow from it.

One of the broadening aspects is, of course, the extended family. Our previous notions of family life are either re-enforced or altered according to the situations we encounter. As we associate with other families, be they relatives or family friends, we begin to build a storehouse of criteria for family life. It is this interaction between and among families which is so rich in potential for intergenerational sharing of Christian principles and family living.

In to this learning process come various persons who are significant because of their relationship with one or more family members. These individuals may surface in any area of society: work, play, church, school, or community. He/she may be a co-worker, playmate, neighbor, teacher, coach, or club leader. These persons are important because they can provide opportunities for individual growth and often fill specific individual needs.

One of the most overlooked factors which reaches into our image of family life and leaves an indelible mark on it is the media. Television, movie, and advertising portrayals of families, while perhaps entertaining, are often simplistic, inaccurate, and debasing. Little is known as to the real effect of these messages on existing and future families, but it is thought to be far-reaching.

School and community organizations are integral parts of many families. They have the potential to provide a base for family learning and activities. Unfortunately, this base may accentuate family division and even cause disruption rather than strengthen the family unit. These organizations will have different effects because each family is unique. Large-scale programs on community, state, and federal levels often tend to treat all families alike. This has unfortunate repercussions in many cases.

As Christians we look to the church as a center for family growth and edification. Our theology of God's Family expresses itself most vividly in the Christian fellowship called the congregation. It is here in our sacramental, worship, and social life that our family grows and shares with many brothers and sisters in Christ. It seems to us, however, that many congregations fail to include families in their working ministry. Women and children are frequently relegated to secondary ministry. Programs often limit themselves in appeal and design to one age or sex of the family members. Even such inter-generational functions as worship often fail to involve the whole family significantly. Nevertheless, the congregation remains the fellowship of believers where growth, edification, and sharing in the name of Jesus takes place.

Considering all the things that contribute to a person's learning about family, how does one assimilate all this information and experience and develop a concept of family? Much of it happens quite naturally; but there are certain steps in this process which need conscious attention. The identity of the marriage partners, who establish the family, is very important.
Awareness of needs, strengths, and values should play a major role in establishing a family life-style. Many times outside factors such as employment, housing, or health take attention from personal needs. Some decisions require individual risk and/or sacrifice for the sake of a better family life. We feel that Scripture encourages our family not to fear risk-taking, but to be secure in the love of God and the certainty of the Resurrection. In the end we trust that the style will bear the mark of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The partners involved need to weigh their circumstances and their personal needs and to establish priorities for their family life. This establishment should yield a Christian environment in the home and community. This is also true for single parent families.

We know that, for us, a family-oriented Christian fellowship is an essential part of our Christian environment. It gives us an opportunity to become friends with other Christian families and to provide support in our chosen Christian life-style. The spiritual life generated by such a fellowship contributes to personal and family edification which carries itself into our home. One way that this fellowship manifests itself in our home is the weekly sharing of a meal and evening with another Christian family. This sharing has nurtured a strong bond between the two families. What we do together depends upon the needs and circumstances of the day. We might discuss the day’s problems, share a celebration, work on a project, cook, or enjoy a game of cards.

Another expression of growth in our family is helping our children to learn Christian fundamentals. We do this in several ways. Stories at bedtime provide a chance to meet people from Scripture and learn what they did. This experience also gives us an opportunity to reinforce and expand knowledge obtained in Sunday School. Special worship, including songs, Scripture, sharing, and the active involvement of the children, highlight our various seasons of the church year. Our children are young so we use many visual aids: candles, pictures, puppets, and dramatic action. We sing regularly in our home. We encourage it and enjoy it, but seldom initiate it because our girls like to sing and do. Singing has become a part of our work, play, travel, and devotion time. We use songs from church and Sunday school as well as other sources. We have also added prayer-learning to singing as our three-year-old readily puts any group of words into a tune. Prayer learning also takes the form of memory games. We have also found sign language to be very useful in visualizing songs and prayers. Young minds are eager to learn; Christian fundamentals are good concepts to be learning.

All of us enjoy friendships with men, women, and children outside of our family. We feel it is important for the maturity of our children for them to make friends and to learn to share.

Today’s media, excellent and challenging in many areas, often falls short in its portrayal of the family. Assuming that the exposure to these images is a fact for most families, the issue becomes how to react and respond to it. One effective use of this phenomenon is for family members to discuss that particular view of a family. The basis for conflict and/or reconciliation in a television or movie plot could be identified and compared to one’s own family’s reaction to a similar situation. Assumptions made by the fathers, mothers, young adults, or children in advertising could be discussed, evaluated, and then accepted, expanded, or rejected. In this way a family could evaluate phases of its own life-style. This kind of sharing can enable children to listen to and talk about reasons why things are done the way they are in their own family, and can demonstrate for them how the discussion process may reinforce or alter behavior.

In many ways, community organizations lead the way in family programming. Strong parent-child relationships are established goals for many clubs and auxiliaries. While some programs are effective, they are supplementary and not replacements for the family relationships that are built and nurtured in the Christian home.

Because school becomes such an important part of a child’s life, the family should take an active interest in it. The sharing of encounters in this world away from home can and should be the topic of family discussions. A child’s reaction to classmates and teachers can be critical in the socialization process. Families need to be sensitive, interested, and supportive.

Congregational life is important to us; as we mentioned before, much of what we do at home is an extension of or a commencement for our congregational involvement. Our hope is to encourage our congregation to be aware of the family unit and involve families more directly in its ministry. One exciting aspect of our present church home is the involvement of many different individuals in each worship celebration. In this way the talents and gifts of many are regularly and comfortably shared. We particularly enjoy the practice of the blessing of the children during the Sacrament of the Altar. But even more family involvement is possible. For instance, an entire family could head a committee; a family could be responsible for an object lesson or scripture lesson; and what would be more appropriate than one family calling another family or officially welcoming a family into the parish community. Family education should be just as important as child or adult education. Family-centered confirmation preparation would once again make the parents responsible as they are at Baptism, for teaching Christian fundamentals. The church would support the parents and family rather than vice-versa. We would also like to experience a more specific attempt by congregations to encourage people to be involved in ministry where their talents and interests lie, regard-
less of sex or age. Often ministries are less effective than they could be because of the easy carry-over of society’s assumptions about who should do what task. A woman might be an excellent carpenter, a man might be an exceptionally good teacher of four-year-olds, and a teenager might prepare and deliver a superb sermon. The potential is as varied and infinite as the gifts given to each person.

We as a family must make important decisions. With the many challenges open to us today, we must select what is best for us. The key is knowing our own goals and having priorities clear so that we can recognize what is good. For example, in our family it is important for us to spend time together—time for our spouse relationship as friends, lovers, and partners; time for the four of us; and time for each of us to have a special relationship with each of our children.

Now is an exciting time to be a part of a Christian family. Our place in history affords us many choices. In order not to be overwhelmed by or fearful of the possibilities, the family needs to be secure in its certainty of the Resurrection. This certainty comes through to us in our marriage text: “Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you should drink, nor about your body, what you should put on. Is not life more than food or clothing?” (Matthew 6:25) We always have to answer “YES!” We are reminded that anxiety, non-productive worry, is, in the light of the Resurrection, a sign of little faith.

We are therefore not alarmed by our times, but excited. We strive with God’s help to be caring and responsible persons, while struggling to avoid anxiety. With the certainty of our Lord’s presence in our lives, decisions can be made, risks taken, and life lived in forgiveness and celebration. As a family we can say “Yes” to life, whether it means saying yes or no to a phase of contemporary living. All this because life in 1975 is a gift, an exciting gift, from God.

DEPRESSION PICTURE

The small words are written on clean white sheets, it is early morning, the time when, my dogs tell me, squirrels sleep.
I am writing, thinking of writing, waiting, dying within words.
My typewriter sits on a desk, designed, built by me in sunlight, the long rough sawn cedar boards stretch toward the wall, book heavy.
Reaching toward the corner high-piled with papers, bills, books, rocks, arrowheads, flowers,
I notice there a small portrait tilted slightly forward, old, rough edged, (the kind we called a depression picture) when as young boys my brothers and I ransacked our parents’ trunks in the cool basement on hot summer days.
It is my mother, twenty-five, short hair, red lips browned by time, a lace blouse, white and grey.
She looks slightly left, she is pretty and young, pretty and young in sunshine at twenty-five. She is older now.

JAMES G. JOHNSON


IN THE FAMILY OF AUTO-biographical literature, the historical diary has often occupied a less than respected position. The reader of an autobiography or memoirs can be assured that the writer has made a conscious attempt to organize the materials of his life in a systematic manner. Often composed years after the events described, memoirs discuss those occurrences which seem most important in retrospect, ignore many day-to-day details which appear less significant, and place the subject's life in historical perspective. The diary, in contrast, usually has none of the coherence of memoirs. Composed hastily at the time of the events described, often not intended for publication in the form written, filled with comments about insignificant events and forgotten people, the historical diary can often confuse more than enlighten.

Through careful excerpting and footnoting, the editors of The Diaries of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., 1943-1946 have made Stettinius' written comments about his public life accessible to those interested in the foreign policy of this period. The editors explain obscure references, give the full names and positions of persons mentioned by Stettinius, and connect the diary sections with a coherent commentary. They have produced, as a result, a clear account of three crucial years in American foreign relations, as seen from the position of a high-ranking U.S. official.

Stettinius was a business executive who became involved in foreign policy almost by accident. He first attracted the attention of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early 1930s, when Roosevelt was Governor of New York and Stettinius was handling company-employee relations for General Motors. When Roosevelt became President in 1933, he asked Stettinius to aid him in securing big business support for the National Recovery Administration, a program to persuade industries to set wages, hours, and prices—with government enforcement of the agreements reached. When NRA began to falter in 1934, Stettinius left the agency to aid U.S. Steel in attempt to modernize their factories. His success in this position led Roosevelt to give him chief responsibility for coordinating aid to England and Russia in their war against Germany, a job he managed so successfully that Secretary of State Cordell Hull named him Undersecretary of State in 1943, when these diary excerpts begin. In late 1944, with Hull suffering from poor health, Roosevelt appointed Stettinius Secretary of State. He held the post until the summer of 1945, when he became U.S. delegate to the United Nations, serving until disagreements with President Harry Truman led him to resign in June of 1946.

The Stettinius diaries contain much material of interest only to a specialist in recent U.S. foreign policy. As Undersecretary of State, Stettinius was responsible for persuading Spain, officially neutral in World War II, to decrease its shipments of tungsten to Germany. He was concerned with persuading the pro-German government of Argentina into changing its policies, while conciliating the British who feared that pressure on Argentina might reduce exports of the South American beef which they needed. As Secretary of State, Roosevelt sent Stettinius to talk with the President of Brazil about sale to the U.S. of certain minerals needed in atomic research. Such problems, while important to foreign policy at the time, now seem little more than minor footnotes to history.

More significant are the diaries' accounts of Roosevelt and Truman as makers of foreign policy. Clearly the downgrading of the State Department in the formulation of foreign affairs began long before Senator Joseph McCarthy accused the department of harboring security risks. Roosevelt weakened the department's influence by ignoring its recommendations and keeping important decisions secret from his Secretaries of State. Cordell Hull resigned his position in part because Roosevelt had grown increasingly isolated and refused to consult Hull about significant matters. Stettinius tried to strengthen co-ordination between the department and the White House by appointing a special liaison officer, but the diaries show that Stettinius also found himself excluded from major deliberations on foreign affairs. At the 1945 Yalta conference, while Stettinius was consulting with Russian foreign minister V. M. Molotov and British foreign secretary Anthony Eden, Roosevelt was meeting with Stalin and making secret agreements to give Japanese territory to Russia in return for a Russian declaration of war.
against Japan. Stettinius was not consulted about these pacts, which were among the most significant matters decided at Yalta. In addition, communication between Roosevelt and Stettinius was so poor during the conference that Roosevelt told Stalin that the foreign ministers had reached agreement on issues which, in fact, Stettinius was still disputing with Molotov.

But, as the diaries also make clear, Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, treated Stettinius with no more frankness than Roosevelt had. Sent to San Francisco in April, 1945 to discuss United Nations organizational plans, Stettinius learned that James Byrnes, Truman's rumored choice to succeed him, was planning to attend the conference too. Disturbed by this weakening of his authority, Stettinius sought assurances from Truman that his position was secure. Truman insisted that Byrnes would not attend the conference because "we are counting upon you to carry through." In fact, as the editors note, Truman had already decided to replace Stettinius with Byrnes but preferred to conceal the news until Byrnes was ready to take office. The continued rumors about his impending replacement only weakened the Secretary's negotiating position at the UN conference and led to doubts about his ability to reflect Truman's views accurately.

Roosevelt and Truman may have concealed important information from the State Department because they felt that the department could not be trusted to keep secrets from newspaper columnists. The diaries reveal that long before Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon made press "leaks" a concern of their administrations, Roosevelt and Truman worried about the problem. In 1944, Stettinius told Roosevelt that action should be taken to stop columnist Drew Pearson from publishing secret documents. Roosevelt agreed. He told Stettinius to bring an FBI agent into the State Department, tell employees that he was a new foreign service officer, and assign him the task of discovering which members of the department were passing information to Pearson. When Stettinius suggested that the leaks might be coming from the White House staff, Roosevelt treated that possibility lightly. Shortly before returning to private life, Stettinius discussed the problem of "leaks" with Truman and Byrnes. Pearson had assured Byrnes that no one in the State Department had served as his source of information. But Truman was angry at published reports of certain intra-administration disagreements, and he dismissed the columnist as "completely unreliable."

The downgrading of the State Department in foreign policy making, the increasing secrecy which led presidents to consult fewer persons before making important decisions on foreign affairs, the growing White House fears about press leaks which might embarrass the administration—Stettinius describes such matters in detail. The diaries show that the secrecy and deceptions of the Vietnam War and the spying and obsession with security which marked the Watergate scandal were not aberrations in presidential foreign-policy making but extensions of administrative habits practiced by both Roosevelt and Truman. When Stettinius wrote about Roosevelt's isolation or Truman's duplicity, he did not realize that later presidents would destroy their reputations by carrying such tendencies to extremes. Many writers of political memoirs would eliminate such passages from their writings rather than mar the reputations of former presidents. Stettinius, recounting his daily experiences, felt no such compulsion. By illuminating the usually hidden actions of high public officials, the Stettinius accounts give the contemporary reader new insight into the growth of presidential power and clearly show the value of the skillfully edited historical diary.

RONALD SCHLUNDT

GLOBAL COMPANIES: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WORLD BUSINESS.


THE GROWTH IN NUMBERS and size of the GLOBAL COMPANIES or Multinational Companies or Transnational Corporations of the United States, Japan, Europe, and other countries constitutes a development which since the end of World War II has become of increased political concern to the developed and the developing countries in the world as well as to the HOME and the HOST country of the corporations, their subsidiaries and branches. This development is described and appraised by many books, articles, and seminars from the points of view concerning the efficient allocation of world resources, the desirable and undesirable effect on the world economy and the nation-states.

The book under review is the product of a seminar sponsored by the 47th American Assembly of Columbia University and consists of ten essays given by highly qualified and competent authorities in December of 1974.

The purpose of the book is to present information concerning the multinational corporations as (1) a private economic enterprise; (2) an auxiliary in harmony with the political organization to meet the requirements of an expanding population in a world of limited resources; (3) to determine what new adjustments, regulations, and institutions are needed in the economic and political sectors; and (4) the relevancy of the many conflicting views regarding the legitimacy and the future of the multinational corporations' activities.

Inasmuch as the ten essays contain a wealth of information and the essayists were not required to comply with an integrated plan, the reviewer, who is not omniscient,
The first essay, given by Eugene V. Rostow, indicates the provisions of the United States Constitution which by limiting the powers of the states permit the development of a NATIONAL market. Whereas the proprietorship and the partnership legal forms of organization and local markets predominated down to the Civil War, the corporate device was better suited to the growth of the NATIONAL market as population increased, transportation facilities, improved technology, and capital markets appeared. The corporation being considered as a legal "person" having limited liability, certainty of duration, transferability of shares, and other features relative to the proprietorship or partnership device, enabled corporate managers to serve the national market, to reap the "economics of scale," to enter the world market, and to come into conflict with their own government and with that of other sovereignties.

The second essay, given by Jacques G. Maisonrouge, maintains that the multinational corporation's past performance and future promise justifies its continued existence as an instrument of dealing with the unequal distribution of world resources.

The third essay, given by Ronald Mueller, holds that the structural transformation embodied in the globalization of private corporate enterprise in the industrial, banking, and financial sectors led to global competition and then to global concentration. The structural lag in the public sector relative to the structural changes in the private sector of the economy reduced the effectiveness of a nation's fiscal and monetary policies, limited the function of the free market allocation of resources, and produced a "crisis in information" in the collective bargaining process between the unions and their employers. Moreover, the globalization of United States enterprises was duplicated in part in other countries and was followed by global expansion into the underdeveloped and developing countries.

The fourth essay, given by Seymour J. Rubin, deals with the relations of the multinational corporation and the state from which it receives its charter, that is, the HOME state. The areas of conflict with the home state include the application of the anti-trust laws, the import and export controls, the trading with the enemy, and the support given by the home state to the corporation's conflicts with the foreign governments or HOST states.

The fifth essay, given by George W. Ball, indicates that the HOST state has the power to regulate, tax, expel, and confiscate the property of a corporation that does business within its borders but may have a disadvantage in the bargaining process with the multinational corporation relative to the terms of trade, its access to the markets of the developed countries, and the taxation of the profits earned by the multinational corporation. It is the essayist's opinion that the multinational corporation (MNC) provides the best means to date for the efficient use of world resources and that the correction of injustices and the reduction of the gap between the rich and the poor countries will not be hastened by restrictions imposed by a resurgence of nationalism in the world.

The sixth essay, given by Charles P. Kindleberger, lists and analyzes 3 views for and against foreign direct as against portfolio investments by private firms. The experience derived from these investments indicates that U.S. multinational corporations have operated in militant developing countries which championed "uncompromising nationalism, economic populism, the termination of their dependency on the United States," and demanded a greater share in the "economic rents" or the profits of the MNC.

The seventh essay, given by Herbert Salzman, suggests that the new militancy and the increasing nationalism of the HOST countries placed upon the MNC the necessity of devising means for reducing the political risks of doing business in those countries. Because traditional responses to new issues have not been satisfactory, the essayist lists ten measures that may be employed to reduce the political risks of the MNC.

The eighth essay, given by Eugene V. Rostow, suggests that the multinational corporations must serve as an instrumentality for organizing a flow of capital, technology, managerial talent, and entrepreneurship from the developed to the developing countries to reduce the pressure of population growth and of the decline in material resources on society. Otherwise, the gap between the rich and the poor countries may widen, peaceful relationships between countries may become untenable, and mass migrations of people to the developed countries may take place. A second suggestion calls for the formation of an international treaty between nations and the establishment of a world central bank to integrate and coordinate the measures to be employed by the developed and the developing nations to attain full employment of the resources, stable prices, and world peace.

The ninth essay deals with the long range political role of the MNC and consists of two parts; one part is presented by Prof. J. S. Nye and the other by Prof. S. J. Rubin. Prof. Nye maintains that the MNC will not render the nation-states obsolete for the opposite view grossly overrates the power of the MNC and underrates the power of the sovereign states. However, the shift, in the nation-states, from the political-military struggle to the political-economic struggle may lead to an increase in the role of the MNC in world politics. These MNCs may do this directly and indirectly, in-
tentionally and unintentionally in at least three important ways. There follows then the arguments for and against the multinationals' increase in their political role, the problems encountered by them in the developed and in the developing countries, and the essence of the three major recommendations made by the United Nations.

In the second part of the ninth essay Prof. Rubin maintains that the multinationals will not become the masters of the nation-states, for the favorable conditions, in the United States and Europe, which supported the rapid growth of the American-based multinationals, have changed; that global companies have appeared in other countries; that investigations and restrictions by nation-states are in the making; and that the corporations may get involved in conflicts with the HOME as well as with the HOST states.

The tenth essay consists of three parts, one each given by Eugene V. Rostow, Joseph R. Nye, and George W. Ball. Each part contains a proposal for some international or supranational agency providing useful criteria for the developed and developing nations regarding the legitimacy of the multinationals' future activities. Prof. Rostow suggests an international treaty to fill the gap in the international legal system. Prof. Nye, after discussing the optimistic and the pessimistic view of world order, suggests the establishment of procedures, codes, and international institutions to resolve the conflicts between the multinationals and the nations in a manner not detrimental to world peace. Mr. Ball proposes that the multinationals be subject to the provisions of an international charter and that rules be established to govern also the interference by the HOME and by the HOST nations in the affairs of the MNCs.

Global Companies is an important book and should be given serious attention by business management, economists, political scientists, and the persons in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the governments. The ten essays do not deal with the faults, abuses, or illegal activities of any one or all of the global companies but deal primarily with the potential exercise of the powers inherent in the resources at the corporations' command within the current economic and political system. It is hoped that this may lead to the formation of new regulations and institutions presumably necessary for the maximization of the benefits and the minimization of the costs of the multinationals' activities as a positive contribution to the attainment of the goals of the nations concerned.

The essayists cannot be criticized as being propagandist or of being one-sided. They have been quite exhaustive in their analysis and in presenting the different views existent relative to the issues. The references to the United States companies' experience in Canada, Chile, Peru, and the Mid-East were enlightening, appropriate, and most interesting.

The remedies suggested do not call for an abandonment of the economic and political system but consist of measures that may reduce the tensions and inhibit the resurgence of nationalistic policies. The multilateral is preferred over the bilateral and unilateral approach in the decision-making process.

The ten essays represent merely the tip of the iceberg of the subject matter as a whole and the summary of each essay is the tip of the iceberg of each essay.

The fears still prevail that globalization may lead to cartelization either private, governmental, or both, particularly in the areas of the production and sale of critical raw materials.

To become more familiar with top-level international economic and political relationships and to become aware of the many research opportunities in these areas is indeed a generous reward provided by the essays reviewed.

ERWIN E. GOEHRING

THEY DON'T DANCE MUCH.


A contemplation of one's reaction to They Don't Dance Much brings one directly to some central questions about novel reading in general. The fascination of novels lies, I believe, in the rather simple fact that as the reader of a novel you are introduced to the lives of other people. This is true of all the novels I can think of, and "introduced" is the only word that will do to describe the peculiar relation that the author sets up between his imagined characters and his imaginary readers. The writer brings us into the presence of his characters in a number of different ways. For example, in Pride and Prejudice, we know Mr. Darcy solely through his drawing room conversation until we have the devastating look at his private correspondence in the famous letter beginning "In vain have I struggled. . . ." We can know a character in an intimate way, as we know Leopold Bloom, or sentimentally, as we know Agnes Wickfield. Or, to use the same novel for illustration, see how Dickens plays with the relation between character and reader in presenting us with Copperfield himself. The character as narrator imagines he is showing himself to be quite the man of feeling, the sentimental gentleman. In fact, we see much more clearly than he into his motives, thanks to Dickens's enormous skill in the presentation of the character. The characters in this novel, They Don't Dance Much, are introduced with all the patent objectivity of the computer date, and they are as abrasive and unforgettable.

The world of novels, then, allows us to see, in various degrees, "all sorts and conditions of men," and provides us with a setting in which
we can ponder their quiddity. And
to a novel reader, the distance be­
tween the world of the character
and his own world often enhances
rather than diminishes the charm.
(I cannot imagine wanting to read
a novel about a 35-year-old Mid­
western, semi-academic housewife
with four children.) Thus, to modify
the image, we human creatures of
varying kinds look at each other
with mingled curiosity and diffi­
dence, rather as the animals in one
section of a zoo enclosure regard
those in another. Reading this book,
I had an image of myself as a polite
giraffe, speculatively observing the
orangutangs, amiable but other. The
humans portrayed in They Don't
Dance Much were interesting, but
totally incomprehensible.

The jacket says the book was “for
sheer brutality and frankness of
language considerably ahead of his
reading public's taste for pitiless
realism untinged with sentiment or
profundity.” Indeed, no setting
could be more sleazy, no people
more repellent, no plot more vul­
gar. A gas station enlarged to in­
clude roadhouse, gambling hall,
dance floor, and by-the-hour guest
cabin is the setting for the activi­
ties of the book's characters. The
narrator is a failed young dirt farm­
er who takes a job at the gas station
owned by his high school friend,
Smut Milligan. Several minor
characters are the habitues of the
illegal bar and gambling room that
are the whole of this establishment
at the book's onset, and others are
the staff of the more ambitious road
house endeavor which is built dur­
ning the book's development section.
The “girl” is Smut's old high school
girl friend, who has married the
town's rich man, Charles Fisher, and
these two operate as dei ex machina,
flashing into the plot to precipitate
various crises, one climactic and,
inaudibly, fatal. None of the charac­
ters ever displays a motive or inten­
tion that isn't immoral in some way
or other; drunkenness, cheating, and
fornication seem to come to them as
naturally as eating, sleeping, and
breathing. I am hardly a judge of
the “realism” part of the jacket's
description, since in my limited
experience I've never run into any­
one at all like Smut Milligan, and
I'd cross any number of streets to
make sure it never happened. The
“pitiless,” though, I can vouch for.
A succession of events is recounted
minutely, inexorably, each grubby
detail set down baldly and seriously.
How many hands of blackjack Wil­
bur Brannon and Bert Ford played
before 11:30, how many gallons of
gas were pumped into Lola Fisher's
bright red Chrysler, the histories
of the kitchen crew, the nature of
Catfish Wall's daddy's ailment, the
price of a Coke, Sheriff R. L. Pem­
berton's casual visits to the road­
house, the amount of cash in the
register at closing time. The narra­
tive is both terse and exhaustive;
we are told everything, briefly. So
the narrative of the murder (of
course there's a murder—this is a
Southern novel) is spare and matter­of­fact, as essential and chilling as
a snake. The narrator is almost a
bystander, though “unwilling ac­
complice” would also describe him.
He is sickened by the proceeding,
which seems to mean no more to
Milligan than mopping up the rings
left by beer glasses on the bar. But
why does he react as he does? Why
no outrage? Why no refusal to help
Milligan with the theft, and the
macabre disposal of the body? What
are his principles, what guides him
in his actions? The moral situation
which the novel gradually reveals
is a vast echoing emptiness. There
is no truth, beauty, or goodness,
no sweetness and light here, no
honor or generosity, no humanity,
no pity, no faith. The book is a
startlingly clear photograph of a
moral void.

Yet we are not to look, says the
jacket, for either “sentiment or pro­
fundity.” I would certainly object
to that reading of the book, as if it
were Mickey Spillane or even Er­
skine Caldwell. In an effort to get
They Don't Dance Much in per­
spective, I tried to find some Cald­
well, but he was too popular at the
time he wrote to be included in
Lost American Fiction, and not
popular enough now to be readily
available. At the other end of the
scale, Faulkner presents the reader
with a Southern gothic table which
is almost nothing but profound,
appearing, in Ross's light, pre­
eminently nineteenth-century in
outline, like an ornate hall tree
illuminated by a Charles Eames
light fixture.

It ought to be mentioned that the
language of They Don't Dance
Much has a lot of zip in comparison
with the turgid contemporary style
of, for example, Saul Bellow, or,
dare one say it, John Updike. The
book is often very funny, a princi­
ple element of Ross's style being the
laconic twist of phrase that strikes
precisely home, a characteristic of
rural Western and, I must suppose,
Southern speech as well. “The sheriff
was a short, thick fellow, and so
bowlegged that he couldn't hem up a
pig in a ditch.” His syntax is spare
and vital, like very, very good jour­
nalism. George V. Higgins has
something to say in an Afterword
about language and Ross's use of
it. His point seems to be that
writers ought to be able to use dirty
words to describe dirty acts and
dirty characters, and that Ross was
still laboring valiantly under the
constraints imposed on literature
by “the fat lady and her consort, the
fellow in the frock coat.” I haven't
read Mr. Higgins's own books (have
you?) but I found his patronizing
admiration for Ross's “doing the
best he could under the circum­
cstances” objectionable. Ross's book
is far better than that. Its fascina­
tion says a great deal about the power
of the novel as an art form, since it
demonstrates how a novel draws
us into sympathy with what we
scarcely know, and can never, ever,
understand.

GAIL EIFRIG

December, 1975
HOW DO YOU WHOMP UP some Christmas spirit ahead of time? We're apt to get reflexes of weariness at the lights and tinsel, the shopping and the nipping, before we ever get there. The music? The Baby, the Virgin, the Gentle Jesus? Wouldn't it be great if we could subtract sentiment and be left with some substance?

Of course, you can reflect on some substance. How good that the Incarnation underscores the meaning of man and the concern of God for His whole Creation. Here you have human conception, birth, childhood, carpentry, teaching, collision with authority, death. God with us, indeed.

As I sit experiencing the competition between the jangle and the goodness of Christmas in my mind, obviously I want to hum "Oh Come All Ye Faithful." The anonymous Latin original may be as late as the 18th Century. But here I find:

_Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine,
Gestant puellae viscera Deum verum,

_Genitum, non factum. Venite, adoremus Dominum!

Begotten, not made—that stirs a memory. Where have I heard that? and then I realize that for sixty years I have been saying it, absent-mindedly, half-wittedly, in the Nicene Creed.

Here is God at work—God with us. It is He that works among us human beings, in conception and birth indeed, poverty and handicraft indeed, teaching and human encounter indeed, collision with authority indeed, and death. But in all of it is God at work.

Wouldn't any man or woman have done just as well? Why these? Why in this quaint way? Well, you see God is at work not only acting, but telling why He acts; not only creating out of nothing, but sharing Himself with us; not simply stooping to us, but becoming one of us; not only talking to us, but redeeming us at the cost of—get it—Himself. Here comes Christmas, by addition and not subtraction, God for Us.

Therefore the Gospels talk not just about a birth, but about angels singing; not just about a boy, but "don't you know I have to be about the things that belong to my Father?"; not just teaching, but being the Bread of life; not just dying unjustly, but dying to carry out God's supremely just will to forgive the human race at His own expense; not just dying, but rising from the dead.

The miracle about Mary isn't that she was a Virgin merely, but that she could sing: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden."

Christmas too thick with sentiment? Don't knock it, but put it all together:

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity! Pleased as Man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Immanuel!

That's right, God with Us. This Christmas, put it all together!