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LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
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# The Seminarian



Epiphany  
January, A.D. 1945

# The Seminarian



EPIPHANY

TRANSFIGURATION

SEPTUAGESIMA

1945

Septuagesima Sunday sounds an ominous note in the cycle of the Church Year. In the events of our Lord's life, we have lately left the white radiance of the mount of Transfiguration and begun that long descent leading through the wastelands of this world, the valley of the shadow of death, and rising at length to another mount which is Calvary. The white light of Epiphany is stained as it were; passing into a glowing green it will presently assume the darker shades of violet; and at last the deepening tones will resolve into the black of Good Friday, the dark night preceding the radiance of Easter.

This season of transition commands our attention as we approach, though from afar, the Passion of Our Lord. There is but the slightest warning—remote rumblings of a foreboding Vesuvius—suggestions of disaster, as the opening bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony; but sounds that will grow in volume until at length we recognize them to be the blows of a hammer driving hard nails into a Cross.

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## THE FAITH WITHIN US

### Excerpts From Senior Essays

Departing from the usual form of comprehensive examination, the Seminary Faculty asked the seniors to write a paper of some four thousand words in which they were to

- "(1) state, with some fullness, what Jesus Christ means to you;
- (2) show how your personal faith is related to the Scriptures and to the church; and
- (3) indicate how, as a minister of the Gospel, you propose to communicate this faith to others."

The essay afforded an interesting opportunity to put into writing one's own ideas and convictions upon subjects that embrace the whole of theological training. Believing that students were eager to compare their ideas with one another, the staff of the Seminarian invited a number of contributions in the way of excerpts, voluntarily selected by the writers themselves. The response was encouraging, and we are happy to offer our readers the following quotations with our hearty thanks for the willing cooperation of the class. It is apparent that the composite picture herewith represents something of a theological patch-work quilt. No attempt has been made to effect any transition from paragraph to paragraph, and our readers are left to decide for themselves what part of the question the authors were seeking to answer. It should also be stated with fairness due the integrity of the writers, that these excerpts, being samplings, do not necessarily represent a total statement of belief. Nor are they expressions of an official position of the Seminary.

#### I

"A Chaplain in the United States Army told me that at one point in his seminary life he felt completely incapable of preaching another sermon. Perplexities and doubt left him nothing to preach. The Professor to whom he spilled his story did not solve his perplexities - but he did keep him in the ministry. And the words he used to do just that have become a guiding star in this Chaplain's life. 'You may not be able to solve all things. . . but you can resolve them!' - In my own life the perplexities of the Christian Religion crop up again and again. . . the problem of sin and its source, the problem of God permitting one man to be doomed to hell, the possibility of religion being man's own defense mechanism in a wishful thinking sort of way. No one has ever answered - no one can answer - these problems specifically, with finality. Still, the Christian Religion paradoxically has strengthened its grip on me. I can't leave this Religion alone! I may not be able to solve all things. . . but I can resolve them in a God of Love. Although He has not given me an encyclopedia of divine data, the God of John 3:16 mysteriously has given me a 'spiritual Weltanschauung', an assurance, a heart-over-head understanding. I know Him so little. . . and yet I know Him so well, since every true contact I have with him ultimately testifies to a God-Who-Loves!

## II

"Though I cannot, for example, know from personal experience that Jesus Christ is the agent of creation in all time and space, I can and do know that He answers prayer, that He forgives sins, that He strengthens in trial and temptation, that He enlightens in ignorance, that He comforts in trouble, that He supplies in time of need, that He calls men to His Service, and countless other matters daily. These things I have experienced, and therefore know Him to be faithful and true. If so much is true, I am content to accept the testimony of the Holy Scriptures on matters outside my ability to experience or know."

## III

"There are many people who have said to me that Christ seemed to them to be only a figment of the imagination of men. To me Christ is a living standard. While there have been many men who have given us noble ideals and rules for life, Christ is the only one who ever lived up to what He told others to do. And so I have accepted Him as the pattern for my life. While I realize that I am a mere mortal, and as such, can never hope to live up to His standards, I owe it to Him and to myself to seek to follow Him as closely as possible."

## IV

"Instead of arguing with people I shall be their friend. If I can be 'as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as streams of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land' I shall be showing Christ to people much clearer than if I argue with them. True friends, I think, people need badly. If I can convince them that I am a better friend to them because Christ is my Saviour I shall be happy. I shall try to show what a life dominated by God is. As Jesus strengthens me I shall live a life unruffled by worries, secure in crises, sincere in devotion, integrated in purpose."

## V

"Christ is the fullest revelation of God. The prophets did not reveal God as we know Him. They emphasized His justice to the neglect of His love. They could not even understand God's love for sinful man. That can be seen only in Christ. There was gradual development in revelation. John the Baptist gave the fullest prophecy of Christ. All other revelations of God are subordinate to the revelation of God in Christ. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,' says Jesus. None other could make that statement. We can know God as he really is only to the extent that we know Christ. All that has followed since the ministry of Christ on earth is the product of reflection upon Christ, which led to a fuller understanding inspired by the Holy Spirit. God has given us no greater revelation of Himself since He sent His Son into the world. If we have any fuller concept of God now than the Christians of the first century had, it is because God, through the Holy Spirit, has allowed the minds of thinking men to see farther into the depths of the truths revealed in Christ. But even with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, man's finite mind cannot fully comprehend the infinite

wisdom of God in His plan of salvation through Christ. We must still accept God's revelation of Himself in Christ through faith and not reason."

## VI

"It behooves the minister to be informed as to what is going on in the world. The minister's life cannot and must not become an 'ivory tower' existence. He must continually be aware of the pulse of living. He must keep up with current thought, educational trends, politics, business, international affairs—in fact, the whole gamut of living. It is true that the Word of God is directed to individuals, but that Word is directed to individuals who are living in the world, not in a social vacuum. The man to whom God's Word is directed probably has a family. He has a position in business or industry. He is a member of other organizations. He votes. He reads newspapers and magazines. He listens to the radio. All these forces condition his whole personality. A minister cannot ignore this. Neglect or ignorance of these forces will defeat one's ministry. Appreciation of and knowledge of these factors will assure one of a vital ministry—a vital medium of communicating God's Word. Christ is certainly a 'changeless Christ for a changing world'."

## VII

"You see, He has taught me that He wants to bring out the best that is in me, and although that 'best that is in me' is not always perfect or even the best human answer to a situation to be had at the time, still He insists that for my welfare and that for the good of society in the long run of affairs, for each one of us it is important that He be permitted to bring out the best that is in us. This is a principle close to the life-stream of democracy as we envision it here in America: it is also close to the heart of Christianity although it is often lost sight of by those who would put authority, or the church, or their own opinions or laws with their own human fallibility above the workings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts, minds and lives of men.

While men are often sadly misled by their own sinfulness and wander far from the truth, they are also frequently just as wildly misled and betrayed by following blindly after what other men have cited to them as infalible authority. Despite the error that results from our inability at times to correctly distinguish between right and wrong, yet the Holy Spirit does guide men into truth, and each man is responsible not to the conscience of another, but to his own conscience—to whatever he himself believes to be the will of God."

## VIII

The preaching of the Word of God is, at first glance, our most obvious means, as pastors, for proclaiming the Faith. Standing in the tradition of the Augsburg Confession and the spirit of the Lutheran Reformation, we give prominence that is due the preaching office of the ministry... That our sermons contain the Gospel of Christ is our serious responsibility. This is not a legal requirement, but as for Paul a

divine urgency, bringing him and us to the profound cry, 'Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel!' The position we occupy is fraught with dread, for we are unworthy of our high office, yet called to proclaim God's Word, His people awaiting our instructions. As in the experience of Barth, we face a similar dilemma: called to preach the Word of God, compelled with all the urgency of divine command, yet confessing in our human frailty that we know not what that true Word is. The dread reality of our condition would lead us to despair, were it not for the power of the Holy Spirit Who enlightens our minds and warms our hearts, even as we read the Divine Word. . . And though the voice of prophesying with tongues has long been stilled in the Church, we sorely need that pristine vitality in our preaching to-day. The German chorale voices our prayer,  
'Awake, Thou Spirit, Who didst fire  
The watchmen of the Church's youth!'"

## IX

"I maintain that no man can be won to the faith of Jesus Christ by argument. I can only present to him my belief and the belief of all Christians, but the final decision must be made by him aided by the working of the Holy Ghost within him. Thus I contend that I cannot communicate my faith to others but can only show them the way in which they may become believers with me in the same faith."

## X

"As a minister I shall represent the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His Church in whatever level of society or walk of life I may find myself. And it is unfortunate, but true, that for many people I shall be the only Gospel that they will ever see or hear. To the best of my profession that Gospel must be as appealing and convincing as I can make it. I do not hold with the opinion prevalent among many that outside the Church proper the Pastor is no more than any other Christian man. It is not true that a minister can separate his professional status from his social life. Indeed, because of his professional status, his social status is more significant. At all times, in all places, and under any conditions, it is imperative that the Christian Minister represent Jesus Christ and His Gospel. Hence, I find myself, according to my own definition treating every life situation as an opportunity to give evidence of the Faith that is within me. The Office I hold as a minister of Jesus Christ cannot be separated from the social status I hold as a Christian. It follows then that in my personal conduct shall be my prime opportunity to communicate my faith to others."

## XI

"Living Christ and letting Him be my Master is not merely something that comes into my life when I become conscious of my sins; it is not merely a new series of duties I enter upon; it is coming into friendship with that noble person in whom God is known to me; it is the giving of my life so thoroughly to Him so that I may become like Him; my nature shaped upon His nature, till my life becomes His life and His life becomes my life."

## XII

"I want to make my impress as a Christian, not as a priest. This is not implying that there is lacking within my being a consciousness of calling. That it should be I who has received this special training and these responsibilities is indeed something to weigh on my heart. I value the confidence, at the same time realizing my inadequacy, and indeed, my personal unimportance. But for the grace of God, Joe the ditchdigger might be in the pulpit, and I shoveling dirt. This too I can never forget. My approach must therefore be humble. It must be as a Christian bearing testimony to another fellow man who is just as high in the sight of God as I. I cannot descend from a pedestal to speak to 'hoi polloi' because I have never been placed on a pedestal. God help me to remember this!"

## XIII

"But far in advance of all ministrations of the pastor to his flock, is the experience of corporate worship. This we believe is the highest spiritual activity of redeemed mankind. Sermons, instructions, even works of mercy may fail; but the pastor standing before the altar of God and leading his people into communion with our Lord and our Redeemer is, after all, rendering his highest service. When human means prove futile, God Himself 'stoops to us in likeness lowly.' The sacramental act is God bending down to us, entering our souls and there transforming our lives. . . The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper remains for us the greatest corporate action of Christendom, and to be called a minister at His Table is our blessed privilege. For the Sacrament is an expression of the goal of the Christian ministry: the bringing of hungry souls into communion with God. And though we can scarcely exhaust in our emphasis the spiritual treasure of communion which the Sacrament affords, we are bound to cultivate an appreciation for the other elements of the Supper as well. These comprise the chief principles of divine worship: Thanksgiving, with all the joy and praise of the common celebration; memorial, that holds before our mind's eye the redemptive work of Christ; and mystery, that opens to us the realm of the spiritual in which by faith we touch and handle things unseen and enter into that 'brief, bright hour of fellowship with Thee.'"

## XIV

"In the Scriptures I have a source of strength for my life. When I am in need of strength in times of temptation, I find it in the Scriptures. When I am in need of solace in times of sorrow, I find it in the Scriptures. When I am in need of guidance in times of perplexity, I find it in the Scriptures. When I am in need of inspiration to do more and better things for Christ and His Kingdom, I find it in the Scriptures. When I am in need of a work of certainty in times of doubt, I find it in the Scriptures. All of these needs the Scriptures fulfill in my life. The Scriptures are the very basis for my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In them I have the assurance of the forgiveness of my sins. In them I have the assurance of everlasting life with the Father. In them I have the assurance that God does love, me, an unworthy sinner. Yes, my faith is rooted in and based upon the Scriptures."

## XV

"Gradually I came to see that I had not done at all what was in keeping with God's will for me. In fact, I realized that even now 'the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' I realized this was my 'sinful nature' about which I had been told! . . . God did something about my sinful nature when He decided to come from Heaven to earth with the baby Jesus in His arms. Almighty God, my gracious Heavenly Father, broke through it all with a purpose. That purpose was to reconcile the world unto Himself. Yes, Almighty God came into the world in the person of Jesus Christ to change my mind, my heart, and my spirit. He came to cause me to fear and to trust Him, thereby reestablishing our Father-child relationship which has given me peace of heart and mind for this life on earth and which shall someday blossom into a perfect communion when I shall be one with Him. . . . I define everlasting life as everlasting communion with God. Through the person and work of Jesus Christ my life has been restored to a communion and fellowship with God which shall continue into all eternity. What does Jesus Christ mean to me? He means that God so loves me that He came into the world to restore my faith and trust in Him, that I shall not perish, but enter into a life with Him which shall be everlasting."

## XVI

"It was just ten years ago when I was in catechetical class that I first made another discovery. In the third article of the Apostles' Creed most of the things in which we are professing our faith are separated by semi-colons. They are separate items. Two, however, are separated only by commas: the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints. At the time I was studying English grammar in secular school, and I realized that that must mean that these two phrases were in apposition. In other words, the Holy Christian Church equals the Communion of Saints! . . . I knew what the Church was, and I knew what a saint was. I was a saint and a member of the Church! Luther said that the Christian is 'simul justus et peccator', at the same time a saint and a sinner. While I can say, as St. Paul did, that I am chief of sinners, because of my faith in Christ I am a chosen, a called one of God, and a member of His Church. I was one of the same body with Peter and Paul and Stephen, with Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, with my fellow Christians of this day and with those who are yet to be born. The Church knows no limits of time or space, . . . the Church knows only the communion, the fellowship of all those called to be servants of Jesus Christ."

## XVII

"I believe that nothing else will earn me the respect, the confidence, and the love of the people than a faith in Jesus Christ which I am able to communicate to them thru word and deed. Nor can I effectively minister thru visitation and counselling save that I believe that Jesus Christ has the power to mend broken and sick bodies."

## XVIII

"It is not an easy task to let Christ shine through our lives. But it is a goal for which to strive daily. And I, as a Christian pastor, must try with all my strength and ability to translate the spirit of the



Gospel into the hearts and lives of men... Yet in all that I can do to convey my faith to others, it is not I who is working, but God Who is doing it all! For He is the source of all my strength! To Him be all the glory and praise!"

## A N O P E N L E T T E R

Dear Fellow Seminarians:

There are, no doubt, numerous reasons why men go into foreign mission work, but two come to my mind as basic. The first is the compelling fact that as believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of men we have a divine Gospel to share with the world. And the second reason is its simple counterpart: The greater part of our world has never heard that divine Gospel which has given us Life.

These two reasons are so obvious that they seem almost trite; but whether we serve at home or abroad, we dare never become callous toward their truth. It was nothing less than the thoroughgoing realization of these two truths that compelled the apostles to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world! It was the Resurrected Lord's "Lovest thou me?" that constrained Peter to preach the saving Gospel to three thousand souls that first Pentecost in Jerusalem; and it was the Love of Christ that constrained Paul to go over to Macedonia.

The point I want to share here is this: The Gospel which compels us to enter the Holy Ministry does not limit our field of service, but calls for a willingness in us to go preach It wherever the Holy Spirit, the Church, or the Macedonian Call would have us go. When we see the work of the Kingdom of God with such openness, we are ready to weigh other factors which may bear upon our field of service.

One such factor which has always borne weight with me is the relative need of the different parts of this world in which to live. Several little things have stuck in my memory: Dr. E. Stanley Jones said something in one of his books about the disparity of the ten pastors in the United States to every one in India. Someone else once pointed out that there are more people in the world who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ today than there were two thousand years ago when our Lord said, "Go ye, therefore!" And, truth or pious fiction, there is a spirit in the story of the remote Chinese who, upon hearing of Christ's love and death upon the cross for him, asked the telling question, "When did this Jesus die for me?", and, informed that He died nearly two thousand years ago, added, "Why didn't you tell us sooner?"

There is another angle which is not worthy of consideration among us as seminarians, but it comes to mind and has admittedly prompted me along the way. We have been in seminary in years when our less fortunate

high school and college buddies have been going to the far corners of the earth in the service of Mars. Certainly the possibility of danger or discomfort in the service of our Lord, then, can have no place in our thinking of missions! Better it is that we be guilty of personal "wand-erlust" and a flare for adventure in going to some mission field than of patriotic fear!

Recently some of us heard Dr. Reinartz speak on "Signs of the Dawn". One of the signs, he said, was a growing lay appreciation of the Mission movement. He gave a good illustration: A recent cartoon pictured a fuzzy-wuzzy busily stirring soup in a man-sized kettle with one hand, and holding the open Bible which he was reading in the other. The ubiquitous Yank private comes near and chides him for reading such antiquated literature. The fuzzy-wuzzy pauses, points squarely into the kettle, and says, "If I weren't reading this Bible, you'd be in there!!" Which is to say: Missions have paid, are paying, and will pay more than ever in our constantly shrinking world community!

One more random thought. The collect for the Epiphany of our Lord begins with fitting beauty: "O God, Who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy Only-begotten Son to the Gentiles..." Without seeming to be quarrelsome, let me simply and seriously add this comment, that the Epiphany of our Lord to the Gentiles comes no longer "by the leading of a star", but by the Spirit-directed and blessed efforts of those who by many a road hear and answer the Call to Missions.

I look forward with joy to taking a place in the constant line of men going out from our seminary to the distant fields, and with sincere hope of being followed by some of you whom I know have a vision of those fields. Wherever our fields of service, we work together in Christ's Kingdom. Fellow "Sons of Old Mount Airy", let us help carry on

"Till the sons of every nation gather 'neath the cross!"

Fraternally,

Don Wilson

O God, our heavenly Father, who didst manifest Thy love by sending Thine only-begotten Son into the world that all might live through Him; pour Thy Spirit upon Thy Church, that it may fulfill His command to preach the Gospel to every creature; send forth, we beseech Thee, laborers into Thy harvest; make them glad with abundance of increase; and hasten the time when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in, and all Israel shall be saved; through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, who hast warned us that Thou wilt require much of those to whom much is given; grant that we, whose lot is cast in so goodly a heritage, may strive together the more abundantly, by our prayers, labors, and gifts, to extend to those who know Thee not what we so richly enjoy; and as we have entered into the labors of others, so to labor that others may enter into ours, to the fulfillment of Thy holy will, and the salvation of all mankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## MORE ABOUT KIERKEGAARD

### Pastor Rilling Addresses the Seminary on the Danish Philosopher

Lively and refreshing, warmly sympathetic, a master of style, the Rev. John Rilling, pastor of First Lutheran Church, Springfield, O., brought us fresh insight into the life and mind of the Danish Philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard, in a lecture delivered before the Seminary last Thursday evening, January 25. For many of us, the most practical result of his address should be a renewed desire to begin reading Kierkegaard at once, and to discover at first hand what accounts for his unusual popularity to-day.

Opening with the striking comparison of Ibsen's Job-like character Brand, the speaker suggested that the life of the melancholy Dane, too, was one smitten of God, yet of a God of love. Going on to discuss the philosopher himself, Pastor Rilling demonstrated how a spiritual agony brooded over the experiences of father and son. In attempts to interpret a life not easy to fathom, many followers of the Dane, he pointed out, have indulged in pretty thoughts and reconstructions from his writings—all quite fanciful and inaccurate. But we were shown in the lecture that Kierkegaard's life, the record of so profound a spiritual struggle, presents us a rich subject of study. Our speaker described the philosopher's long route from theology to aesthetics, then the enigmatic fall into sin and final crossing over into the area of grace. Out of this experience emerged the concept of either/or, a philosophy of dramatic decision. Christ is standing between two thieves: the one redeemed, the other condemned; we must choose, for one of them is ourself. Yet Kierkegaard finds that God is able to create saints from sinners. To the outbursts of despair that characterize his personal experience there is added saving, restoring faith.

The lecture touched further upon the personal life of Kierkegaard. Our speaker alluded, for example, to the utter strangeness of the philosopher's romance. For Kierkegaard to marry, it was as though Simeon Stylites should, at an appointed hour, descend from his pillar and invite a young bride to rejoin him in his lonely and restricted abode! We were quoted that passage from the philosopher's writings in which he confesses that his Regina was not one to make of her spouse a poet, a saint, a hero or a genius. At length, by an unhappy engagement, by bitter caricature from the press, by differences with the established Church, Kierkegaard finds himself estranged from family ties, from countrymen and Church, until in time these experiences lead to final collapse.

In addressing himself to the thought of Kierkegaard, our speaker placed him between philosophy and Christianity. For him every question was a paradox. Hegelian philosophy, its concept of both/and, diluting the force of the categorical imperative, has, moreover, changed our outlook upon history. We are no longer makers of history, we watch it from our balcony, as a drama. History is always gradual transition;

it knows no sharp edges. To this way of thinking, Kierkegaard came with the purpose of creating difficulties—lest perchance those who make things easy should run out of materials!

A singular victim of his attack was the philosophy of the aesthetic life. We were shown from Kierkegaard's writings copious illustration of the vivid, immediate, sensuous life the aesthete seeks to capture and enjoy in his attempted flight from boredom. But such is really a life of despair and, at length, bitter irony. Or, there is the ethical category that sees men wrapped up in their duties, intent upon expressing the full personality: at work, at home, with family and associates and beyond this world, hope of a life even more beautiful. But again, the very repetition of these delights operates upon the principle of diminishing returns.

Over against this, Pastor Rilling described Kierkegaard's category of the religious. The aesthete and moralist have ignored an important factor. For across the bright picture falls the dread shadow of sin and failure. With Paul, the philosopher cries out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is through suffering, toil and pain that Kierkegaard reaches, at last, Paul's hymn of thanksgiving.

Vividly the speaker brought home the picture of Kierkegaard as both a genius and a man. To him and his strenuous spiritual life were applied these lines:

"I would not have my life be one of bliss,  
Untouched by heartache, agony, despair—  
A pale anemic thing; my nightly prayer  
Is that with each day I shall not miss  
High venturings nor undervalue the hiss  
Of envious human moles who never dare  
To touch off rockets in their souls and flare  
Above their deepening grooves. O grant me this:  
That I shall scale life's peaks, explore its glooms,  
Know mountained ecstasies, deep-vallied pains—  
That when my last red sands by Time are sieved  
And life has struck my sinews from her looms,  
I shall have earned three words o'er my remains:  
Beside, 'was born' and 'died'—between 'he lived'!"

Nor did the literary style of Kierkegaard escape comment in Pastor Rillings's analysis. He spoke of the wealth of metaphors, terse epigrams, poetic imagery, humour and a keen sense of the ironic that are all to be found in the Dane's writing. But these are a by-product, for it was not by style but by thought that Kierkegaard made his way.

Referring in a final section of the lecture to the significance of Kierkegaard to modern preaching, Pastor Rilling pointed out a cardinal tenet in the philosopher's thinking. It is that Christianity is always contemporary with Christ; that in the relation with the Absolute there is but one tense, the present. This lends an urgency to our preaching, makes of it a divine-human encounter, a high adventure. We should be delivered of the formula of "reflecting upon a text for the morning;" rather should the sermon become a striving: our efforts bent not upon getting away from ourselves, but returning to ourselves.

Our speaker referred further to the practice of preaching from the "hard texts"—"tacking against the prevailing winds." Here Kierkegaard helps us to recover this practice with its inherent struggle, else Christianity become a "collection of honorary Christians." And from the great Dane we may learn something, too, of reading the Bible without being disturbed. The philosopher has displayed his faculty of amazing insight, to cite a single example, in recounting the feelings of father Abraham setting out for Mount Moriah with his son, Isaac. There he has reexpressed the fear and terror of that story which can never be brushed away.

Bringing to a close a thoughtful and informative essay, Pastor Rilling offered a prayer composed by Kierkegaard, and to be found in Purity of Heart:

"Father in Heaven! What is a man without Thee! What is all that he knows, vast accumulation though it be, but a chipped fragment if he does not know Thee! What is all his striving, could it even encompass a world, but a half-finished work if he does not know Thee: Thee the One, Thou art one thing and who are all! So may Thou give to the intellect, wisdom to comprehend that one thing; to the heart, sincerity to receive this understanding; to the will, purity that will only one thing. In prosperity may Thou grant perseverance to will one thing; amid distractions, collectedness to will one thing; in suffering, patience to will one thing. Oh, Thou that giveth both the beginning and the completion may Thou early, at the dawn of day, give to the young man the resolution to will one thing. As the day wanes, may Thou give to the old man a renewed remembrance of his first resolution, that the first may be like the last, the last like the first, in possession of a life that has willed only one thing..... Give Thou victory in the day of need so that what neither a man's burning wish nor his determined resolution may attain to, may be granted unto him in the sorrowing of repentance: to will only one thing."

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"The snow is God's forgiveness,  
Blown from the open gate of heaven  
Upon the world below;  
It is his blessing,  
Obliterating the harsh outlines  
Of our everydays.  
White wonder fills the air  
And our eyes are suddenly aware  
Of a purity we had forgotten;  
We walk a common city street  
Covered with lovely mystery  
Fresh from the hand of God."

— Bro, "Everyday a Prayer"

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LUTHERAN CHORALE

James Horn

The use of vernacular song in the Western Church began not with Luther but some six hundred years before Luther. Although not used in the main worship of the Roman Church, it was used in many of the minor offices and its use in private worship was widespread. How widespread this use of vernacular song was is indicated by the fact that Philip Wackernagel, who has recorded the words for all of the chorales and vernacular songs through the sixteenth century, lists more than 1400 religious lyrics in the German tongue written between 368 A. D. and 1518. Add to this number the undoubtedly vast number of lyrics which have been lost and one can get an approximation of the extensiveness of the religious vernacular song in the Pre-Reformation period.

Many of the older religious songs are a curious mixture of Latin and the vernacular. Some of these "half-vernacular" songs are still to be heard today. We mention

"Puer natus in Bethlehem  
Dess freult sich Jerusalem"  
and

"In dulci jubilo  
Singet und seid vro"

This mixture of Latin and the vernacular reached its high point in the German version of the Roman hymn "Ave Maris stella" in which only the word "Ave" remained in the Latin.

"Ave Morgensterne  
Irleuchte uns mildichlich"

It was from these curious mixtures that the vernacular song and eventually the Protestant chorale were evolved.

Another source for the chorale was the love songs and other popular songs of the day. With a slight change in the words the lyrics became religious. It was as if someone changed the words of "Don't fence me in" and made of such revision a religious song. The tune for the changed form remained the same as before. Is it any wonder that the chorales made in this fashion were so popular? Two striking examples of this metamorphosis are to be found in the Common Service Book (unfortunately for our purposes both tunes are set to words composed at a later date). Hymn 469 was originally a popular song, "Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen" by Heinrich Isaak. The word "Innsbruck" was changed to "O Welt" and a few other changes were made until the chorale became "O Welt, ich muss dich lassen." The other example, which had to undergo more extensive alterations, is hymn 99, the famous "Passion Chorale." Originally this was a love song of Hans Leo Hassler, and first published in a collection entitled, "Lustgarten neuer Teuscher Gesang." The first letters of the five verses of the original text spell out "Maria," the woman to whom the love song was addressed.

The process of chorale writing and chorale arrangement was greatly speeded up by the Protestant Reformation. The new church did not regard the music of the services to be a detail of the sacerdotal office. The music was to be put into the hands of the laity. The chorale was admirably suited for this and as a result great numbers of chorales appeared almost instantaneously. It has been estimated that in the century following the Reformation, over 100,000 chorales were written.

To fill the great demand for chorales, Luther himself organized the musicians and poets of Germany for the writing of chorales. How he did this is shown by a letter written by Luther to the poet, Spalatin:

"It is my intention, after the example of the prophets and the ancient fathers, to make German psalms for the people; that is, spiritual songs, whereby the Word of God may be kept alive by singing. We seek, therefore, everywhere for poets. Now, as you are such a master of the German tongue, and are so mighty and eloquent therein, I entreat you to join hands with us in this work, and to turn one of the psalms into a hymn, according to the pattern that I here send you. But I desire that all new-fangled words from the Court should be left out; that the words may be quite plain and common, such as the common people may understand, yet pure, and skilfully handled; and next, that the meaning should be given clearly and graciously, according to the sense itself."

Luther and his friends used five sources in providing chorales for the new church. The first source of the Lutheran chorale was the Pre-Reformation vernacular hymn which was adapted to suit the purposes of the new church. Luther writes in the preface of Valentin Babst's *Gesangbuch* of 1545, that he had taken several sad Roman Catholic funeral hymns and had given them more joyous words, adapting the tunes to fit the new texts.

A second source, the popular folk-song, has been discussed above. Needless to say, this was one of the most popular types of all the chorale types, for the people were already acquainted with the tunes.

The third source of the Protestant choral was in the official Gregorian hymnody of the Roman Church. Such chorales as "Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott," (No. 146 in the CSB, first tune) from "Veni sancte Spiritus," and "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland" from "Veni, Redemptor Gentium," were derived from the official hymnody.

Many of the Protestant chorales were derived from the Pre-Reformation Latin popular hymns. Such chorales as "Christ lag in Todesbanden," (No. 110) from the Easter sequence, "Victimae Paschali laudes," and "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ," (No. 18) are from this source.

Finally, many of the Protestant chorales were wholly or in large part originally composed. Bauncker, the great Roman Catholic

musicologist, maintains that none of the Lutheran chorales were composed by Luther and his helpers. This stand seems far too radical. Although its authorship is still disputed, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" (No. 195) is the outstanding example of a composed chorale. The tune for this noble composition is still ascribed to Luther although its germs can be found in the early Latin hymnody. Some Lutheran scholars attribute it to Johann Walther, a contemporary and close friend of Luther's but it is still thought of as Luther's own.

In addition to encouraging the writing of chorales, Luther also was responsible for the publication of several chorale books. In 1524 Luther assembled around him in Wittenberg the finest musicians and poets of Protestant Germany for the purpose of making a German Mass for the new church. Among these musicians was Johann Walther, a bass in the court choir at Torgau. From this combination of Walther and Luther stemmed one of the three first chorale books issued in that year. Probably the first chorale book in the Lutheran Church was the "Achttliederbuch" issued at Wittenberg (1524). The second was the "Erfurter Enchiridion," issued at Erfurt (1524). Perhaps the greatest of the three, however, was the "Wittenbergisch Geistlich Gesangbuch," published in 1524 under the editorship of Johann Walther. This was the first book with harmonized chorales. There were thirty-five melodies set to thirty-two hymns (twenty-four by Luther) and five Latin texts. The five harmonizing voices were called by Walther, Discantus (the Soprano), Altus (Alto), Tenor, Bassus, and Vagens (The wanderer or discant). The Cantus Firmus (melody) was in the Tenor in all chorales except one.

This chorale book contained an interesting preface written by Luther himself. In it he tells of the reasons for issuing such a book. "The singing of sacred songs is good and agreeable to God, and this, I believe, must be the feeling of every Christian; but it is made known to them not only from the examples of the prophets and kings of the Old Testament (who with singing and sound, with tapping and all kinds of playing praised God), but also Christianity was made known from the beginning with psalms. Indeed St. Paul sets this forth in I Corinthians 14, and he tells the Colossians to sing unto the Lord from the heart with spiritual songs and psalms in order that through this, God's word and teachings of Christianity can in all manner be furthered and served. Therefore I also brought these spiritual songs together on the example of these others that we also might rejoice as Moses did in his song, Exodus 15, that Christ should be our praise and song and that we should know nothing to sing nor to say but that Jesus Christ is our Saviour, as Paul says in I Corinthians 2.

"They are arranged for four voices for no other reason than that I wanted the young people who had been trained in music and the other arts, to have something so that they could be free from the love songs and bawdy songs and put in their place something sacred so that the young people may enter into the good as young people purified. I am not of the opinion that through the gospel should all arts be thrown over and banned as the overzealous have asserted but I wish that all arts, especially music, should be in the service of Him who created and gave them. I pray, therefore, that the good Christ will be pleased in this effort and that God will afford."



We can see from this preface that the original purpose of these chorales was as a substitute for the "Liedlied" which were popular among the young people. Dr. Otto Finkeldey, the eminent musicologist, says that these chorales were intended originally for use in the schools rather than in the churches. The effect of these chorales upon the church membership was tremendous even if they were intended for the schools. A pious Jesuit contemporary of Luther's wrote, "Luther's songs have damned more souls than all his books and speeches." Another writer, more sympathetic with Lutheranism, wrote, "The doubts of that many hundreds of Christians have been brought to the true faith by this one hymn ("Ein feste Burg") alone who before, perhaps, could not so much bear to hear Luther's name. But his sweet and noble words have so taken their hearts that they were constrained to come to the truth."

Contrary to popular belief, congregational singing of these chorales in the service did not come about until about seventy years after the beginning of the Reformation movement. There was some congregational singing in the Wittenberg Church in earlier times but in most churches the choir sang the chorales while the congregation followed along, silently, in their chorale books. The chorale books, moreover, were not suited to congregational singing in the beginning, as the Cantus Firmus (Melody) was in the Tenor and not the Discantus (Soprano). It was not until 1586 that a chorale book was issued with the Cantus in the Discantus. This was Lukas Osiander's "Fünfftig geistliche Lieder und Psalmen," in which the Cantus Firmus was transferred from the Tenor to the Discantus in order that "the entire Christian body could sing." From that time on the chorale has been one of the distinguishing features of the Lutheran Church services.

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#### List of Recordings

- Code: C - Columbia (still generally available)  
 CM - Columbia Masterworks Set (still available)  
 D - Decca (not available except at certain stores)  
 D-CA - Imported Decca-Polydor (not generally available; also once pressed in this country as Brunswick)  
 G - Gamut (available but hard to get)  
 M - Musicraft (available)  
 V - Victor (generally available)  
 VS - Victor Set (generally available)

Records marked with an asterisk are not generally available but may be found in second-hand record stores or in stores with old stock.

Christ lag in Todesbanden (in Bach Cantata 158)  
 Blair McClosky and Group

CM-F191

Dir dir Jehova (Bach)  
 St. Thomas'kirche, Choir

D-CA3136\*

Ein' feste Burg (Luther) St. Olaf Choir	V-35920*
Ein' feste Burg (Luther-Bach-Stokowski) Philadelphia Orchestra	V-1692
Jesu joy of man's desiring (Cantata 147 of Bach) Bach Cantata Club with oboe and strings	C-DB507
Jesu joy of man's desiring (Bach) Temple Church Choir with oboe and piano	V-4286
Jesu joy of man's desiring (Bach-Cailliet) Philadelphia Orchestra	V-14582
Jesu meine Freude (Cruger and the motet by Bach) Madrigal Singers	GT-1
Jesu meine Zuversicht (Cruger) Irmler Choir	D-25706*
O heil'ger Geist, kehre bei uns ein (Vivaldi) Lotte Lehmann	D-20334*
Passion Chorale (Hassler) St. Olaf Choir	V-35920*
Passion Chorale (Hassler-Bach-Stokowski) Philadelphia Orchestra	(V-14582 VM-401)
Passion Chorale (Hassler-Bach: St. Matthew Passion) Bach Cantata Club	C-DB506
Vater unser (Luther-Bach) Bach Cantata Club	C-DB506
Tachet auf (Vivaldi-Bach; Cantata 140) Orfeo Catala	(V-11182* VM-120)
Collection of Chorales Trapp Family Choir	VM-713*
Other Recordings of Interest	
Chorale-Preludes (Bach) Albert Schweitzer Carl Heinrich	CM-310 PC-22
Innsbruck ich muss dich lassen (Isaac) Trapp Family Choir	(V-1960 VM-535)
Orgelbuchlein (Bach) T. Fover Biggs	VM-652 VM-697 VM-711

## WHAT OF THE POST-WAR SEMINARY?

The following ideas and quotations are excerpted by permission of the editors from an article by the Rev. Bernard Iddings Fell in THE LIVING CHURCH, October 1, 1944. The material is presented not because you are or will be in a position to plan the post-war policy of this seminary, but because it voices a thought-provoking challenge to the men now in the seminary.

"The seminaries ought not insist rigidly upon their ex-service students being the graduates of universities. . . Many a 'graduate' has never learned how to study, how even to read a book; in particular, shoals of them know no history to speak of and less philosophy. . . Would it not be better to pay less attention to degrees and more to content of knowledge? The 'service candidates' will vary in respect to such knowledge. Some 'non-graduates' will have a good deal of it; some 'graduates' will have none to write home about. Individual examination and study of each man can soon reveal what necessary background knowledge is lacking. In some cases the man can be sent to college (his curriculum controlled by the seminary and the college jointly); others may be taught intensively by the seminary itself. When the man is reasonably ready, then and not till then should he be admitted to theological studies, and this regardless of academic degrees or the lack of them.

"Is there not a possibility of speeding the present work of the seminaries. . .? It is entirely possible to do what is now being done in three 'short' years during two longer ones, especially if lectures are done away with and there are substituted personal conferences, guided reading with written reports, tutorial supervision. In the case of a few very slow men, more time may be required and in the case of some of the more quick less will be needed, and that with no 'cramming' devices." (This, we may point out, is the argument of the English University system. - Ed.)

"Those who advocate this do not wish to cut the total time required in seminary, but rather to condense what is now done to make room: (a) for necessary preliminary training in history, philosophy, and languages, and (b) for clinical pastoral experience and teacher-training during the last of the three years spent in seminary. . . These ex-service students mean business; they want and deserve more in three years than our seminaries have thought of giving men up to this time. . . It would be the height of cruelty to mix together indiscriminately in a single group, for living and disciplinary purposes, men who come from years of strictly ordered military life, used to expect and to obey direction, and students fresh from leisurely civilian universities.

"The sedentary habits of the usual seminarian of the late past in this American church will not suit the returning service students. As a matter of fact, those lazy ways have never been healthy nor conducive to righteousness for any seminarian." (More time, place, and equipment

for an adequate sports program may be indicated. This program should be a compulsory part of each student's daily routine. This will provoke no student revolution if the program is other than sheer drudgery. No calisthenics, please. How about a swimming pool. - Ed.)

"These men who come back, especially if the weaker brethren are weeded out, will know very well indeed how badly the Church has been doing its job. They will have seen only too clearly the general indifference of American manhood to religion. They will be under no illusion that to be a clergyman is to be honored and respected by the rank and file of folks. They will know that the Church is fighting for continued existence, with its back to the wall, fighting against a deadly being-ignored that is worse than violent persecution. They will not regard the ministry as 'an easy way out.' They will demand severe training, intellectual and spiritual. They will be tough. The seminary that tries to train them will have to be as tough as they are -- direct, to the point, hard-working, hard-praying. In short the seminaries are going to have to stop being polite clubs of charming people following literary pursuits in a graduate-school atmosphere and become gymnasias which condition men to fight for God."

-oOo-

Brief, on a flying night  
From the shaken tower,  
A flock of bells takes flight,  
And goes with the hour.

Like birds from the cote to the gales,  
Abrunt -- O hark!  
A fleet of bells sets sails  
And goes to the dark.

Sudden the cold airs swing  
A verse of bells, takes wing  
And flies with the cloud.

--Alice Meynell

When the Krauth Memorial Library was dedicated, it was said that it was to serve all of the Lutheran Church in America. It has done that in a way and to a degree that few people appreciate. Recent acquisitions of books are one of the ways in which it is preparing to do its part in the critical years ahead. The able and willing assistance of the staff is an important part, too.

Very recently the Library has purchased some things which have been on its list for some time. All of us are familiar to some extent with the **NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY** based on Dr. Moffatt's translation. Until recently some of these volumes were lacking. We have now all those which have been published so far, and our forward-looking library already has some on order which are not yet published!

Under the guidance of Professor Tappert a number of very important additions have been made in the field of American History. Most important of these is an excellent **HISTORY OF AMERICAN LIFE** in 12 volumes. Each of the volumes has been written by an authority in the period covered. Such an addition means much for the student of research.

But even those of us who are not specialists in this field will enjoy looking into a very attractive **ALBUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY**, edited by James Truslow Adams. It is all well enough to read about what our ancestors did and why, but we find it difficult to picture in our minds sometimes just what they and their era looked like. This volume, covering the Colonial period shows in countless pictures what their houses, clothes, and furnishings etc., were really like. Load into it! It supplements a history book like the newsreel does the newspaper.

The book review columns of **THE LUTHERAN** recently gave prominent place to a new publication with an interesting title and even more interesting contents, **RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN LATIN AMERICA**. Our Church and all Evangelical bodies are taking an increasing interest in Latin America. Roman Catholics would have us believe that our missions are not wanted, but Mr. Howard, the author, gives a somewhat different answer.

These latter years seem to have produced a large number of new translations of the New Testament. Some of these have been good, some not so good. Right off the presses is **THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH** by Mgr. Ronald A. Knox, a British Roman Catholic. This one differs from most in that Fr. Knox's thesis is to make the evangelists and apostles talk like Englishmen. How well he has succeeded you may judge not only from the highly favorable reviews this book has received from clerical and lay readers but from your own experience. The Library has provided it for you!

We are writing this on the Eve of Septuagesima. As we look forward to the Holy Season of Lent and prepare to turn our own steps toward Calvary and tread the road of the Passion, we might well start by going to the Library for Lenten reading. In homiletical aids you will find much of value. Dr. Strodsch's **VICTIM OR VICTOR** is the newest of many. But down in the basement in the devotional section 'Z' you will find much to aid you in your own experience.

This month brings to a close this writer's proprietorship of this page. If it has stimulated a little interest in reading it has served its purpose well. But remember, students and alumni alike, the seminary is here to serve the Church. The Krauth Library will mail you any books you want if you will but pay the postage. The Students' Cooperative Book Association will procure for your own library books you want to own (and save you money, too). You will find reading - - profitable!

## BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION IN REVIEW

### The Seminarian Offers Its Readers a Synopsis and Comment Upon Professor Kraebling's Recent Lecture Before the Seminary

Opening a series of lectures presented on successive Thursdays before the Seminary by various scholars and leaders in the Church, Dr. Emil G. H. Kraebling, professor of Old Testament at Union Theological Seminary, spoke here January 11 on the subject, "Biblical Interpretation Tomorrow."

A good portion of the lecture was devoted to a review of the history of interpretation, a background for judging present trends. Dr. Kraebling's scholarship and experience were well fitted to the task of faithfully describing the stream and its many currents. His delineation, fair and sympathetic, carried the interest of his hearers and evoked a discussion following the lecture.

It was evident from the very beginning of the lecture that one cannot regard biblical exegesis as a static subject but committed to a state of flux. The great theologians and religious thinkers of all eras of Christian history have been able to present all they had to say in the medium of biblical interpretation. Dr. Kraebling suggested that Lutherans, in this respect, have achieved a measure of unity and harmony in the system of Pauline thought, but even that at the expense, in a certain sense, of further feeling and freedom of thought. In other words, our interpretation of the Scriptures bears the influence of Paul, rediscovered by Luther at the time of the Reformation; the question for us today is how much creative interpretation we have seen since the day of Luther.

In presenting an historical analysis of biblical interpretation, Dr. Kraebling mentioned the succession of research and theory that has destroyed the "idealistic view of the Bible": Hegel and Darwin, archaeology and finally psychology. In answer to the disturbing questions of these new elements, many Protestant bodies turned to their Confessions, but only insofar as they agree with Scripture. Yet all this does not permit us of avoiding the search of Scripture in our effort to discover its pure teaching and relevance.

Thereupon the speaker presented a brilliant analysis of the recovery of perspective and insight in the interpretation of Scripture. Exacting historical interpretation was shown to render the Bible even more remote as a source of faith and spiritual power. When revelation came to be regarded a matter of imagination, many were turned to the social ideal and sought refuge in ethical teachings. A reaction to this trend brought on a new theology of revelation which arose in Germany and based its claims upon a kind of "spiritual exegesis." "Spiritual" being the watchword of this school, its exponents recognized in exegesis a "real scholarly effort" in which the "object is giving spirit." This method became a part of systematic theology. Professional exegetes could not cope with this concept of the spiritual, and maintained that the direct work of the Spirit was much more real in Paul's day than our own. They feared the excesses of mysticism and theosophy.

Then came Karl Barth's commentary on Paul's letter to the Romans. Dr. Kraeling described Barth's rejection of the atomistic method of exegesis which proceeds word by word for a broader approach that seeks to discover the message of the text itself: a book that reveals "Paul, the living apostle, not Paul the ancient." Barth has sought to convey a theology by means of his commentary upon Romans. In this respect he resembles Luther and Calvin. However, our speaker pointed out that Barth, under the influence of Kierkegaard, reads back into Romans something of the Danes' qualitative difference between time and eternity. Here again the professional exegetes arose in protest.

The historic method of interpretation, Dr. Kraeling characterized as properly the domain of the research laboratory with its multiplicity of refinements. Here one comes upon all manner of special areas of biblical criticism: form, style, tradition, cultic experience, oriental psychology, and social, economic and archaeological interests, to mention several. Exclusive adherence to any one of these emphases he stated, unfits the theologian. And these trends are developing just at the time when languages are dropping out of the seminary curricula. Yet there arises some concern when we realize that shortly only secular scholars will be equipped to investigate these new approaches and arrive at their particular discoveries.

Where in all this complexity can theological students turn? They must go beyond the historical (meta-historical), our speaker advised. They must inquire into meaning more than into being. Their province is to discover the religious message that lies in the text. Yet we cannot go back to the arbitrary use of Scripture. We must know what a passage meant historically. This complex situation calls for the most careful handling. The exegete must choose his way between preconceived ideas and a tangled confusion of relativities.

To his discussion Dr. Kraeling introduced further elements: the mind of the writers of Scripture and the value of the history of the text in its interpretation by different ages. For example, John 1 adds something that Genesis 1 does not present. And more valuable for us to-day than the historical setting of a book such as Galatians, is its subsequent history, say in Luther's time. We should not only regard the books of the New Testament in their first century setting, but also inquire how they have fared in times since, a study most illuminating in such cases of "mixed blessings" as the Epistle of James.

Dr. Kraeling set forth as a real goal of biblical interpretation the immediate, Christian message for to-day. This requires a norm or standard of judgment, such as Luther has advanced: all that relates to the principle and history of redemption. With this norm operative, one needs subordinate those parts which lead into the by-paths.

Our speaker's conclusion revealed much of practical solution to the situation together with that humility and cognizance of the spiritual that mark a true scholar. Diversity in the New Testament field among students and scholars is a good thing, he declared. The Old Testament must frequently be left more to the professional exegete. But each interpreter can give only that which is in himself according to his own lights. And perhaps most significant of the many brilliant and felicitous remarks of the lecture was his that the Scriptures

are judging us while we are criticizing them. Biblical criticism in the last analysis bespeaks more the natural than the spiritual man. Appropriately our speaker whose commentary on Job, ~~The Book of the~~ ~~Days of God~~, is not only a work of scholarship but of art - applied to the scene of Goethe's scholar in Faust, gazing into the world of the Spirit. Through the Cross we, too, see but cannot enter the spiritual world. And beware, for often our seemingly most inspired moments are not inspired at all. The miracle of Pentecost affords us a clue. For us it remains to that future day of revelation, when we shall "speak with other tongues," that we shall really know the answers.

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### CALENDAR OF FUTURE SEMINARY EVENTS

Thursday, February 1

Two lectures by Dr. Martin J. Heineken

11:30 a. m. "Is God Absolutely Other?"

8:00 p. m. "Is Christianity Reasonable?"

Monday - Friday, February 5-9

Examinations

Thursday, February 8

8:00 P. M. Lecture: "John Caspar Stoeber, Lutheran Pioneer in America" Dr. Roy L. Winters

Monday, February 12 to Friday, February 23

Seminars

Friday, February 13

Choir Banquet

ASH WEDNESDAY - February 14

Holy Communion 11:00 a. m.

Preacher, the Rev. G. Elson Ruff, Litt. D.

Friday, February 20

Senior Banquet

Friday, February 23

Winter Term ends.

Friday, February 27

Seminary Commencement. 11:00 A. M. St. Michael's Church, Germantown. Commencement speaker: the Rev. Franklin C. Fry, D.D., President of the United Lutheran Church in Africa.

Thursday, March 1

Registration of entering students

Friday, March 2

Spring Term Begins.

11:00 A. M. Holy Communion



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"ONE WORD MORE"

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A Concluding Editorial Comment in Retrospect

The Epiphany issue of the Seminarian not only marks the close of the editorial activity of the present staff over an allotted period of the two preceding semesters, it brings a class of some thirty seminarians to the threshold of Commencement and the widening horizons of a ministry in the Church. Our articles this month reflect these "last things," as it were; and our present juncture, with certain reservations, is not altogether irrelevant to the confession of Donne, in one of the Holy Sonnets (albeit written upon a far more auspicious occasion in life)—

"This is my play's last scene; here heavens appoint  
My pilgrimage's last mile; and my race  
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace."

At this very writing, seniors meeting with examining boards and committees of Synods, are attesting to their faith and knowledge as candidates aspiring to the high office of the Gospel Ministry. One's mental and spiritual development over these three years of theological training is, at this time, a matter of serious reflection and self-examination, and occasions, perhaps, mingled emotions of regret and satisfaction. The quality and content of our work is a profitable subject for appraisal and comparison. So far as the latter is concerned, it is interesting to find such an entry as the following, in the minutes of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania for June, 1848, just short of a century ago:

"The committee of examination has the honor to report: that they have conscientiously examined the applicants directed to them, in the usual branches of study; viz.: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Dogmatics and Moral Theology, Church History and Exegesis and have found Messrs. \_\_\_\_\_ to have acquired a very good, and Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ a sufficient knowledge, and therefore your committee propose, that Messrs. \_\_\_\_\_, be received into our Ministerium."

It is quite evident that a shift of emphasis in Seminary training has brought the practical aspects of the pastoral ministry into prominence. And, as we are to-day challenging, for example, the position of biblical language study in a seminary curriculum (to say nothing of a background in the classics or a facility with modern theological German) we are, at the same time, facing problems arising from the present war. Of the latter we would refer our readers to quotations in an article appearing elsewhere in this issue. Here we may confine ourselves to the general observation that in the seminaries to-day students themselves are beginning to evaluate more critically the current program of theological education.

In reviewing the past three years of seminary life, we are prompted to set down a few observations as a concluding editorial comment and as reflecting primarily but personal opinion.

#### Tension in a Two-Fold Opportunity

We may speak of the seminary career as a two-fold opportunity: at once a scientific theological training and a spiritual development and experience under the canopy of Christian charity. There are dangers in

forcing such a distinction between two intermingling elements; however, for the sake of clarity and convenience, we may employ this somewhat arbitrary division. For indeed, there is a certain conflict vying between the intellect and the spirit, between faith and reason that renders theological study so difficult a pursuit. In maintaining intellectual discipline one cannot neglect religious piety; nor is the opposite proposition fully satisfying. In a sense, we come to the Seminary with the background of the Renaissance, and meet in our study of theology the new emphases of the Reformation. The doctrine of the centrality of man is confronted with the disarming message of the grace of God. A tension inevitably results. To borrow Paul's phrase, we come to see another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind (spirit). We are not wholly delivered from this dilemma except in our complete surrender to the Gospel of Christ. And here even the stoutest heart is thoroughly tried. Nevertheless, tension can be put to good use.

To carry the matter a bit further--at the expense of digression--we could suggest that integration of the personality is not the most important goal in life. Professor Albright, for example, in discussing the prophet Ezekiel, pronounces him "one of the greatest figures of all time, in spite of his tendency to psychic abnormality--a tendency which he shares with many other spiritual leaders of mankind." Furthermore, he believes that "a certain 'abnormality' is required to divert a man's thoughts and his emotional experiences from the common track of human thinking and feeling. While the individual is undoubtedly happiest when his personality is most fully integrated, the traditional motto, *mens sana in corpore sano*, is not well calculated for progress since it conduces rather to stagnation. . . . It is precisely friction and conflict between imperfectly balanced or harmonized elements in a man's mental make-up which may lead to innovations and discoveries. Real greatness of men emerges from profound spiritual or intellectual travail. A placid, bovine mind may be exceedingly well integrated at a low level; a gifted demagogue may enjoy perfect nervous and mental health, with few conscientious scruples or intellectual struggles to prevent him from employing his talents to personal advantage and to public disaster--in other words, he is integrated at a higher level."

We are not suggesting that one cultivate his peculiar "abnormalities;" we are recognizing the legitimate existence and use of a tension between mind and spirit that, despite our efforts, forces itself at times upon our experience. And this we are bound to meet as we apply ourselves to the study of theology.

### The Cultivation of Christian Knowledge

To maintain theological scholarship, a seminary must do all it can to foster a wholesome spirit of inquiry. And precisely where seminaries are prone to err in view of the overwhelming and direct appeal of the spiritual content of the subjects of study. Rather should the spiritual treasure induce an even more devoted scholarship! There are dangers if running into side is yes. But here again a central pivot offers a rallying point for our scholarship. This may be the Church, or the Gospel that the Church cherishes and proclaims. This so far, in a sense, limits to scholarly research, but none the less, limits that give meaning and purpose to our intellectual pursuits in order that the results may enrich and strengthen faith.

However critical we may be of the academic climate of our seminaries, we could not with justice neglect to recognize our mental progress and growth over the years of seminary training. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that we acknowledge the influence and kindly interest of creative minds devoted to the building of this school and its cultivation of Christian knowledge. The teaching ministry of our Faculty is centered in our midst. To receive the impact of personalities steeped in the message of the Gospel, to benefit from the scholarship of minds well-trained and lent, as it were, for our use: such is the privilege of a seminary career. As the strength of a seminary lies in the men it has trained and the Church it serves, it remains for us, perhaps, to discover in a few years an adequate appreciation of our formative experience here. For over four years in this school have witnessed the close of inspiring careers of teaching and service among retiring members of the Faculty, who have brought to a dramatic realization of the power of Christian witness and the influence of sound scholarship. And then Dr. Browning was speaking of the art of music, his lines apply to true greatness, wherever found; his thought is ours:

"Ye have heard and seen; consider,  
and bow the head!"

#### A Lutheran Consciousness

Perhaps most distinctive of all academic values of our seminary is the cultivation of a Lutheran or evangelical consciousness. To do well to investigate and appreciate the expressions of other branches of Christendom, and thereby enhance the understanding of our own; yet are we dealing in lesser matters if for a moment we forget our own birthright. There is such a thing as a Lutheran emphasis and flavor, a pure and right use of the Word of God, as it is sometimes called. If that is lost sight of, we surrender our right of existence as a Lutheran church. We are not committed to perpetuating traditions per se; an evangelical approach provides a stimulus and life of its own. It is, rather, our privilege so to interpret Christianity. And an awareness of that is the Lutheran genius, elusive as that may be, is planted and nourished in us through the effective influence of our seminary study.

It is agreed, then, that we are provided rich subjects for study. Our business now is to insist upon those mental disciplines necessary to pursue this study with the assurance of lasting benefit.

#### The Seminary Community

All such activity may be carried on in the genial atmosphere of Christian charity. For intertwined with intellectual development is a transforming and deepening religious experience. This second opportunity of seminary life can be found perhaps in no other institution. A life so attractive in its ideal interplay of study and spiritual fellowship. We are afforded in seminary the rich possibilities of a devotional life, in private as it is our opportunity to relate daily prayer to the round of daily tasks; in corporate worship as we are given opportunity to unite with fellow-students in a common liturgical life.

What unites us all, perhaps, more than anything else is the very real element of a Seminary Community. We are reminded of the formal aspects of this communal life in every recurring Service of Matriculation.

But as the Apostle's letter of commendation was truly written in the hearts of his Corinthian fellow-believers; so the reality of the Seminary Community lies in an unexpressed bond uniting us one to another in a common faith and in a common calling. Representing a variety of minds and personalities, we are, all the same, facing common joys and perils. Both are forces that unite. Surmounting all is an allegiance to our One Lord and Master.

The community life, so distinctive a mark of the theological seminary, suggests to us three areas of interest. There is an intellectual exchange of ideas, opinions and findings. It is illustrated in conferring together in studies and sermons or so casual a matter as the loan of a book. There is a community of informal devotional life where two or three are gathered together in worship or discussion of religious experience. There is the larger social consciousness when, for example, the Seminary as one unites to hear a lecture, to pay tribute to one of its numbers, or in corporate worship celebrates the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Insofar as we have urged an increased emphasis upon scholarly disciplines, we are led to offer a corresponding appeal for the rekindling of spiritual life. The professional study of theology can stifle a spontaneous, creative, religious imagination. How strange to suggest that religious creativity may not always flourish in a theological seminary! But such is the disheartening consequence of lukewarm interest or cold, impersonal handling of the materials of theology. The fault, obviously, lies in ourselves. We are content not to think, not to respond to the Word of God with our whole being, not to look upon all the great creation of God before our eyes as the manifestation of His power and purpose. The student studies theology not so much in his remote "ivory tower," rather in some dark and musty cave. Our need is for light and air and that provided in God's free and open world.

In conclusion may we voice our gratitude for all the Seminary offers in the two areas we have discussed above, honest study and religious experience. Both of these figure in the daily life of the Seminary Community. Both are in constant need of strengthening as the Seminary fulfills its prime mission. We who are beginning a ministry in the Church will now draw the dividends of this two-fold training. May our growth in knowledge and grace - enriched in these past three years - continue as we "press on to the goal for the prize of God's high call in Christ Jesus."

—The Editor.

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## O U R C O N T R I B U T O R S

The Seminarian is committed to a policy of publishing student opinion; its invitation for articles has met with generous response in a variety of expression. To our contributors we are indeed grateful and thank them every encouragement in the stimulating and creative discipline of putting thought into print. Admittedly, our voice is weak, our range limited. But as Herrick has put it,

"A little seed best fits a little soil,  
A little trade best fits a little toil  
As our small jar best fits our little oil"

To those students who have assisted the present Staff in contributing articles and reviews, stories and verse in the pages of these past seven issues we extend our thanks. Thus far a total of twenty-eight students have devoted time and effort in writing and publishing the Seminarian during the two semesters. The names of these not members of the Staff follow:

Fred Burtelt	Heinz Mackensen
Robert E. Bornemann	Carl Mau
Theodore Caspar	Robert E. Mohr
Robert Goeser	John D. Muller
Donald E. Heist	John D. Newpher
Philip R. Hoh	Eric Sismar
James Horn	Pétur Sigurgeirsson
David Jensen	William Ward
Leonard R. Klemann	Richard E. Weisrotten
Donald Wilson	

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