

ET VERBUM CARO FACTUM EST

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James L. Haney, Jr., Editor
John Johnson, Business Manager
Richard G. Miller, Assistant Editor
Norman Melchert, Assistant Editor

Staff: John Adam, Peter Bornemann, Thomas Clay, David Eichner, Carl Ficken, Kenneth Fieldstadt, Romaine Gardner, Paul Garrity, David Godshall, Edward Kappeler, Robert Kistler, Milton Mann, Lee Mull, Carl Olin, David Nelson, James Patterson, Mrs. Mary Martha Robertson, Thomas Stennett, John Timm.

CONTRIBUTORS

- GUNARS J. ANSONS (A.B., Muhlenberg College, 1955) is a senior from Sellersville, Pennsylvania.
- GEORGE H. BRAND (A.B., Wittenberg College, 1955) is a member of the Class of January 1958 from New York, New York.
- ROMAINE L. GARDNER (A.B., St. Olaf College, 1955) is a senior from Estherville, Iowa.
- ARTHUR F. HAIMERL (A.B., Wagner College, 1955) is a senior from Rochester, New York.
- EDWARD R. KAPPELER (A.B., University of Pittsburgh, 1955) is a senior from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- ROBERT C. KISTLER (A.B., Lehigh University, 1957) is a junior from Tamaqua, Pennsylvania.
- RODGER A. KRAUSE (A.B., Muhlenberg College, 1955) is a member of the Class of January 1958 from Sugar Loaf, Pennsylvania.
- EDGAR W. OESTREICH (A.B., Susquehanna University, 1955) is a senior from Ashland, Pennsylvania.
- ROY RODERICK (A.B., Wagner College, 1956) is a middler from New York, New York.
- KENNETH M. TREXLER (A.B., Muhlenberg College, 1955) is a senior from Laureldale, Pennsylvania.
- ARVIDS ZIEDONIS, JR. (A.B., Muhlenberg College, 1955) is a senior from Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

ADVENT'S MESSAGE

Gunars Ansons

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
That her warfare is accomlished, that her iniquity is
pardoned;
For she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all
her sins."
Isaiah 40:1-2

Advent is a time of repentance. It is a time to say with the tired poet, who once mournfully asked himself and Jesus, "Why did I not catch fire from your flame, why did I not love you as I wanted to?" It is also a time of self-examination--a time to confess that we are still at warfare with our God, with ourselves, and with our brothers. And in war there is really only one hope for the tired soldier, only one word of comfort--peace. To comfort is to be able to say "peace" to a man in fear and suffering. To be comforted is to be able to hear this word of new hope and forgiveness.

But not all bells ring peace, peace. Jeremiah tells of many who made themselves priests and prophets of peace, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, Peace; when there is no peace." False hopes and easy consolations have a good market. Other generations had false hope in patent medicines: education, democracy, science, art. Our generation hardly hopes any more. It tries to conform to things as they are, or tries to forget them. The promises of false peace for all generations are the same. Though the wrappings appear different, in all of them, instead of living bread, there is stone; instead of reconciliation there is deception and despair.

Where is peace? It is in the coming of Him who by his life and death has taken away the enmity between man and God, an enmity which is the cause of all warfare. He is the Prince of Peace. Rejoice, Jerusalem, thy bridegroom cometh: the King of Peace. God is near, rejoice in the Lord.

Advent is a reality. It is not like the glitter of Christmas decorations, created of paper, tinsel, and paint. In Advent we do not come closer to salvation but we are in it. For Christ, whose coming Advent announces, has already come and is here. In faith we recognize his presence and receive him.

The message of Advent is peace, for the Lord of Advent is peace. He who delivers this message to Jerusalem speaks "comfortably" to her. He who lives in Advent bears this message in all he does.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says your God."

THE TWO SIDES OF CHRISTMAS

Rodger A. Krause

In one of the most moving pieces of work of all Christian literature, The Valley of the Shadow, Bishop Hanns Lilje tells how he spent one Christmas in a German concentration camp during the last great war: "Everyone thinks of his own loved ones, for whom he is longing;" he writes, "everyone suffers because he doesn't know how they will be celebrating the festival of divine and human love." Yes, "the festival of divine and human love", that's what Christmas is, isn't it? But in that concentration camp Bishop Lilje also caught a glimpse of the other side of Christmas. There was suffering; there was longing; there were those who would not let there be a place for the One Who was crowded into a manger 2000 years ago.

That, too, has been part of the Christmas message, right from the very start. The Bible gives us both sides of the Christmas story. Luke gives us the finest expression of one side of it: "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger..." That's what God has done, the festival of divine love. But the festival of human love, that is never successful in reaching its fulfillment. Matthew tells about it in this way: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under." That is the other side of Christmas. Let's see if, by putting the two together, we can rise above the confusion that has been heaped upon Christmas by centuries of Christian culture, and come to a true understanding of the meaning of Christmas.

I

Let's begin with what God has done. Christmas always has to start there. "...and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger..." If that tells us anything at all about God, it tells us that He is exactly the opposite of what we're always thinking about Him. What are the attributes of God? Omnipotence? Omnipresence? Omniscience? Did you ever hear humility listed? But that's the one that tells us more about God than any of the others. He humbled Himself. Paul uses stronger language: "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant."

(Phil.2:7) It's easy to talk about the super-superlative attributes of God, for they will tell us only that God is precisely what we would expect a god to be like. But this is the one that makes Him God, for this is the one that surpasses all the imagination of men.

I suppose this has become too familiar by now to startle you. Then contrast God with men, or with yourself. Would a man "empty" himself? Recall the words of the serpent in the garden: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods." That's what lies at the root of our sin. We want to be powerful, independent, as gods. Well, this tells us that whatever else sin is, it is a lie; for God is not like that. He is not self-seeking, but humble. And having the knowledge of good and evil will not make us like God. In fact, nothing will. He has made Himself like us. He has come to us, to live with us, to die for us. That's what Christmas is all about. Have you read that story in this month's McCall's about the little boy who died one Christmas Eve in the children's ward of a hospital praying for the boy across the hall? That's what God is like. Yes, He came to be King of the Jews. But not with pomp and show. He came humbly. He emptied Himself. "She wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger."

II

And then the other side of Christmas. It should also be the festival of human love. But somehow it turns out to be the very opposite. Herod's response to God's gift, to God's love, to God's humility is the classic example. He had to kill the Christ child. And if no one would tell him where to find the baby, then he would kill all the children in Bethlehem and round about who were under two years of age. No leaf must be left unturned in his effort to do away with the one who was born to be King of the Jews.

We shudder when we think of how many innocent children must have lost their lives in that massacre. And it only adds to our horror to point out that Herod was as twisted a man as ever walked the face of the earth, and to recount the other seemingly sadistic deeds that marked his blood-stained career, as when he imprisoned some of the leading citizens of Jerusalem and ordered that they be executed when he died in order to secure mourning at his death. But at least we must say that we can understand his reasoning. He was king. And this Christ child was a threat to his sovereignty. There was nothing personal that he had against this child, and certainly not against

the other children. But no one must be allowed to get in his way. He wanted to remain king.

And men have been responding that way to God's gift ever since. Have you noticed how they're celebrating Christmas in East Germany this year, for example? Just a few weeks ago Pastor Erich Hein, one of the leaders of the Church of Saxony, died of a heart attack as a result of the interrogation he underwent at the hands of the Communist officials. It could hardly be called an accident. The officials were warned that the pastor's health would not hold up under questioning. But it made no difference. Perhaps his death would serve as a warning to other pastors that they had better cooperate with the state. For what better purpose could they use him?

It was all right to have a Church in the country. But when the Church prevented the young people from dedicating their lives to the Communist Party, something must be done. And the persecution started. They had nothing against the Church in itself, but Christ must not be allowed to become King. It's like what Herod did, isn't it?

But there's more to the other side of Christmas than that. We haven't as yet understood the mind of Herod, or of the rulers of East Germany, or even our own minds for that matter. Take Herod, for example. He wasn't really sovereign. He ruled only under the authority of Caesar. Why should he react so violently against the Christ? And the East Germans, they can be as servile to their leaders in Moscow as they were to Hitler two decades ago. Why the bitter opposition to any tinge of infringement of authority on the part of the Church? It doesn't make sense, does it?

Yes, it does make sense...for there's something else at stake here. It's not just the mere fact that rulers must subdue any threat to their authority. It can't be just that; because in one sense we're all rulers, we're rulers of our own lives. And somehow we sense that we're not capable of standing alone. We need a fear of some kind. We need to give our loyalty and devotion to something. We need to fit into something, an institution or system, that will give us a sense of security. In one sense we don't want to be rulers, to have all responsibility resting upon our shoulders, and neither does anyone else. We need God, the One Who was born in the manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes.

But here, precisely here, lies the offense. It's easy to

worship Caesar. It's all right to be obsequious to the gods of Moscow, who can even put moons up in the sky. But humbly to kneel before One Who was wrapped in swaddling clothes, to worship One Who would not come down from the cross--that hurts our pride. It offends our dignity.

But perhaps I'm making too much of this. After all, we do worship Him. We do keep Christmas. Yes, we do keep it. But what does it mean to you? A time of bright lights and beautiful Christmas trees? A time when we tell our children about Santa Claus, and construct for them a magnificent world of make-believe, where all their hearts' desires will be fulfilled, where all is right in the world? And perhaps with all the parties, and sending of greeting cards, and persistent dreams of softly falling snow in the brisk evening air while stars shine brightly, seemingly unaware of the fact that it's snowing--perhaps we construct a world of make-believe for ourselves as well.

Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that we ought not to have these things. They're fine expressions of our culture. But then, be careful...lest going to church on Christmas Eve, and hearing the beautiful Christmas story also become part of this make-believe world. That, too, I cannot help but think, is part of the other side of Christmas. And then the real difference between ourselves and Herod is not that he tried to kill the Christ child, while we worship Him; but that he had to try to kill Him in order to do away with Him, while we have succeeded in finding a much easier way to keep Him from becoming King--even while we supposed we were worshipping Him. It's one thing to have the glorious festival of Christmas. But quite another thing humbly to worship the One Who was born in a manger without the slightest tinge of glory.

III

There are the two sides of Christmas: God came to us humbly; but because He came humbly, men would not allow Him to be King. Now that we have put the two sides together, we ought to be able to see a little more clearly through the confusion that is always a part of this season, and perhaps for a moment catch a glimpse of what Christmas ought to be. Christmas ought to have two sides. That's clear. But certainly not the two sides that it has had from Herod's time right down to our own day: not a festival of divine giving and human rejection. No, somehow the two sides must fall into place according to Bishop Lilje's description, when he called Christmas "the festival of divine and human love." If Christmas were what it ought to be,

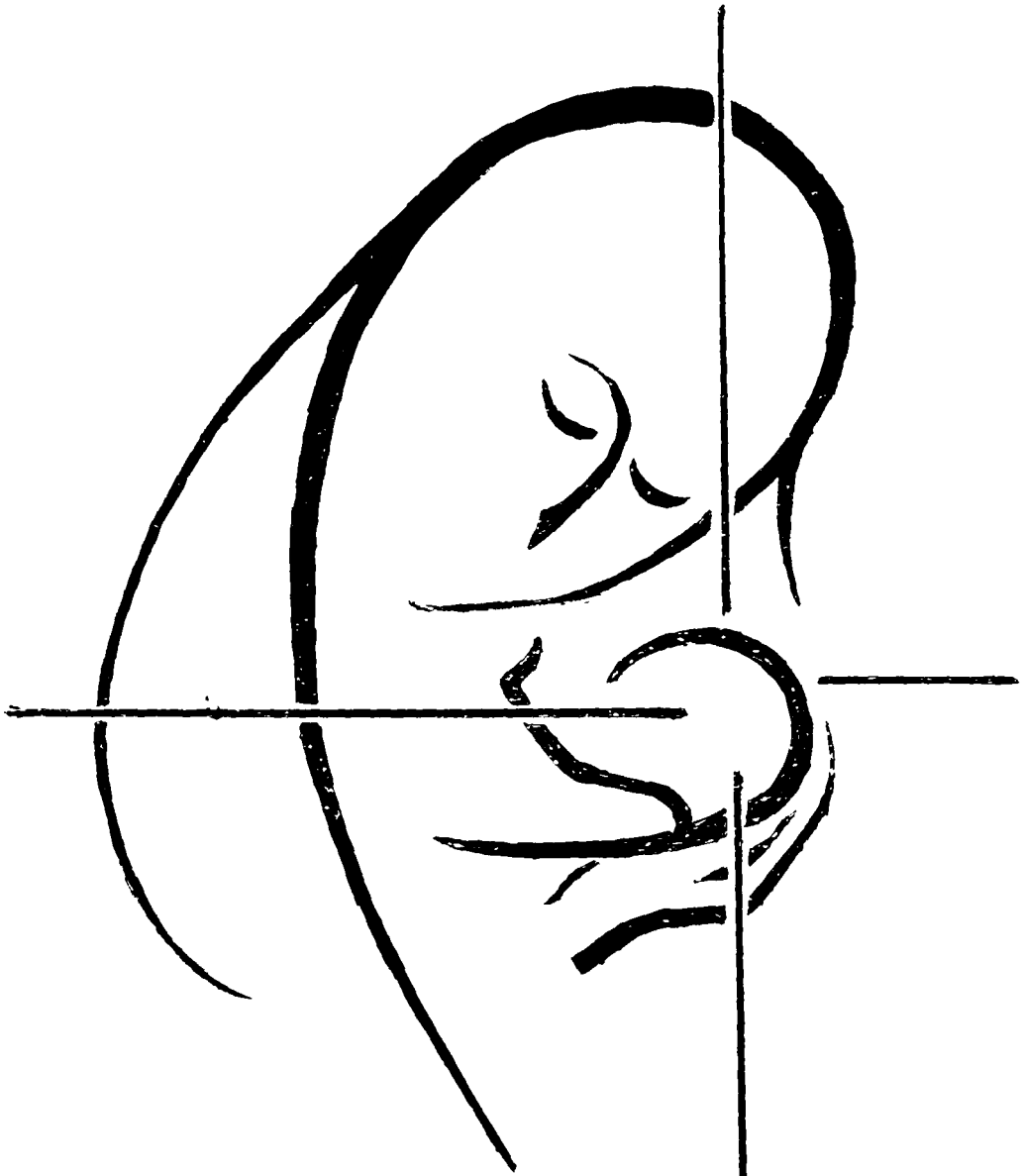
these are the two sides it would have.

And we've got one side. It is a festival of divine love, no matter how much it hurts our pride to have a King Who was born under more humble circumstances than we were; and Who, in His triumphant rise to fame, made it only to the horizontal bar of a cross: at least we can't deny that it is the most magnificent expression of divine love anyone could imagine.

And to be sure, we've got some taste of the other side, too. There is more in our keeping of Christmas than just a suggestion of a festival of human love. Surely all of our prayers for peace on earth and good will toward men, all of our sending of cards and exchanging of Christmas greetings are not hollow mockeries. And it can't be a mere coincidence that our tuberculosis society derives its main support from the sale of stamps that are distributed at Christmas time. Yet it's on this side of Christmas that something is missing, and that something is this: in our attempt to make this a festival of human love, we begin with a shining world of Christmas trees and make-believe; and not with the adoration of the God Who "emptied" himself, and became like unto us.

Martin Luther used to tell the story, though he said he got it from the papacy, of the time the devil went to church to attend mass. When they got to the part of the Patrem where they sang the words: "The Son of God was made man," the devil was so surprised that the people did not kneel that he struck one on the mouth, and said: "Aren't you ashamed to stand there like cattle? You ought to fall down for joy. If the Son of God had become our brother, like yours, we would not know what to do for joy."

If we could begin our celebration of Christmas with a fresh appreciation of the joy that ought to be ours because of this one astounding fact, then perhaps the other side of Christmas would somehow fall into place also.



MATER ET DEUS

ADVENT VESPERS: "HE SHALL REIGN"

Roy Roderick

The annual Advent Vespers is an occasion for the members of the seminary community to lift their voices in praise of the King-- no earthly king, but the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

No matter how often we pray "Thy Kingdom come" and speak of the Kingdom of God, we are apt to forget that we are committing ourselves in allegiance to a King and His sovereign rule in our lives. Luther said of the Kingdom of God that it "comes indeed of itself, without our prayers, but we pray...that it may come unto us also." Such is the church's prayer in this season of Advent. "Come, O Lord, and make no tarrying."

"The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord." (Psalm 146)

This office psalm sets the theme for our worship. Each of the following Advent Prophecies testifies to this impending reign of God.

Preparation for His Reign. (Isaiah 40:1-11) "Prepare ye the way of the Lord...Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule."

Basis of His Reign. (Isaiah 11:1-5)
"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse... And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

Proclamation of His Reign. (Isaiah 61:1-4,10,11)
"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Extent of His Reign. (Isaiah 52:7-10)
"Thy God reigneth!...And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

A single note of joyful anticipation runs throughout. This is the spirit of the opening hymn O Come, O Come Emmanuel. This ancient hymn, dating from the eighth century, was originally one

of the "Great O's." These were antiphons sung before and after the Magnificat at Vespers from December 17 to 23. Each begins with "O" and uses some Old Testament name and prophetic type of the Messiah. Four of these traditional chants have been selected as the Responses to the Lessons:

"O King of Nations,"

" O Root of Jesse,"

"O Key of David,"

"O Emmanuel."

The necessity of haste in preparing for the impending reign of God is sounded in the opening Choir Anthem:

"Sleepers wake! for the night is flying...Behold, the Bridegroom comes, arise and take your lamps. Alleluia! And for His marriage feast prepare, for ye must go to meet Him there." Wachet auf! (J.S. Bach).

The announcement of the Advent Gospel—the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary—is heralded by a second Choir Anthem, O Rejoice, ye Christians. (J.S. Bach).

Manifestation of His Reign. (Luke 1:26-33)

" Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

How can we respond to so great a mystery and wonderful a gift, but in awe and humility! Such is the spirit of the choir anthem, O magnum mysterium. (Jacob Handl). Within the chapel setting of evergreen and candlelight, we are led to make homage to Christ our King.

SACRED AND SECULAR

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Romaine L. Gardner

Church people complain about the secularization of Christmas as they push their way through the down-town department stores. Ministers preach sermons on the "secularization of America". Recent surveys show that "I saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" is played more times on the local juke boxes than is "Silent Night". And so, we are reminded that the problem of the sacred and the secular is still with us.

When we speak of the secular we often mean by it anything that is not stamped and certified as religious. Christmas trees are secular whereas manger scenes are sacred. Christmas dinners are secular and Christmas communions are sacred. There is a sharp line of demarcation between that which is sacred and that which is secular. If this is our view as to the secular then we will want to eliminate as much of it as we can from our lives, because by its very nature it is inferior to the sacred.

We may inquire just where in the history of Christian thought this sharp distinction between the sacred and the secular arose. Certainly we cannot find this distinction in Augustine. For Augustine the secular realm was completely swallowed up by the religious realm and consequently there is no sharp distinction to be made. Some have suggested that this distinction came out of the thought of Thomas Aquinas. At least at this point we can see the culmination of this type of thinking. For Aquinas the secular realm became the sub-structure and the religious realm became the super-structure. Thus by its essential being the secular was neither religious nor sacred and consequently it was inferior to the sacred. There can be little doubt as to just what the Protestant view is at this point. For Protestantism God is as much in secular existence as he is in sacred existence. (From "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art" by Paul Tillich in Christianity and the Existentialists.) Luther's point about the value of the maid with the broom in contrast to the monk speaks directly to this situation. The housemaid's work, if it is done in the fear of God is superior

to the asceticism of the monk, even if his work is done in the fear of God. Luther seems to come out emphatically on the side of the secular.

If, in the Protestant tradition, we have no distinction between what is, in essence, secular and what is sacred, what are we protesting against when we speak in derogatory tones about the secularization of Christmas? The secular, for the Protestant tradition, is anything that presents itself as a threat to the religious. Thus even the so-called sacred can become something secular if it becomes a threat to the religious. We can speak of the "secularization of Christmas" only insofar as something other than the celebration of the birthday of Christ becomes the occasion for the celebration of Christmas. Our problem then, as Christians, is not to attempt to eliminate everything that is not sacred, but to give religious meaning to the secular.

"What is divinity if it can come
Only in silent shadows and in dreams?
Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,
In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else
In any balm or beauty of the earth,
Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?"
From "Sunday Morning" by Wallace Stevens.

THE CHURCH INVOLVED

Kenneth M. Trexler

The Christmas season with its religious core and engulfing commercialism suggests a problem which is of no mean size — that of the church and secularism or "the secular". The fact that volumes have been written on the problem reflect its size and indicates the utter impossibility of dealing exhaustively with it. I should like merely to indicate several points related to the problem which I feel are basic to any discussion of it.

First, it seems quite evident that the church (the organ: whole — people and institution) is, has been, and must be involved with the secular as it seems to be generally understood, i.e. that which is lacking a fairly obvious religious taint. It may come as a surprise to some to learn that the music which is seemingly coming to be accepted as the churchly music in ever increasing circles (Gregorian Chant and plainsong) was original-

ly an adaptation of common practice to the purposes of the liturgy. The same holds true in the case of church architecture. Even in the realm of thought the church has not been free from "secular" influence. Just the mention of Greek influence in the sphere of Christian thought should be enough to illustrate what I mean. The history of the church does not illustrate a one-sided relationship with the secular order as much as an interaction with it, and this not always to the shame of the church. It seems to me that if the church is to truly be the Church of Christ, an effective agent of and for His Word, it cannot stand on a high plateau and look down at "the secular" in the valley below, but must come down into the valley, meet people at their level, adopt, adapt, and reinterpret common things, contemporary things - "the secular" - for use in and by the church, and all this, while within limits, for the sake of meaningfulness and relevance. The history of the church shows involvement, the commands and example of Christ, as well as effective action in His name, demand involvement with "the secular."

Second, it seems to me that the church in recent times at least - thinking now of the average church member - has been caught up too much in the distinction between "the secular" and the "sacred" which is in reality a false one for the Christian. The word "secular" often carries connotations which point to the deprecation of the material as distinct from "the godly", something which ultimately holds no water for Christianity. Everything man does is done in an "interested" fashion, either in the interests of self or some other shallow cause, or ultimately in the interests of God. The only distinctions which a Christian can make, while he admittedly stands in the shadow of sin, are those between the more or less suitable practices, customs, aesthetic pieces of work, etc. for specific use in and by the church; and between those which express, or aid in expressing and presenting, the Word of God and the response of the people, and those which do not.

The only really valid, or in any sense desirable, use of the adjective "secular" for the Christian is as it is applied to people. But this immediately brings us to the other side of the coin, "secularism".

Therefore, third, it is the cult of the so-called secular, i.e. secularism or the ordering of life as if there were no God, and not the so-called secular itself (except as applied to the thought and life of persons), over against which the church must stand and do battle. There is nothing un-Christian about a comfortable or pleasant standard of living ("the secular") if

it is sought, enjoyed, and shared in a Christian way. The church then is face to face with the thoughts, attitudes, motives, values, goals, and interests of people; and in as much as the church is constituted by forgiven but nonetheless sinful people whose thoughts, values, interests, etc. are not always pure, it is by no means free from secularism within its own camps. The church is involved again.

It remains to apply the plumb line to the church and to see just how far secularism has taken it from the ideal of being the Body of Christ—a vital instrument in the hands of God for the channeling of His Word—a truly missionary church. This is where the task of the churchman begins.

THE CHRISTMAS STAR AND SPUTNIK

Edward R. Kaebler

The story of the Christmas star is familiar to every Christian. This was the star that God set in the heavens to guide the wise men to Jesus. The wise men were aware of the significance of that star--the star that would lead them to man's last hope of salvation. They watched the star and were guided to Jesus Christ, the incarnation of the Word of God.

We watch the heavens these days, too. But instead of watching for the Christmas star we are more likely watching for Soutnik, or for the rocket which propelled it. This satellite, to a large extent, reflects the hope of the Soviet Union and her allies, and the fear of the western nations. To Russia, this is her Christmas star. There is no God on which to pin hopes for the type of victory Communism wants. Instead, power and technological advancement are the order of the day. Soutnik is the symbol of the gains that Russia has made toward attaining her goal of world leadership.

What then, does America do--this land that professes to be a Christian nation in contrast to the atheistic Communism of Russia? One would think that at this time it might make a reappraisal of its Christian aims and responsibilities. But instead we find ourselves in a frenzy over the advances that Russia has made. The solution seems to be for us to get our missile program speeded up. Some have suggested that a "crash program" is in order to catch up with the Communists who are so

far ahead. Beat the "Commies" at their own game! This type of thinking reflects one thing very graphically--we have come to the same conclusions as Russia. Our salvation no longer depends upon our trust in God, but it depends upon our ability to gain and maintain supremacy in the armaments race. Our economy is not based upon peace but on war--or defense if you prefer. Despite everything our Lord taught us and despite everything we have learned in the past, we are still a nation that thinks of America first. A congress that slashed foreign aid unmercifully seems ready and willing to spare no expense to get our arms program in high gear. "Millions for defense, but not one cent for charity," is apparently still very much alive here today. What foreign aid is granted seems to be given to those countries that can do us the most good, rather than to those where it is most needed. We make certain of the two-fold return before we do any casting of bread upon the waters.

What then is the Christian answer to this problem? Or has Statnik cast so much of an eclipse over the Christmas star that it will be impossible to see it again? This situation has a familiar ring. It reminds us of the fight Christ had on His hands with the Jewish Zealots. These Jews were not looking for a Saviour, but were looking for a Messiah that would deliver them from the hands of the dreaded oppressors. Their foremost thought was of Israel. What would be the leader of the secular world. They had little time for this weakling that went about preaching and doing good works. They wanted a man who was ready to fight against the Romans, but what they got was a man who talked of nothing but God.

Perhaps this is the kind of Christ we are still looking for today. Perhaps this Christ should wreak some far-reaching havoc upon the Russians so that we could go on living in "peace". At least it should be possible for us to develop arms as strong as our enemies so that if they begin to destroy us, we can retaliate in good Christian fashion. We can show them what happens to a country that tries anything with us, for we have God on our side.

This, obviously, is not the teaching of Christ. It is obviously not the Word of God. We are not listening to the Word of God, and we have apparently no desire to hear it. There are no doubt scoffers who would put someone who advocated listening to the Word of God rather than building up armaments in a mental institution. Yet it remains that if we had listened to the Word of God in the first place, there would be little or no need for arms now. God has blessed this nation so abundantly

that we cannot use of what we have. Certainly here is a perfect opportunity for us to show other nations what Christians do with God's gifts. But what confidence can other countries have in freedom or in Christ, when they see our land letting foodstuffs rot rather than sharing them with those who starve in the streets? For to many people, our country is not only a symbol of freedom, but of Christ as well.

The light of the Christmas star still shines for us today. It gives us a light which Soutnik can never eclipse. The Word of God is ever present, but it must be used to be effective.

THE BOOKSHELF

The God That Failed. Edited by Richard Crossman. New York, Bantam Books, 1949.

These days one is never at a loss to find numerous books which explain in a most erudite fashion the theoretical and philosophic content of Communist doctrine. Dogmas such as dialectical materialism, economic determinism, the classless society, the theory of surplus value etc. are carefully examined, and any reader who is willing to subject himself to a few hours of strict mental discipline is soon made aware of the inherent fallacies and contradictions of Marxist thought.

The God That Failed also exposes the Communist delusion, but it does not do so on a purely intellectual plane. The reader is confronted by the intimate testimony of six literary figures and their brief sojourn in what they thought would bring "heaven on earth."

Political confusion and social disintegration well characterized the years immediately following 1918. In such times of political and social upheaval, abstract utopian concepts always seem to acquire magnetic attraction. The obvious shortcomings of the League of Nations, the long years of appeasement of Hitler, the failure to support the original Democratic regime of Spain, and the general reluctance of the Western powers to oppose Fascism were strong contributing factors that drew many to the camp of Communism.

Andre Gide, Richard Wright, Arthur Koestler, Stephan Spender, Ignazio Silone, and Louis Fischer lived in different parts of the world and wrestled with their own particular problems. Yet the one common element which all of them shared was a sense of social anguish. With idealistic enthusiasm these men allied themselves with the revolutionary movement which was going to "save" the world.

In dramatic fashion this book describes the developing psychological states of mind of the Communist convert. In a few brief years, the early hopes of these six men turned to bitter disappointment. Working for the Party and travelling through the Soviet Union made them aware of the treacherous and vicious nature of the Communist system. What happens to a man when he realizes that the theory to which he is dedicated conceives of

the arts not as creative forms of free expression, but rather as weapons which impose conformity? What happens when human dignity can no longer be compromised?

The eminent philosopher Sidney Hook has said: "Without Democracy, a collectivized economy becomes at best a tool of benevolent despots and bureaucrats, and at worst, the most terrible instrument of oppression in the history of mankind." It is the latter of these two alternatives which the six men in question saw as the inevitable result of a political doctrine which proclaims that the ends justify the means.

It has become evident that in Communism we oppose a "religious" movement which adheres fanatically to its faith. We can therefore conclude the final victory over Communism will not be won on a battlefield but rather in the minds of men. I think that this realization should make us aware of our grave responsibility as we go forth from this seminary and proclaim the message of the God that does not fail.

George H. Brand

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Long Day's Journey Into Night. By Eugene O'Neill. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957.

Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey Into Night is one of his last plays. It reveals a painful and tragic part of his own autobiography. The author says that he has long been haunted by this "tale of old sorrow." Here in four acts O'Neill reveals a human situation that speaks to us. The characters of the play suffer for their own sins. The reader is led to feel the judgment and the hopelessness of these people who have lost their guide.

In the play we see a family of four. The father of the family, James Tyrone, is an alcoholic. He was an actor in his younger days, but now is a dealer who invests all his money in secondhand houses. Everything that he gets is secondhand. "Secondhand bargains in everything." The value of the dollar becomes the center of his life. He is even too cheap to get a good doctor for his dying son. He admits that his family has lost the meaning in life because "You have flouted the faith you were born and brought up in...and your denial has brought but self-destruction."

The mother of the family lives in a dream world. Her thirty-five years of marriage have resulted in complete failure.

She has become a drug addict because her husband was too cheap to get her a doctor who could help her. She spends her life in suspicion and loneliness. She always remembers the past and the dirty rooms of filthy hotels where she had to live most of her married life. She blames her husband for everything, and her philosophy of life is revealed when she says: "Not to try to understand, or help things that cannot be helped--the things life has done to us we cannot excuse or explain." There is no way out. Nevertheless, the reader of the play feels that in spite of all this, there should be a way out--the grace of God in forgiveness with which the family was not acquainted.

The oldest son, Jamie, who calls himself a bum is also an alcoholic. He tries to ruin his brother's life, and he succeeds in it. His brother, Edmund, is sick and sees no value in living. He says: "Be always drunk. Nothing else matters...be drunken continually." For him, too, there is no way out.

At the end of the play the reader feels that he is at the "gates of hell." The whole drama becomes like a great fire--beyond man's ability to put out, or to do anything about it. The only thing the mother of the family can say is: "I went to the shrine and prayed to the Blessed Virgin, and found peace again..." But when she says this she is completely doped and has no control over her self.

O'Neill has once more presented a vivid picture of people who find themselves caught in a situation from which they can not escape. I became convinced while reading the play that only God could do something about the chaos in which the characters found themselves. The play stands as a negative witness. It helps us to see that man, by his own power, can not bring himself out of the confusion in which he finds himself. Through this negative witness we can grasp a better understanding of the human predicament and better comprehend the relevance of the Gospel of Christ. And this is our task: to be able to grasp the meaning of the negative witness and to show that God can break through--even to those who stand outside his flock.

Arvids Ziedonis, Jr.

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TOSCANINI: An Intimate Portrait. By Samuel Chostzinoff. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1956.

Often times we try to picture in our mind's eye the qualities which are inherent in the personality of a musical artist. Of course, it is understood, we all have our individual concep-

tion of what it means to be an artist per se.

This book portrays Toscanini as a musical perfectionist of great eminence. The author uses his own personal relationship with the maestro as his starting point for the formulation of the material contained in this book. The picture of Toscanini, painted by the author, is intimate and real. Reading the book transplanted me into another world; it brought me under the spell of this great musical master.

The author has taken a back seat, he remains hidden behind his words in order that the life of this profound artist may clearly be portrayed. Here, clearly painted, is my Toscanini, pictured as a perfectionist, who unfalteringly goes on his way to produce a pure art in expressing the music of the great present and past masters. This is exciting reading which is calculated to rip through every emotion of which you are capable.

As God is experienced in the sacred, here he is imparted in the secular. To deny that God worked in and through this artist would be to deny the very perfection of His being. God is at work in that which He creates. He not only expressed Himself in individual lives, but He finds an avenue of expression through their creative efforts. In striving for perfection, Toscanini missed the God of perfection. In striving for expression, God laid His hand upon Toscanini.

"The baton slipped from his hand. He stepped unsteadily from the podium and walked with a drooping head off stage, while the orchestra behind him screamed out the exultant, throaty C Major jubilation of the Prelude's final bar. It sounded like the world's affirmative judgment on the man who had for so long revealed to it the naked marvel of great music. He was now, before their very eyes, stumbling toward silence, probably forever."

An empty podium behind him, the God of perfection before him.

Arthur F. Haimerl

THE CAMPUS

A sabbatical leave will excuse Dr. Russell D. Snyder of teaching responsibilities for the duration of the spring semester. The sabbatical leave is offered to faculty members by the Board of Trustees on the basis of seniority. The opportunity has been declined by Dr. Frederick Nolde who has taught at this seminary since 1922.

Dr. Snyder's plans for the forth-coming semester include writing and research. He hopes to complete a short work concerned with the ministry and teachings of Jesus. He has also been asked to assume responsibility, for six months, of the "Bible Study" page in The Lutheran. An additional item in Dr. Snyder's agenda is a plan for research in various phases of the history of the Apostolic Age.

Although definite plans have not yet been completed, it is likely that Dr. Snyder's courses will be taught by Dr. Reumann. Graduate School responsibilities will be assumed by Dr. Tappert in the field of church history.

Under the present sabbatical program, eligibility is determined on the basis of service. Only full professors may avail themselves of the plan. It has been designed to run for a full semester, affording the opportunity to make use of the preceding or succeeding summer months. The leave is to be used for travel, research, creative writing, or study--all with the view of enriching the life of the professor and, consequently, those who study under him.

The cost of the sabbatical leave is borne by the seminary; all programs of study are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

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Dr. John Reumann is to speak before the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis. The title of his paper, to be delivered to the New Testament section of the meeting, is "Stewards of God." In his paper, Dr. Reumann will discuss pre-Christian applications of oikonomos, in Greek. Special references are to be made in connection with its usage in I Corinthians 4:1-2, I Peter 4:10, and Titus 1:7.

The society's meeting is to be held on December 30 at Southwestern Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky.

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Dr. Luther Reed was the speaker at the second monthly meeting of the Seminary Choir held on November 21 at the refectory. Dr. Reed, Chairman of the Joint Commission which prepared the new common liturgy of the Lutheran Church, spoke concerning its compilation. He traced the development of the new hymnal and liturgy from the resolution in 1944, (U.L.C.A. convention) which invited the other American Lutheran bodies to assist in the project, to the present day activities of the commission.

The work of compiling a new liturgy and hymnal was delegated to numerous committees which specialized in particular fields of endeavor.

In the process of the commission's work, it was necessary to study the roots of Lutheran divisions which previously had sprung up in Europe. This, alone, led to much research and many years of careful and devoted study.

Dr. Reed mentioned that the melodies and translations of "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" were numerous. Six translations and four melodies had been circulating throughout the Lutheran churches in the U.S.A. and Canada. Now the Lutheran using this new book will be able to sing the best of the translations. With one exception, all the Lutheran bodies have assisted with the compilation of the new liturgy and hymnal.

The first edition is already under way with an expected production of over 600,000 copies. It is expected that it will be available sometime in March, 1958.

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The 1958 Senior Banquet has been scheduled for April 24 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ardmore. Plans for the program have not been announced.

The Banquet Committee is traditionally composed of members of the Middle Class. This year's committee is under the chairmanship of Paul Pfadenhauer. He is being assisted by: Richard G. Miller, Publicity; Robert Ke, Dinner Arrangements; Richard Schlagel, Speaker; Elton Richards, program; and Roderick, Middle Class President.

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Mid-year commencement will be held in the Schaeffer-Ashmead Memorial Church on Wednesday, January 15, 1958, at 10 a.m. George Brand, Peter Fish, William Fluck, John Hendler, William Hunter, and Rodger Krause will receive the Bachelor of Divinity degree.

ANGEL ANTICS

The basketball season is well underway now, and the Angels are still looking for their first victory. Here is the record of the Angels so far this season.

Angels	56	Philadelphia	63
Angels	54	Watertower	59
Angels	45	Burbas	62
Angels	25	Bullets	61
Angels	48	Eagles	64

Special: Norm Melchert surpassed Rodger Krause's world record for tardiness recently. With only two minutes remaining in Church Administration, Norm came into the room and broke the class wide open. Congratulations Norm!

Until next year: Season's Greetings.