



# the SEMINARIAN

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To the Editor of the Seminarian:

At the recent Student Body meeting it was decided to adopt every item on the budget except the \$600 for the spring banquet. A number of points were made to support this action of not approving the banquet allocation. They include the following:

1. The total budget was \$1730. Thus more than one-third the entire budget would be allocated for ourselves and our "pleasure." This speaks rather poorly for a theological seminary. Have we not learned that sin consists basically of pride; of man's being turned in upon himself? In contrast, far lesser amounts were set aside for benevolence.
2. This is supposed to be a gala farewell to the seniors, and an occasion for joyous expressions of friendship. The poor attendance at past banquets and the almost empty dance floors afterwards indicate that not all of us have to be dependent upon a banquet to express friendship.
3. Why should every student, through his dues, have to subsidize the tickets for those members (and wives) who do want to attend? Isn't it rather contradictory when we exclaim that we want this banquet so much and yet are unwilling to pay the price of a legitimate evening's entertainment?
4. The banquet is supposed to be such a high-class celebration. Since when have basements in out-of-the-way churches had such an elite status?

For these and other reasons, it would seem wise that we students vote to keep the \$600 out of the budget. We can vote for no banquet, and also vote that if a banquet be held, that it be a really respectable event, paid for by those of us who attend, from our own pockets. After all, our benevolence money should seek a higher goal than giving ourselves a cheap evening's "entertainment."

Peter S. Olsen

## RETREAT EVALUATION

Evaluation of a Retreat is an especially difficult task--especially for one who has not had much prior experience with gatherings of this nature. If, however, the comments of many who attended (including seminarians, college students, pastors, professors and--perhaps most important--parishioners) are any criterion for judgement, then the Retreat held last Saturday at St. Paul's Church, Mt. Holly, N.J., was surely a success. The Retreat's stated purpose was "to shed God's light in mountaintop intensity", and few would deny that this purpose was

accomplished; for whether in sermon, sacrament, lecture, discussion or fellowship, God's Word was dominant.

The question arises as to the place of a Retreat in the life of an Evangelical Christian. Could it not be construed that those who participate in retreats are attempting to "Climb up to God on a Jacob's Ladder"? Perhaps a Retreat is just a modern day, short term version of medieval monasticism. The writer believes this question to be justified (probably because he thought it up), but believes equally strongly that such a question may

## FOOTNOTES

Maybe you think that you have enough to do already, and indeed you have if you take seriously the educational opportunities of Mt. Airy. But all the book-ing might end up being too much unless you wholeheartedly pursue a diverting task. Theologians are used to paradoxes; it is not laughable to say that by taking on some more work the total load becomes lighter.

What is it that I have in mind for your diversion? Two areas, especially (although there are as many possibilities as people): 1. The Chamber Music Ensemble of Mt. Airy. Two concerts were given last year on campus and a third program at a nearby church. This year already there are two outside engagements contracted and plenty of plans for more. We can use just about as much musical talent as is available. We guarantee the recreation and refreshment that comes in musical cooperation as nowhere else.

2. Another possibility which has been affected in the past, although not recently, is religious drama. There is a wealth of material which calls for imaginative acting, directing, lighting, all in the service of the Gospel. The Choir is taking a lead in this field with its production of a thirteenth century Magi play this Christmas. Modern works are available too; however, I am confident that the talent is here to produce them.

And of course there are the literary possibilities in THE SEMINARIAN and its Quarterly, which is devoted to poetry and literary prose. Don't dig into the files of adolescent scribblings; really try to create with words and give expression to all the reactions and attractions, thoughts and feelings of these days.

If you don't think you have time, you'd better make it - or perhaps you would be proud to join the rows of cabbage heads already filling our pulpits! Narrowness is a curable disease.

George Weckman

## FROM THE BOOK SHELF

John O'Hara, The Big Laugh, Random House, New York

The subject of The Big Laugh is the development of Hubie Ward, male movie star, who somewhat resembles an amalgam of Rudolf Valentino and Clark Gable. The time is set in the late 1920's and early 30's. O'Hara narrates Hubie's career and sex life as one indivisible entity--none of it is noticeably concealed. The Big Laugh is not very funny. Besides lack of reticence, the style is remarkable for its use of short, crisp sentences and a vocabulary augmented by a handful of familiar monosyllables. The resulting simplicity will be called "realism". And the book does read as though the author either stood behind Kinsey and heard every word or installed a tape recorder in a random sample of the bars of Hollywood or Philadelphia.

Before concluding that the book is pornographic, it would be well to review the Supreme Court dictum that a work is pornographic if "to the average person, applying contemporary standards, the dominant theme of the material taken as a whole appeals to prurient interests." Prurient as defined by the dictionary means "having itching, morbid, or lascivious longings...uneasy with desire."

As O'Hara propels his characters from acts of, say, taking tea to acts of taking ultimate liberties (minutely described), a certain conclusion is almost inevitable: if this book cannot render twelve members of a jury uneasy with desire, no novel can. However, the book is for sale and it is therefore possible to hope that pornography  
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## FROM THE BOOK SHELF (Cont'd from P. 2)

has become defined right out of existence. If so, we can settle back and, helped by O'Hara and using the Christian views of sex, reach some conclusions.

Mr. O'Hara certainly does have the ability to present his material so that it simultaneously reads like the juicy culls from a verbatim transcript and yet possess an organized clarity almost never found in natural speech. As Proust says of Vinteuil, his work "is become so transparent, so full of what he is interpreting, that himself one no longer sees and he is nothing but a window". In O'Hara's case, the glass seems to refract nothing. Total transparency annoys most readers who look for the personality of the artist behing his art. Seek O'Hara in this book and you shall not find it.

Nevertheless, there is a theme in The Big Laugh. By coincidence, it too is stated by Proust: "We live only with what we do not love; with what we have brought with us in order to kill the intolerable love".

As an author, John O'Hara has not been static. He has gradually sharpened his tools and tightened his style. More significantly, he has his fingers on the pulse of something radically wrong in our society. It is possible to detect a touch of romanticism in Butterfield 8 and something maundering in From the Terrace. No hint of either appears in The Big Laugh as O'Hara traces the course of an intolerable love to its death.

Wesley Hamlin

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Because I felt that Dr. Horn's sermon on Wednesday, September 26, was of superior quality, it came to me that many of those seminarians who were not in chapel should share in Dr. Horn's preaching. Hence, a brief summary, if only for edification's sake.

Dr. Horn talked first of a remoteness that exists today. This was the

distance that most people feel between the Kingdom and the "facts of life". In essence, this was a growing irrelevance of the Gospel to human goals, feelings, or awarenesses. Dr. Horn used the analogy of the Seminary itself to depict this remoteness of the Kingdom of God, of how we were considered (even by ourselves) to be off in some "land of Oz". He concluded these opening remarks with the question: "Which of these worlds is real, the world of "facts" or the Kingdom?", attempting to outline the problem before us as future ministers in a world that has become secure in secularization.

The turning point of his sermon was when he stated that the religious category involves a bi-focal attitude. By this he meant that the present was a reality with a future. That the present was always interpreted in terms of some future action by God towards a new creation. This involves not some dismay for the present status, as is the pentecostal approach to this truth, but a "taking of the facts seriously" with the end in mind. This "end" is the Promise of God continually sustaining the present and influencing its direction. Further, though, this promise was the total restoration of Creation with the establishment of God's will.

Thus, in theological jargon, we stand in this "eschatological tension" before the world and God. We are "new men in Christ", and yet not quite. We are, but we aren't. This is the paradox of our situation. In Dr. Horn's terms, we've moved into the house, but it isn't a home yet.

Douglas E. Werner

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

VOTE "YES" FOR THE SENIOR BANQUET

DID YOU KNOW THAT... General George G. Meade and General Beauregard attended Mt. Airy? (1826-28)

## COMMENTARY

II Samuel 1:19 Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places! How are the mighty fallen!

It had happened quickly, considering the months of training, hundreds of hours of exercise, endless days sparring, rope-jumping, thousands of miles jogging across countryside. Friendly hellos from farmers. "Good luck, champ." Encouragement from trainers, handlers, family. Last minute telegrams from well-wishers. A growing tiredness as the moment approached, the peculiar sign of nervousness. Then the more common tightening of the stomach--fear rippling across abdominal muscles. White lights. Taut canvas. Gritty rosin. There was the sweet smell of leather, and a swipe of sweat on the brown glove. There was the comfortable tension of elastic around one's waist. A soft cotton robe was the last refuge. Then he was ushered by friends to the center of the ring--a small group collected--an island in a bright universe--a focal point, perhaps, for anger and ambition, for revenge and jealousy. It was a quiet prelude to a test of strength. And now it is finished.

He had read all the advance comments. His opponent had been pictured as a "Neanderthal", while he as the man who knows--homo sapiens. It was to be a contest of caveman and culture; between his heavy, dull, sullen, low-browed opponent, and himself, articulate and intelligent. And he knew the crowd liked him. In return, he felt obligated to them. Yet, he couldn't agree with the analysis of his opponent. He felt drawn to him. Strangely, he felt closer to this "Neanderthal" than to anyone else. Funny. But he couldn't explain this sense of kinship.

Now it begins all over, he thought. Too bad the crowd was not sated. He had not seen the short, devastating punch, as it slid over his defense. Just blazing lights. The wild roar of the crowd. Entreaties from his corner. All, slicing into his consciousness. And the floor spinning up at him. He remembered the four-point landing. How ridiculously clear the canvas grain appeared--round pebbles on the bottom of a mountain stream, low and clear in late summer. It seemed to call him to press himself close, to forget the din that now boiled around him. He wasn't hurt, just dazed. The lone figure of "Neanderthal" crouched, waiting in the far corner; a surprised look was etched on his face. He had not imagined so early a victory. Surprise! The crowd was more disappointed than surprised. "Good luck, champ." The din grew louder. He struggled to one knee. His hands left the floor. A dead burden weighed on his shoulders, terribly oppressive. The last stroke. The metronomic voice said "Ten". He was rushed from all sides. Too bad about the crowd, he thought. But he had worked and exercised and trained; and he had met his part of the bargain. Too bad, though, it could not have lasted longer.

He is relaxed now, but already he feels long months of work ahead. He understands and accepts this. Uncomplainingly, he faces a new tiredness. Meanwhile, he needs to be alone. The crowd is quiet too. He wonders where they have gone. Perhaps they are applauding the new champion. "Good luck, champ." It's a long way back. For now, though, he is relaxed and very much alone.

Peter Schumacher

RETREAT be answered negatively by setting forth a proper understanding of a Retreat.

Last Saturday's Retreat placed its emphasis squarely upon man's total depravity before God. At no time were the participants encouraged to climb upward to some "mystical presence". In fact the

theme of the Retreat might well have been "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD."

It is true that the Christian should be open to receive the inspiration of God's Word at all times in his daily life, and that we need not draw apart to contemplate God as if He were some far-off unknown to whose knowledge we have to aspire.

Wes Johnston