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# M O T I V E

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**COVER ARTIST:** BOB HODGELL has taken the biblical theme: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," and has made it speak to us today. The ancient Christmas symbols are renewed and made vital. Bob uses the atom within the Christmas star and the hands of God delivering the Christ child to the hate-filled world of today. These symbolically tell the true story of Christmas, 1958.

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Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger. . . .

# REHEARSAL FOR THE DRAMA OF OUR SALVATION

BY JAMES MILLER



A MANGER, a stall, a stable, a cave, or perhaps even a feeding place under open skies—the word used can mean any of these, but not an ordinary house for a son of man.

THAT the ordinary houses, the inns, were too full to let Love Itself in is not the important part of the Christmas story. The busy-ness of man's dealings for himself has always been with us. What is unique about Christmas and the Nativity we seek to portray is that Love comes into our world anyway. It may have to be born out in a cow lot, but no man can keep Love out of God's world.

AT A TIME when the Church had become the world and found itself too busy for the Love on which it was founded, the first outdoor Nativity was arranged. Saint Francis, the Little Brother of Mankind, who preached to the birds and called the animals brothers, who gave up all his wealth to follow Christ—this loving monk called together the country people to a small cave on a hillside in North Italy. Here peasants represented Joseph and Mary, local shepherds knelt before the image of the Christ child, and the local knight offered gifts of gold as a Wise Man. The common people gathered to sing praises and worship the Little King of Love, their Lord.

HE IS your Lord too. Or he can be. Do you take part in this Nativity scene because "it's pretty"? Or because "the whole town will talk about it"? Or because "you always support your church"? Or rather because Christ, the Lord of your life, is born this time of year? Do you come to adore him as the fullness of all your hopes and life?

*(Continued next page)*



MARY—You are an ignorant peasant girl whom God has chosen to bear his Love into his world. Can you adore that Child he has given more than your life and family? Will you offer all family love to him?

JOSEPH—You are a skilled workman, a righteous man, a leading citizen. Can you adore God's Son more than pride in your job, more than your own righteousness, more than your civic standing? Will you offer all reputation up to him who came among us as a nobody?

SHEPHERDS—You tend God's flocks, you take your life from God's good earth, you care for those things—oil, money, or cattle—which God overflows into your hands. Do you adore God's greatest Gift more than those things which you handle for him? Will you offer all those things which you manage, and those persons whom you lead, to God who made all things and fathered all persons?

WISE MEN—You kings of the earth, you Americans with more opportunity for learning, more power as a common man, more influence than man has ever possessed before. Can you adore this Prince of Peace more than all learning, power, and influence? Will you offer up every kingdom to this King of kings?

Offer up all our world to him. For it was his world first, before we messed it up trying to keep it for ourselves. We are made by Love to love all those whom he has made. Let us go to his Nativity expecting his power to be let loose in our lives.

Power of God, descend to us as a child and grow in us to the full manhood of perfect self-giving Love. In his name. Amen.



Margaret Rigg

ANNUNCIATION



# NO PEOPLE

## AND

# GOD'S PEOPLE

BY JAMES F. WHITE

IN the second chapter of the First Epistle of Peter there are two verses of very great significance for anyone trying to understand what Christian worship is:

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people. . . .*

At first sight, these verses, so strongly reminiscent of the Old Testament, seem to have nothing to do with worship, and certainly not with Christian worship. But, I believe that they point right at the heart of Christian worship.

Have you ever considered what it is that distinguishes the Church from any other group in society? Certainly the Church is not the only institution interested in charity, social justice, or recreation, and long ago the Church lost its monopoly on education. No, the only unique characteristic of the Church is that it is a worshipping community. We may wonder why it is that only the Church, of all institutions, is devoted to worshipping God. I think our text gives a clue to this in calling Christians "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people." These words call to mind the Israelites whom "God has chosen to

be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth." The early Church thought of itself as being the New Israel. The First Epistle of Peter was addressed "to the exiles of the dispersion," that is, to Christians who like the Jews had been scattered throughout the world. One thing always stuck in the Hebrew mind, the amazing fact that though they were the least among nations, God had chosen them as his own people. From a nameless group of slaves, toiling in Egypt, God had formed of them a special people, "a holy nation."

In all this, the important fact was what God had done for them in order to make them his people. The Old Testament is full of recitals of what God had done for his people. If we stop to think for a moment, we realize that this is just what the New Testament contains. It proclaims the climactic event in history through which men were made aware that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself."

The Church exists as those who have been transformed through this supreme invasion of God into history by "the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." We are not Christians because of what we are or have done; we are Christians because of what God has done, choosing us from





among all people as witnesses to his supreme love. It is in the common bond of that "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life." This being in Christ is what makes us a new people, the Church. "Once you were no people but now you are God's people."

TOO often we tend to forget that it is this common sharing in the Christ event that makes us the Church. In the early Church, only those who were actually members could attend church services. Not until a person could answer a series of questions, thus confirming his participation in the knowledge of Christ, could he worship with other Christians. First, he was examined and baptized in a separate building, the baptistry. Then, and only then, was he allowed to enter the church building. Today, the Church is much easier to join than many clubs, and perhaps not much more meaningful to many people. Because our churches, and especially our university chapels, contain such a mixed congregation of people of every belief or none, worship is extremely difficult as the Body of Christ. The primary purpose of Christian worship is not conversion; worship is the *result* of conversion. Only after that change of mind occurs can one truly worship as a Christian.

It may quite fairly be asked: "What about private prayer and meditation? Are they not Christian worship?" Of course they are, but in a radically different sense from public worship. If there is any single mistake at the base of our present confusion about worship, it is that we have not distinguished carefully enough between private and public worship. Neither type of worship is superior, both are vital, but they are considerably different in character. If you were speaking alone to a close friend you would speak in a different manner from that which you would use if you were addressing a crowd. In conversing with a friend, one is informal, personal, and intimate; in a crowd one cannot be as personal because it

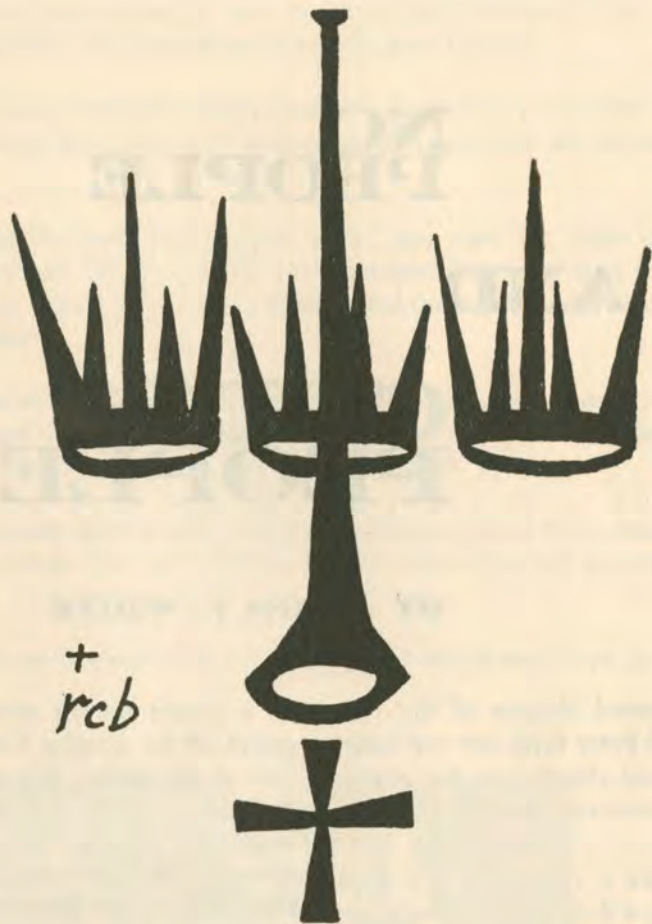
would be impossible to communicate in the same terms to those who do not share our own feelings and experiences. Private worship, like conversation with a friend, is intimate and personal. It may be very informal and subjective, and quite frequently contains emotion and strong feeling. However, it is never a completely isolated act, but joins with the private worship of other Christians, though not present. Saint Basil said, "Even prayer when it hath not the consort of many voices to strengthen it, is not itself." In public worship, those worshiping are assembled and the worship is more formal and objective in order that all may share in it equally. Certainly it is not without feeling, but it is a disciplined emotion, an emotion in which all have a part.

WHEN we try to mix private devotions with public worship, we forget the nature of the Church. The Church is not simply a series of chosen individuals. It is a chosen people. In pub-

lic worship we do not worship as individuals in isolation, but as one body—the Body of Christ. "We, though many, are one body in Christ." We are many individuals, yet in public worship we are one people, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people."

How then do we exercise this "royal priesthood"? How does our worship represent our actions as God's people? Just as we do not worship together merely as an assortment of individuals, so too, no single congregation worships in isolation from the rest of the Church. Each congregation, like every individual Christian, is a part of Christ's Body. Our worship is shared not merely within the local church but throughout the universal Church. Because of this, it is dangerous to build worship around one congregation, just as it would be hazardous to build public worship around the devotions of any individual. We all partake of and contribute to the inheritance of Chris-

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tian worship, and consequently we cannot afford to divorce ourselves from the rest of Christ's Body. Let us hope that the practice of "making up a service" without any regard to the rest of Christianity will soon end. The experience of any one individual is too narrow to exchange for the legacy of twenty centuries of Christian devotion.

Certain elements seem to have acquired a universal validity in Christian worship. Many of us are familiar with the Wesley Order of Morning Prayer. This service did not originate with John Wesley in the eighteenth century, nor was it invented by the sixteenth-century reformer, Thomas Cranmer who had translated and adapted it for congregational use. Medieval monks had used similar services throughout the previous centuries, and the same manner of worship can be traced back to the time of the Roman Emperor, Constantine. By such long usage, certain elements have established their permanent significance. I do not intend to discuss the form of such worship, but I think it highly important that we take time to study the content of Wesley's Morning Prayer, or really, of the tradition of Christian devotion to which Wesley's Service is a comparatively recent witness.

## I

Throughout the centuries, Christians have begun worship with some form of confession, though the practice itself is older than Christianity. The Prophet Isaiah, confronted in the Temple with the presence of God, exclaimed:

*Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!*

Christian worship begins with this same overwhelming sense of the presence of God, this sense of his holiness and majesty. The feeling of awe and dread in Isaiah's awareness of God's presence is reflected in one of the hymns of the Eastern Church which begins: "Let all mortal flesh keep si-

lence, And with fear and trembling stand."

This sense of awe is reflected in confession. Believe me, confession of our sin is a very difficult and painful part of Christian worship, but it is imperative because of the holiness of the God we worship. It is here, at the beginning of each service, that a distinction is erected between Christians and others. To those who are not in Christ, confession of sin is an insult to human dignity. Yet, to address God without it is an insult to him. How unspeakably presumptuous it would be for us to address God with our "unclean lips" without seeking first his cleansing forgiveness!

As Isaiah's words indicate, there are two elements to confession. The Prophet said, "I am a man of unclean lips," reminding us of the importance of frequently confessing our sin as individuals. But he went further, and added, "and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." It is not only as individuals that we are involved in sin, but through our membership in groups. Each group seeks to preserve itself, often justifying as necessary to its self-preservation actions far more ruthless than any individual would tolerate. As individuals, few would use violence, yet a nation will go to war to preserve itself. Business firms engage in vicious practices which the members as individuals would abhor. Because we belong to groups, our power to act is greatly increased, far beyond our capacity as individuals. And because of this power, the number and magnitude of those things "we have left undone . . . which we ought to have done" and those things "we have done . . . which we ought not to have done," are greatly increased. We as a church are involved in sin, just as we are as individuals. When this is forgotten, the Church becomes an object of idolatry, receiving worship due only to God. Consequently, when Christians come together to worship, they begin their confession by saying, "We have erred. . . . We have offended."

Isaiah's experience in the Temple didn't end with his confession. God

acted, sending one of the seraphim to say, "Your guilt is taken away, and your sin is forgiven." In our prayer of confession we have asked God for forgiveness and pardon. Afterwards, the minister declares to us God's present act of forgiveness, delivering us "from the bonds of those sins which by our frailty we have committed." Having been brought to confess our sin by the sense of God's presence, and having been assured of his pardon, we are ready to continue in our worship.

## II

The sorrow of confession immediately gives way to the joy of praise and thanksgiving. It is as if we were waiting with the crowd on the Mount of Olives that first Palm Sunday, the moment when

*The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they have seen, saying, "Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"*

The crowd was excited because of the "mighty works" which they had seen. This same excitement is a part of our worship. Those present the first Palm Sunday had no advantage over us for we are equally witnesses to the "wonderful deeds" of God. For twenty centuries, Christians have united in praising God for his mighty acts, confident that today, as ever, "he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

It is because of these actions of God, culminating in the events of the first Holy Week, that we have been made one people. Christian praise is simply a rejoicing in those "mighty works" of God which have made us his people. Once we were no people, only isolated individuals, but now we are God's people because in Christ "the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it." Because of this, we rejoice and praise God. We do not say nice flattering things about him, for indeed, we know no words which could adequately describe God. We know him by his saving acts, and we praise him for them.

One of the chief forms of praise in



our worship is through hymns. One hymnal bears the very appropriate title, *Congregational Praise*. In the eighteenth century, the Wesleys made one of their greatest contributions through their hymns, hymns which so often speak of God's works. Nineteenth-century hymns were usually sentimental and subjective. Instead of praising "Jesus, lover of my soul," they rhapsodized about my soul, lover of Jesus. The important thing in Christian praise is that it is centered on God, praising him for his glory as revealed in his actions. Perhaps the most perfect expression of praise is in a phrase in the Communion service: "We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory."

### III

The element of corporate witness, expressed in the lessons, Creed, and sermon, has much in common with

that of Christian praise. In the words of I John:

*That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

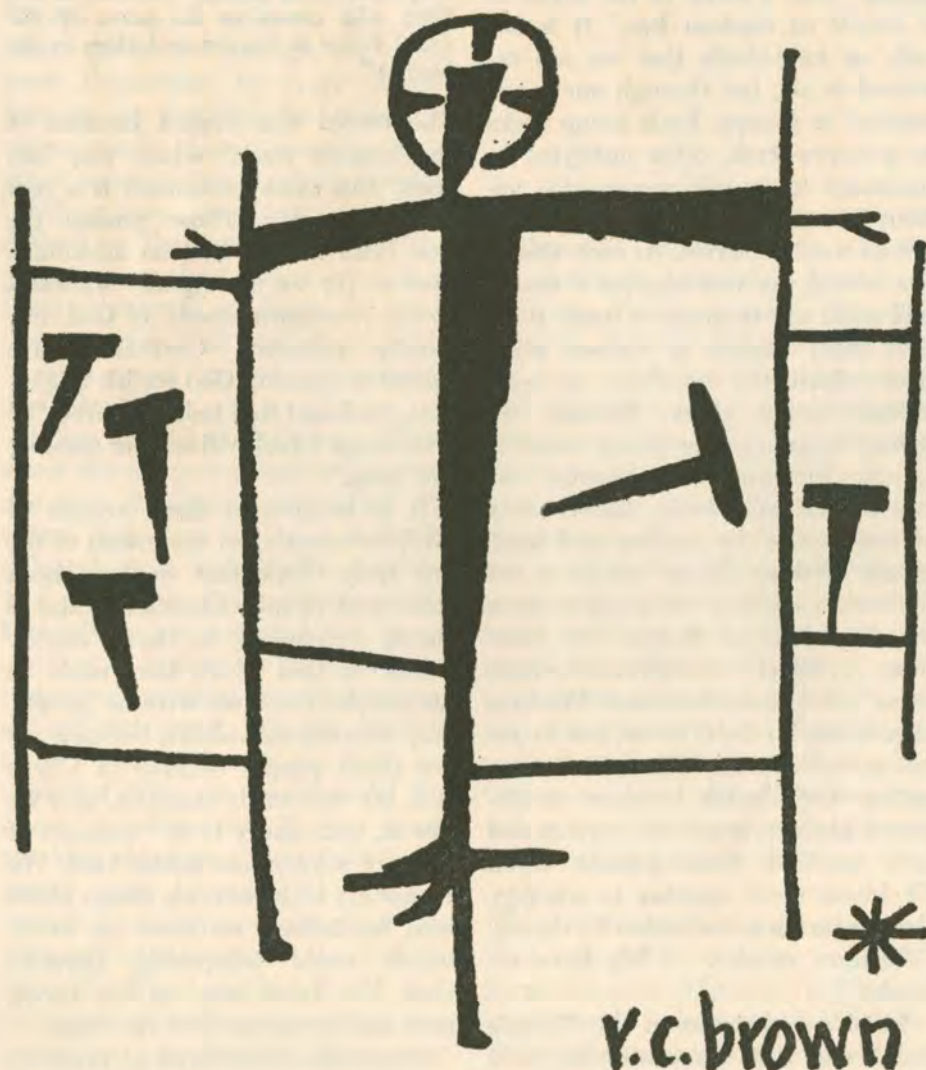
From earliest times, Christian worship has included lessons from the Bible, telling of God's saving acts in history. The lessons do not tell us about God so much as they tell us about God's historical actions, "that which we have seen and heard" as John says. Here is the very heart of Christian worship, for our worship centers on a recital or *representation* of these events, that "you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." Our worship recapitulates the events of the history of our salvation, climaxing with

Christ's sacrifice for us. By the recalling of this event, we show forth Christ's eternal work and confirm that we are his people.

The lessons, then, are a recital of God's acts on the behalf of his people. But then comes what may well be the most exciting part of the service, the Creed, or the Belief as it was sometimes called. The last chapter of the book of Joshua tells us that after Joshua had gathered the chosen people together at Shechem, he reviewed the wonderful acts by which God had made them a people, beginning with the time of Abraham, through their escape from Egypt, and continuing in their settlement in the Promised Land. This recital of God's saving work is just what occurs in our Scripture lesson. Then Joshua asked the people if they would serve the Lord. They thundered back a reply which even today is stirring: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; for it is the Lord our God . . . who did those great signs in our sight." Then they repeated in a brief form these same "great signs" by which God had made them his people. This is exactly what we do in saying the Creed; we respond to the mighty acts declared in the Scriptures, voicing in summary form our common belief in the biblical account.

The sermon continues this declaration of God's acts, concentrating perhaps on one certain aspect each Sunday. The purpose of the sermon is not to tell us to be good, but, by opening the Scriptures to us, to show forth God's manifestations of his love for his people, thereby, stimulating our gratitude in return. By holding up to our sight this love of God the sermon recalls the actions of God, that we may behold once again the new thing which he has done for us in Christ. In a sense, these signs are renewed by again being made present to us in preaching. Once again we are reminded of how God watched over his people in the Old Testament, how he has inaugurated his kingdom in Christ, and watching over us, "slumbers not nor sleeps."

The lessons, the Creed, and the sermon, then, recall to us those "won-





derful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Together we celebrate those saving acts of God which, quite apart from our own deserving, have made us his special people. By these acts we are united. Instead of being no people, we affirm our fellowship which is "with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

#### IV

Christian worship also involves a real sense of responsibility, shown most clearly in prayer or supplication. The concluding chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians has these words:

*Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.*

That last word, "saints" is one which we don't use very much today. This is strange, for the New Testament makes very frequent reference to "the saints." Surprisingly enough, it never speaks of a saint; the saints are always conceived of as being a group, not as individuals. In the seventeenth century, the Puritans spoke of the Church as "the saints," though they never spoke of any individual as a saint. The saints, then, exist together as the Church, the Body of Christ. They are all parts of the same Body, and as such have the same concerns. In the East Harlem Protestant Parish in New York City, part of each service of worship is known as the "concerns of the Church." Someone will announce sickness, unemployment, or a tragedy which affects a member of the church, then the rest of the church prays for that person. As members of one Body, we pray for each other, "making supplication for all the saints." The 122nd Psalm enjoins this when it instructs us to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

But what about those outside the Church? In prayer we turn our attention to them too. Christians, though members of a colony of heaven, also belong to the earthly city. We pray, hoping that we are the yeast that may leaven the whole loaf. God promised Abraham that he would spare Sodom



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for ten righteous men. Christians pray God to continue in his mercy to all men. Perhaps for the sake of ten men, persevering in prayer, God will grant a new life and purpose to all men on the college campus.

Christian prayer reaches out, far beyond the worshiping community to "all sorts and conditions of men." Prayer is the most comprehensive part of our worship. We pray for the peace of Babylon, our enemies, even "for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." There is nothing exclusive about Christian prayer for it includes all mankind in its concern. Together we recall the needs and as-

pirations of all men, persevering in our prayers for the saints, and for all the rest of mankind, not yet united to Christ's Body.

#### V

The remaining element in worship, that of offering and dedication, is really a part of all worship. There is a strange verse in Romans in which Paul says:

*I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this*



world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

It may seem strange to us, this calling our worship a sacrifice, a word which we associate with the reeking flesh and blazing fire of Old Testament ceremonies. But it is a very appropriate word, for there is something very painful and unattractive about worship. George Bernard Shaw once remarked that all his plays contained a bitter pill or message which he had sugar-coated with wit and action in order to get people's attention. As he grew older, Shaw complained that his audiences had merely licked the sugar off and not swallowed the pill. Too often this is what happens in our worship. We want a safe, professionalized service which leaves us with a good feeling, something that is soothing and not shocking. Perhaps this is why people never sit too near the pulpit. They might get burnt.

But worship, if it is real, does hurt. It cuts clean and swift, straight to the bone. Genesis tells us that when Adam and Eve had disobeyed God "the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked." This is what worship does to us. It exposes us to ourselves. We come to know ourselves as we really are. And this is painful, extremely painful. When Adam heard

the sound of God in the garden, he was afraid because he knew he was naked, and so he tried to hide himself. Worship makes us realize we can't hide from God. We have to confess our disobedience, imploring his forgiveness. It is only after we know ourselves as we really are, and ask for forgiveness, that we can make an acceptable offering to God.

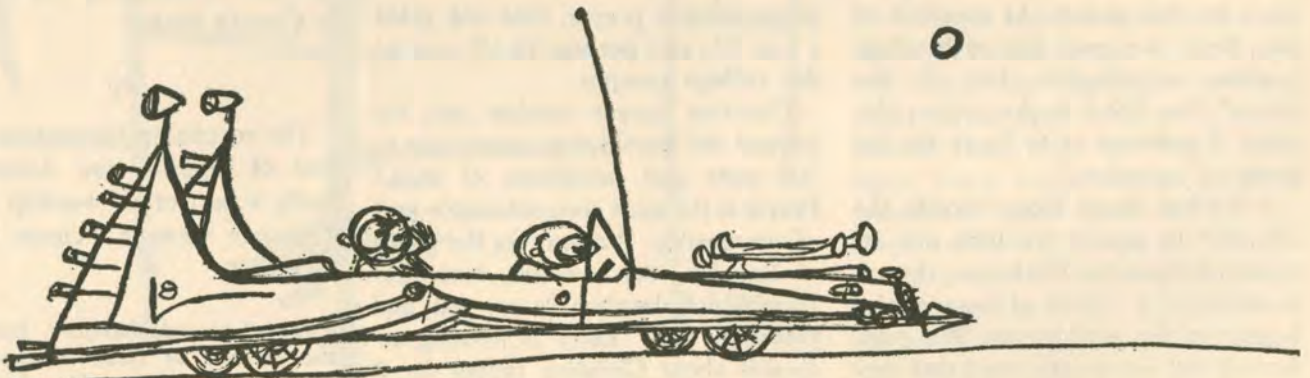
But what is this offering which we make? Isn't it strange that Paul speaks of presenting our "bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" and then calls this our "spiritual worship"? Paul means that we dedicate our entire lives to God. One of the Communion prayers declares that "we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee." If our offering is genuine, nothing is held back, but all our life is reconsecrated to God's use.

The sign of this, of course, is the offering. It is not just a collection of money for the needs of the Church, but rather a convenient token representing our most valuable resources. Abraham offered his only child to God. Really giving of ourselves is a painful process. It represents tearing down every last shread of selfishness, and pledging ourselves anew to God's

service. And if done sincerely, this is not easy.

But it is possible, simply because we are not ordinary isolated individuals, offering our own worthless sacrifice. We are members of Christ, our great high priest, and his supreme sacrifice has become our sacrifice. In Christ, God has chosen us as "a royal priesthood," selecting us from among all peoples that by the power of our Lord's offering of himself, we may make our acceptable "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." We offer ourselves by our worship, but these selves have been transformed by our incorporation into the Body of Christ. St. Augustine wrote: "This is the Christian sacrifice, the many become one body in Christ. And it is this that the Church celebrates by means of the sacrifice of the altar . . . where it is shown to her that in *what* she offers she *herself* is offered." The same is true of all genuine Christian worship. Through our union in *Christ's offering*, we present *ourselves* to God who in his love for us has called us as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were no people but now you are God's people."

And so, we worship him.



WHAT GOOD IS IT TO GET THERE TWICE AS FAST AND MORE COMFORTABLY IF THIS IS THE WRONG DIRECTION?



# THE LEGEND OF

## santa claus

BY KENDRICK GROBEL

**D**ID your father tell you Santa Claus was a myth? He probably did, because his father had told him the same. But they were wrong. Santa Claus is not a myth. He is a legend, a debased and distorted one, but still a legend—specifically, a personal legend. Behind a personal legend there usually stands a man. There does here, a man of flesh and blood.

First to get his name straight: Santa Claus is a corruption through New Netherlands tradition of (Dutch) Sant Nikolaas which became, familiarly, Sant Klaas, and then Sinterklass (accidentally, probably, Swabian-dialect Santiklaus is even closer). His Greek name was Nikolaos, which we usually anglicize into Nicholas.

All that the professionally skeptical historian can admit about him is that around A.D. 300 the little Asia Minor city of Myra (now Dembre on the Turkish coast opposite Cyprus) had a bishop named Nikolaos. As Nikolaos bishop of Myra he appears in the Menologion of the Orthodox Churches and in the Missal of the Roman Church for December 6th, the day of his death.

Strictly and prosaically speaking that is all we know of him. But there remains his legend. Legend passes on primarily not what a man *did* but what *impression* he made upon people and what, under that impression, they considered him capable of doing. In the case of saints of such lasting popularity as Nikolaos the later legends far surpass the earlier, for they are the



impressions of impressions of impressions, squares and cubes, to speak mathematically, of the original impression. But even so the total legend of a man, after all due reduction, leaves behind not his portrait, certainly, but the "taste" of him, the flavor of a life once lived—as the Fioretti, for instance, can give a Picassoesque flash of understanding for the Poverello of Assisi that is "truer" than sober biography.

The Nikolaos legend lets him be born to properly devout parents, Epiphanius and Johanna, within fifty

miles of Myra at Patara—off to the west facing the Isle of Rhodes. Both places were appropriate to a saint, inasmuch as both had been hallowed by a visit of St. Paul himself, both accorded mention in the Book of Acts—27:5 and 21:1. In legends "coming events cast their shadows before" even into the infancy of the holy man. Nikolaos' coming piety announced itself while he was still a suckling: on Wednesdays and Fridays (the Church's fast days!) he accepted the breast but once and fasted from earthly food the rest of the day, for, as a medieval hagiographer notes, *jam tunc sugeret ubera virtutum*—"thus early was he sucking the breasts of the Virtues."

Before he becomes bishop the legend takes him by sea on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Egypt. On the way his prayers still a tempest—and countless mariners still revere him for it and implore him for similar intercession, as we shall see.

His education had been given him by the bishop of Myra himself, his own Uncle Nikolaos. Fittingly the nephew-pupil followed the uncle as his second successor. (Quite possibly the two Nikolai are doublets in tradition of one historical person.)

The deeds of Bishop Nikolaos whether merely humane and "natural" (but divinely prompted) or humane and miraculous (because divinely caused) are legion but all save one of them have this in common: they are merciful, compassionate,





caritative. The one exception is a slap in the face dealt by Nikolaos in unsaintly defiance of Matt. 5:39. But tradition certainly meant it to his credit: look who the recipient was—Arius himself, the blasphemous heretic! It was at the Council of Nicea, A.D. 325; Arius had uttered one of his worst blasphemies, denying full divinity to the Son. Who slapped him down? Our doughty Nikolaos! What does it matter that in the old lists of the two hundred fifty bishops assembled at Nicea—or was it three hundred—our Nikolaos is missing? Tradition could still hold that he was in that surplus of fifty. Or perhaps he was just “auditing.” In any case, he was a defender of the Faith!

ONE exploit in particular gave him his character in folk-belief for all time. A certain worthy man had goods of this world and three nubile daughters. But reverses set in and brought him to abject poverty—with three daughters and no dowry for any. He had sorrowfully come to the necessity of selling them into a life of shame and

degradation when Nikolaos learned of their plight and hastened incognito to their aid. Unseen he smuggled into their bedrooms a purse of gold for each. The dowries! It might have been into a shoe or a stocking that he placed the unexpected, anonymous, and blessed gift. Their honor, their fortune, and their endangered faith were rescued. From henceforth what saint could be a more appropriate patron of youth than this self-sacrificing, self-effacing Nikolaos? He had long been that before the medieval miracle of the three pickled youths attached itself to his fame: three young travelers were foully murdered by the combination butcher-innkeeper at the last of their stops and their flesh put up in brine. Later on three casks of “pickled pork” yield to the prayers of our saint and give up the resurrected bodies of three grateful youths.

The butchers, understandably, are not among the many guilds that adopted Nikolaos as chief patron saint. But the bakers were. Legend told of a time of famine in Asia Minor when under Nikolaos’ hand and peti-

tion the multiplication of the loaves had happened again. He also became the patron of ship passengers, then of travelers in general and—since thieves are notorious travelers—even of thieves!

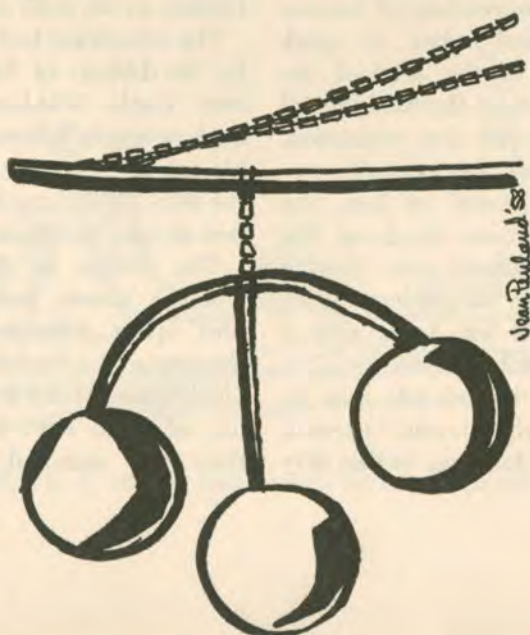
Many other stories are told of him, more sea stories, rescue of prisoners, healings. And with a logic natural to legend his healings did not cease with his death: from his coffin flowed at times certain balsams or myrrhs which even today at Italian Bari are thought to heal miraculously. (Myrrhs, in Greek, is spelled *myra*, exactly like Nikolaos’ town of Myra; was the town’s name the father of this thought?)

Returning to indisputable history, we first find clear evidence of the veneration of Nikolaos in the fifth century, when the Emperor Theodosius II built a church to his memory over his grave at Myra. In the next century Justinian I dedicated a chapel to him (and St. Priscus) at Constantinople and the poet-archbishop Andrew of Crete wrote a long poem in his honor. In the seventh or eighth century Emperor Leo the Wise also wrote in praise of him. He is even mentioned in the liturgies of both Chrysostom and Basil. Hence it is not surprising that he became the patron saint of Orthodox Russia.

In 1087 a body believed to be the potent relic of Nikolaos was removed (stolen?) from its burial in Myra by Italian merchants (pirates?) and brought to Bari, where the Basilica di San Nicola was soon built to enshrine it and inaugurate the still thriving veneration of the saint there. Italians consequently know him as San Nicola di Bari—a saint so popular that Rome alone has around sixty churches, oratories, or chapels bearing his name.

The rest of Europe came to know Nikolaos by sea, the one practical carrier of freight and culture to western and northern Europe, for Nikolaos was the sailor’s friend—doubly so if he happened to be both a sailor and young. Someone has counted twenty-two hundred St. Nikolaos churches founded north of the Alps between 1100 and 1600. The more sea-bound a country was the more inevitable its

motive





connection with this saint. Britain alone has over four hundred old St. Nicholas churches. But it was in the Hanseatic cities of the mainland that the saint was accorded highest honors, for here the interests of sailor and merchant flowed together. In many another country the great merchant had already become almost inevitably a ship owner too, and consequently his saint, too, was the "Christian Poseidon," Nikolaos. In every Hanseatic city one of the oldest and most richly decorated and appointed churches is sure to be the Nikolaikirche.

In any country the merchant needed and sought the protection of St. Nikolaos. He did it by prominent display of the "attributes" of the saint—those three purses of gold, now stripped down to three golden balls! Only one class of merchant still hangs them out today, and he is often of another faith or none, but he still claims with varying justification to be the poor man's friend.

THE children's saint is naturally most active on his own day, December 6. Customs and conceptions vary in every country, but since it was from Holland that the legend spread to us, we can only touch a few of the countless customs of Germanic lands. Nikolaos is still very much a bishop there, wearing the mitre and bearing the crosier—but carrying both a sack of gifts and a bundle of switches to be used as need may be. He rides a white horse or donkey. On the eve of his day the children await him with anticipation or dread according to the state of their conscience. Since his coming is always invisible, it is not much strain on childish imagination to accept the notion that his white beast carries him right through the air and over the roof tops. (Some folklorists maintain that this is one of several traits of the old god Odin-Wotan that, in Germanic lands alone, have been transferred from Wotan's solstice-festival to that of Nikolaos at about the same time of year.) Shoes or stockings or other garments are hung up for the saint's convenience, often containing hay or oats for his steed. His own gifts are very simple, usually fruit or special

pastry in forms allusive of Nikolaos. In Protestant areas Nikolaos is often quite forgotten or else his customs are transferred to Christmas Eve.

BUT what does this dignified, even stern, bishop have to do with the silly old clown who leers from almost every shop from Thanksgiving to New Year? Almost nothing but the name. And, ironically, the bishop-saint was deposed from his episcopal dignity by the son of a bishop (Protestant Episcopal)—Clement C. Moore, himself a solid theological professor. To his credit it must be said that he was not responsible for the first publication of this bit of Christmas foolishness: "A Visit from St. Nicholas." He was forty-three, his children half grown, when he dashed off this doggerel for their Christmas amusement in 1822. Probably he wished many a time later that after they had enjoyed it and laughed at its fun and its crudity he had flung it into the flaming fireplace as having served its momentary purpose. But a misguided friend got hold of it and the next Christmas season had it printed in the *Troy Sentinel*—December 23, 1823. It could not be recalled: Nikolaos of Myra, sainted bishop, had become "a right jolly old elf," "his dimples, how merry" with "a little round belly—like a bowl full of jelly," "eight tiny reindeer," "Donder and Blixen"—all out of a father's leisure playfulness with his children.

No more than the saint behind Santa Claus was Clement Moore a fool. From 1821 to 1850 he was professor of Hebrew and Greek in General Theological Seminary, New York, and in its immediate predecessor. In 1809 at the tender age of thirty he had already published his one important work, the first Hebrew-English lexicon ever written or printed in the United States. Having inherited a fortune from a grandfather, he donated all the land at Chelsea Square on which General Seminary still stands. In gratitude for this and later benefactions, the seminary established after his retirement the Clement C. Moore Professorship of Hebrew, though the current catalogue no longer lists a chair of this name. Whether

there is correspondence or tradition that would tell what he himself thought of his holiday prank, I have never heard, but the facts above strongly suggest that such a man had meant it to be private.



IS Santa Claus a myth? Hardly, except for his debatable mingling with a Wotan myth. In his current debased form he is a little of many things, but mostly of two: an accidental perpetuation of a bit of family hilarity and an insatiable mercantile greed that welcomes him as a symbol of desire-fulfilment which jingles the cash register. Yet behind all that is the legend of Bishop Nikolaos, childish perhaps and often sliding into superstition, but tender and reverent (yes, reverent even as the patron saint of thieves, as he is in Europe—don't thieves need heavenly grace at least as much as we ordinary sinners?). And behind the legend is the shadow of a man: this was what his life "tasted" like to those who knew him.



# A MESSAGE

*to the methodist church  
from the council of bishops*

Adopted at Miami Beach  
April 10, 1958

CONTEMPORARY international policy and contemporary theological emphases must be reappraised.

Politically, we appear to have lost the initiative. Others act and we respond. We tend to think primarily in terms of security and of defense. The deep and abiding interest of the American people in the life of the mind and of the spirit, our underlying idealism and our concern for the welfare of all men do not reach the peoples overseas.

Theologically, we discuss the theme "Jesus Christ, the Hope of the World" but many seem to have lost hope. The teachings of Jesus are called "perfectionist ethics" and the prayer of Jesus, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is declared by prominent theologians to be unrealizable in history.

Defeatism, with consequent loss of power, follows in the train of theologians who center attention upon "the end of history," "the depravity of man," and "the second coming."

OUR forefathers electrified the world when they drafted the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. These were affirmative and creative documents, not negative and apologetic declarations. "All men are created equal . . . endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights . . . Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

The Preamble to the Constitution

proudly proclaimed, "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity. . . ."

The peoples of the world listened and acted. Many nations drew up similar documents. We led the world in its quest for democracy, and demonstrated within our own boundaries the workability of the democratic faith. Liberty lifted her "lamp beside the golden door" and millions from many lands crossed the seas to find haven. We were unafraid. The immigrant left feudalism and despotism behind him and entered a free land. Security lay in our principles and in our practices.

John Wesley was not a man to underestimate the sinfulness of man, but he knew man could be redeemed. Now, however, a strange theology has been

infiltrating our thought. It results in passive and patient acceptance of injustice and of exploitation and calls upon man to await God's good time, and thus becomes a tool of reaction and a suffocating miasma. Its proponents appear to forget that man is to be a co-worker with God and, together, bring peace to warring humanity, justice to exploited humanity, brotherhood to segregated humanity.

NEO-ORTHODOXY is neither new nor orthodox. Methodism needs a neo-Wesleyanism. "The personal knowledge of the love of God and of its transforming power in human life is the creative source of Methodism. The Gospel which historic Methodism proclaimed was the Gospel of salvation from sin; and salvation meant not only forgiveness of past sins but a new relationship which brings the assurance of final victory over everything that comes between man and God."

Many influential theologians of our day are men who have been conditioned by the tragedy of war. They have dug themselves out of the rubble of the cities that were bombed and burned. They have fastened their understandable pessimism upon their theology. They have moved from the ruins of a devastated Europe to the libraries of the theological schools, but they have carried defeatism into those sacred precincts.

THE Christian faith holds that love conquers, that hearts can be strangely warmed, that both new men and a new society are possible here and now. It is thus that Jesus comes. It is thus the Holy Spirit works. . . .

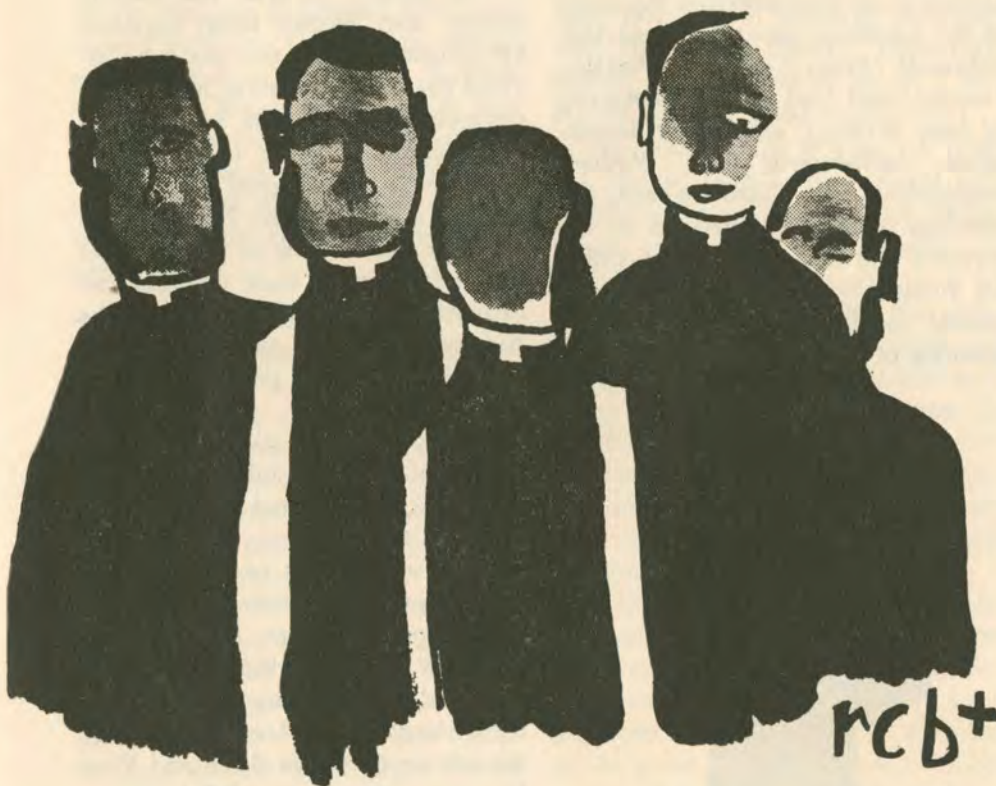




# A REPLY

to methodist bishops  
on neo-orthodoxy

BY ROBERT T. OSBORN



IN April of this year the Council of Bishops of The Methodist Church, in its annual message to the Church, appealed for a reappraisal of Methodist theology and national foreign policy.

They suggested the direction which the reappraisal should take. By implication, the Bishops' statement raises in acute fashion critical questions which Methodists should always be

asking: What is the current direction of Methodist theology? What should it be? In short, who are Methodists? Hardly, although it was doubtless their intention to do so, did the Bishops shed much light upon these questions. The present direction of Methodist theology, as the Council sees it, results from an infiltration of a "strange theology" called "Neo-orthodoxy." This theology is "pessi-

mistic," "passive," and "defeatist," say the Bishops; it accepts "injustice and exploitation." It is "a tool of reaction," a "suffocating miasma."

The Methodist Bishops believe that European theologians, conditioned by the "tragedy of war," are responsible for this pernicious influence. These war-worn, so-called "Neo-orthodox" theologians would have us wait patiently for God's good grace rather than put our shoulders to the plow as God's co-workers; they would have us wait and pray for the Kingdom rather than build it; they tend to give comfort to a foreign policy based upon the "philosophy of the market place," based upon a pessimistic conception of human nature rather than a foreign policy guided by "the idealism of the American people," the idealism reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of our nation.

To this strange theology, the Bishops oppose American idealism and the thought of John Wesley. They declare that Methodists, rather than follow the direction of these tragic theologians, should travel the path of Neo-Wesleyanism. Thus would come the understanding that Christianity means a "transforming power in human life," "that love conquers, that hearts can be strangely warmed," and that "both new men and a new society are possible here and now." This is the sort of thinking which they suggest would be inspired by a revival of John Wesley.

It is not difficult to demonstrate that this reappraisal comes to very little. The thesis of the Council of Bishops is that Methodism needs a new Wesleyanism which is opposed on the one hand to Neo-orthodoxy and is identical with the spirit of American idealism on the other hand. Indeed, it is not at all bold to point out that this thesis becomes true only when it is inverted. Namely, a proper understanding of Wesley, a genuine Neo-Wesleyanism, must stand with Neo-orthodoxy in opposition to the naïve idealism of our American creed.

NEO-ORTHODOXY is very difficult to define and certainly cannot be



understood in terms of the caricature found in the Bishops' statement. It is a term with so little meaning that there is no effort to define it in the *New Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. In the statement of the Bishops, "Neo-orthodoxy" apparently designates modern Protestant theology in so far as this theology is inspired by continental theologians, such as Karl Barth, Rudolph Bultmann, Emil Brunner, and Paul Tillich, and also by their noncontinental colleagues such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Richard Niebuhr, Methodists like Edwin Lewis, Albert Outler, Claude Welch, and the remaining host of older-younger theologians who represent the leadership in the majority of our Protestant seminaries, including Methodist seminaries.

What generalizations can be made about a category as broad as this? Speaking most generally, at least three characteristics stand out. First, Neo-orthodoxy represents a renewed interest in theology, in the enterprise of defining over against innumerable contending faiths the essence of the Christian faith. Second, its enterprise is undertaken with the guidance of the Reformers, especially Calvin and Luther. Third, a return to the Reformation and to the essentials of the Christian faith has led all these theologians back to the Bible. (One might reverse the order and say that a rediscovery of the Bible has brought contemporary Christian thinking back to the Reformers, back to the essence of Christian faith.)

Perhaps this return to the Bible is the most significant aspect of Neo-orthodoxy, a return to the Bible as the primary source and norm of Christian faith and thought. That this is *new*, the general ignorance of contemporary Protestantism to the Bible makes patently clear. That it is *orthodox* Protestantism, our knowledge of the Reformation leaves no doubt. It is the Bible that tells us to pray and wait for the Kingdom, that has taught us to wait patiently for the gift of God in answer to our prayers. It is the teaching of the Cross that "there is none righteous, no not one," that "all men are under the power of sin,"

and that "all our gain is but loss." It is Pilate's yielding of Justice to the mobs, the words of Jesus that his Kingdom is not of this world, the Book of Revelation with its prophecies of doom and destruction, with its apocalyptic vision of a new heaven and a new earth, and with its closing petition: "Amen, come, Lord Jesus," which leads the Christian to hope not in the idealism of men but in the grace and power of God.

It is the renewed understanding of biblical religion mediated by the fathers of our tradition that is Neo-orthodoxy. Can this be opposed to Wesley? Is Neo-Wesleyanism the antithesis of all this? The judgment of historians seems to be that also John Wesley's preaching and teaching were the result of a renewed and most serious quest to understand the heart of the Christian message. Franz Hildebrandt (*From Luther to Wesley*), George Croft Cell (*The Rediscovery of John Wesley*), and others demonstrate, furthermore, that Wesley's reappraisal of the Christian faith, the theology which is expressed in his sermons and hymns and upon which his revival was based, was a reappraisal mediated by a new understanding of the Reformers.



We need no recitation of the kinship between Luther and Wesley. We cite only the obvious importance of Luther in Wesley's conversion and in Wesley's break with the Moravians. As to Wesley's Calvinism, hear Wesley's own words, recorded in the Second Wesley Conference (1745), that "the true Gospel touches the very edge of Calvinism." His differences with Calvin are to be understood not as a rejection of Calvin but as a modification of Calvin.

WESLEY was indeed Neo-orthodox. He returned in his day, in a new age, to the orthodoxy of the Reformation. Above all, this meant for him the grounding of Christian faith upon the Scriptures. Absolute loyalty to the Bible . . . with this Calvin, Luther, and Wesley stand together. Of course, Wesley, the one who revived the Neo-orthodox of his day, endeavored to relate the biblical and Reformation tradition to contemporary society, endeavored to speak a modern language. The Neo-orthodox of today like Wesley in his day, like the Reformers in their day, are endeavoring to speak the message of the Reformation, the message of biblical Christianity in the language of this day.

When Wesley speaks in experiential terms, and the modern in existential terms, can we not see that here we have two different ages, each in its own way, trying to do justice to the imperative, practical nature of the Scriptures. When critics accuse Barth of teaching the doctrine of universal salvation and when Wesley is charged with Arminianism, may we not see that both Barth and Wesley are seeking to give full justice to the sovereignty of Grace as revealed in Christ. Cell calls Wesley's ethic an ethic of Grace (Cell, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*, p. 256). Berkouwer designates Barth's theology as the triumph of Grace (Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*). Surely Methodists who are concerned with Wesley that religion be personal will want to stand with Emil Brunner in his stress upon the personal relationship between

motive



God and man, the I-Thou relationship which one enjoys through faith in Jesus Christ.

It would indeed be worth while for Methodists, Neo-Wesleyans, as they return to the orthodoxy of their heritage, to walk in counsel with those of other traditions who are returning to the fathers of their heritage; for we all are members of one body, branches of one vine. To return to the fathers of Protestant faith is to return to the Scriptures, to the Word of God. What tradition can presume to have the last word about the Word of God? Methodism cannot return to Wesley and remain true to him; it cannot pretend to be an authentic expression of Christ's Church, if it walks alone. It is not becoming for the leadership of Methodism to brand the quest of the fellow members of Christ's Body with unholy epithets. The Church stands or falls together. Methodism in order to become Neo-Wesleyan must embrace Neo-orthodoxy. If Neo-orthodoxy is a strange doctrine, Methodists might well ask if indeed they are not strangers to the truth. Who is out of step?

THE other aspect of the Bishops' thesis is that a Neo-Wesleyanism would lead to a revival of American idealism and to the foreign policy expressive of this idealism. Wesley's sermon on original sin and many others should prove false this notion (Bishops not withstanding). Further, it seems that Wesley's objection to Calvin was not at the point of the doctrine of total depravity; although Wesley disagrees with Calvin as to the irresistibility of Grace, it is nonetheless clear that the response of man to God's Grace is the work of that very Grace. "Of yourselves cometh neither your faith nor your salvation. The faith through which ye are saved as well as the salvation he of his own good pleasure, his mere favor, annexes thereto, are the free, undeserved gifts of God. That ye believe is one instance of his grace, that believing ye are saved is another." (Cited by G. C. Cell, p. 245.)

Man of himself has no freedom for God whatsoever; he is free only for

sin. It is true that Wesley believed in the perfectibility of man. However, this was a belief in God's sovereign power, in his ability to perfect in man that which God has already begun in him. It is faith in God's power to make out of the sinner, who is nothing, a renewed creature. This doctrine is thoroughly pessimistic about man, thoroughly optimistic about God. It is very doubtful that, in deduction from Wesley's conception of grace, a case could be made for Wesleyan doctrine of the perfectibility of society.

AMERICAN idealism (when severed from its biblical presuppositions) is, on the other hand, a liberal and optimistic confidence in man. It teaches that man's freedom is inalienable, that man is endowed naturally with rights and dignity. Thus conceived, man's future is his as a potential residing in his good nature.

This faith in man is a far cry from the biblical faith in the Creator and Redeemer of man. A foreign policy which operates on such idealism is bound to fail. Either it will come to despair as it collides with the stubborn reality of sinful individual and national existence, or it will lead to a blind, self-righteous action, action ultimately without mercy, without compassion for the sinner, man or nation, who can see what is right but cannot do it. Either it will lead to frustrated inaction or fanatic action.

As Christians, however, we still pray for God to send us the Kingdom. The kingdoms of this world are not yet the kingdom of our Lord and God. To ask a people who are still in the shackles of sin to set themselves free, to ask a nation which exists for the interests of its citizens to exist in the interest of others, is sheer nonsense. Such idealism puts nations and men under a law which can but condemn and kill. It denies Christ who justifies man by his Grace through faith, who came to Palestine in the midst of the Roman Empire so that there, even there, men could exist as sons of God.

It is utter irresponsibility to charge Neo-orthodoxy with social irresponsibility because of Neo-orthodoxy's



faithful acceptance of sinful existence as the realm of responsibility to God. To the contrary, such realistic faith gives the Christian the ability, the will and the power, to respond to life as it is. That Neo-orthodoxy is not a doctrine of social concern no theologian could seriously argue, and certainly the activity of some of its leading proponents demonstrates the falsity of such arguments.

Neo-Wesleyanism is Neo-orthodoxy. It is indeed neo-Neo-orthodoxy, for John Wesley was perhaps one of the first Protestant Neo-orthodox. Neo-Wesleyanism stands in judgment upon a self-assured, irresponsible, irrelevant idealism. It offers to man, instead, the redeeming Grace of God. It offers man a new humanism, the humanism of God mediated by Jesus Christ through the means of Grace committed to the ministry of the Church. It is this grace which man needs as he has from the beginning; a further dose of his own potential is what he needs the least.

IF the Methodist hierarchy wishes to quarrel with Neo-orthodoxy, let it do so with legitimate weapons. Let it not pontificate from its councils; let it not call names; let it not invoke the Constitution of the United States. Let it, rather, call with seriousness and responsibility upon its own tradition of biblical understanding and challenge this Neo-orthodoxy in honest and faithful debate about the meaning of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as witnessed to by the Scriptures. If Methodism would be Wesleyan, it must take up as its sword the Word of God and not the word of man (even the word of the Bishops).



# TO PAINT THE *life* OF CHRIST

By FRED NAGLER

I CAME from a background of western Massachusetts country simplicity, one of seven children of humble parents. Rather than finding strength in their Lutheran religion, I sought it wandering in the woods and fields. Those pleasant fields, woods and streams are so intimate, when looked at now, I think the boy of me was housed in Paradise.

In my youth I left this simple way of life to study art at the Art Students League in New York. Traveling a few miles made scenes and tempo of life wholly new to me. Pictures by masters could be seen in the museums and volumes of reproductions of their works could be bought on Fifth Avenue for a quarter. My teachers and fellow students seemed bursting with knowledge. They introduced me to the works of the masters and their lives and to the world of good poetry, music and thought. I painted, looked, read and wrote. I slept little. A sense of my own inadequacy was almost overwhelming. To survive, I needed help, spiritually and financially.

One day when I was walking Broadway, a man standing ahead of me on the sidewalk was handing out to passers-by little paper-covered books. He wasn't having much luck, until I came along. People wouldn't take his offering. It so happened that as a boy I had passed out some advertising material to people coming out of a factory. Very few would take it, and those who did would glance at the lead line and then throw it to the wind. As there was a city ordinance prohibiting the littering of streets, I had to retrieve them later from all stagnant corners and from under horses' heels. So, my heart was sympathetic toward this Broadway giver when I stretched forth my hand and took a little book.

It was the Gospel according to Saint Matthew. I read and reread it. I thought it was wonderful that God of man was trying as best he could to strengthen my spirit. On my easel I tacked the word "BELIEVE," stopped my weeping in spirit and worked on. Struggle and bewilderment were with me still, but hope was not overcome and I consider that important.

THEN, the country boy won a scholarship, the annual portrait prize, and a seat on the Board of Control. He married the scholarship girl at the next easel and in the next chair on the Board of Control—one girl. For the record, we have a son who is an engineer and married.

On leaving the League we both painted portrait, landscape and still life. She still does. After several years I had a change of mind. And having an abrupt

change of mind reminds me of my artist friend, Waldo Peirce. He is a rugged former Harvard football lineman. Well, Waldo thought he would go to Europe and got on a boat at Boston, bag and baggage. When the boat was a mile out on its way he thought, "What the heck, I don't want to go to Europe," and he jumped overboard and swam back to Boston.

Now it seemed to me after painting portrait, landscape, etc., that all picture making was but the illustration of one's ideas. So why not illustrate the ideas from my beloved book—the story of man's behavior toward the Enlightened Man? It aroused my emotions to the fullest. These pictures are my thoughtful works. Into their subject matter I have tried to build new esthetic values. They are different from the religious pictures you know—different in the way that Beethoven's music was new or Wagner's music new. Churches have bought my work, so, I conclude, since this artist had the will to paint them before the church bought, such could have been true of Giotto, Michelangelo, El Greco or da Vinci. Those masters were not hired slaves to paint for the church. They wanted to paint the life of Christ with all their hearts.

The artist is a lonely individual; always needs his God. His soul is always hungry; it never feels as though it has had a full meal. Seeing it has been had by other men, he asks the God of creation to give him power.

I STILL paint, look at paintings and reproductions, listen to music, read poetry and philosophy. The frustrations and bewilderments of life have never lessened. The little Broadway book is still my strength, I expect to need it always. Its words still lift a grounded spirit and renew the will to greater effort.

As one of a few living religious painters, I have had to defend that art against formidable opposition. I believe that every Christian should have a religious painting. To look upon such a picture is to remember one's strength and hope and is to see also an artistic creation. In such pictures the masters achieved their best. So, to paint such works is hardly a degeneration of the mind, rather it is an act of considered human devotion. In my own works I have tried to make the spiritual value more acceptable by leaving out ornament and sentimentality.

When I graduated from elementary school at the age of fourteen (there were nine grades in those days so entering school at five I made it in par), the class prophecy was that I would become a religious painter. The strange part of that prediction is that, at that age, neither art nor religion was in my mind. Now, as the

motive





Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

FRED NAGLER

old religious painter, I would like to try **my hand** at prophecy.

I am not the last religious painter in America, rather one of the first. There will be more. When there are many, a Renaissance will take place; for to paint Christian subject matter requires superhuman effort. Supreme struggle went into the best of Rembrandt's pictures—his religious ones. The whole world of man will find out that it can only exist by the love of Christ. Man will have power to destroy all earthly life—to make a blazing sun of this cooling planet. Among nations there is no existence under a balance of power. Knowing how willingly tyrants destroy, one must prophesy doom unless there is honoring of Christ. It seems to me that whoever examines mankind with due circumspection will find that true.

So, it has been important to me, after painting landscapes, portraits and still lifes, to paint the life of Christ. I think such pictures are the **great** art and do the most good. They are the pictorial effort to stop man from making the all-consuming fire.

THE NATIVITY 1945

Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.





Midtown Galleries, N. Y.



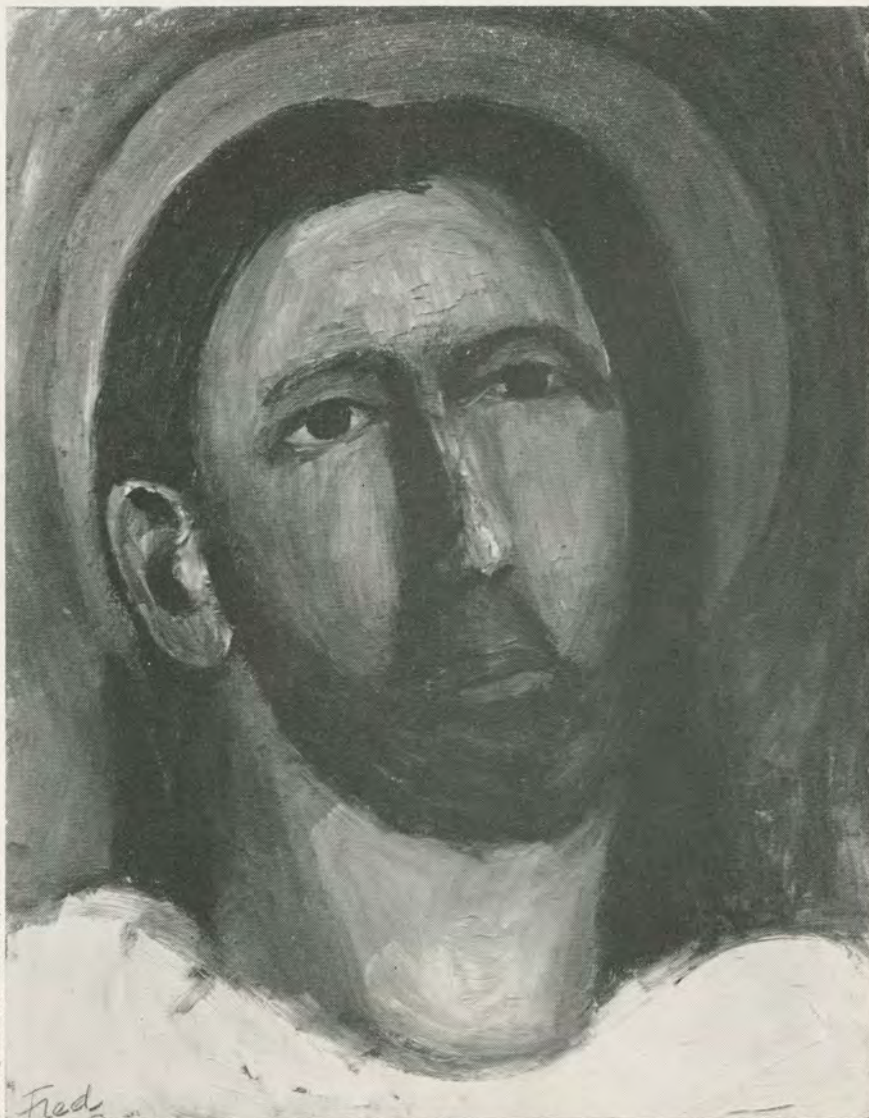
MADONNA AND CHILD  
UNDER A TREE  
1953

DETAIL FROM  
THEY ALSO LABORED 1951



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

CHRIST 1949



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

DETAIL FROM SKETCH FOR  
THEY ALSO LABORED  
1951



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.





Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT 1946

CHRIST RAISES LAZARUS 1945



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

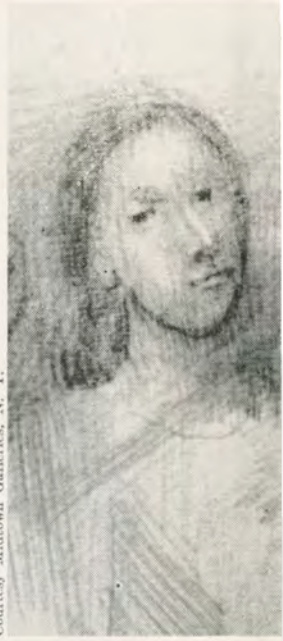


Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.



THE STORM

Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.



DETAIL FROM  
THEY ALSO LABORED

THE LAST SUPPER #3

Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.







FR ED Nagler brings to his religious paintings a sincerity and a truly felt emotional quality rare in painting today. They represent a distinguished contribution to our contemporary American art. While Mr. Nagler's paintings have found their way into important private and public collections, they only recently have been acquired by churches, notably the Holy Redeemer Church in Reading, Pennsylvania, and Dwight Chapel of Yale University.

BUT as yet the ecclesiastic authorities have failed to avail themselves of the services of an artist so eminently suited to decorate the walls of the many churches and other religious buildings under construction.

Nagler "refuses to conform to the dictates of age-old tradition. . . . By today's standards . . . nothing at all radical in the treatment of his subjects, but they are deeply emotional, and that is what the dignitaries shy away from," said one art critic.

THE *New York Times* said of Nagler's work, "For similar intensity of feeling, early Renaissance paintings come to mind . . . no small achievement for a latter-day artist to have coupled this quality with fresh conceptions of the Last Supper, of the Crucifixion, and of the face of Christ."



CHRIST BEFORE PILATE 1957



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.



Courtesy Midtown Galleries, N. Y.

MEN WERE DIVIDED  
1955

motive





Dwight Chapel, Yale University

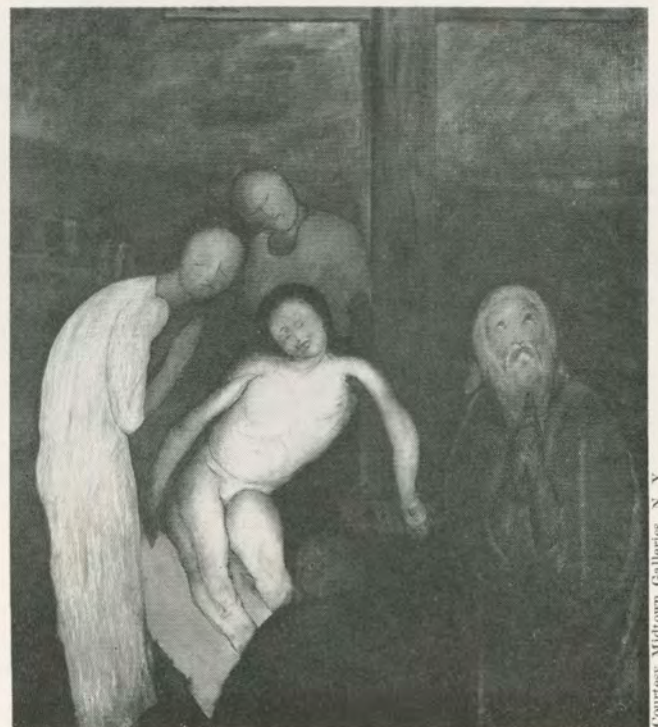
FROM AFAR 1948





DESCENT FROM THE CROSS 1950

Holy Redeemer Church,  
Reading, Pa.



PIETA 1932

Courtesy Middtown Galleries, N. Y.



# A M E N



BY JOHN LA FARGE

A PHILOSOPHY of confidence I express by a very simple word, *Amen*: not an English, Latin or Geek word, but Hebrew.

Amen is not a word of ordinary currency, unless consciously used to imitate church phraseology. By a curious anomaly, Protestants in the English-speaking countries give Amen the Latin pronunciation, *Ahmen*, though they use the word in English language prayer; while Catholics, whose adherence to Latin as a quasi-universal language is troubling to their Protestant brethren, stand staunchly by the Anglo-Saxon pronunciation, *Aymen*. Catholics are much afraid, if perchance they join in a common prayer with Protestants, that they may be caught off base by saying *Ahmen* in good Roman fashion, as indeed they always do pronounce it in their own Latin liturgy. The Christian Churches of the Eastern rites solve the problem by using the latter-day Greek pronunciation, *Ahmeen*. I venture no solution for this problem, which affects only English-speaking countries; but I mention it as one of the pebbles in the shoe of those who wish to walk toward religious unity; a much larger pebble being the varying numbering of the Ten Commandments, not to

speak of the Scripture canon itself.

The difference of pronunciation is a bit anomalous. *Amen* is a sign of assent to the sacred words of prayer—the entire congregation saying: *Yes, we agree, this is the truth*—to what the liturgical celebrant has solemnly pronounced. It also is a sign of fellowship, and if I refuse to say *Amen* to my fellow man, it is because I wish to declare my belief, either that he is personally insincere—the harshest sort of rebuke—or at least that regardless of his personal integrity I cannot agree to the sentiments or to the implications of his prayer.

THE priest says *Amen*—so many times in the course of a single day—not to the sentiments nor even to the prayers of a single individual, but to the Church, with which he holds a continual dialogue. The Church speaks to him in praise of the Creator, or in petition and sorrow or thanksgiving, and he answers with an expression of agreement. He does not just say Amen; he *is* Amen: his life, his total commitment, is a response to the Creator's own commitment in his regard. So that these short syllables sum up his life-philosophy, as it were.

The truth of his life—in either sense, logical truth or moral truth—is a response to the truth of his Creator.

HE says Amen not just to the *being* of the Church—I approve of your existence and trust your good faith—but he says Amen to the Church's action in the world. The Church is an observable phenomenon, as scientifically verifiable in space, time and human ecology as the Orthoptera of my scientist nephew or the bones of Teilhard de Chardin's *Sinanthropus*. It is also an agency. For the expert Marxist theoretician it is an agency for bourgeois class oppression, skilfully using tools of superstition and terror. The Nazis vilified the Church as a sublimated form of Judaism, striking at the vitals of Nordic racial purity. For the modern secularist it is an interesting or inconvenient survival from the Middle Ages or else a rather menacing type of power and thought-control. In the minds of many people, the Church is an agency of unity, of peace in a grievously divided world. In saying Amen to the Church he is saying Amen to what he honors as its work for human unity and peace: social peace, class peace, international peace.



# COULD God make a stone he couldn't lift ?

BY WALLACE GRAY

TO put it simply, "No." But why raise the question, much less try to answer it? Can such a question do more than titilate the brain and waste time? I think so, for it concerns the kind and extent of God's power. Of course, there are more straight-faced ways of wording this problem. For example: Could God create a world he couldn't redeem? Or a problem he couldn't solve? Or a freedom he couldn't cooperate with for man's own ultimate good?

All these questions, though differing in content, point to the same theological puzzle, namely, Is God almighty? If so, in what sense?

Although the dilemma involved is pretty obvious, let's spell it out so that we can examine it. Either God can make a stone he can't lift or he can't make such a stone. In either case, his power is limited. In the first case, his lifting power is limited; in the second, his making power.

THE first thing we need to be clear about in this connection is that we should worship *God* rather than a word such as "almighty." If "almighty" means that God can always take care of what he creates, then I for one can subscribe to it. But if it means that he can or will create (or perhaps already has created) more than he can take care of, then I must reject it.

I am quite willing to say that God cannot make a stone which he cannot lift. I am saying that God is limited in creativity or making power, not in providence or lifting power. But what limits his creativity? His own infinite love! Because of his great love, he will never create a universe he can't take care of—or a man or a problem!

Now when we examine this "limitation" we see it doesn't necessarily force us to declare that God's creative power will some day run out. Our limitation is rather a description of the relation of God's creative power to his sustaining power. God may be able (as I believe he is able) to create eternally and infinitely. If he is, then

he is also able to sustain eternally and infinitely.

IN more down-to-earth language, we can go on to say that whatever difficulty God has created or allowed us to create, he can take care of it eventually, because "underneath are the everlasting arms." He can provide for us and for all things better than we can either ask or think. That is more than enough. If this is really a limitation of his power to create, then it is the kind of limitation we most deeply desire, for it means that the love of Christ constraineth God as well as us.





# prologue to INVOLVEMENT

*The National Methodist Student Commission meets annually, bringing together state presidents of the Methodist Student Movement, staff and field leaders, and key students at large. At the commission meeting last summer, the committee on socio-political concerns drafted the following statement of philosophy, which was received by the commission but not adopted. motive was asked to print the statement, along with reactions to it and criticisms of it. This we are pleased to do.*

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth. . . . Acts 1:8

## with comments

WE would like to be able to say that our voice is being drowned out by the din of the world around us; we would like to be able to say that our voice is being ignored because it has not mastered the vocabulary of the new age; we would like to be able to say that we are hoarse from shouting. But the truth is that our voice is strangely strangled deep within our throats. We turn perplexed toward the crying social and political problems of our time; we turn perplexed toward the irrelevancy of our church and of our own faith. Our hearts and minds ache to proclaim. Our very being trembles to discover a new meaning, a new significance.

Yet it is at this very moment that we must stand before the judgment of God. We are moved to humble ourselves before God, confounded, weak, and empty. With sorrowful hearts we come to beg forgiveness for ourselves and our church, unworthy as we are. Too long have we been preaching a sterile Christianity and not the fullness of Christ; too long have we been witnessing to our love of God and not God's love to all mankind. No longer does Christ stand at the center of our lives; he is just another one of our circle of friends; his worship, just another campus or community activity.

Realizing our present inadequacy and confessing it before the throne of

God, we turn once again to the Christ who calls upon us to lose our lives for his sake. Only by proclaiming the Risen Christ can we ever hope to become once again the vital and relevant church. Only by witnessing to the unique action of God in history can we hope to speak to the heart of our new age.

With humble and contrite spirits then, we ask that God in his infinite mercy forgive our past and present folly. With willing hearts we ask that God in his infinite wisdom use our otherwise empty lives. And once again, rejoicing with our whole being, we acknowledge Jesus Christ to be above all and in all our Lord and Savior.

We see our church caught in middle-class moralism, in eloquent witness to peace of mind and complacency. And a world waits on the periphery for the healing Word. We see this sickness of the church in sharper focus on our campuses, where affirmations of the central truths of the Gospel are made apologetically, if at all. And yet, we know, in our high moments of affirmation, that we have, in the faith that was revealed to our fathers and which is now revealed to us, a faith which calls us to proclamation. We become missionaries engaged in a mission not determined by geographic boundaries. Mission frontiers open at every hand and our lives

become in word and deed instruments of God's reconciling love. The sacrifice of the cross becomes again a focal point for our existence. The cross and resurrection are no longer items for speculation, but are realities in which we share.

None of these experiences are ours alone. The community of Christians undergirds us. We speak the Word to each other, and affirm our faith together, even in times of the ascendancy of nonfaith. We gain nothing however if the community is the limit of our witness for we again are called into "the far country" of the secular world, where our witness is made. And yet, this world, too, is God's and the message of the incarnation of his love is as relevant to the political, social, and economic worlds as it is to the community of believers. The expression of this relevancy is our task.

### COMMENTS

THE whole thing is more of a wail than an affirmation, but for the life of me, I cannot tell what the wail is about. "We would like to be able to say that our voice is being drowned"—why not say so then? "We would like to be able to say that we are hoarse"—why not say so? Even poor editing could work some contradictions out of this paper. For instance, it states: "No longer does Christ stand





at the center of our lives," but later we read: "And once again, rejoicing with our whole being, we acknowledge Jesus Christ to be above all and in all our Lord and Savior." Try to reconcile those two sentences.

If our young people have to beat their breasts and bewail their sins, then let them do so, as most sinners do, in private, until the Grace of God rolls in like a mighty sea and they can speak affirmatively and clearly. Much better the old discarded "Let us take the world for Christ in this generation" of the young Motts and young Spears of 1905, than all this attitude of present-day Christian youth "standing before the judgment of God" and "humbling ourselves, weak and empty." At least the boys of 1905 knew where they were going and what they wanted to do, and had no doubts in their own minds as they slugged it out against they knew what. I do not demand that we have a robust Christianity or none at all, but I do ask that we have a robust Christianity before we start publicly wailing and uttering "official" statements which indicate perplexity toward "crying social and political problems"—likewise "irrelevancy," and a "trembling to discover new meanings and new significances."

Come on now, Methodist Student Commission of 1958, you can do better than that! If you don't believe anything, say you don't; if you do, say what you believe; if you are not sure what to say, keep quiet; but skip the imported European jargon, and call the thing exactly as you see it.

—Nolan B. Harmon  
Bishop, Charlotte Area  
The Methodist Church

Along with many students with whom I come in contact, I feel that the committee is grossly underestimating the power of the Church in the lives of members of the Christian community. Furthermore, the searching and questioning by Christian students on college campuses of the nation do not necessarily indicate that students feel the Christian message is irrelevant. I feel that they are seeking an expression of this faith that can and will remake their lives. I heartily applaud this search with the hope that

the final conviction and commitment will be deeply meaningful to them and the age in which they live.

—Helen Shinn  
Student, University of Wisconsin

This well-written statement often puts in striking form fundamental theological matters of tremendous importance. It is a splendid preface to a statement on socio-political concerns. If this is the entire word of the committee, however, it has not yet gotten into chapter one. These theological generalities—basic as they are—need to be supplemented also with specific recommendations on the crucial social issues of today. The statement as it stands communicates no concrete political, economic, or social meaning to anyone charged with responsible decision in these areas. If this is all we have to say, the Gospel is impoverished, and the Church has not established its relevance to modern life. Indeed, "the truth is that our voice is strangely strangled deep within our throats." True repentance for inadequacy and irrelevance should in-

volve turning from one's evil ways. Since the statement makes no attempt to do this, it retains a strangely hollow sound.

—Harvey Seifert  
Professor of Christian Ethics  
Southern California School of Theology

This is a powerful and moving statement of what is true for the student Christian movement "elite." I agree wholeheartedly with the aching sense of the sterility of our contemporary church-Christianity, and the emptiness of the heart, the strangled voice, the lack of a transformed life spilling out in vital relevance to all the frontiers of our present universal "malaise." And the prayer for renewal in the power of the Risen Christ comes almost too easily—since repentance that will risk drastic changes in our way of life is so stillborn.

However, for the nonleadership mass of students involved in campus Christian life, the churchgoers and foundation-goers, this may be too general and too removed a statement, for this can only come from those who







have been caught by the "vision" of the total Lordship of Christ—and such are the remnant in the churches everywhere.

—Hal Leiper  
Associate Director  
University Christian Association  
The Pennsylvania State University

THE pronouncement is something less than satisfying, although its last two sentences rise somewhat above the bog of rhetoric and the conflicting generalities of its body. It begins with a whimper of needless frustration: "We would like, . . . but. . . ." It goes on with a misconceived desire "to discover a new meaning, a new significance." There is no new meaning or new significance in the love of God for man and the love of man for his fellow. The first is a timeless fact, the second a timeless potential. The only novelty possible lies in new applications and new personal and social demonstrations of the old, old love. We have been preaching a sterile Christianity, continues the statement. If what we have been preaching is sterile, it has not been Christianity, for Christianity is vital. Perhaps we have been preaching ecclesiasticism, or ecumenicalism, or possibly even statism instead of Christianity. A *mea culpa* for such may be in order.

The use of the theological cliché, "the unique action of God in history," is more likely to encourage the sterility complained of than to stimulate anyone to live the Christian life. The committee itself seems uncertain here,

for a little later it speaks of our sharing the cross and the resurrection. A shared experience is not unique. Incarnation, passion, that is, suffering even to the death, and resurrection are timeless symbols of the only redemptive way of life. They occur over and over again, and they must continue to recur if the generations are to be saved. The expression and demonstration of the incarnation of willingly sacrificial love in each of us is indeed our task.

—Edward Murray Clark  
Professor of English  
Centenary College of Louisiana

Assuming that the statement is complete, and that it means to be a basic Methodist utterance, I am led to respond quite frankly: the statement is un-Methodist, unrepresentative, unecumenical, and unconvincing.

1. It is un-Methodist because it is spiritually barren, nontrinitarian, and defeatist. Where is the radiance of the Holy Spirit and the primary assurance that we are living in God's world? The latter is added like an afterthought. The commentary seems to have forgotten the text from Acts.

2. It is unrepresentative because it does not express the social witness or commitment of The Methodist Church as that is concretely available in its social legislation and educational program. I do not think that the church is bearing an adequate social witness, but this statement ignores both the center and the historical reality of

Methodism's life and work. The statement does not represent the Methodist Student Movement but a disconsolate theological fad.

3. The statement is unecumenical because it ignores the whole dimension of the idea of the responsible society which has informed the World Council of Churches since its founding. This statement mentions relevance but is actually not relevant because it deals with no problem as if God were really acting in history. If the cross and resurrection were realities in which the authors presently share, they would have done some concrete incarnational wrestling with history's present dilemmas. The impression is left of irrelevance, despite the concluding reference.

4. The statement is unconvincing because of the extreme form of the language and phrases used and because of the dogmatic arrogance of the argument. How convincing is: "our very being trembles to discover"? How convincing is it to speak for the whole church in asking forgiveness? Who are the "we" who have been preaching a sterile Christianity? On whose authority and by what criterion is such a judgment passed? How much precise meaning is there (or is it posed humility?) in the clause "No longer does Christ stand at the center of our lives"? Is the committee speaking for itself? for students? for the church? Is the repetition of the unmodified contemporary cliché about



"middle-class moralism" a real bit of evidence that the authors have "trembled" until they found a "new meaning" which causes "their whole being to rejoice"? The attack on moralism in the interest of the central truths of the Gospel seems to be used here as a substitute for responsible ethical witness to the kingdom of God which, oddly enough, seems to have been lost along with the Holy Spirit and the sense of Christian power in the midst of contemporary social and political problems.

—Walter G. Muelder  
Dean, Boston University School of Theology

This is one of the most clear and precise statements I have read. The committee is to be congratulated for clarity and courage, poise and prophecy in its drafting. Whereas, the statement is reflective of traditional dualism in Christian thought, it is nevertheless structured for a unity of purpose. Its strongest emphasis for me is the keen analysis of relevancy and belief; that is, the functional expression of faith in culture.

The statement's focus on the shallowness of our faith and expression, as well as our practices, plunges deep into the core of our problem. The witnessing student in the university may be the hope for releasing a fresh dynamic in belief and action. The statement points the way. The question is our own degree of commitment and its resultant spirit of determination to make both meaningful and effective our Christian heritage and promise.

—Samuel L. Gandy  
Dean, Lawless Memorial Chapel  
Dillard University

In our desire and enthusiasm for reforming our church and our world, let us not forget that one can well be alone in being a Christian. Even if our reformation fails, this does not excuse us as individuals. Just because our church as a whole may fail in its task, we must not blame it for our individual failure. Each of us must be consumed with zeal for the Lord; each of us must find a passion for bringing others to Christ; each of us must recognize the need of meeting individual, church, political, economic, and social problems with an uncompromis-

ing Christianity; each of us must speak with our lives and words to these needs of our generation. Each of these areas needs to hear the gospel of complete dedication; each needs to learn the victory of surrender, the gain of loss; each needs to accept Christianity on a full-time basis.

To bring a relevant message to this and to all ages, we must stop concentrating on the peripheral parts of the gospel and begin to "preach Christ." We must "concentrate entirely on Jesus Christ himself," and thus answer the "crying social and political problems of our time" and express our relevancy to our society.

—Ed Parish Sanders  
Student, Texas Wesleyan College

There is a great deal of difference between (a) having something to say, and (b) having to say something. The writers of the statement before us believe the church has something to say—and are impatient with "the irrelevancy of our church," and with "preaching a sterile Christianity."

A sincere voice speaks here—more power to it! It is true that real Christianity is "relevant to the political, social, and economic worlds" as well as

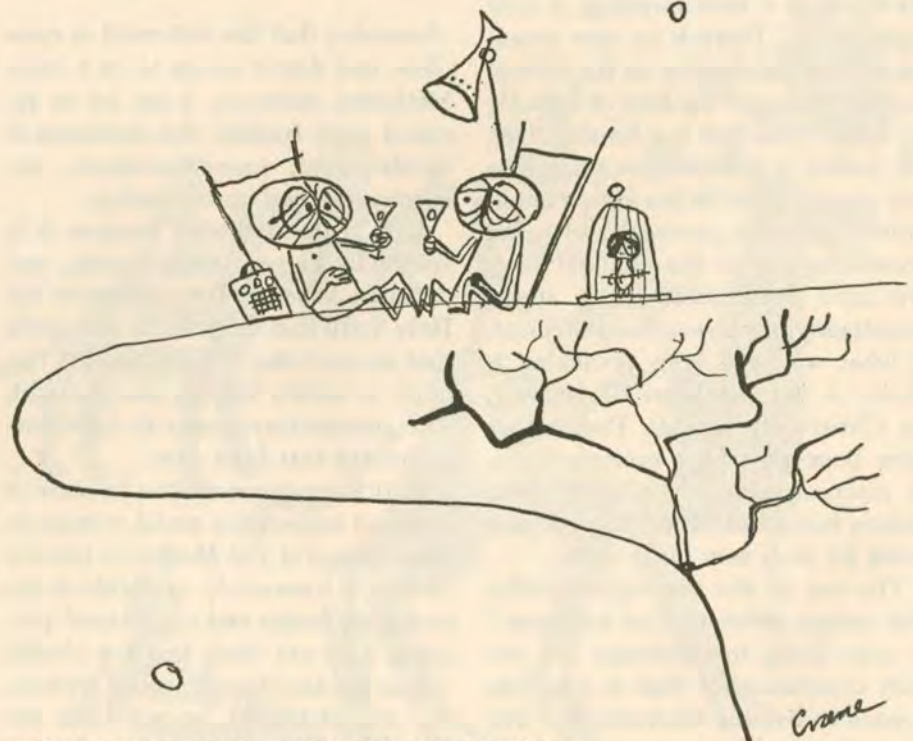
to individual lives. And our task is to express this "relevancy."

But where did these writers learn this truth, achieve this insight? Was it not through the ministry and influence of the church itself? No church can completely have failed when it has preserved and proclaimed such an authoritative insight into the Gospel of Christ.

We have failed, yes. But we cannot be at ease in our failure. We know enough, care enough, about our faith to feel the tension and torture of the conflict between what is and what ought to be. All this is a part of Christianity calling us, as the writers truly say, to become missionaries with the "frontiers open at every hand" for the proclamation of "God's love to all mankind."

—W. Earl Ledden  
Bishop, Syracuse Area  
The Methodist Church

It is impossible to argue with this statement, yet it is not a powerful statement of the mission of the church. Much of the significant content is lost in verbiage, for the style is loose and repetitious. This is probably explained by its corporate authorship, but an



WHY AREN'T WE HAPPY WHEN WE'VE GOT SO MUCH?



explanation does not improve the statement.

What is the article about? What does it want to say? Something like this. . . .

When we acknowledge that we are accepted by God our Father and assert our faith in his righteousness, then we are given the world in which to proclaim the good news. Our witness must no longer be for ourselves, our conversation must no longer be a monologue. We must scatter from the community of the faithful to become involved in the structures of the world, for we must assume utter responsibility for it. Yet the final responsibility is taken from us for it belongs to the Lord of history who justifies both our success and our failure in the world.

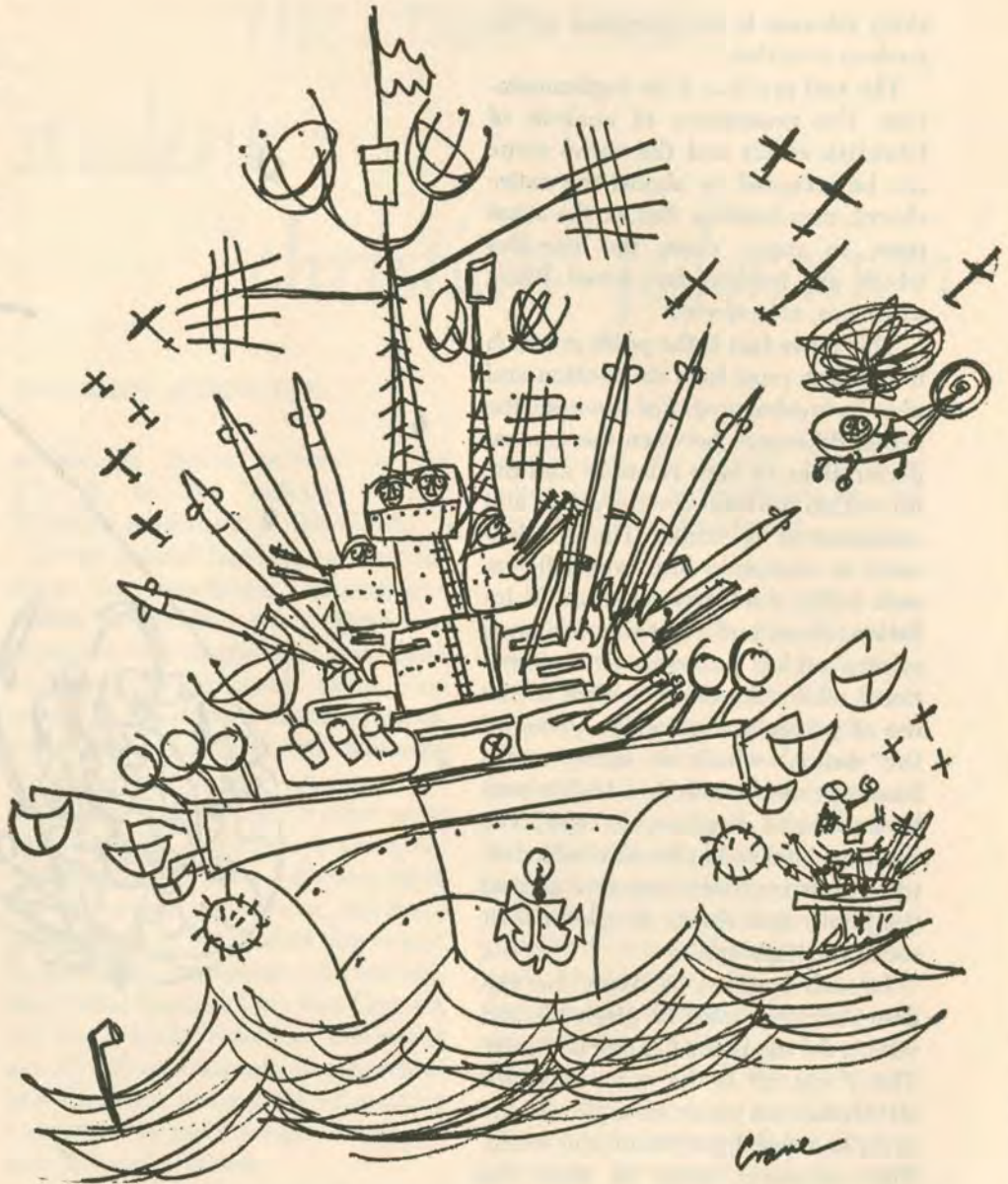
—Fritz Stokes  
Student, Woman's College  
Duke University

It is encouraging when Methodist students demonstrate their deep concern for the urgent need to apply Christian principles to our social, economic and political problems. The statement is relevant to the complex issues which we encounter today.

—Benjamin E. Mays  
President, Morehouse College

These are ringing words—and maybe profound ones. They leave me with one big question. Is this what Christian students feel, or what they think they ought to feel? Does the testimony come from piercing vision? Or does it represent the emotional steam bath of people who think they should feel guilty? Or does it—as I guess—stand for something in between?

The famous Jacob report says American students are "gloriously contented." It's good to hear that some know they are "perplexed," that their "hearts and minds ache to proclaim." But if they are going to proclaim to the contented, they may need to find more specific words. "Middle-class moralism," for example, is a valid phrase, but vague. Should it be related to the campus prestige system with its components of athletic prowess, sexual attractiveness, fraternity politics, and conformist habits? Unless the statement becomes more specific, the



"gloriously contented" are likely to learn nothing from it—or at best feel momentarily uneasy without knowing why.

—Roger L. Shinn  
Professor of Christian Ethics  
Vanderbilt University Divinity School

I find no serious fault with this as a general pronouncement. It sounds as though it had been composed by someone filled to the ears with Continental theology, with its references to "the judgment of God," "witnessing," "proclamation," "the healing Word," "the cross as a focal point of existence," and its customary dig at "moralism." In my judgment, however, we need more than an affirmation of "the relevance of the Gospel" to our socio-economic problems. We

need a forthright statement of what the Gospel of the Incarnation means in concrete terms for our common life. And it must be put in words that are intelligible and convincing to the world in which the church lives. Since the issue of "relevance" has been raised, it might be in order to note that the continent of Europe, where the Barthian version of the Gospel has been preached most uni-vocally, has no better record in solving its problems than "moralistic" America.

—F. Gerald Ensley  
Bishop, Iowa Area  
The Methodist Church

The statement is a good one and is a word for the entire church. It is set on a solid theological foundation which gives it stature, and it is en-



tirely relevant to the dilemmas of the modern situation.

The real problem is its implementation. The generalities of analysis of Christian ethics and the social scene can be accepted by almost the entire church membership. But at the same time, in many cases the specifics which are implied for actual living situations, are rejected.

This latter fact is the point at which the church must take its position and plan its involvement. For example, the actual difference between the general declarations on race relations and the life within the local congregations and communities is tragic. The involvement in economic life, especially on such highly controversial issues as inflation, taxes, and right-to-work laws, creates ethical vacuums. In international affairs the ethics related to the use of power in the foreign policy of this nation, which to many seems bankrupt and sterile, is a highly controversial and disagreeable topic. The disasters involved in the alcohol industry and its continued pressure against the family unit divide people in their social relationships.

In such specifics as these, the student statement must be given life and vitality for the living Church of Christ. This I suggest is the point at which all Methodists must struggle as pioneers in a sinful, yet wonderful world. This statement helps to chart the course.

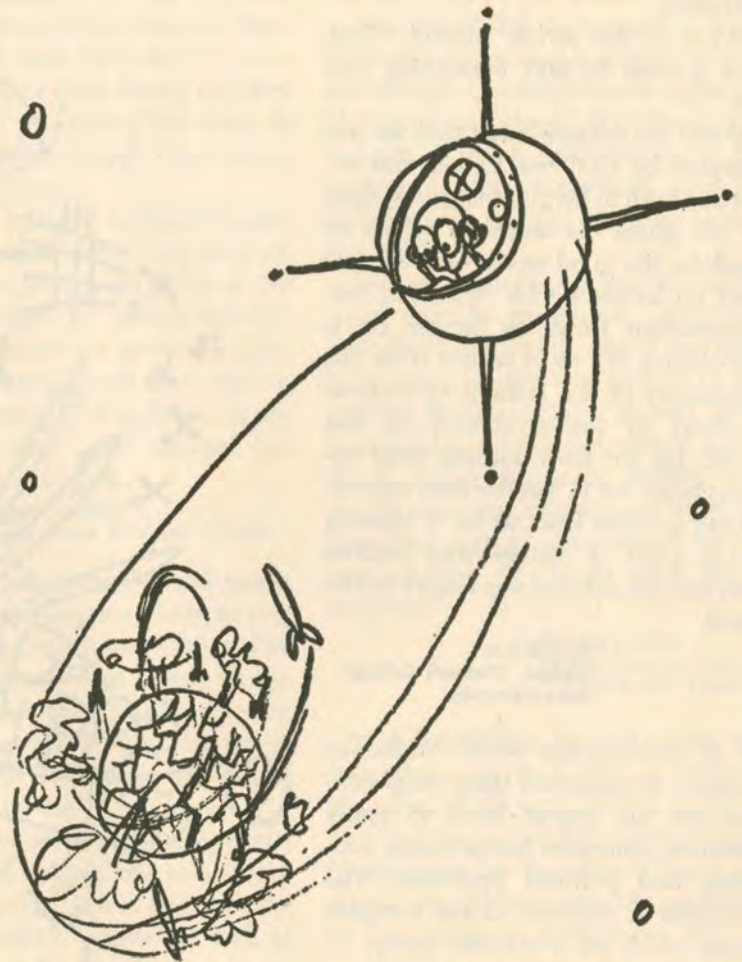
—A Dudley Ward  
General Secretary, Board of Social and Economic Relations, The Methodist Church

HOPE the ensuing discussion around this statement will center not so much on how to express our failure as on the more positive side, namely, how to take on from this point a different direction in our life as students and as student groups and as members of our churches. This discussion then should be very concrete and not simply a matter of affirmation of general theological truths. For instance, if it is true, as the statement says, that we need to be forgiven "for our past and present folly," I take this to mean that the churches and the student movements have been fooling themselves and everybody else with many of their

activities and programs carried on under their name. If this is true, then we need to be willing to envisage radical changes in this respect and also to go through with them, and it is on this that we have to concentrate from now on rather than on making

general statements about our inadequacy and that of others. If this statement does encourage this kind of searching, I think it will do a great deal of good.

—Thomas Wieser  
Associate Secretary for Study  
United Student Christian Council



Hello! Hello! Hello!

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\$2.00 (single subscriptions) to friends anywhere in the u.s.a.

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THE World Council of Churches has become increasingly aware that the Church must act and express itself as the whole Church speaking the whole Gospel to the whole world. This growing concern has been historically expressed through the organization in 1948 of the World Council of Churches, bringing together the Life and Work movement ("practical" in nature) and the Faith and Order movement ("theological" in nature). The World Council also looks forward in 1961 at its meeting in Ceylon to uniting with the International Missionary Council, thus joining the two so long organizationally divided: the life and the mission of the Church.

The same kind of concern has characterized the life of the student Christian movements (denominations, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Student Volunteer Movement, Interseminary Movement) in the United States. The Student Volunteer Movement grew out of the initiative of a small group of students who were dedicated to the missionary task of the Church. The Interseminary Movement has developed as the expression of the life of Christian seminary students throughout the country. The United Student Christian Federation, representing the denominational student Christian movements, has grown to carry out cooperative projects and provide a framework for faith and order discussions among the student Christian

# the national student christian federation

BY BEN CONLEY

movements. Some believe in the U.S.C.C. as the "uniting" student Christian movement in the U.S.A.

It has seemed incongruous that the drive for missionary commitment within the student world should be separated organizationally from other aspects of the movement. Being committed to the student Christian movement as a ministry to the university community, including seminary students as well as students in other areas and categories, it is logically and theologically false to place a division upon the educational, missionary, and evangelistic tasks of the student movement. In short, the Interseminary Movement, the United Student Christian Council, and the Student Volunteer Movement are all different aspects of concern of one Christian community attempting to minister in and through the college and university setting.

Against this background, the recent approval by the United Student Christian Council of the proposed National Student Christian Federation is highly significant. Its primary significance lies in that it brings the whole life of the Church together to carry on the concerns of the Church on the college campus, and through the college campus to the world. The reorganization effected by the National Student Christian Federation is much more than reorganization for the sake of efficiency. It is recognition in structural terms that the missionary, evangelistic, educational, and priestly

functions of the Church should be united in their expression in, to, and through the student world.

OUR present approach to the campus is a fragmented one. We work denominationally; this in itself helps to fragment the campus. The Interseminary Movement functions too often with no awareness of current denominational or interdenominational work on the campus. The Student Volunteer Movement is hard at work in missionary education and recruitment, but its program is not integrated into the total campus religious work. The denominational and interdenominational student groups are also concerned with seminary students and the task of the world mission of the Church; so also the Interseminary Movement and the Student Volunteer Movement, and the result is overlap, confusion, duplication of effort, and a slighted effectiveness.

There is another reason why the National Student Christian Federation is significant. It provides for the life of the whole Church to be expressed there. Too often in the past, some of the denominations have tended to locate their responsibility to the university campuses in their Boards of Education or similar bodies *on the assumption that the task of the Church on the campus is an educational task*. They fell into the error (the criticism runs) of isolating the missionary from the educational and



M. HANCOCK

December 1958

SOMETHING IN LIFE DOES DEPEND ON ME



so compromised the task and the effectiveness of the Church in the university.

The task of the Church in the university setting is the task of the whole Church, specialized only because of a specially trained ministry and a special constituency. It still is the whole Church at work. Thus, the National Student Christian Federation provides for memberships of both Boards of Education and Boards of Missions of the various denominations on its General Assembly (the governing body). This arrangement (the United Student Christian Council only provides for Boards of Education to be represented on its General Assembly) allows the persons at work in the field of missions to be brought into a responsible position within the ongoing life of the student Christian movement in this country.

It should also be made clear that some denominations faced this problem some time ago within their own communion. Methodism, for example, provides for representation of the Woman's Division of Christian Service, Board of Missions, Board of Temperance and the Board of Education in the National Methodist Student Commission. The merger of the U.S.C.C., I.S.M. and S.V.M. seeks to channel this kind of concern of the whole Church through the National Student Christian Federation.

In the third place, it is clear that the National Student Christian Federation does not focus simply on a ministry to the university community, but also *through* the university community to the world. It is important to know that the campus Christian community sees itself as sharing in the task of the Church in and for the world, as well as seeing itself as the object of the concern of the Church.

While it would be naïve to equate the National Student Christian Federation with the campus community, the vision is still there, that this new national organization will be better able to carry the dual task of nurture and witness into and through the university community because of its new relationship to the "witnessing

Church" through the Boards of Missions.

The sincerity and commitment with which the United Student Christian Council approved the proposal for a National Student Christian Federation was a wonderful sight to behold. The proposed merger of the United Student Christian Council, Interseminary Committee, and the Student Volunteer Movement came at a time when the U.S.C.C. was being forced because of financial matters to re-evaluate its entire program. It came at a time when the student movements around the world were launching a new emphasis on the Life and Mission of the Church. It came at a propitious time.

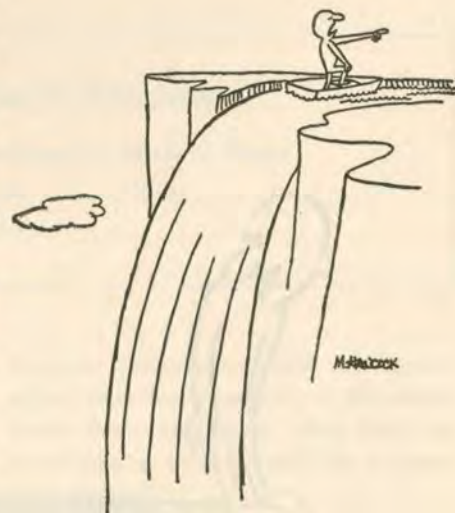
THE United Student Christian Council took a radical step at its General Assembly (September 5th through 11th, 1958) in redirecting most of its resources toward the local level. The associate secretary for study was made an associate to the general secretary. The national publications program was almost completely eliminated. The meetings of the national program committees were sharply curtailed. These things were done in order to operate on a limited income; they were also the announcement that the efforts and projects of the U.S.C.C. should be primarily local rather than national. Knowing that "if it ain't local it ain't real," the U.S.C.C. made plans to bring about on local campuses one hundred retreats each year to study the Life and Mission of the Church. Member movements committed themselves to providing leadership and encouragement for these retreats. Special consultations for the leadership of these retreats were planned, again with the committed support of the member movements. This new program of emphasis on the Life and Mission of the Church carried out through local campus retreats will begin with a series of experimental retreats in the spring of 1959 with full emphasis on the program projected for the years 1959-1962.

What makes this a propitious development? The fact that the Student

Volunteer Movement carries on a very similar program at present, with its primary emphasis on this kind of local study and analysis of the mission of the Church. The two movements, U.S.C.C. and S.V.M., seem to be following converging lines of operation in their program and concern; what would be more appropriate than to make manifest organizationally what is a reality in fact—a common concern and a common task. The real distinctions between the U.S.C.C. and the S.V.M. should not be ignored because of this unity of operation, but neither should unreal distinctions be perpetuated through outdated organization.

The present status of the National Student Christian Federation is still tentative. The proposed constitution and bylaws were approved by the United Student Christian Council with some modifications. Consummation of the merger awaits approval by the Student Volunteer Movement and the Interseminary Committee. The first General Assembly of the N.S.C.F. could be as soon as the summer of 1959; it might convene only after one or more years of negotiation.

LET us look at some of the implications of the proposed National Student Christian Federation for the future. There are not only those who are enthusiastic about the merger, but also those who feel that it is a very



I AM THE MASTER OF MY FATE

motive



poor expression of the kind of ecumenical, missionary, student concern that it attempts to unite.

We have come to realize today that the structures we set up within which to work are as important as the life we wish to exist within them. The structures do not guarantee that the life will grow and flourish, but they do exert very powerful positive or negative pressures. The question is not whether we should have unified structures; we can and ought to be as efficient and as effective in the deepest sense as possible, and this purpose is abetted through structures that allow us to think and act in a unified manner. The question is what kind of unified structure we will adopt. In any sociologically stable institution we find the power distributed throughout the structure, so that no one part has complete control over the other; we find the principle of legitimation, affirming the right of one group to think its own thoughts and act in its own action, within the minimum unity binding the entire group together.

The N.S.C.F. is not a perfect structural organization, but it incorporates these two principles fairly well. The commissions and committees, for example, have the right to go after their own financial resources, to initiate their own policy, to nominate their own staff; in short, to take the initiative within their own program area. It is true that they must work in cooperation with and be subject to the approval of the General Assembly; this is the price a movement like the S.V.M. pays for the unity it gains. Whether this process of cooperation will dull the cutting edge of creativity that the S.V.M. brings to the N.S.C.F. is a judgment of opinion that only the future can decisively state.

Another question has been raised about the student nature of this new federation. Two things should be said. One is that we should cast away the old student-staff saw. We have come past the point when we can legitimately see staff as those persons that students must always be on guard against lest they be seduced into "staff" ways of thinking. This may have been

necessary when the "staff" had no real understanding of the nature of the university and the task of the Church there. But since we have men and women for our "staff" who are professionally committed to work in the university setting and who are able to remain sensitive to the student world, is it not more adequate to see the relationship of student and staff as one of joint responsibility? We should not impose a false either-or by pointing to the large number of staff on the General Assembly of the N.S.C.F., or by describing the overwhelming complexity of policy decisions that the naïve student leader will be called upon to meet.

This leads to the second thing that should be said: the student leadership going to the N.S.C.F. General Assembly will not necessarily be overwhelmed by the complexity of the organization he is supposed to lead. Simply let the fact be recorded that while the U.S.C.C. has become more and more complex, the student delegations of more than one member movement have moved from bewilderment a few years ago to sound, strong leadership today. Thus, the question of whether the N.S.C.F. will express a movement among students does not depend so much upon the presence of students *per se* on the General Assembly as it does the presence of persons sensitive and responsive to the concerns of the student world. It does not depend so much upon the complexity of the problems to be dealt with by students as it does upon the preparation of the student leadership to deal with the issues.

We might also wonder if the merged organizations will really be able to make the same kind of creative contact between the missionary world and the student world that has been one of the most valuable functions of the Student Volunteer Movement. No matter how one answers that question specifically, all will agree that there needs to be a closer and more vital relationship than now exists. The pragmatic effects of this new marriage of the S.V.M. with the U.S.C.C. and I.S.M. bear close scru-

tiny that the campus and the mission field are actually brought into closer acquaintance.

Alluded to was the analogy of this merger to the proposed merger of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. Objections are raised that the analogy is not legitimate when applied to the U.S.C.C. and S.V.M. because of differences of historical development and functional responsibility. One would be naïve not to agree that there are very real differences. But the National Student Christian Federation is not rightly subject to the accusation of blind imitation of the I.M.C. and W.C.C. in the "merger mood" of the time; the N.S.C.F. is following the lead of the two world bodies and is analogous to them only in that it recognizes the practical need (based on spiritual concern) for a closer relationship tying missions to the other aspects of the life of the Church. This task requires organizational unity as well as unity of concern. The present structures we have were the product of an age of the Church when "missionary activity" was seen as a foreign mission to the heathen. Now that we conceive of the mission of the Church as a mission of the whole Church (not just the foreign and home mission boards) to the whole world (not just the heathen in the jungles), it is only natural to express this new understanding by uniting the historic missionary structure of the student movement with the other aspects of its ongoing life in the U.S.C.C. and I.S.M.

The surprising speed with which this proposal for the National Student Christian Federation has been brought to satisfactory form deserves note. Negotiations have at present been in process less than three years; this is a short time indeed for so important an action. The pressure with which the process has been accompanied seems to imply not only the much heralded freedom of the student Christian movements, but also a haste that is somewhat compulsive.

Perhaps the most significant implication of the proposal for the establishment of the National Student



Christian Federation is the direction it gives to the future of the student Christian movement in the United States. The increased representation on the General Assembly (as compared with the present U.S.C.C.) to include Boards of Missions is frankly an attempt to draw upon the total life of the churches so as to represent more adequately the concerns of missions as well as the concerns of education. The provision for this direct representation on the N.S.C.F. General Assembly moves in the direction of making the N.S.C.F. the uniting Student Christian Movement in the United States. It is not simply a federation of member denominational movements, church agencies responsible for student work (for denominations that do not have a movement), and related student movements (Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., S.V.M., and I.S.M.). It brings in a new

category: Boards of Missions, who will send to the General Assembly the persons within their boards who are responsible for or related to work with students.

THE life of the churches at work with students presently flows into the U.S.C.C. (through representation on the General Assembly) through the one channel in each church appropriate to the organization of each denomination. With the National Student Christian Federation, a new channel is formed by which the denominations will share in the life of the Federation: the Board of Missions. This new representation on the General Assembly is a step in the direction of making the N.S.C.F. more organically the united Student Christian Movement of the United States. Not fully discussed as an issue

at the last U.S.C.C. General Assembly, it would seem that the question of what we want the National Student Christian Federation to become is crucial and should demand further study and discussion before the merger is consummated. At least three alternatives suggest themselves. The N.S.C.F. might become: 1.) simply an agency through which a minimum cooperation among the denominations would take place, 2.) a framework which would provide for cooperative action and faith and order discussions that would hopefully lead to greater unity among denominations (in this case the N.S.C.F. would eventually go out of existence as the denominational student Christian movements unite), or 3.) the uniting Student Christian Movement of the United States. We should take this issue much more seriously as we give birth to the National Student Christian Federation.

## Contributors

JAMES MILLER, once on the staff of  *motive* , continues to write from his church post in Beeville, Texas. His graduate study has been at Vanderbilt and Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland.

JAMES F. WHITE, as part of his graduate work in church history at Duke University, is writing a dissertation on Anglican worship and church architecture in the nineteenth century. He has studied at Harvard, Union Seminary, and Cambridge.

KENDRICK GROBEL, long one of our favorite scholars, is professor of New Testament at the Vanderbilt University Divinity School. His doctorate is from Heidelberg (Germany). He is known to many as the translator of Rudolf Bultmann's *New Testament Theology*.

ROBERT OSBORN teaches in the undergraduate department of religion at Duke University. After a B.D. at Garrett, he studied a year with Emil Brunner in Zurich, then completed a Ph.D. at Drew.

JOHN LaFARGE, son of the famous American artist, has been editor of the magazine *America* for over 27 years. Born in Rhode Island in 1880, he was ordained into the priesthood in 1905, shortly thereafter was accepted in the Jesuit Order. He is widely known as a missionary, a journalist, an author, and a priest. The "Amen" article here is from his newest book, *An American Amen*.

WALLACE GRAY, while doing a B.A. at Central College, received honors for his work on the evolution of the *rogue* novel. His Ph.D. work at Vanderbilt included a dissertation on "The Place of Reason in the Theology of John Wesley." His B.D. is from S.M.U., where he taught two years in the religion department. Now he teaches Bible, religion and philosophy at Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas.

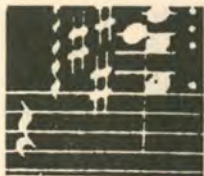
BEN CONLEY grew up in the Methodist Student Movement, served a year as its national chairman. While working on a doctorate at Boston, he is field director of the New England M.S.M.

WOODROW GEIER is director of information and publications for the Division of Educational Institutions, Methodist Board of Education.

DON SCOTT THOMPSON is working on a master's degree in religious education at the Southern California School of Theology. He intends to write, and has a wide range of experiences that will help.

TO THE ARTISTS IN THIS ISSUE: a special thanks from  *motive*  for the offering of your gifts and talents to this Christmas issue. Most of you are faithful contributors and one is a newcomer we welcome. The list includes CHARLES BARSOTTI, who turns from Beethoven on the tomb and tissue to "Mary had a little lamb" on a wondrous instrument; ROBERT CHARLES BROWN, giving again his deeply revealing drawings; JIM CRANE, of the cartoons with the droll bite of satire; MALCOLM HANCOCK, whose cartoons remind us of ourselves; JEAN PENLAND, new to the pages of  *motive*  this year, special talent with design; and a wonderful new supply of drawings by BOB WIRTH.





# MUSIC

## IN REVIEW

BY L. P. PHERIGO

### KEYBOARD REVIEWS

I am embarrassed by the superlatives necessary to make this report. I have to put several recent piano performances in the "great" class, no matter how much I may quibble over some points.

Most important, I suppose, are two releases on LP of performances made years ago. Camden has issued "The Art of Sergei Rachmaninoff," Volume I (CAL-396), with performances of Schumann's *Carnaval* (recorded 1929) and Chopin's *Sonata in B-Flat Minor* (recorded 1930). Both have long been rare collector's items. Rachmaninoff was a legendary performer on the piano, and these must be heard to be appreciated.

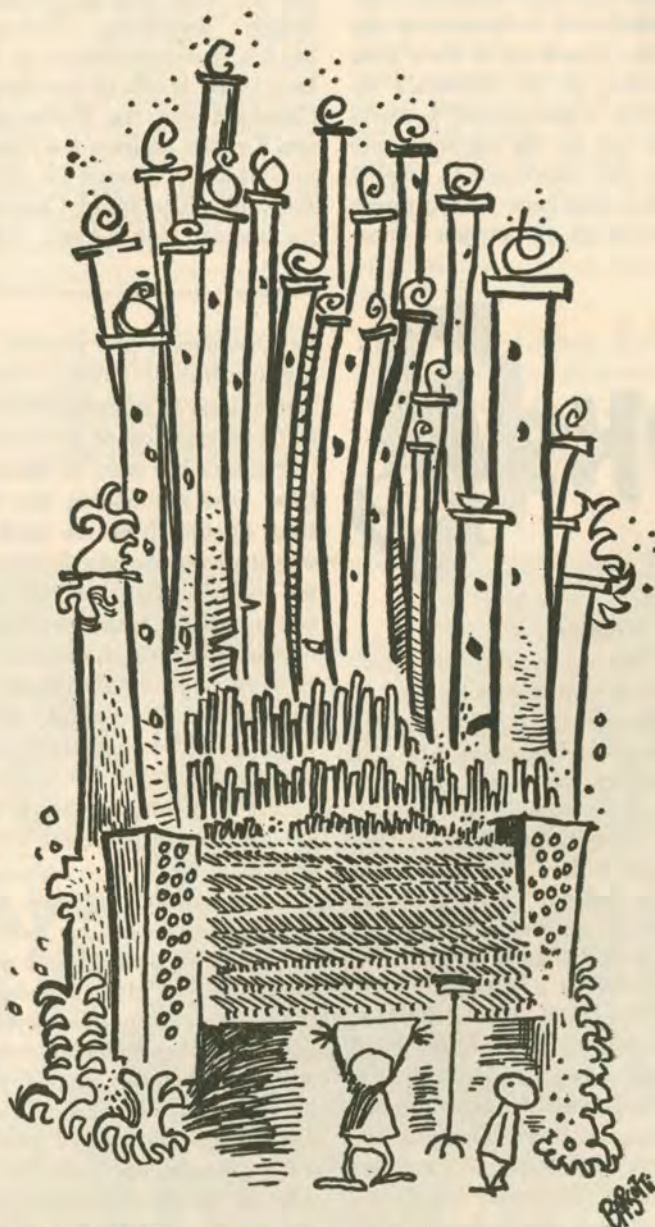
The other reissue is in Angel's "Great Recordings of the Century" series. It is Prokofiev's performance of his own *Concerto No. 3*, with the London Symphony under Piero Coppola (COLH 34). Originally recorded in 1932, it again demonstrates that no one plays Prokofiev like Prokofiev. The recent Gary Graffman performance (with Jorda and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra; RCA Victor LM-2138) aroused great expectations because of his earlier brilliant Prokofiev *Sonata* recording, but its excellence does not successfully challenge the much older performance by the composer. Moreover, the reverse side has a collection of seventeen short piano pieces of Prokofiev in definitive performances by the composer. Their genius can best be realized by a hearing of the *Gavotte No. 2*, Op. 25, almost incredible in its effectiveness. These short works were recorded in 1935 and first released on 78s in 1937.

Schumann is one of the most difficult composers to interpret. It is especially gratifying, therefore, to have so fine a Schumann record as Wilhelm Kempff's performances of the *Symphonic Etudes*, Op. 13 and the *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16 (Decca DL 9948). Graffman has done the *Symphonic Etudes* also (RCA Victor LM-2190), with the *Sonata in G Minor*, Op. 22, and the *Romance in F-Sharp*, Op. 28, No. 2. But while there is considerable excellence in Graffman's performances, especially the *Sonata*, there is

greatness in Kempff's. Kempff is much more graceful and polished, playing with an understanding of Schumann that Graffman doesn't match.

I have no reservations about several others, either. Solomon's performances of Beethoven's *Concerto No. 1* and *Sonata No. 27 in E Minor*, Op. 90 (Angel 35580), are superb. He has a rare combination of poetry and power in these works. He is supported very well in the *Concerto* by Herbert Menges and the Philharmonia Orchestra. Edwin Fischer continues to demonstrate his unique authority in the early classics with performances of Mozart's *Concerto in D Minor*, K. 466, and Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5* (Angel 35593). In both works Fischer conducts the Philharmonia

Orchestra from the keyboard. His *Brandenburg No. 5* ranks with the old Busch-Serkin version, and his Mozart *Concerto* excels all others for stylistic playing, even the excellent versions of Clara Haskil and Gieseking. Bartók's *For Children* (both volumes) gets a very sensitive performance from Edith Farnadi (Westminster XWN 2226). Her conception is more lyrical than Foldes', and does full justice to these wonderful little pieces. Artur Schnabel gives us a new *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* of de Falla, with the San Francisco Orchestra under Enrique Jorda (RCA Victor LM-2181). The second side is filled with a group of well-known solos from Spanish composers. The performances are brilliant, easily superseding all others.



IT'S MINE . . . ALL MINE  
I CAN PLAY "MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB" . . . WHEN YOU LEAVE



Another group of performances are excellent, in their own way, but do not persuade me of their right to be classed as "great." Emil Gilels and Fritz Reiner turn in a version of the Brahms *Concerto No. 2* that goes right to the top bracket (RCA Victor LM 2219). It does not totally displace the Serkin-Ormandy or the Backhaus-Schuricht versions, however, and all three suffer from the fact that Schnabel once recorded this concerto.

By now everyone's heard of Van Cliburn, the Texas pianist who won the first International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow last April. His first record is the Tchaikovsky *Concerto No. 1 in B-Flat Minor* (RCA Victor LM 2252), with Kiril Kondrashin conducting an unidentified (NYC) orchestra. Mr. Kondrashin conducted in Moscow at the Competition and was flown to New York for the recording at Mr. Cliburn's request. The result is impressive; I would rate it at the top of the versions now available. My only reluctance to label it "great" is that I miss some of the music communicated in an old version I have

by Egon Petri, especially in the second movement.

The grand old lady of the harpsichord, Wanda Landowska, is served well in "The Art of the Harpsichord" (RCA Victor LM 2194). She performs three works of Bach, including the *Partita No. 2 in C Minor*, and an otherwise unrecorded Passacaglia of J. K. F. Fisher (d. 1746). This is a fascinating record, with its "authenticity-a-la-Landowska," but it leaves me somewhat unsatisfied. I think it's my inability to free myself from the superb conception of the *Partita* that Harold Samuel conveyed, but that Landowska doesn't.

A real need is filled by RCA Victor's release of the only available performance of Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No. 2* (LM-2197). Nicole Henriot turns in a first-rate job, with able co-operation from the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Munch. Two selections from Samuel Barber's ballet *Media* fill out the second side. Gieseking and the Philharmonia under von Karajan perform the *Piano Concerto in C Minor* of Mozart (k. 491), with the *Barcarolle*, Op. 60 of Chopin filling out the second side (Angel 35501). Both

performances are excellent. Slightly inferior are performances of four concertos of Mozart (k. 449, 459, 482, 491) by Budura-Skoda, conducting the Vienna Konzerthaus Orchestra from the Keyboard (Westminster XWN 18661/2). The orchestra is a bit inferior to the Philharmonia but the over-all results are excellent.

Firkusny's version of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto, with Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (Capitol PAO-8419), is very fine, but here the competition is too keen. Much the same can be said of Kentner's reading of Beethoven's *Sonatas No. 21* ("Waldstein") and 23 ("Appassionata") (Capitol PAO-8409). There's no flamboyancy here, and many solid musical virtues, but the subtleties of a Schnabel, Kempff, or Gieseking are missing. His Liszt Chopin record (Capitol P. 8400) is also very respectable, without rising to the heights. Less valuable is a Beethoven recital by Andor Foldes (Decca DL 9964). Mr. Foldes seldom rises above an unimaginative, mechanical statement of the *Thirty-two Variations in C Minor* and several shorter works.

# BOOKS



## FOR HOLIDAY READING

Among all the meaningful opportunities at Christmas time is the joyous one for reading what is not required. Among the best of tangible Christmas gifts is a book that sparkles with some unforgettable quality all its own.

With these two points in mind, we want to suggest a few new books that seem ideal for holiday reading—books to buy and enjoy yourself and books to give to the selected friends on your list.

First nomination is a biography of a dog: **WALTER—THE IMPROBABLE HOUND**, written by his owner, Fred Ayer, Jr. (Henry Regnery Co., \$2.75). This biography, according to the author's own description, is "A Socially Insignificant Study with Copious Annotations and a Brief, Shameful Appendix."

Walter, we must say quickly, is a basset hound, and a happily real individ-

ual (we almost said *person*) with amazing intellectual ability. That the Ayer family lives in suburban New England is of major significance in Walter's life.

Walter's life story is hilarious. We refrain from mentioning any details, and from quoting from the book itself. The style is wonderful, fresh and funny. Walter himself plays the role of scholarly editor, adding footnotes where they are needed. Walter's charms are guaranteed to work magic on all who are introduced to him, regardless of any previous relationships with basset hounds or any other kind of dog.

Not for your Aunt Mary, however, or anyone who may object to a few bad words.

Another wonderful book this season is designed especially for looking and listening. Really, you should read it aloud to a group of close friends—preferably after an evening of storytelling when people are beginning to feel a bit silly anyway. When this happens at our house, we like to pull a book off the shelf and read aloud. Our newest discovery (and it's a game in itself) is **OUNCE DICE TRICE**, by Alastair Reid, drawings by Ben Shahn, published by Atlantic-Little, Brown, \$3.50.

Alastair Reid is a Scotsman, living mostly in Spain, probably best known for his poetry. He put this book together for his own amusement, from a list of favorite words. Actually, this is a book of words—some serious, some funny, some rude, some hopelessly unbelievable. The point is, words have a sound and shape, in addition to their meaning. If you play around with the sound and shape, you may discover new meanings.

So, here is a book of sounds, out of which come new words and meanings. Here is a list of words with a host of ideas and definitions. Ben Shahn, born in Russia and now living in New Jersey, one of our best-known graphic artists, has marvelously translated the words into pictures.

If you wonder about the title, it comes from a suggestion that

If you get tired of counting *one, two, three*, make up your own numbers, as shepherds used to do when they had to count sheep day in, day out. You can try using these sets of words instead of numbers, when you have to count to ten. **OUNCE DICE TRICE QUART QUINCE SAGO SERPENT OXYGEN NITROGEN DENIM.**

You get the point? You should see the





list of light words for windy or singing moods, of squishy words for wet days, words for times of day (to be used where there are no clocks); names for insects, names for whales, rude names for nitwits; and definitions that will startle your mind and tickle whatever makes you laugh.

*Ounce Dice Trice* is highly creative and completely enjoyable. Don't miss the fun of reading this aloud.

Most of our readers, we suspect, have already been introduced to Eloise, the city child whose life revolves in and around the Plaza Hotel, New York. Two books about the little girl (*Eloise, Eloise in Paris*) have sold over 300,000 copies. Random House has published a new Eloise story for this season, *ELOISE AT CHRISTMASTIME* (\$3.50). The promotion among children (Eloise dolls and so forth) will cause a lot of folks to think this is a children's book. Although this third one is less sophisticated than the previous two, the story is still for adults who need a laugh and a bit of sentiment these days. This story involves Eloise's agonizing attempts to force some of the hotel's inmates to listen to her Christmas carols. Kay Thompson gets the credit for the creation of Eloise.

Only in passing we mention our favorite inspirational title of the year: *SICK SICK SICK*—a guide to nonconfident living, by Jules Feiffer (McGraw-Hill, \$1.50). These cartoons point new and surprising patterns for responding to our age. The Feifferites maintain that Feiffer is the most, both for seeing yourself and a psychoanalytically mad world. The cartoons mean different things to different people, but enough of them mean enough to make most people stop and think between chuckles.

#### BIG SURPRISES

So many surprises are connected with the names Harry Golden and *ONLY IN*

December 1958

AMERICA that we puzzle over where to begin.

For one thing, Harry Golden is the Jewish editor of a southern paper, the *Carolina Israelite*, published monthly in Charlotte. The paper consists of the editor's comments and essays, plus advertisements, and yet has 14,000 subscribers. Mr. Golden is a cigar-chomping, scalpel-wielding liberal, the son of an immigrant and a product of New York's Lower East Side. His paper is one of the best living examples of personal journalism. His proposals in the field of race relations have been widely quoted, and with good reason.

For example, Mr. Golden noted that the South has practically eliminated any *vertical segregation*. Because of the tremendous purchasing power of Negro people, one sees white and Negro people

standing at the same grocery counters, shopping in the same stores, depositing money at the same bank teller's window, and on and on. However, whenever the Negro sits down, there may come trouble. So, Mr. Golden proposes the *Golden Vertical Negro Plan*. Southern state legislatures, instead of passing complicated legislation to get around the Supreme Court's decisions, need only to pass a small amendment which would provide only desks in public schools—no seats.

The desks should be those standing-up jobs, like the old-fashioned bookkeeping desk. Since no one in the South pays the slightest attention to a *Vertical Negro*, this will completely solve our problem. And it is not such a terrible inconvenience for young people to stand up during their classroom studies. In fact, this may be a blessing in disguise. They are not learning to read sitting down, anyway; maybe standing up will help. This will save more millions of dollars in the cost of our remedial English course when the kids enter college. In whatever direction you look with the *Golden Vertical Negro Plan*, you save millions of dollars, to say nothing of eliminating forever any danger to our public education system upon which rest the destiny, hopes, and happiness of this society.

After a successful test, Mr. Golden came up with another proposal: the *Golden "Out-of-Order" Plan*.

I tried my plan in a city of North Caro-





lina, where the Negroes represent 39 per cent of the population.

I prevailed upon the manager of a department store to shut the water off in his "white" water fountain and put up a sign, "Out-of-Order." For the first day or two the whites were hesitant, but little by little they began to drink out of the water fountain belonging to the "coloreds"—and by the end of the third week everybody was drinking the "segregated" water; with not a single solitary complaint to date.

I believe the test is of such sociological significance that the Governor should appoint a special committee of two members of the House and two Senators to investigate the *Golden "Out-of-Order" Plan*. We kept daily reports on the use of the unsegregated water fountain which should be of great value to this committee. This may be the answer to the necessary uplifting of the white morale. It is possible that the whites may accept desegregation if they are assured that the facilities are still "separate," albeit "Out-of-Order."

As I see it now, the key to my Plan is to keep the "Out-of-Order" sign up for at least two years. We must do this thing gradually.

Now, surely, you have some idea why Harry Golden is widely hailed as one of our most stimulating and enjoyable writers in America. A selection of his best has been collected into a book, *ONLY IN AMERICA* (World Publishing Co., \$4). To look at the titles is to anticipate the real humor: "Why I never bawl out a waitress," "Why other planets have not contacted us," and "Cato's cure for a hangover." There are serious titles here, too, such as "A day with Carl Sandburg." Incidentally, the famed poet is a subscriber to Mr. Golden's paper, and wrote the foreword to his book.

*Only in America* is an amazing collection of thoughts and word-pictures about a wide range of topics—current events, desegregation, history, Jews, American life, and personal events by a writer of great skill. This book belongs in the list above of things to read and give this season.

You may have heard that *Only in America* was a surprise to its publisher and the booksellers of the land. All at once, it sold everywhere, climbing to the top of the best-seller list in nonfiction.

Then came the bigger surprise, the revelation by Mr. Golden that he spent some three years in prison, back in the 1920s, on a charge of mail fraud. Often such an "exposure" serves to "ruin" a man, but in this case the whole nation seemed to agree with a *New York Times*

editorial: "The real exposure is of an unpremeditated sort: It is a view of a man's heart, of a lovable philosopher who truly spoke of America, contributing to our current mood an integration of New York's East Side with a section of the Old South. . . . If he was rightly penalized a quarter of a century ago . . . he is now rightly rewarded and honored for the highly endowed man he so evidently has become."

"It could happen only in America," as Mr. Golden himself likes to say.

Another view of America has come this fall from a Roman Catholic, John LaFarge, editor of the magazine *America*. His latest book is *AN AMERICAN AMEN*, published by Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, \$3.75.

As a missionary, as a journalist, as an author of real merit, and as a priest, Father LaFarge has worked wholeheartedly in the cause of interracial and social justice. His new book is a highly personal thing, a kind of continuation of his autobiography, *The Manner Is Ordinary*. In part one of *An American Amen*, he speaks as an American of one's responsibility to his country. In part two, he speaks as a priest about our responsibility to ourselves, in order that we may reach right decisions. In part three, he speaks of the responsibility of intellectuals to the human race as a whole. The piece about the word "Amen," printed in this magazine, is a worthy introduction to the book itself.

#### THE COLLEGE YEARS

A big grab bag is always welcomed, so long as there is sufficient indication that something in the bag is worth keeping. So, we suggest a book that is big in every sense—subject matter, contents, size, attractiveness of design, and entertainment value. It is *THE COLLEGE YEARS*, edited by A. C. Spector (Hawthorne Books, \$7.95). This is a grab bag of stories, articles, excerpts of biographical writings about college life, mostly by well-known contemporary authors. Here are pieces on halls of ivy, class, campus, reflections and inquiries, and fond recall. Here are Ogden Nash, Robert Benchley, E. B. White, Thomas Wolfe, Sinclair Lewis, H. L. Mencken, and almost anyone else you would like to read. Occasionally a grim or sardonic note creeps in; generally, the tone is light and gay. As a gift to yourself or your best friend, whatever his connection with the campus, this is a beauty. Well-chosen mate-

rial in a book well designed.

—Jameson Jones

**THE MARKS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**, by F. Gerald Ensley, The Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, \$1.25.

When is a college student ready for a degree? The conventional answer in American higher education is that he gets his degree when he has survived a frightful number of lectures, cram sessions, bibliographies, papers, and tests until at last the institution holds solemn assembly and confers its diploma, signifying that he has arrived.

Bishop F. Gerald Ensley of the Iowa Area of The Methodist Church thinks a student is not ready for a diploma until he is prepared "to distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, piety and irreligion." He brings the dogmas of American secular education under the searching critique of Christian theology to show that no college is doing its job unless it can help students "acquire a just and vivid image of what is first rate" in single fields of knowledge and in life as a whole. Secular education is inadequate because "America rots for want of a valid definition of success."

The Christian teacher and the Christian student perform the same duties as teachers and students in secular education—but for a different reason. Their piety is no substitute for learning—they are truly professional in their tasks; for they have what Whitehead says is essential to every educated man—"knowledge in a special direction." Vague intentions and enthusiasms are not enough. Christian education has a competence that knows how to mass the facts but also how to wrestle with the facts until they yield their meaning.

Bishop Ensley takes the Incarnation seriously in his discussions of the aims and methods of education. A scholar must be a human being. He is educated by the sum total of his relationships and responsibilities. He must have a social concern. The arduous road of freedom is the way of obedience to God.

*The Marks of Christian Education* is a frank apology for the Christian college. It is a valuable book in the mounting series of volumes by Christian scholars who are trying to help American education and culture discover what Bishop Ensley terms the one thing needful—"a light for the human voyage."

—Woodrow A. Geier

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BOB HODGELL



## A STORY OF THE COAL WAR

Once, in the mountains of shall we say, Upper Slobbobia, there were two coal-mining towns. On one side of a ridge nestled the hamlet of Tattletale Black, while on the other side, its rival, Old Smoky, hung on the slope like a soot flake deposited by the wind.

The seams of coal ran through the ridge and under the towns. It was well known that the grimy miners of each town, working on different levels, were tunneling under the other town as well as under their own. The responsible heads of Tt.B. were aware of the danger in this situation, though they publicly declared that all was under control as long as a firm stand was maintained. To appear weak before such a rival as Old Smoky, they declared, was a sure invitation to disaster.

The men in the mines and the women in the shacks they called homes knew there was trouble. Attention was called to it at times by the faint rumble of a blast, far underground, when the whole town shook. Occasionally there was a cave-in, and sections of the town would sink a few inches, making street and pipe-line repairs necessary. Taxes became very high.

Some of the grayer heads shook in warning. "The whole town will some day drop into the abyss," they prophesied.

"But we cannot stop mining while Old Smoky goes on digging in the same seam," the people said. "The sale of coal is our whole source of income, meager as it is." "Then we should have a conference with the men of Old Smoky," said the thoughtful ones, "and both agree to stop. Together we can explore for other seams that will not endanger us."

"That's been tried," was the answer. "It didn't work."

But the concerned ones called a public meeting, anyway. Fifteen people came. Four thousand five hundred and twenty-two watched TV. Six hundred and two attended a movie called "Raintree Rock." Four hundred and ninety-four were in taverns. (Some of these were also watching TV but were not included above.) Forty-three people read books. (Twenty-nine were reading *Panting Place*, a current best seller.) One hundred and eighty-three carried on various activities common to the race—and of course more important than the boring strategy meeting called by the zealots.

One man, named Amos Ramos, who did attend was so impressed by the facts brought out that he wanted to do something about it. He went to the manager of the local TV station. "I'm afraid people wouldn't be interested," the manager said. "Maybe you could work it into a dramatic sketch—but I'm afraid the subject is a bit controversial for us. Besides, we have very little time available. We're starting a new serial—'I Led 64 Lives.'"

Amos went to the radio station, which billed itself as "coming through in full color—red, white and blue." The manager offered a 30-second spot between a 3½-minute newscast and Cackling Cal, the 6-hour disc jockey. The newspaper editor said, "It isn't news. Now if you can do something to make news, I'll print it."

So Amos made a sign adapted for carrying. The sign read:

PARLEY OR PERISH!  
YOU MUST DECIDE!

Early the next morning he began to tramp the streets. The afternoon paper carried a front-page picture. Amos was shown with the sign over his shoulder, followed by a straggling group of children, some grinning, some jeering. Between the P and the E of "perish" was the remains of a ripe, red tomato. Under the picture was the caption, "Peace picket packs placard." There was no more.

MORAL: Maybe we will all be blown up in fifteen years or ten, or two. As soon as I've finished the important things I'm doing now, I intend to look into it.

—Don Thompson