

The **+ WITNESS**

DECEMBER 23, 1965

10¢

Editorial

The First Yuletide

Articles

Are We Prepared?

Terence J. Finlay

Christmas is Out of Hand

Ruth Adam

Anxiety: --- Fear Gone Inward

Kenneth E. Clarke

**NEWS HIGHLIGHTS: --- Major Union Barriers
Are Ahead. Cathedral Sponsors Huddle on
Dope. Laymen Axed Out of Jobs in England**

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In Leading Churches

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Story of the Week

Major Union Barriers are Ahead Declared W. A. Visser 't Hooft

★ The ecumenical movement in the last 40 years has made "great progress" in those things which did not require radical restructuring of traditional church patterns but has lagged in such matters as mergers across denominational lines, full inter-communion and agreement on the essentials of union.

This was the analysis of W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

"It would seem that we have made great progress in all things which could be done without an agonizing reappraisal of the positions and forms of life of the churches," Dr. Visser 't Hooft declared in an address before the annual luncheon of the U.S. friends of the organization.

Tracing the history of the WCC's three assemblies, we did what we were asked to do in 1948, 'stay together.' We did to some extent what the Evanston assembly (in 1955) said: to grow together. We have not yet done what the New Delhi assembly (1961) said: 'The achievement of unity will involve nothing less than a death and rebirth of many forms of church life as we have known them.'

"Nobody," the WCC leader

continued, "can possibly say that today we have carried that out."

He stressed that the time is now at hand for the ecumenical movement when "these costly decisions must be made, in which the 'mutual correction' of and by fellow churches of which Amsterdam spoke must become far more radical and truly effective than it has yet been. We must not give the impression that the churches in the ecumenical movement are like race horses that run very fast, very fast, but who refuse to take the jump when they come to the barrier.

"That's very bad for the people in the saddle," he added ruefully.

In many respects, said the Dutch churchman who has headed the WCC since its inception in 1948, ecumenism has moved ahead of expectations. He cited in particular the significant roles played by the burgeoning regional ecumenical organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America; the growing participation of the Orthodox Churches; the "change in attitude" of the Roman Catholic Church; inter-church cooperation in refugee relief, and other emergency services; and the strengthening common witness of the churches in international affairs and social problems.

Assessing briefly the significance of the Vatican Council within the total ecumenical movement, Visser 't Hooft said it was important "because of the way it has let itself be stimulated by all the ecumenical developments of the last 40 or 50 years and in the way it has itself become the stimulant for future ecumenical developments."

He pointed out that the mutual withdrawal of nine-century-old excommunication decrees between Rome and Constantinople "in some way involved" all Christians. "It is good that one element in that situation—which brought about the mutual excommunication in 1054 — has been removed," he said.

Then the world Protestant leader speculated: "We might think what Rome would say and what we would say if the excommunications of Luther and John Hus should be lifted." He added that such an action would not really get at "root causes." But, he continued, it would show that "we are dealing with these things in a new light."

Visser 't Hooft praised the Vatican Council's declaration on religious liberty and said it "shows what can come out of ecumenical discussion." It is a significant action, he said, not only because it "helps in the relations between us" but because it reflects the "re-adjustment of the Roman Catholic Church to the world."

Significant participation of the Eastern Orthodox Churches in the WCC and the ecumenical movement dates from 1961, Visser 't Hooft said. Several Orthodox Churches, including the Russian Church, became members of the WCC at the New Delhi assembly held that year. "We have not yet drawn all the conclusions and developments" from these moves, he stated.

Forthright Stands

He reviewed briefly the forthright stand of the churches on such current international problems as the Vietnam war, the Rhodesian crisis, the racial struggle in South Africa and others. "In all of these cases the WCC or the member churches speak on the basis of an ecumenical understanding of the church and in the light of principles worked out together in the ecumenical movement," he said.

In his brief history of the beginnings of the ecumenical movement, Visser 't Hooft paid tribute to the German martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. "I sometimes think that if Bonhoeffer had lived he would have become the central figure in the world ecumenical movement."

In passing, Visser 't Hooft criticized present-day associations of Bonhoeffer with "certain types of theology that he had nothing to do with." He did not elaborate on the point except to say that Bonhoeffer was a "Christocentric theologian," but he apparently alluded to so-called "death of God" theologians, some of whom cite certain of Bonhoeffer's writings to buttress their arguments.

The demands of the ecumenical view of Christianity, Visser 't Hooft asserted, "means that we must prepare our churches — not only at the level of synods and assemblies, but especially at the level of the

local congregation — to understand that the ecumenical movement does not only bring the joy of fellowship and mutual enrichment, but also the pain of self-sacrifice.

"No one must be asked to give up his deepest convictions about eternal truth, but all are asked to give up what needs to be given up for the sake of unity and what can be given up with a good conscience."

Press Conference

At a press conference following the luncheon the WCC leader laughingly waved off questions concerning his future or his possible successor.

Asked about the likelihood that he may retain some relationship with the WCC, he said he didn't have "the slightest idea" what he would do after the Feb. 8-17 session of the central committee in Geneva. Selection of his successor is a key item on the agenda.

When asked for an opinion as to whether Eugene Carson Blake, executive officer of the United Presbyterian Church, would be a "worthy successor," Visser 't Hooft's arms went up as he promptly responded: "That's a silly question!"

Students at Cornell

Visser 't Hooft talked about the current revolutionary mood among students. He came to the New York luncheon directly from Cornell where he had been a leader at the four-day conference on Toward World Community (Witness, 12/16).

One of the most interesting sessions was an informal give-and-take between the guest lecturers, faculty and students. There was a good deal of "couldn't care less" attitude expressed by the few students who attended. Churches and colleges were owned by what they called "the establishment" and gave no leadership in the areas they were interested in

— world peace, racial and economic justice and other areas of social concern. Ronald Thwaites, a sophomore, said that he was learning nothing at the university of any importance, nor did he expect to.

Visser 't Hooft replied that he also had learning nothing at college, but at the end of world war one he dedicated himself to peace and had devoted his life to creating conditions that make for peace.

Morris Mitchell, Quaker, also expressed pleasure at the rebellion of students but advised them to think out what they were rebelling against — or for.

It was largely this session at Cornell that prompted Visser 't Hooft to say at the luncheon in New York that young people appear to be seeking "revolution for revolution's sake," not having specific objects for their protest. Older generations, he added, have an obligation to help young people define their role in society.

U.S. & ASIAN DELEGATES URGE NEGOTIATION

★ All parties involved in the Vietnam war were urged in Bangkok, Thailand at a conference of National Council of Churches in the U.S. and East Asia Christian Conference delegates to "take all possible initiatives to move action from the battlefield to the negotiating table."

Participants in the conference, pointing out that they were not speaking for their churches or church councils, at the same time pointed out that they felt "bound to report on the discussions" they had.

In their report, the 18 Asian and U.S. conferees called for a cessation of bombing by both the U.S. and South Vietnamese forces in order to create a better atmosphere for negotiation.

As the Asian conference was

held, the NCC's general board in the U.S. issued a statement also calling for a halt to bombing in order to stimulate negotiation (Witness, 12/16).

The conference report called for support of the secretary general of the UN in his attempt to find negotiation opportunities, urged a restudy of the Geneva conference of 1954, and asked recognition of "the importance of Asian countries, not

directly involved in the conflict, making available their good offices in seeking . . . the way to solutions."

"The people of Vietnam have the right of self-determination and this right ought to be recognized and observed," the report said, but added that "the state of war in Vietnam makes the immediate exercise of the right of self-determination impossible."

Conference on Dope Addiction Sponsored by N. Y. Cathedral

★ Protestant clergy from the New York area and Washington, D. C., attending an exploratory conference on narcotics at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, were told by a drug expert that addiction is "a challenge to what the church claims to be."

The meeting was organized by Canon Walter Dennis of the cathedral staff. The Rev. Lynn Hageman, in charge of the East Harlem Protestant parish, and other medical and social work authorities discussed problems of youthful addiction and various methods of counseling and treatment.

Among the 48 clergymen invited to the session was a Pentecostal minister, the Rev. Herbert Daughtry, minister of the House of the Lord, Brooklyn, who said that as an ex-addict who had served two prison terms, he thought that clergymen did not place enough emphasis on the gospel when they counseled addicts.

"Does the minister place the emphasis in the proper place?" the 34-year-old Negro clergyman asked from the audience. "Would we not get greater results if we placed enough emphasis on the gospel? Are we not shirking or neglecting our greatest responsibility?"

"In the matter of conversion," Hageman commented in response, "the church often shies away from this. The professionally religious person sometimes finds it embarrassing that this really works. People do get converted, sometimes to secularism, sometimes to psychoanalysis, sometimes to Mohammedanism. Some of us tend to be bashful about talking about Jesus Christ to addicts."

"But," he added, replying directly to Daughtry, "it is more effective if it comes from you, as an ex-addict, than from me."

Earlier in his talk, Hageman traced the history and cultural aspects of drug addiction and how it provides a "chemically induced heaven" to the drug user. When an addict is "high," he said, he is relieved of the "sweats and tensions" of daily reality — a reward offered to Christians after death "for a devout life."

Appearing with him on the program were William Lane, 23, a onetime addict who is agent for the Greens Farms, Conn., reception center for Synanom, a self-help movement for addicts; Dr. Joyce Lowenson, of Manhattan General Hospital, which had conducted a study of the effects of methedone, a drug

used in treatment, and Dr. Lonnie MacDonald, head of the Haryou-Act Narcotics Institute program and director of social services of Harlem Hospital.

"Addiction is not a problem of vast numbers," Hageman said, noting that 1962 statistics of the federal bureau of narcotics showed 47,489 addicts in the U.S. "But it is a problem in depth. It goes right to the heart of what the church claims to be." With about 50 per cent of U.S. addicts, New York City is the "Hong Kong of the West" in drug prevalence.

Youths who experience a "powerlessness" at not being accepted as economic producers or respected consumers in American society, he stated, find a "function" in addiction, even as thieves or drug sellers. The function is something they have not found at home, or in school or in church.

"The failure of the church is not to be thought of as a surprise," he advised the clergy. "What it means is a rethinking of the role of the church as a reconciler."

In answer to a question, Hageman said that the Black Muslims have been effective in the war on addiction because of their "intense community life." This puts the individual in the midst of a new family with a new identity. Also, he said, Black Muslims act "in profound opposition to the state of things as they are."

"They exist in protest," he declared. This is important, he said, to addicts who fundamentally "see themselves as rejected from the bourgeois security they so terribly want."

Lane said that during his career as an addict, he was in and out of hospitals and prisons so often that "I felt this was my way of life." He wound up, he said, at a Synanom House on the west coast. There he was

re-educated and "resocialized" to a drug-free, mature life.

MacDonald warned against "easy, oversimplified solutions" to the problem. "Hospitals alone will not do it. Detoxification alone is not the answer."

He urged a "comprehensive, integrated" approach to victims rather than one of "fragmentation."

Most of the clergy present at the conference, the first in a cathedral series on urgent pas-

toral concerns, said in questionnaires distributed at its close that they had been helped "substantially" by the program.

"Just about all of them," declared a spokesman for the office of Canon Dennis, "said they wished to participate in continuing small group workshops" on the subject of narcotics abuses. About two-thirds of those present had had occasion, they replied, to counsel people with problems related to drug addiction.

ropolitan, said Hopkinson. He also contended that the bishop should play the role of a diocesan team captain, with a council round him consisting of the regular diocesan staff of specialists and also of representatives of clergy and laity.

"A good and easy way of representing the clergy is through the rural deans," he adds. "These admirable characters — the shop stewards of the clergy — get, like other shop stewards, no half-pence and many kicks. But . . . they are a first rate channel of communication. They have the trust of their colleagues, and can represent them honestly."

There are about 780 rural deans in England. They are usually senior parish priests and preside over regular conferences of parish representatives in their area. At present they are nominated to the post but Hopkinson suggested that they be elected for periods of about three years.

In a reference to the patronage system, Hopkinson said, "No one can seriously expect the Methodist Church to enter into organic union with a church, one of whose parish clergy is nominated by a firm of potato chip manufacturers, for instance . . . If the potato firm in question is really interested in the parish, it's all to the good that it should have some say in the election of its incumbent. What is to be avoided is the arbitrary right of an outsider to appoint."

Pensioners from Armed Services Axing Laymen Out of C of E Jobs

★ The Church of England was accused of filling top administrative lay appointments at "cut rates" in an article in the Bridge, monthly journal of the diocese of Southwark.

It also called for a reform of the church's appointments system and asserted that the patronage system whereby various bodies and even private individuals have the right of appointing priests in some parishes is "doomed."

The author is the Rev. Stephen Hopkinson, rector of Bobingworth and religious adviser on television work.

Referring to the laity, he declared, "At present, we underpay most of our employed lay people, and only get by through the use of pensioners. Luckily there seems to be an endless supply of dedicated organists and choir masters — but what happens when you get to the higher levels?

"The usual answer is to look to the services — armed forces — which have the splendid — from our point of view — habit of axing men at the height of their experience and ability. Thus, the senior lay officers in the church are apt to combine a military or naval title with a

military or naval pension, and this enables them to take on administrative jobs at salaries well below their own value . . .

"Is this really good enough? Is it right that over and over again church work should be paid for at cut rates, and that we should expect to make up for meagre salaries by a sense of 'vocation'?"

Hopkinson also called for a campaign to "de-clericalize" parts of church activity and do away with a false concept of clerical "authority." This would involve the handling over to lay administration of "all sorts of such activities over which bishops and clergy at present insist on presiding, and the readiness of the ordained to take orders from the laymen."

He said bishops should be chosen by a form of voting which is "not a mere facade to 'royal' nomination." (There is much criticism in England today of the present system whereby high church dignitaries are appointed by the queen on the recommendation of the prime minister).

The bishops should be encouraged to show greater freedom and initiative and dioceses should be grouped under a me-

BISHOP PARSONS

ANTHOLOGY

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THE WITNESS

Tunkhannock, Pa. 18657

EDITORIAL

The First Yuletide

TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO wellnigh there was born into this world a man. He was born in an out-of-the-way and unimportant corner of the greatest Empire that, up to then, the world had ever seen. The power of Rome was at its height, and under Caesar Augustus, there was a period of peace before it began the long-drawn-out decline to agony and death, the causes of which remain one of the most tragic and fascinating mysteries of all time.

We have a very full and detailed history of those days, and can form a fairly accurate picture of the world as it was then. It was full of great and populous cities with beautiful buildings and busy streets. There were the same bitter contrasts of riches and poverty to which we are accustomed today. The marble palace glittered in the sunshine on the hillside and looked down upon the pigsty hovel in the valley.

There were newspapers with their daily sensations, and a constant round of crude and brutal entertainments for the people. There were many shops and markets. Moneylenders, quack-medicine vendors, slave-dealers, merchants, and business men jostled one another in the overcrowded towns.

There were books to be bought, and much of their poetry and history and their oratory is as well known today as it was then. He was not born into a barbarous savage world, but into a very highly civilized society like our own.

But this busy world knew nothing of his birth, and they would not have been in the least interested if you had told them. If you read in the "Daily Mail" a small paragraph something like this:

Strange Story from the East Child Reported Virgin Born

In a small village in the province of Assam, N. India, a child has been born, and there is a rumor among the natives that his birth was miraculous, and that his mother is a virgin. Some native shepherds who were watching their flocks on the hills swear that on the night of his birth they heard angelic voices singing, and that they proclaimed him to be the Messiah, the Saviour of the world:

you would probably turn over to see the latest

murder or divorce case, or to find who won the football game, thinking to yourself: "There are some queer folks in this world. What a silly tale!" That is how you would feel, and that doubtless is how the ordinary man of the world felt then, if any whisper of the Christmas story came to his ears. It was not worth bothering about. It would probably be a ten-days' wonder in the place itself, and then be forgotten in the limbo where all queer stories go when they are dead.

But the man of the world was wrong, as he often is. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in his philosophy. It was not a ten-days' wonder, it was a wonder that was destined to grow more wonderful as the centuries piled themselves up on a thousand years.

It was a story that was to be told a million times in a million different ways. It was to be told in perfect poetry and painted in the sublimest pictures the art of man has ever made. It was to be carved in wood and carved in stone, and sung to gorgeous music by a multitude of voices still unborn. It was to bring the heart of the ages to worship a new-born babe.

We do not blame the Roman gentleman or man in the street for thinking there was nothing in it at the time. Who would possibly have foreseen what was going to be the result of that birth? No fairy tale has ever sounded so fantastic and wildly improbable as the story of what has actually happened would have sounded in the ears of those who were living then.

Truth is stranger than fiction, and doubtless there are still in store for the sons of men wonders that we would laugh at as incredible. But in the light of what we know has been the result of this story, are we not bound to ask ourselves who and what this child was who was born in Bethlehem while Augustus reigned in Rome? What is the secret of this hold upon the hearts of men? How has he been able to force a man possessed of a critical mind to write:

"Jesus is the greatest figure in history as Hamlet is the greatest figure in art, because of his reality; and he still has the power because of this reality to make men fall in love with him

in spite of all their prejudices. A Christian is one who has fallen in love with Christ."

The power of the man Christ Jesus is due, not to anything that he had, for he had nothing, nor to any great thing that he did, for during his

short life on earth he did nothing, as the world counts deeds. It is due to something that he was. His triumph is the triumph of character. That fact sends us back to the beginning of things. All the real and lasting achievements of men and nations are the results of character.

ARE WE PREPARED?

By Terence J. Finlay

Rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York

THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL BE REVEALED ONLY IF WE ARE PREPARED

IN AN ISSUE of Time, a paragraph, under the heading of "Modern Living," describes the Babel of sounds heard during the Christmas season connected with "the rite of buying and giving of gifts." Amid all these sounds, the voice of the Christian Church is truly a voice crying in the wilderness of man's indifference and materialism.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Are you prepared for Christmas? You are probably thinking of the hundred and one things you have to do between now and Friday evening — cards to be sent, gifts to be bought, last-minute preparations for the holiday meals. These are all part of the preparation for Christmas. Please do not misunderstand me; it was never the purpose of the Christian church or of any Christian minister to wish to take away one iota of the true joy of Christmas. But what we are afraid of is that so many of us are allowing the counterfeit to pass for Christmas.

In the days of the children of Israel, they looked for the coming of the Messiah; for the one who should come and redeem his people. All through the scriptures, especially in the Book of Isaiah, you find marvelous prophecies of the one who shall come; but as you go on, you find that the prophets are concerned with the indifference of the people to a really spiritual preparation for the coming of the Messiah. You will recall Malachi's words: "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come . . . But who may abide the day of his coming? . . . for he is like a refiner's fire."

Symbolism of Fire

WE FIND the symbolism of fire running throughout the scriptures. God is represented as a

pillar of fire leading the children of Israel through the great and terrible wilderness. Elijah challenges the priests of a degraded idolatry on Mount Carmel: "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God." In the New Testament, you find John the Baptist warning that the one who is to come shall be like fire.

We are told that the ancient Eastern refiners would place the dross or clay into a crucible, which they would subject to seven fierce burnings. After each burning, the refiner would skim off the scum which would rise to the surface, until at last the refiner was able to see his own image reflected in the pure silver that remained in the crucible.

Thus the coming of the Lord is likened to the refiner's fire. He has come not just once, not only as the Christ Child at Bethlehem, but Christ has been coming repeatedly through the centuries. He has come in the movement of international events. Sometimes in the fire of war, he has revealed to men how cruel they may become to one another. In times of depression he can show men, under the burning of this pressure, the true values of life. And he also comes nationally, trying people under the fires of adversity, to remove the dross or clay and find the true gold.

Crises of Life

HE COMES to the individual in the crises of his life. He comes to a man who has been so confident that he is in control of everything; who suddenly finds himself unable to obtain those things of which he thought his material possessions would always assure him. Good health is

not for sale in the market-place. Peace of mind is not purchased at the drug store. Love and understanding between so-called loved ones is not found by material things alone. It is found by trust, sympathy, forgiveness, and some kind of mutual religious conviction.

Under the crises that have come to us in our lives, have we not found ourselves thrown back upon religion, upon Christ? We reach down for the faith which we have been taught is ours, and suddenly we realize that it is not enough just to come to church. There must be something within us which will respond to God, and God will speak to us and give us strength. A person who has passed through a refiner's fire, comes out a better, finer Christian.

We are now, with the rest of the Christian world, thinking of the anniversary of the birth of the Christ Child. Are you prepared, not only for the celebration of his birthday, but are you prepared to receive him more fully into your heart and life than you have ever known him before? If not, then we are lost in this Babel of sound that confuses the Christmas season.

"Though Christ a thousand times in
Bethlehem be born,

If he be not born in thee, thy soul is
all forlorn."

A Few Suggestions

MAY I GIVE YOU some practical suggestions, based on the words of Isaiah, found in the fortieth chapter: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

"Every valley shall be exalted." Symbolically this may mean the valley of our lower nature. Almost every one of us is aware of the tug downwards. At times we are forgiving, understanding, sympathetic. At other times we are critical, cynical, resentful. We all have this dual nature. The prophet tells us that every part of our lower nature can be lifted up and brought to a higher level if we are prepared for the coming of the Lord.

"Every mountain and hill shall be made low"—the mountains and hills of selfish pride and arrogance. There can be false pride of intelligence; false pride of ancestry. These mountains and hills must be brought low, if we are to know the presence of the Lord.

"The crooked shall be made straight." How many of us are devious in our dealings with one another, thinking not of how we might help and lift and cheer, but how we might prosper our own future, our own social standing, our own prestige and welfare?

"And the rough place made plain." What rough places are there in your life and mine? There is in every one of us a blind spot, which it is difficult to overcome. It may be that we are intolerant of one group of people, even though we may not admit it. We resent being associated with these people and try to keep away from them. These rough places must be made smooth.

It is a humbling process to be reminded of what goes on behind the facade which we present to the world. I hope that, as we prepare for Christmas, we may go beyond this outside Babel of sound; that we may go within ourselves and, like the prophet of old, may hear the voice crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

And then, what happens? Then the Christ appears; "the glory of the Lord is revealed" — but only if we are prepared!

CHRISTMAS IS OUT OF HAND

By Ruth Adam

Churchwoman of England

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES have always been slightly out of hand, ever since they were first introduced to replace pagan customs which were more than slightly out of hand already, from the Christian missionaries' point of view.

As Rose Macaulay pointed out, "The Christian missionaries had to permit our forefathers their revelry, their feasting, their dancing, their decking of houses with green, in spite of the prohibitions of these pagan vanities by the austere councils of the church."

And all through history, "Not all the decrees, the wrath of parish priests, the ordinances of Puritan parliaments could suppress the Saxon Christmas which always reappeared; noisier, jollier and more Bacchanalian than ever, through

every change of land, dynasty, religion and constitution."

From time to time, every hundred years or so, someone has made an effort to curb the festivities to keep them in line with their adaptation to Christianity, rather than their pagan origin. Sometimes, some part of the festivities would be forbidden altogether.

No Christmas Boxes

DURING the last few days as I trudged from gift department to gift department, I have thought sympathetically about Henry III, who decided, one year, to give no Christmas gifts at all, but to set aside the money towards pilgrimage he proposed to take during the coming months. This was not well received by his court, who found themselves docked of their expected gifts of royal garments and precious jewels.

Later, in 1418, the mayor and aldermen of London decided that "mumming" had got out of hand, and forbade it altogether. It was made a criminal offence for any person "during this holy time of Christmas, to walk by night in any manner mumming with plays, interludes, or any other disguisings, with any feigned beards, painted visors, deformed or colored visages in any wise." Though it was still allowable that "each person be honestly merry as he can within his own house dwelling."

The following year, authority made another effort — this time over the custom of asking for "Christmas boxes." A regulation was passed that the "perverse custom . . . which has grown to be an abuse . . . of persons who have food and raiment and appropriate advantages, resulting from their office should, under color of asking for an oblation, beg sums of money every year at the feast of our Lord's Nativity," should be stopped, and that any public official who asked for a Christmas box in future should lose his office.

Churches Shut

LATER STILL in 1644 Christmas celebrations of all kinds were stopped altogether and as a writer of the time lamented, "Who would have thought to have seen, in England, the churches shut and the shops open upon Christmas day?"

But, however much separate bits of the old customs are stamped out, they always creep back again; and I suppose it was Dickens, as much as anybody, who revived the old Saxon idea that to

be "noisy, jolly and Bacchanalian" was a sign of good-fellowship, and that the man who stood apart from it was a justifiable target for abuse.

If you look, for instance, at the story of Scrooge, you find that Dickens condemns him for not being jolly just as much as for neglecting the poor.

Scrooge was punished, not merely because he kept his riches to himself while children were starving at his door, but even more because he would not conform to the tradition of dancing and drinking and over-eating and being jolly like the families of his nephew and of his clerk.

If Dickens revived the Saxon jollity, it was Victoria and Albert who established the idea that Christmas is a family festival, and above all a nursery festival. Making it the day when home life is sacred is one of the few ideas that ties up at all literally with the Christian origin.

As Father Martindale said, "Christmas used not be treated as a day for children separately. The entire family was involved, and so were servants—if you had any—and so were friends who mightn't be going to have too good a Christmas because they would otherwise have been lonely. In a word, Christmas was a home-feast. And this was certainly due to sympathy with Mary and Joseph who found no room in the inn. The notion of dining in a restaurant on that day would have been regarded as not only absurd, but irreverent."

But Queen Victoria and her husband, in their enthusiasm for their own overflowing nurseries, introduced the German idea of its being a children's festival, along with the Christmas tree of German custom.

There is, by the way, an interesting theory that the Christmas tree came first from England to Germany, through a Christian missionary who went there from our own southwest, and took with him the adapted Druid custom of taking a tree indoors. The Druids did it, in order to keep the Dryad in the tree warm and comfortable during the winter solstice.

Excessive jollity — excessive eating, drinking, mumming excessive asking for Christmas boxes, excessive indulgence to the children — they have all been corrected, temporarily in turn. During recent years we have been creeping up towards excess again.

The war years gave an entirely different feeling to Christmas celebrations. Do you remember those "austerity" Christmases? Do you remem-

ber saving sweet-coupons, for weeks beforehand, so that the children could have a whole box of chocolates, just for once?

Wartime Christmas

DO YOU REMEMBER how delicious it was to have a proper joint or a chicken, after months of frozen cod and stew? And do you remember the passionate search for toys, or for materials that would make toys?

My own most vivid memory is of getting hold of the secret address of an obscure toy-maker, who lived in a back street, and who had to be approached by slipping through the back door of an innocent-seeming grocer's shop, into premises where he had, I can only suppose, a supply of black market wood.

His private life was far from irreproachable; and his work on one's order interrupted by his regular appointment in the police court. But he made the most wonderful wooden horses, strong, enduring, primitive, in scarlet and emerald and royal blue, like an impressionist painting.

I shall never forget waiting, one wartime Christmas Eve, until he emerged at last — unsteadily — from the blackout, with the splendid, finished articles which were the whole backbone of our Christmas preparations, just before we gave up hope entirely.

But those wartime Christmases stand out, as festivities that really meant something — exciting and romantic and significant, where later ones are a confused memory of too much colored paper and tinsel and expensive food and gifts in transparent boxes tied up with nylon ribbon.

I suppose that for once, we saw the Christmas feast as the very poor have always seen it — as a little patch of brightness in a long dark winter. I suppose we also saw it for once as a feast which meant something because we had also kept a fast.

Indulgence All Year Round

HOW OUR FOREFATHERS would have laughed at us for not knowing that to appreciate feasts, you must observe their opposite numbers, the fasts! Today, we eat and drink and indulge ourselves to the full, all the year round. We do not even observe the seasonal shortages; but eat green peas in the winter, and strawberries in February, and fresh meat in early spring. Then we wonder why the flavor has gone out of these things, which once tasted so special, and so different.

Our Christmas has got out of hand, just like

that of our forefathers. It is not merely that it has got so far away from its Christian origin that out of a hundred Christmas cards, so far arrived at our house, only six are religious ones.

Personally, I would welcome the complete separation of this winter-feast, this orgy as the nights grow long, from the Nativity celebration. In fact, I think we should take a leaf out of Scotland's book, and have the spending spree, which is now called "Christmas shopping" separately as a religious festival.

But it is not merely that the festivity has ceased to be Christian. It has got out of hand as a festivity. Our excess, I think, is neither eating nor drinking. Except among a small section of society, drunkenness is hardly a problem today.

Our Own Excess

A CERTAIN CLIQUE of "socialities" drink to excess, but the ordinary, public-house drinking is sensible and reasonable — nothing like what it was forty years ago, when I was a child. Nor do we overeat, on the whole. Indeed, the whole nation is so passionately diet-conscious that over-indulgence at the table is a thing of the past.

But we have our own excess, and it is simply in spending money, wildly, selfishly, for no better reason than self-indulgence and keeping up with the Joneses. This tremendous shopping spree, which takes place the first three weeks in December, is not confined to buying presents for other people.

The money which cascades from savings accounts into the pockets of tradespeople is mostly for ourselves — new furniture, new clothes, above all special food and drink.

I suppose historians will say that the first attempt to pass regulations against the excessive Christmas shopping of the nineteen-fifties was in the "pink zone" regulations against shoppers' cars. It is interesting to notice that this attempt to check excess has called forth exactly the same indignant protests as all similar Christmas regulations, throughout our history.

The Saxons complained that the clergy wanted to stop their jollity; our later forefathers that the civic authorities and the Puritans wanted to stop their innocent merriment; and we complain that the minister wants to stop money changing hands.

I dare say a spending spree is less damaging to bodies and souls than gluttony and drunkenness; but it is just as far removed from any genuine celebration of the Nativity.

ANXIETY: --- FEAR GONE INWARD

By Kenneth E. Clarke

Rector of St. Thomas, Terrace Park, Ohio

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS ABOUT WHAT CAN BE DONE IF YOU ARE IN AN ANXIOUS STATE OF MIND

THE PRESIDENT of a small industry had placed an order for some new machines in his factory, but when China threatened to invade India, he cancelled the order. His anxiety over the future of the world made business expansion seem futile. Recently though, the volume on the New York stock exchange reached a peak equalling the seven highest in the market's history. With the announcement of a cease fire between India and Pakistan, people's anxieties were lessened, and they returned to the everyday business of buying and selling.

Anxiety; someone has said, is the price we pay for being human. All of us have experienced it, and even when we are not directly involved, our lives are often affected by it. Unlike fear, it doesn't stem from any immediate external threat. If a man double our size and twice as mean is about to punch us in the nose, we become fearful. But, if he isn't standing in front of us, yet we worry continually about the possibility of being attacked by such a person that is anxiety. It is, you might say, fear gone inward. The man who cancelled his order did not face any immediate threat to himself, but his reflection on the dreadful possibilities of world war produced a temporary state of anxiety. No doubt, the mere act of cancelling the order gave him relief. He had done something, and when we are anxious, almost any action which has some promise of effecting the situation eases our burden. To question whether or not such action is wise, is beside the point.

Now as you know, Jesus addressed himself to the subject of anxiety in the sermon on the mount. But before exploring the meaning of the saying "Do not be anxious about your life", found in Matthew 6, we ought to give further consideration to the nature of anxiety.

Symptoms of Anxiety

IN ITS EXTREME and intense form, anxiety results in mental and physical sickness. Psychologically the individual finds himself beset by

phobias of one kind or another and physically he may suffer from such symptoms as headache, dizziness, heart-racing, sweating and choking or smothering sensations. All this sounds rather clinical I am sure, and some may even resent having such things mentioned. But those who are honest with themselves will admit that they have had such symptoms from time to time. A man I know, for example, was taking a long trip and was suddenly overcome by pain in his shoulder which extended into the chest. He asked the person with him to take the wheel. The pain continued so they stopped to see a doctor. Examination showed that my friend's blood pressure was quite high. When he finally reached his destination, he went to the hospital. It turned out that he had an acute attack of bursitis. The high blood pressure had been caused by his anxiety over the thought that he might be having a heart attack. Such experiences are relatively common. Of course, if they are chronic, outside help is indicated. My reason for mentioning all this is to indicate that the difference between so called neurotic anxiety and everyday rational or existential anxiety is not as great as we think.

Rational anxiety refers to the anxiety which grows out of the circumstances of life. It is called rational because there is an obvious reason for it. A company, for example, may have introduced a new product with the hope of expanding business and creating new markets. After several months of production they find themselves besieged with problems. Parts are hard to obtain, workers are having difficulty learning new tasks and, worst of all, customers are complaining over faulty performance. The chances are that under such circumstances the man or men responsible for introducing the new line will experience considerable anxiety. Or on the more personal level, consider the person who is suddenly confronted with the necessity of an operation, the outcome of which is highly uncertain. Who among us could say he would not be anxious?

Role of Guilt

IN ANY CONSIDERATION of this subject, we can not overlook the role guilt often plays either. All of us have standards we have set for ourselves. These standards have to do with both our achievement and our moral integrity. In both areas we are continually confronted by the fact that we are falling below our own and others' expectations. Somehow, we think it ought not to be this way. Because of this, we feel guilty, and our guilt makes us anxious. The net result is a condition which Dr. Karl Menninger describes as "man against himself". Or, you might say, we are at war with ourselves.

There is another form of anxiety, however, which cannot be traced to any outward circumstances. It is called "spiritual anxiety", and in this day and age when so many foundations of the faith seem to be crumbling, it is quite common. All of us want to know and believe that our lives have meaning and purpose, but we are sometimes plagued by the thought that this hope is an illusion. The threat of nothingness can be paralyzing. Such thoughts as: why bother, what's the use, what does it all amount to anyway, go around and around in our minds, and we become depressed, lethargic and disagreeable. Some might regard this condition as the work of the devil, but I see in it the hand of God provoking us to dissatisfaction with the shallowness of much of our lives.

What We Can Do

ANXIETY in all its forms — neurotic, rational and spiritual — is, then, a condition with which we are all too well acquainted. But the question is: what can we do about it? Because, as Sullivan says, it is basically a threat to our self-esteem, what we are likely to do is become overly sensitive, acutely conscious and protective of our status and prone to hostile and angry behavior. In the sixth chapter of St. Matthew, however, Jesus suggests some more creative possibilities.

"Behold," he says, "the birds of the heaven that they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they?"

Many have interpreted this to mean that we should have no more cause for worry or concern than the lower forms of life. This is ridiculous and entirely out of keeping with the rest of Jesus' teaching. He challenged men to face their re-

sponsibilities, not escape from them. Thus, by calling our attention to birds of the air, he is pointing up the difference between man and all other forms of life. Animals are animals because they are unaware of themselves and their reactions. When we are caught in anxieties' tight vice, we become like them. We lose the capacity for awareness. We cease to think clearly and rationally. We are apt to act on impulse alone, and we use all sorts of devices, such as anger and hostility, to conceal the real cause of our discomfort.

The words "Are ye not of much more value than they?" are a reminder to us that we can do better than this. Thus the first thing Jesus tells us to do with anxiety is to get to the root of it, bring it out in the open, and face it head on with the conviction and the courage that his grace is sufficient for us. If we can't do it by ourselves then we should seek help. This also requires courage.

Jesus goes on to ask: "Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?" Those of us who are so continually confronted with human tragedy and death are often amazed by the anxious concern some display over trivialities and inconsequential details. Perhaps if we all were in more direct contact with life's basic realities, we would be relieved of many of our worries. At least, they would be kept in better perspective. Important as this truth is, I think Jesus had something more than this in mind in this saying. He was also speaking of the whole matter of self-acceptance. Earlier I mentioned the relationship between guilt and anxiety and the condition which Menninger terms "man against himself".

By reminding us that we cannot add one cubit to our stature, Jesus was also indicating that we had better come to terms with our human nature. It is as it is. God made us this way. Thus, there are going to be times — many times — when we will handle our anxieties in uncreative ways. We will be afraid to face them, we will hide them from ourselves and from others, even those who could help, we will seek solace in status symbols and we will display hostility and anger toward our fellows. I do not say this is good, but it is human. The good news of the gospel is that God accepts us the way we are. This is what gives us the strength and the desire to repent, make amends where we can and carry on with the assurance that we are forgiven.

W. L. Northridge tells of a woman who came to his office to borrow books on psychology. He asked her how she became interested in the subject. In reply she told him that all her life she had been painfully jealous of her more attractive sister. She hated herself so much she used to stick her tongue out at herself in the mirror. Then one day she decided that if she couldn't be physically beautiful she would concentrate on inner beauty. She began to give her services to the poor and the sick. "Now," she said, "I want these books so I can be as understanding and effective as possible." Jesus, as you recall, also said: "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Many people, like the woman in this story, have found that the answer to anxiety is a new way of life.

A Day At a Time

FINALLY, Jesus tells us to live one day at a time. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." I was working with some members of the

every member canvass committee recently and, in the course of the evening suggested a few decisions which resulted in some changes in the previous plans. Jokingly, one of the men said: "You're just like my boss. I get things all laid out and then he switches the signals."

Regardless of what we may think of this as far as running a business or a church goes, life is apt to be like this. We have to plan, but we also need to be open to changes in our plans. Thus in telling us not to be anxious for the morrow, Jesus was sounding a warning about an over-investment in the future. If our plans are too hard and fast, we will not only become anxious when they are changed but, what is worse, we will not be open to the guidance of his holy spirit into new and uncharted paths.

The Christian is a man who is living fully in the present. He faces the future with the assurance that all is within the providence of the power which, as Tillich says, is "greater than the power of one's self or of one's world".

NEW BOOKS

E. John Mohr
Book Editor

THE ROAD TO SALVATION — A Handbook on the Christian Care of Persons. By Theodor Bovet. Doubleday. \$4.95

A few years ago the Swiss psychiatrist Theodor Bovet published a small book on Christian marriage, entitled *Love, Skill and Mystery*. The title seemed cryptic but I am sure those who read the book were impressed by Dr. Bovet's sensitive and wise discussion of sex and marriage.

The Road to Salvation is likewise wise and sensitive, and much more ambitious in scope. The title again is rather cryptic, even pretentious, and the publishers should have stuck closer to a reasonable translation of the original: *Lebendige Seelsorge*. Furthermore the subtitle, A Handbook on the Christian Care of Persons, does not coincide with the American idea of a handbook as a manual on practical matters, easily arranged in little blocks of instant-answers to instant-problems. The blurb on the dust-jacket is also quite misleading, but I suppose American readers are sufficiently skeptical of dust jackets to bother about reading them.

The Road to Salvation is con-

cerned with the Christian care of persons, and is clearly written for Christian pastors. It is not easy reading, and Dr. Bovet's meanings are sometimes elusive, perhaps especially to Americans unaccustomed to continental evangelical theology, and the author's personal "mythology." At times one is perplexed by ideas which sound old fashioned in close juxtaposition to ideas which are psychologically and socially very bold and avant garde. Perhaps this perplexity is caused in part by the translation, perhaps in part because we have been shaped in our thinking by mechanistic, deterministic approaches to the behavioural sciences, and find it surprising to discover a psychiatrist speaking seriously of haunted houses, materializations, demonic powers and other occult phenomena which have as yet no scientific explanation. But certainly the author's approach to these matters, as well as his approach to human nature, sin, disease and health is that of a trained scientist and dedicated Christian man who believes that all things known and unknown must be observed and interpreted in the light of the gospel of Christ, who alone is the source of healing, mystery, knowledge, skill and life itself.

The chapter on the practice of the pastoral ministry includes sections dealing with man's sexuality and various problems of love and mar-

riage. These are properly bold, sensible and enlightening. He has many things to say which have needed to be said, which many books have evaded; and they are said here with considerable clarity. Perhaps the main weakness of the book is that it is too brief for the range of material it attempts to cover. Often the reader wishes Dr. Bovet had expanded, illustrated, clarified insights and ideas of great acumen. This is especially true in passages which deal with man's work, sickness, death; his attitude toward technology and the arts, the mission of the church, the life of the Christian pastor. I could myself wish that the early chapters in which there is an unnecessary rehearsal of some of the contributions of Jung, Freud, etcetera, had been pruned down, and the later chapters expanded.

This is not a Handbook on the Christian Care of Persons. I'm not sure any such book could be written which would be worth reading. But it is a book which throws considerable light on the person, as God's child, whose sins have been taken away by Christ, and on the difficult but uniquely important task of the Christian pastor, not as a psychiatrist or as man who "circles like a sparrowhawk, waiting for someone to get into difficulties so that he can swoop on him and offer him prompt pastoral assistance," but as intelligent man of God, informed to

(Continued on Page Eighteen)

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CHRISTMAS GIFTS

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The WITNESS

PENNSYLVANIA

DANIELS FELLOWSHIP ESTABLISHED

★ Dean John B. Coburn of the Episcopal Theological School has announced on behalf of the board of trustees the establishment of the Jonathan Myrick Daniels Fellowship. Jonathan Daniels, a second-year student at the School, was killed in Hayneville, Alabama, last August while attempting to bring about better understanding in the critical social issues of that area.

It is hoped that this fellowship will continue to bring something of his spirit to these issues in our society today. Students from any of the accredited seminaries of the American Association of Theological Schools will be eligible for the fellowship, and thus it will be ecumenical in scope. The purpose of the fellowship is to strengthen the participation of seminary students throughout the country in areas of great human needs — involvement in civil rights matters, problems of the inner city, of disadvantaged children, and others of a similar nature.

A campaign will take place to raise one hundred thousand dollars for the fund. A Committee has been appointed to help make this possible with Mrs. Philip B. Daniels, Jonathan's mother of Keene, N. H., as honorary chairman, and Dean Coburn, chairman, and includes members of E.T.S.—trustees, faculty and students — and representatives of Jonathan's home city of Keene.

They are as follows: Dr. Henry F. Allen, Boston, and Robert S. Potter, New York (trustees); the Revs. Joseph F. Fletcher and William J. Wolf (faculty); Stuart P. Coxhead, Jr. and Rayford B. High, Jr. (students); Mr. J. Eugene Felch, 3rd., the Rev. Chandler H. McCarty, David Putnam, and

Ross B. Warren (Keene); and Mrs. Owen C. Thomas, secretary.

By providing financial assistance the fellowship will encourage students in seminaries to increase their participation in social issues and thus to strengthen their theological education in the preparation for a relevant ministry of service to the contemporary world.

URGE RECOGNITION OF NEW CHINA

★ Directors of the Massachusetts council of churches have strongly recommended the admission of Communist China "into the world community of nations."

Forrest L. Knapp, general secretary, said a resolution under consideration since January was endorsed by a vote of 24 to 4, with three members abstaining.

Four specific means of accomplishing the purpose were offered and it was stated that "a workable disarmament agreement is possible only if mainland China is involved."

"No other power will disarm so long as China's armament remains unaffected or so long as China is not covered by inspection procedures," it said.

The steps that should be taken, according to council directors, are:

- The United States government to press negotiations with the People's Republic of China for extension of non-strategic trade, for ready access to news, for inclusion of mainland Chinese in scientific and other conferences, for freedom of travel, and for cultural exchange.

- The United States government to consult with other nations in seeking ways to provide the responsible representation of the People's Republic of China in test ban treaties, disarmament discussions, and the

deliberations and decisions of the United Nations, in the last instance with due regard for the continued effectiveness of the United Nations and its agencies and for the welfare and political self-determination of the people of Taiwan.

- The United States government to take steps to move toward diplomatic recognition of the de facto government of mainland China.

- The 1,800 member churches of the council to build informed public opinion and to take advantages of any opportunities for the exchange of information and visitors with the Chinese churches.

CHRISTMAS A BURDEN SAYS PRIMATE

★ The primate of Australia, Archbishop H. R. Gough of Sydney, said that he sympathizes with some people who now "dread" and "even hate" Christmas.

In an article published by Southern Cross, diocesan magazine, he said that although "the origin of Christmas is found in the poverty and simplicity of a stable," Christmas has become a burden because it is now a "commercial and social event."

He said that many are so exhausted by "all the rush and strain of preparation for Christmas parties and meals, the worry of getting the right presents and the anxiety of the cost and for those in business the exhaustion of pre-Christmas parties" that they are not able to enjoy Christmas day, "let alone turn their minds attentively to the spiritual wonder of the festival."

The primate held that part of the trouble lay in "the disease of keeping up with the Joneses."

"Our parties must be gayer, our presents more expensive, our houses and gardens more beautiful. To achieve this, we wear ourselves out and spend

far more money than we ought to." He suggested that people set aside time for quiet thought and prayerful meditation on the inner meaning of Christmas.

DELTA MINISTRY TO BE STUDIED

★ Brooks Hays, former Congressman from Arkansas and one-time-president of the Southern Baptist Convention, will head a committee of the NCC to evaluate the Delta Ministry program and to recommend guidelines for future programs.

Mr. Hays, an adviser to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, is now a visiting professor at Rutgers University.

Herman Morse of New York, head of the United Presbyterian Church's institute of strategic studies, was named vice-chairman of the evaluation committee.

The Delta Ministry is a long-term project to improve the economic, health and social conditions of Mississippi's poor. It has an interdenominational, interracial staff of 14 — including six native Mississippians — plus volunteers from the north and a corps of local Negro youths.

"Because there are so many kinds of critical need on which the Delta Ministry might spend its energy and its money, it is obvious that it cannot hope to meet every one of these . . . Priorities must be established," said Jon L. Regier of New York who delivered the commission's report. He is an associate general secretary of the NCC and heads its division of Christian life and mission, which administers the Mississippi program.

Citing achievements of the Delta Ministry's first year in operation, he pointed to a number of successful programs in economic rehabilitation, health, citizenship and "freedom."

The ministry has helped lead-

ers from 10 counties form a non-profit association eligible for federal grants and loans to be used in developing low cost housing, small business opportunities and agricultural improvement.

It has also been instrumental, Regier said, in establishing the child development group of Mississippi, "an autonomous indigenous organization which developed and administered a project head-start program this summer."

Some southerners on the general board which met Dec. 6-8 in Madison, Wis., protested that the ministry was alienating sympathetic southern whites by its militant actions. They were especially critical of one section of the report which said that "a major difficulty now facing the Delta Ministry is not the action of the usual troublemakers, but the attitudes and practices of the so-called white moderates."

According to Regier, other achievements included:

- Creation of more than 1,100 jobs for adults

- The bringing together of representatives of public and private institutions, including denominational mission boards, to consider both short and long range economic development plans for Mississippi

- Purchase of a mobile clinic for a health program, staffed by a doctor and four nurses at work in Holmes County. "In line with the Delta Ministry policy of encouraging local people to assume their own leadership, this work includes organization of a county health improvement association to conduct demonstration clinics and to put pressure on the county and state for expanded, non-discriminatory health programs."

- A freedom corps, composed of 19 specially trained young

Negroes between the ages of 18 and 23, is working in local communities, helping Negro citizens organize for self-help.

NCC TO ASSIST HOUSING PROGRAMS

★ The general board of the NCC voted to assist its member denominations in setting up a not-for-profit housing corporation to aid participation in federal housing programs by churches and other religious groups in local communities.

Legal and technical advisory services will be provided by the corporation, including surveys, assessing the need for specific housing projects, and aiding prospective sponsors in applying for federal grants.

It will help establish housing projects for the aged, the handicapped, the poor and the underprivileged.

The sponsoring denominations and their appropriate boards and agencies will control policy and operation of the corporation. The resolution specified that the council itself would not be a member.

Officers of the NCC were empowered to assist the denominations in setting up the corporation, provided that legal counsel of the NCC has reviewed the proposal for creation of such a corporation and the legal interests of the council are protected; that adequate participation is assured from member communions of the NCC through their boards and agencies; that adequate assurances are made by those boards and agencies for funding the corporation so that an effective program can be launched and maintained.

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THE WITNESS

Tunkhannock, Pa. 18657

- NEW BOOKS -

(Continued from Page Fourteen)

the fullest extent as to the nature of man as person, and man as God's partner, and willing to be the agent through whom Christ can bring wholeness and life.

The book is an important contribution, and a provocative contribution to the pastor's library; a library perhaps too filled with little books on pastoral care which are secular in their approach and veneered over with a "pale cast" of Christian thought.

— THOMAS VAN B. BARRETT

Dr. Barrett is Professor of Pastoral Theology, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif.

COMMUNISM, CHRISTIANITY, DEMOCRACY, by Surgit Singh. John Knox. \$3.

It is the contention of Dr. Surgit Singh, professor of Christian philosophy at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, that both Communism and liberal democracy partially are derived from Christianity. In a sense, they represent a secularization of certain aspects of the Christian heritage and each has become a kind of secular religion replacing the faith from which they sprung. Neither is the real thing; yet, because of the hidden, underlying, historical connection, each affords opportunity for a reaffirmation of Christian concern in terms of social relevance.

Perhaps the most interesting portion of this little volume is its careful description of the intellectual background and philosophical evolution which led to the mortal sickness of Communism. Byzantine autocracy — from which the poor Russian people always have suffered — the linguistic isolation and cultural backwardness of old Russia, the quarrels between the Slavophiles and Westernizers, the intricate intermeshing of Czarist state and Orthodox religion: all play a part. So also does the perverted Christian messianism of Hegel, which becomes in Feuerbach an anthropomorphic atheism and in Marx a revolutionary materialism. The cunning deceptions of Lenin, the brutality of Stalin, the pragmatic modifications of Communist ideology by Khrushchev, challenge the Russian Orthodox Church — first, to survive; secondly, to influence; and thirdly — God willing — to transform an atheistic society.

In contrast, the history of modern liberal democracy, stemming from

Reformation doctrines of the "priesthood of all believers" and the "liberty of the Christian man," is more familiar to most of us. Due regard is paid by Dr. Singh to our nation's basically Puritan inheritance as he describes British and American democracy as a "free and voluntary association of individuals" in which the state is only "an imperfect copy of the original true life of the (religious) congregation." The Virginia Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and many other such documents, express this fundamentally Biblical and Protestant ideal. Comparison is made with Catholicism's continuing reliance upon the semi-fascist "leadership principle" of the embodiment of authority in the papal and episcopal office. Nonetheless, regardless of historical riches of heritage, the fact remains that in the Western world, as in the sphere of Russian influence, the original Christian impetus has become secularized and the church socially irrelevant.

In a comparison of the Khrushchev reports to the 20th and 21st Congresses of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., and the report to President Eisenhower entitled "Goals for Americans," the evolving history of the two worlds is brought up to date. Dr. Singh calls upon Russian Orthodox Christians, who now are "a depressed class in a supposedly classless society," to step into the expanding gap between Communist theory and practice with a challenging reassertion of Christian idealism in terms of social relevance. Lenin's only fear of the church was that it would be a "priest without cassock" — something like "religionless religion" — and in this capacity it will never be defeated. So likewise in the Western world Dr. Singh calls upon the church to supercede shallower forms of patriotism and pursuit of self-interest, which claims to be the truly vital religions of our people in the present day, and to in-

spire our changing society with Christian ideals of love, justice, and truth.

— MARION L. MATICS

Dr. Matics is Rector of Christ Church Parish, Bay Ridge, New York City.

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Rector of St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

A letter addressed to a good friend who has been sending the author clippings and quotes from various publication of the radical right. Among them was an editorial by David Lawrence

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THE WITNESS

TUNKHANNOCK, PA. 18657

- BACKFIRE -

Reuel Lahmer

Organist and Choirmaster

The Ascension, Pittsburgh, Pa.

In reply to Wilbur L. Caswell (12/9) I do as a musician have opinions as to the effect of music upon students. These opinions it seems are quite contrary to Mr. Caswell's.

As to the scientific study of the effect of religious services on the attitudes and habits of school children, I wonder how the study was conducted, what part music played and if perhaps the kind or quality of the religious service was at fault!

As to the statement that "no one can distinguish between the 'sacred' and the 'secular'" I would like to quote the dictionary; "Sacred 1. Set apart or dedicated to religious use." As to music not being uplifting or degrading, it would be possible to fill a book of quotes about the uplifting qualities of music. Here is one from Martin Luther: "Music is greater than the most eloquent man's most eloquent eloquence. Next to the Word of God she is the only thing that can produce what the Word can, namely, a calm and glad spirit . . . Do you wish to lift up those who are sad, or sober, those who are gay, enliven the despondent, threaten the proud, calm those who live, or soften those who hate? Is there anything more potent than music to command all these human emotions?"

I don't believe "It all depends upon the words set to music." Rather the music more often carries the words. It is true that associations do influence our likes and dislikes, which is all the more reason for seeking good and wholesome associations.

When Stainer threw pebbles at stain glass windows he was a boy. There are many grown

men, including churchmen and clergymen who still throw pebbles at the "beautiful." As to Wagner living with the wife of one of his friends, I don't know that this had any effect on the quality of Parsifal. There have been clergymen too, including the recent case of a bishop, caught in similar acts but does this effect the quality of their past good deeds or those they may do in the future?

The Passion Chorale it is true was at one time a popular song but it was transformed through use in the church and probably through some change in its tempo and meter so that it became more fitting for religious usage.

The quality of the music, its rhythm, melody, harmony and form determine its fitness for use in the church, not just its meter, however it is true that music in 3/4 or 6/8 meters unless at a slow tempo is not as fitting as music in 4/4 or with no definite meter. A look at the hymnal will confirm this.

We should be even more concerned with what goes into the ears and eyes of our children and young people than what goes into their stomachs. Music can be a factor in spiritual nutrition.

Our creator put rhythm in all things. Even the birds sing and when man looses his urge to sing we shall have a pretty dull world. In conclusion I would like to quote from a fine article in *The American Organist*, April 65 by the Rev. Wyn Blair Sutphin minister of the First Presbyterian church Pompono Beach, Fla. "The loftiest experience of man is always set to melody. His most sublime communication is the musical. When the angelic heralds agitated life, their bulletins were scored for orchestra and chorus, and the voice of God is traditionally transported on the wings of song. While the poverty of languages exhibits God in tat-

tered rhetoric, the great chorale conveys him still majestic and splendid! So, in the church, the music ought to be the most inspiring part of every service."

William B. Schmidgall

Rector of St. Stephens, New Hartford N. Y. and Secretary of the Joint Commission on Church Music.

Mr. Lahmer's letter (11/18) about the importance of music reminded me of a doctoral dissertation I saw some years ago in which a careful study was made comparing the effect of choir experience on learning the lore of the church. The thesis was substantiated that children trained in choirs knew more about the church than any other groups of children. I'm not able to cite the reference, but I haven't forgotten the thesis.

Certainly, one of the best dioceses to look for a specific answer to Mr. Lahmer's question would be the diocese of Los Angeles where there are some forty parish day schools in operation. Perhaps the music commission in that diocese would be intrigued by Mr. Lahmer's question and initiate a study.

Of course, schools will, if they are church schools, reflect the general interest of the church in music. A study of the role of music in the Protestant Episcopal Church of the diocese of Southern Ohio is in process and is being made by a member of the faculty of Ohio State University. This study should be of considerable interest.

By all means, let's keep Mr. Lahmer's general question alive. Whether we care about it or not, music is central in the education of the faithful. Besides hymns, the liturgy would scarcely be liturgy without music.

Far too little attention is being paid to the role of music in church, let alone its special educational facilities.

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