

7 February 1951

Lancaster, Pa.

MAKING GOODNESS ATTRACTIVE

The Elder Brother in the Story of the Prodigal Son.

There is something about this elder brother that we do not like. He is honest, industrious, law-abiding, he stayed home while his brother, the prodigal, was in the far country wasting his substance in riotous living - he is what we know as a good man. Yet his goodness is not attractive.

Let us study him a bit. There he is coming up from the field after a day's work. As he nears the house, he hears music and dancing. It is evident he doesn't approve. It is too lively for him. "What does this racket mean?" he asks. A servant tells him that his brother has come home and that his father has killed the fatted calf. One would suppose that he would rejoice at such news. If he had had any concern for his brother and any affection for his father he would have been glad that his brother was safe and sound and that his father had the load of anxiety lifted from his mind.

But no. His face darkens with anger and he will not go in. His mind turns inward, and he begins to brood over his fancied wrongs. "I might have known it," no doubt he said to himself, "I stayed home, worked hard and saved. Why couldn't he have done the same?"

In this we see what kind of a person he is. I think we must say that there are people like him in our day. They are good, respectable, law-abiding people, but there is something about them - something cold, hard, exacting, unforgiving - that spoils their goodness. They just have no sympathy for anyone weaker than they. They walk the straight line of strict rectitude themselves and they will never forget the person who does not.

The real character of this elder brother is further revealed when the father comes out to plead with him. He becomes more angry. "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." He chose not to remember all that his father had been to him and had done for him through the years. All he could think of was that his younger brother was being given a feast. "When this thy son - this precious son of yours - was come," - he says, "after devouring his living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

Can't we just see him there! Angry, jealous, vindictive, peevish. There was really no reason for it. During all those years he had had by far the better part of it. While the prodigal, driven by his passions, was rioting in the far country, this elder brother was safe at home with the father, enjoying his father's companionship, being blessed by the freedom and affection of the father's house. "Son," said the father, "thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." He begrudged his brother this one feast prepared for his welcome, but he had sat daily at his father's table. Instead of complaining, he should have had the grace to be thankful - not only for the blessing he had enjoyed at home but also for the fact that he had been spared the temptations of the flesh which drove his brother from home. He had much to be thankful for if he had been willing to acknowledge it.

The same is true of many good people in our day. They seem to think that their goodness is due entirely to their own virtue and that they are entitled to all the credit. The failure to be thankful - that's the fatal flaw in the goodness of many a good person. If we are good, the chances are it is due to the fact that we have had a good heredity, were brought up under favorable circumstances and never had to fight the battle with strong temptation. God grant that we may have the grace to be thankful for this.

But what made the elder brother's goodness least attractive is that there was no love in it. How it was possible for him to live with the father whose love was so great without reflecting some of that love - is hard to understand. If he were like people in our day who are without love, he was cold, critical of everything and everybody, convinced of his own superior merit, always letting everyone know how much he did and how little he received in return. His influence in the home must have been very depressing. Indeed, one reason why the younger brother ran away from home may be that he couldn't stand the stung, complacent self-righteousness of the elder brother. And what a trial he must have been to the father! - as great a trial as the younger son was a source of anxiety and concern.

Yes! The greatest flaw in the goodness of this elder brother is that he was without love. In the last anal-

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MAKING GOODNESS ATTRACTIVE  
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ysis that is why he is such an unlovely person. That kind of person is always unlovely, unattractive. Sometime ago I heard a speaker relate the story of a woman who was a teacher of English in a certain college. This woman was known as a good teacher, careful and exact, always striving for perfection and of unimpeachable character. But she was very proud of her excellence. One day she asked a friend of hers what she could do to make her teaching and herself more nearly completely perfect. Her friend said: "I can tell you but you will not do it." "Oh yes I will," said the woman. "Well then," said her friend, "Get drunk and turn a somersault." What that friend meant to say, of course, is - if you are so perfect that you have no sense of failure at all, no sense of sin, no humility, if you think that by just a little further effort you will be completely perfect, then you had better do something you'll be sorry for and be humble and penitent about. We can understand that. The speaker said that the fact was that that woman who thought she was so nearly perfect had sinned all her life in hardness, coldness, lack of sympathy, lack of love. She needed something to make her realize she was human and had faults and needed forgiveness.

Yes! The goodness of the elder brother, like the perfection of this woman, is very unattractive. Indeed, the prodigal with all his weaknesses, is more attractive, more likeable. He is a profligate, it is true, a spendthrift, a sensualist, but at least he is cheerful, good natured, sympathetic. He has the capacity to love, and proved himself capable of repentance. Thank God for the saints but when the saints are cold and critical and loveless, it is hard to warm up to them and it is doubtful whether they win any souls for the Kingdom of God.

Dr. Kosman

SCHOOL CALENDAR

It's later than you think. That is, late enough in the winter term to think of course choices concurrent with registration for the spring semester. All students are requested to register in Dean Dunn's office on Wednesday, today, between 1:15 and 3:30 p.m. and tomorrow, Thursday, between 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. and 1:15 to 3:30 p.m.

Seniors, please note!! Friday is the deadline for portrait appointments for the 1950-51 yearbook. It is your yearbook. Your cooperation is essential to its completion and success.

The spiritual in the life of the Seminary's neighboring institution,

Franklin and Marshall College, will be highlighted in both group discussion and addresses by well qualified members of the faculty at the annual Institute of religion, scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 15, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and continuing throughout the day. All members of the Seminary Family, students and faculty, are invited to attend by Dr. Charles Spotts, college department head of religion.

Dr. Furd E. Dietz, General Secretary, and Dr. Ralph Weiler, Eastern Secretary, Board of National Missions, will be available for conference with all members of both the Junior and Middler classes on Monday, Feb. 19. Anyone desiring an appointment with them is requested to give his name to the office or Dr. Dunn. Both men will speak during the regular 1:30 p.m. chapel period.

Everyone is reminded that David A. Miller, General Council member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and Allentown newspaper publisher, will address the Society of Inquiry on Tuesday, Feb. 20.

Guest speaker at the 10 a.m. chapel service on Thursday, Feb. 22, will be Dr. Marcel Pradervand, General Secretary of the Alliance of Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System.

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THE STAFF

Editorial:	Dick Glatfelter, ed.
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News:	Bob Haas, ed.
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Sports:	Dick Masters, ed.
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Art:	Ken Shreiner
Technical	Banks Sheppard
	Joe Gyorke
	Bob Titus
Faculty Advisor:	Dr. Harner

# DIGAMMA-ing IN A PARAGRAB

It's a rare treat to entertain a fraternity brother---especially when he lets you know he's coming. Anyway, this is the case when one is a Seminarian and the fraternity brother is still bothering his head about the wanderings of the Muns in a rather unliturgical college. And it's amazing what kinds of scholars will turn up in a pre-theo frat. Now this guy Fturner is really the tops! (The "F" is a digamma and is not pronounced in the best circles; it shows that he comes from an ancient family.) He's trying to escape from Karma by uniting himself with the true essence--the ur-digamma. It's a hobby. A fixation? Why, I can remember the day when he ran into my college room with a mass of pages in his hand and a fanatical gleam in his eye, "I stole this from Leary's for only two bits!" "Eh?" "ANTHONY'S HOMER WITH THE DIGAMMA RESTORED," he supplied.

With these recollections forcing themselves into the conscious I noticed Fturner creeping up the walk at the ungodly hour of ten-thirty Saturday morning and dashed out to meet him. "Hush-mouth!" "Droop-snoot!" The cathedral of 101 was properly adorned with garlands and superfrontals as he waddled through the portals. After receiving an honorary degree, he sat down full of questions: "Where's the proctor live? Where d'ya have yer water fights? Wha d'jya do with the cannon ball? Do these doors burn down when you light Ronsonol streaming down over them? What cha got t'eat?"

As I steered him back through the doorway, I murmured, "You must see our chapel." On the way the old gleam returned to his eye as he produced what might be considered a report card, "All digammas!" I nodded. Nearing the chapel, he asked, "Is this where they train Baptist ministers?" I nearly had forgotten! The ciborium was veiled not a moment too soon, but on my way I had tripped over my rosary and dented my gold mitre against the censor. (Now I'll have to wear my silver one!) But as I explained to Fturner, "It's all a matter of taste, but remember that taste is the razor-edge of...." And he was running to meet someone who represented himself to be the Lone Ranger.

Dick Carson

# SEMINARY SPORTSCOPE

The dart baseball league has the top spot of interest in the Seminary this week. Last week team # 2 swept all three games to change the standings. Interest was at its peak as both teams met for final and deciding games early Monday evening. Team # 1 clinched the first game 4-3, Team # 2 battled back and won the second game 2-1. All hopes for the championship centered on the third and final game. Team # 1 made sure of this one and swept the game by the convincing score of 9-1. With that victory Team # 1 has won the first half championship for 1951. The second half of the season will begin next week.

A quick glance at the individual departments finds Tom "Dutch" Harting the leading hitter of the year. Dutch's average was a lofty .609. Other leading hitters on Team # 1 were Dr. Englert, .536, and Norm Bucher, .575. The leading hitters for Team # 2 were Orville Miller, .430, Joe Gyordas, .438, and Mel Palmer, .423. Other department leaders were: Doubles, Miller, 21; triples, Palmer, 7, and the slugger of the league this year was Charlie "Unconscious" Sigler with four circuit clouts for the season.

The bowling league still stands where it was two weeks ago. Because of choir difficulties, no activity last week. The first floor aggregation still rides in first place with nine points while the Second and Third floor teams are tied for second place with seven points apiece. Individual leaderships have had a slight change as a result of the last match. Dick Glatfelter still leads the group, followed by Bob Titus and Ken Shreiner. The league was tightened up considerably when the Second Floor keglers swept three out of four points from the First Floor league leaders.

Because of vacations across the street, the basketball schedule was on the quietus for the last two weeks. The "Angels" played one practice game and lost it to Crispus Attacks 43-40. The boys played to a draw for most of the game, but it went the wrong way in the last three minutes.

'Til next time, yours for good sports,

Bob Titus

Choir Members: The choir will present a concert at 7:30 p.m. today in Good Shepherd Church, Boyertown. The bus will leave at 3 o'clock.

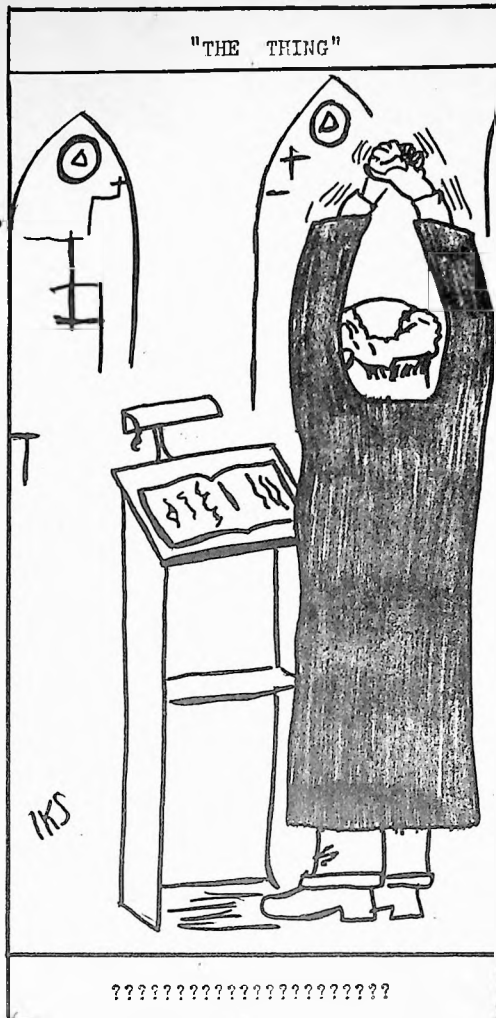
# PRIZES!

Write a  
line for:

"The  
Thing"

Look at  
these

VALUABLE  
Gifts!!



# PRIZES!

VOCAL LESSONS,  
PICTURES  
BOOKS

These are only  
a few of the  
many prizes  
you may  
win for  
just writing  
a line for:

"The  
Thing"

## CAN YOU NAME "THE THING" ???

Several months ago your editor, his wife, the art editor, and the feature editor were quietly engaged in a very serious discussion. There fell from the lips of Mrs. Glatfelter a few very harmless words. Ken's eyes lit up like a pinball machine at 100,000,000! Something told us that he was no longer with us. When we saw him the next day, he carried in his hands the accompanying cartoon. Ken was in a wild and delirious state. "This was it", he said. But what it was we didn't know. It had no caption, and it never got one. For weeks it lay on the editor's desk like some unwanted, un-named child. As we looked at it we grew horrified, because we knew it was Kenny's brain-child, but it was nameless and unpublished. It became "The Thing"; its very presence maddened us.

We didn't know what to do with it. Then someone, we know not who, suggested that we use it as the basis of a special feature, asking our readers to suggest a caption that would best fit the mad inspiration that hatched it in Kenny's mind. That rang a bell somewhere, and we decided to do just that, the paper sponsoring the contest, to be directed by the art and feature editors. We even hatched up a long list of prizes.

Some lucky reader who comes up with the best suggested caption will win all the following lovely prizes to be donated by members of the faculty and administration:

- 10 vocal lessons - Dr. Meek
- 2 genuine hairs from topsoil - Dr. Sayres
- 5 missing books from the reserve shelf - Dr. Stonesifer
- Complete notes from lecture on "Liabilities of Roman Catholicism" - Dr. Kosman
- A true ship from the tomb of St. Peter, Rome - Dr. Frantz
- A splinter from the true Boehm pulpit - Dr. Dunn
- A license for operating a 16 mm. motion picture projector - Dr. Harner
- 1 used bridge deck from Noah's Ark - Dr. Englert
- 1 old time gospel hymnal - Prof. McConnell
- A book on "Administration of the Successful City Church" - Dr. Bartholemew
- 1 pin-up picture - Dotty Korn
- An opportunity to ring the bell at 7:55 A.M. - Sarge
- The recipe for southern fried chicken - Mrs. Groff

Can you name "The Thing"???

Ken 'n Dave