

THE SEMINARIAN

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THEATRE IN THE CHURCH

This is a plea for the "Church Play." This term is usually associated with a one or two-act play, done in the recreation room with make-shift scenery and extemporised lights, sparked by one or two enthusiastic young people, and indulgently but patronisingly tolerated by the pastor and church stalwarts. Sadly enough most of such dramatic activity has little to recommend it other than enthusiasm; it is more loaded with boredom than with entertainment. It is understandable why the minister sighs with relief when the affair is over and the recreation room is cleared of the clutter of props and scenery. But rather than be treated as a seasonal annoyance, this activity should be encouraged, definite steps taken to improve the product, and a coherent dramatic program be developed within the church.

The theatre is after all a child of the Church. The Greek Drama sprang directly from religious ritual, as does all Oriental Drama. In the Middle Ages the Catholic Church revived drama for the purpose of more vividly presenting the Bible Story to its congregations. There is no more powerful instrument for shaping thought and feeling than the theatre. The hawk-like eye with which the Russian government scrutinizes its stage and screen is eloquent proof of the theatre's propagandist power.

It seems to me that the Church fails fully to employ the drama in propagating Christian teaching. Such plays as EVERYMAN, DR. FAUSTUS, and FAMILY PORTRAIT can provide moving religious experiences. Appealing to the emotions as well as the mind they can be more effective than a sermon.

Besides presenting religious and ethical teaching effectively, plays in the church can be of considerable social value. Rehearsing and producing a play becomes a completely absorbing experience. I have never failed to see a strong sense of group unity develop in the cast of an amateur play. Church dramatics offers a solution to the question of how to keep the young people interested in church activities. A well planned program of dramatics will engage the imagination of the young, a fact that is of some significance in this age of "juvenile delinquency".

Of course, any such program must be directed by some one who has a practical knowledge of the theatre and its related arts and has some talent for the job. The whole idea will stand or fall on this factor. Young men studying for the ministry might well prepare themselves for directing or at least supervising dramatic work in their future parishes. A knowledge of theatrical values can also be of direct help in the pulpit itself. The main concern of the theatre is presenting truth at its effective best, a problem of as much concern to the pastor as to the actor.

Most colleges and universities offer courses in the various arts of play production: directing, acting, scene constructing. If these courses are not offered, extra-curricular dramatic activity is provided. The future minister has ample opportunity to acquire knowledge of the theatre arts while doing his undergraduate study. Even if the minister finds he has no time to direct the plays, this knowledge will enable him to intelligently supervise church dramatic activity and develop a dramatic program that will teach the Christian virtues and provide a fascinating recreation for his young parishioners.

Professor Darrell D. Larson,
Dept. of English, F&M College

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Wednesday, April 27 - Seminary Choir concert, 8 p.m., St. Paul's Evangelical and Reformed Church, Lancaster.

Monday, May 2 - Society of Inquiry meeting, 8:30 p.m., Santee Chapel
Panel discussion, "America's Present Military Program." Leaders, Atty. K. L. Shirk, Dr. Charles Spotts, Dept. of Religion, F&M College.

Wednesday, May 11 - Communion, 7 p.m., Santee Chapel. Dr. Kosman, liturgist; Dr. Stonesifer, communion meditation; Dr. Meck, dedication of reredos panels to the memory of Mrs. Sarah Buss Englert.

WAR OR PEACE . . WHAT CAN MAN DO?

"War or peace... What can Man do?" is the problem to be considered at the Institute of International Relations at the Community House at Hershey, Pa. on April 29, 30, and May 1. This conference is to be held under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee and the F. O. R.

AS I SEE IT . . . by Dave Mark

Several days ago your Seminary Choir visited the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. Men preparing for full-time Christian service met men preparing themselves to be professional military leaders. An opportunity was at hand for everyone to meet a number of the men who are going to have in their hands the power being delegated to our armed services under the peacetime armament program. These are the men who will defend our shores and carry out the provisions of the North Atlantic Pact.

I was anxious to discover just what type of men we'd discover there. There is prevalent in many ecclesiastical circles a fear of the development of a military caste in our own nation similar to the Prussian military caste that has been the cause of so many of the conflicts in modern Europe. It was most encouraging to note that the midshipmen in our U. S. Naval Academy are serious-minded young men, showing a definite interest in the ethical nature of national life. The general undercurrent in the interchange of ideas was such that it is evident that we need have no fear of a phenomenon similar to that which has developed in Germany.

And the production of men with such ideas is by no means an accident. As one approaches Annapolis over the Governor Ritchie Highway, the first thing to catch his view is the dome of the academy chapel, squarely in the centre of the campus and squarely in the centre of campus life. In this beautiful chapel, in which their non-denominational services are conducted by a Navy chaplain, there is inculcated into the men a feeling of respect for the God of us all. Even underclassmen with few leave privileges are allowed to attend worship services of their own faith every Sunday morning. Above the chapel altar are written the opening words of one of our fine hymns: "Eternal Father, strong to save." And in the crypt in the basement is buried our country's greatest naval hero, John Paul Jones. A spirit of Christian fellowship is especially evident in the cordial relations between the midshipmen and their Spanish naval cadet guests, and their Negro and Jewish classmates.

A church whose founder chose his first followers among seafaring men must come to feel a close kinship with these men. St. Martin's Church, the choir's host in Annapolis, has developed close ties with a fairly large group of these midshipmen. These men, certainly a fairly good representation of the group, have shown themselves to be vitally interested in the principles which we hold dear. Why should we, then, fear to what use they will put power delegated to them in the interest of our nation's security? Militarism and balances of power are not among the tenets of Christianity, but our church has a tradition of a Christ who scourged the temple, a Zwingli who fought for

CHOIR'S SEASON DRAWS TO A CLOSE

Presenting its last out-of-town concert of the year, the Seminary Choir on Sunday travelled to Annapolis, Md., and sang at St. Martin's Church. The choir was featured on a special program to assist that church in its celebration of its 75th anniversary. Twenty-four members of the choir made the trip, accompanied by several of the wives, Mrs. Frantz, and Miss Dorothy Korn. Dr. Meck gave the greetings of the Seminary to the church, filling the spot usually held by Dr. Frantz, the faculty advisor to the choir.

The choir left Lancaster by chartered bus at noon on Sunday and arrived at Annapolis in the late afternoon. A tour of the Naval Academy grounds had been arranged by the pastor, the Rev. Homer W. Kock, and this was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Navy plebes served as guides in this tour, and the choir spent two pleasant hours touring the grounds. The outstanding feature of the tour was a visit to the Naval Academy chapel, one of the most beautiful and artistic chapels in the nation. Following this tour, the choir members returned to the church where a splendid meal was served. A sound film was then shown... "Operation Crossroads". This is the official documentary film of the Bikini experiments, where two atomic bombs were detonated in the midst of a group of naval ships.

After the concert, which was given before an overflow audience of 250 people, a reception was held in the church basement. Then the choir boarded the bus for the return trip, having presented its 15th sacred concert, a new record for the Seminary Choir.

This Wednesday evening, April 27th, the choir will present a concert in St. Paul's Church, Orange and North Duke Streets. This concert is being held under the auspices of the Lancaster County Ministerium (E & R) and the proceeds are to go into the choir gown fund to pay for new gowns and the annual cleaning of all gowns. A capacity crowd is expected to hear the choir, and all the members of the Seminary family are urged to attend and support the choir. This concert will conclude the engagements for the year, except for the annual concert to be given in Santee Chapel on May 22, as part of the graduation exercises.

Thus the choir is drawing close to the end of its most successful year in its 24-year history. The choir this year has sung to approximately 4500 people in 15 concerts. It is one of the best choirs the Seminary has had in years, and everyone is urged to come out and hear their final concert.

Grant Harrity

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what he believed to be right, and a clergy of men who are not afraid to stand up for their beliefs.

SPORTS CORNER

"There was no joy in Mudville, mighty Casey had struck out." That's the way we all felt last Wednesday night after the final game with the Phi Psi's. After losing the opening game of the playoff series, the Crusaders came back after Easter Recess to take the second game 32-25. The boys won the game going away and it looked as if they had hit their stride now. Bruce Fellows, the boy who had caused the Seminary so much trouble in the first game, was held to 12 points. Bruce Hatt took the scoring honors in the game with 13.

The following night the series went into its final game. The game was tight until the last quarter when the frat boys found the range and put the thing on ice. Fellows was hurt in the last few minutes, but it was too late to make much difference to the Phi Psi cause. The story of the game was that, for a change, all of the Psi's broke into the scoring column as they spread their 42 points out among six men. The Crusaders were able to muster a total of 30 which just wasn't enough. Abbie and Stan Dunn shared scoring honors with 9 a piece.

But before this begins to sound like an obituary notice or a eulogy, we hasten to say that the Seminary Five looked great even in losing. In all three playoff games, as indeed throughout the season, the Crusaders showed what veterans they are, both as players and as sportsmen. Their floor play was excellent and their spirit was superb. Although it may sound like rationalizing to say that the Seminary had the better team, we think this is exactly the case. The Phi Psi's had a team built around one or two outstanding scorers, while the Crusaders were as a whole more consistent and steady in all departments. This last game was a tough one to lose, but let's not forget that we still brought home the league trophy. Besides that, we lose only one man through graduation and next year's another season. Hats off to the boys for a great year!

Dick Glatfelter

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Now that the Seminary has closed the basketball campaign, the eyes of all turn toward the diamond. Slide! Yer out!, etc., return to our vocabulary.

The Seminarians are playing in the Blue League of the college intra-mural and hope to end up as they did in basketball. The Crusader schedule for this week includes Phi Psi on Tue., Hartmen Hall Wed., and Z.B.T. on Fri. All league games start at 4 P.M.

Particular attention is called to the game between the married and single men of the Dorm. The single men have been on the losing end of the two previous games. Everyone wonders why the bachelor boys can't beat the old-timers. Come out Thurs. at 3 P.M. and see if you can discover the reason!

Dick Abernethy

FINAL PROGRAM OF THE SOCIETY OF INQUIRY

With the close of school fast approaching, the Society of Inquiry will present its last program of the current year on Monday, May 2, at 8:30 P.M. in Santee Chapel. The program will be in the form of a panel discussion on America's present military program - "Why is there a need for such a greater program?" - "Will it give us security or not?" - "How did it affect the Atlantic Pact or how did the Atlantic Pact affect the military program?" A local attorney K.L. Shirk, who is the former assistant district attorney, will present the government's viewpoint. The opposing viewpoint will be presented by Dr. C.D. Spotts, head of the Department of Religion of Franklin and Marshall College. Our own Dr. Harner will serve as moderator. There will be a question period at the conclusion. Come prepared with plenty of questions.

The student body has voiced its approval of such a program. Here it is fellows! We need your one hundred percent cooperation. The program committee would like to see everyone turn out for this one. Let's all plan to come to Santee Chapel on Monday, May 2 at 8:30 P.M.

Merv Gerhart

We would all be insane if it were not possible for us to forget our past painful experiences, but that happy faculty has a disadvantage; i.e., that we don't learn from experience so easily. Millions of our fellowmen died under beastly circumstances within this decade, and we're already allowing our leaders again to "play with war fire." Einstein and others assure us that an atomic war would be a carnage beyond imagination and warn that the growing militarization of America is dangerous. Our country makes unilateral alliances, pouring billions into arms all over the world and throws a pittance to the U.N. Where is the end of such a road?

Is the military philosophy, that the best way to insure peace is through a strong national military force, valid? Does history confirm it? By our "security measures" are we making a threat of Russia and thus unmaking our security? What does Jesus' ethic have to say to the problem or is it relevant?

We must continually prod ourselves to leave the ivory tower. This coming forum of the Society of Inquiry should bring us face to face with the issue and force us to square our Christian faith with it. Is it Christian or patriotic not to face human problems and not to act according to our soberly weighed convictions? Let us do some advance thinking about our government's present policy and come prepared with alert and open minds.

Stan Dunn