

# THE SEMINARIAN

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## THE WORDS AND THE TUNE

We are now in the Christmas Carol season. The radio, the amplifier in stores, are at their repetitious work of inducing the Christmas spirit by immersing us in carols.

I waive certain obvious remarks about that to make another point, viz., a Christmas carol has words as well as tune. It makes a statement as well as stirring a feeling. It seeks to implant a truth in the mind as well as impart a pleasantly pink glow to the emotions. It deals in fact as well as in sentiment.

For the instructed, of course, words and music inevitably go together, and one evokes the other. You hear the strains, and the words run through your mind. You read the words and the music starts singing in your memory. Perhaps by dint of repetition almost everybody knows the literal words as well as the music of the Christmas carols.

But speaking metaphorically, at least, it is possible to know the music well enough and not know the words at all, to feel the sentiment of Christmas and not apprehend the truth of Christmas.

Of course the musicians say that the highest truth is communicable only through music. Loving a good tune, but without other qualification, I cannot say. I am not arguing, but only quoting scripture when I point out that "the angel said unto them.....I bring you good tidings of great joy", and that then he was joined by "a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest." As I write, from out of the radio comes "And the whole world give back the song, which now the angels sing." Ah, but they said it, and it would be a great deal better if the whole world would say it back in a great Amen of affirming faith. To my mind it is better to say Amen than to sing it, to say "And with thy spirit" than to chant it, and to repeat the Lord's Prayer in unison rather than listen to the choir render it.

Now as to the words of the Christmas carols, they state the Christmas gospel. They teach a certain theology of the Incarnation. Their message is that God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son: That God was in Christ,

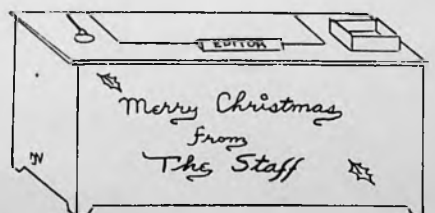
reconciling the world unto Himself; that God who in divers manners spake by the prophets hath spoken unto us in His Son. That the new Adam should be brought into human flesh in different wise than we natural children of the old Adam they do not count incredible, but see a supreme unvieling of the divine love in that "When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man Thou didst humble Thyself to be born of a virgin."

It was the theology of the Incarnation, of God coming down and not man rising up, which gave us the Christmas carols. Great theology begets great music, and not vice versa. Our secularized, commercialized Christmas can produce nothing better than White Christmas which is all tune.

The deep need of the human heart is to know God brought near, that the Son of God became the Son of Man. And this is the Christmas affirmation. That is why Christmas is so dear; even a Christmas carol in a store decorated for Christmas since November 1st says something that people deeply need to believe.

In our Morning Service we confess our sins, and receive assurance of pardon to penitence, and then at the call, "Praise ye the Lord", we sing the Gloria in Excelsis, in which the Christmas gospel and the angels' witness is embodied. And so as every first day of the week is a reminder of Easter so is it also another celebration of the essential Christmas, which comes when men who work, like shepherds, hear heavenly voices, and men who study, like Wise Men, come to know that a star (or an atom) is but the sword-point of a cold infinity aimed at our pathetic mortality until it becomes a beacon that leads us to the Christ in whom all things consist.

P. T. Stonesifer



EDITOR: THE SEMINARIAN

Sir: By this time in the Advent season, the innocent mind of children and the not so innocent mind of adults is confused beyond hope of regaining its equilibrium. Maybe, I should have referred to Advent as the season of "Comings," for it is the comings that confuse the mind of young--and of the old. At least, six days out of the week, and for about five weeks, newspapers, radio, television, and parents prepare the innocent minds for the great "coming" of the old gent in the red suit from his earthly heaven at the North Pole. Then on Saturdays the proud parents--proud of this little game of delusion they are playing--take little Johnny to the department store to preview and to verify the "reality" of this figment of the imagination for Johnny. But the next day, Sunday, in church school, Johnny is told that all Christians (Who are they?, he wonders) are getting themselves ready to celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world. That's fine, because he likes to sing "those songs" and make "little houses" with animals and with people standing around a baby.

Now at this point, I wonder if Johnny really has seen any connection in his thinking between the "comings" represented by the "little house and baby" and the man in the red suit he saw the day before. Most probably the events are isolated and compartmentalized in his thinking. (Parents suffer from this "mental illness.") If he has, he is confused, just as his parents are, who are trying to live by two "comings." In reality, however, they are not able to be true, loyal, and faithful to two "comings". Our Lord spoke well when he said, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

Wishing you an unconfused Christmas, I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Simeon E. Quella

RUDOLF BULTMAN at Crozer - Dec. 10

"The Message of Jesus and The Problem of Mythology" was the focus of a stimulating lecture by Rudolf Bultmann, hailed by New Testament scholars as one of their princes and tabbed by his native students as the most critical professor in all of Germany. A dozen representatives of our theological home traveled to Crozer Seminary to hear the voice of this royal mind. What did we hear? Well...

Bultmann pointed to the mythol-

ogy in Jesus' message, to those symbolic representations of eternal truths and mysteries which can be expressed in no other way. Heaven, Hell, Satan, and eschatological terms are all concepts seeking to give objective reality to transcendent realities---Heaven points beyond earth to God, Hell equals transcendent evil and darkness, Satan portrays the solidarity of evil forming an atmosphere which all men breathe, Eschatology speaks about a God who is always a coming God and about a transitory this-world. To understand the nature of this mythology as primitive science is basic. Then comes--and here is Bultmann's new term--"de-mythologizing", which is no more than interpreting the myths in modern terms, seeking to find their deeper eternal meaning with contemporary glasses.

Both Paul and the Fourth Gospel resorted to this de-mythologizing, giving concrete relevance to Jesus' eschatology, for example. Paul talked of the drama-like second coming, John of the present-obtainable eternal life. Therefore, since this Hermeneutic (interpretation) began in the New Testament, "I think that our attempt at de-mythologizing is justified." And with this the professor concluded, having given us much, having left much to be given.

Ted Haas



Dear Santa,

Whether you know it or not, I am not among that illustrious group who joins in the singing of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." I can see how you could have very easily overlooked this fact since I am only six feet two inches tall. I am especially easy to overlook when I stand sideways since, as I have expressed it before, my belly sticks out like the inside of the spoon. I don't ask you to withhold the beauty of a white Christmas from my Northern friends, but Sir, I am not from the North. Sacre bleu, non! I am a little fellow twenty three years old from the Sunny South. So please, Santa, the only whiteness that I want for the yuletide season is the brilliant whiteness of the sun. No snow, if you please.

I'm not asking you this favor just for myself but for all of the other Southern Students here at Old T. S. that I beg this favor of you. I'm sure that Keith Sink doesn't want any snow over Christmas. (Lt. Charles K. Sink, in case you don't know him by his Christian name. That Lt. could hardly be Christian. That's why I give you both of his handles, you can hold to either one you like.) You may also remember him by the dents in his car. Well, sir, all of those dents came from driving in the snow. The boy isn't accustomed to it. Spare the snow, or you spoil the Dodge.

Then there's Banks Shepherd. Whenever it snows, he always has a very bad cold. Why, right now he's lying flat on his back, (he can lie in that position as well as in any other.) That young fellow has a very bad cold. Perhaps you think that he would have it regardless of whether it had snowed or not. Tell me, sir, have you ever walked four or five blocks in the snow with no shoes on? Try it! I guarantee you will come down with something even if it is only brittle toe-nails!

You can forget Horace Sills, Carl Martin, and Wayne Fouts as far as I am concerned. I'm beginning to suspect that they have forgotten their Southern raisin' because I saw them walking around in the current snow and they were actually smiling! I fear they have gone apostate on us. I'll let Frank Snider speak for himself but I'll have to admit that I have had suspicions of him ever since he made the last trip South with me.

Bill Joe Leonard and Don Lyerly are true Southerners, (I'm sure no yankee could talk like that!) and they join me in hoping to have no snow in our Christmas presence.

Southernly,  
Mel Palmer

'TIS THE SEASON.....

A familiar secular Christmas carol advises the celebrant to "Deck the halls with boughs of holly", for "'Tis the season to be jolly." I don't know who wrote these pretty words, and I'm sure I wouldn't deny him the privilege of his joviality. But I believe he would find it difficult to carry out his idea in the Arctic regions of Lancaster, Penna.

Have you ever seen anyone trying to be jolly with a box of Kleenex in one hand and a Vick's inhaler in the other? I'd like to see Mr. "Deck-the-halls" making jolly with a throbbing headache and a nose so red that Rudolph's sniffer would look like a snowball in comparison. I can't imagine his hanging holly all over the house if he has to take pills on a fifteen-minute schedule. The old boy would have a hard time being merry with a head cold.

Apparently our friend never had to stand in snow up to his knees trying to discover why his car wouldn't start. And he must have never started out five minutes late to take his wife to work and found that during the night the temperature went about fifteen degrees below his safe anti-freeze level. Nor was he ever caught in a sudden snow storm with no chains or snow tread tires. He would forget some of the joy of decorating the hall if he owned an automobile.

I'm inclined to think that our holly vender was spared the monotony of the radio's insistence that you do your Christmas shopping at a dozen different toylands where Santa will personally consider every child's request. And his gay little ditty didn't compete with such songs as "Frosty the Snowball" and "The Texas Santa Claus." But there is a possibility that he would have had his own fifteen minute spot on some local station, with his own sponsor and his own short-wave set to tune in Santa Clause at the North Pole. Then he would not need to worry about decorating his house. He could hire someone to do it.

It is easy to see that he didn't have to elbow his way through impatient crowds to get to a counter that didn't have what he wanted anyhow. Can't you see him singing his way from one store to another after the chilling wind has carried his fifteen dollar hat to the middle of the street? One hour on any main street, ten shopping days before Christmas would change his tune.

But let us give our friend from a quieter age credit for his good intentions. Excuse me while I run for holly. Time to be jolly.....bs

BOYS, I'VE REALLY  
BEEN THRU IT!

DR. CLAUD, HOW  
DO YOU ARRANGE SUCH  
A HEAVY SCHEDULE?

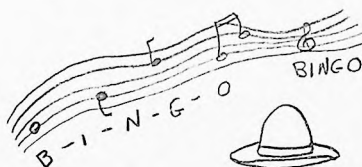
THIS SANTA IS  
OBVIOUSLY A LATER  
INTERPOLATION.

יְהוָה  
יִשְׁמְרֵנוּ  
יְהוָה  
יִשְׁמְרֵנוּ



DMH

## THE SEMINARY FAMILY GREETES ST. NICK



PARTY  
NOTES!

IN

NOTARY  
SEMAC

NOT SO, JAC?

