



GANNON



SEVEN

St. John's College
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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OBSERVATIONS 1.

FEATURES

THE DAISY FESTIVAL 3.
Claudia Nordstrom

A PRESIDENTIAL LOCK-OUT? 9.
Chris Brown

THE STATE OF ULTIMATE CONCERN 11.
Carlton Severance

PROSE TRANSLATION FROM LUCRETIUS 16.
Donald Brady

TYRANNE, OR PSYCHO-ANALYSIS 18.
Sigrid Nielsen

POETRY

KABALA 28.
Don Whitfield

LETTER TO A FRIEND 29.
James Morrow Hall

PROCESSIONAL 30.
Carlton Severance

POEM 31.
Elliot Skinner

REVIEWS

W. B. STANFORD--THE SOUND OF GREEK 32.
T. H. Jameson

LEFT IN A FEVER
Joe Reynolds

34.

THE CENTER DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

36.

MEMORANDUM
Clarence Kramer

37.

EXCERPTS FROM THE FIRST DAY

43.

KENNST DU DEN FAUST
Charles G. Bell

50.

A CONCRETE PROPOSAL
John Polgreen

56.

Notices

58.

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OBSERVATIONS

I spent much of the week-end listening to the Center tapes. I was extremely impressed with the sincerity and competence of the participants and my mind was filled with the many possible improvements that their discussion might engender. It was with a slightly distasteful effort, then, that I descended to comprehend the meaning of the statement in this week's calendar that requires seniors and juniors to "sign in" at the formal lecture. I have enjoyed the privilege of not signing in, but this is not my point. It simply seems to me that the effort required to enforce this triviality might be more beneficially applied elsewhere. If the traditions we establish are theoretically explained and justified in a straightforward and open way, they will be conscientiously and eagerly encountered. If they are not, the solution does not lie in stricter enforcement. Such a lack of confrontation is only symptomatic of a more basic problem. And if such insipid enforcement does take place, as Mr. Darkey says, "That's not very interesting." -jmh.

Libris Libraqve

Late one night in the student center, I heard the seven books on the stone seal of the College say to the balance: "Go, you don't belong here!" They not only accused the balance of not being a book, but went on to call him dull, difficult, esoteric and unworkable. Finally they wagged their covers and cried: "Away, away with him!"

When they all shut up for a moment, the balance decided to speak in his own defence. He apologized for seeming dull and unworkable, but reminded them that he rarely felt at home there. He sorrowfully told them how he had tried to make himself appear as attractive as possible, only to feel that he wasn't really loved. He even implied that many put up with him only because of the seven fat books that were so much more popular. The balance felt that if he only had a little understanding, if not love, they would grant him as much prestige as they granted each other.

He confessed that he was difficult and that his program often depended on outside work, but reproved them for forgetting that this was also true of themselves. He looked them in their titles and told them this was a compromise they all had to make if they were to remain together on the stone seal of a college.

Finally he admitted that his program put man in the undignified role of an observer. This was a concept of man that some of his program might lead to, he said, as he jibed at them: "The roar of your infinite chatter deafens me." Then he smiled and his two scales started bouncing up and down with glee. He showed them the world outside and concluded that the world judged the college on how well it connected books with a balance. He stood still. "Come," he said, "let us reason together." -ss.

I received a letter from my sister the other day in which she suggested that St. John's be changed into an old-time western town, with gunfights at noon and the whole business. "That would be a real education," she said. Which made me wonder if we have forgotten what a real education is. We read the books. We ask questions. We learn a few things. But are we doing something that makes us better people? Are we doing something that makes us happy? Or does St. John's provide us with nothing more than a four-year pastime, an intellectual play pen for some other species of animal than real, live human beings?

We have heard much about "divine madness." I do not believe in divine madness; I believe only in human madness. Although it is possible that we are caught in the prison of the universe, we still have a great deal to do with what we are. To a considerable extent, we make ourselves what we are. If we lack a deep and genuine concern for what we are doing at St. John's, as numerous people have justly asserted in recent weeks, our own doing, or lack of doing, is responsible for this apathy. And our own doing is all that is going to deliver us from it. If we are not concerned, we must make ourselves concerned, each one of us, individually. No one else is going to do it for us, because no one else can do it for us. If I am not personally and deeply concerned with making myself better and happier, it is clear that I will never improve in these respects. If I am concerned, there is a chance that I might. Obviously we must stake our hopes in the chance rather than in the impossibility. And the chance imposes on each of us the personal responsibility of making the Program meaningful for ourselves. -css.

THE DAISY FESTIVAL

The Ibian Sprites were a very developed race. They were most often tall and had lovely long red hair, in which they often placed flowers. Their skin was quite black and smooth and their hands and feet were long and slender. They lived in and around a cluster of cities not far from Spain. Quite aside from the fact that they were handsome and good-natured creatures, they were also intelligent, so that they had short working days and all sorts of games for amusement. The only thing that could be considered even the least bit odd about these Sprites was their Daisy Festival.

The Daisy Festival had been established years ago in honor of a Sprite named Malcom. Malcom was a wise man, much respected by everyone, but just the least bit somber and occasionally even odd. He was descended from the family of Charin, which, although it wasn't a family of kings, was of the highest nobility. Malcom's work was to be consulted by other Sprites for advice of all sorts. He was the generation's wise man.

What was considered odd about Malcom were his yearly journeys into the forest. The forest was known to be a most dangerous place, and there was no reason to go there, but every year he set off for a two week trip. He explained his going by saying that the important thing for a Sprite to do was to face a great challenge, and to die, if necessary, protecting his fellow Sprites from the challenge that would, perhaps, be too much for them. But then again, he never told anyone what happened in the forest and all was left to their imaginations.

But one year, when he had gotten rather old, he took his servant, Lipsin, with him into the forest to carry the food which he was now too weak to carry himself. Lipsin was of an honored servant family known particularly for cheerfulness and intelligence. He himself was said to represent all the best traits of a servant, and was well-loved and trusted by Malcom's family. Malcom told him, before the trip, that he was not to be afraid for Malcom found him to be an intelligent being capable of understanding. Lipsin didn't particularly want to go, and later said "Maybe if I hadn't agreed, old Malcom wouldn't have gone and would still be alive." But everyone knew that Malcom would have gone anyway, alone if he had had to.

On the day they were to set out Lipsin and Malcom went and collected the necessary provisions, which included food,

sleeping mats, and a protection stick. The protection stick was only to be used in case of necessity and it didn't really hurt anything. It merely put one to sleep for a hundred years, a long time even in those days. But if it seems cruel, it must be noted that it was only to protect the Spritans and that the sleep it produced was very gentle and gave one lovely dreams. It had been developed in order that the wise men of Ibia might be put to sleep and called back for important decisions, but it wasn't quite perfected as they could only come back every 100 years. And many of them had asked to be allowed everlasting dreamless sleep after the first hundred years.

After Malcom and Lipsin had secured their provisions they took the road to Ansela, the city closest to the forest, and stopped there at the Mansion of the Wise Men, where they ate the traditional food for wisdom and closed their eyes for the customary hour before one embarks on a trip of necessity.

The time for departure arrived and they set out on foot towards the great forest. It took only a few moments to get into the forest and Lipsin was amazed at the beauty of what was around him. There was water coming from everywhere and both the brightest and most subdued colors he had ever seen. The air was sweet and he could breathe strongly. Only one thing bothered him, and that was that he felt alone and slightly afraid. Malcom was still with him but Malcom was different. He still did the same things, like run his fingers through his long red hair, and place his feet in his same peculiar stance, but somehow Lipsin felt separated from him.

However, Lipsin decided that the best course was to follow Malcom and to be very quiet. They walked for a long time in the forest, where everything was perfect, but still something was wrong. It was almost as if the trees and flowers and animals weren't all part of one nature but were divorced from one another and unable to join roots.

They finally stopped for the night and Lipsin was feeling quite bold enough to ask Malcom how much farther they had to go. Malcom answered that there was only one more day of walking until they reached the Daisy Field which was their destination. They ate and Lipsin watched Malcom to try to figure what he should do next, but he suddenly decided that he might just go to sleep since he was tired. Lipsin had never before done such a thing as make decisions, and his master smiled at him in his sleep and then he too lay down and still smiling closed his eyes.

The next day the sun was shining brightly and when Lipsin woke he saw his master swimming in a waterfall nearby. He

almost said the reproof words. These were the words said by servants to their masters when the latter were being foolish, and they were always to be accepted with grace by the masters. The words were:

Brought up in a world of sunlight,
Let not your actions cause you blight,
For it befits no Ibian Sprite.

These words had long ago been established by the Servant Union to dissuade masters from foolishness, and because they were harmless enough the parliament passed an approval for them. Servants were actually required to use them if necessary. And, they were necessary when a master of over 37 was swimming alone. But rather than say the words Lipsin decided to jump into the water and swim with his master (an act forbidden to servants) and had a most wonderful time splashing about. Malcom again smiled on him for he had a great hope for Lipsin; and although by law he should have stopped Lipsin's actions at once, he didn't.

They began walking again shortly after their swim and as they walked Lipsin again felt fear, although he couldn't understand why. Everything was even more beautiful than the night before and his master was treating him as no master ever treated a servant. For example, Malcom had asked that morning what Lipsin would like for breakfast. That was strange enough, but when Lipsin had asked (to his own surprise) for pekats, a food eaten only after dinner on four days of the year (and a food Lipsin loved), Malcom actually produced some for him. And then, stranger yet, he ate some pearl berries himself. In Ibia it was considered proper for all members of one household to eat exactly the same food as that unified them in strength and feeling. However, as Lipsin later noted, "everything was a bit strange and I wouldn't suggest such a journey for anyone."

The sun rose higher and the forest seemed to brighten at every turn. For the first time in his life, Lipsin began to wish that he could draw. So beautiful a scene, recreated for the whole world, would make him famous; but then he remembered that no servant was ever supposed to think of fame, that honor was reserved for the most elite. Still, he decided, fame would be nice.

As they walked Malcom began to tell a story; one Lipsin had not heard before. It was a rather simple story about early Ibia. Malcom told how the first Ibiens had come to Ibia, and that as they had lived mostly near the forest had great freedom to do as they liked. (Lipsin was a bit surprised that this fear he felt was called freedom.) But things had not gone well for the Sprites because of warring among themselves

and with other nations. It became necessary to call the first parliament to order the lives of the Sprites and thus protect them. The rules necessitated that every Sprite have a specific job to do, and by the time the wars were over many of the Sprites felt happy and content with their well-ordered lives. After all, they never fought among themselves any more and there was nothing to fear. So the Sprites kept on as they were, and every generation had a wise man to whom they went when they needed advice about something not recorded in the rules. The wise men, after their appointment, had gone away to study for five years and came back with the ability to handle all situations.

Lipsin was surprised to hear this as Malcom was the wise man of his time, but had never gone away for more than his yearly fortnight trip. He decided to ask Malcom about this and Malcom replied: "When I was chosen wise man I could not go away as I had a wife who was to bear a child soon. I looked up many of the old records to see what should be done in such a case, and in the secret files came across a piece of paper which had written on it, 'For the wise man shall know the daisy fields and the beauty of freedom.' I had heard that there were daisy fields in the forest and came to them. It is the freedom of these fields which gives me the wisdom that I hope to bequeath to you."

They walked on in silence for some time, and Lipsin reflected on the reputation of goodness and wisdom that his master had. He was quite pleased that his master had considered him for his successor and became anxious for the moment when he, Lipsin, would become the wise man of Ibia. He had an odd feeling that if he wished the moment could come soon.

They were now quite close to the daisy fields. Malcom said that he could feel its presence and Lipsin wondered if he could just decide to fly and be able to. And then they were there. The sun was beginning to go down, and Lipsin witnessed the most beautiful sight in the world. There was a brook which flowed over jeweled stones into a blue lake. There were hills that rose and fell, yet they were not difficult to climb. The sky was wide and blue with an occasional pink cloud, a cloud one would like to rest on. And there were the daisies. Patterned in circles and all shapes, they almost danced in the light breeze. They were all colors but never clashed, and whenever Malcom and Lipsin approached they formed a pathway.

Malcom was quite relaxed and happy, with all traces of somberness gone. But Lipsin felt nervous; first of all this was too much beauty for him to understand and then he felt too powerful for a servant of an Ibian Sprite to even think of feeling.

That night they ate a light supper and went to bed under a full orange moon surrounded by a rainbow. During the next few days Malcom just sat smiling while Lipsin explored and tested himself. He found himself forgetting the servant's code and making delicious decisions about how to spend his days. He no longer waited for Malcom to tell him what to do but rather did what he liked.

After they had been there for four days Lipsin began to think again of the pleasures of being a wise man, and became a little afraid when his mind began opening itself up to plans of how to succeed in becoming a wise man soon. He began inspecting the daisy stalks for hardness and found a rough jewel stone. Then after Malcom had gone to sleep he picked the strongest daisy and began to sharpen the stalk. He thought about how old and weak Malcom was while he sharpened it, and at daybreak he stabbed him in the back. But Malcom was not as weak as he had thought and he lived on. He kindly offered Lipsin golden candies, the like of which Lipsin had never seen before. Lipsin ate one and was surprised and indeed a bit angry that he had never before tasted such a sweet candy. He ate another and another until they were all gone. Then he fell into a deep sweet sleep and did not awaken until the sun was high.

When Lipsin awoke he looked around him and saw Malcom lying on his stomach and breathing hard. He ran to him and with great consternation asked him what had happened. Malcom replied only with a command to build him a bed of daisies. When Lipsin finished this task, Malcom commanded him to drag him back to Ansel. Lipsin, a cheerful and obedient servant, walked for a day and two nights dragging Malcom, without regard to the beauties of the forest or the fatigue of the journey.

When they had arrived home again everyone gathered around Malcom, their beloved wise man, in the hope that he would have the strength to speak a few words more. Malcom, tired and ready to die, spoke: "The forest is a dangerous place for many people," he said, "but one and only one must go there and return every year in order to preserve wisdom for his fellow Sprites. I can go no longer and I ask you now to allow me to appoint my successor."

The Sprites agreed to his request and Malcom named as his successor a young man from a good family who was known to be just a bit somber.

Malcom then called to Lipsin and told him that he must never again go near the forest. Lipsin promised his master gladly that he would not. Malcom died with a smile upon his face, and many Sprites accompanied him to the Mansion of the Wise

where he was laid forever.

The next year a festival was instituted to honor Malcom and all who went into the great forest after him. For some reason, no one quite knows why, Lipsin, the humblest of servants, asked that it be called the Daisy Festival. And as Lipsin was a model Sprite of the servant class and had served his master well until the end, his request was granted.

-Claudia Nordstrom

A PRESIDENTIAL LOCK-OUT?

Three years ago the rank-and-file of the United States of America voted to accept management's "Great Society" contract proposal by the greatest majority in the Union's history. Yet recent straw balloting indicates that a majority of Union members favor terminating the current agreement when it comes up for renegotiation in 1968.

The discontented among the voting class cite two primary reasons for the reversal of their previous positions. Management's 1964 proposals, they allege, contained no mention of an "escalator clause" allowing for increases in the scale and cost of warring. If the fiscal 1965 Vietnam appropriations of \$300 million are given a percentage scale base value of 100, then the Cost of Warring Index (seasonally adjusted for Defense Department underestimates) currently stands at 9330% of its 1965 value--"galloping escalation" by anyone's definition. Union members contrast these developments with management's 1964 declarations that "we seek no wider war" and "we are not about to send American boys to fight a war Asian boys should fight for themselves." The voters conclude that either management originally bargained in bad faith, or has since been guilty of breach of contract.

Spokesmen for the corporate state reply that, on the contrary, the leaders of 50 Union locals passed a resolution authorizing the President to take "all necessary measures to repel armed attacks against the forces of the United States, and to prevent further aggression." Management contends that the declining productivity of body counts sustained through the continued use of obsolete "Asian boys" necessitated, under the terms of the resolution, the introduction of automated American specialists.

The voters counter that the introduction of sophisticated technology and automatons has not only displaced countless hard-working Asian soldiers, but has also displaced thousands of supposed beneficiaries of our business expansion to refugee camps: either to "temporary" ones near Saigon or to permanent ones in the hereafter. Management seems to have the last word on this subject, though, arguing that for every job eliminated by automation two new ones are created: former soldiers can be retrained as agricultural specialists to poison crops or collect back peasant taxes in technologically "pacified" areas, to give two examples.

Another source of discontent within the Union is management's disregard of its vow to war against poverty. The voters feel that this pledge was of central importance to the contract, intended as more than a fringe benefit of the "Great Society" to be pursued at the President's discretion. A guaranteed annual vacation from poverty was promised. So were improved working conditions entailing breathable air, drinkable water, and beautification of grounds and facilities. Again, the voters allege that management has refused to "honor its commitments" to these provisions.

At this stage in the preliminary negotiations, reconciliation between the disputing parties seems remote. The President has declined to seriously discuss Union grievances. Furthermore, he has caricatured Union suggestions of "fact-finding" and "voluntary arbitration" in foreign affairs as "not in the American tradition." Perhaps he has a point in that respect. But if the President continues to ignore the picket lines protesting too much war and too little society, he will likely become the first president ever locked-out in wartime.

-Chris Brown

THE STATE OF ULTIMATE CONCERN

I. Questions

Probably the most disturbing idea in the works of Paul Tillich is his concept of faith. To read Tillich is to jump gratefully out of the Sunday School frame of mind to which most of us have been raised into a new dimension of spiritual life. At first the jump is a shock to the spirit. A radically new kind of search is begun, and radically new kinds of answers begin to emerge. The question of faith explicitly becomes more than a question of belief. It is a question that drives to the very center of our existence.

This brief paper will be an exploration of Tillich's concept of faith as presented in the first chapter of Dynamics of Faith. In many ways this chapter provided the clearest and most concise example of Tillich's thought, and it is for that reason alone that I have used it. His idea of faith as the "state of ultimate concern" pervades his writings, and the quotations here used could undoubtedly be found in different form in other parts of his work.

II. The State of Ultimate Concern

What is faith? Do I have it? Is it the same as your faith? What are the consequences for me if I have faith? What are the consequences if I do not have it? These are questions that must plague every seeker for spiritual meaning and fulfillment. Tillich says that faith is "the state of being ultimately concerned." His conception of faith does not demand belief of us, only ultimate concern. Ultimate concern for what? He says that that does not matter: "The content matters infinitely for the life of the believer, but it does not matter for the formal definition of faith." It can be directed toward a political party, a nation, prosperity, Zeus or Jahweh. What are we to think of this "ultimate concern" that demands of us neither a particular belief nor a particular direction? Where does it leave us?

We find that Tillich is using his words very carefully. When he says "ultimate" he means ultimate in the fullest sense of the word. This becomes clear as he enlarges his original description of faith:

The unconditional concern which is faith is the concern about the unconditional. The infinite passion, as faith has been described, is the passion for the infinite. Or, to use our first term, the ultimate concern is concern about what is experienced as ultimate.

Tillich is hinting at something very big. He is trying to free the idea of faith from its limiting, ossified meaning and put it into a much larger context, a context of infinite extent. Forget about faith as belief; it is much, much more than that. Forget about faith as devout adherence to a particular creed; it is much more important than that.

At another point he hints more precisely at the nature of the relationship between the finite and the infinite implicit in an act of faith:

An act of faith is an act of a finite being who is grasped and turned to the infinite. It is a finite act with all the limitations of a finite act, and it is an act in which the infinite participates beyond the limitations of a finite act.

We are turned to the infinite because that capability is in us, and the need for the capability to be fulfilled is also in us. We, as finite beings, stand before the infinite. What more can we understand by that than that which our inner self speaks to us? The infinite transcends rational account beyond the recognition that it is in some sense a common experience to human beings. For Tillich, faith is something like the courage to face that infinite with an open heart. The responsibility involved is unimaginable.

Because of our finitude and because of the magnitude of the task, we are allowed to have serious doubt about our faith, and for Tillich this does not remove us from the state of ultimate concern. In fact, Tillich understands doubt as a sign of concern. He even goes so far as to say that doubt is an inevitable part of a true ultimate concern. As finite beings, it is inconceivable that we would not have grave apprehensions when and if we meet the infinite face to face. Although doubt may not be an omnipresent feature of faith, Tillich insists that the condition of ultimate concern must include the possibility of doubt. He insists that we allow our faith to explore itself when the need arises.

One of the most crucial steps toward understanding Tillich's faith is that each of us must let himself be "grasped by and turned to the infinite." If we do not, we face the familiar, apparently insolvable, problem of trying to

understand in an analytical way a single man's account of his spiritual experience. We can ask the questions, we can ask questions for a hundred years, but unless we play Tillich's game, unless we let his ultimate concern happen to us, we will never fully understand what he is trying to tell us. He himself says:

All speaking about divine matters which is not done in the state of ultimate concern is meaningless. Because that which is meant in the act of faith cannot be approached in any other way than through an act of faith.

The question "Do I want to understand Tillich?" becomes a religious question. If we wish to understand Tillich the man of faith, we must become faithful in his sense of the word. The words of Tillich become for the reader more than an intellectual exercise; they constitute a spiritual challenge which cannot be ignored.

III. The Choice

We are now in a position to ask ourselves some serious questions about Tillich's kind of faith. Indeed we must ask ourselves these questions and make some attempt to answer them if we are to meet the spiritual challenge Tillich presents to us. Is faith, in Tillich's sense, a human necessity? By what criteria do we judge the validity of our faith? What compels us to accept one faith over another? What significance does the loss or lack of faith have for the individual?

Tillich implies that although faith is not implicitly in the nature of human beings, their nature nevertheless drives them in a very strong way to search for faith. He says:

And often,...(skeptical doubt) leads to indifference and the attempt to develop an attitude of complete unconcern. But since man is that being who is essentially concerned about his being, such an escape finally breaks down.

"Man is that being who is essentially concerned about his being." We care about ourselves. If we choose to, we may try to avoid this concern, but such a course will only end in the forfeiture of the little stability we as human beings can enjoy. Encounter with the infinite is within the realm of human possibility. Faith is necessary insofar as we feel the drive to fulfill our spiritual potentialities.

The validity of our faith depends on the content toward which it is directed. An ultimate concern about that which is not ultimate can only result in disappointment. Only by directing our concern toward that which is truly ultimate can we avoid this disappointment. The truly ultimate is characterized by "unconditional" and "infinite." It has no element of finitude. In it, ultimate concern and the object of ultimate concern become one. We love God; God is love.

It seems that we should select a particular faith by applying the criteria outline above. We should select the particular faith that grasps us and leads us to the infinite, the particular faith which is directed toward what we perceive as truly ultimate. Although Tillich continually reaffirms his status as a Christian, he also continually stresses concern for the ultimate more than the particular creedal formulations of that concern. Creedal formulations are necessary; spiritual life must take place within some sort of community. But it is the more basic concern that determines the soundness and relevance of all the rest.

Every act of a finite being, including faith, is fraught with the dangers that are the heritage of everything finite. At every turn it is possible that we might be annihilated. Any act we perform could lead us to this annihilation. That is simply our unavoidable situation. Included in the act of faith is the courage to assert one's self in spite of this all-pervading threat. Faith gives one the balance and stability and strength to stand in the face of nothingness. A loss of faith--say the arrival at the disappointment stage of a misguided faith--disrupts this balance and stability and strength. Life tumbles out of control, no longer able to positively assert itself against the threat of annihilation. Faith provides the equilibrium necessary for us to look and see. Lack of faith renders us incapable of any but the shakiest insights.

IV. The Total Act of the Total Personality

The most demanding aspect of Tillich's faith is that faith is considered to be "an act of the total personality." Tillich sees faith as in some sense the principle in which all other facets of human life find themselves united. In faith the rational and irrational parts of the mind come together. Rational and ecstatic affirmations of faith find themselves talking about the same thing. Conscious will and sub-conscious drive find themselves striving after the same things. Faith at once includes and transcends all finite aspects of human experience.

Through the finite it points to the infinite. It is more than an act; it is a mode of living--perhaps a dimension of living, a dimension our lives must occupy if we are to claim any kind of aesthetic and spiritual completeness.

V. Questions

It is conceivable that I could convince myself that I have the ultimate concern of which Tillich is speaking. I am concerned. I do have doubts. But I am not an active member of any church. And it is clear to me that my concern does not provide me with answers to some very important spiritual questions (ethical ones, for instance). Can I call my ultimate concern a religious concern? If I accept the common notion of religion, it seems that I cannot. Can I say that my ultimate concern is leading toward some sort of spiritual fulfillment? In one sense, I answer Yes to myself. In another sense, however, I am dissatisfied, disappointed. Is this because the content of my concern is not really ultimate? No, I do not think so. There is something that is not there. There is something that I am missing. Perhaps Tillich would say, "Do not worry. You are finite, and all finite things are missing something." How can I answer him? In a way I will still feel like Job, and still will be unable to understand and appreciate the comfort he is trying to give me.

-Carlton Severance

T. LUCRETI CARI

DE RERUM NATURA

Liber Primus

Aeneadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas,
 alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa
 quae mare navigerum, quae terras frugiferentis
 concelebras, per te quoniam genus omne animantum
 concipitur visitque exortum lumina solis: 5
 te, dea, te fugiunt venti, te nubila caeli
 adventumque tuum, tibi suavis daedala tellus
 summittit flores, tibi rident aequora ponti
 placatumque nitet diffuso lumine caelum.
 nam simul ac species patefactast verna diei 10
 et reserata viget genitabilis aura favoni,
 aeriae primum volucres te, diva, tuumque
 significant initum percussae corda tua vi.
 inde ferae pecudes persultant pabula laeta
 et rapidos tranant amnis: ita capta lepore 15
 te sequitur cupide quo quamque inducere pergis.
 denique per maria ac montis fluviosque rapacis
 frondiferasque domos avium camposque virentis
 omnibus incutiens blandum per pectora amorem
 efficis ut cupide generatim saecula propagent. 20
 quae quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas
 nec sine te quicquam dias in luminis oras
 exoritur neque fit laetum neque amabile quicquam,
 te sociam studeo scribendis versibus esse
 quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor 25
 Memmiadae nostro, quem tu, dea, tempore in omni
 omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus.
 quo magis aeternum da dictis, diva, leporem.
 effice ut interea fera moenera militi
 per maria ac terras omnis sopita quiescant. 30
 nam tu sola potes tranquilla pace iuvare
 mortalis, quoniam belli fera moenera Mavors
 armipotens regit, in gremium qui saepe tuum se
 reicit aeterno devictus vulnere amoris,
 atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice reposita 35
 pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus,
 eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus ore.
 hunc tu, diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
 circumfusa super, suavis ex ore loquellas
 funde petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem. 40

PROSE TRANSLATION OF THE OPENING TO
 LUCRETIUS' DE RERUM NATURA, BOOK I, LINES 1-40

Queen of Rome, the pleasure of men and Gods, prospering Venus, who beneath the gliding ensigns of the heavens adorns the seas with fleets and lavishes the lands with corn--since through you the entire race of creatures wins life and wakening looks upon the sheen of the sun! You, Goddess, you the winds race, at your presence the clouds of the skies sail forth, for you the artful earth burgeons forth delighting flowers, with you the expanses of the oceans do laugh, and the gladdened heavens shine with prodigal light. For as soon as the spring days bare themselves and the unbarred winds of procreant Favonius burst forth, the birds of the air sigh your arrival overpowered by your sway. Then the fevered herds bound over the teeming pastures and fight the rapid streams--subdued so by your beauties they follow you wheresoever you command. Throughout the seas and the spouting mountain rivers and in the leaf-spangled retreats of the birds and over the green fields you range incanting flattering love in the hearts of all, so that they multiply their generations with longing.

Since you alone govern the career of things and since without you nothing rises into the magic estates of light nor is anything made copious and lovely I beg for your sustaining grace in the creation of this poetry which I compose for our Memmius whom you have willed to be illustrious in all ways. All the more, O Goddess, utter your immortal spell. Act now that the crazed alarms of the war-god on sea and land may be muffled and quieted.

For you alone have the power to delight men with exquisite peace: since sword-strong Mars bosses the savage shows of war and often languishes on your lap defeated by the never-healing wound of desire. He gazes upward with his well-formed neck thrown back and marvels longingly as he feeds his greedy glances off you, and the breath from his supine body hangs from your mouth. O Goddess, pour your sacred body over this reclining lover and, most eminent Queen, whisper delicious hints wooing peace for the Romans.

-Donald Brady

TYRANNE, OR PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

The woman was a serving-maid, or at least she did the jobs of a serving-maid and showed all the proper deference. She had been given to the Lady by the Lord a week before, supposedly to allay the Lady's grief; but the Lady was always grieving, and the Lord was always giving her things, and so no one cared about the arrival of a new servant-girl. Some people asked whether she were strong and could carry things in order to lessen their own burdens, but it was pointed out that the Lord would, in such case, simply invent more work, and so no one was concerned with the servant-girl either before or after her coming.

Possibly the Lady might have been expected to show some interest, but she was not interested in anything. The time she did not spend following the Lord's commands or sitting in audience with him, she occupied by sitting in her grey chamber, staring out the window or at the floor. She always wore a crown of flowers over her veil, huge, blowzy blossoms too heavy for her small rounded forehead; her girlish waist bore a similar burden, and sometimes she wore tails of fern or rushes from her shoulders, like a second green growth of hair. She looked like Ophelia by the riverbank, except that her hair was always kept tightly braided and her clothes stiff and ordered; and so she looked as she sat hour after hour in the grey light of her chamber, her eyes vague in her pale face, and her knobbed chin sunk in the heel of her hand. Which serving-maids came or went did not disturb her; if they braided her hair too tightly or dressed her in an ugly gown, she did not complain; it was all fate.

True, this servant dressed differently from most. She wore a grey long-sleeved shirt, like a doctor's coat; it had metallic threads interwoven in its fabric, and in the queen's shadowy chamber gleamed at odd moments, as if it were really made of metal. But dress meant nothing in the Narrow Kingdom, since people could dress themselves merely by wishing, if they desired, and the garments of some people arose on them spontaneously, according to their natures. Moreover, even if one had clothes made it became quite impossible after a time to say where they had come from, for time in the Narrow Kingdom was a vague thing, and memory, consequently, was not trustworthy. The girl's appearance was remarkable as well, particularly her eyes: they were large and blue, and the filament of the iris stood out individually like rays. But it seemed to the Lady that if garments could be assumed, there was no

reason why appearances could not; and in any case no one could be sure whether his own appearance was permanent. Since one could not tell how long ago any event had occurred or remember distinctly whether the past had been different from the present, it was quite conceivable that appearances changed like clothes or buildings or landscapes; there was no way to be sure.

Still, the servant-girl had a strange name; she was called Tyranne, which was not a word in the language of the Narrow Kingdom. But no one cared about names, and so this went unnoticed. The unprecedented and unintelligible thing that the servant-girl did finally brought her to the Lady's attention, and ultimately to everyone else's.

At the time the servant-girl performed this act the Lady was, as usual, sitting in her unlighted chamber; the servant-girl had entered, apparently to perform some routine task, and the Lady had not at first noticed her. But instead of setting to work, the servant-girl had strode over to the Lady's chair and announced, flatly and without preface: "I can make you happy."

There was silence. The Lady looked up and blinked, and said, "What?"

"You are afraid to be happy," continued Tyranne with lofty contempt, "but that need not deter you."

The Lady frowned delicately. "I am always unhappy--yes. But I do not understand you. There is no other way that things can be--truly. I do not see how you can say that there is another way."

"Why are you unhappy?" asked Tyranne coldly.

The Lady sighed and looked out the window, to where the hills on the horizon were sharpening and rising into mountains. "I am in bondage," she said simply.

"To whom?"

"In bondage. Why--to--my Lord, I suppose."

"But there is more," continued Tyranne.

"I do not understand you," whimpered the Lady. "I do not understand, I do not see what good it does to ask all these questions." She glanced around herself. "Look, you are making the room smaller, and it is growing darker. I do not like such a small room, it gets too stuffy. I do not see what good you are doing."

"Do you see no point in the questions? Do you never ask yourself questions?" returned Tyranne, glancing down her finely worked eyes.

"It only makes one unhappy to ask questions!"

"But not to answer them," said Tyranne, delighting coolly in the thrust of the rhetoric, "and you have answered mine. You are unhappy because you have asked questions."

The Lady was growing more and more agitated, and with her rising agitation the room lightened, and the tapestries reddened and began to develop spiral compositions. "Everything you are saying," she cried, "is perfectly obvious and ridiculous! Of course, I am unhappy because I have asked questions! I am in bondage, in bondage for all the time I can remember, and I cannot remember any other time or see one to escape! How else could things be? I cannot really remember or think, no one can!" Her anguish spent itself, and she dropped her head. There was another silence. Then she said miserably, "What can I do? I cannot stop thinking."

"You have not thought about the right things: dreams, of course. It is only in dreams that we can take rational thought and draw conclusions based on facts. Surely you must have known that."

"But what good can it do to think about dreams!" cried the bewildered Lady, as the corners of the room dimmed. "Everyone knows that you can think in dreams, but that does not tell you anything about reality!"

"Leave that to me," Tyranne ordered. "I shall be back tomorrow at this same time, and you must tell me what you have dreamed. And now I shall be going." And she exited swiftly, before the poor Lady had a chance to ask what she meant by, "At this same time," or even by "Tomorrow."

The Lady always had the same dream. She had never had another, or at least she could not remember any other, and she had an excellent and complete memory of her dreams. This dream was extremely straightforward and easy to remember; it took place in a cafe, which kept throughout the same dimensions and decor. The Lady was an ordinary girl, sitting with an ordinary young man drinking coffee.

"You are afraid of me," the young man would say indifferently, looking at his coffee, and the girl who was the Lady would grow angry.

"That is not so. I simply like to do things in a circumspect

fashion. I won't come and sit with you at meals unless I am invited; I don't know your friends, and I don't believe they want to know me."

"Nothing but fear. Of course they want to know you. You are afraid to know them, and you are afraid to know me. Look at the way you are sitting there, all hunched up with your arms over your chest, as though I were going to hit you. You just don't know the way things are done."

The girl sighed and stared downward. "Why do you always say these things?" she asked. "Perhaps they're true; in fact, they probably are; you're more sensitive than I am, I know that. But what if they are true? Suppose I admit that they are true and correct them all? You'll just find others, because there are infinitely many. Why can't we just accept what we have and try to do what we can with it?"

And they would both fall silent; it would occur to the Lady that the boy was as miserable as the girl who was herself, but was trying to hide his feelings under a clinical manner. On the night of the visit of Tyranne, however, the dream continued longer. The boy, a slight relief in his voice, had turned to the girl who was herself and said, "You should be psychoanalyzed when you get out of school."

The girl immediately flared, anger barely covering misery. "I'm not a cripple. I won't be regarded as a broken-down machine. It's unfair of you to bring those things into it."

The boy had looked at her for a moment, and suddenly became sorry for her and guilty over having hurt her; he frowned in pain, and said, "I'm sorry. I'm being abusive again. It's all right. We'll--live, I guess." He attempted awkwardly to smile, fearing the girl's position, it seemed; for she could easily have scorned his apology. But the girl who was the Lady had no such thought. She was overjoyed even by so meager a contrition, and she took his hand and nodded, looking at him. The boy, relieved, sat more quietly, for which the girl was grateful; and in the silence the Lady was even aware of her thinking, "Perhaps I should try to be psychoanalyzed..."

"...And so what does that mean?" asked the Lady a bit challengingly of an impassive Tyranne, when she found the latter in her chamber again.

Tyranne stood at the window against the plain which was the Narrow Kingdom and said, "It means everything. It means this world."

"You aren't making any sense. I don't understand you."

"Why do you suppose it is that dreams are so easy to understand, while life is not?"

The Lady could answer this question easily. "Because in dreams we have memory, while in life we haven't any."

"But more; in dreams everything is visible and stated, while in life people rarely speak to one another, is it not so?"

"Oh yes, yes!" She gave Tyranne a pitiable look. "I am so lonely, it is why I am unhappy. No one has ever talked to me before."

"And your Lord?"

"Ha! We have not said two words together, unless I forget them. I do not think, though, that I should forget."

"Tell me what you remember."

The Lady suddenly paled and cried, "I remember so little! We do not talk and think here as they do in dreams; talk, talk, talk, I wonder that they do not dry up their voices--"

"You are going to say we act."

"Yes," replied the Lady in awe. "I was going to say that."

"It is not true," returned Tyranne. "One always acts into his environment. There is no abstract action to be seen in the real world; it is all interaction."

"What?" asked the Lady.

"You must not just tell me the actions. You must tell me about the tapestries, and the rooms, and the clothes, and your husband's appearance. Everything you can remember."

And so the Lady told her. She related her first vague memories of fire and confusion, shouting and shrieking. "I think that my Lord stole me from someplace, but of course I cannot remember where," she summarized helpfully.

"Do not try to draw conclusions as you would in dreams," reproved Tyranne.

And so the Lady told her of her coming to the castle where the Lord lived, and of having to work at various tasks. Her Lord, she related, wanted her to work so that things would happen to her which she might describe to him and thereby entertain him. Sometimes the Lady would work outdoors, under

the black sky of the Narrow Kingdom, by the yellow light which issued from a strip around the horizon, as if through the crack under a closed door. The sky-vault was solid, for one could hear it throw back the echoes of one's steps; and the ground was metallic, and altogether flat. The Lady would try to remember whether there had ever been a different landscape, for it seemed there should have been. But she could never remember.

When the Lord held audience she was supposed to be with him. She could not remember anything about these audiences except that she would often have to stand before the assemblage of the Lord's vassals. The Lord would introduce her to them. Perhaps, she often reflected, he told them the details of her life before she had belonged to him.

"It is unlikely that he knows more than you," Tyranne replied.

The Lord, in any case, was an indulgent man; he did not require the Lady to stand long before the assemblage. Once he had placed a screen on the dais, which hid her to the neck; then he had taken her long hair and bound it to a nail over her head. "This is my wife," he had told them. "If I were to show you more of her beauty it would dazzle you to blindness." He ordered that she be kept neat by her servants and forced her to go out into the world to do her work and showed her before his vassals, but otherwise he made no demands on her and did not enquire into her activities; hence she was able to spend the hours in her grey chamber, even though they would have distressed him, had he known of them.

"No," said Tyranne, "you are concluding again."

"What? But he could not know, otherwise I should not be allowed to--oh."

"As a matter of fact, he does know. And that is why he gave me to you--to have the brooding stopped."

"And will--you stop it?" The Lady cowered before Tyranne, who nevertheless remained unmoved.

"No," she stated, "I shall not stop it. I cannot serve anyone's wishes with regard to another person."

The Lady breathed deeply, relieved; she actually became a bit cheerful, realizing that this tool of her Lord's had been able to thwart him. Tyranne was on her side! "You must stay with me always," she told her gratefully.

"I am here to fulfil your repressed desires, to cure you of

your melancholy."

"Then give me my memory!"

"It is reserved for dreams. You do, of course, know the name of the girl in your dream?"

"I know her whole life," nodded the Lady, "and everything about her."

"Her address, perhaps?"

"Of course. Though what will you do with that?"

"I shall disclose my intentions at the proper moment."

"Well..." and the Lady frowned and stared ahead of her.

"Whatever your intentions are--can you--take me out of bondage?"

"Yes," said Tyranne.

They were both silent. The room whitened a bit; the wind abruptly died.

"How?" whispered the Lady.

"It is very simple. The world of which we dream is another world, which controls our own. I call it the supra-conscious. There everything is known, for the inhabitants have memories and can think, regulate, depend on certain conditions. They have only one deficiency: they cannot know their desires."

"But if they can know so many other things--"

"Their desires are hidden from them. It is because they basically desire not to have their world, but rather a world such as this, in which they would not have to think and choose. We, however, know their desires. We are their desires."

"We? You mean that--the girl in the cafe--wants to be me?"

"That is metaphorically correct. The girl in the cafe desires bondage to the young man. Time there is not what it is here. All your memories have only the span of her desire. Your bondage is only her wish. All these walls, that plain, your work, is her wish."

"Then what good can you do?" The Lady was at once anguished; all her suffering was caused by a being who had everything

she, herself, might have desired: memory, control, choice and freedom, and was only using it to put herself in bondage. It seemed a vicious injustice and a hopeless situation.

"What can you do if all this is coming from another world where we couldn't even go if we wanted to and..."

She stopped. Tyranne was watching her intently.

"You mean," she said in a small voice, "you can--"

"Yes," said Tyranne. "I shall go to her and tell her to leave the cafe."

"You will?"

"I have said that I would. Now I shall leave you. Tomorrow I shall come back. Things will be different if I succeed."

All that night the Lady tried to sleep so that she could dream of Tyranne and the girl in the supra-conscious; but she was too excited. She walked about her chamber and the halls, thinking, "Tomorrow these ugly things will not be here. Tomorrow I shall be free, everything will be changed."

And then her memory failed her, and so she never knew what happened. She found herself sitting on a tremendous block of shattered stone. All about her, scattered for hundreds of yards, were such blocks; they were a blue-grey and had no particular texture. All around her was light. She looked up and saw that the sky-vault had turned opaque and was emitting a flat white light. There were no shadows anywhere; a dull grass, still in the still air, grew all around.

Tyranne stood beside the rock on which the Lady sat.

"How did you--" began the Lady, but Tyranne shrugged.

"I did it," she said. "It may have taken years of their time, or months, or only a second. It will mean nothing to you, in any case."

"But what is it like, there, in the supra-, the supra-conscious? How did you go? you mustn't just do a thing like this, Tyranne, and say nothing about it. Where are you really from? Are you from here or from there?"

The air was chilly, and the Lady hunched forward and folded her arms. Tyranne made no sign of answering. "You must be from there," the Lady continued, trying to elicit an answer, "or you wouldn't have known how to do any of this. Of course. How ingenious you must be! You came from there to

here to find out peoples' desires--is that it? To help them, to show them what to do? Is it?"

"You are drawing conclusions again," replied Tyranne laconically, and then she fixed the Lady with her rayed eyes. "And you are wrong. I am from here."

"Then how..." But the Lady stopped.

"I don't remember," returned Tyranne. "I am, after all, only a being like you. You cannot deify me, even though I am sure you would like to. I see that you are cold. You must not stay in this cold air."

"But--but where shall I go?"

"To my castle." Tyranne pointed toward the horizon. The castle was built of the same stone that lay in the field; it was a square structure without ornament.

"Your castle? But how could you have a castle?"

Tyranne started toward the building, and the Lady had no choice but to follow her. She stumbled in the long grass, and hitched up her skirts in order to keep up with Tyranne's strides. As they at last approached the castle she cried, "But wait! You must tell me just one thing. Please! What is the meaning of your name?"

Tyranne smiled ironically. "It is a word from the supra-conscious," she said slowly, "in a language they call French. It means, well, loosely translated, 'Lady'."

"Oh," said the Lady.

They came out of the grass onto some flat stones before the entrance to the castle, and there, to her surprise, the Lady saw the Lord, waiting on the steps. He cried out and rushed to her, calling her name. "I knew you would come! I knew she would bring you," he exclaimed, and embraced her. "I knew it! I saw it in a dream."

"In a dream? What dream? How?" The Lady saw that Tyranne was smiling.

"We were married, in the dream. You had been cured. You saw that you should marry me, and you weren't melancholy any longer. Everything was solved. And now everything is solved."

"What do you mean?" she asked, drained.

"You went to see someone," he said. "Don't you remember? A psychoanalyst."

"I don't remember," said the Lady. "What will we do now?"

"Why, you will be happy, of course. Now that you're cured, everything will turn out. Isn't that so, Tyranne?"

"We have wasted too much time already," said Tyranne. "Come inside, my children."

-Sigrid Nielsen

POETRY

KABALA

My ancestors were obtuse Socratics.
(What does that make me?)
For centuries they kept their god
buried at Delphi and Cumae,
spoke to him through those wild, gifted ladies.
(What's happened to all the talent in the family?)
Even Grandfather has forgotten
the secret signs and spells;
all he can do is point out
three chalk circles
drawn in a dark corner of the cellar
and whisper in ancient, self-reverent awe:
"It was here that I called up Lucifer
when I was just your age."
Old men have a way of losing their skill
with time-eaten volumes
and magical formulae.
Grandfather goes on:
"Boy, when you learn the words
and diagrams, then..."

(No, Old Man, that skill was never to be
my heritage, nor ever to know
the pleasure of conjuring daemons.)

-Don Whitfield

LETTER TO A FRIEND

At first it was a whistle,
grating, loud and dissonant,
that brought us together;
empty noise from a Cracker Jack box.
A Game was being played that night,
and many games within it.
Ours was one, and we became friends.
You kept the whistle.

One night soon thereafter,
the loud childish genius and I made you
the accidental object of a journey.
I cannot forget the sweater that you wore:
softly, whitely intimating you beneath it,
as we sat, hand in hand, before the fire.
He whined, fretted, wheedled;
you comforted and tried to change the subject;
I merely sat and touched you and felt
almost an immeasurable delight and wonder
(indeed, almost a scream)
at your existence.
That night never ended.

We had many adventures then;
we had them in theaters, cars, cafes,
and once, even in a laundromat.
You were the adventure, not we.
Watching you, sitting on the floor,
patiently wasting your time,
was not a waste of mine.
I loved you, but I worshiped too;
because of that, I bored you,
and now we are "only" friends.
You are no longer a goddess I must worship,
you are now a human being that I love.

I would like to think
that you still have the whistle.

-James Morrow Hall

PROCESSIONAL

For the Holy One has said:
Morning, as the Sun leaps to its flight across the heaven,
As the morningbird lifts itself to flight across the air,
Let thy soul also lift itself in mysterious flight through the kosmos.

And He said:
As the grizzled bear wakes to seek bee's honey and salmon fish,
As the she-lion stalks hungrily the swift and nourishing gazelle,
Break thy fast hungrily; eat thy fill and be grateful.

And He said:
Mid-day, as the Sun has worked to mount the heaven and has become hot,
As the horse has worked to obey his master and steeps in his own sweat,
Work also to obey thy Master. Improve the world; it is thy home.

And He said:
In danger, as the haughty he-lion will protect ferociously his pride,
As the she-bear permits no stranger to separate her from her cube,
Protect thy women and children: they give thee thy immortality.

And He said:
End of day, as the Sun finds its rest in the sea,
As the bear and the lion lie warm against their families,
Give rest to thy body and thy soul, that the morrow may see them
Lift themselves again to join the holy procession of life.

-Carlton Severance

Thought, and then the act:
Reason drives its amber wedge
And separates the leap
In which we, when we live,
Find ourselves. The insect,
Frozen midway between point
And thickness, is stopped--
Halted as we
When we pause, draw circles
On the sand, conjecture
Our location, ask how
The jump can be made,
Stop everything, as a photograph,
In mid-course; and the straining form
Tightens in a grimace, inert,
Leaping with one foot over the barrier--
And how, we ask,
How can it halve the remaining.
The mind whirls, its hooks too large,
Or too small, and the tightened muscle
Carries the force over, carving
Deep into that geography we find
When we cannot look away.

-Elliot Skinner

REVIEWS

W. B. STANFORD--THE SOUND OF GREEK

The Sound of Greek by W.B. Stanford, a Dublin professor of Classics, comprises lectures delivered in California in 1965. It is distinguished from most learned books--and this is a very learned one--by containing a five-inch 33 1/3 rpm phonograph disc in an envelope glued to the inside of the back cover. Insofar as the lecturer's chief purpose is to advance the cause of the proper pronunciation of ancient Greek, the disk is the part of the book that excites first curiosity. The chapters themselves, on the auditory resources of Greek phonemes, on ancient theories of language, on Greek taste, one feels that he can read at his leisure.

The heart of Stanford's doctrine is his insistence on the strict observance of pitch accent over and above the more familiar stress and quantity accents. Two things will happen to the person who, like me, reads the books and plays the record thinking that he knows all about the proper reading of Greek verse simply because he could distinguish the vowels properly and had trained himself to "hold" syllables for differing time intervals. He will say to himself, "Of course, why else were those acute, grave and circumflex accents there in the first place!" But hard on the heels he will say, "Oh, Lord, what a lot of work ahead of me!" For it is work. Try it--try maintaining the hexameter or trimeter beat of Homer or Euripides at the same time "singing" the acute accent a fifth higher than the unaccented, singing the grave somewhere in between, and singing the circumflex--when you come to it (all too frequently)--with the rising and falling inflection of the "ye-es" employed in English to register your surprised assent to the obvious.

To listen to Stanford's rendition of a passage from Sophocles' Ajax is to listen to a cultivated Dubliner practicing a limited voice exercise. To go further, to convince oneself that this new thing should actually replace the noble intoning one taught oneself in graduate school requires a rendition somewhat more operatic than Stanford's. These pleasant ups and downs of his smack of conversation over the tea cups. What becomes of the agony of a man about to commit suicide, what of the range of sound employed by Medea when she turns from flattering Creon to telling the chorus pretty plainly what she intends to do, what of the shrieking of Cassandra that Ezra Pound heard so clearly? Yes, it is these that I must contrive to reproduce and

practise if I am to replace my monologuic chanting for something closer to what was originally heard in theatre or megaron. (I might mention in passing that I myself have not heard any effort at the "real thing" outside colleges; Greek nationalist groups, like commercial Shakespearean, bend every effort to obliterate all traces of meter so as to make everything sound "natural.")

I urge all St. John's students to arrange to hear Professor Stanford's rendering of ancient Greek. I know that there will be prejudices to surmount; the lilting of the Irish don's voice reminds us that the Acropolis or the precincts of Olympia were not the repositories of marble-white statuary that we suppose, but of statuary bright with show-card colors. But he will at least begin to see the reason for the accents he was confronted with as a Freshman. What was the point of them, he wondered then, not to mention the need of memorizing them? I myself recall being told that they represented the traces of a lost art--but an art I was supposed to reproduce at examination time. There are alluring subtleties to experiment with, one in particular that even Stanford has not investigated, the rationale of rules governing accent changes. After all, the accents don't stay stationary, but sometimes change to suit the words they stand next to. Try as a starter declining the plural of "men":

ἄνδρες, ἀνδρῶν, ἀνδράσι, ἄνδρας.

-T. H. Jameson

LEFT IN A FEAVER

A review of
Music and Musical Instruments of Ancient Greece
 by Dr. Douglas D. Feaver
 Formal Lecture, Friday, February 16, 1968.

Friday night, St. John's was introduced to Greece and Greek music. As of Saturday morning, there had been the formation of a Kithara Consort and a notable depletion on campus in soda straws.

If the totality of Dr. Feaver's lecture consisted in a demonstration of the fine art of playing ancient Greek instruments, some rather disjointed facts concerning Greek modes and musical scales, and a few interesting, if inconclusive and one-sided, remarks about Greek tragedy in general, and Euripides in particular; then, it seems, the hours spent with him in the Friday night lecture were as frustratingly futile as the subject upon which he lectured. I prefer to believe, however, that this was not the case.

Dr. Feaver began his talk by attempting a distinction of three types of research which have gone into the study of Greek music: the philological, musicological and archeological. It soon became apparent that Dr. Feaver was primarily interested in the last method. Through a study of the remains of instruments, and of artifacts depicting those instruments, he reached his denouement by offering what was for him the answer to a particular problem: Did the Kighara notation of the 5th Century denote finger positions on the strings, or did it denote actual musical notes? Dr. Feaver, by using a method of proof well known to St. Johnnies, built a kithara and showed empirically that the notation did, in fact, represent pitch values. His conclusion: Perhaps it is possible to untie some of the other knots in our understanding of their music by careful archeological studies of the ancient Greeks.

It is a pity that Dr. Feaver was not better acquainted with St. John's, or perhaps the tone of his lecture would have been somewhat different. In any case, the general feeling about ancient Greek music at St. John's this morning could be summed up by the remark with which Mr. Bell prefaced his opening question in the period after the lecture: "I have a lot of questions." Everyone has questions, Mr. Bell, and

it seems, at least right now, that we all are, along with Mr. Brown, "left in a cloud of mystery."

-Joe Reynolds

THE CENTER DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

In the week of January 22, 1968, a four meeting series of discussions was held at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California, on the subject of St. John's College. The meeting was made possible through a grant from the Robert C. Townsend Foundation. Mr. Townsend is a member of the National Committee for St. John's College.

As is customary procedure at the Center, the discussion was prefaced by the circulation of a paper on the subject. This paper, by Dean Kramer, is the memorandum which is mentioned at the beginning of the first tape. It is reproduced here.

The following people participated in the conference:

From the Center:

Robert M. Hutchins
Scott Buchanan
Stringfellow Barr
William Gorman

From the Annapolis campus:

Dean John Kieffer
Rev. J. Winfree Smith
Thomas K. Simpson

From the Santa Fe campus:

Dean Clarence Kramer
William Darkey
Charles G. Bell
David Mischel
Sam Larcombe
Jim Liljenwall
Joe Tooley

Other participants:

Harris Wofford
Adolf Schmidt

Mr. Hutchins is the president of the Center. Mr. Barr was the first president of the College when the current program was instituted, and Mr. Buchanan was the first dean. Mr. Gorman is a former tutor. Mr. Wofford is connected with the University of New York. Mr. Schmidt is a former Visitor and Governor.

MEMORANDUM

Sometimes one is tempted to believe that the St. John's Program, now more than thirty years old, has been discussed nearly to death. Probably no faculty or student body expends more energy on continuous self-examination, and for those closely associated with the College shoptalk and discussion of ends and means seem unremitting. One consequence of this has been perennial curricular change, often of a minor nature, such as the deletion or addition of a seminar book, less often involving a major decision, such as the reduction from four to two foreign languages in the Language Tutorial, or the addition of music to the curriculum. The Program, therefore, has evolved and changed, though critics continue to speak of it as if it has been static. Whether these gradual changes mean that the Program is more clearly articulated now than in earlier years or is more effective pedagogically can be debated.

Nevertheless, though the College can and does cite these modifications as evidence of flexibility and sensitivity to its shortcomings, the evidence seldom satisfies the College's severer critics or comforts some of its worried trustees. Terms like "inflexibility", "dogmatism", "irrelevance", "lack of concern for the contemporary world", etc., continue to be applied to the faculty and the Program. It is frequently asserted that difficulties in student recruitment and fundraising are inevitable so long as the present Program is maintained; that no Board, no president, no recruiting officer can effectively sell a product for which there is no demand, or convincingly argue for a curriculum that so obviously is out of phase with current trends and fails to satisfy the needs and desires of today's youth.

There is little if anything new in these charges. Since the inception of the present program in 1937, St. John's has been out of the mainstream of American education, and this remains true despite changes over the years; for in its fundamentals the Program to a remarkable degree has maintained its integrity. There still are no departments; still no electives, unless the preceptorials in the junior and senior years are so construed; there is still a determination to build a curriculum around the reading of "great books", though this has proven impossible in some areas and the faculty have found it necessary to develop manuals and instructional materials to the point where one student recently characterized St. John's as the "college of the hundred great manuals." The most

durable aspect of the Program, which has somehow survived or transcended the changes, the tinkering, the textbooks, and the manuals, has been more one of attitude and approach than of institutional forms or the books studied in the curriculum. This aspect is less apparent to a critic, but comes close to being of the essence of St. John's.

Many years ago, a student described the St. John's Program as "something between a machine and an atmosphere", a phrase that remains appropriate and hints at the elusive character of the College in its living reality. One can easily enough outline the features of the curriculum now in effect, list the books and topics studied and discussed, as the Catalog does, and fail to communicate what is significant about the College. On the other hand, to try to be articulate about the "atmosphere" leads to lyricism that has a ring of falsity. Visitors who are acquainted with other campuses, lecturers who confront St. John's students and faculty in question periods, members of adult seminars, visitors to student seminars--these sometimes detect it and comment upon it in one way or another. Little in fact needs to be said about this aspect of the College, the one in which it is most truly itself and which it transmits more or less successfully to its students.

Surely one of the essential factors is the primacy accorded conversation and the respect for its prerequisites. In the first place, students and faculty take discussion seriously, if not initially then later on, more seriously even than the "great books", which rather amazingly acquire the status of members of a Seminar rather than being regarded as sources of doctrine or as monuments to man's progress or folly. Secondly, there is a realization that good dialogue or discussion involves a willingness to abandon or translate specialized and technical terminology or jargon, as the case may be, rather than to rely upon it to win an argument or lend an illusory sophistication to the talk. Thirdly, there is a not unhealthy scepticism with regard to authorities, living or dead. Finally, there is an understandable tendency to refract discussion of any issue, even of student government, into the context of traditional concepts and principles.

This is only to suggest that the College in its actual functioning is a rough adumbration of a Platonic dialogue, which is probably what it was intended to be. Which is not to say, (as is sometimes alleged) that what are called "Platonic doctrines" are inculcated. But the Socratic mode of inquiry, despite the paucity of Socrateses on the faculty, constitutes one of the College's most unique characteristics.

In saying this, one is immediately aware of the risk of

exaggeration. For it is undeniable that even among those faculty and students most committed to this mode of inquiry, the process is frequently botched or caricatured. Furthermore, St. John's has always had its quota of teachers and students who are restive in such an atmosphere, who develop anxieties and wish to get on with the job of "learning", cover the ground, and forge ahead to the twenty-first century. Often in their impatience these lovers of opinions leave the College; while they remain, providing they are reasonable, they may help create a tension that keeps fundamental issues in the foreground. This Platonic bias is probably communicated more by example than precept, but is fortified by the emphasis placed upon the reading of many Platonic dialogues in the freshman year. It has been said, not without some justice, that we make good Greeks of our students, but then are of little help in guiding them in their confrontation with the modern world.

Assuming the validity of this sketchy characterization of the College, it is not hard to see why St. John's seems more and more out of the mainstream of education. The increasing fragmentation of disciplines and the attendant emphasis upon expertise runs directly counter to the College's somewhat ancient and Quixotic faith that the intellect seeks a unified knowledge. Furthermore, in the age of the expert, a non-departmentalized program in which teachers are expected not only to learn outside their own discipline but to teach other subjects will simply appear mad, only slightly less so than the expectation that all students will profit from the same curriculum. With so much to be done and so many problems to be solved in today's world, it will seem merely silly to ask to devote precious time to the study of outmoded astronomers or a dead language like Greek, and to make them forego the social sciences, the fine arts, all the exciting developments on the so-called "frontiers".

There is no need in a statement of this sort, designed only to initiate a discussion, to detail the charges made against the St. John's Program since 1937. Nor is it the purpose of these remarks to attempt a refutation, even if the author were adequate to the task. The College's achievements, (and I believe them to be impressive) have been accomplished in the face of continuing opposition, misunderstanding, and recently, despite the strains of establishing a second campus. Unfortunately, these achievements consist mainly of a quality contributed to the lives of its students and teachers, and are therefore not measurable in terms that evoke much respect. In a more general way, the College may have helped keep the savor of the salt in American education, and nourished respect for a genuinely intellectual and dialectical enterprise, differing markedly from the "think tank" concept so favored today.

But regardless of the weight one attaches to these achievements, there are times when even the most dedicated advocates of the St. John's Program feel a gnawing frustration and depression. From a certain point of view there is nothing wrong with a college laboring and laboring and bringing forth a class of fifty or fewer graduates, or in acknowledging that an incommensurate amount of effort is required to generate an entering class of 125, or in asserting that the values of the Program can never be adequately represented quantitatively or its worth measured by the growth of endowment. Nevertheless at some time one is bound to ask: need it be this difficult? Should there not be some proportionality between the efforts and monies expended and the results? Why, after thirty years, in an affluent society, does a college whose integrity even its critics will grudgingly concede face a crisis in enrollment and funds that endangers its existence?

And beyond these hard and frustrating questions are others. Why is it that it seems increasingly difficult to communicate to students and faculty and prospective supporters what the College is about? It is comforting, but hardly an adequate answer, to suggest that over the past thirty years our society has experienced profound technological and social changes, occurring with a rapidity hardly imaginable, the effects of which are manifest in student unrest, the erosion of traditional values and concepts, in a general corruption of morals and manners. Certainly St. John's never had illusions about reforming the world or even education on a mass scale, despite the messianic tone that sometimes has crept into its publications. But neither was it without hope that it would become a firmly established institution within the bounds of which discussion and experiment regarding the ends and means of liberal education could fruitfully occur. In a sense this has occurred; how fruitfully is another question. The terms in which the conversation was couched--the language of the traditional liberal arts, for example--seem less and less meaningful, either because of a simple failure to make our practices and convictions intelligible, or because of a signal failure to translate these terms into a contemporary idiom. The College's decision to insist that four years of laboratory science and four years of pure and applied mathematics are an essential ingredient of a liberal education signifies at the least an intention to face the complexities of the modern world, and to search for unifying principles that could help make modern practice and contemporary disciplines intelligible. In this we have not on the whole succeeded.

On the contrary, one senses among students a growing feeling of futility as to the relevance of our intellectual tradition to the overwhelming problems (Vietnam, the race issue, nuclear warfare, etc.) we face today, and a deepening frustration at the complexities that must be comprehended in order

to attain minimal clarity on such issues. Furthermore, at a time when talk seems cheap, trust in its efficacy diminishes. Pronouncements of the nation's chief executive and the reflections of a teacher are likely to be regarded with the cynical detachment or bemusement formerly reserved for advertisements. The question implicit in this attitude is not "What does that mean?" but "What's his game? What's he trying to do to me?"

Associated with this frustration and deepening cynicism regarding the traditional ways of reason is an impatient desire to be "where the action is", to short-circuit the seemingly endless process of preparation for living and doing and to live and do now, right now--this apparently on the assumption that any kind of "action" is likely to be more productive, or at least more interesting, than reflection upon "enduring" principles or the laborious acquisition of arts and disciplines that technology may quickly make obsolescent.

Much of this may be implicit when the St. John's Program is criticized for not being sufficiently "relevant" or "contemporary", for not speaking in today's language. A great deal of such criticism, of course, is ill-considered and foolish; but when the foolishness is brushed aside or answered, there remains a kernel of legitimate concern which it would be irresponsible for the College to ignore. Young people who come to the College with a genuine impulse toward reflection, whose minds hunger for the nurture traditionally provided by the liberal arts, nevertheless wish with increasing intensity to understand the world they perforce live in, one that seems mysteriously disjunct from the past. The charge of "irrelevance" may be a disguised cry for help to find ways of coping intelligently with a world that seems to grow more and more chaotic. If the liberal arts as we have conceived them and tried to teach them are indeed relevant, as we claim, then we ought to find ways, more effective than we now possess, of applying them to phenomena that have the most vital impact upon us today. If the Socratic mode of inquiry provides a viable pedagogical concept, we should, in some respects at least, be able to start where the students are, even if that is knee-deep in a community project, to find there a locus for principles which reflection could elicit and upon which their critical faculties could be brought to bear. St. John's, perhaps, needs something of the Center.

To do anything like this would require, obviously, an ability to meet the contemporary world on its own terms, to make the effort to penetrate the veils of specialized talk and assimilate it to the traditional language of the great conversation which the College has sought to keep alive. Without

coming to terms no real dialogue will be possible; without assimilating it to the greater conversation the effort would be as ridiculous as the mere substitution of a rock-and-roll service for the traditional mass in order to get more customers into the church.

In making these remarks I have become distressingly aware of how they fail to comprise anything like a "state of the union" paper. Though others may well have the necessary perspective to make such an analysis of the College, I do not. It would be unfair, consequently, to associate my colleagues with the judgments and opinions offered here. For it is by no means clear that the dean's office provides the best vantage point from which to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and prospects of the College. In the course of several year's conversations with students, faculty, visitors--pleased, disgruntled, worried, despairing--criticisms of this, that or the other detail of the curriculum merge into a blurred image which only a patience greater than mine could bring into focus. The distillate from these conversations and the experience of seeing another St. John's College come into being has, I hope, somehow gotten into these remarks.

If they help to prod us into a fresh and unprejudiced look at what St. John's is about they will have served their purpose.

-Clarence Kramer

THE FIRST DAY

(January 22, 1968)

MR. HUTCHINS: The start is in the memorandum that was circulated which you all received.

I say on behalf of the Center for the Destruction of Democratic Institutions that we're delighted to have you here and hope that you'll contribute greatly to our education.

* * *

MR. KRAMER: I can perhaps say a little about how this came about; it's a little mysterious to me too. I think it's probably not an overstatement to say that in the last few months particularly of this whole year there's been a sense around the college that approaches a sense of crisis, though I don't want to overuse that word. The Santa Fe campus particularly, I think, has precipitated this, because of enrollment and financial problems.

Mr. Townsend happened to be in Santa Fe some months ago, and discussing some of these problems informally, he said something that has been said by many others, that when this program began in 1937 it was new, created news, and so on; and that, over the years, it's gone sort of stale. And that somebody has to articulate again what we're trying to do, and do it in a way that will have some impact upon students and potentially, donors. He also felt that many of the discussions that do occur--we do discuss these matters a great deal--are almost always under the duress of almost an emergency situation. And I think, quite frankly, the Board has been worrying a great deal and I think at the last board meeting a very serious effort was made to introduce a resolution to change the program in some undefined ways. This on the grounds, as I tried to say in this memorandum, that as it is now constituted it is simply not salable--those are the words--and as good businessmen they realize when you can't sell a product you change it, or at least change the package.

Dean Kieffer and I were at that meeting, and to a rather surprising extent it turned out that there was more feeling among board members in support of the program as it now stands than I think many of us had anticipated. So we came through relatively unscathed except for a change in our policy of accepting transfer students, which is yet hazy; but we're on record now (both faculties) as being in favor of accepting students with advance standing, which means giving them up to one year's credit for college work elsewhere, but that's not very specific.

And it so happened that Mr. Townsend also was interested in the work being done here at the Center, knew that some of you had been in on the formation of this program in the early years, and thought it might be useful to have a chance to talk with some of you and get some of us together without the pressure of having to make a practical decision by 4:00 or so.

And so I look upon it myself, and I think Dean Kieffer should speak too, just as a chance to hear what you might have been thinking. You look at the whole problem of education and you look at this little college we're associated with from a rather unique vantage point, it seems to me. And I'd be very interested in hearing your views and trying for my part, and I think for the rest of the faculty, to look at the whole problem of St. John's as objectively as possible, forgetting the availability of it, though it's very difficult to separate those questions right now.

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MR. KIEFFER: I think part of the problems we face are in the nature of the kind of preparation and attitudes students have when they come to us now, which are somewhat different, of course, from when we started 31 years ago. And maybe we as a faculty have a certain amount of adjustment to do, especially the older ones of us who are getting further and further removed from the present generation of high school graduates.

A good deal of my time is taken up with talking to students who say, "I think the St. John's program is wonderful, but I want to be out doing something active, so may I have a leave of absence?" The rest of my time with students is taken up with people who have dropped out and who come back and say, "I want to return to the college. The life of action isn't what I expected." In many cases this year out does a great deal of good.

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MR. KRAMER: I don't have a copy of the resolution of the Board with me, but they were shooting in particular at rather familiar targets: first of all, it's an all-required curriculum. Many of them feel that the insistence that every student take four years of what is called mathematics (you know, much of it is Newton or something like that) and four years of laboratory science is enough to scare the average student. And they were charging the faculty with recalcitrance and stubbornness in refusing to discuss these kinds of changes. The resolution was defeated, but in effect was a proposal that the program be revamped to make it more attractive to students. This means more leeway in the selection of courses and less requirements in the way of mathematics and

science, for example: modernization in many respects.

* * *

MR. KIEFFER: As far as the acceptance of the program is concerned, we would be lynched by the students if we changed the program. Most of them say they came because they wanted this program.

* * *

MR. KRAMER: I think there was considerable feeling, among the students on our campus at least, when this transfer program was announced.

MR. LILJENWALL: I haven't taken a survey of the students, but I think most of my friends didn't like the decision to admit transfer students. I'm against it. I don't think it's a good idea because I thought that the standard for giving a student credit as if he had done one year of the program was irrelevant. Other colleges, as far as I know, really don't have much to do with what we're doing at St. John's. In general, as far as student opinion goes, it's very conservative. Any change in the program is looked on with abhorrence. What I've found in the St. John's program is meaningful and worthy of respect.

REV. SMITH: The proposal for the transfer program doesn't mean admitting students to the sophomore year after a freshman year elsewhere, but admitting them to the freshman year and then having a condensed version of the sophomore year in the summer.

MR. LILJENWALL: I just didn't see what going to another college had to do with St. John's.

REV. SMITH: Yes. Having been admitted at some other college for a year, they would be accepted at St. John's but would finish in three years. This proposal was passed by the Board and accepted by the faculty. I don't think anybody on the faculty liked it really, but we thought there were certain reasons for it.

MR. BELL: I've been in favor of admitting transfer students and in an individual sort of counseling way giving them some kind of exemption for what they happen to have done in the way of coordinate geometry and all the other things that can be transferred since I came to St. John's, but on the other hand I voted against that because it's ridiculous to think that the sophomore year can be condensed into a summer and that the freshman year should remain inviolate.

MR. DARKEY: It seems to me that the transfer proposal is somehow getting the wrong weight in the meeting. I think the significance of the transfer program is only to be taken as evidence that the board or somebody is feeling desperate and that this looked like the thing to do in a desperate situation. I don't think anybody thinks it's theoretically interesting at all. It wasn't thought out on sensible theoretical grounds. I think the argument quite simply was: 'Why do we lose so many students? Well, we have high attrition. Why is our attrition so high? Everybody's attrition is high. Yes, but we have fewer students than other people. That's because we don't accept any transfers; other people cope with attrition in part by accepting transfers. Answer: accept transfers.' That's not very interesting.

MR. KRAMER: When the accrediting team visited the Santa Fe campus last year they did not make a great thing out of the attrition. They felt that our attrition, though high, was explicable in terms of our particular situation. We had a bad year last year--we probably lost 30% of our freshman class--but this year it's much better. But we have a full college now.

MR. DARKEY: It's also unclear, and I think always has been, what the real relation between the work of the literal admissions officers, school visits and so on, has to do with the people who come to the college.

MR. KRAMER: It's relatively minor.

MR. DARKEY: And it's a little discouraging because what you can do about it is try to put more effort into admissions work, but it's just not clear that there's any proportion between what they do and what the results are. Our best kinds of contacts are always the kind that you can't engineer. Somebody picks up a magazine or runs into somebody in a bus station or something, and...

MR. KRAMER: Reads Mortimer Adler's book; that still brings us...

MR. HUTCHINS: Mortimer Adler and Mark Van Doren are still our best admissions officers.

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MR. HUTCHINS: That leads me to ask my question. I'd like to know what you would like to do if you didn't have to worry about enrollment, attrition and the board of trustees. I gather from your report that as far as the present students are concerned they'd like to have things as they are.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FROM 1763 TO 1876
BY CHARLES A. BEAMAN
VOLUME I
CHAPTER I
THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE COLONIES
The first English colony in America was founded in 1607 at Jamestown, Virginia. It was a difficult and dangerous venture, but it paved the way for the future of the United States.

The Pilgrims arrived in 1620 on the Mayflower. They were seeking religious freedom and a better life. They founded the Plymouth colony in Massachusetts.

The Virginia Company was established in 1607 to sponsor a colony in Virginia. The first settlers arrived in 1607 and founded Jamestown.

The Massachusetts Bay Company was established in 1630 to sponsor a colony in Massachusetts. The first settlers arrived in 1630 and founded the Massachusetts Bay colony.

The Maryland colony was founded in 1634. It was the first colony to be founded as a refuge for Catholics.

The Georgia colony was founded in 1733. It was the last of the original thirteen colonies. It was founded as a refuge for debtors and as a buffer between the other colonies and Spanish Florida.

Now I happen to very much discouraged with the way some of these advanced manuals work, though I have an enormous respect for everything that's gone into them. And yet they don't work, altogether. We didn't have proof, though, that the texts themselves would carry themselves.

For instance, we have a big Ptolemy manual. Well I refuse to look at the Ptolemy manual. I mean I look at the sky and I read the text and I try to teach it. Teaching is really cutting up a carcass with a bludgeon, and there's no very decent way to do it, and every way looks like a failure, and the more deeply you involve yourself in it, often the more it looks like a criminal failure.

REV. SMITH: I think most of the manuals are extremely useful and extremely helpful.

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MR. KIEFFER: We've gone soft; instead of using marble we use talc for the making of plane surfaces, but essentially, we're still in a terrible stew about what are extensive and intensive magnitudes and about the problem of error.

MR. SIMPSON: I'm dismayed, really, by the feeling that I think most of us have had over the years that we really have not opened up the conversation in the lab as has always been intended.

* * *

MR. LILJENWALL: Whenever I understand something in the laboratory or an equation in the manual, I put it into my own terms. I'm not entirely certain that it's impossible to do that in the manual so that people could understand it and not become lost, but if it is, I don't see any justification for keeping the junior and senior years--at least as they are--because virtually nobody does them. One or two people in each lab will get something out of it and nobody else does.

MR. BUCHANAN: You do realize, don't you, and I'm saying something I was saying 25 years ago, that this problem hasn't been cracked by any academic institution before. And more and more people are aware of it at present.

* * *

MR. GORMAN: I'm trying to formulate an unpleasant question. These heroic terms I am a little leary of--that we're taking on a "mortal combat"; "the great monster", and so on. It was too easy in my time to take that romance as a cover for a good hard look at the kind of scandal that is involved if

this kind of student result occurs. The results, if seriously deficient, are as much a scandal as the kinds we St. Johnnies used to point to in other colleges. That degree of apathy could suggest, if we could put aside the romance for a moment, that maybe St. John's might at least think of what it would mean to pull in its horns quite considerably on this commitment about liberal understanding of mathematics and science.

My experience was that it was the romance of the fact that we were trying to do it at all that made at all bearable how comic it was for the most part. Its probably not comical any more, but it is, evidently, seriously deficient. It may be that its a somewhat inhuman, unrealistic commitment.

Now I know its absolutely contrary to the whole St. John's esprit to think of in any way diminishing the size and range and depth of its commitment about liberal education.

MR. HUTCHINS: If we had stuck to this romantic view we might not have solved anything, but might have...

MR. BARR: ...graduated on the barricades.

MR. HUTCHINS: Good.

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SEVEN will publish excerpts from the following days of the conference in future issues.

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KENNST DU DEN FAUST?

The hassle of the Liberal Arts? Better particulars: Why is Goethe's Faust always a pariah in the program?

--In English? All translation impossible; out of poetic German most so; most of all into English, our stale "joy" and "ecstasy", words Latin-inflated, sluiced by Victorian falseness, no heiliges Lebensglück, no segenduftenden Schwingen, Lust withered into "lust"--the one readable version besides, (Macintyre's, Part I only) out of print--how anything but a Pariah? --Yet even when German was taught, Faust was a poor relation, seen less as a compelling splendor than as a warning against unreason.

It is no trivial fear which has turned thoughtful moderns from faustian participation, titanism gone suicidal: Lucifer into Satan, Nietzsche into Nazi, the dream of democratic liberation into Johnson's Vietnam. Long ago, little old Geronimo drew back from that terror, formulating our incapacity in terms no reasonable prose writer has matched:

"Unnatural vices are fathered by your heroism."

Who could have known that better than the founders of a program meant to reinstate the rational? But how to wall the ground of the old Logos from the entropic withering of every closed system?

That was why Faust, translating the word Logos in St. John, threw out the creed-invested "Word", then the Platonic and rational "Thought", next the fore-existing prime-mover of "Power", and for the Creative Force espoused the temporal and factual, the uncaused and immanent: "In the beginning was the DEED."

A heresy against what we hold. For the classical mind, on which St. John's based itself, had throned reason ultimately out of time, changeless, in the god-given Numbers and Forms. Impulse, multiplicity, matter got pushed aside, inexplicable accidents of some fallen lot. Mind cleared of the muddle in which mind and world are involved.

When Christ took body, that should have been broken through, the submission to flesh mediated by God himself (felix culpa), though it took centuries, Dante, Pico, Bruno, Blake, Goethe, Hegel, to breed the Other onto the One, to bring the

actual out of the potential by a passionate alienation, make Nous an incarnate fire, at war with itself, refining eternal Nows out of dire antinomies, through what Whitman called "all terrible balks and ebullitions". That is the pact with Mephistopholes, in politics Machiavelli (Old Nick), in science the submission to "brute fact", experiment, the witches' kitchen; there the horned angle opens up into the infinitudes of calculus; there the unconscious coils its saving serpents. That is the muddle of process ("Love has pitched his mansion in the place of excrement") in which even Platonizing theory must hereafter build. For what were Hegel and Goethe, Melville and Thoreau, but Western Platonizers?

So the attempt to discard history, Transcendentalism, the Faustian and Nietzschean, romantic and creative, a soberness we shared with Hutchins, McKeon, Adler, not to mention Positivists, Litterati, stock brokers, shop-keeping America, specialists, came too soon and was glib; it abandoned hope of such a synthesis as Plato and Aristotle, our models, had effected in the Classical world.

If Buchanan founded the Program, call him our Milton. It would not have taken much study of Milton himself, or of Blake's poem of that name, not to mention history, to assume the sequence of Orc into covering Cherub; one had only to be possessed by the historical dialectic we have ostrich-like repudiated--the tragedy of faith--acting as if castration were a virtue.

So here we are needing a Blake to draw our Milton from the stiff company of the Elect, incarnate him as a revolt and scandalous indignation (that fibrous left foot swelling black); and who can give us a sharper clue than the Faust in whose rebellion the modern age was born: "Nur der verdienst sich Freiheit wie das Leben, Der täglich sie erobern muss." (No one deserves freedom and life but who conquers them for himself every day.)

It is conceivable that Faust could be brought to life, even at St. John's; context might swing it: Marlowe's Faust against Goethe's; myth and history: Promethean Greece against the New Prometheus; the Miltonic forehall: Commonwealth and Cromwell, the French Revolution, Rousseau into Robespierre, titanism as a phenomenon of hope changing into a phenomenon of despair: Moby Dick ("Bear the grimly, demigod! Up from the spray of thy ocean-perishing, straight up, leaps thy apotheosis!") Nietzsche: "Who acts from love acts always beyond Good and Evil," the Marxist reassertion, against Conrad's Heart of Darkness: "We live in the flicker"; then dessication to the Hollow Men: "Mr Kurtz he dead", "Teach us to care and not to care; teach us to sit still."

But that is Geistesgeschichte in its most flagrant form. Perhaps one could get away with it in the Preceptorial, the capsule perverter of our Program; otherwise it would be special pleading, corrupting the young, "not what we meant at all." Let the law of Entropy operate rather than jaq up the conversation with such drugs.

Against that voice I take refuge in the text; I have translated one of the great scenes: the First of Part Two, Faust in a meadow, recovering after his most destructive involvement, the love for Gretchen (by which he also turns out to be saved).

An opposition runs through the whole of Faust, call it of fire and water, daemonic-eunomic, classical-romantic, Werther to Wilhelm Meister, Sturm und Drang against Eclairissement (though each wording alters the antithesis), and under the opposition a question: must the Faustian desire burn and destroy the fabric, as in myths of Icarian and Satanic aspiring, or can the flame be contained in a self-shaping vitality?

In Part I, when Faust, fighting the inevitable (cf. Blake: "Those who restrain desire do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained") withdraws from Gretchen and is found musing in "Forest and Cavern", he addresses the World-Spirit: "Along with this ecstasy which brings me nearer to the gods, you gave me a dark companion from whom I cannot separate myself. . . He fans a fire in me for that beautiful image. So I rush from desire to satisfaction, and in satisfaction yearn for desire." It would be too simple to say that Goethe, through a long productive life, shifts from suicidal to constructive Faustianism. Rather the poles are sustained and woven into richer configurations: Faust's last achievement of a free land brought out of the ocean (by hell's fire) is also punctuated with terror (the burning of the pious old couple); it remains a dire miscarriage, an act of the blindness in which he dies. No wonder the final ascent to the sky, the half-god leap, without humility, without submission, puzzles the orthodox. It is less Faust's immortal fate than a mythical spelling out of what has been immanent from the first (so Thoreau: "God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages."), the transcendental calm at the heart of every tornado of embodied desire.

In no scene are these tensions more subtly woven than in that of Faust's waking. The earthly recognition--"Im farbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben"--does not deter a maturer Faust from rising to the day of incommensurate longings. Have not the comforting small spirits of nature announced (though

they themselves hide from the dawn): "The noble soul that understands and seizes may accomplish all things."?

TRANSLATION OF GOETHE'S FAUST,

PART II, SCENE 1.

A pleasant landscape. Faust stretched on a flowery bank, tired and restless, seeking sleep. Twilight. Spirits hover around him, small graceful forms.

Ariel (Song accompanied by Aeolian harps):

When spring in petals
Drifts down like rain,
And children of the fertile
Earth savor the green
Blessing, magnanimous spirits,
The elves, in pity,
Help as they can
Good or evil,
All in pain.

You whose airy circles weave this head,
Perform your elfin healing; touch the heart
And calm its raging fever; forbid remorse;
Draw out the rankling darts that he may wake
Clean of terror; let the past be past.

Night is measured by four silences;
Fill them all with service:
First, let him sleep pillowed on coolness;
And the dew that bathes him, bring from Lethe
Quiet forgetfulness; then the cramped tendons
Ease as he slumbers toward the dawning;
Last and noblest, let him wake,
And come again into the sacred light.

Chorus (singly, then by pairs and groups, alternating and together):

Serenade: When evening blows
 Over bordered fields,

Twilight falls
 In perfumed veils;
 And the heart like a child
 Is rocked in peace,
 And the tired eyes close,
 And the golden gates.

Notturmo: When night has fallen,
 Star on star
 Holds the watches,
 Near, and far;
 Waters mirror
 The sky's fire,
 And the moon sheds sleep
 On the world's floor.

Mattutino: Old pains, old pleasures
 Melt away;
 The heart is whole,
 Let it trust the day.
 Hills and valleys
 Bush into shade,
 And the ripe wheat works
 In waves like the sea.

Reveil: Renew your wishes
 At the light.
 Sleep is a chrysalis;
 Shake it off.
 All things approve
 The great soul
 That knows its purpose
 And lays hold.

(A terrible tumult announces the sun.)

Ariel: Ears of spirits hear it, hear it:
 Thunder of day; hearing, fear it:
 Storm of the Hours, earth's rim shattered,
 Jar of rock gates and the wheel's clatter;
 Apollo's day-bright wagon comes;
 Always in tumult light is born.
 Drums. Trumpets. Deafened, blind,
 Spirits creep in flower-crowns;
 Unhearables must not be heard.
 Cower deeper, in leaves, in rocks;
 Cover your ears. Day breaks.

Faust: The pulse of life wakes in me, roused to greet
 The mild ethereal gray. And earth that was steadfast
 Through the long dark, breathes the quickening air,

And clothes itself in light and me in power;
 And stirs as always longings in the heart,
 Soul-reachings for the goals and heights of being.

The world is wrapped in the pale shimmer of dawn;
 The woods are full of voices, living songs;
 In low places pools of mist are poured,
 That take the light of heaven and are pearl;
 And twigs and branches from the vaporous gorges
 Where they have slept in shrouds, wreath and aspire,
 All fresh, all green; colors steal from the gray,
 Where leaves and flowers trembling with the dew;
 And Eden revives around me; all is Eden.

I lift my eyes to the hills. The highest peaks,
 Already touched with light, announce the coming.
 They drink the day before us, the eternal brightness,
 For which we lower creatures wait in longing.
 And now the upland slopes and last smooth pastures
 Receive the glory, which step by step descending
 Down the long sequence of the folded ranges,
 Strikes: it strikes; and blinded,
 I turn away, my eyes pierced through with anguish.

It is always so. Whenever restless longing
 Finds the basis for its highest wish,
 The wingspread portals of its promise open,
 Then from the reach of those eternal vistas,
 Break prodigies of flame; we stay, confounded.
 We thought to kindle our life's torch a little;
 A fire enfolds us, an all-inflaming ocean.
 Is it love or hate? It wraps us in its burning
 Incredible waves of ecstasy and wounding;
 And we are glad to sink to the earth again,
 To take the shelter of some childish veil.

And so I set my back against the sun.
 The waterfall that brims the rock chasm
 Dilates the orbit of my sight with wonder.
 From fall to fall it breaks in a thousand streams,
 That break and break again into other thousands;
 And spray mounts up, cool fountains of spray,
 At whose peak and crown, vaulting the storm,
 A rainbow comes and goes, dying and born,
 Hovering spirit of the downward shower.
 I see it now: it images our striving--
 Itself an image, born of sun and water:
 Our life is not of light, but of broken color.

-Charles G. Bell

A CONCRETE PROPOSAL

St. John's College is almost certainly the most Platonic undergraduate college in the country, in that it makes the most widespread and purest use of the dialectic form. There is a fluency of argument that places our type of dialectic above the "board meeting seminars" which Mr. Kramer tells us exist in other schools.

It seems, however, despite the beauty of our dialectic technique, we have missed the point of the Platonic ideal. We have missed it not only through student indifference, but perhaps also through a basic flaw in the conception of the seminar at St. John's.

When Socrates engages in a dialogue, he is concerned primarily not with understanding what Homer and Hesiod thought about the Good, but what the Good is in itself. Rather than concentrating on the philosophies of others, although this clearly part of his process, he philosophizes. Would it be too presumptuous of us to follow his example?

It appears that in seminar most of us assume unconsciously that our "encounter with tradition" is an end in itself rather than the means to a greater philosophical end, that of the acceptance, rejection, or modification of tradition. The means, the encounter itself, is necessarily analytic, but the end, philosophizing, is necessarily synthetic and creative. Perhaps we are dying because we fail to create intellectually as well as to analyse. Mr. Severance suggested in his broadside that we plan a change and implement it. Here are two proposals:

1. Keep the present seminar. It is an effective means as long as we remember that it is a means.
2. Create a new seminar having groups of about ten members each for which no preparation is required. These seminars would meet once a week when and where the members pleased, and would consist of students of all classes. At the beginning of each session, one member would ask a basic and universal question and each individual would attempt to formulate his own philosophy with the help and criticism of the others. No books would be opened and discussion of authors would be limited in the same way that Socrates' commentary on poets is confined to either

making specific points or refuting commonly held notions. If more discussion of a concept became necessary, the dialogue would continue next week. Every effort would be made to keep the atmosphere as free as possible, even to the point of making attendance non-compulsary.

-John Polgreen

NOTICES

With this issue, Hugo Hamilton is leaving the magazine. We wish to thank him for the time he has put in as Art Editor. Lloyd Westbrook is taking over that post.

Mrs. Greene is sponsoring a contest for a Christmas card design. A worthwhile and pragmatic prize will be offered. Further details will be soon announced.

Articles are respectfully solicited that seriously and thoughtfully continue the Center discussion.

On March 1st, SEVEN will publish VIORDAN, a science-fiction novella by Sigrid Nielsen.

Subscriptions: \$4.00 a year.