

MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 1955

No Parallel

Dr. Howlett Johnson's habit of identifying Russian Communism with the social practices of the early Christians is understandable; anyone with his affection for the Marxist doctrine could hardly be expected to stick to a liberal reading of Christian history when a deviation therefrom might help to surround that doctrine with a faint aura of piety. The strange thing is that many persons who haven't the slightest sympathy for Communism admit, grudgingly, that early Christianity was somehow or other tied in with a Communistic way of life. Where that idea sprang from in the first place is difficult to say; certainly, a plain reading of the Scriptural text justifies no such assumption.

"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the Apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according to his need." That is how the situation was summed up by the writer of "The Acts of the Apostles" (according to the Authorized Version; other versions differ slightly in style, but not in meaning.) What does it show? Obviously, that the communal life of the early Christians (a relatively small body, it must be remembered) was a purely voluntary arrangement. The plan seems to have been more practical than ideological; in any case, there was no compulsion about it; certainly, there was no State authority waiting to punish any individual who might not wish to join the community. It was simply an arrangement entered into by a small society for the mutual benefit of its members, during the difficult formative period of its life.

This becomes perfectly clear when the story of Ananias and his wife Sapphira is unfolded. Their crime was not that they did not feel like putting all their money into the common treasury, but that they lied brazenly about the transaction to their fellow Christians. (Even Dr. Johnson will admit that Ananias's place in history is that of a brazen liar, not that of a non-conformist.) When Ananias's deception was discovered Peter said: "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" This is plain evidence, surely, that there is not a trace of compulsion—political, social, or economic—about this "all things in common" concept of early Christian life.

There is no law in this country, or in any other free country, to prevent groups of persons from sharing a common social life or dividing their possessions with one another. Indeed, there are many Christian communities doing that very thing at the present time. But that is a very different thing from a system under which a political party, which does not even bother to go to the polls, forces entire populations into its own collectivized institutions and, what is worse, into political conformity.

A Tossed Salad

Educators—and many other persons who take a lively interest in such matters—are becoming increasingly alarmed at what they believe to be a trend towards lessened concern for the liberal arts; and statistics in college registrations seem to support their view that vocational and technical training, once considered as secondary in importance to a well-based classical education, is rapidly assuming the place of special honour. Not that they deprecate technical training; in this day and age mechanical skills of one kind and another are valuable possessions, and they will become more valuable still as time goes on. What they fear is that the time is approaching when the liberal arts will go a-begging; and no thinking person needs to be told how great a loss that would be to any democratic society.

Some educators, however, are of the opinion that much of the trouble can be traced to a growing inclination among University and College administrators to water down the content of liberal arts curricula and to lower academic standards generally. They argue, probably with reason, that this tendency, far from enticing more students as it is intended to do, has the effect of ac-

celerating the commonly held view that liberal education is unimportant and of no great help in making a living. One very prominent educator who believes that this dubious administrative method is doing more harm than good is the Rev. Dr. Theodore Hesburg, President of the University of Notre Dame. Following are a few brief excerpts from a lengthy and thoughtful address he delivered recently before the Association of American Colleges, which takes in more than 700 of the country's leading institutions of higher learning.

"Our modern liberal education is a melange of disaggreated parts, concocted by piling course on course, without internal unity of the subject matter itself and with even less external integration contributed by the various teachers. The result is comparable to a tossed salad, except to fill out the analogy we would have to admit that the component parts are seasoned with Russian, Rocquefort, French, and Thousand Island dressing all at once.

"Clientele changed, new elements added, the substance disintegrated, teaching fragmented—these are a few of the important changes included in a 'realistic' appraisal of this proud old badge of liberal education. The very core of what was considered to be liberal education in former times—the classical tradition—has been largely submerged and lost. The cultural unity of the Western world formerly achieved by philosophy and theology has almost entirely disintegrated. It would seem to follow from these facts that we should begin spending less time in asserting the superiority of liberal education and apply ourselves to the very difficult task of making our liberal programs, in fact, superior and more effective."

Valued Messengers

For the second time in less than a year a carrier pigeon has made the headlines by the simple expedient of losing his way on a short flight and ending up many hundreds of miles from his home post. The very fact that this was considered news is a fine tribute to the strange powers of navigation the species has possessed—and used in the service of mankind—for a very long period of time. In fact, mention of the pigeon and his phenomenal sense of direction can be noted in the ancient literature of almost every race and people. It has even been suggested that the dove which the patriarch Noah sent out of the ark at the time of the Great Deluge was in reality a carrier pigeon well trained in the traditional avocation of his kind. It is well known that pigeons were in common use among the early Egyptians and Romans; indeed, they took precedence over all other classes of royal messengers. Right up to the first world war, and during its course, they were regarded as important and trustworthy agents of all military commanders. Even in the last war, notwithstanding the vast improvements in scientific gadgets of communication, it was not unknown for pigeons to be called into service for delivering messages of top-secret importance.

As time goes on these messengers of the air, pioneers of the communication line, will have less and less to do until, finally, they will be put down in the books as "expendables". It can be taken for granted, however, that a small force of the home-loving and intelligent birds will be kept ready for any emergency—just in case some unexpected failure in their scientific replacements should develop. Meanwhile, as a valued servant of the human race goes into virtual retirement, his heroic exploits deserve to be given an honoured place in the archives of history.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The first Boy Scout troop was organized in England this date, 1908.

Chinese New Year: "The Year of the Sheep." Chinese year-names derive from the animals in a zodiac calendar 4,500 years old, and are symbolic. The Year of the Snake (1953) was ill-omened; the Horse (1954) happier; the Sheep presages "quiet, retired life." Let's hope so!

According to the President of the American Heart Association, the risk of dying of heart disease has declined sharply for persons under 44 years of age. It has remained stationary for women over 44, but has increased for males about that age. Medical advances in the last thirty years have reduced the heart death risk of persons under twenty-five by 70 per cent.

The death of the Rev. Daniel Lord, S. J., in St. Louis, Mo., removes from the American scene a man of many talents and accomplishments. He was equally proficient in theology, belles-lettres, religious writing, music, drama, and youth work. A skilled apologist for his own faith, he was regarded highly in all religious and literary circles.



If It's Over His Head Now --

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open to the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Editor does not necessarily endorse the opinion of correspondents.

WHO IS TO BLAME?

Sir.—Last week there was a cold war in a Boston penitentiary. The convicts had taken charge. Hatred was their controlling passion and freedom their chief desire. At our birth we are neither good nor bad, but soon begin to develop certain attitudes of mind. The brightest child in the playground makes up his mind what toy he wants and sets out to get it, unless it is in the hand of his crippled brother that he had much affection for. He may show a more dominating attitude to one outside his own family. We must agree that character is determined more in the first seven years of life, than in any other seven. The wise mother encourages the child to give small gifts to each and all in the home; to herself and to the father, each brother and sister as the birthday of each one comes round. All this is to oppose natural selfishness with generosity which considers the rights and happiness of others. If such a normal child learns to love the organization we call the family, he goes out into the larger family we call society no chip on his shoulder. He has learned that living consists in giving as well as in getting. He always has friends with whom he can cooperate. You can't make a criminal out of him if you try.

But one equally normal and perfect at birth may be born into the lap of luxury. His parents strive to increase his happiness by loading on him material gifts. Soon delinquency shows up in the home. He carries the selfish spirit into the world. "Give me this and give me that or I'll break things up. If I don't get a raise in salary, I'll rob my employer." He hates everyone but himself. When he reaches the prison cell, he is critical of the food, the efforts to supply the guard, the police, his past employer, and the whole outfit. His time is now taken up with hating. And hate leads to violence and even to murder.

Unconventional Grandfather

(Manchester Guardian)

Most of us know that Sir Winston Churchill's mother was a handsome and gifted American girl, nee Jennie Jerome. But few, probably, know much about Miss Jerome's father. Now, thanks to a new biography "The Fabulous Leonard Jerome", by Anita Leslie (just published by Hutchinson at 21s.), we can to some extent repair the omission.

What we find out, if not quite fabulous, is nevertheless fascinating—and, for those who like to trace the effects of heredity upon the formation of character, positive proof that Sir Winston could not fall to be unusual.

His American grandfather was a brilliant and wayward personage; a Wall Street broker who won and lost three fortunes (he was, however, able to settle 6,000 pounds a year on Jennie when she married Lord Randolph Churchill, though he could afford less for his other fashionable marriages); a prominent sportsman, who adored riding and yachting; a patron of the opera, who even built a miniature theatre on his New York house; a collector of Italian paintings; and—here Miss Leslie becomes rather veiled—apparently a philanderer, with a special taste for actresses and singers.

Mr. Jerome gradually recedes in the narrative as his wealth dwindles and as his striking daughters, shepherded about Europe by their ambitious mother, come to fill the foreground. Yet he never seems a trivial figure. He remains attractive and unconventional even to the end, when dying in a Brighton boarding-house, he was given the Old Testament to read, but soon laid it aside, remarking, "what horrible people!" and refused to read another word.

So Winston, we see, could have no reason to be ashamed of the "Leonard" in his name. And Leonard, though he was American enough to regret that all his daughters married Englishmen, would certainly have rejoiced in his grandson.

Cold War Danger Point

By Henderson Gall  
Reuters Service, Berlin

West Berlin authorities are anxious to take over more responsibility in the government of the city, but the Allies feel that West Berlin still is too much of a danger point in the cold war to justify any gamble with its security.

Britain, France, and the United States promised in November that West Berlin should be given the "greatest possible degree of executive, legislative and judicial self-government compatible with Berlin's special situation."

"They reserved their powers to 'maintain the security, status, economy, trade and communications of West Berlin, to ensure the maintenance and security of their troops there, and to fulfil their international obligations.'"

Within these limitations, an Allied high commission spokesman assured this correspondent that the Allies had every desire to allow the West Berlin authorities to be master in their own house.

Both sides are reticent on the specific points they will raise in future talks on the subject, but it is understood that the Allies will go as far as possible in cutting out obsolete restrictions. A recent example of this trend was the return to the West Berlin government in December of the right to license newspapers in the city.

The talks were delayed by the West Berlin elections, which returned the Social Democrats at the expense of the former coalition partners, the Christian and Free Democrats. The new government

hate leads to violence and even to murder. We may also have the child that is slightly different to the others in the home. He has latent possibilities that are overlooked by the parents. But other children regard him as inferior. What he needs early in life is a friend. If he does not find that, he is headed also for delinquency. We all need a friend. I visited the local assistant work Master. He told me of his work in that line and I was full of optimism. I saw that some coming under his care show some signs of delinquency, and have to be firmly dealt with. I also learned that every boy wishes to be a "Scout" or, if below age, to be a "Cub". But his groups are too large.

I thought—this is a great opportunity for a clean living man to develop a vocation or hobby that will make a real man of himself, as well as turn out the class of citizens we need. I am, Sir, etc., ARCH. MACKENZIE.

Kensington.

consists of the Social and Christian Democrats in coalition.

The Allies expect that the Social Democrats will press them to give up all special powers and retain only general powers relating to security. Although the Allies are shy about saying what they will concede, they are definite about what they will not compromise. The most important of the latter is full control of the police. The spokesman said that the Allies would reject any suggestion that they should retain only "emergency powers" over police, arguing that such powers would come too late for action to be possible.

Many cases of kidnapping from West to East Berlin and the violence and double-dealing involved in West Berlin's unique position, he added, have proved that police here must be more alert and more heavily armed than in most Western countries.

The Allies have no objection to West Berlin adopting West German legislation, but they insist that the West Berlin parliament be entitled to scrutinize each bill and to reject any considered incompatible with Berlin's special interests. They oppose any 'emergency for West German legislation to become automatically binding here as in West German federated states.

The Poet's Corner

SUNRISE

I saw the shining-limbed Apollo stand, Exultant on the rim of Orient, And well and mightily his bow he bent. And unseem-swift the arrow left his hand. Far on it sped, as did those elder ones That long ago shed plague upon the Greek— Far on—and pierced the side of Night, who weak And out of breath with fright, fled to his sons. The nether ghosts; and lo! his Jewelled robe No more did shade a sleep encircled world; And thereupon the faery legions furred The silk of silence, and the wheeling globe Spun freer on its grand, accustomed way While all things living rose to hail the day.

—W. D. Lighthall.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

There is danger of other countries on the perimeter of Communist China going Communist. The immediate danger is that part of Indo-China still free may do so. Apart from any direct appeal Communism might have to underprivileged people, or the possibility of direct attack, there is a psychological influence at work. It isn't easy to counteract. There is an old Indian proverb which reads: "He who lives by the river must make peace with the crocodile." In other words, he must not take chances with, annoy it or get in its way. — Windsor Star.

We have in our possession a book entitled "What is the Matter With Canada?" It was written by a university professor some 20 years ago. It deals with this very difficulty that lies in lack of co-operation between the provinces and between the provinces and the Dominion. Perhaps Canada has assumed the mantle of nationhood a little prematurely. Are we sufficiently ripe and seasoned for the exalted status we not only claim but insist upon? At any rate, this country doesn't seem too adept at pulling together. — Nanaimo Free Press.

The area has a new town. The Village of Delhi became the Town of Delhi as the new year entered. Our congratulations to the town and those whose efforts resulted in the change of status. Delhi has known rapid growth in the last few years, a growth that has been evident across Canada, and especially in this part of Ontario. Canada is growing up, and growing fast. There is no need to look at larger nations with envious eyes. We will have ups and downs along with the rest of the world, but we cannot help but go ahead. The future for our young men and women is in Canada. Here there is still room to roll up the sleeves and carve your own success. — Tillsonburg News.

Does your wife have the habit of making memos about this and that? If she does she's no different than the Greek housewife of 1500 B. C. Prof. Alan J. B. Ware of Princeton's Institute for Advanced Study says a series of clay tablets that lie in the pre-Homeric civilization of ancient Greece. Newly deciphered, these tablets listed spices, herbs, and other household items. This, the professor says, proves that the ability to write was common in those days. Well, we'd like to suggest that it also shows wives then were much like they are today. Ours is always making out shopping lists and mislaying them, too. — Owen Sound Sun-Times.

We have shaken germs upon which we could feel germs—they were as big as grasshoppers, and almost visible to the human eye. But we are still here to tell the tale, and we think it is better to feel free to shake hands with people than to worry about their germs. All of us, every day, are sneezed on, spat at, and, unavoidably in the normal course of human life, somehow we survive. We are even conscious of spreading a few germs ourselves, in various unpleasant ways. Germs, if they are facts at all, are facts of life, and we are going to get rid of them by refusing to shake hands. — Peterborough Examiner.

There will be regret not only among Toronto symphony audiences but throughout Canada when Sir Ernest MacMillan steps down finally, at the close of the current TSO season, from the podium on which he has been a familiar and distinguished figure for exactly a quarter of a century. No Canadian has done more for the art that soothes the savage breast than the music knight who has won international fame as a conductor, composer and organist, and whose name is inseparably linked with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Mendelssohn Choir. It is just 52 years since the boy from Mimico, then ten years of age, astonished and delighted an audience of 4,000 at the Massey Hall with his first organ recital. Since then his career has fulfilled his early promise. At 13, he became an Associate of the Royal College of Organists in London, and at 17 he was made a Fellow of the College. As a student in Paris, he visited the German festival at Bayreuth in 1914, and was interned at the outbreak of the first world war. In the internment camp at Ruhleben, he took a leading part in musical activities there, and it was while he was interned that he composed a setting for Swinburne's England as his doctoral thesis. On his release he quickly made his name known all over the continent of North America and

The Age Old Story

Who can understand his sweetest cleave thou me from secret faults... Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

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