

the office of priesthood nor any other power or agency gives a man the right to make valid judgment on subjects about which he is ignorant. I personally have a deep belief in God but I think the Holy Spirit tells me a few things too, and they are sometimes quite at variance with what the Holy Spirit reputedly has told Paul.

Freudian psychiatry has worked with the thesis that homosexuality is not a part of nature, but is rather a perversion of the natural instinct. But Freudian theory has not stood up well under the test of the last several decades. Homosexuality seems to be ingrained much deeper as an instinct than to be said to be generated from an inability to resolve drives centered around the Oedipus situation. Most patients who come to analysis as homosexuals leave as homosexuals.

Most churches and religious bodies look upon homosexuality with disfavor, due I think to the unfortunately strong influence of St. Paul upon early Christian literature and theology. His feelings of guilt were so strong as to be almost morbid. The same could be said for St. Augustine. This type of morbid guilt seems to permeate so much of western religious literature that we certainly cannot accept it as an adequate rule of life, nor even an adequate philosophy for most humans.

I cannot agree with Mr. G. that a homosexual is in the same class with the alcoholic. Nor do I think that the future of ONE Magazine is doomed because it represents an attempt to question what has long been held to be God's opinion—that homosexuality is wrong. Nor do I think that a homosexual should pray to be rid of his desires of the flesh simply because a religious organization has told him that he should. If anything, the homosexual should seek to learn, as best he can, the nature of the universe and his place in it.

**Mr. K.
Miami, Florida**

Dear Mr. Legg:

I appreciate hearing from you about my earlier letter. I am not a theologian and I doubt if you are, but the Bible, as we all know, can be translated and jerked around to suit people's lives. I believe I know as you must that most of us are unhappy people on earth. If you face life as it was intended men were made to be attracted by women, basically to produce children. If you tell me that sodomy is a natural act, or other ways of having sex, then YOU must give up blasphemy.

If you do not believe God destroyed the two cities of sin then do you know why He destroyed them? They were certainly living

against the natural laws of Nature. If scientists do not know what causes homosexuality then don't you think we should leave the answer up to God?

I have known nasty queens and nice ones and believe me sexually there isn't much difference whether being done in an old rooming house or behind velvet curtains. It is wrong to live "that way" and deep in almost every homosexual heart they know it. Otherwise they wouldn't escape through the bottle and go running to psychiatrists.

I think I will buy every issue of ONE up where they are sold here and replace them with the Catholic Digest.

**Mr. G.
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Dear Mr. Legg:

I have already found solace in "religious escapism" as you choose to call it. Remember that "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." This is now confirmed in my life of mystical experience—union with Christ and the daily reception of his body in sacramental form. Perhaps I am especially favored by such signal expression of His love. Nothing you may say will have the least influence in causing me to think otherwise.

**Mr. W.
Enid, Oklahoma**

Dear Editors:

Several afternoons ago I was browsing in a used-book shop and found the June, 1954, issue of ONE Magazine which was devoted to religion and the homosexual. I doubt whether the intervening years have made any change in the interesting and illuminating research there into the religious situation concerning homosexuality.

It is my good fortune, as a relatively religious person and a homosexual, to possess a possibly rare degree of so-called religious sureness and tranquility. I firmly believe that, standing apart from accepted norms I was forced to rely on my own inner resources as far as religion was concerned. And I have been the victor.

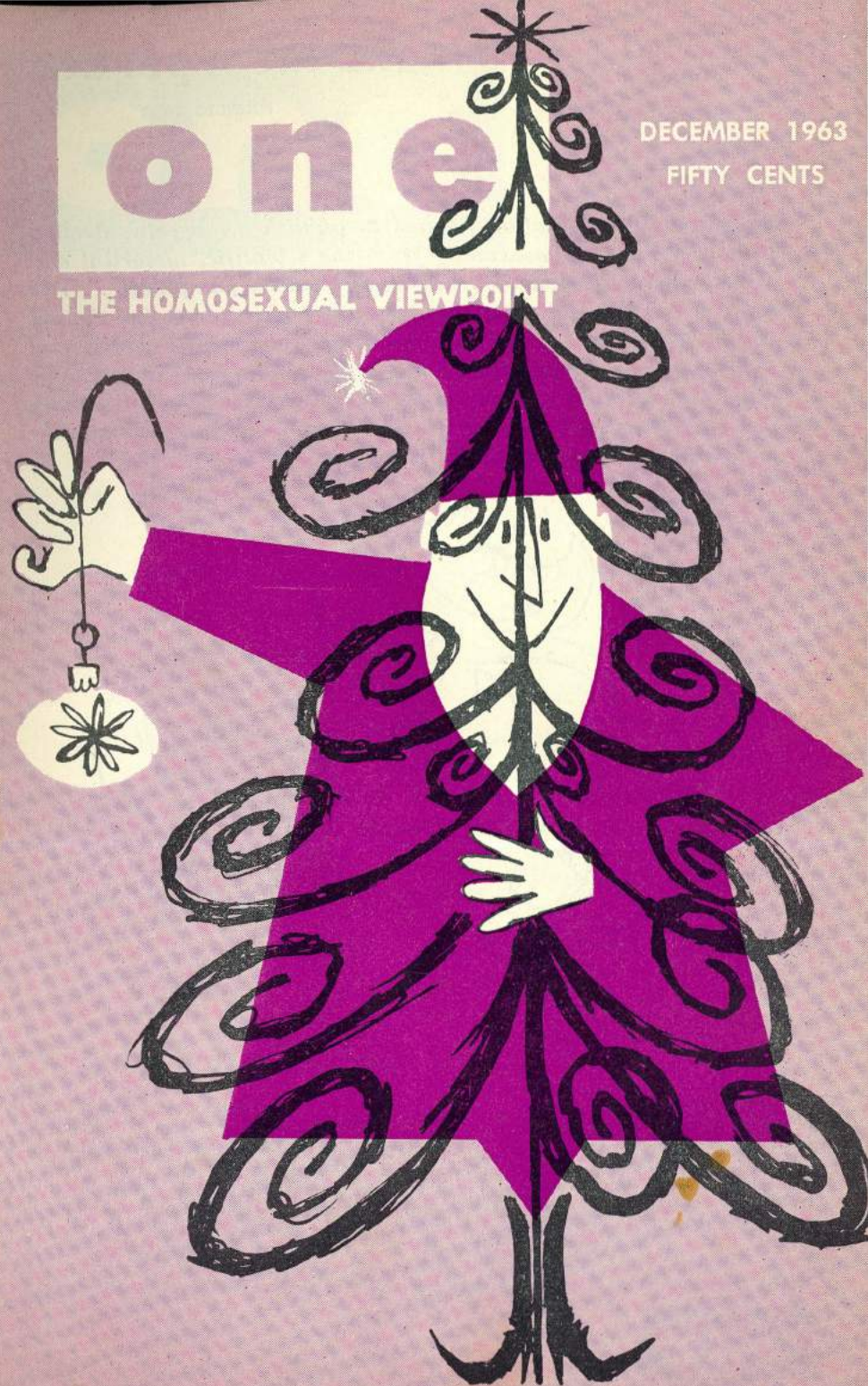
As a child of a Catholic-Protestant marriage, contrary to normal procedure I was raised a Protestant, always amidst the clash and din of religious warfare. The experience has taught me that if there is one thing the homosexual must learn to excel in it is sincere introspection and reliance on that introspection which transcends a good deal of the spiritual and social traditions so zealously kept in the fore by prevailing society.

**Mr. R.
New York, N. Y.**

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THE HOMOSEXUAL VIEWPOINT

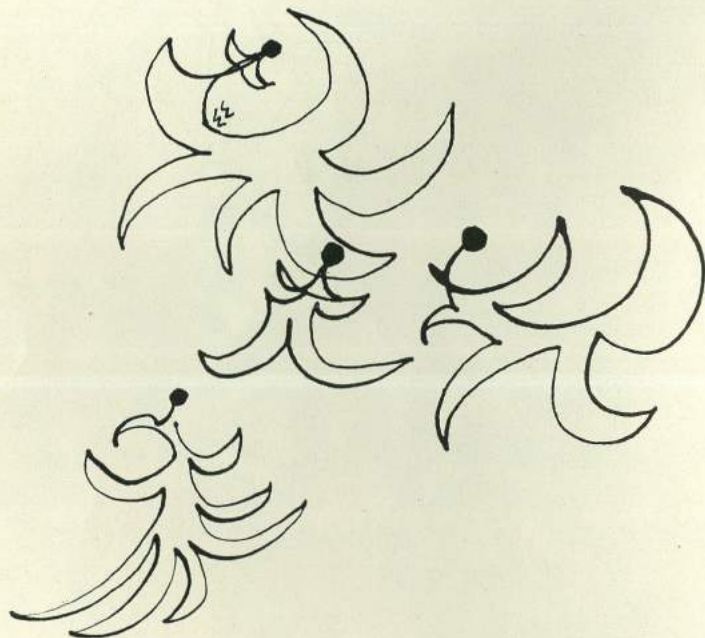
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" . . . a mystic bond
of brotherhood
makes all men one."

Carlyle

magazine

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Number 12

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EDITORIAL

With any comprehension of the social system in which he lives today, any homosexual will immediately grasp many of the illogical inequities suffered by his group, and as any man in the street who feels he is being victimized, he will seek to mitigate his persecution by whatever means he possesses He realizes that the fights for Catholic and Jewish acceptance, Non-Segregation, Votes For Women, Labor Unions and such have not been won simply. His membership in a vast unorganized minority suddenly becomes a challenge to him, and no reasonable man can condemn him for thinking of his own welfare in these terms.

However (and here he hits his first big snag), in seeking to identify his most dangerous adversaries in the society, business, and government of today, it does not take him long to recognize several ultra-dogmatic sects of organized religion as the "brains" behind those legions of uninformed who refuse to understand his dilemma and who would prefer to see him destroyed to living the useful life of an average citizen. The problem is a serious one, for not only is the average homosexual inclined to be deeply devout, but when he quotes modern medical attitudes that treat him as an understandable phenomenon, or questions the reactionary teachings of an established church, his politics are immediately called into question. . . .

Most homosexuals have a great respect and admiration for the life and teachings of Jesus. Christianity is not incompatible with their natures. Imagine then, the reaction of the homosexual when some member of a pompous ministry tells him he is damned if he expresses his love for his fellow man in a way that seems completely natural to him, because it does not have the blessing of a clergy that can sanction only a sexuality resulting in the procreation of offspring! Jesus' defense of the fallen woman from the stones of her tormentors obviously did not mean what the homosexual thinks it does

Fortunately, all of America's religious sects are not so hidebound. I've been told the more liberal ones are growing at a most satisfactory rate. Last week a minister, who also has been elected twice to his state's legislature, told me, "Once the Christian Church had the power of life and death over the populace. Today it is forced to sell itself on an open market like toothpaste or soft drinks or razor blades. It's an excellent situation, for the sects that do not progress satisfactorily will die, and that's as it should be." Most encouraging words from a minister whose congregation can be counted in a few score. Across the street, however, there is another group that number as many hundreds who interpret tolerance in quite another way and to whom homosexuality ranks high on a long list of similar anathemas. Politically powerful, rich, dogmatic, puritanical, spoiling for a fight to the death with anyone who challenges its strength, it reminds me most unpleasantly of something Stekel, the famous Viennese psychiatrist, wrote several years before I was born. "Religious teachings always adjust themselves to the social needs of their day and even fulfill them. Religious formulae prove meaningless only to the progressive, emancipated, free and forward-striving persons, the imperatives of religion are superfluous only for those above the average. The crowds must cling to religious formulae and will always need sexual inhibitions of a religious nature." Even so, the handwriting would appear to be on the wall for future generations of queer-baiters.

Game of Fools

James Barr
Kansas, 1954

DEJECTION: AN ODE TO FRIENDSHIP

Such natural delight, as conversation
With one's friends, is gone. No longer am I
Gratified by taste or touch, the scent
Of freshness, song, or sunlight of the sea.
Abroad the news is bad, and here now stirs
A discontent, like fear among imagined
Shapes at night, like noises in the house,
Work still left undone or not done well.
A readiness is in the air, yet this
Is not the season of farewell—one knows
These things somehow, or have I bent my mind
To superstition in fatigue of sentiment?
In the street—the clamor of oblivion,
Activity to keep the mind from thought;
And still the even day proceeds, a process
Comforting in some vague sensual way.
And then a screech, a thud, a cry, a scream:
Agony without the numbing words
Of higher explanation; violence
Beyond intent. Violence of falling
Stones on rainy nights, violence at sea,
Of water over towns, of a wind, of fire,
Of teeth, of knives: flesh burning, torn, deceived
By all the comforts of our slow natural
Decay. I will forego the luxury
Of contemplating purposes and ends;
Of glooms, dissensions with my faculties:
Come to me now and talk to me, my friends.

—Bruce Boyals

A MORAL IMPERATIVE

We live in an age of ferment. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the field of religion. Struggles of conscience and soul-searchings are daily fare in the temples, pagodas and churches of our time, as new wines seek uneasy accommodation in the old bottles.

The conflict between the homosexual and certain religious attitudes is hardly new. Over the centuries its harvest has been a grisly one of executions, suicides and shattered lives.

That large numbers of homosexuals, knowing this, should reject religion and the church is understandable. The contempt so many of them feel for religion indicates the width of the gulf between the two. In rejecting the church which has rejected them thousands of homosexual men and women become unchurched or else atheists.

It should be made clear in this present discussion that ONE does not take sides either for the one or the other of the disputants. As a non-sectarian institution ONE's duty is to be as impartial as possible. Non-sectarian, in this sense, means to be broadly humanitarian and neither atheistic nor diestic, neither Christian, nor anti-Christian. This is felt to be the truly ecumenical position.

In this spirit then, we shall examine "the failure of the church" in the field of homosexuality. We shall follow this by giving specific examples of such failure, naming names, and we shall conclude with a statement of what appears to be a moral imperative facing religion and "the church" these days.

By W. Dorr Legg, Director of One Institute

THE FAILURE OF THE CHURCH

Thousands of homosexuals have told us or have written what this means to them. It means that, broadly speaking, their churches have refused to accept them into religious communion *as homosexuals*. Many of them find themselves entirely unable to square the thought of pretending to be other than what they are, or of dissembling, with the ethical standards their religions profess. Yet, if they tell the truth the doors of the churches are closed in their faces.

Homosexual acts, they are told by clergyman, priest and rabbi, are sins so vile in the sight of God as scarcely to bear discussion. The revulsion of most churchmen at the mere mention of homosexuality is so intense that the hapless subject is quite unlikely to avoid feeling condemned both of God and of man. In desperation, many homosexuals sincerely strive to conform to a pattern of living which they are told is The Divine Plan, but the attempt seldom is a success. Their failure then sinks them deeper into feelings of guilt, self-condemnation and despair, according to the degree of their own integrity and sensitivity to ethical problems.

Some homosexuals seek escape through the use of alcohol or drugs, so many of them in fact that some observers believe repressed homosexuality to be the prime cause of alcoholism and drug addiction. Others turn for help to psychiatrists, or else struggle weakly on until some mental hospital is the only way out.

The stronger ones are apt to rebel and become reckless outcasts of the gutter or prison fodder. It sometimes happens that in prison for the first time in their lives they discover their homosexuality to be just what it is, simply another aspect of the human condition, neither good or bad of itself. In such cases, blessed are they

who lose all, for thereby do they find themselves—an ironic beatitude rung out from the dregs of disaster.

Only slightly less trying than ecclesiastical condemnation and rejection are the indifference and temporizing so often encountered. Many clergymen to whom homosexuals appeal for aid are so immersed in the delights of theological speculation or plans for some new stained glass window as to find little time for less pleasant pursuits.

Upon being pressed, this sort will ooze a synthetic charitableness, saying, "Come into the church by all means, but please soft-pedal your homosexuality. You have a fine choir voice and so long as there is no stir, I certainly won't condemn you. After all, the old Sodom story is in considerable textual disrepute these days anyway and the mission of the church is to save sinners. I don't see why this would exclude you, my son."

So runs the thinking of the sweepers under carpets, but large numbers of homosexuals want higher standards of honesty than this. They charge the churches with harboring far too many scribes and pharisees and expect the church to face the whole homosexual question squarely and fairly.

This, religion must do or else relinquish its claim to universality, is their demand, feeling that if the church is unable to supply adequate answers to ethical questions why then honor it any longer?

To unnumbered homosexuals the failure of the churches is of two sorts: a failure of commission, instanced in countless inhumanities vented upon countless homosexual men and women; a failure of omission, shown in an unreadiness and unwillingness to wrestle with the knotty question of the acceptance of the homosexual in the order of things.

OFFERING HIM A SCORPION

Protestants. The number and diversity of Protestant denominations is proverbial, yet in their treatment of homosexuality they exhibit a singular unity. For this reason, the admittedly limited number of examples cited here is yet claimed to be typical of them all.

Oscar B. Jensen, Associate Minister of Los Angeles' First Methodist Church, answered an inquiry from a member of his church, "are you asking the Church, the Methodist Church, and the Church Federation to condone homosexual activity, or are you asking for help in solving the problem? . . . the Church can never condone homosexual activity as it has always been regarded as immoral and a psychological illness. These people, as I understand them, are emotionally sick."

Edward Staples, Nashville, Tennessee, of The Board of Education of The Methodist Church, has written us: "Most of our American churches have not taken any stand on homosexuality." Neither, it seems, has the Church Federation which represents the major Protestant and Orthodox denominations of Los Angeles. For, when ONE's Social Service Division in August, 1963, invited the Church Federation (copies of the invitation going to a number of the individual church bodies as well) to send representatives to a meeting for the discussion of the religious problems of homosexuals, two Orthodox priests from a neighboring state were the only clergymen responding and present at the meeting.

The minister of a very large church, Dr. John D. Brown, Beverly Hills Community Baptist Church, speaking in August, 1962, before an audience of homophile men and women, said that homosexuality was anti-Biblical and anti-Church; that "normality" was "basic Christian-

ity," and that those who were unable to be so must refrain from sexual expression entirely.

Another Baptist, Pastor George Wall, First Baptist Church, North Hollywood, wrote ONE concerning an article Editor Don Slater had published, "Such a conglomeration of faulty reasoning and pure nonsense could not come from anyone except he were either morally and intellectually incapacitated or depraved . . . why not engage in face to face debate where your preposterous facts and ridiculous reasoning could be easily refuted?"

A reply was sent to Rev. Wall, in part as follows, "On the assumption that your spirit of inquiry is honest and responsible, as well as presumably Christian, Mr. Slater has expressed his entire willingness to debate with you at a time and place convenient." Although many months have passed Rev. Wall has not replied, leaving the question of both his honesty and his Christianity yet to be evaluated.

The Episcopal Church, inspired perhaps by certain humanitarian statements contained in the 1954 report, *The Problem of Homosexuality*, issued by the Moral Welfare Council of the Church of England, has a number of clergymen who are somewhat more liberal in their views.

For instance, Canon Robert Cromsey, of San Francisco, said in September of this year, "Our attitude generally is that people with this psychic and emotional condition are some kind of animal despised of man and God." He then called for greater understanding and tolerance. Father James Jones, of St. Leonard's House, Chicago, has addressed meetings at ONE Institute in charitable and temperate terms.

Yet it is doubtful if their basic theological positions would differ much from that expressed at San

Francisco in May, 1960, to a Daughters of Bilitis Convention by Episcopalian Rev. Fordyce Eastburn, who said that homosexuality was "a primary disorder of the Divine Plan," and should be cast out forthwith.

Few Congregationalists have rallied to support Long Island's Rev. Robert F. Wood, author of *Christ and the Homosexual*; nor was any standard publisher willing to publish the book, or reviewer to herald its appearance. So far as is known Rev. Wood is the first and only clergyman to have seriously explored new approaches to the theological problems involved in homosexuality. A single quotation will illustrate his thinking. "It is quite possible for homosexual love to become sacramental and thus moral."

Roman Catholics. Persons of many different religious persuasions come to ONE's offices seeking help in solving their problems. Of these it seems safe to say that none are more disturbed than those having Roman Catholic backgrounds, also that the ratio of Catholics in this condition is greater than the percentages from other denominations.

Can this be explained? An answer must be sought in the teachings of this religion regarding homosexuality. A clear and official statement of these teachings has been made by the Rev. Michael J. Buckley in his book *Morality and the Homosexual*. Following Thomistic lines he writes, "that homosexual acts are intrinsically sinful," and that it is impossible to believe "that the natural and divinely ordained human condition is other than *uniquely heterosexual* . . ." Fr. Buckley also states that "The aim of the homosexual should be ultimately his re-orientation to heterosexuality and where this is impossible an adjustment to his condition is the only way acceptable to Catholic moral theology—a life of

chastity."

Catholic homosexuals tell us that they find themselves caught between two apparently irreconcilable demands—those of their church and the equally urgent pressures of what they describe as their own inborn feelings. While it often happens that Catholics, particularly Latins, are able to resolve this conflict for themselves many others are unable to do so and suffer untold anguish.

Some of them break under the strain. Others rebel defiantly, pointing out the undeniable historical evidence that their church has often had in its seminaries, priesthood, and on up to the highest levels homosexuals whose condition is neither denied nor to all appearances curbed. "Why should I go to confession," is the argument of such persons, "and take a beating for what the priests themselves are doing?"

Quite clearly there is little that a neutral observer can offer to individuals citing such arguments. Despite repeated requests to the Roman Catholic Church for speakers and cooperation in helping to meet the needs of its communicants ONE has yet to receive any response from that source. This seems to be the uniform behavior pattern of religious bodies, Protestant, Catholic or other, when homosexuality is the topic. Can homosexuals be blamed then for using the phrase "the failure of the churches"?

Other Denominations. The Jewish position has been little, if any better. Rabbi Alvin Fine, of San Francisco, has said, "The problem of homosexuality is one of serious concern . . . that bears directly upon the integrity of family life, and the moral foundations of our society . . . it is my interpretation of Judaism that homosexual practice is still held to be immoral, but moral problem that it is, we should regard and treat it

as a psychological illness . . .”

A good many of the Jews interviewed in ONE's Social Service activities do have severe emotional problems but it is not possible to clearly determine that these may be attributed mainly to their religious teaching. Enough of these cases have not been observed to warrant such a conclusion yet.

While Mormon doctrine follows the general religious pattern those Mormons coming to ONE have for the most part been able to work out resolutions of their homosexuality as also have, surprisingly, a considerable number of those with strong Fundamentalist background.

Christian Science, one of the more intellectually sophisticated modern religious groups, has a record concerning homosexuality no more favorable than others. A case coming to our attention was that of a young man deeply disturbed over the moral questions concerning his homosexuality. Failing to secure satisfaction from several clergymen and psychiatrists, as a last resort he sought a Christian Science practitioner for help. The practitioner heard his story and then confessed that he had long had a curiosity to have a homosexual experience. The young man was both too weak and by this time too confused to refuse compliance. Following the incident he returned to his home and shot himself.

Is this instance untypical? Yes, insofar as particulars are concerned, yet examples quite as unfeeling could be charged against many other churches and churchmen.

While it long has been believed that Buddhism and Hinduism each have held more morally defensible views concerning homosexuality than has Christianity, the trend today in Far Eastern countries is in the direc-

tion of increasingly repressive attitudes. Homosexuals in Japan, India and elsewhere have written us describing their fears and their sense of social and religious isolation.

In the West there has been quite a bit of faddist espousal of Buddhist and Hindu teachings on the part of some homosexuals. The Zen groups have had an appeal of that sort for some. As to Moslems, their official position appears to be anti-homosexual. In Moslem countries tourists tell us of considerable tolerance of homosexual prostitution but great severity directed against what might be called “upper class homosexuality,” a situation not unlike that found in a number of the European countries.

There are at least two religious bodies known to be willing to speak directly to the homosexual: the Basilian Friars in Washington, D. C., of the Old Roman Catholic Church, have placed advertisements in ONE Magazine inviting inquiries; the American Eastern Orthodox Church in Las Vegas, Nevada, has sent representatives more than once to address ONE Institute groups. More recently it has agreed to accept for counselling persons under twenty-one who normally are debarred from ONE's services until reaching legal age. Mention should also be made of current progressive studies of homosexuality being made by some Quaker groups.

TOWARD A HIGHER MORALITY

Many homosexuals charge that it is the duty of the world's religions to become aware of the inadequacy of their moral standards respecting homosexual men and women. It is their contention that churches uphold one standard of morals for heterosexuals and another for homosexuals.

Historically speaking the association between morality and religion is comparatively a recent one and so varied have been the religious interpretations of moral questions over the centuries as to arouse considerable scepticism regarding the reliability of their statements.

For example, homosexuals are told that marriage is a sacred institution and part of God's plan for humans. Why, then, it is asked, did priests not perform marriages until fairly late mediaeval times, and why was marriage considered too profane to be performed anywhere within proximity to a church?

In Imperial Rome Christians were fed to the lions as having violated the moral codes of the Roman religion. Moslems executed “the Christian dogs,” because their conduct violated the moral codes of the **Koran**. Subscribing to a different moral code Christians enthusiastically slaughtered Moslems during the Crusades, when they were not slaughtering each other for “heresies.”

The Inquisition under Church approval executed a code of morals featuring refinements of physical torture undreamed even by Hitler's experts. The story of the Portugese and Spanish conquerors of North and South America as well as the more recent British, French and Dutch records in Africa, India and Indonesia again throw a clear light upon the flexibility in practice of what religions claim are immutable moral laws.

Many homosexuals mean exactly what they say when they announce that they are placing religion and the churches on trial. They refuse any longer to accept as valid a moral code based on ancient Jewish records appropriate to other days and other ways. Nor do they find themselves persuaded as to the authoritative value of every single phrase ascribed

to Saul of Tarsus. Especially suspect do they find his statements concerning homosexuality in view of his own well-known instability and some circumstantial evidence that he himself was a repressed, hence fearful, homosexual.

A moral imperative of compelling urgency faces the churches today, say homosexuals. For if religion is unable to produce men who are humane and decent, then the moral codes of the churches are ineffective. “By their fruits shall ye know them.” The old excuse that one should not judge Christianity by Christians no longer seems persuasive in a pragmatic age such as our own.

The churches will continue to lose the respect and the allegiance of those homosexual men and women who refuse to settle for an ethical standard that has two faces. Either religion makes provision for the in-born goodness and dignity of man—all men — or religion is found wanting.

The moral imperative has now been so defined. The churches must come humbly and willingly before the judgment seat of the religious demands of all humanity. If their self-righteous obduracy should stiffen instead and if old shibboleths persist, then, like dinosaurs covered by ice, the overriding strata of higher ethical levels will cover the churches from sight. The religions of today will become footnotes of history, alongside Mithraism, Isis or Adonis worship, and all the myriad others which have vanished with the dust of the ages.

If it shall have fallen to the lot of homosexuals to force the issue many of them stand ready these days to raise the challenge. The vintage time of a higher morality is at hand. Will there be vessels for the new wine?

The Other Present

by

Leo McAlbert

It had been snowing heavily, that Christmas Eve, as I found my way over to George Kusaki's house at the other end of the campus.

Just as I crossed the street, I slipped in the new-fallen snow and nearly got run over by a truck. I was still shaking from the shock when I rang the doorbell. Kusaki opened the door immediately.

"I didn't think you would make it," he said.

"Oh!" I said, "You saw?"

"I knew you had to do something before coming here," he said.

"But not *that*!" I said, "I mean, it's the snow—slipping in the snow's an accident!"

Kusaki shrugged his shoulders and sat, very Buddha-like looking straight in front of him.

"All right," I said, "I'll bite. What is it? The death instinct, *thanatos*? Where do you want me to hang my coat? In the bathroom?"

"Yes," he said. "You can put it in the closet when it stops dripping."

"Can you really recognize Thanatos—the Death Instinct when you see it," I asked. (Kusaki, a psychology student, is an orthodox Freudian.) "And Eros, all-pervading Eros? Can you recognize that?"

I had shouted this from the bathroom, hoping to get above the sound of Callas coming from the hi-fi set, but Callas must have won, because there was no answer from Kusaki.

"That's your present, over there," I said, coming into the room. "Do you want to put it under the tree? Don't stand up. I'll do it for you."

"No," said Kusaki, "give it to me."

"You're not going to open it *now*," I said. "Why, you have to wait until at least after midnight so that it's Christmas Day. And usually, I think, they're opened the next morning."

"You *think*," said Kusaki, "don't you know?"

"Well, I'm Jewish," I said, sitting down next to him. "My family never celebrated Christmas."

Kusaki smiled at me.

"Then you've no religious, or *ethnic* objections to my opening your present now?"

"No," I said, "but don't expect another tomorrow morning."

"We'll see about that" he said, opening the wrappings.

It was a photograph of Bernini's St. Teresa with an expensive silver frame. I knew Teresa was one of Kusaki's favorite subjects, one he had begun with William James, then going on to the autobiography of Teresa herself. I had not shared his enthusiasm, had in fact rejected St. Teresa as just a neurotic, if an energetic one.

"Eros of Thanatos," I asked.

Kusaki turned and smiled at me.

"Eros" he said, looking back at the picture, "Eros the picture and Eros the picture-giver."

I burst out laughing. "Is that the wisdom of the East?" "I'm twenty-seven, neither a boy—nor—thank God—blind!"

Kusaki smiled again and, getting up, went to the Christmas tree and took a package out from under it. Outside the snow was beating against the window. I could hear it.

The package was, evidently, a phonograph album.

I smiled and accepted it, saying, "I'll wait till tomorrow morning, after all, I'm staying over."

The voice of Callas on the phonograph had risen to some immense height. It was "Norma". I had a feeling that something unpleasant was about to happen.

"Open it now," said Kusaki.

"But then I won't have a present tomorrow," I protested.

"I'll give you another present tomorrow," he said, laying his hand on mine, "open it."

I slipped the ribbon off and undid the paper, realizing for the first time, that I was afraid of Kusaki. He was very intelligent, and one of the chief marks of his particular intellect was that he rarely wasted time or motion. Each visit he made, each remark had a purpose. And I now felt, that even his gifts—this the first I had received from him—would bear this force, perhaps, more than his other actions.

I had undone the wrappings.

It was the *Tristan and Isolde*.

I looked at Kusaki, who was again seated on the couch, but this time—with good reason—not smiling.

He knew! When had he known?

He looked at me directly, his eyes seemed to say, "your move."

But the board seemed upset, the pieces falling on the floor, the edge of my vision, touched by that terrible darkness I had experienced so briefly earlier when I had slipped in the street . . .

★ ★ ★

I had spent the last Christmas alone. Ronnie, who was my roommate (and lover), had gone home for the vacation. My father was dead, my mother had gone to Florida with my aunt, and although my brother and his wife had invited me to stay with them in New York, the expense of the trip there was too great, and even if I could have afforded it, the trip was purposeless. I wondered if it was being gay that separated me from the possible joys of living with my brother, his wife and their three children. I knew that for me there was only my studies and Ronnie.

And now that Ronnie was away, the studies didn't seem to mean much. The school holidays last for a week before and a week after Christmas. There had been no letter from Ronnie before Christmas and on Christmas Day I sat, trying to read Troilus and Cressida. The bell had rung.

I had been so sure (for no reason) that it was the postman with a Special Delivery letter. But it was Kusaki—a friend of Ronnie—who I hardly knew. He was returning a book he had borrowed from Ronnie.

He saw my Troilus and Cressida and, sitting down, embarked on one of those short precise essays that I was to know and love so well, this one being on faithful and unfaithful lovers.

I smiled and wondered—what every gay person wonders—if the other person is too.

It was impossible to tell.

Kusaki had gone on into a discussion of Tristan and Isolde, which I knew more through the Bedier version than the Wagner opera.

"It's love of death," I'd said viciously, "a suicide pact."

"No," he said, "its love *through* death, love *strong as death*."

"Yes," I said, "but in the Song of Songs the lovers escape—alive."

Kusaki had nodded.

"Yes," he said, "sometimes we are that fortunate."

We? He had gotten up, as abruptly as he had sat down, as if—quite purposefully—this was the message that he had come to deliver and then said as he left, "I'll stop by on New Year's Day."

There was no Special Delivery letter that came after he left, and no letter from Ronnie, or even a card on any day that followed.

Kusaki's talk had made me interested again in the Troilus but this interest flagged when there was no mail, and only growing, increasing doubts. I took Ronnie's records of the Tristan and Isolde out and, for the first time, played them. Listening to them, I found myself overcome by a strange, almost insane, mystical conviction that somehow my own love would save us both, that the black thoughts hanging around me, would, if kept away, not bear fruit.

But I knew. If I had felt my voice, or presence was wanted or needed by Ron, would I not have phoned him? Even the daily letters I sent him seemed to need an extra prodding to get in the mailbox, as if they knew that they would be unwelcome guests at their destination.

I went to a party New Year's Eve, got very drunk, or tried to, but couldn't. The drunkenness of sadness had crawled into me deeper than any alcohol could reach.

I had sat sour-tongued, listening for Kusaki's ring, and also, wondering, if he knew about Ron and me.

When I let him in the room I had said, "I hope you don't mind. I'm playing the Wagner Tristan. Ron sent it to me . . ."

Kusaki did not talk at length as we had last time. He never competed with records. He had sat and smoked and left.

The next day Ron had returned. I asked him if he had received my letters. He had. As for him, he had not written because . . . there was no reason. There doesn't have to be. It is only writing that needs a reason, not non-writing.

I can answer hate, as I can accept love, but the wastes of waiting, boredom, indifference, are for me impassable, unknowable, unbearable barriers. I had been under a delusion, that this numbness of Ron's was strength. When the new term began I changed rooms. I lived alone, and slept alone, feeling that the touch of another lover would only recall the defeat of Ronnie.

I avoided the few gay friends that Ron and I had known, but found that I had nothing in common with my straight friends, who were all now, for the most part, married.

It was the solitary yet social Kusaki who became my closest friend. We never discussed Ron, who Kusaki now rarely saw—and I was never able to tell him about Ron. There were times when I wanted to but I had hung back. It was not because I was ashamed that Kusaki would know I was homosexual. I felt certain this would not disturb him. It was that I never wanted him to feel that he—Kusaki—was a mental substitute (a sublimite, so to speak) for my physical lover.

* * *

Now I stood with the Tristan in my hands.

Kusaki got up and took the Callas "Norma" off the phonograph.

"Do you want to play it," he said.

"You knew Ron was my lover?"

"You never had a lover," he said. "You were his lover. I'm your first lover."

He reached forward for the album which I handed him and put on the first record.

"Oh?" I said, "is that my present?"

"Yes," he said.

"It's a very nice present," I said.

Kusaki bent down at the hi-fi adjusting the dials and then looked up at me and winked.

"And how about my present?" he said.

"Would you like a blind boy?" I said.

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ALONE

Alone is a moonless world
or a despondent man on a ledge
who could not cope with despair—
or a man in a movie house
with his arm around no one.
It is the sum total
of the crowds you have seen,
the parties you enjoyed,
the New Years you celebrated,
and the lovely love affairs
that turned out to be unlovely
and shattered your heart
like nothing else ever did,
and left you that way
for a very long while.
Alone is a terrible time
and a terrible place.
It is an unkind bellow
among a thousand "hurrahs,"
or a disenchanted creature
gazing with little anxiety
upon tomorrow,
because his mind is busy
reviving all his
yesterdays.
Alone is the result of
happy yesterdays
that have vanished forever.

It is an empty Greyhound Bus
going nowhere,
or an acre of land
on the moon.
It is what makes boys
want to become men,
and what makes men
become heroes.
Alone is not a bad dream.
It is a tormenting truth
anyone can cry with his eyes open,
and yet it is a serene element
that can beautify the thought
of perishing.
Still it is the grievous thought
of a never healing wound,
with the disconsolate knowledge
that Time heals nothing—really.
Alone is a person you always dream of
who never comes your way,
but is always expected.
It is wishing and hoping
in a night filled room,
or a man waiting to die
with his door ajar.
But most of all,
it is the comfortless end
of all things.

—Susan Smpadian

tangents

news & views

HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE NEWS

The San Francisco NEWS CALL BULLETIN recently carried an article discussing the idea of curing sexual deviates by shock treatment. In the article Dr. Karl Bowman referred to the failure of orthodox psychotherapy to cure sexual psychopaths and mentioned the experiments with Pavlovian aversion treatments. Although the example given was homosexual, Dr. Bowman pointed out clearly that he had no reference to homosexuals, since homosexuals are not classified as sexual psychopaths by California district attorneys and judges. He gave a listing of so-called sexual psychopaths for the state of California, which has the best and largest treatment program in the world. Out of 400 men so classified, 4 or 5 were child molesters. They molested girls by a ratio of 2.5 to every boy. Girl molesters were found "most likely to be cured" probably by graduating to older females. Other types were peeping toms, exhibitionists, transvestites, etc. Very few "graduate" from minor to major sex offenses. There seems to be a need for a comment pointing out the moral problem involved in using aversion treatment to change a person, since it could also be used to change a heterosexual into a homosexual.

The WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS reports that the Mattachine Society of Washington surrendered a charitable solicitation permit that the district proposed to revoke. The LOS ANGELES TIMES reported about the same time that a city ordinance prohibiting male and female impersonation in public was invalidated by the 2nd District Court of Appeal on the grounds that the ordinance has been pre-empted by state legislation. The case was *People vs. Martin, Uben & Magdalen*. In comments the court said that for "a male, all of whose visible clothing was male attire, to wear his hair long in a feminine manner neither constituted a disguise nor an outrage of public decency." What the paper didn't report was that the police were more outraged at the court's decision and their own ignorance than at the 3 young men. By forcing the issue they had lost not only the case, but the ordinance. You can hardly blame the police for the outrage committed in Melmerby, England, where a bachelor is being forced to marry or lose his home. Wonder what would be said if he "married" a man?

The L.A. Times, in its Calendar section publicized a town meeting held in a Unitarian Church in the Southern California area at which the Chairman of the Board of ONE,

Incorporated was a panel member. The meeting was recorded for rebroadcast by KPFK. Date may be found by writing KPFK, Los Angeles 38. The program may be broadcast on other stations if enough requests are forthcoming (KPFA, 2207 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, California, and WBAI, 30 East 39th St., New York 16, N. Y.). At about the same time the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles featured a sermon concerning the recent report on sex by the Quakers.

The PITTSBURGH PRESS probably got letters about its typographical error which, in referring to Robert Wagner & Mrs. Marion Donen's marriage, reported that Wagner was divorced last year from Natalie Wood, and "**Mr. Donen's**" two previous marriages ended in divorce. Robert Sylvester in the DETROIT FREE PRESS quotes the American Psychiatric Association of St. Louis as saying, "Normal men tend to marry 'normal' women. Nearly all normal men and their wives lead narrow, confined lives. Their lack of outside interests and sparse sense of imagination places limits on their capacity for emotional experience." Comment: "So let's be gay!" The NEW YORK TIMES has an article by Henry Popkin from Opole, Poland concerning the Laboratory Theater, where founding director Jerzy Grotowsky has given an interesting treatment to Wyspianski's "Akropolis", a dramatic fantasy set in the old Polish Akropolis in Cracow, presenting symbolic figures out of the past and concluding with the resurrection of Christ. Each of the play's classic gestures was reversed; Paris and Helen become a pair of homosexual lovers among the prisoners.

The BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PRESS printed reports of morals arrests

in a bar, and then letters to the editor about homosexuality containing some of the following comments: "... one might expect to find the police better employed than sitting in bars (presumably drinking at the taxpayers' expense) waiting for homosexual advances—and like as not encouraging them." "If I have a girl, I think she would be happiest fulfilling a woman's role. She can only learn that role in relation to the men she comes in contact with. If every day on the way to the store she must pass whole armies of men who despise little girls, she may learn to despise herself." The writer of the last letter needs an education concerning cause and effect. But then we have heard of homosexuals who despised themselves because they thought society didn't like them. Other letters discussed the problem of enforcing morals and the old idea that it was the "outside queens" who were coming in that were causing the trouble. One wearies of hearing the hypocritical homosexual, who is "passing", hiding and living a lie, complain about the honest, open homosexuals. We might question taste, but taste is not as eternal a problem as self denial. Rather, the hypocritical homosexuals should concern themselves with changing a society that can actually accept such situations as described in the next paragraph.

The American Civil Liberties Union, as well as other individuals and organizations concerned with maintaining the basic freedoms given us by our forefathers in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, has entered a case in which an individual has been convicted for what he wrote in a personal letter. One judge, in a dissenting opinion, concluded with these words: "If

revelations of homosexual practices set forth in sealed letters are to be brought within the purview of the statute, then let it be publicly known that only that should be written which will pass the ultimate censorship of judges & juries. (Case is that of John Darnell III, convicted in federal court in New Haven, Connecticut.)

The NY Times reports that Cornel Wilde has plans for making a motion picture of Nicholas Monsarrat's book SMITH AND JONES. The MIAMI HERALD, in a column by Juanita Greene, and the NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM, in a column by Jack Dempsey, have let themselves be used by the propagandists of their respective police departments to spread lies about the sex offender and homosexuality. How can these people talk about managing of news when they encourage it by reporting what they are told without checking facts.

THE MILITARY

A "friend" reports having information about the marine who killed a homosexual civilian. The marine has been rewarded by being transferred to the Military Police and is being used in L.A. and Hollywood to finger homosexuals for the vice squad. Such a report is no shock to us, for the vice squads often use homosexuals who hide their own "guilt" and acts by turning in friends or serving as decoys.

The Navy appears to have used highly irregular tactics in its campaign to prove it is anti-homosexual. The U.S.S. Bennington actually spent half of a page of the Plan of the Day giving sailors hell-fire and damnation in the good old protestant tradition warning about homosexuality. It seems that an undesirable discharge for reason

of unfitness was given a sailor arrested by the Long Beach police while a civilian was committing a homosexual act. This sailor was persuaded to participate in the act with a promise of \$20.00. The Plan of the Day goes into all the horrible things people will think about the sailor, and urges all sailors to watch out since this "year's customers are next year's competition." The admonition continues that sailors must not accept rides from people who promise girls and drinks since this a homosexual ruse, and the police have the names of the homosexuals in the area and if a sailor is merely seen near one he will become suspect.

The facts about this particular case, which is cited as cause for warning, are as follows. The sailor was not caught in any act, he foolishly opened the door of a private home while naked and let the police in. This would not be evidence however to get a conviction unless the men admitted the act.

Most attorneys recommend that persons who have been arrested refrain from making any statements and wait and let an attorney handle all questions. The Bennington has shown a warning film to the ship's company which is a homosexual sex orgy taken with hidden cameras. It is strange that homosexuals will continue to go to these orgies where they will have their names taken by the police and will be filmed, yet they will not attend meetings where the problems of being homosexual are discussed intelligently, and no films are made and no names are taken.

Here is a problem homosexuals don't even know about: insurance companies are beginning to ask questions from medical doctors and

maybe psychiatrists about the applicants for insurance. This is of course a violation of the patient-doctor relationship, but even worse the insurance companies are obviously discriminating against certain men and women because of their private sex life. If one man, who happens to be homosexual is a bad risk, this is no more reason for branding all homosexuals bad risks than it would be if the same man were heterosexual. One New York company in this respect is the worst offender. Along the same line, Negroes have either had to fight for honest rates, or form their own insurance companies.

Too many homosexuals are too eagerly conforming. They wouldn't think of going to Lesbos for a look at the island where the poet Sappho was supposed to have thrown herself into the sea. They would be afraid that people might think them queer for being interested. But of course Jackie Kennedy is only normal, so didn't think twice about satisfying her normal curiosity. Too many lesbians run away from the honest curiosity and the search and hide in pseudo-religious groups.

Paul Coates, in an article in the LA Times discussed a problem which affects the homosexual minority as it has all others, and in the same paper Dear Abby had a most interesting letter and answer. Coates was writing about the attempt of minorities to boycott any individual or organization which tended to give the minority a "bad press." The motion picture industry got so afraid of portraying Negroes as servants till the warmth and humor of Louise Beavers was denied the world. All Negroes are not Ralph Bunches. There are dirty Negroes and clean ones, etc. No minority is any better or worse than

the rest of the population. So for the homosexual to feel that he is hurt by the portrayal of a swish, is nothing more than self-rejection and a desire to hide one side of his nature which he may feel is that of the swish. A homosexual who is not swish and who does not fear his own nature does not feel endangered by the swish, nor does he feel that he must compensate to prove that he isn't. And, in Dear Abby we have a clue to why the homosexuals get bad press. Just Wondering writes: "Our family is small, and we have many single friends (bachelors, divorcees and widows) whom we frequently invite to share a meal or an outing. Our children have often asked why the single men and women we invite so often never invite us for anything. At first we told them it was neither necessary nor expected. But the more we thought about it, the more we began to wonder—why don't they? They wouldn't have to include the children. I wonder why 'singles' think nothing of repeatedly accepting invitations from their married friends, but rarely reciprocate." Abby answers: "Many do. Only those 'singles' who feel they have been invited out of charity do not consider themselves obligated and therefore make no effort to reciprocate."

This is a good answer, and most homosexuals are very good about repaying kindnesses. But there is the minority in our minority that thinks nothing of accepting things without a thanks. In our own case ONE has often had calls from non-member homosexuals who are in jail and have no one to aid them. We have given them attorneys and bail bond, and then most have run away without making good their word.

Did everyone see the cartoon on page 233 of the October PLAY-BOY? And how about the BREAKING POINT SHOW on ABC. And the snappy quote from our Quarterly in the October SEXOLOGY.

Some comment must be made on a recent Mary Haworth column concerning a mother's letter asking how to inform a bachelor friend that she won't let her son go with him on a weekend camping trip—no joke intended. It seems that she has learned that the guy is homosexual because of information given her by a security officer in a government department. The children just adore the man. Mary Haworth said in reply to just tell the bachelor that the trip is off and if he is a sex deviate that he would understand. Miss Haworth, even in her usual lack of insight on such matters, did spot certain flaws in the letter. She noted that most children do not "just adore" mixed up people, but why does Miss Haworth think homosexuals are mixed-up? She also noted that some people ask such questions out of a morbid desire to talk about sex. What Miss Haworth should have worried about is how information which is supposed to be secret, and which was given by men and women in strict confidence in the assurance that it would be shown to no one, was given to some housewife just because she wanted to know something about the individual because she knew him. This question may come up a lot in the future, since Senator Dodd has questioned the right of the government to fire a man just because he gave out secret information. Some people insist that all information is public, even VD records. A final note to the mother and Miss Haworth is that they both may be

underestimating the knowledge of the boy. He may be interested in the man as a friend and knows how to refuse to have any sexual acts, or he may be gay himself and this man is a confidant who helps the boy maintain mental health in a hostile society. Read again the case history in the November issue. Judges have found that more often than not it is the young person who seduces the older person, whether the act is heterosexual or homosexual.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND

The NEWS OF THE WORLD REPORTER writes about his own special fairy land. He finds it in Wimbledon Common, and he reports (it's easier reporting than stories worthwhile) that at night, in the bushes, it is the "secret" meeting place "of the misguided collection of misfits known as The Queers." The maneuvers that the queers go through or at least the reporter thinks they go through sound like what most of us "played" as children, what with secret codes, signals, spies, etc.

According to Angus Macpherson in the DAILY MAIL, only married men are now to be used as Service attaches in "certain foreign capitals." It seems that despite Profumo, and statistics which prove unquestionably that heterosexuals are more often convicted of treason and other blackmail offenses than are homosexuals, homosexuals are still scapegoats for the ills of society. As Peter Black reports in the same paper, "If anyone wished to devise a school for secret agents, the way Britain treats homosexuals could hardly be improved upon . . . The point is that though homosexuals are no more inclined to treachery than you are, the law as it stands gives

the Communists a lever against them which they have over nobody else. If Vassall had not been a homosexual, and subject to this law, the Russians might have got him anyway. I think he had a predisposition to treachery. But they could not have blackmailed him into it.

"The possibility of wrong arrest is more than enough to freeze on your lips any smile of welcome you might otherwise give an acquaintance . . . There was the case of the unfortunate Chinese gentleman who for smiling at a man and asking the way to Earls Court was promptly arrested, charged and convicted of indecent behaviour. On appeal the conviction was quashed and two policemen jailed for perjury; examples of the keenness which this law can rouse in some of its defenders."

The DAILY MIRROR discloses a vicious attack by the Greek paper ETHNIKOS KIRYX using scare headlines and old news of Vassall to try to prevent the King and Queen from going to England (they did go and got booed). The same paper reports that Mortimer Bennitt, civil servant, won an appeal against a conviction for importuning. He was convicted by police testimony that he followed several men into a toilet and nodded at them. The Chairman, Mr. Edward Clarke, Q.C. said the case had not been proved beyond reasonable doubt, which is an understatement, since the vice policemen, typically, did not hear or see any violation of law but imagined it in their evil minds. In a lighter vein the paper reports the marriage of April Ashley, the fashion model who was once a man, to Arthur Corbett in Gibraltar. And the 400 boys, at a Royal Ordinance Corps "Junior Leaders" battalion, were told:

DON'T dye your hair. It seems that the craze had swept the camp at Blackdown, near Aldershot, after two 17-year-old corporals who play in a dance band gave their hair a color-rinse-Pink Champagne. Reason given for the order was the trouble that would be caused by change—such as new ID's etc.

The EVENING STANDARD reports that in his book IN SEARCH OF MERMAIDS, Dr. Colin Bertram tells about the *Crepidula fornicata*. It is a mollusc which regularly changes sex. It lives in stacks of alternating males and females and every now and then every mollusc in the stack changes sex simultaneously. Hm.m.m. Another book of interest is THE FINISHING TOUCH, by Brigid Brophy, about the wicked goings-on at Miss Antonia's academy for young girls. On the theater side there is "Norman" which is about a young farmer who has written a play and comes to stay in a house while the play is waiting to be done. The house contains a daughter having a miscarriage and a Guardsman son who is up on an importuning charge. David Andrew's study of the tongue-tied Guardsman is reported to be good by Felix Barker. And then there are the men getting steamed up in the Turkish Baths in Ironmonger Row, Finsbury over notices which prevent them from playing cards and consuming food not purchased at the bath. Oscar Wilde is in cross-word puzzles in England.

Malcolm Muggeridge in November ESQUIRE writes for Americans an article on the English scandals. He isn't very bright though, for he feels that the way to stop homosexuality in England is merely to close down the private boarding schools for boys. If he thinks that "high-spirited, good-looking boys"

have sodomy only because there is an absence of girls, he has a lot to learn or is hiding a lot he has learned.

FROM EUROPE we have the Newsletter of I.C.E.E. (Quarterly) which has not been printed regularly. It is welcomed and our best wishes go to its staff on the occasion of its resumption of publication.

w.e.g.m.

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BOOKS



Notices and reviews of books, articles, plays and poetry dealing with homosexuality and the sex variant. Readers are invited to send in reviews or printed matter for review.

OUR LADY OF THE FLOWERS

by Jean Genet, translated by Bernard Frechtman, introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre, Grove Press, N.Y., 1963, \$6.50.

Every year scores of novels are labelled great by reviewers. They fade from popularity, from memory. A decade later they are unreadable. But the practice of over-praising continues and makes writing the review of a truly great novel difficult.

Yet once, twice, maybe three times in a generation a great novel does appear. *Our Lady of the Flowers* is one of these. Written in a French prison more than twenty years ago, this story of Paris queens, faggots, hustlers, murderers, has only now legally become accessible to American readers. It has already proved itself an enduring work. It is more.

To begin with, it is written with enormous compassion. It is prompted by pity for human life, tenderness, forgiveness. More. Understanding. But it is not a soft book. Life is depicted here in terms some will find too strong to stomach.

Genet sets down his characters in all their natural—and I stress that word, natural—filth. He does not smear them with filth for shock effect. With the instinct of the truly great novelist, he knows that the exact truth about human nature is

more shocking than what is merely imaginable.

Yet he has a superb imagination. Even to have conceived the idea for such a novel is an achievement beyond any but the most gifted. Actually to have written it was the work of genius. Its framework is complex. The novelist is himself a vital character. He often interrupts the narrative to confide his creative problems to the reader. Yet, knowing as the reader does that the characters are mere masturbatory fantasies, they still come alive with stunning reality.

The prose in which *Our Lady of the Flowers* is written is of such originality that it ranks with the finest of twentieth century poetry. The translator is to be commended. Genet has marked every passage with word images of beauty and force. There are hundreds. To choose one or even half a dozen examples for this review would be unjust.

Yet the prose is not artificial. Nothing about *Our Lady of the Flowers* is that. The images merely heighten the reality, deepen it, widen it. To read this book is to live the life depicted in it. No sounder praise can be given any novel. No single attribute can better assure a novel immortality.

Characters, times, places shift as in dreams, as in reverie, during the

course of the novel. But so compelling are Divine, the queen, and her childhood self, Louis Culafoy; Darling Daintyfoot, her lover, a pimp; and Our Lady of the Flowers, a sixteen-year-old boy murderer, and so sure is Genet's talent for narration, that the reader is never lost.

Mention has been made of the underlying motive of this novel—compassion. Which has room within it for laughter, but never brutal laughter, always forgiving, remissive. To have Jean Genet's capacity for love is surely to be a saint. Mention has been made of his undeniable talent as a writer. So what is left?

Intelligence.

And this is an important factor. It must not be assumed that *Our Lady of the Flowers* is written only out of a man's emotions—emotions of the most exalted kind, pity, tenderness, compassion. Not only this. Intelligence infuses every sentence. Genet observes with sharpness every human gesture, word, thought, impulse. And the mind to which his keen eyes and ears transmit what they see and hear, the mind which deduces thoughts and impulses, though compassionate, is never deceived.

Our Lady of the Flowers is a book without illusions, without promises, without solutions. Not only a fine brain, but a brave one, dared this book. There is not a false note in it, not emotionally, not artistically, not intellectually.

But it cannot be described. It must be read.

—James Colton

OSCAR WILDE, THE AFTERMATH by H. Montgomery Hyde, Farrar, Straus, and Co., 1963, \$4.50, 221 pp.

This book, we should like to think, will put an end to the dissection of

Oscar Wilde's notoriety. In it the author carefully picks up where he left off in his earlier *Trials of Oscar Wilde* and carries the story of Wilde's life from the sentencing at Old Bailey to his release from Reading Gaol. In this aftermath Hyde shows that Wilde was artistically broken. Yet a few acquaintances felt Wilde to be unmarred, presumably because he was able to retain his wit.

The author's chapters on *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* and *De Profundis* which were Wilde's sole literary output from the time of his sentencing to his death, if not scholarly, are at least thoughtful. Unfortunately, Hyde in his attempt to include just about everything in his book tends to rely on much that is merely circumstantial. This kind of treatment is characteristic of Hyde's work. He places undue emphasis on the mechanics of the publication of *The Ballad* and *De Profundis*, and in his journalistic style, fails to catch the significance of the artist. Much of the book appears to be pieced together, in a pliant enough style, from bits and snatches of documents, letters, and published works which touch on Wilde's melancholy later years.

Rather than a picture of the close of Wilde's life and art, Montgomery Hyde has portrayed a sociological treatment of the unfortunate penal conditions at the end of the last century—some of which still exist today.

The period of Wilde's life covered by this book belongs in its former place in earlier biographies, in considerably shortened form. After all, Wilde's value unquestionably belongs to that period before his trial and imprisonment. The book's repetitious and pedantic rummaging of Oscar Wilde's prison life, unfortunate as that life was, makes tiring reading.

Leslie Colfax

CRIME AGAINST NATURE

a new book to be published in the Spring of 1964—an important addition to the already select group of books from ONE's Publications Division which explore the world of the homosexual, namely: **Game of Fools**, 1955, **Homosexuals Today**, 1956, **The Keval**, 1959.

CRIME AGAINST NATURE

is a chilling, sensitive autobiography by Geoffrey Neilsen, who with absolute honesty and humility tells the story of his arrest and imprisonment, his loss of job and home and future, as the result of a homosexual act with another consenting adult behind locked doors.

Through his frankness and vividness, the author reveals himself as a pathetic victim—not only of antiquated laws, but—mostly of his own human frailty.

Concerning his "crime" Mr. Neilson makes this comment: "If the sexual act involves adults, and if these adults consent, and if they perform their act in private, and if the worst that can be said is that such a sex act offends the sense of morals or propriety—then how is that act a crime? Does the crime not lie rather in the restriction of these individuals, freedom?"

CRIME AGAINST NATURE

is a perceptive, unswerving indictment of the attempt of societies to legislate morals. It is a magnificent story on many levels, and it reads like a novel. On whatever level you may choose to share the author's experience, you will find this, truly, an astonishing book.

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NEW BOOKS:

THE PROBLEM OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN MODERN SOCIETY, an anthology
edited by Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek, E. P. Dutton, \$4.95

An important work with unusually astute observations in the editors' introduction. Almost a first-rate book. Contents include Evelyn Hooker, Robert Lindner, Sigmund Freud, etc.

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one

SO IT GOES

I adored him from the start
Oh, such an attractive devil!
quite enough to steal away a heart

but so like many
a pastry tart of past
experiencing
all shell and very very
little filling

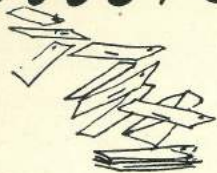
But so what?
What the Hell?

so it goes
games of hearts
or custard cups
thank god!
the shops are many
and variety well supplied!

Hi! Ho! Jam Tarts!
and jelly!

—p. e. britton

Letters



UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES DO THE EDITORS FORWARD LETTERS FROM READERS TO OTHER PERSONS NOR DO THEY ANSWER CORRESPONDENCE MAKING SUCH REQUESTS.

THAT PICTURE: A FINAL WORD

To the Editors:

ONE Magazine was instituted to promote understanding of the homosexual by society and by himself. (Refer back to stated principles on the inside cover of your Magazine.) Just how the picture of the sailor evacuating promotes this understanding, I fail to see. I feel you alienate the decent thinking homosexual by displaying this so-called art, and you defeat the aims and purposes of ONE altogether.

I have never seen a woman on the john in PLAYBOY, nor anyone pictured likewise in THE NEW YORKER. But of course I refer here to two high ranking magazines. (They are adept in being sexy without violating good taste.) One of low rank might be expected to print anything and everything the law will allow, lacking the sound judgment of good editors.

I have always supported ONE even though not always, actively; now it saddens me to say I have had to change my will because of principles I cannot change. Perhaps in the future you'll find it in your best interests to return to the high ideals we all had when ONE started.

Ann Carll Reid
Van Nuys, California
Editor, ONE Magazine
1954-1957

Dear Mr. Gregory:

I doubt that you will print the enclosed story. I am getting a little fed up with this Utopian sentimentality that I have been writing. Of course your readers like a little fantasy and are not likely to welcome realistic writing. Any time you try to present anything that vaguely approaches the truth you are condemned for it.

This is evidenced by the indignant storm of letters over the famous picture in the August issue. Our little virgin friends like to

imagine that people don't really go to the bathroom, or have sexual organs either; or brains, or guts, or toenails. However, I am a wild-eyed fanatic who is decadent enough to admit going to the toilet once in a while. I am always ashamed of it afterwards, but I can't help myself when I get the urge. I am also so perverted and evil that I enjoy looking at a naked man. I also appreciate Mr. Bronstein's excellent drawing, but this is so disgusting and hideous I should never admit it. However, I would say to our friends that art may represent whatever it goddam well pleases and still be art. A man going to the bathroom, dear friends, is merely a man going to the bathroom. Period.

Mr. W.
Parker, Arizona

MATTACHINE SOCIETY WASHINGTON, D. C. (Copy to ONE)

Gentlemen:

Your irresponsible letter published in ONE (October, 1963) could be written better by an enemy than by a fighter for what you wish us to believe in.

The drawing does not show a sailor doing what you believe. It is a tender boy sitting on a drumlike seat on a cushion, meditating—maybe wishing compay for a part of his body which I do not want to call by name before you.

Do you know of a toilet which would yield to the pressure of the right leg as does the cushion shown? Do you know of toilets with small curved legs, as in this drawing, where you can distinguish two of them? What your evil thoughts imagine he is doing cannot be done with the genitals in the position shown. Try it yourself and see.

The drawing is nicely done, free from the artificiality of posing, a being entirely occupied by himself, the quality we like in the paintings of really great artists like Chardin, etc.

On your second paragraph: How about printing the etching "Si quebró el cántaro," by Goya, but leave off the artist's name? That would give off Homeric laughter! Or "Thinker," by Rodin in which a mind like yours might see the same act as you see in the much discussed drawing.

I have to apologize for my still imperfect English, being of German birth.

Mr. H. (Artist)
New York, N. Y.

POTPOURRI

Dear sir:

I cannot say that I took very kindly to the acid and terse review of *The World*, the

Flesh and Myself (July, 1963). The fact that there might be some slight truth in some of the reviewer's view does not, to my mind, justify his brief and callous dismissal of the book.

Michael Davidson revealed himself in his own pages as brash, improvident and lacking in tenacity. Nonetheless he is a character of considerable interest and the frankness of his book—not about sex alone—is at once commendable.

How any person interested in recent history could fail to find his accounts of life in Germany during the rise of Hitler and in war-torn Malaya interesting I do not know, and I am sure many will have taken more than casual note of what he had to say about the Cyprus troubles and the role played there by his newspaper.

Let us by all means be acid about the failings of a writer as we see them; but to omit mention of the good points in his work does not make for a balanced review.

Mr. G.
Durban, South Africa

Gentlemen:

I have just finished reading "Case History" (November, 1963). Let's have more, more like it! I also go along with the idea that Mr. B. gives in his letter to the Editor that you might have a section in the Magazine entitled "Helpful Hints for Those Who Don't Know."

Mr. L.
Bellflower, California

Dear Don Slater:

Your Magazine has always been interesting and helpful but I do have one suggestion: If we are to help the Cause we should not use the first two words on page 23 (October, 1963). After all, God is our Creator and we should show God our respect. If we do not show God respect how can others show us respect?

I do know that in the future you will be more careful.

Mr. J.
New York, N. Y.

Dear ONE:

On VD: socialists and religious groups are using health as a pretext. People too cheap to hire doctors are willing to go to the health clinics and become tools and stool-pigeons, giving up their hard-won rights and everybody else's.

Too, among homosexuals, properly so-called and otherwise, we may have too great a proportion of irresponsibles; and if we took a stand in favor of self-reliance we may do something toward weeding out the men who give homosexuals a bad name. We need to consider our followers, taking them man by man. Each ought to be made

to measure up to some standard or other.

If you were recruiting an army you'd give each man an examination. To have a strong organization you have to select your members and keep some control over them. Each man in the ONE army should be told what is expected of him. Until he has definitely enlisted he should not be permitted to feel that he shares our fellowship. Maybe there is a correct criterion in dealing with those coming to ONE. What do we really know about them? What are their ideals? What duties do they feel obligated to discharge? Taking too many things for granted is probably not very safe.

Mr. B.
Los Angeles, California

ON RELIGION

Dear Editor:

I want to comment on the letter by Mr. G. of New Orleans (September, 1963) because it represents what I believe to be two rather widespread errors in regard to the proper approach one should take toward the Holy Bible. This letter expresses the sentiments of an earnest but badly-informed group of individuals who attempt to solve all of their sexual problems on the basis of what they can read about the subject in the Bible.

The Bible is not a manual of sex instruction. It treats the subject only occasionally, superficially, and not even with any consistency. Nor is homosexuality the only form of sex treated with inconsistency in the Bible.

Nevertheless, there are individuals who form certain ideas or attitudes about sex and then use the Bible to back up these attitudes. Mr. G. is by no means the only one to do this. Again, I want to repeat, the Bible is not a manual of sex instruction! To attempt to make it so is to court disaster. The Bible is merely a collection of writings which represent man's attempt to reach out and find the infinite. It is not a letter-perfect record of dictation from God taken down by man. There are passages in the Bible that would suggest that the world is flat. Am I to believe them?

In the New Testament Paul observes, rather presumptuously, that homosexuals are by their very nature an offense to God. St. Paul felt that the power of the Holy Spirit gave him the authority to make such pronouncements. Similarly the Rev. Carroll E. Simcox, of New York City, author of an article published several years ago in an Episcopalian magazine, told me upon my inquiry that his office as a priest gave him the authority to make observations on the immorality of homosexuality.

Neither the power of the Holy Spirit, nor