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 Bill Dayton
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 Bob Hurt
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Diana Denton
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come now, dr. otto

Back To School Again

by WILLARD CLUTCHMYER

Ignomy and woeful gloom was mine. After searching three days in that cavernous edifice in the midst of our quaint campi I was successful in locating the post office only to find in my shiny new box two threatening letters from the Let's Keep Our Rooms Tidy Committee and a tart note from Dean Featherfelt Shaftwell urging me to come to his office immediately . . . if not sooner.

Sallying forth at great speed I rushed up to the Dean's office. While waiting in the outer office I noticed a small child come screaming from Dean Shaft's office with a lighted cigarette in his ear. The Dean was in a bad mood.

The Dean, a Marlboro man, was casually lighting another cheroot. On his hand was a clever tattoo of a shaft extending from the south end of a north bound student.

"You know why you're here Clutchmyer! !!" he screamed, beating me about the head and shoulders with a section of rubber hose.

"If it's about not going to chapel last quarter . . . I can explain," I whimpered, hopping around the room. "Clutchmyer," he shouted, "for the sixth straight quarter you've made an F in ceramics, Buddhism 103, Spelling 12 and a D in ROTC. What do you have to say for yourself? ? ?"

"Sir," I confessed, "I'm afraid I spent too much time on ROTC." "See here," he shrieked as the telephone interrupted him, "What do you mean Prof. Goodfellow isn't going to change text books this quarter! ! What's he trying to do, get the annual dedication?"

I knew why the Dean was angry. Prof. Goodfellow, known and loved by all M. U. students, had often taught a course three consecutive quarters without changing books. The administration would have fired him long ago except for the fact that he teaches free. Goodfellow, independently wealthy, amassed a small fortune selling Grit Newspapers in the afternoons.

"Well we'll have to overlook it this quarter," shouted the Dean into the phone, "but it's a shame all of the faculty can't follow Prof. Moosegums . . . Yes, yes, have you heard what he did last quarter . . . required his class to buy new \$20 text books then changed in the middle of the quarter! ! !!" The Dean howled with delight and pride as he picked names from a hat of the students he would flunk out of school for the coming quarter.

The Dean hung up and turned to me. "Clutchmyer these terrible grades could have gotten you kicked out of school . . . It's lucky for you that you promised to teach here after you graduate. I'm letting you off this time but if you ever foul up again . . . Pow, right in the keister! !!"

"Oh thanks be unto you kind sir may all your children be human beings," I said making a low courtesy and licking his hand gratefully.

Sinking out of the building I ran into my friend Maynard Grunch. Maynard stayed in school this quarter by the hair of his chinney chin chin. He was almost expelled during the holidays after he gave one of his professors a gift certificate to Hart's Mortuary for Christmas.

"Well Amigo," he smiled, "everything cool with usted?" "Si," I replied, in fluent Spanish.

"Was Santy good to you over the holidays?" he asked using favorite back-to-school cliché.

"Well," I admitted, "I did receive some choice gifts. My Aunt Yuma gave me a new pencil box and I also received a pair of rabbit skin gloves with dandruff! Not to mention my new tennis shoes." "Aren't they cool?" I asked (using a college colloquialism for smart or stylish.)

"Yeah," Maynard agreed, "about as cool as Arthur Murray at a Georgia Baptist Convention." With that bit of praise, Maynard turned in the dark night, brought his binoculars from inside his toga and walked towards M E P

The Blue Bird of Happiness seems to have committed a social indiscretion in the Christmas pie of the Rev. F. Robert Otto, Mercer's dean of chapel. Before the late lamented holiday, his sermon told us that Santa Claus is (among other things) a sex fiend and an anti-Christian humanist-materialist.

All of this sermonized debunking of Christmas seems to have stemmed from an innocent statement by one of the little Ottos that Santa Claus is a clown, which of course he is. Our only question is: Where did this antichrist sex-fiend business creep in?

It is written that "A little child shall lead them," but we think the good dean would do better to give a more fundamentalistic interpretation of the words and wisdom of little children. We suspect that Otto the younger meant nothing unfavorable in calling Santa a clown. The jolly old gentleman is quite obviously a clown, but he is also Saint Nicholas; and like all saints, he wears his greatest adornments upon his soul so that his sainthood is not so obvious as his clownhood.

And, too, Santa Claus helps the world to take a clear look at reality for the brief Christmas season, and for a short while, commercialism helps rather than hinders the work of God. Madison Avenue helps us believe in Santa's sleigh and "eight tiny reindeer". Reason declares that four and four reindeer equals eight, and Santa follows the letter of Reason's law; but he also reminds us that Dame Reason never has said anything about its being necessarily true that reindeer can't fly merely because no reindeer of our acquaintance has been seen flying. A thing is not unalterably so just because no one has noticed

exceptions; if that were the case, science would have to oppose the Wright brothers airplane and Salk's vaccine on the grounds that these things had not been done before. In this respect, Saint Claus reminds us of G. K. Chesterton's great truth that the sun does not rise by natural law but because God ever delights in saying, "Do it again."

Dean Otto is wrong in attacking that good Christian clown in a jolly red suit; just as he is mistaken in saying unfavorable things about the Christmas tree (that great symbol of the Christianization of Western Europe which turned the evergreen from the object of pagan worship to a traditional item in the celebration of the Savior's birth).

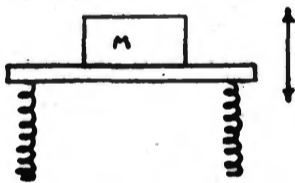
Modern Christmases, with all their commercialism, are not evil things, but the contrary. For a short time in December even atheists and anti-Christian humanists place the Star of Bethlehem on the evergreen of St. Boniface; for a while men come close to observing the words of Christ that "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Also to quote Dr. Willis B. Glover, "Christmas is the only time in the year when the message of the gospel is being told in every bar in the country."

We realize that Dean Otto's anti-Santa sermons served a useful purpose in that they stimulated students thinking; but so did that sermon of Luther's which Dr. Otto read from the pulpit last past Christmases, and the Luther sermon was so much nicer. Come, Dr. Otto and turn your gaze from the tinsel fort of the Christmas clown to the advancing ranks of anti-Christian humanists, then they, like Ebenezer Scrooge, may send a Christmas goose to Bob Cratchett for the joy of giving and the Glory of God.

Physics Dpt. Holds Contest

The Department of Physics is offering a Prize of \$5 for the best solution of the following problem:

A body rests on a spring-supported platform. The body has a mass of 5 Kg, and the platform sinks 0.02 m when the body is placed on it. The whole system is set into motion by depressing the platform further and then releasing it. What is the maximum amplitude of motion that can occur such that the body does not lose contact with the platform at any time?



The competition is open to all Mercer undergraduates individually or jointly subject to the following rules:

1. The solution must be presented in ink on 8 1/2" x 11" (standard-size) paper.
2. Each participant may submit several solutions. However, each solution must be submitted as a separate entry.
3. Entries will be accepted in room 202 P on or before January 28, 4:30 p.m.
4. Correct solutions will be judged, for example, according to: (a) Completeness; (b) Conciseness; (c) Order; (d) Logic, and (e) Appearance.
5. The decision of the judges is final.

Herschner Heads I.F.C.

Bob Herschner was named president of the interfraternity council last Tuesday night. President of Kappa Sigma, Herschner is also Vice President of the Junior Class and a Member of Blue Key Honorary Fraternity.

Other officers named at the meeting Thursday were: Vice President, Bill Thielman of Sigma Nu; Secretary, Allen Lancaster, an SAE; and Treasurer, David Loney of Alpha Tau Omega. Thielman was appointed Disciplinary Chairman.



SECOND REGISTRATION LINE a few minutes before it closed last Monday. Registration had to be resumed on the afternoon of the first day of classes. (Photo by Broadman)

EDITORIALS

Registration Blues

Registration was the usual grandiose mass of complications this quarter. Most students waited hours in line to receive the class cards filled out during pre-registration a month ago, and gain the dubious privilege of standing in line for a few more hours to pay tuition.

Actually, things were about normal for Mercer and most other colleges; but we really had expected better things of Mr. Posey, Fall of Pre-Registration. If the class cards had been distributed through mail, the first line would have been eliminated for most students, and made much smaller for those who had course changes. The second line might have been speeded up considerably if it were possible to have a few more people working at the desks (more than one person doing each job).

Perhaps it might also be possible to do a good bit of the tuition paying through the post office.

As we go to press, Mr. Posey tells us that he is well aware of the flaws in the past registration, and promises that things will not be bad in the future. As General Braddock said after the massacre: "I shall know better next time." The Cluster certainly hopes so; would hate to have our faith in Mr. Posey's abilities shattered by mediocrity.

Bully For Receptions

The Cluster would like to congratulate the Student Government Association for organizing and conducting the delightful Reception which provided an excellent finish for the Fall Quarter social season. We hope that many such Receptions will follow.

We would, however, like to make an appeal to the girls of Mercer that we may see a larger number of them come to future Receptions. We noticed at least fifty Mercer men standing on the sidelines for the females to lead through the Reception line. When the Reception is graced with a band, it is far more pleasant for a man to accompany a co-ed, so we hope to see more of them at the next Reception, and we also be pleased to see more punch available, since the supply ran a bit early last time.

Notice For Seniors

Departmental Tests for Seniors will be administered on Monday, January 25, 1965 from 1:30-5:00 P.M. in the Testing and Guidance Center.

All seniors completing requirements for a degree during this quarter must register for the tests by Friday, January 15th at the Guidance Center in Penfield Hall.

Too many seniors are attempting to sign for and take Senior Tests before they are ready for these tests.

To compare the results with other scores these tests should be taken no earlier than the quarter before graduation. In most situations, these tests should be taken in the last quarter of attendance.

Since these test results will be part of the permanent record, it is imperative to complete almost all studies in the major field, thereby assuring the best possible results.

P. E. Maffeo
 Director of Testing

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