

The Mercer Cluster

MERCER UNIVERSITY, MACON, GEORGIA

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Convocation

Convocation is a very special forty or fifty minutes. It is a time of responsibility emphasized by external show of pomp and circumstance.

The Wednesday Chapel heard the president of Mercer, Dr. Harris, make a statement of the Berlin crisis and its implications to our civilization if war, "more likely than not", does come over Berlin.

To some this seemed an unnecessarily pessimistic statement of affairs. To others, the convocation message was cheering in its honesty and clear-sighted urgency. Realizing the chaos that war would bring to values and institutions, Dr. Harris was concerned for the "several special tasks" of institutions like Mercer "when the spiritual life of the nation is in danger." He continued, "... the church and the college must reassert and restress their endeavor to prevent the spiritual and intellectual life of the world receiving serious and mortal wounds. They must remain zealously faithful to their roles."

Dr. Harris expressed hope that peace would become the aim of thoughtful people produced by institutions like Mercer. Monday President Kennedy presented the first American plan for total disarmament. How successful present attempts to control or abolish armaments will be cannot be known; an appeal to history gives reason for a goodly measure of skepticism.

NOTICE FOR SENIORS

Departmental tests for Seniors will be given on Monday, October 16, 1961 from 1:45-5:00 P.M. All Seniors who expect to complete their studies in December, 1961 are required to take these tests.

Please register for the Senior Departmental tests at the Mercer University Guidance Center in Penfield Hall by Friday, October 6th.

NOTICE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate Aptitude examinations will be given on Monday, October 16, 1961 starting at 8:30 A.M.

All Graduate students who are matriculating for the M.Ed degree are required to take the Graduate Aptitude Examination.

Please register for the Graduate Aptitude Examination at the Guidance Center (Penfield Hall) by Friday, October 6th.

MEDICAL COLLEGE ADMISSION TEST

FOR: Students applying for admission to medical colleges in the fall of 1962

WHEN: Saturday, October 21, 1961

WHERE: At Mercer University Guidance and Testing Center

HOW TO APPLY: Obtain application blank from the Guidance Center. Send completed application and fee at least two weeks before testing date to:

Medical College Admission Test
The Psychological Corporation
304 East 46th Street
New York 17, New York

FEE: Examination fee is \$15.00 which includes reports for up to three medical colleges.

Each additional report costs \$1.00

RESULTS: Scores are reported directly to medical colleges.

TEST CONTENT: Test is designed to measure general academic ability, understanding of modern society and scientific knowledge.

APPLY EARLY. NO APPLICATIONS CAN BE GUARANTEED AFTER DEADLINE ANNOUNCED AS OCTOBER 6, 1961.

BY TIM GILL

This season's first production by the Mercer Drama Department will be Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. Based on an actual event, the Salem witch trials, the play is clearly an objective and realistic account of what happens when men allow reason and good sense to yield to superstition and emotional hysteria.

Although the action of the play takes place in the seventeenth century, its political and social implications are certainly not with relevance for us living in the twentieth. Only the style of clothes have changed since the time of John Proctor and Nathan Hale, not the people who wear them. There are still those who profess to be lovers of freedom and individual liberty and yet never blink an eyelash over acts of violence and social injustice when committed in the name of so-called decency and right-mindedness.

Only today the emphasis has shifted. Certain people who were merely cohorts of the Devil in 1692 and punished as such have descendants today who are free and indepen-

Miller's Crucible

dent devils themselves and thus more dangerous. Whereas witch-hunting was carried on then in a relatively small area, the search for political heretics is carried on now nationally or even internationally.

Every society, it seems, in every conceivable time and place has feared its possible destruction by ideological enemies, real or imaginary, and as Miller has so admirably pointed out, waged wars in an effort to avert such a possibility whether they be absolutely necessary or not. Every age, of course, has its own way of waging wars, but they all reveal more about the character of man than his less damaging actions could ever do.

But unless this sounds like so much cynicism and political haranguing, it must, in truth, be added that though the play is polemical in nature it in no way detracts from its entertainment value. It is a highly absorbing drama with plenty of action and dramatic appeal.

The New Realism of Words

BY GRANGER RICKS

A student of psychology recommended a thought to me which I pass on to you with neither praise nor scorn, but content to let it prosper or perish as it will in the marketplace of ideas.

We began our conversation with a discussion of his roommate which led us, quite naturally, considering his roommate, to a discussion of psychology in general. Many times before I had noticed my friend's predisposition to pessimism concerning human behavior and had found it at times a little refreshing, so brilliant was his wit and eloquence in deploring the human scene in contrast to the superficial babblings that usually accompany its praise.

"You know," he said, "people talk a lot of nonsense. Everyday we use terms and phrases that refer to nonexistent entities and ascribe properties to things which they really don't have. This misuse of language in order to gloss over a dead

surface is intolerable in the light of modern psychology—and common sense," he added after a pause.

I started to interrupt, but he rushed on. "I heard somebody say once that this guy had a tortured soul. I'd rather say that the idiot is suffering guilt feelings brought on by some miserable action of his own than to credit him with a soul."

"But just a minute," I objected, more as a taunt to spur him on in his ravings than a real heartfelt protest. "You're confused about the proper function of language. This is merely a poetic way of expressing what would sound crude if expressed in the unvarnished language of science. People aren't trying to mislead you by such talk."

Oh no?" he queried, assuming a suave tone. "When I say to my girl 'Darling, you're cutting my heart out', when the truth is that my ego has only been hurt; is this misleading?"

Hide and Seek

BY RONALD CARR

It seems to me that the world is playing one ridiculous game of hide-and-seek, allowing no seekers in the game. To paraphrase from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the world is a stage upon which fools play out their meaningless lives.

The fools upon the stage are those dark creatures of conformity who totter about weaving their vicious webs of hypocrisy behind them. They expel their deadly venom upon every holy vessel leaving a sacrilege in its place. There is not one citadel of cultural or aesthetic appreciation which is not darkened by these sinister forms.

Crativity has been crucified on a cross of conventionality. Men are losing the philosophic mind and are becoming completely insensitive to the finer things in life. With a practical mind and an ounce of respectability, which can be gained by membership in any one of the Protestant sects, the average member of the bourgeoisie is infinitely happy. He could ask for no more.

Genius, so we've been told, is ninety-nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration. It seems that yet another component should be added—bravery. Only a cursory examination of the great minds in creative history shows that these men (or ladies) were not afraid to stand up and stand out for what they believed. Moreover, they often had to do so in a cold and callously indifferent society.

Obviously, it is impossible to give a resume of all these great geniuses of ages past. However, the following three examples from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries display vividly how rapidly the twentieth century has submerged into decadence.

Voltaire, one of the greatest literary geniuses of the eighteenth century, was always delivering various lampoons in which he observed the established order too closely. Once a duke ordered Voltaire imprisoned in the Bastille when this master of satire dared to denounce him for his heinous crimes. The duke was obviously a sore-head for doing this to Voltaire but, nevertheless, Voltaire was undaunted. In fact, he was later exiled two times from France because of his boldness. Finally, one must not forget that it was Voltaire who, dissatisfied with all established churches because of their empty forms, decided to build his own. In short, Voltaire was an individual who took the world by its horns and shook it.

Beethoven, the musical genius of the nineteenth century, though not so critical of society,

was certainly an individual. He seemed like an angry bear to the daughter of the nobility whom he taught. His table manners were atrocious. He was arrogant but also sensitive. He couldn't keep time when he danced, yet he was the master of tempo. The police once mistook him for a burglar. Yet who can deny that Beethoven, through his daring, soaring improvisations, proclaimed his individuality to the world immortally?

Shelley, a literary genius of the same century was an atheist. Yet few poets have even come close to the sublimity of this couplet from "Adonais":

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity...

Our modern society could rise like a phoenix triumphant from its ruins if it would look introspectively into itself and seek that refreshing individuality which has been hidden by, as T. S. Eliot calls them, "The Hollow Men".

Mercer Choir Announces Year's Activities

The Mercer Choir will begin its program activities by a performance in November before the Georgia Baptist Convention meeting at the First Baptist Church in Columbus, Ga.

The Mercer Choir's annual presentation of Handel's *Messiah* in December will be televised this year.

Dr. Arthur L. Rich, head of the Music Department, will direct the choir Fall Quarter.

Clyde Hiss of the Mercer Music department will direct the choir during winter and spring quarters.

The Glee Club operetta, to be announced by Mr. Hiss, will be presented in Willingham Chapel in March.

Spring quarter the opera *Samson and Delilah* will be presented for the first time on the Mercer campus.

A record made by the Mercer Choir last spring quarter will be released by Columbia Recording company in approximately two weeks.

Interested students who have not already tried out for the Mercer Choir should contact Dr. Arthur Rich. Rehearsals are scheduled for Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.