

No Man Is an Island

The Rev. G. M. Armstrong, director of the Episcopal University Chapel, is author of today's article.

Running down the right hand column of Page 4 of Tuesday's Rag was Peanuts, my favorite comic strip. For three panels Snoopy "arfed" vigorously, and in the last he explained himself: "Every now and then it is a good idea to let the world know you're still around." And that made me think of the churches, which are always, it seems, trying to let the world they are around, but not very effectively. So I ask this question: "How effective is the Christian effort at publicity and public relations on the Campus of this University?" Or, to put it in ecclesiastical language: "How effective is the missionary effort, the telling forth of the good news of the Gospel, on this campus?" and I venture this answer: "Not greatly effective."

This is not to say that the campus pastors are not doing their job as pastors. I know that they are. What I am saying is that too many students are really unaffected by organized Christianity: they aren't getting the word. Why not? Sometimes we get a "bad press." For example, newspapers across the country recently carried the head-line "Episcopalians say alcohol the gift of God." Only a few news-men made the effort to read the Report of The Committee on Alcoholism to discover and report on what the Church had to say on this most important matter.

Very little mention was made in the secular press of the Pastoral Letter with its statements on race, international relations and Christian living. Little publicity was given to the Episcopal gift of an atomic reactor to Japan for industrial use. But far more often it is that what we have to say is simply not news. The Rag seldom carries stories of religious activities, and I, for one, do not complain. I cannot think it earth-shaking that Fr. Armstrong speaks to the Wesley Fellowship about the Christian Year! When a real news story is submitted the Rag usually prints it. I submit that too often what the Churches say to the world is self centered. It is of interest only to ourselves because it is about ourselves. Again: we miss the main issues. In his column of Oct. 28 E. E. Hines reports on a visit to Presby House Chapel with approval because "He (Dr. Knowles) said that Christianity shouldn't be dwelling on the petty differences between sects. Christians should be empha-

sizing their much greater likenesses." Parenthetically: I should like to discuss this with my friends Dr. Knowles and E. E. There are very real differences between sects, and they are not always petty. But—Is there not a God with whom to confront the world? A God who loves, who seeks, who speaks?

Then too: We Christians tend to condemn, and too often to condemn only others. We set up a false dichotomy between "us" and "them", forgetting that we are all under judgment. This is not the most attractive way to present the Truth. It is true that God judges—most men are already aware of this, only now they speak not of "guilt" but of "guilt feelings." It is also true that God loves, and that God redeems, the guilty and those who "feel" guilty.

And this essay itself is judgmental. So I offer a partial solution. First let Christians accept the fact that the Christian doctrine of the relation between man and man and between God and man needs attractive presentation. Then, let it be made news.

Second: let us concentrate on the main issue, which is that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son."

Then: Say this well.

But finally: Let Christians live their Faith. Christianity is not only a body of truth to be presented, nor an intellectual exercise to be enjoyed; it is a way of life and worship. No amount of argument, no judgment, no presentation is good, acceptable, or convincing unless it is first of all lived by him who professes it.

Back to Hines, and forgiving his inconsequential "so":

So often those who boast of their Christian heritage forget two of its most important messages: tolerance and love.

Here is judgment begining at the house of God indeed. Perhaps "they" could get the word if "we" could accept this judgment: for the writer is moved, whether he knows it or not, by THE Word: By their fruits ye shall know them." Elaborating on the words of Christ, in Galatians V, St. Paul puts it this way: "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." I submit that this is the way to spread the word: so to live as to show these fruits of the Spirit.

Conservative Estimate

By John Hoerner

Many campus activities are losing fraternity support supposedly because everyone needs more time to study. I'd like to establish here and now that I frankly don't believe it!



I will be ready to most humbly and apologetically swallow these bold words when grade averages come out at the end of this apathetic semester showing the all fraternity average way above the all men's figure. Until then, I will continue to substitute the word "lazyness" for "increased academic interest" in discussions concerning non-participation.

The most pertinent example of this deplorable situation is the Kosmet Klub Fall Revue. This show which for many years has been one of the highlights of this fall season all of a sudden has become something for "someone else" to bother with. Seventeen houses signed up, five houses tried out, four houses got in, three houses are left . . . it's going down fast.

Incidentally this isn't meant to run down the show

—I've heard that the acts are funnier and even better than last year.)

In the wake of this there is a proposal before the Interfraternity Council to penalize any house falling below the all men's average for two consecutive semesters with social probation.

This much discussed (and cussed) proposition has really put the IFC on the spot as far as many are concerned.

They have no choice but to pass it.

A vote against such a proposal would mean only one thing: The house voting no didn't feel that they could bring themselves above the all men's average if given two semesters to make it. Any self respecting fraternity would be ashamed to make this public admission considering all the talk about scholarship being a prime interest of fraternities.

An informal straw poll taken after the IFC meeting showed encouraging support of this move by house presidents and IFC representatives.

Fraternity men have been talking about scholarship for a long, long time—here is our chance to do something concrete to convince everyone including ourselves that this talk isn't just hot air.

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