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BY MEANS of a questionnaire submitted to the students of the Duke School of Religion, an attempt was made to discover trends of opinion on certain theological, social, and ethical problems foremost in contemporary religious thought. It is not claimed that the results of the poll accurately reflect student opinion; but it is hoped that an analysis of the results may exhibit general trends of thought and may indicate the type of theology prevalent in the student body. Seventy-five out of the ninety-five students enrolled in the seminary responded by filling out the questionnaire.

In this poll three major types of questions were asked. These were questions pertaining to pertinent theological problems; questions bearing upon the foremost social, political, and economic issues of the hour; and questions dealing with the matter of personal dedication and devotion. From the inquiries made concerning theological problems it was found that recent trends in theology, i.e., the "crisis theology," have greatly assisted ministerial students in formulating their own positions. Of some importance is the fact that these relatively recent trends have helped, in either a positive or a negative way, in shaping the thinking of a much larger percentage of the seniors than of the members of either the middle or the junior classes. Nearly one fourth of the first year men admitted uncertainty as to their present theological position, while there were only a few such admissions by middle-year men and none by seniors. A further question, concerning the Continental theology, revealed that the greatest agreement with its features—such as "divine" revelation, transcendent God, and divine judgment—is among the seniors. Such data lead one to draw the conclusion that the Continental theology grows in influence among students as they progress in their theological studies. The prevalence of uncertainty and lack of acquaintance with these features of theology among the men of the first-year class provide an additional item of interest.

Another group of theological questions bears upon the problem of the nature of the Church, the nature of man, and the Person and Work of Christ. In those pertaining to Christological problems the disparity of opinion between the classes is rather slight as compared to the responses to the other questions. A vast majority of the students regard Jesus as "an *indispensable* clue to God's nature" and to their own salvation. A smaller per cent, but still well over a majority, seem to think of Jesus as being "very God and very man." A much larger number of the students professed uncertainty as to what they believe on this particular issue; and in fact, the greatest degree of uncertainty was found among the seniors. In regard to the inquiry concerning the nature of man, slightly more than a majority of students view man as essentially good; almost a third deny this viewpoint with certain res-

ervations. Finally, a very substantial majority look upon the Church as "more than a voluntary group of persons interested in the good life," while only a very small number dissented from this view.

By a careful study of the compilation of theological data it is possible to arrive at certain general conclusions. First, the members of the junior or first-year class displays more uncertainty on nearly all questions than do members of either of the other two classes. Second, there seems to be a rather steady growth within the student body, as its members advance in their studies, toward a more reactionary attitude to the liberal theology. This is not to say that any large number have been won wholly to the position of the crisis-theologians, but, unmistakably, these newer trends among modern theologians are influencing the thinking of theological students. Although more first-year men marked themselves as being more theologically conservative now than when they entered the seminary, the facts reveal that, of the three classes, the first-year class is the most liberal and the senior class the most conservative. Perhaps with many students, as one middle-year man remarked, "it was not so much a case of becoming either more liberal or more conservative, but of becoming broader" and more theologically minded.

The second major division included questions of a social, political, and economic nature. The first two of these questions had to do with the problem of inter-racial relations and prejudices. It was found that approximately three fourths of the student body favor merging the Methodist Church with the three major Methodist negro groups "with equal rights and privileges for all constituents." There was very little disagreement between the first- and third-year classes, but slightly less than half of the second-year class expressed opposition to such a merger. Seventy-eight per cent of those voting indicated they favored "admitting colored students to the Duke School of Religion." Three per cent were undecided. Here again the middle-year men showed the most dissent. In response to both questions, as in those of a theological nature, a small group of first-year men admitted indecision as to the stand which they would take. Furthermore, in both cases, more of the seniors than of either of the other two classes seemed anxious to see the two racial groups brought into closer and more harmonious relations. A further question revealed that almost all favor a more inter-denominational student body.

Turning next to the problems of peace and war and the Christian attitude toward them, the questionnaire revealed that exactly thirty-five per cent of the students profess to be *absolute* pacifists. The first- and second-year classes were about equal in percentages at this point with the third-year class dropping slightly below them. In the allotted space a few students expressed the desire to be absolute pacifists, but felt that as yet they could not conscientiously accept that position. In an additional question, asked to determine student opinion on the part

America should play in the present world crisis, it was discovered that the students take an isolationist position. Only five per cent favor American intervention with military aid even "if it becomes evident that England and France are being defeated in the European conflict." Only twenty per cent favor intervention with economic aid in the same eventuality.

As a means of ascertaining the attitude of the students toward present economic problems and conditions, three questions were asked. The responses to the first of these disclosed the fact that slightly over ninety per cent of the student body believe "in the moral right of the laboring man to strike." A small number expressed opposition to this position, but a substantial minority maintained without reservation that the laboring man should be allowed to organize and strike for his rights. A second question bearing upon the solution of the nation's present economic problems had to do with the cooperative movement. It was found that well over three fourths of the students feel that both the consumers' and the producers' cooperative movements might be a valuable aid to the South's economic recovery. Here again the dissent was quite small, but some uncertainty was expressed in the case of the producers' cooperatives. Perhaps this latter fact may be attributed to a lack of acquaintance with the real nature of the producers' cooperatives. The final question of an economic nature pertained to government ownership of the major public utilities. Twelve per cent were opposed to the policy of government ownership of utilities. Sixty-eight per cent agreed to the policy with certain reservations. Only nineteen per cent of those voting replied without any reservations that the government should own the major public utilities. These facts certainly remove any doubt of the dominance of social liberalism among the students.

"The Imitation of Christ"

By CHARLES A. ELLWOOD

(*Christian Horizons* makes an exception to its usually rigid policy of printing student manuscripts only. The editors take pleasure in presenting this article which recently appeared in the *North Carolina Christian Advocate*.)

A MEDIEVAL monk called the Christian world of his time to "The Imitation of Christ." With the new union of the various branches of Methodism, Methodists should consider whether the imitation of Christ is not the central problem in the advance of Methodism and Christianity. Whether the world has grown less Christian or not may