Sometimes, we run after the wrong gods

Why are there so many references recently to Alice in Wonderland and the Wizard of Oz? Kansas tornadoes are not noticed by most of the nation, Judy Garland is long gone, and robots in automated planes surpass the wonders of the Tin

nation, along dataunationated planes surpass the wonders of the Tin
Man.

It gradually dawned on me that speakers are
sending us a subtle message by referring to the
dream world of Alice. I would rather be direct.

Let's be alert to our temptation to retreat into fantasy when problems seem overwhelming.

A certain type of religion is combining with a
certain stant in politics to entice us with magic.

Campaigners indicate our next president will wave
a magic wand to resofter decency, order and piety.

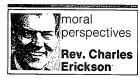
Simplistic slogans create fervor when the power
of the Almighty is added to them.

PRIMATIVE relgion has always been popular. People develop superstitions to provide protection from fears. Rituals arise to sustain social customs that give stability. Irrational beliefs create securi-

ty.

There are hints we have been outgrowing the pri-mative in recent centuries. Religion and politics have been shaped by real thinkers.

Both pulpits and soap boxes have been occupied



by people gifted with the capacity to reason. There have been solid debates about rational differences

have been solid debates about rational differences of opinion and genuinely intellectual issues. The hope for magic, however, never recedes far into the background. We are beset by threats more awesome than witches and goblins.
A nuclear holocaust makes war unthinkable, but we keep flirting with it. Technology threatens to make our planet uninhabitable, but we keep developing pollutants. No economic system seems capable of dealing with ruthlessness by those controlling vital resources. Street crime and terrorism spread and deepen fears.

HYSTERIA CAN be prevented by believing there are magical solutions to real problems. Agitation can be calmed by assigning blame to bad guys.

A new day is promised by combining religion and politics in a campaign to reclaim the social order defined by founders of nation and church.

The heart of the matter lies in a mistaken definition of the human problem. Popular religio-politicipargon assumes the enemy is atheism. Godiess Communism is viewed as a hidden power behind the destruction of our dreams.

Prophets in ancient Biblical times did not make this mistake. The trouble is not atheism but idolorly. The key human problem is not dismissing God but running after the wrong gods.

Superstition is poor religion because it gives cosmic pander or maving a black cat cross one's path is assumed to have eternal influence on destiny. To sing sall over the shoulder or knocking on wood promises magical protection.

Now, really. What kind of god pays attention to such foolishness? We attribute to the delty worse eyesight than the proverbial blind umpire and less sense than the village idio.

THE WAY TO mature religion and reasonable

politics is clear. Let us name our fears. Let us name our visions. Then we can attack evil head-on and pursue good with ennobiling passion.

Our problem is that we work of the control of

and he is us."

We don't need magic to take care of devils and bogs-men. We don't need fantasy to describe our goals. We need witherat vision and rational rituals.

We can dream with Alice and at the same time deal with fears about real problems in the real world. The moral way is to identify the crucial issues and the powers actually shapping events.

Our hope lies in naming the evils and visions that

Divinity degree granted

Randal Hobert Huber Randal Robert Huber, son of Mr. And Mrs. Rob-ert Huber, 35409 Heri-tage Court, Farmington, received his master of di-vinity degree from An-derson School of Theolo-

gy.

Huber, one of approxi-mately 45 atudents parmately 45 ftudents par-ticipating in commence-ment exercises, was graduated with academic honor. He received his bachelor of arts degree from University of West-ern Ontario and is mar-ried to the former Suran-

ern Ontario and is mar-ried to the former Susan Reid.

Anderson School of Theology, the graduate professional school of An-derson College, is spon-sored by Church of God.

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Pastor Michael A. Halleen Associate Pastor Mary Miller-Vikander

Minister to Youth David A. Rose

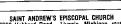
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