THE EUROPEAN

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WORLD POLITICS AND THE COLOUR PROBLEM
by ***R. H. PARKER***

HITLER'S COURT JESTER by ***DIANA MOSLEY***

FORD MADOX FORD by ***PETER WHIGHAM***

BRITISH COMRADES ABROAD: 1947 by ***JOHN HAYLOCK***

ANALYSIS by ***EUROPEAN***

A century's results; old men succeed, young men fail:
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Defence of the pound and the defence of Britain:
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POLITICS BOOKS TRAVEL

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CONTENTS

DECEMBER 1957

ANALYSIS by ***EUROPEAN*** - - - - Page 195
A century's results; old men succeed, young men fail: The Christmas pantomime of political parties: Defence of the pound and the defence of Britain: Oxford University as it looks today.

WORLD POLITICS AND THE COLOUR PROBLEM by ***R. H. PARKER*** Page 203

HITLER'S COURT JESTER by ***DIANA MOSLEY*** - Page 206

THREE POEMS OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE translated by ***DESMOND STEWART*** and ***DR. ERNST FELLNER*** - - - - Page 210

FORD MADOX FORD by ***PETER WHIGHAM*** - Page 212

ARRIVING: A Poem by ***ALAN NEAME*** - - Page 219

A DIARY - - - - - - - Page 220

THE INCOMPARABLE ANOUILH by ***HARVEY BLACK*** *Page 223*

CINEMA: *BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI; HE WHO MUST DIE; A FACE IN THE CROWD* by ***VINCENT MURRAY*** Page 229

NEW BOOKS: *Arabian Destiny* by ***Jacques Benoist-Méchin***
Russia in the Making by ***John Lawrence***
The Golden Virgin by ***Henry Williamson***
Testament of Experience by ***Vera Brittain***
The Black Cloud by ***Fred Hoyle*** - Page 231

BRITISH COMRADES ABROAD: 1947 by ***JOHN HAYLOCK*** Page 238

LETTERS: *Canada; Apartheid* - - - - Page 254

ANALYSIS

THE history of the last hundred years will suffice to correct at least one current illusion; let us begin with the Franco-Prussian war. The three German generals who led the Prussian armies on Paris were all more than 70 years old. Bismarck was only 55 at the time of the war because his opportunity came earlier, but was 75 when he was forced to retire by the young Kaiser who lost the next war; he showed by his writings when over 80 that he was even then still at the height of his powers. When Clemenceau formed his war-winning government in the First World War he was aged 76. The French General Foch was 63 when he turned the Battle of the Marne, and was 67 when as Supreme Commander he brought the war to a victorious conclusion. The most successful general on the other side emerged from retirement to win the decisive battle of Tannenberg at the age of 67, and as President Hindenberg was returned to power with great majorities in popular votes at the age of 78 and again at the age of 85. Sir Winston Churchill was over 65 when he became Prime Minister in the Second World War, and over 70 at its conclusion. He was finally compelled to retire from office on the grounds of being too old at the age of 80, in favour of a man of 57 whose public policies and personal health collapsed within 18 months. Finally, Dr. Adenauer took office for the first time in national politics at the age of 74, as head of a government which presided over the recent recovery of Germany, and won a triumphant election for another five years' term within three months of his 82nd birthday. So, by the hard, practical test of success, it does not appear necessary to find politicians whose youth makes them innocent of everything except wetting their nappies.

The cult of Peter Pan.

We are moved to these reflections both by the approach of Christmas and by some recent performances in politics and press. The festive season gives traditional occasion to review the current harlequinade. Otherwise the deep coma which is the only inspira-

tion that the turn of the year brings to present society, affords opportunity for little except a dull survey of the gloomiest prophecies expressed in this journal being easily surpassed by the even greater gloom of actual events; it has proved impossible in practice either to over-estimate the seriousness of the situation or to under-estimate the incapacity of Western statesmanship. The failure has not even been relieved by giving youth its day, with a junior golf champion as President of America and a teddy boy as Prime Minister of Britain. So let us turn to the ripe pantomime which is appropriate to the season and is amply provided by British politics.

The new cult has a Christmas flavour, for it is the cult of Peter Pan. The connection between the retirement of Dr. Dalton and the present plight of the Tory Party may not be immediately apparent. But the boy who would not grow up—in fact must retire in a hurry if he shows any signs of growing up—skips through the pages of *The Daily Mirror* as blithely as he splashes with Lord Hailsham on Brighton beach. The *Daily Mirror* greatly applauded Dr. Dalton for retiring at 70 on the grounds that he was too old. But were the "Doctor's" faults indeed the failing of age? Were they not rather the babbling indiscretions of extreme youth which he retained into what are normally regarded as the years of discretion? Was it not a most juvenile tongue-wagging which effectively ended his career? Was it not a case of Peter Pan at the Exchequer, simply refusing to grow up even in the sixties? And is it not this type which in greater or lesser degree the present system and the cult of current silliness inevitably produces? Has it anything to do at all with the years of a man? Has it not everything to do with character? And is not this character inevitably produced by present values in those who are willing to serve them?

Ringing bells and bathing belles. The people more serious.

The next stage is the muffin boy who rings the bell, and announces that the Tory Party "stands for honour and dignity . . . for decency and purity . . . for the family, for patriotism, for religion."* Surely the most illuminating announcement of political doctrine since that long-standing worthy of the Baldwin cabinets, Mr. W. Bridgeman, in a moment of irritated inspiration replied to persistent interlocutors: "The principles of the Tory Party are truth, protection and the Ten Commandments." Lord Hailsham is no doubt

* Lord Hailsham's address to the Conservative Political Centre at the Party Conference.

perfectly sincere in these blameless sentiments from which few will dissent, even if they contribute little either to the balance of payments problem or to the struggle for supremacy in inner space. But is he equally worthy of his office when he rings the bell, or becomes a bathing belle? We have reached the point where the stunt is everything and the policy is nothing. The new politicians have blameless records because they have no records; nothing can be said against them because they have done nothing. Once in the water and obliged to swim, they cut their own throats with proverbial speed; the hysterical idiocy of "I am ashamed of being half-American" during the Suez crisis was just the first small splash in a swim to ultimate suicide in the eyes of all serious opinion which culminated with the still more fatuous splashing on Brighton beach. The politicians cannot understand how serious are those who have influence among the people in their daily lives; the man who is listened to at the factory bench or in the village pub, the woman whose voice is heard in the shop when prices rise. By such people the substitution of stunts for policies is at first regarded with contempt, but later with ever mounting anger as the hard pressure of life increases. The jabber-boy, the chatter-box, the empty stunt merchant is in the end the unconscious promoter of revolution, and the further to the right he stands the further to the left he drives any society on which he has any influence.

Peter Pan versus Pietas and Gravitas.

All this is not entirely the fault of the politicians, who merely cater for current silliness because they lack the character to resist it. But let us be clear that in the light of history, the "youthful" symptoms of this age are the symptoms not of vigour but of decadence; Peter Pan is the boy who runs away from existing life, not the man who creates fresh life. Gravitas and Pietas ruled in the great societies of mankind; now we have Pietas without the Gravitas, while in the supreme creative periods of the past it tended to be the other way about. These are indications of dissolution, not of integration, still less of creative vitality.

Yet without doubt the most vigorous and constructive capacities are still present in the British people; the triumphs of English technique in every field give conclusive proof. The politicians are inclined to boast of these things as if they had done them, when in fact science and technics have again and again saved them from their blunders. The great example, of course, is the development

of nuclear power saving Europe from the inevitable destruction by Russia which the triumph of Russian armies and the subsequent disintegration of the West would otherwise have brought. But many lesser examples abound of new development in industrial technique saving the old economic system to which our politicians cling like drowning men to a tub in a rough sea, without any effort to strike out for the dry land of a larger and safer system. Again and again science has lifted them up by the trousers as they sank for the third time, and on each occasion as soon as the water was out of their mouths they have boasted of their prescience and vigour without a thought for the next wave.

The bell rings for Mr. Sandys; not for the first time.

Mr. Sandys is the other rising hopeful, a rival to Lord Hailsham's wig and gown dictatorship in a Conservative Party which is perpetually in search of a leadership free of blame for past blunders. It was his task to wield the sword, but since he took office his only effective use of the weapon has been to cut some very thick slices off the British Army. The declared object was to modernise the forces, and to substitute new weapons for old; a policy for which this journal has long stood. But in practice he appears to have relied unduly on the "great deterrent," at the expense of a dangerous reduction of conventional forces. We are now within sight of the complete paralysis of the major nuclear weapons which has been described in this journal, and elsewhere by the same pen, for the last seven years, because both sides possess them and they cannot be used without world destruction. Consequently conventional forces with tactical nuclear arms become of paramount importance to prevent Russian armies marching under cover of the major nuclear paralysis, a danger which, too, has been stressed in this journal for long past. The *Times* stated recently our European allies now felt "that the primary need was for conventional strength." The *New York Herald Tribune* of November 11th also reported that "an advisory Parliamentary group of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation members last night in Paris . . . asserted that NATO's ground forces were affected by 'increasing disintegration'." Can it be denied that this process was begun by the Sandys cuts?

Mr. Sandys appears to have committed a first-class blunder for which his only excuse is that Britain is not strong enough to support the burden both of the great deterrent and of conventional forces. This again is a decisive reason for Britain entering into the full

Union of Europe whose collective strength could support both burdens with ease, a policy which is rejected by the Government of which Mr. Sandys remains a favoured member.

So now the bell is ringing for Mr. Sandys as well as Lord Hailsham, and Conservatism will soon have to search again for fresh innocence without a past, until the cradles themselves are ransacked. (The fact that such policies lead also to a tolling of the bell for Britain, counts, of course, for much less in the political gossip columns.)

Mr. Sandys, the unwise virgin.

But was Mr. Sandys, after all, so entirely innocent? Had he no past, no record of failure? Did he not make a most unsuccessful attempt—or was it not two attempts—to start a new political movement before the war? The last was called "The First Hundred Thousand," and, according to his warm admirer the *Daily Mail*, in a candid moment, achieved an eventual membership of himself and the Duchess of Atholl. So he remained entirely innocent; a political virgin, if ever there was one, albeit by necessity rather than volition. At any rate he did not require two special Acts of Parliament to hold him down like the wicked Mosley Movement, with whose aims and policies he had naturally no sympathy whatever; it rather required a more agreeable event to hold him up.

He is not so garrulous as Lord Hailsham; his pose is rather strong and very silent, being not all that capable of speech. But the Tory Party may find now, as Mr. Sandys found himself in his little private enterprise before the war, that to attract and hold a following you must be able to do a little more in the talk line than just bark.

We must therefore leave the Christmas pantomime, without even a glance at the real funnies on the Opposition bench. At the turn of the year we can only wish for our country that the farce will not turn too soon to tragedy.

Government, wages and inflation.

Apart from the misjudgment shown in the recent Defence cuts, the most immediate test of the Government will be the demand for increased wages in the nationalised industries. All the Chancellor has said so far* is that "the measures the Government had taken in relation to the supply of money were intended to make it harder

* House of Commons, 29.10.57.

to earn profits and to get wage increases"; this indicates not action but the old familiar creation of "atmosphere." But the plain question is whether the Government, as the largest employer of labour, is going to say "No" to increased wages without increased production. That is the test by which the Government will stand or fall in public esteem and the pound will stand or fall on the exchanges of the world; sooner or later there is no escape from that question. In such circumstances, to say "no Chancellor can be indifferent to a problem of wage increases," is simply playing with the question. The Government must make up its mind whether there will be wage increases or not, and once the decision is made they have the power to enforce it. The only immediate question which remains is whether they have the courage to face the trouble which that decision can bring. As the Chancellor stated that "without the measures the Government had announced there would have been massive unemployment within a matter of months," it would be a betrayal of the country if these measures were not finally applied in an effective form. It will be found in the end that the Government must face the question of both wages and profits, or fail. The truth is that the economy of modern states cannot be conducted without a far more comprehensive policy; a wage-price leadership by Government through a deliberately organised wage-price mechanism, which gives a general lead to industry in the whole economic sphere of wages, profits, investment, and in price control as well where monopoly conditions prevail. This can be the complete answer to Marxism, without bureaucratic control; otherwise we risk the victory of Communism. It is a policy first suggested in these columns to which we shall continually return.

A serious debate in the Oxford Union.

The Oxford Union now provides the gravitas which national politics so conspicuously lack; one of the paradoxes of the period. The bellringers are to be found among middle-aged statesmen at Conservative conferences, not among the undergraduates. (Perhaps, too, even the bell is a little muffled in All Souls' Common Room.)

A serious, dignified and well reasoned debate on October 24th was addressed to the following motion: "This House would accept Khrushchev's offer for mutual withdrawal of American and Russian forces from all European countries provided this policy is accompanied by a measure of disarmament sufficient to prevent aggression by either side or by a rearmament of Western Europe adequate to

prevent Russian invasion."

193 voted in favour of the motion and 328 against in a crowded House. The 37 per cent. vote in favour of the motion was in effect given against a coalition of the parties of the Left and Right; those who would not embarrass dear Mr. Khrushchev in any way by attaching any conditions to acceptance of his offer, and those who found the possibilities of European Union too remote, our continent too divided, helpless, poor in spirit and in pocket ever to emerge from American protection and tutelage.* The opening speech of the undergraduate proposing the motion was particularly good, and he was ably seconded. The whole case in favour of European integration and independence was entirely free from any trace of the anti-Americanism which would have marred with irrational emotion a closely reasoned argument, and would have entirely traversed the sentiments of gratitude and friendship towards America which are held to be appropriate by the guest speaker in support of the motion, Sir Oswald Mosley.

" Totem and Taboo."

It was an agreeable and curious feature of the discussion that the opposition to such European dependence, and, in particular, apparently, to European rearmament if general disarmament proved unattainable, was led by an opposer and seconder who were both coloured members of the Commonwealth; agreeable because they were both charming people despite a tendency in the former to employ the old-fashioned abusive method, curious because the danger of Europe being overrun by Russian armies—which they appeared to confront with a most magnificent indifference—did not seem to be primarily their concern. No one was impolite enough to point out that a speech from an European in Calcutta University suggesting it is quite unnecessary for any serious precaution to be taken against a Russian invasion of India would not have been quite so well received. No one winced even at jokes so corny as " a man with a future behind him "; not even the bust of Mr. Gladstone, for it must first have been heard in the Oxford Union long before his time. In fact, it soon became clear that these amiable and gifted gentlemen

* The Prime Minister in his speech to Parliament on November 5th appeared to support the view of opting for integration with America rather than with Europe; true to the teddy tradition that it is better to live easy at someone else's expense (America) than seriously to exert yourself and build your own business (Europe).

were also the most privileged beings; as a result of war propaganda they had become the local deities, the tribal totems. The educated English are suffering such agonies of remorse at the way they treated Colonial peoples in the past, such depths of shame at the very memory of the old Empire, that all the familiar symptoms of sacrifice followed by totem worship are present to these usually sophisticated surroundings. Those who were previously so ill-treated are now the subjects of deification; the victim has become the totem.

All this, of course, is reasonably clear to anyone with opportunity to read the major works on psychology published in the two main languages which treat this subject. As the occasion was afforded by imprisonment without trial, or possibility of charge, during the war years, it is encouraging to think that this previous sacrifice may thus also be eventually atoned by achievement of the same high totem status.

Yet, despite a few inevitable idiosyncrasies of the period, it was an evening worthy of the best traditions of a great university; encouraging, also, for the future because it showed seriousness, purpose and a sane European feeling in a new generation whose big central bloc gave the vote for the motion.

Mr. Trevor Roper as Regius Professor.

After all, we must expect a few odd features in a university whose Regius Professor broke the reverant hush which greeted his appointment with the following utterance: "The function of genius is not to give new answers, but to pose new questions, which time and mediocrity can resolve." So an Oxford professor contributes the last definition of genius; make the question as silly as you like, so long as you don't know the answer.

Is not this the final *reductio ad absurdum* of the generation which can only ask questions, and can never find the answer; the cheeky boy who can only scribble a rude question on the blackboard, and then run away; little H. G. Wells in cap and gown, for he first set the literary fashion even if he were innocent of the philosophic sterility; a most appropriate Regius Professor in the most positive illogicality of modern Oxford.

"Es braucht eine neue Bejahung."

EUROPEAN.

WORLD POLITICS AND THE COLOUR PROBLEM

by R. H. PARKER

Editor's Note.—Except for certain high class Japanese, everyone has some colour; "coloured" is therefore an inexact term, but it is used here in its current sense for want of a better word.

"FOR many generations our peoples have been the voiceless ones in the world. We have been the unregarded, the peoples for whom decisions were made by others whose interests were paramount, the peoples who lived in poverty and humiliation."

The words are those of President Sukarno of Indonesia opening the Bandung Conference in April, 1955. They may be taken as a text for the consideration of one of the most important phenomena of our time—the resurgence and rapidly increasing importance of the coloured peoples of the world.

Until the last decade of the 15th century the white nations of Europe had very little contact with these peoples. Then came the Age of Discovery, followed by four hundred years of European expansion. Asia and Africa succumbed to the superior "white" technology and the European countries became the masters of the world. This was, in Sardar Pannikar's phrase, the "Vasco da Gama" epoch of Western dominance. By the very nature of things there could be no colour problem in world politics, since European politics *were* world politics.

By 1900 white supremacy had reached its high-water mark. Then in 1904-5 Japan defeated Russia. Future historians may well consider this the most important event of the twentieth century. It marks the beginning of the resurgence of the coloured peoples of the world. The colour problem enters world politics for the first time as a factor of importance.

During these last fifty years the European nations have fought two disastrous wars. European union has yet to be achieved. On the other hand, the coloured nations have steadily regained their inde-

pendence and importance. China was revivified by the revolution of 1911-12, today she is one of the world's leading powers. Japan made important gains after the First World War, and achieved an astonishing series of victories before being defeated by the atomic bomb in the second. Eleven years later she is rapidly regaining her strength. India and Pakistan gained their independence in 1947 and are playing an increasingly important part in world affairs.

Indonesia, the Philippines, Indo-China, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, the Sudan and the West Indies have all achieved independence or come near it. The list is impressive. The makers of foreign policy will ignore at their peril the effects of their actions upon these countries.

If the recent Middle East crisis is any guide our rulers have not yet fully learned this lesson. We cannot re-create the world of the 19th century, however desirable it may seem. As Messrs. Wint and Calvocoressi have pointed out: "People have sometimes regretted the disappearance of the Austrian Empire, but they have never known how to put it together again."*

The coloured countries do not, of course, form a monolithic bloc. There are many differences between them—Kashmir is only the most obvious example of many; but they are united by a common experience (past or present, real or imagined) of colour prejudice, colonialism, and most important of all, poverty, disease and illiteracy.

Colour prejudice is largely a modern phenomenon. Its origin is certainly connected with slavery and the spread of white European power throughout the world. The masters were always white; the slaves and conquered were always coloured. Hence arose the convenient rationalisation that by virtue of their white skins alone the Europeans were destined to be the superior race. Biblical justifications were found; learned clerics "proved" that the sons of Ham (i.e., the black and brown races) were set apart by God to be forever "hewers of wood and drawers of water" and "the servants of servants unto their brethren." Modern scientific investigation, however, has demolished the arguments for a naturally superior race. The *Statement on the Nature of Race and Race Difference* by physical anthropologists and geneticists, published under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation in September, 1952, concludes that:—

* *Middle East Crisis* (1957), p. 127

" Available scientific knowledge provides no basis for believing that the groups of mankind differ in their innate capacity for intellectual and emotional development . . . Vast social changes have occurred that have not been connected in any way with changes in racial type. Historical and sociological studies thus support the view that genetic differences are of little significance in determining the social and cultural differences between different groups of men."

For good or ill, and whether one likes it or not, the era of European colonialism is fast coming to an end. The former colonies will fear the devil they know—colonialism—rather than the devil they do not know—communism. When Mr. Dulles calls Goa a " Portuguese province " in one breath and denounces communism in the next the natural response of many Asians is to think that since Mr. Dulles opposes communism there must be something to say in its favour. The fact that legally Goa *is* a Portuguese province is beside the point. In 1776 the thirteen American states were legally British colonies.

The poverty, disease and illiteracy of most of the coloured countries can best be shown by means of a few representative figures, drawn from United Nations sources:

Country	*Estimated Income per Head in 1949 U.S. $*	*Infant Mortality Rates per 1,000*	*Illiteracy Rate per cent.*
Indonesia	25	—	80-85
China	27	—	50-55
Burma	36	230.5	50-55
India	57	119.1	80-85
Egypt	100	128.6	75-80
Japan	100	48.9	2- 3
U.S.S.R.	308	—	7-10
U.K.	773	26.3	1- 2
U.S.A.	1,453	26.6	2- 3

Some of the figures are necessarily approximations, and economists are not united about the validity of comparisons between countries of income per head but the figures do at least bring out plainly the great disparities between North America and Europe on the one hand and Asia and Africa on the other. The colonial powers are often held to be responsible for these conditions. In many cases the accusation is unjust, but one thing is certain, we cannot ignore the " new men " of the " new countries." They and their problems are here to stay for a very long time yet.

HITLER'S COURT JESTER

by DIANA MOSLEY

Hitler: The Missing Years by Putzi Hanfstaengl (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 30s.).

"HANFSTAENGL was a gay and amusing companion," writes Mr. Brian Connell, the man who has set down these reminiscences in English. "People have said I was Hitler's court jester," adds Dr. Hanfstaengl himself.

The Hanfstaengl family belong to Germany's intellectual middle class; they print art reproductions and sell them in a Munich shop. Putzi's mother was American: he was sent to Harvard and remained in America to manage the New York branch of the business. He was twenty-seven when the first war began; he stayed on in the shop in Fifth Avenue. During and after the second war he spent seven years of considerable hardship in English, Canadian and American concentration camps, except for a short time when his offer to help the Allies in their "psychological warfare" against Germany was rather half-heartedly taken up by Roosevelt. (The Central European Jews who ran this side of the war never cared much for Putzi.)

His claim to fame is that he knew Hitler well, and saw a good deal of him between 1923 and the middle thirties.

More than twelve years have passed since Hitler died, and it may seem astonishing that Dr. Hanfstaengl should still feel obliged to write with such exaggerated spite about the man he was once so proud to call his friend. But in so far as he was a close associate of the Führer (and "court jester" neatly sums up this association) or in so far as he was a National Socialist, he evidently feels bound to excuse himself to his Anglo-Saxon readers. It is as if he imagined they were lying in wait to see what he would say, ready to pop him back behind bars if he is not abusive enough. This attitude of his places him in a dilemma. He wishes to sell his memoirs, therefore he must write about the only interesting thing that ever happened to him—his connexion with Hitler. He has to have been an intimate,

yet the Führer must be a monster; he has to have been an influential counsellor, whose courageously sharp criticisms and sage foresight were nevertheless ignored; he has to have been prominent in the Nazi hierarchy, yet all the time devoted to the American way of life. Thus he calls upon memory for fact, upon imagination for fiction, and the unity of his book suffers in consequence.

It is a safe guess that most readers will skip the pages about the Hanfstaengl pedigree to get to the man in the shabby suit, spell-binding his Munich audiences and charming Putzi's dollars out of his pocket to pay for a printing press for the Party newspaper. It is the eye-witness account of the famous Bürgerbräukeller meeting, the Putsch, Hitler's trial and his imprisonment in Landsberg which, historically, is the valuable part of the book.

On the 9th of November 1923 the marching column of demonstrators, led by Ludendorff and Hitler, was fired on by the police in the narrow street near the Feldhermhalle; sixteen men were killed, among them Scheubner-Richter whose arm was linked in Hitler's. His fall dislocated Hitler's shoulder, and it was in this condition that he made his way to the Hanfstaengls' country cottage at Uffing. Putzi, along with many others including the badly wounded Goering, had fled to Austria. Frau Hanfstaengl took Hitler in, and it was at the Uffing villa that the police arrested him two days later.

Dr. Hanfstaengl's was far from being the only family of substance to support Hitler at that time. On the eve of his trial, for example, Frau Bechstein visited him in prison. She gave him a bouquet of flowers and embraced him, saying: "Wolf! Wir stehen immer zu Dir!"*. Back in his cell, Hitler discovered half a bottle of champagne concealed among the flowers, which he drank next morning before going into court. The Führer told me this story himself.

Months later, when Putzi visited him in Landsberg, "the place looked like a delicatessen store. You could have opened up a flower and fruit and a wine shop with all the stuff stacked there. People were sending presents from all over Germany."

Apart from the loan of his invaluable dollars at a time of galloping inflation Hitler liked Dr. Hanfstaengl's company and his piano-playing and his drollery. Hitler himself, at Putzi relates, "was a gifted mimic with a sharp sense of the ridiculous. His star turn was a sort of symposium of the type of patriotic orator then very

* "We shall always stand by you!" Frau Bechstein belonged to the piano manufacturing family.

common in Germany, and by no means extinct since—the politically conscious, semi-professorial figure with a Wotan-like beard. Hitler's nationalism was practical and direct, but they would boom away about Siegfried's sword being drawn out of its scabbard and lightning playing round the German eagle and so forth. He could invent this mock rhodomontade *ad infinitum* and be very funny about it." He would also recite a poem written to him by one of his admirers "with embellishments of his own, and have us in tears of laughter." But Hanfstaengl, not content with being the boon companion of a leisure hour, hoped (so he says) to influence Hitler politically; an idea which anyone who knew both men would find grotesque.

When the National Socialists came to power he was given the job of foreign press relations officer. In a way he was well fitted for this; he spoke excellent English, knew many American newspaper men, and was popular and hail-fellow-well-met. What, then, went wrong with this enthusiastic Nazi, wearing a smart uniform he designed himself, enjoying his new status to the full (he says his telephone never stopped ringing, even the barest acquaintances were anxious to claim friendship with the man who was the Führer's friend), and playing the part—this I can vouch for myself—of *der treueste aller Treuen:* what went wrong?

This book provides the answer. Dr. Hanfstaengl, while professing love and loyalty to Hitler himself, loathed with bitter hatred every single person in his entourage. Men like Goering and Himmler, who seldom saw the Führer, are let off lightly, but those who were frequently in his company, from the brilliant Dr. Goebbels to the faithful Schaub, are heaped with scorn and abuse. He made no secret of his feelings, and it appears that he regaled foreign press correspondents with every kind of tittle tattle and stories of real or imagined strains and stresses within the Party. Naturally enough, this came to Hitler's ears, and the enemies Putzi so recklessly made saw to it that his attacks on members of the government were repeated to the victims. Annoyed by these reports, Hitler invited him less and less often, thereby increasing his bitterness. After a time his post virtually ceased to exist; foreign journalists were directed to other channels. For old time's sake this was done gradually and unobtrusively; the only wonder was that it had not happened sooner. A modern English equivalent would be the appointment of Mr Malcolm Muggeridge as Buckingham Palace press relations officer.

Not long afterwards he left Germany; the result of a practical joke. Court jesters seldom care about jokes against themselves.

Hearing one evening that Putzi was in the habit of saying that he wished he could have fought in the 1914 war, but that keeping a shop in New York of which the window was smashed by anti-German Americans had been more disagreeable than life in the trenches, Hitler said that if he really longed for battle he had his chance at last: he could volunteer to fight in Spain, where civil war was raging. He then imagined how funny it would be to pretend to gratify this life-long wish, to pretend to be flying him to Spain to be parachuted behind the Red lines while in reality he was flown from one German airfield to another. Probably after elaborating this idea in his inimitable way (and acting Putzi in the *Kampfzeit* when he thought there were Reds lurking round the next corner) the whole thing went out of Hitler's head. Among those who heard him, however, there were several with old scores to pay off. The practical joke was carried out. Starting from Berlin on a "special mission" to Salamanca, headquarters of the Franco press, Putzi was told in the aeroplane that he was to be dropped behind the Red lines. By the time he landed (at Leipzig) he was in a great stew. He took the first train to Switzerland, convinced that the Gestapo was after him. Goering, contrite that the joke had gone with such a bang, wrote begging him to come home and offering him a job in the Four-year-plan. He refused.

Dr Hanfstaengl announces with pride (or at any rate with satisfaction) to his Anglo-Saxon audience that after the war he found his name on a Gestapo blacklist. Probably it was there because during the war he was released from the Allied concentration camp for a time in connexion with the Americans' psychological warfare, an activity which can take a very dangerous turn according to which side loses the war. But Putzi's hosts, of course, won the war.

Back in Munich since 1946, he has now broken his long silence. Some people might think he has got his values mixed up. He is ashamed of what he should be proud of, proud of what he should be ashamed of. However that may be, his book contains interesting material about events and scenes he lived through. Where he is forced, through lack of first hand evidence, to speculate about Hitler's private life, we cannot do better than quote Mr. Brian Connell once again, when he praises Putzi for his "inextinguishable capacity for embroidering an anecdote and total lack of inhibition in his remarks and comments."

THREE POEMS
by FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

AUTUMN

Autumn has come—and it will break the heart.
Fly far! Fly far!
The sun ascends the peak,
Slow foot by foot
And rests at every step.
How dead the world has grown!
On tiredly woven threads
The wind picks out its tune:
Bewailing now the hope that's flown.

Autumn has come—and it will break the heart!
Fly far! Fly far!
Oh fruit of the tree,
You tremble, fall?
What secret did the night impart to you,
That on your cheeks a blush
Of purple spread?
Silent, you give no answer.
And who would speak?

Autumn has come—and it will break the heart!
Fly far! Fly far!
I am not fair—
So says the pallid aster,—

But men I love and comfort still.
May they yet flowers see,
May they stoop down and gather me—
And in their eyes will gleam
A memory,
A memory of beauty more than mine.
I see it, and so seeing die.
Autumn has come—and it will break the heart.
Fly Far! Fly faf!

VENICE

Upon the bridge I stood
Lately in brownish night.
Afar off came a song.
Droplets of gold moved
Out on the rippling waves.
Gondolas, music, lights,
Merge drunken in the falling dusk.

My heart, a mandoline,
Invisibly played upon
Secretly forms a song,
Trembling with coloured bliss.
Had I a listener then?

THE WANDERER

No path left. Abyss around, and all is still.
To leave the well-known pathway was your will.
You are forsaken—if you yield to fear!
Now is the test. Gaze round you calm and clear.

Translated by
DESMOND STEWART and DR. ERNST FELLNER

FORD MADOX FORD

by PETER WHIGHAM

WHEN Wyndham Lewis died, earlier this year, someone made the remark, " Well, that's the third of the great five to go." Eliot, Joyce, Lewis, Pound (I am placing them carefully in *alphabetical* order)—who was the fifth? The fifth was Ford Madox Ford, born in 1873 and buried in the English cemetery at Deauville, in what he called his second country, on the eve of the last war.

Few, perhaps, would place Ford in this company, but it should be remembered that in Ford's case the link is as much associative as qualitative. If the two books with which most of us are familiar —*The Good Soldier* and *Provence*—are of the first order in their kind, that was not his sole or even his main contribution to English letters. His brilliant editorship of the first thirteen numbers of the *English Review* bridged the gap between *The Yellow Book* and *Blast.* When one turns again to those extraordinary opening numbers one is struck more than anything else by the lack of any sense of disparateness between what were, after all, extremely disparate circles. It is then that Ford's influence and his importance, not just as a link, but as a sort of *vital* link—working closely from the inside in both periods—becomes clear.

Behind *The Yellow Book* stood Rossetti and his circle. As a grandson of Madox Brown and a nephew by marriage of the Rossetti's, Ford acted very much as a transmitter of that pre-Raphaelite influence which Mr. Eliot has detected as the background —it might be more exact to describe it as the seed-bed—of Ezra Pound's early poetry. One must remember that while the moderns

reacted against the Victorian Establishment, they did not react in the same way against the pre-Raphaelites whom they were more inclined to treat as their revered elders and exemplars. (Whenever Ford spoke of the pre-Raphaelites he used to assert that there was ever only one—and that was Holman Hunt. I am, however, using the word in a wider sense than *that.*) Specifically, the sympathy between the moderns and the pre-Raphaelites is evident in the effect which their particular brand of neo-Platonism had on modern art —the idea that there is a world of abstract forms which by an act of empathy we can enter and which it is the real task of the artist to present. We see an underlying sympathy again in the connection between Guild Socialism and the various credit and syndicalist theories current in the twenties. The similarity between the later preoccupations of Ruskin and Pound underline this. Both the moderns and the pre-Raphaelites shared the same predilection for the simple (in the sense of what is *pure* in art) and the primitive: the earlier a thing was, the better. In poetry, they preferred Cavalcanti to Petrarch; in portraiture, African or Oriental masks to the art of Joshua Reynolds. They also shared an attitude of severe professionalism towards the arts.

One is not suggesting that without Ford Madox Ford these threads of continuity would never have existed, only that such continuity in fact did persist and that Ford in his life and his books embodied it. Douglas Goldring and Ezra Pound, both of whom knew him well, between them bear witness to this. Goldring has entitled his admirable and authoritative biography of Ford, *The Last Pre-Raphaelite*; whilst Pound has declared that it was Ford rather than T. E. Hulme who was the catalyst for the young writers in London of the 1914 generation. It was certainly he who first insisted that poetry should be at least as well written as prose—a remark which led to the founding of the imagist movement. Equally, the Flaubertian development of the English novel is directly traceable to Ford,—to his constant precept and to the example of his endless search for the *mot juste.* (It is amusing and instructive to remember that Flaubert's theory of form was also Pater's.) If Ford was not exactly of the modern movement in quite the same sense that the others were, he was perhaps as responsible for it as anyone after Ezra Pound.

Ford wrote some seventy books. They include volumes of reminiscence, historical romances, art criticism, poetry, straight novels, and books such as *Provence* and *Great Trade Route,* which

can only be described as being in the *genre*—a rather rare one in English—of *Lavengro* and Thoreau's *Walden.*

The first and one of the most valuable of his volumes of reminiscence is called *Ancient Lights and Certain New Reflections.* It is an evocation of the pre-Raphaelite circles of his childhood as seen through childhood's eyes, and at the same time through the eyes of a more disillusioned later year when the gods of childhood did not seem quite so godlike. It was published in 1910, when the modern movement was under way. In it Ford's anecdotal and discoursive method is already established. At the end of his life, in his last four books, *Mightier than the Sword, Great Trade Route, Provence,* and that vast, leisurely, and wonderfully humane conspectus, *The March of Literature,* he will ramble no less, although there will be an added tautness and astringency. Ford's somewhat ambiguous attitude to the pre-Raphaelite great is also apparent. He affects, partly one feels as a matter of showmanship, to have been oppressed by so much greatness at such close quarters. And one observes his marked contempt for scientific truth. He says, in so many words, that his interest in facts is confined to the ulterior truth he can make them convey; which is the interest of the novelist. So that if his novels such as the *Tietjens* tetralogy and *The Good Soldier* were written—as were many of Conrad's, under Ford's influence—in the manner of reminiscence, it is equally true to say that the volumes of reminiscence were themselves written as novels. He defines this intention in *It was the Nightingale,* where the method is carried to its extreme limit. It was written in 1933 and was the last of the strictly autobiographical works; for *Provence* and *Great Trade Route* although equally reminiscential are so in a different way. In them the protagonist is no longer a person or even people, but places: the autobiography is incidental. This is what he says:

> 'I have tried then to write a novel, drawing my material from my own literary age. You have here two adventures of a once *jeune, homme pauvre*—a poor man who was once young. In rendering them I have employed every wile known to me as a novelist—the timeshift, the *progression d'effet,* the adaptation of rhythms to the pace of action. If then it is a bad book it is merely because of my want of skill, or because my canons are at fault.'

Whether or not his canons were at fault they frequently led him into trouble. This was particularly so when he was writing of people

or events who were well-known. You cannot then with impunity treat fact as fiction. For instance, there is a familiar passage in *Ancient Lights* in which he describes Christina Rossetti's method of composition. It is repeated with slight variations in *Provence* and elsewhere. Unfortunately, for reasons which I shall elaborate in a minute, it is very difficult to quote from Ford's work. But the passage compels—at least while you are reading it—the necessary suspension either of belief or disbelief. It does not occur to you to question what he tells you. You know the details were *so*,—that the woman's life could have been lived in no other way. And yet, to anyone acquainted with the Rossetti household, and who knows that there was in fact no marble wash-stand in Christina's bedroom for her to write at, that she never wrote her poems on the backs of old envelopes, and that she was not in the habit of retiring to her bedroom—pictured as a cold servant's attic—while her brilliant family held their 'at homes' below, such a description must appear not only false but positively tendentious.

What sort of truth then is Ford after? Clearly he is trying to portray the sort of woman Christina Rossetti was. The facts themselves are of little interest. It is their selection and arrangement which are calculated to evoke our response. Rightly or wrongly, Ford has seen her as a woman consumed by three passions: the passion for her private, sectarian, anguished form of Christianity; for the man she loved; and for her native South. This conception the passage does convey. If one seems to have laboured this point it is because Ford's free use of the impressionistic method (and it affected his conversation too; for he was a dedicated man, and did not lead two lives) earned him a great deal of personal unpopularity from people who did or would not understand his aims. These were always the aims of the artist. He was incapable of writing anything without subordinating his material to an artistic purpose necessarily beyond the value of that material as such.

One might have thought that Ford's anecdotal manner would make him easy to quote from but the opposite is the case, for each anecdote is set within another, and that within yet another—and so on. He was also a master of the timeshift and uses this device continually; so the whole forms an extraordinarily intricate web either of plot or reminiscence. In such circumstances, it is almost impossible to extract a sentence, let alone a paragraph or a page, from its context. From a narrative point of view the effect is not unlike what one encounters in *Tristram Shandy*. Far from proceeding in a straight

line, the reader is drawn towards the heart of the story, as it were centripetally. This arrest of the forward narrative impulse endows Ford's stories with an intensity of which only Conrad is a comparable master. In more general terms, the result is a very high degree of self-integration. And this general characteristic is directly traceable —as such characteristics, to be genuine, must always be—to his verbal style, that is, to the way his mind worked.

The trouble with Ford's type of writing is that it is fatally easy to read. Much of his neglect is probably due to this fact. It is easy to be deceived by the air of apparent negligence beneath which his Flaubertian sense of structure and concern for the *mot juste* are concealed. It is equally easy to take his anecdotal manner at its face value, and forget that an anecdote of Ford's will, in intention at least, constitute an aesthetic judgment either of an individual or, possibly, of an entire literary period. The method is again that of impressionism; the viewpoint, psychological.

Ford's historical romances, although they have the same aim as his other novels, are quite different from them in construction. The story is told chronologically; the style is not reminiscential; while in tone they vary between the Edwardian pastiche of Maurice Hewlett's variety and something more realistic and modern. The most important are *The Fifth Queen, Ladies Whose Bright Eyes,* and *The Young Lovell. The Fifth Queen* is a trilogy about Katherine Howard, and was published in three volumes from 1906 to 1908. Apart from anything else, it is remarkable for the way in which Ford has infused the husks of all-too familiar historical characters with a thoroughly convincing humanity. *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes,* which came out in 1911, is on the old theme of the interlocking of a remote age and modern days in the experience of one man,—as in Mark Twain's *Yankee at the Court of King Arthur. The Young Lovell,* the last of the *genre,* is based on the legend of *True Thomas,* and although written as late as 1913, only two years before *The Good Soldier,* belongs in imagery and style to the fey period of the Celtic Twilight and Fiona McLeod. It exceeds any production of that period, however, in its power and intensity. All these books display a truly astonishing knowledge of their period. They are weighted with a mass of arcane detail one can only presume to be accurate—and which in any event is most impressive. There can be nowhere else in all literature such a description of a medieval bath as is to be found in chapter nine of *Ladies Whose Bright Eyes.*

It is natural to ascribe Ford's passionate love of detail to his pre-

Raphaelite background,—and this is probably just; but it was not his controlling passion. The elaborate evocation of past times is not the real point of the historical romances. In them, as in modern novels, the pervasive idea is Ford's belief in the unknowability of all that matters. In this connection, it is interesting to recall that Ezra Pound has recorded that W. B. Yeats and Ford never got on, for the good reason that Yeats spent the greater part of his life trying to see visions (as the strain in much of his poetry records) while Ford had such experiences frequently, and with no effort. For Ford, the moment of empathy, of visionary insight, was the only source of true knowledge; and this he believed to be incommunicable, except in art. Ford, in fact, would have full subscribed to Yeats' dictum, '*Man can embody truth but he cannot know it.*' In both the romances and the novels Ford's purpose is to probe, not by analytical but by intuitive processes, the 'reasons of the heart.'

Although Ford was primarily a novelist it is perhaps on open question whether *Provence* and *Great Trade Route* are not after all his greatest books. Needless to say, Ford's *Provence* bears little relation to the Provence of real life. It has never figured on a political map. But if it is true that you measure a people not by their achievements only but by their aspirations, then Ford's *Provence* represents just such a yardstick. For Ford it was a sort of norm of European desires, a nexus of civilised instincts to which man has returned again and again during the centuries. It represents a piety for the spirits of place; for the arts which are their traditional expression; for the temper of modesty and frugality in a quiet life; and for the now almost forgotten virtue of *hilaritas*. It is an affirmation of all the values Ford held dear—a book written *con amore* if ever a book was. *Great Trade Route* is the complement of *Provence*. It is not so much an affirmation of a possible way of life as a Philippic directed against an actual one. It was written when the thirties were closing in, and inveighs against the cheapening of the non-material instincts, which Ford saw creeping like a blight over Europe. The bitterness and fundamental urgency of his attack are largely concealed behind his urbane manner. Ostensibly he was still writing under the Edwardian banners of good taste; in reality, he was just about as serious as a man could be. That is a thing one should remember about Ford: he was always in earnest. He may in his life have assumed a variety of personas: he appears as an arbiter of literary taste in Edwardian London; he rejects the literary world and raises pigs in a Sussex cottage; he becomes a

literary ex-patriate, writing, and tending his parched garden plot on the shores of the Mediterranean; finally, in New York, where for a brief time he achieved a certain popularity, he is the distinguished *litterateur*, an ' authority ' on European living. But beneath all such appearances his devotion to art and to his idea of the good life remained unshaken.

It would be pleasant to be able to end with a passage in Ford's own manner, summoning him out of the past, with his wheezing breath, and his lemon-coloured moustache, talking endlessly and wisely about literature,—and thinking that Li Po and Rihaku were two different people. Ford was not fortunate in his life, and since his death there has been silence and neglect. Only recently one could obtain copies of *Mightier than the Sword* and *The March of Literature* fresh from his publisher's cellars where they had lain undisturbed for the last twenty years. In all probability one may still be able to do so. Perhaps one could apply to him the line from the Homeric paraphrase:

'A man of no fortune and with a name to come.'

ARRIVAL

A Poem by ALAN NEAME

No reservations? But we wrote from Ghent
On Friday. Gordon, are you sure you sent
The letter air-express? You say you are.
La Manageria, Hotel Dellagare:
I wrote in capitals at Lady Stagge's
Dictation. Did the Major count the bags?
No, those are distance glasses. Put this wrap
Inside the hatbox with the broken strap.
Quite maddening! Take it, dear. My son will pay
Your porter. So, reserved or not, we stay.

Two single rooms, communicating door
With bath, not higher than the second floor.
You have a lift? Gordon dear, run and see.
If it works, give the lift-boy this from me . . .
Considerate service . . . This Venetian heat!
Except a double on the fourth, complete?
Bath? Oh! Twin beds or double? Have them take
The luggage up. No, darling, please don't make
Your faces now. I could not stand a scene
After that journey. Nonsense, dear, *what* screen?

A DIARY

IT may possibly have been during the one minute silence, observed by some of the English in connexion with the poor little space dog whirling round the earth, that it occurred to them it might be as well to spend more money on training scientists. (Not, of course, to train them to make flying kennels, that would be inconceivably cruel; but because apparently the Sputniks will enable the ICBMs to be launched with such deadly accurate range that they will be sure to fall on their targets.)

Even Eton has announced its intention to equip some more laboratories. A few years ago a boy I knew, who had a talent for mathematics and a lively interest in physics and chemistry, was firmly dissuaded from specializing in science, as he had wished to do. His tutor's words were uncompromising: "Only stupid boys do science at Eton."

★ ★ ★

Bébé lune, as the French papers call it, has changed all that, though the die-hard spirit lingers on. Sir Harold Nicolson, for example, broadcast a talk on education (*overseas*, but *The Listener* does not mention which seas, so I am not sure to whom his words were directed) called "Science or the Humanities?" He came down on the side of the Humanities.

"How comes it," he asked, "that the Russian inventors and scientists have got ahead of other inventors and scientists? Is it that the Russians really do possess a greater genius for experiment and invention than we do ourselves . . . Or is it that the Russians have devoted infinitely more money and effort to the training of scientists? . . . In other words, is it our education in the sciences that has allowed us to lag behind?" With considerable hesitation.

Sir Harold seems to think that perhaps the answer is, that the Russians have put enormously more effort and money into scientific education. But he hopes we shall not hurry to substitute science for the humanities, because if we do he fears that "we shall produce thousands and thousands of third-rate scientists, while throwing upon the dust heap people like Shakespeare or Beethoven."

It must not be supposed from the foregoing, however, that his advocacy of a liberal education means that Sir Harold Nicolson is all for culture. Quite the contrary. He says the word "culture" has fallen upon evil days. For one thing, it has been discredited by the German conception of Kultur. Here, of course, he is echoing Marshal Goering, who was supposed to have said (though he probably never in fact did say) that when he heard the word Kultur he undid the safety catch of his revolver. It is quite possible that Sir Harold hasn't got a revolver; but he agrees, up to a point, with the Reichsmarschall about Kultur. Not content with this, he goes on to say that as to aestheticism, the very word suggests "dreadfully decadent developments." So there we have it; we are faced with a disagreeable choice betwen thousands and thousands of third-rate scientists, and dreadfully decadent cultured aesthetes.

★ ★ ★

There is also the danger, foreseen by Sir Harold, that people like Shakespeare and Beethoven may be thrown upon a dust heap. They both, according to him, "from the age of eleven-plus, showed unmistakable signs of not possessing the scientific mind." I must admit, whether they showed these unmistakable signs or not, they seem to me to have nothing to do with the argument, which is whether to concentrate higher education on science, or on the humanities. Beethoven never went to a university; he studied orchestration with Haydn for a time, but complained later that he learnt nothing from him. As to Shakespeare, I doubt whether attendance at the lectures of Lord David Cecil or Professor Auden would have made much difference to his verse, or whether he would have preferred those of Mr. Trevor Roper to a reading of Plutarch.

It was Bernard Shaw who said prison was better than school, because though the warders may torture your body they do not torture your mind by obliging you to read books they have written. Probably many creative writers would agree with Shaw.

No scientist, on the other hand, could now be self-taught, however

great his genius. Inventors need vast installations, and teams of expert helpers, in order to develop their inventions. The fact that I know this, who know nothing of science, must mean that everybody knows it except Sir Harold Nicolson. Thinking about it, I wondered again which seas he was broadcasting over? I rather hope it was not the Atlantic Ocean.

★ ★ ★

English town and country planners certainly know what to do about dreadfully decadent aestheticism, or any other kind of aestheticism. Their latest effort is a plan to pull down the Nash Terraces in Regent's Park. The whole of the West side of Grosvenor Square has now disappeared; the pretty old houses in Upper Brook Street and Grosvenor Street face each other across a vast pit. Unfortunately, we know already how this space is to be filled; the prospect of the new building must please the anti-aesthetes.

★ ★ ★

Last time I was in London two foreigners stopped me and asked "Where is Knightsbridge?" I replied that it was the very street we were in. They seemed rather doubtful, and said they had walked twice up and down looking for a shop called Harrods, but couldn't find it. When I told them that, though Harrods may call it Knightsbridge, the street it adorns is Brompton Road, they were puzzled. It is one thing to have your shop in a "good address," but very strange to muddle customers by giving a good address and then not being there.

D.M.

ENTERTAINMENTS

The Incomparable Anouilh

by HARVEY BLACK

Pièces Grinçantes by Jean Anouilh (Les Editions de la Table Ronde, 1,300 francs).

IF there is a lively and intelligent spirit who can break even in the commercial theatre of our time it is Jean Anouilh. Ustinov, at his best in lightweight political satire, is the nearest English equivalent, but it is as much Ustinov the actor who triumphs in his own creations as Ustinov the dramatist who has won popularity.

To have one's plays in the repertoire of Jean-Louis Barrault, to be widely read as an author in one's own right (not merely in acting editions), to have provoked the theatre-going public of Paris into violent political controversy over *Pauvre Bitos,** such is the record of Jean Anouilh. He is at his weakest when, like so many of his contemporaries, he buries himself in that sickly mass of domestic circumstance that one finds so frequently in the pages of such widely differing French writers as Sartre and Mauriac, Gide and Montherlant. Even when presented satirically, with the aid of a polished, clever manner and style (Gide was nothing if not master of this art) the same mixture as before of provincial adulteries and small-town perversions arouses a feeling of tired nausea in the reader. These things, I know, are conventions of a genre of writing, as they are in certain Sunday newspapers, and as the murder is a convention in a detective story. But as literature . . . the writer who shows that he considers the nondescript characters and the sexual comings and goings to be

* Reviewed by Jacques Brousse, *The European*, No. 49, March, 1957.

important, who treats them as if they were significant in our society, cannot expect to be taken seriously.

Anouilh seldom takes these stock characters of 3rd and 4th Republic fiction seriously, but even when they are butts, as in the *Waltz of the Toreadors*, they occupy so much of the foreground that they become oppressive. In spite of its immense success as a comedy on the London stage ("more laughs than any other play") the *Waltz of the Toreadors* is the most disappointing play of the present collection. It leaves a sour taste in the mouth, the most truly destructive and nihilistic of 'dark comedies,' because of the intrinsic triviality of the subject. The epoch *dix-neuf cent* with its decaying generals, their duels and their *aventures* is more effectively handled in the medium of a René Clair.

The first two *Pièces Grinçantes* are both concerned with the same General Saint-Pé, his *affaires* with his *bonnes*, and his supposedly paralysed wife's sexual neurosis. Though in other respects the circumstances of the General are different, and *Ardèle* is a greatly superior play to the *Waltz of the Toreadors*, this arrangement of the book is unfortunate. It not only emphasises the tendency of Anouilh to repeat himself from one play to another but gives a totally misleading impression of the latest development of his work. After the *Pièces Roses* and the *Pièces Noires* this opening to the *Pièces Grinçantes* immediately suggests that the author has reached *his* 'problem play' period, and is providing the raw material for future undergraduate studies of his 'difficulties.'

But this is not at all the true significance of the *Pièces Grinçantes*. Neither dark comedies not 'problem plays,' they show at their best the artistic and political maturity of this master of irony and classic understatement. *Ornifle, ou le courant d'air* and *Pauvre Bitos, ou le diner de têtes* are by far his most brilliant achievements. Both these plays have in their turn enjoyed violent attacks by the Parisian theatre critics and immense popularity in spite of these attacks. From dramatic, technical and literary standpoints there can be little doubt that they are superior to much of his highly esteemed past work. The attacks of big newspaper critics have their *raison d'être* in the political content of the plays.

Ornifle, however, is mainly concerned with the idiosyncrasies of an extremely agile and successful literary windbag, and of Machetu his *milliardaire* broker or 'literary' agent, who owns three Paris theatres and commissions Ornifle to write verses for his revues. Machetu, or rather the 'resistentialist' circumstances in which he

made his millions, is the nearest the play comes to touching on the current French political scene. And this only by allusion.

Pauvre Bitos is built round a charade party, a *diner de têtes* in which the guests disguise from the shoulders upwards as characters from the French Revolution. It would be difficult for anyone to accuse the author of doing a Priestley, of making his characters 'put across' his own point of view. If he annoys the politicians it must be by the level on which he places the men of the Revolution; and because his characters express 'minority' opinions that are not often given a hearing. Above all, there is the character of Bitos.

Bitos takes his role seriously; he loses his temper so many times in defence of Robespierre that his host has to keep reminding him that he is only taking part in a charade. Furthermore, Bitos is a true scion of La Quatrième, the Substitut du Procureur de la Republique. Within the first few pages we learn of his handling of the case of an ex-member of the Vichy militia arrested and executed long after the end of the war.

At one time it was not prudent to be too open in criticism of the so-called *épuration* of 1944 and after, or one could easily be next on the list. Such a situation was bound to breed a widespread salving of conscience, a popular pretence that the mass orgy of sacking, shooting and imprisonment was in order; no more than the ministering of retribution to 'collabos' who had 'done much worse during the occupation.' This officially upheld myth has, for obvious reasons, acquired something like the status of an article of faith in French public life. Though there is hardly a village, hardly a household into which one can go without hearing unpleasant evidence to the contrary, few of those accorded the opportunities of big scale publicity depart from the official 'cover' history.

For a writer to 'get on' his adventures into politics should be restricted to repetitive attacks against the conventional aunt sallies. With the machine of party publicity on his side he can afford to take risks provided the party is big enough to give him an economic sufficiency of readers. Hence the endless uninspired casuistry of a Sartre, determined to be a communist and not to be a communist.

The latest development in the work of Anouilh is therefore important as a 'break through' in the contemporary world of French literary politics. And this political background to his writing illustrates more clearly the bent of his latest satire. For it is the minor satirist who swims with the tide, who holds up to ridicule only the eccentrics and 'outsiders' against the norms accepted by the average

crowd minds of his time. Such a satirist is merely laughing louder and longer than the other apes at men who are bigger than apes. But to challenge the trends and axioms of one's own time, to present the popular and the accepted in such manner that they may be seen in all their grotesque absurdity, that is the essence of true satire. It is what Anouilh has succeeded in doing.

There is a further important factor in the background against which Anouilh's latest work has to be viewed. That is the tradition of French education, *nationale et laïque*. From the militant days of Jules Ferry onwards this has incorporated a vast propaganda machine for the greater glorification of the revolution, or rather the revolutions—1789, 1848, 1871 and 1944. As recently as last autumn an animated correspondence took place in the columns of *Le Figaro* on the subject of extremely biased history text books. A parent, with one child at a private school and another at a state school, quoted from the standard text books in use at each school the manner in which an event as distant as the massacre of St. Bartholomew was depicted. The writer of the letter concluded that if such books were patronised by the state schools they were hardly calculated to encourage the spirit of rational objectivity.

One French commentator has set out his view of the long-term effects of this educational tradition as follows. The basic idea, which is not difficult to instil, is that the French people are more intelligent and more advanced than any other people because they were the first to make their own revolution. On this basis communism and socialism can appear in a very attractive light—as being 'advanced' and revolutionary. These 'young socialists' grow up and gradually adopt more pragmatic (and less socialistic) attitudes to life, but having acquired from an early age an inferiority complex about 'being right wing' they continue to call themselves socialists and to conjure with the clichés of their socialist youth-politics. As not-so-young socialists they have to give up the role of avant-garde to younger socialists fresh from school. The result is an adult population at different stages of ideological disintoxication. Word disintoxication comes last of all, so there is little chance of these many groups communicating intelligibly with each other and joining forces to combat the source of their confusion. The Revolution goes on being taken seriously as an idea, as an important step forward in human progress, by large numbers of people who in practice have an outlook on life totally opposed to every tenet of the revolutionaries.

Thus Robespierre is in for a period of excavation. The appearance of Anouilh's comedy preceded by only a few months a large-

scale white-washing operation. 1958 was to be celebrated as the bi-centenary of Robespierre's birth. The Fourth Republic has had difficulty in finding a great national figure—suitable for a republic. Kings were out, even Henry IV, Charlemagne and St. Louis. So were Emperors and Generals ("En France on n'aime pas les militaires"), even Napoleon. Joan of Arc and Bernadette had to be excluded in order to please the anti-clericals. At last it appeared that the party leaders had reached agreement—a revolutionary hero to please everyone. M. Tixier-Vignancour gave a humorous account of the situation in a recent number of *Rivarol*. At the last minute Pinay withdrew the support of the Independents. Vignancour concluded that with the impending increases of taxation there could only be one suitable national hero—St. Vincent de Paul. They would all need him.

Against this backcloth with its potential balloon personality of Robespierre the Great appears the little man of the comedy. But the play is no gulling of a buffoon. Bitos, like Robespierre, is given qualities to win our sympathy. Poor, always top of the class and detested because he was top; later working through the night at his books while his companions filled the cafés with their laughter; gaining one by one the professional qualifications that were to bring him power. Though the scene is delicately poised between the present and 1792-3, Bitos/Robespierre remains a constant.

In an interview with the elegant and urbane Mirabeau the young deputé from Arras declaims on the importance of mediocrity—with alarming portents for those who are not mediocrities; the following dialogue takes place:

Mirabeau: . . . You can take it from me that I'd rather live in Constantinople under the Sultan than see six hundred mediocrities making and ruining our country every day. They could vote themselves into power for the rest of their lives—in the name of the millions of mediocrities who originally elected them—they could even make themselves hereditary. Who could stop them? An aristocracy of mediocrity? Huh! And with that crowd you can bet your bottom dollar there would be no fourth of August.*

Robespierre: Nonetheless . . . if these millions of mediocrities who elected them *are* France . . .?

Mirabeau (violently): Live in France, yes. But they are not the

* The 4th August, 1789, was the 'black day' for the original aristocracy, when the Assembly announced the suppression of feudal privileges and declared the 'rights of man.'

people who have made her what she is. You really believe that that can be done like keeping a shop? The men who made France great had absolutely nothing in common with such rabble, except perhaps arms and legs; but they had heads, I regret to inform you, heads unequalled anywhere.

Robespierre: In the years to come we shall have to get busy cutting off all these unequal heads. You understand, Monsieur le comte de Mirabeau!

The contrast of revolutionary personalities displays great psychological insight on the part of Anouilh. Danton, the rabble-rousing leader who has 'arrived,' is depicted discovering the 'simple pleasures of life,' now that he can afford them. He would, like many others who did well out of the revolution, have preferred it to stop just there.

"People made fortunes during the revolution?" asks Amanda. "I thought they gave everything to the poor."

"Isn't she charming," Brassac the industrialist replies. "Amanda is still at the stage of history in picture-stories. No, my dear! Such fortunes had never been amassed before the days when everyone became interested in 'the people'. . ."

While it lasted everyone had a certificate to say he had taken part in the storming of the Bastille, just as a century and a half later everyone had an arm-band to show that he had done a good job of work in the resistance.

But if one uses a Danton to rabble-rouse, how does one shut him up when he has served his purpose? Robespierre had the answer. It was to stop the accused appearing at his own trial. He might insult the Tribunal.

When the time came to get rid of Robespierre he was conveniently shot in the jaw by the gendarme Merda. Robbed of his powers of oratory he was helpless to save himself from the guillotine.

"The Revolution was above all a speaking contest. The slightest interruption was fatal. To be cut off in a speech was usually to have one's head cut off as well. What better example than the 9th Thermidor!* How do you think they got Robespierre? By making so much noise that no one could hear him. From the moment that he ceased to make himself heard he was a dead man. Three cheers for democracy, mother of such supreme gifts of the gab."

This is not romantic comedy; *ça grince*, as the author warns us.

* *9th Thermidor*—27th July, 1794. The date of the fall of Robespierre.

But the author is a master of irony. The potential villains are never allowed to become martyrs, not even comic martyrs. There are the elements of tragedy and pathos and pent-up indignation, and it is more difficult to contain these in the framework of comedy than of tragedy. Ben Jonson has done it, and Molière.

"Molière who?" Machetu, the theatre impressario, would ask.

"Just Molière," Ornifle would reply, and, as Machetu starts looking in pocket after pocket for a pencil, the maestro of contemporary letters would console him with impromptu couplets—not by Péguy, not even by Rimbaud this time—and because this is another *pièce grinçante*—

L'horreur de la mort bande leurs chairs molles
Et l'amour pâlit
Et fuit de la chambre où leurs cabrioles
Font grincer le lit . . .

In the age of publicity one does not, says Ornifle, need to have genius, but only newspapers to make people believe that one has—"When are the photographers coming?"

CINEMA

LEWIS MILESTONE'S *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *A Walk in the Sun* mark the peak of humane, intelligent film-making on the subject of war. To these must now be added, despite some crude concessions to the box-office, David Lean's **Bridge on the River Kwai**. For the first time the stiff upper-lipped tradition of screen behaviour, which, though obviously reflecting a national trait, kills drama stone-dead, has been tackled imaginatively, contrasted with the national tradition of the enemy and pushed to a conclusion as moving as it is ironic. The first hour, a duel of endurance between the captured British Colonel Nicholson and his Japanese captor Commandant Saito, could stand on its own as an example of first-class character portrayal in cinema. Nicholson stands firm on a principle of treatment of officers to what seems the limit of his endurance. Beaten up and kept for days in an iron-roofed hut under a scorching sun, he refuses to yield an inch from the position his military tradition has logically brought him to, while Saito gradually comes around to an acceptance of his position —with the mental reservation that his own defeat will be redeemed by suicide once the bridge has been built with Nicholson's help. Splendidly built up and expertly sustained, tension mounts to fever pitch—and all with the help of very little external action; the clash of opposing wills is enough in the hands of a skilful director, and

David Lean is no novice at this game. You may remember his *Brief Encounter*, which depended for its effect on character rather than incident, and, if his films have since appeared to be no more than technical exercises, one must assume from the evidence of *The Bridge* that his subject matter had failed to move him emotionally. Subject and style blend closely here, and nowhere more so than in the ironic final sequences where a commando party is preparing to blow up the bridge that Nicholson is now so tremendously proud of. My only regret is the intrusion of quite expendable love-interest which disturbs the unity of action.

Jules Dassin is chiefly known in this country for his American films (especially *The Naked City*), though the French *Rifi* may now take precedence over them. His most recent film takes him once more to Europe. **He Who Must Die** is an adaptation (partly by Dassin himself) of 'Christ Recrucified,' said to be the masterpiece of Nikos Kazantzaki, a novelist with whose work I am not familiar. The action of the film is set in Asia Minor in a small Greek village where a Passion Play is being cast and rehearsed. The villagers have managed to live their lives peaceably under Turkish domination, though other villages have not been so favourably treated. Conflict begins when refugees from one unfortunate village seek refuge from the Turks, and the local priest, conscious that the peace of his village may well be shattered should he agree to shelter them, refuses to help. In spite of some fine performances (Jean Servais, Fernand Ledoux, Melina Mercouri) and Dassin's superbly controlled direction, this is not a likeable film. I found it pretentious and hollow. Its constant Biblical parallels and references were probably sound enough in the original, but in cinema the sincerity and ardour of a Bresson are needed if religious emotion is to ring true. Dassin's cleverness beguiles the eye with emphasis on externals; the coldness at the heart of the film cannot be disguised in violent, dramatic action.

A Face in the Crowd also disappoints. Its director is Elia Kazan, more skilled than Dassin, and, if *Baby Doll* is anything to go on, capable of developing character without spoiling the inherent structure of a film. The first half of *A Face in the Crowd* bears this out. Lonesome Rhodes is the type of modern television star so familiar to us today: a man with little ability but a basically vigorous personality ferociously exploited by commercial interests. We watch his progress to power—a power which in this case comes to threaten the State. The climax, though, takes the easy way out. It makes no condemnation—indeed more is made throughout—of the social conditions and audience mentality which allows such a gross distortion of standards to take place. Rhodes is rejected by his audience because his crazed mind, twisted with the lust for power, is revealed to them. Social investigation is sacrificde to melodramatic pyrotechnics, for Kazan's film has a bustling, over-vital surface which serves him ill in climax. If all is taken at a forced pace there can be little contrast, and the violent effort to surpass this pace in climax results finally in extreme artificiality.

NEW BOOKS

Arabian Destiny by Jacques Benoist-Méchin (Elek Books), translated from the French by Denis Weaver.

THIS is the first readable and fair account of a very great King, Ibn Saud: though thanks to M. Benoist-Méchin's publishers and translator both the fairness and readability shine through a fogged glass. The publisher's blurb states what this reader knows to be untrue: "the author . . . is no friend of the British." This misstatement comes oddly from one whose interest might be thought to lie in promoting the translation: or are palates in England as jaded as the faces of the Cabinet? Does a spice of hatred quicken? If so, I shall be reducing the sales, but defending truth, when I state that M. Benoist-Méchin has many British friends, but has not chosen them from the ranks of that 'Establishment' whose blunders form contemporary British history. A great European, M. Benoist-Méchin has inevitably come into conflict with the kind of Englishman whose strategy is destruction, schism, exploitation, rather than co-operative endeavour. In his own country he opposed the war against Germany in 1939 and the attack on Egypt at the side of Israel in 1956.

The faults of the translator are those of carelessness: and they make the book in parts unintelligible to the non-Arabic reader. Arabic names are transliterated quite differently in French and English, and while M. Benoist-Méchin's transliterations are correct, in the French style, where 'c' is hard, and where 'gi' gives the English sound of 'j', Mr. Denis Weaver has not bothered to ask an Arabist for advice and as a result famous names appear in this translation in a completely distorted form. This is particularly regrettable in that Arabic names are at the best a difficulty to the English reader. I shall cite only two examples, both on page 23: the famous viceroy Hejaj appears as Hegiage, and the name Qassim appears as Cassem. In English transliteration the letter C is never used, owing to the ambiguity of whether it is pronounced as S or K.

Once past the barricades of the blurb and the translation, the reader is not only confronted with one of the most remarkable men

of the century, but also, in the very interesting first part, to one of the best surveys of Arabic culture and history which I have read. Here, M. Benoist-Méchin is at his best when he is most himself, and less than his best when he relies too heavily on such British Arabists as T. E. Lawrence, whose congenital indifference to truth made him a particularly ruthless employer of the glib generalisation: "the noisy facility of the Syrian—an ape-like people having much of the Japanese quickness . . ." M. Benoist-Méchin himself seems aware of the inadequacies of this source when he comments on another page that "it is not enough to say, like Lawrence, that the Arabs preserved 'something of a classical past for a Medieval future'." And when he forgets Lawrence, whose knowledge of Syria was about as profound as mine of Scotland (where I suppose I have hardly spent a year of my life), he shows what a great civilisation the Arabs built up; in science, the arts, exploration, philosophy and government. To say nothing of medicine. "Rhazes (850-923) established the diagnosis of smallpox and measles. An excellent anatomist and a surgeon of repute, he was the first to distinguish the laryngeal nerve and performed several operations for cataract." Not that we have not heard these successes before—but the author of this book gives them a sweep and impetus which is unusual.

As to the hero of the book, the English reader will have had little to go on before this book, and the grandeur, as well as the cunning, of Ibn Saud, his passion for the reclamation of the soil of his people, as well as their souls, will doubtless come as a surprise. Ibn Saud himself was brought up in austere poverty, and his greatest work was achieved before the discovery of oil — which Philby, among others, has come to regard as a disaster. Some of the King's agricultural settlements were every bit as original as the much publicised Jewish *kibbutzim*—and achieved, of course, without the backing of New York millionaires. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the whole story—and it is a story, rather than a history, just as the Kng is almost mythological already—is the way in which the British consistently underrated this man of genius, and instead supported a family whose oldness was undoubted but whose other qualities were those of double-dealing and intrigue. Is this one more example of the incurable British addiction to royalty? That the Hashemites were kings, and the Saudis wandering exiles? Or did the British believe that they could repeat among the eastern Arabs what they had already done with the *khedives* in Egypt, and establish a pleasure-loving foreign-dependent dynasty, behind whom oil agree-

ments would be safe? Whatever the reasons for the choice, the quarrel between Philby and Lawrence over whom to support, excellently described on page 152, is strangely like the quarrels over another Arab leader forty years later. "Taking a high line, Lawrence told Philby that he knew nothing of the problems of the Middle East and that in this field, he, Lawrence, would take lessons from no one. Ibn-Saud the Cromwell of Arabia? Preposterous. He was nothing but a small intriguer, without credit or future, who irritated everyone with his exaggerated puritanism and ridiculous pretensions. The Wahabis? Fanatical iconoclasts, peasants without culture or education who would destroy the noblest monuments of Arabia and put the peninsula to fire and sword, if they were allowed to. The battle of Turaba? Simply a lucky stroke which proved absolutely nothing. No, no. His opinion was formed and he would not change it: the Saudis were unscrupulous adventurers. There was not, and never would be as long as he lived, any place for them in the Arab Confederation." What strange echoes of later pontifications by British 'experts': Nasser? One bomb, and his régime would collapse. No, no, my good sir, the real Arabs, the people we can trust . . .

Where *did* the legend of astute British policy get born? We can see very clearly where its death-agonies took place.

But for an account of a truer legend, this book could not, of its kind, be bettered. May the first edition sell out: and a new one, with no blurb, and English transliteration, take its place.

DESMOND STEWART.

Russia In The Making by John Lawrence (Allen & Unwin, 25s.).

"ON one occasion the Danish Ambassador succeeded in marrying a Russian wife, but when the King of Denmark asked permission for the lady to come to Denmark he was met with a blank refusal . . ." This quotation from the book under review refers to the fifteenth century. It is only one of many such incidents which demonstrate the repetitive nature of Russian history and the apparently unchanging political character of the Russian people. Over and over again one asks: "What *is* wrong with the Russians?" Why do a people who individually are kind, hospitable, and possessed of so much native wisdom, behave so abominably as a nation over hundreds of years? Why is the Russian nation xenophobic, callous, and addicted to tyranny? Mr. Lawrence, well though he knows and likes the Russian people, cannot answer these questions any more satisfactorily than I can. It is the existence of such unanswerable

questions which makes the history of Russia not only more tragic but more tantalising than the history of any other great people.

Russia In The Making tells the story of the Russian people from the fifth century B.C. (quoting Herodotus) down to November, 1956. Soberly and clearly written, it is occasionally lit up by flashes of humour, such as the account of how, during the Revolution, guard after Bolshevik guard had to be removed from the Winter Palace because they all got hopelessly drunk in the palace cellars. What is so impressive about the author's achievement is that, without insulting the reader's intelligence, he has produced a simplified version of Russian history which anyone can grasp. In one paragraph he describes how Stalin set about eliminating his opponents from 1928 up to 1938; the insane contortions of the party line, the Left and Right wing deviations so dear to the Oriental mind and so distasteful to the uncomplicated Englishman, are explained without a single resort to Marxist jargon.

Although rather expensive, this book can be unreservedly recommended, and will make a good Christmas present for anyone of any age. Some of the newspapers would do well to issue it to their pet Sovietologists as a handbook of clear writing.

R.B.

The Golden Virgin by Henry Williamson (Macdonald, 16s.).

RILKE called the First World War " the heavy, beating cloth of pain." Mr. Williamson's mind is still throbbing with that pain. His latest instalment of the unhappy life of Phillip Maddison is a tense, dedicated book, a sealed-up reconstruction of life during the 1914-18 war with not a crack of light to show the influence of later years: a work seemingly written in a state of total absorption by a man tormented by the tragedy of his lost generation. What a contrast to the jolly, extrovert Second World War stories which nowadays swamp the bookstalls of England in a mottled rash of bright paperbacks.

In fact, the greater part of *The Golden Virgin* is not concerned with the fighting. Although the war rumbles in the background, the prevalent atmosphere of Phillip's doings in England is one of boredom—a Saturday-afternoon type of boredom like a not very severe headache. The young officer on leave is unhappy because he is unsure of himself: a sarcastic father has seen to that. He flounders in a state of total uncertainty about the rightness of the war, about his own corage, about the impact he makes on other people, even about his capacity for drink, since he is usually sick after a few whiskies. His lack of dynamism is fortunate for the reader, who can allow himself to be struck by the full force of Mr. Williamson's portrayal of the period, which is meticulous to the point of noting the price of an umbrella. The language spoken sounds strangely stilted to modern ears (reasonable enough), but the elephantine

priggishness of the letters Phillip writes home makes one almost jump with embarrassment.

The title of this book refers to the statue of the Virgin on the Cathedral of Albert, the sight of which gives young Maddison comfort and inspiration before the battle. He goes "over the top" to certain death or wounds at Paaschendael. The thought of the soggy, shell-shattered misery of this man-made Armageddon is always a blow between the eyes however many times one has read about it. For Phillip it means a wound which takes him back to England, convalescence, and further vegetation. It will be interesting to see what becomes of him in the next volume, above all whether his war experiences will jerk him into a state of mind which will enable him to make sense of his peacetime life.

R.B.

Testament of Experience by Vera Brittain (Gollancz, 21s.).

ONE lesson to be learned from Vera Brittain's *Testament of Experience* is that the most likely way of establishing peace on earth is by some definite, clear-cut political policy. There may, some day, exist a millenium of universal brotherly love, but how far we are from that is shown by the ineffectualness of such movements as the pre-war Peace Pledge Union on world events. Vera Brittain's book will appeal to those who took an interest in politics in the years before the war; in spite of its rather novelettish form, it is written with great sincerity. One must also admire the force within her which seems to have compelled her to be constantly on the move throughout her life. Her husband, too, was continually rushing about the world lecturing, or on some political mission. The reader is fascinated by these 'missions,' as he never seems to hear the outcome of them.

Testament of Experience covers the twenty-five years from 1925 to 1950, years in which Europe has seen as many mistakes made as in any twenty-five years of history. One feels that Vera Brittain must be a disillusioned woman now after the fine ideals which young men and women of her generation brought with them after the 1914-18 war. But I must grant her complete lack of bitterness.

So different is the whole set-up of world politics now that the doings of the 1920s and 1930s seem to belong to a different world. Even Eden has at last left the scene, but we get a picture of him in Moscow in 1935 with Litvinoff's words ringing in his ears: "We wish you every success. Our interests are your interests now!"

Her book shows how pathetically powerless the League of Nations was to deal with the absurdities and injustices of the Versailles Treaty. It shows also the extraordinarily static position of British politics for more than twenty years. Who would have dreamed that the National Government, returned under Baldwin in 1935, would remain in power for the next ten years? Not that pre-war

Britain was without new political thought. Throughout the pages run the names of people, belonging to the same generation as Miss Brittain, whose aim was to give Britain a better way of life, and save Europe from another conflagration. She records how Sir Oswald Mosley, because of the refusal of the government to tackle the unemployment problem, resigned from the Labour Government, and thereby, she writes: "squandered his chances of high office." She recalls the great support Mosley obtained for his unemployment policy—so great that he was elected to the National Executive at the expense of J. H. Thomas. She records the birth of the New Party, in which her husband and many other party members joined Mosley in breaking away from the Labour Party. Of Mosley's meeting at Olympia in 1934 she writes: "In response to a planned series of communist interruptions the demonstrators employed a technique of organized violence which shocked the habitual equanimity of the British public."

Another interesting side light thrown on the inter-war years is the extraordinary left-wing bias shown at every P.E.N. meeting which she mentions. Why these writers should have raised such an outcry when their books were discouraged in countries fighting for their lives against communism is beyond my comprehension, considering the violent pro-communist speeches which they habitually delivered at international P.E.N. meetings.

In the Peace Pledge Union Miss Brittain found a natural outlet for her particular brand of pacfiism. Unlike many of her kind, though, she does not appear to have been duped by communist peace tactics. During the last war to her amazement she found herself suspect on account of her desire for peace. Although she did not actually suffer imprisonment under Regulation 18B, it was forcibly brought home to her "how far a frightened democracy will go in using such powers to impose conformity upon its intellectual or moral dissenters, and thus repudiate the very ends for which it professes to be fighting."

She recounts with horror "Bomber Harris's" broadcast during the war: "We are bombing Germany city by city, and even more terribly." The same year she recalls Churchill's broadcast—"as the year advances German cities, harbours and centres of war production will be subject to an ordeal the like of which has never been experienced by any country in continuity, severity or magnitude." In those days the press and B.B.C. hailed the devastation of working-class suburbs as Allied triumphs, and through Allied bombing—frequently unnecessary and innaccurate—cultural treasures of the ages were obliterated.

Of the concentration camps, Vera Brittain asks if these were not being played up to cover the crime of Germany's razed cities. She poses the question: "What essential moral difference divided the concentration camps from the incineration of refugees in Dresden or the drowning of mothers and children in the Ruhr valleys below the shattered dam?" At the end of the war she remarks:

"Bolshevism, personified by the victorious Russians, now held Berlin, behind them the huge German armament factories fed the Soviet machine." Of the Nuremberg trials she has misgivings about the judges, "who would themselves," she writes, "have been the criminals had the Axis defeated the Allies."

Miss Brittain uses many sentimental tricks in writing, which can be irritating to the reader. For instance, such sentences as: "Two days after Winifred's (Holtby) funeral, Mussolini attacked Abyssinia." But the sincerity in her beliefs cannot be denied.

C.G.

The Black Cloud by Fred Hoyle (Heinemann, 15s.).

THIS novel by Fred Hoyle is about the invasion of our solar system by a cloud of gas from outer space, which brings devastation on earth.

The brilliant pioneer in industry, politics, music and other walks of life has always faced a wall of opposition from the established favourites of the old world. Fred Hoyle's first novel (science fiction, as might be expected) shows the opposition a brilliant scientist encounters when he warns of impending disaster and prepares for an emergency.

His opponents are the complacent ruling politicians, who begin by refusing to believe him, and then neglect to get ready for the emergency. He overcomes their reluctance to move by methods which would be described as "dictatorial" if he had to deal with a political and not a physical disaster: a clear example of a new type of man, part-scientist, part-politician. Naturally they hate him, but the rapidity of the gathering crisis obliges them to concentrate very quickly on personal salvation rather than on anything else.

The moral of the story might well be that if scientists must become part-politicians (part-"dictators") to deal with a really grave physical emergency, then politicians must become part-scientists to face a no less grave national emergency.

Fred Hoyle rides a number of hobby-horses, and airs startling scientific theories (the privilege of a serious thinker when he writes a novel), but these are explained with great lucidity.

R.R.

BRITISH COMRADES ABROAD: 1947

by JOHN HAYLOCK

I DID this trip ten years ago, in the days before Yugoslavia became respectable, before Tito broke with Stalin and the world knew much of Khrushchev, before it was fashionable for Western Ministers to hobnob with the President of the Yugoslav Republic. In the years between I have been to Yugoslavia three times, but as a free agent; I must say that I enjoyed these visits more than the one described below, though in retrospect they are less amusing.

We arrived about tea-time in a third class carriage attached to the end of a goods train into which we had changed at Brod after waiting for five hours. A mass of international youth welcomed us with international Communist roars as we scrambled down from the train; there was no station; we had stopped at one of the work-camps on the line from Brod to Sarajevo. I had brought far too much luggage, a failing of mine when I travel; the others could move about bent double under the weight of their bulky packs from which dangled enamel cups, aluminium containers, water-bottles, clasp-knives. Two of the ardent band of welcoming youth, who saw my predicament, came forward to help me with my bed roll and three heavy, leather suitcases; they muttered "baugy," which I discovered later meant bourgeois. The men and women swarmed round us, clapping in unison and shouting, "'Arree Polleet, 'Arree Polleet."

"What are they saying?" I asked one of my companions.

"Harry Pollit, I think."

"Who is he?"

"Really," he replied, "you are ignorant. Haven't you heard of Harry Pollit, the leader of the British Communist Party?"

The slogans changed to "Tito" and "Stalin," and then "Zilliacus"—"Zil-ee-ar-cus." This was very new to me. I had volunteered to work on the Youth Railway in Yugoslavia through a student organisation in London. It wasn't until we had reached Ljubljana that I had realised that the English group I was with was almost entirely "Red," for during the long wait at that station all my companions, except for a married couple from Birmingham called Len and Edith, bought Communist badges. When I had shown surprise one of them had asked me if I were a member of the "C.P." "If C.P. stands for Conservative Party, then I do belong," I had joked. This had annoyed some but amused most.

When our vociferous welcomers had grown hoarse we piled into the back of an American lorry, with UNRRA stamped on its sides and were driven to the camp, a number of wooden huts near the River Bosna that rushed through a narrow valley. A dumpy English woman of about thirty-five, in blue shirt and shorts, a blue forage cap with a red star at the front, came out of a hut to meet us. She wore little make-up and spoke with a county accent that she tried to disguise by talking gruffly.

"Comrades," she said, I winced at this word and so did Len and Edith. "Comrades, welcome. I am your brigade leader. As you know, you are the second work-group out from England. I came with the first. We are expecting groups of about thirty strong weekly. I hope we shall be able to form a really good work-brigade, and show our Yugoslav comrades that we feel with them and wish to help them in their splendid reconstruction scheme which, this summer, is to build a broad-gauge railway from Samac to Sarajevo that will replace the unsatisfactory narrow-gauge one on which you came today. I earnestly hope that many of you will win the great honour of becoming Stakhanovite workers. I want the British Brigade to become a shock brigade. Our Greek comrades had this great honour conferred on them last week — a very happy and wonderful ceremony it was. Now you may go to the hut: girls to the left side, men to the right. There will be a welcome party for you this evening. That is all. Thank you." She smiled, and when she smiled she looked quite sweet, though a little ridiculous in her brief shorts.

We went into the hut and found the comrades of the first party resting after their day's work. The hut had two shelves one above the other, on either side, which were long enough for a person to lie, head to the wall and feet to the middle of the building; a rough

table and two benches filled the narrow gangway. I managed to put my camp-bed up on to the second shelf, having persuaded two comrades to make room. The other newcomers went off to fill palliasses with straw. We had no welcome from our compatriots already installed; in fact I felt they slightly resented our intrusion, as if they were annoyed at not being the only 'pioneers.' Comrade Ed was on one side of my bed and Comrade Larry on the other. Ed was about 40. He had short, cropped hair speckled with grey, and large pale blue eyes. Larry, a handsome, blond youth of the working class, looked about 18. Unlike the others, many of whom were at the London School of Economics or half-way to getting a teacher's diploma, he was not educated; he never took part in the discussion about politics or work; he hardly ever spoke at all.

While sitting in my space trying to unpack, I felt like asking the questions that prisoners ask each other: "What are you in for?" But Larry feigned sleep, and Ed started a conversation with someone on the opposite shelf about norms, occasionally glaring at my camp-bed, sheets and suitcases.

"Supper's ready," someone said. There was a clatter as people got out their enamel cups and mess-tins, and jumped down from the upper shelf on to the floor. We queued up outside the kitchen hut that belched smoke. I was behind Comrade Philip, a young man with no eyerows, motheaten fawn hair and large brown eyes that popped out of his head when he spoke. For supper we were given half a mug of coffee that could only have been made from acorns, a hunk of rye bread that was so coarse that after a few days it gave me a sore throat, and some tasteless jam.

"Is there a café or canteen anywhere?" I asked Philip.

"No, of course there isn't. What do you expect? Don't you realise what this country's been through? How on earth can you imagine that there could be anything so bourgeois as a café in a work-camp? If you must have a drink you can get some slivovitz in the village two miles down the road. But don't go till after your welcome party. It should be fun. We're going to burn a picture of Ernest Bevin."

"Why?"

"Because he's wrong-minded, especially on the Trieste question. He wants it to be a sort of Hanseatic port — absurd, criminally absurd."

Outside the hut Kate, our leader, was trying to get the undisciplined British Brigade to form up in marching order.

" Please come on, Comrades," she was saying. " I want you to form up properly and march down to the reception ground."

The fanatical members had fallen in obediently, but others were grouped untidily near the door.

" Please, Comrade Ed, try and get a little order into the group."

Comrade Ed tried, " Naow, come along Comrades. We must put up some sort of shaow, you knaow. Other brigades march properly."

" Come *along*, Comrade Pearl, and bring the flag," Kate called out.

Pearl emerged from the women's side and put herself at the head of the group with the pole of the Union Jack resting on her small, protruding belly. Fervour glistened through her glasses.

" Of course, you don't *have* to come," Kate said, " but you all ought to. So please fall in."

We formed a muddled sort of platoon. The first three files were willing and smart, the middle was not so bad, but the back was ragged—more like a defeated platoon than a victorious one.

" Forward march," shouted Kate, " and for God's sake sing. Off you go, Pearl, on ahead. Hold the flag *high* and don't wobble it." Pearl stepped out, raising her knees; the flag bobbed up and down. Kate followed, chin up, eyes gleaming. The faithful phalanx in which were Ed and Philip kept in step and sang, " We're going to turn Buckingham Palace into a public lavatory when the Red Revolution comes." Only the fervent ones knew the words. Len, Edith and I were among the stragglers at the back. We laughed helplessly.

As soon as we arrived at the reception ground that was seething with groups of various nationalities, mostly Balkan, we were rushed at by men of the Greek Brigade. I suddenly found myself being held high above the ground on the shoulders of two stalwarts. I noticed that the other newcomers were similarly perched, but they seemed to be enjoying it and were shouting, " Markos, Markos," and " Down with the King." I was soon dropped, rather carelessly, by my two Greeks, who must have felt my lack of ardour for they left me without a word. It was now almost dark and people were gathering round a bonfire. I went up to where Kate and Philip were standing.

" I know, Comrade Philip," she was saying, " but he is a Minister, and we are English; though, God, I wish I weren't! I don't think it's right to burn his picture. He was once a dock labourer, after all. Anyhow, if you do it, I shan't say anything."

" If you want my opinion, I think it's silly," I told Kate.

" I should have thought you would approve, being a member of the Conservative Party," she replied tartly.

The bonfire was now burning brightly. Philip dashed into the crowd around it, and, holding high a passport photograph of the British Foreign Minister that had been torn out of a newspaper, thrust it into the flames shouting, " Down with Bevin! Black Fascist! Bourgeois Imperialist! " It was more a private demonstration than a public one because except for some of the British group no one understood what he was doing. However, any display of enthusiasm was welcome, and Philip's action set off a wave of fanaticism. Amid cries of " Tito " and " Stalin," they danced the Kola, a Balkan peasant dance, round the fire.

" We must show them a dance," Philip said, " an English dance."

" What do you suggest? Sir Roger de Coverley? " I said.

" Come along, British Brigade," Kate cried, clapping her hands, " we'll do the Hokey Cokey." And the Hokey Cokey they did, rather badly, as only half of them knew the steps, and about three of them the words. Kate obviously didn't enjoy doing the Hokey Cokey, one could see by the expression on her face, but she thought it her duty. I left the crowd and Kate and the others doing Red Indian gestures with hands going up and down saying — " All—do—the Hokey Cokey; all—do—the Hokey Cokey."

I went back to the hut and climbed up to my place on the shelf; on my right Larry was fast asleep.

" Wakey, wakey," someone bleated. " It's foive o'clock, Comrades. Wakey wakey." This was said in a sad, solemn voice, reminiscent of the manner a sergeant says " Get fell in " in the army, but without the authority. " Wakey, wakey," the voice went on, more insistent as no one stirred. " It's foive o'clock, Comrades." And then, louder, in a shriek, " For Gawd's sake get up."

I opened my eyes and saw that Larry was putting his blue shirt over the vest in which he had slept. Ed was already dressed and on the floor. " It's yer first day," Larry said to me, " you can lie in till six. You won't have to work today. Just an injection against tetanus or sumthin'."

After breakfasting on the acorn coffee and the rough bread, we were herded into a bunch and taken off to a tent where we were inexpertly inoculated by a medical student from Belgrade University. Edith fainted and we had the rest of the day off.

I came across Kate outside the British hut.

" How is it that you're here? " she asked.

" Curiosity. And you? You don't sound like a member of the C.P."

" And how should a Communist sound? " she challenged, always on the defensive. " My parents live in Cheltenham. I became a Communist during the war when I met a Russian officer. We're engaged."

" Where is he? "

" In Russia."

" When are you going there? "

" As soon as I can. But it's difficult."

" Does he write? "

" Sometimes; in Russian."

" Do you know Russian? "

" No, but I'm learning."

After supper, Len, Edith and I decided to try the village café. We walked down the dark road by the bubbling Bosna, past the huts of the other contingents where round a bonfire comrades were dancing and ranting, and then, when the camp lights were dim and the shouting a distant roar that no longer bothered us, we came to a number of houses on either side of the road. The only light was from a spitting pressure-lamp hanging outside the café; there were wooden tables and benches where a few villagers were drinking. We sat at an empty table.

" What shall we have? " Edith asked.

" Slivovitz, of course," said Len.

" You from the States? " an unshaven, heavily moustached man asked. His trilby was pushed to the back of his head.

" No, from England."

" England, ah! I bin to the States and it's God's own country. Wish I'd never come back. You from this Youth Camp? Crazy, just plumb crazy, getting a lot of school kids to build a railway. What they know about it? They spend most of their time making speeches and shouting 'Tito! Tito!'." He spat. " Have a drink? "

Len and Edith were Socialists and were pleased at this outburst of free speech. Our throats burning with plum brandy, we returned to the camp, feeling it to be less of a cage than it had at first appeared. At least not far away there was someone who was not afraid to speak his mind.

The dreadful " wakey, wakey " applied to us the next morning and we had to get up with the others at five. Comrade Ed was

appointed our foreman and we were marched off to get wheelbarrows from a store two miles downstream. We worked on an embankment cut out of the steeply rising hill that formed one side of our camp. Our job was to fill our barrows with stones, cart them about half a mile, and spill them into a ravine where other labourers were working. Empty, the rough, wooden barrows with wide handles that one could not grasp properly, were almost too heavy to move; full, I could not push mine for more than ten yards without resting. The girls worked harder than the men. Pearl, our standard bearer, pushed her barrow up and down as many times as she could in an hour; her glasses fogged with sweat, wisps of her untidy hair stuck to her forehead, she pushed and pushed as if her life depended on it. She seemed to be driven by some inner urge. While I did two or at the most three barrows an hour Pearl did ten. Ed, the foreman, pushed about the same number as I, but he made a show of directing the work, spending quite a lot of time speaking to a Yugoslav foreman who knew English. Edith and Len worked solidly but without inspiration. At nine we had a ten minute break and Ed gave us a pep talk while we sat perspiring under a tree.

"Naow, Comrades," he said, "you're working well, but I should like to see you work harder. I know that for some of you this is your first day on, but I think you could do better. Naow, the Comrade with the gloves," he looked at me, "what's your norm?"

"I've no idea."

"How many loads an hour?"

"Two usually, and once three." Some laughed, others made sounds of disapproval. Pearl murmured, "Disgraceful."

"I should like you to push it up to five, if possible, please," he smiled patronisingly. "Right?" He added like an instruction sergeant in the army.

"Next year," I said, "I shall go to Spain to see what a Fascist Youth Camp is like."

This remark was not well received and for the rest of the morning I was given black stares from all but Len and Edith. I got my own back; for having worn gloves I was the only newcomer not to have blisters.

Kitchen fatigue sometimes took the place of barrow pushing, and it was worse. One had to get up an hour before the "wakey, wakey" to make the coffee, and saw the tough, brown bread for the comrades' breakfast. Water had to be fetched in buckets from a tap half a mile away, and at which there was always a queue; and huge car-

casses of meat (we wondered if it were horse) had to be cut up and put into a cauldron heated by scraps of wood gathered from round the camp. The cooks of the British Brigade, who were chosen daily because no one wanted the job, were unable to make much of the meat, which was boiled for every meal and turned into a stew of leather lumps. We were much put to shame by the Greeks when they invited us to lunch. Their meal was not only edible, as ours never was, but palatable. They gave us a mixture that tasted good even though served in mess-tins. The Greek invitation caused the calling of a brigade meeting by Kate.

" Now, Comrades," she said, " yesterday, as you know, we lunched with our comrades of the Greek Brigade." Kate's speeches always began with statements we all knew, as if she were talking to children who needed to be told what they had just done. " Now the Greek Brigade is a Shock Brigade, and most of their workers are Stakhanovites. They are building the tunnel which is a much harder task than the one we have been allotted, and, you may not know this, they work twelve hour shifts round the clock. Half their workers do a twelve hour day, and the others a twelve hour night shift. Now, their lunch was better than hours. Why? . . ."

" Because they can cook," someone said.

" No, it's not that. We can cook. It's because of their spirit, their good Communist feeling of comradeship which, I'm ashamed to say, we do not have in this brigade. Now Comrades . . ."

" Please, I wish to protest," said Len.

" No, Comrade, please wait until I've finished . . ."

Len stood up. " I will *not* be called comrade. I am a Socialist, not a Communist (cries of " What's the difference? " " shame," and " sit down "). I wish to propose that . . ."

" Please, Comrade, wait till I've finished, and then you may speak. Self-criticism is not only welcome but healthy, though what you have to say sounds quite irrelevant. Now, Comrades, and *Mister* . . ." she looked at Len, " I'm sorry, I don't know your name. Now, Comrades, this spirit. We must inculcate into this brigade a feeling of oneness of purpose, a feeling that we are together working for the good of this marvellous country and her glorious people who've been through so much. We have volunteered to help them reconstruct their country and we must show them that we have a driving force too. Forward, Comrades, onward. Now, I have an announcement to make," she smiled like a mother about to give a treat to her child. " Tomorrow there will be no work " (ironical cries of

"shame" from Len and me) — Kate frowned — "because two members of the Russian Communist Party are visiting the camp. This is a great honour. For, remember, not every Russian is a member of the Party, only the honoured ones. At nine o'clock we will parade by the hut . . ."

At this moment two gentlemen in "bourgeois" suits and an interpreter in khaki shirt and shorts appeared. Kate mistook them for the Russians and greeted them warmly, pecking them on both cheeks. "Comrades," she beamed, "these are our Russian Comrades . . . they must have come early . . ." She spoke to the interpreter. "No, they're not. They're professors from Ljubljana University who've come to explain why Trieste must be given to Yugoslavia. So I'll hand over to them." She bowed and waved the professors forward.

There was silence. Nobody seemed to know what to say. The resourceful Kate had to save the situation.

"We all think that Trieste should go to Yugoslavia," she said. "I know that the people in the city are mostly Italian, but the hinterland is Yugoslav, and Yugoslavia needs more ports. Italy has many. It is unfair. You, Comrades, have only Fiume, I mean Rueka. We of the British Brigade want you to have Trieste." While the interpreter was translating this glad news to the professors Len got up.

"I don't agree," Len said. "Trieste should be a free port for Austria as well as for Yugoslavia and Italy. By giving the port to Yugoslavia you would only create another ethnic problem."

"The professors say," the interpreter explained, "that Trieste is historically . . ."

I slipped away, leaving them to argue. Comrades like Kate were not amused by argument; they just wanted their ideas accepted unanimously and unquestioningly. To have someone like Len in the brigade was an embarrassment, far more so than to have a Conservative, for the Conservatives were doomed, and, the Communists thought, pathetic relics of the past who could be no possible challenge to their ideology. Whereas Len, being a Socialist, belonged to a party that recommended some State control, and there was a danger, which, of course, the Communists never admitted, that the Socialists might be more successful.

A platform had been put up not far away from our hut and the different contingents of the camp marched towards it at eight-thirty next morning. The British Brigade, as usual, was late, and arrived in groups of twos and threes. Kate was angry, but she was smiling

when she stepped up on to the platform to meet the two Russian Communist Party members. They shook her hand and kissed her on both cheeks. She then gave a speech which was cheered loudly, except by the British, the only people in the camp who understood it.

The following morning Kate came singing into the kitchen where I was on fatigue.

"Why are you so happy?" I asked.

"Yesterday was so wonderful!" she said. "Those two Russians, the darlings, kissed me. Did you notice?" She put her hands to her cheeks. "To think that I've been kissed by a real member of the Russian Communist Party!"

"By two real members," I corrected.

"Yes, by two," she said dreamily.

I went off with two buckets to fetch water. On the way back from the tap a shaven-headed youth came up to me. "I am from Dubrovnik," he said.

I put down my load. It was my duty to be comradely and speak.

"Ah! the old Ragusa," I replied.

No, Dubrovnik, *not* Ragusa. You English?"

"Yes."

"You like Churchill?"

"Not particularly. I don't know him."

"Churchill black Fascist," he said, screwing his features into an ugly grimace.

"No, Churchill not Fascist."

"Churchill black Fascist."

I picked up my buckets with obvious effort and although the boy disagreed with me he took them and carried them to the kitchen. However much one disliked the political theories of the campers, their slogans, their enthusiasms, there was no escaping from the fact that an atmosphere of companionship prevailed, and that the verve for hard work was genuine. The Yugoslavs worked as hard as the Greeks; no one could possibly work harder. After a long morning digging, the literate among them would give lessons in reading and writing to the unlettered, and, in the evening, they would dance and chant round the camp fires until a late hour. There was no apparent immorality; no free love; no couples sauntering hand-in-hand by the banks of the Bosna. Sex was completely sublimated by labour and politics; the camp was like a political Scout Jamboree.

As the weeks went by more contingents arrived: French. Swedish,

Danish. The Danes were next to us and set up a sort of travel bureau in their hut. They had a publicity officer who sat behind a table of pamphlets in a small room plastered with posters. This was considered to be very 'baugy.' Kate said, "What can you expect of the Danes?" The British Brigade swelled, too, but Kate was not happy. For although her command increased in size, its enthusiasm diminished; there were few Communists among the new arrivals: some were Socialists, others right wing, and one was actually the son of a Conservative M.P. The hard core of Communists that was in the British hut when I arrived remained firm, but the British Brigade was no smarter on parade and their singing was worse. In fact, Kate tried to stop the singing as, while the front three ranks sang the "Red Flag" and "Samac-Sarajevo" (the Youth Railway song), the middle and back countered with "Cherry Ripe" and "Come Into the Garden Maud." Occasionally the British Brigade, along with other groups, were invited to meetings up or down the line. I never went on any of these, preferring to go for a walk in the wooded hills, to escape from the camp and to be alone for an hour or two. Such individuality was not encouraged. My lone trips did not cause any suspicion among the British, but they were disapproved of by the Yugoslavs. On one outing down the line, while the rest of our brigade was visiting, an interpreter tried to stop me from catching the train. "You cannot buy a ticket," he said to me at the station. "You can only travel by pass, and you haven't a pass."

"I'm going to get on this train. I want to see what Zenica is like."

I boarded the train, and the interpreter reluctantly got in too. We stood in the corridor as there were no seats left.

"When the ticket collector comes you'll have to get out at the next station."

The guard came. I said "Omladinska Pruga" (Youth Railway —the only two Serbo-Croat words I learnt). He nodded and pushed his way down the train. The interpreter said nothing.

Zenica was a nondescript village teeming with Bulgarian youth in blue shorts shirts and berets.

"You can't go into that restaurant without a meal coupon," the interpreter said.

"I've got some money."

"They don't accept money."

"We'll see. Will you have lunch with me?"

"I've got no coupons."

I had excellent borsch followed by a rough but good stew, far better than the British Brigade lunch, and the magic "Omladinska Pruga" were accepted instead of coupons or cash. The interpreter did not seem pleased at my success, and we travelled back in silence. The British Brigade returned tired and feeling rather ashamed, for with a sudden impulse of Party feeling some of the men and women had thrown aside any remaining bourgeois sense of modesty, and at the same time their clothes, and bathed naked in a paddling pond in a small park of the town where the meeting had been held. This had greatly shocked the Yugoslavs and given the British a black mark. The British had not understood the Yugoslav attitude at all, and regarded it as old fashioned and even 'baugy.' Surely, the British thought, sexual inequalities are banished?

At last the time came to leave. My group had done three weeks and earned the right to a week's holiday arranged by the Ministry of Youth. At our farewell party an official of the Ministry made speeches and presented us with badges (a metal flag on which were the words 'Omladinska Pruga'). Pearl was in tears at this ceremony. "They're so kind," she wept, "and they can't afford it." Kate decided to relinquish her command and come on the holiday with us.

At six in the morning we got into a carriage which, like the one we came in, was coupled on to a goods train, and left to Sarajevo. There were about forty in the coach, all British, some of whom had managed to get away after only a week's work. Kate was officially in charge, but a Yugoslav interpreter was virtually so. On the outskirts of Sarajevo we passed near to the new broad-gauge railway that the 'youth' had laid earlier in the year. The lines were not straight, and looked as if a shiver had run down them. "These will have to be relaid," an engineering student confided to me. I had trouble with my luggage at Sarajevo station. There were no porters, and I had to ask two of the comrades to help; although weighed down by their knapsacks their hands were free and they were able to carry two of my suitcases. We marched through the town (Kate reprimanded Pearl for leaving the flag behind) to an empty building site where there was a hut next to a chicken run. Len, Edith and I, with the aid of my *Guide Bleu*, found our way to the best hotel that was functioning normally, apparently untouched by the régime. After slivovitz we were given a pre-revolution dinner. When Kate discovered where we had eaten (the rest of the group had dined on hard rations outside the

hut) she was annoyed.

"We are a party, you know," she said, "and we should keep together."

Before catching the goods train for Dubrovnik the next morning the interpreter took us to a mosque. He sneered when I took off my shoes, though the old turbaned men squatting on the carpets were visibly outraged at the others who thought it 'reactionary' to show any respect. "We don't bother about the old," the interpreter explained. "We allow them to go on with their superstitions. But the young are not encouraged to go to the mosque. In our State schools we teach them to break away from their religion which in the past may have helped them forget the oppressions of the old régime. Now that is no longer necessary. The carpets are nice," he added in a resentful tone.

We reached Mostar in the early afternoon, and as there was a long wait we bathed in the swift river that runs through the middle of this country place which, apart from a large red star on top of a modern block, remained a sleepy, agricultural town with narrow, unpaved streets. We jumped into the water and were carried down by the current to below the high arched bridge from which a handful of wide-eyed citizens looked down on us. It was a most refreshing bathe.

The train struggled up a steep incline before arriving at Hum, a wayside station. We wondered if the engine could get us to the top as it puffed and spluttered and only just kept moving. "It's sheer Yugoslav guts that's getting us up this hill," Pearl said between her teeth. At Hum we got out while the engine was recovering from its efforts. Suddenly Philip said, "Don't you all realise that we'll soon be in Dubrovnik and we have nothing on our carriage? What will the people think when we arrive?" Whereupon he got out a piece of chalk (an essential item for an active Party member) and covered our carriage with slogans and the names of political heroes: "Pollit and Zilliacus," to show that we were British; "Youth Railway," to show what we were; "Tito, Stalin, Markos" and other well-known Communist leaders; and "Down with Imperialism" and "Death to Fascism."

"Are you sure the people of Dubrovnik will be able to read English?" I asked Philip.

"The uneducated may not, but it's not they that matter. The Party officials who come to meet us certainly will."

The train slowly trundled down the rocky, scrub-strewn hills to

the sea. It was after dark by the time we reached Dubrovnik and there was no one to meet us; no one to notice our slogans and leaders' names. The interpreter went off to contact the local Youth Department.

"How long are we going to stay here?" I asked Kate.

"A few days, I expect."

But when the interpreter returned he told us that there was no room for us anywhere, and we could only spend one night in a school.

"I want to stay here a week," I said, "and in a hotel."

"So do we," chorused Len and Edith.

"Please don't make things difficult," hissed Kate. "Remember we are guests."

"I am sorry but you cannot stay here as the hostels are full."

"I don't want a Youth Hostel," I replied to the interpreter. "I want to stay in a hotel. I'm prepared to pay for it myself."

"It is impossible."

"I shall take a taxi and go to a hotel. There are plenty according to my guide book."

"I am sorry you can't. You are all on a group visa and must stay together. Only the Minister of Youth can give you permission to break away from your group."

Finally the interpreter agreed to send a telegram to the Ministry of Youth in Belgrade asking if some of us could stay in Dubrovnik at our own expense. We had an uncomfortable night in a school yard; the other comrades were no longer derisive about my camp-bed. The answer from the Ministry (if the interpreter really did send a telegram) was that under no circumstances could we split from our group, and that we must take the night goods-train to Belgrade.

"You have been granted a day in Dubrovnik," the interpreter said, "but you must be at the station by six."

I spent the morning touring the town with *Guide Bleu* and after lunch when we all met in a café, Kate said, "Comrade, I should like you to take us round the sights as you are the only one to have a guide book."

"Sorry, I'm going to bathe."

"It's all right. I didn't really expect you to co-operate." She gave her patronising smirk.

The journey to Belgrade took thirty-six hours, which was long enough to damp the enthusiasm of even the active members. There

was a mild display of hysteria and a few cheers when we passed through Uzice, which had just been renamed Titovo. It looked a very dull provincial town, but Pearl said, " It must be wonderful to live in a town with a name like that."

We arrived in the capital after midnight (there were no porters but I found a spare trolley which the others were pleased to share) and walked to a hut on a bombed out site. Our quarters were far from spacious; the beds were so close together that we had to get into them from the end. We slept until we were awakened by Kate's excited voice. " He's arriving in an hour, and we *must* put up a show. Oh, Pearl, why *did* you forget the flag? "

" Who's arriving? " I asked.

" Georgi Dimitrov is coming from Sofia and Tito is going to meet him at the station. We must all go there to welcome them, but without a flag they won't know that we're a British contingent."

" Try the British Embassy. They ought to have one," I suggested.

" Do you think they would lend us one? " Pearl asked anxiously, hoping that the omission would be made up.

" Why don't you draw one on a piece of paper? "

" There's no time to try anyone," Kate replied, ignoring my second suggestion. " We must march down to the station at once. We're late as it is."

The station square was crowded and the British Brigade was only able to find a back position behind several rows of people. This was not good enough for Kate, who pushed her way to the front, saying, " Come on, Comrades, forward. We must show *him* that we're here." Some of the rabid ones followed her. A large open car escorted by motorcycles rushed down the avenue to the station. I got a glimpse of Tito's hat. We could hear Dimitrov's train arrive but we could not see into the station, nor could we witness the meeting of the two leaders, but their lengthy speeches were boomed to us over loudspeakers. I had another glimpse of Tito's hat and also Dimitrov's bald head. Kate, of course, saw more. " Did you notice Tito's piercing blue eyes? " she said. " He looked straight at me. It's wonderful to have seen him and poor Dimitrov who suffered so much under capitalism before the war." Seeing two Communist leaders more than made Kate's day for her; she was in high spirits.

We were left more or less to our own devices while we were in Belgrade and were allowed to wander at our leisure. A feeble attempt was made to try and get us to see a Russian film with Serbo-

Croat sub-titles, but we were not forced to go. I found an excellent "bourgeois" restaurant and a night club ("We have to keep them on for the diplomatic corps," the interpreter said.). I spent the most of the three mornings that we were in the capital trying to get permission to stay on in Yugoslavia alone, but this was finally refused by the Minister of Youth himself. The Minister, a young man in a khaki shirt with no tie, stood behind a wide desk that acted as a useful barrier between him and a host of petitioners. "You came on a group visa with a group, and you must leave with a group," the interpreter said. "But I want to break away from my group. Can you not get me an ordinary visa from your Foreign Office? There are many places I want to visit: Bled, for example, and Dubrovnik again." He spoke to the Minister who shook his head quickly and passed on to the next applicant. "It is impossible," the interpreter said.

That night, our last in the capital, we were given a banquet at a restaurant in the old citadel that looks down on the confluence of the Danube and the Sava. The Minister of Youth arrived but when I shook his hand he gave no sign of recognition. Wine and slivovitz flowed freely, and before the dinner was over the party got boisterous. Kate's speech was drowned in shouts and laughter; her peroration was inaudible above the cries for the Kola, which we began to dance round the table before she had sat down. By this time the Minister had disappeared. In the morning our hut looked like the deck of a Channel steamer after a rough crossing.

We scrambled on to the packed train to Budapest which emptied before we crossed the Yugoslav frontier. We spent five hours in the Hungarian capital waiting for a train to Prague. I got out at Bratislava, for having an individual Czech visa I was able to break away from the group, who were going on to the Youth Festival in Prague.

"You're mad to get out here," Philip said. "It's a black Fascist town. It's Roman Catholic."

"Be a change," I said. "Goodbye, Kate."

"Goodbye, perhaps I shall have the pleasure of shooting you one day," she said half-seriously.

"When the Red revolution comes? I shall shoot back."

It was a relief to have a room to myself in a hotel.

LETTERS

APARTHEID

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

It is gratifying indeed to read a reasoned and dispassionate approach to the policy of 'Apartheid' as in Geoffrey Vernon's article in the October issue of *The European.* As the writer stated, the recent wave of vilification against the Nationalist Government of South Africa is impelled by the clause in the "Native Laws Amendment Act," which liberal opponents generally, both within and outside the Union, present as an infringement of freedom of worship. It is in fact no such thing.

Mr. Van Heerden, editor of the foremost Afrikaans newspaper, *Dagbreek,* states the facts admirably as follows:

"In 1945 the United Party Government passed legislation prohibiting the establishment in European areas of 'churches, clubs, etc.,' intended mainly for non-Europeans, without the consent of the Minister. In this legal provision activist leftist elements have since found a loophole. Instead of institutions being established 'mainly for non-Europeans,' they are established for Europeans, but are used by non-Europeans as freely as if they had been intended for them. This obviously defeated the original purpose of the Act, and Dr. Verwoerd proposed to prevent this evasion of the law."

There is no more restriction of "liberty" involved here than in the fact that a Native cannot build a house in the select northern suburbs of Johannesburg where most of the ladies of leisure who form the "Black-Sash" movement reside—or in my inability to do likewise in the model native township of Kwa Thema, or restrictions on Europeans in Zululand.

Mr. Van Heerden continued: "At no stage was the clause intended to prevent the attendance, within reasonable limits, of one section at the religious services of the other sections." The attendance of non-whites in small groups at European religious services goes on as ever it did. Nor is exchange of priests or pastors forbidden either. A Native minister was, not long ago, invited to preach in the Dutch Reformed Church at Pinelands. This is not a contradiction of

Apartheid but its proper concomitant — separate but friendly development.

The melodramatic charges hurled at the South African Government by its foes are aptly termed by Van Heerden "absurdities bought by the United Party fifteen years ago at the sale of obsolete war propaganda."

DERYCK ALEXANDER.

"Beth-Sheba,"
37 Side Road, Chrisville,
Johannesburg, South Africa.

CANADA

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

I gather from Mr. J. P. Bury's article, 'Advice to Those About to Emigrate,' that he confined himself to the industrial East of Canada. Had he travelled further West to Manitoba or Alberta his opinion of Canada might be somewhat different. He might have met, as I did more than twenty years ago, the poor emigrant farmers from all parts of Europe, who, by sheer hard work, guts and pioneering spirit turned the virgin land of their homesteads into the prosperous farms that exist today.

There is much wisdom in the following quotation from Jose Antonio: "In the city you hardly see the man. He is always concealed behind his job, behind his clothes. In the city you see the merchant, the electrician, the lawyer, and so on. In the country you always see the man." London is not England, nor is Paris the real France.

As for the Americanisation of Canada which Mr. Bury deplores, has this blight not also mingled with the so-called culture of the English masses?

Yours, etc.,

PHILLIP GOODWIN.

Hale Common,
Arreton, Newport, I.W.

Next month in

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