THE EUROPEAN

THE JOURNAL OF OPPOSITION

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A change in the voting system is now necessary to avert a serious risk.

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ANALYSIS

"I AM getting tired of hearing Mr. Dulles say that we cannot trust the Russians," he said, "I am bound to tell Mr. Dulles that the situation is reaching a point where we cannot trust him." These words appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune* of April 14th, and were ascribed to Mr. Bevan during the course of his speech in Trafalgar Square in the company of Mr. Gaitskell on the previous day. They did not appear in *The Times* report, or in that of any other English paper we have seen. But anyone in the responsible position of a prospective Foreign Secretary would doubtless hasten to contradict them if they were incorrect. So far we have observed no contradiction.

What do these words mean? Can they mean anything except that Mr. Bevan does trust the Russians and does not trust the Americans, as represented by their present government? If Mr. Bevan does not mean that, what does he mean?

A potential Foreign Secretary cannot shelter the most dangerous utterance since the war behind the habitual obscurity of a confused mind. And, for once, the dictum of Mr. Bevan seems crystal clear. In default of contradiction we must assume that the prevailing alliance of Britain and America in face of Russia will at least be rupted, if not reversed, when Labour comes to power.

This is the man who will be Foreign Secretary after the next election, unless the Conservative Government is prepared to lose some party advantage by changing the system of voting.

Can Britain trust Mr. Bevan?

Even the report of Mr. Bevan's speech in the English *Times* was sufficiently revealing. The report ran as follows: "Mr. Bevan said

that we are in a much more dangerous situation than many people imagined, with aircraft laden with H-bombs on patrol overhead in a state of alert that was equivalent to a state of mobilisation, the last step short of war. The assumption was that the Soviet Union seriously contemplated, without provocation, the launching of an overnight attack on the West. That was an entire misreading of the Russian point of view.

"I have thought about this over and over again. I cannot imagine that the Russians can conceive they would gain by an action of that sort, and I do not believe that the Soviet leaders are so malevolently inclined as to harbour such a thought for one moment."

What can this mean except that the next Labour Government will not permit any aircraft to be airborne from English bases if they are carrying H-bombs? Does not this give the opportunity to Russia of knocking out every air base in Britain and destroying the aircraft upon them, if they desire to do so? Would not this remove from Britain all means of retaliation to the mortal blow of a super-Pearl Harbour? Could not the Russians then destroy us, if they so wished, with complete impunity? Would not the life of Britain then depend on Mr. Bevan's trust in the Russians being justified?

What is the difference between Mr. Bevan and the marchers?

Can we trust a Foreign Secretary who would risk the life of his country on his belief that the Soviet leaders are "not so malevolently inclined"? What right has he to assume that they have no such inclination, in view of the long-standing communist principle that they should impose their doctrine by force, if occasion offered? And even if that were not the case—even if such an attack in all the circumstances were extremely improbable—has any statesman the right to place his country at the mercy of a foreign power? And can anyone deny that Britain would be at the mercy of Russia if all our air bases and aircraft could be knocked out at one blow, and Britain had no means of retaliation?

When the mass of the people laughs at the Aldermaston marchers as of no account, is it not wise to enquire just what is the difference in practice between their attitude and that of Mr. Bevan? If Britain is placed in the position where a sudden blow from Russia can knock out all our defences, does that not amount to unilateral disarmament? What is the real difference between Mr. Bevan's attitude and that of the marchers, except that its crude folly is not so easily observed by the electorate? What is the difference between laying down your arm,

and placing your arm in a position where it can be struck from your hand? In reality, there is no difference if the Russians prove unworthy of Mr. Bevan's confidence.

Change in voting system means to avert risk.

It is time that even the Conservative Party reviewed their complacency at the prospect of Mr. Bevan becoming Foreign Secretary. The old roundabout of In and Out with alternating spoils of office to the winner, is not quite what it was. Give the Labour chaps a go, and let them take the knock of the coming economic crisis, is not quite the amusing game it used to be. Doing nothing to stop Mr. Bevan becoming Foreign Secretary can be now not merely a frivolity but a fatality.

The means of preventing a Labour Government are simply the means of preventing a minority imposing their will on Britain. This matter requires a change in the voting system, and this rests with the present Conservative Government. If they have sufficient sense of public duty to prevent Mr. Bevan becoming Foreign Secretary on a minority vote in the country, which yet can accord a majority in Parliament, they may discharge that duty with a simple two-clause act which can be passed quickly and easily through the present Parliament. The process was described in the *Economist* a few weeks back, and was surprising in its ease and simplicity.

Hitherto any change in the voting system to make Parliament more representative of opinion in the country has been resisted by the dominant parties, because it would mean sharing their power with others and giving a foothold to newcomers whom the Establishment dreads. The argument was always used that it would lead to a multiplicity of parties and the impotence of government, as in certain continental assemblies. There might be some element of truth in this argument if a truly proportional system were adopted, but the alternative vote, suggested by the *Economist*, would have no such result. At most it would create three decisive blocks in Parliament.

In any event, a variety of unmanageable parties is produced more by temperament than by the voting system. The logic and clarity of the Latin mind create an atmosphere of socratic interrogation and the rejection of easy emotional unities; in exaggeration this can lead to the dissolution of a society. The English inclination is the opposite; a tendency to team up too easily and too permanently, with many a curly head firmly affixed to the curly tail in front, until the full gadarene plunge is consummated under the truly porcine leadership

which easy times are liable to evoke in England. The best that can be hoped in these conditions is that the contemporary Baldwin comes unstuck by *reason of* some egregious folly before the final disaster.

Government by the sensible centre (20th century).

Such a change in the voting system in more or less normal conditions would entail virtually permanent government by the sensible centre. The apprehension that it might in any long run mean a liberal domination is unlikely to be felt by anyone who has noticed the difference between the nineteenth and twentieth century. It is far more likely, in any hour of compelling reality, that it would lead to a union of all who are agreed on the one decisive act of Britain entering Europe completely and speedily.

The fear that it will lead to the paralysis of Parliament and the imposition of a dictatorship is clearly as illusory in modern conditions as it is irrelevant to the English character. There is really no serious argument which inhibits a new system of voting; only an old interest. That interest is the absolute power of the old party caucus, an alternating power which is enjoyed every few years at the expense of a rest while the other party has its turn. This power is accorded to the machines by the weight and influence of press and money, and by nothing else. It is a power which can vanish overnight in time of crisis. And it is a power which cannot any longer be reconciled with the public interest, when it is maintained at the cost of a period of high office for Mr. Bevan.

However patriotic the motives of Mr. Bevan may be, it cannot be denied that the course of action he suggests might place Britain at the mercy of Russia. This can involve the surrender of Britain to communism by will of a minority, against the very clear will of the majority. To deny the majority the right to prevent that surrender is a crime. It is the duty of Conservative Government to change the voting system and enable the will of the majority to be effectively expressed.

No ganging up of old gangs to defeat Labour by coalition can do what is necessary. In the end that would make a Labour victory yet more certain. What is wanted is the simple principle of making the people's will effective, and that is the principle which above all others our leading democrats seem at present determined to resist.

Lord Russell's only serious point met by European union.

Meantime the agitation for the unilateral disarmament of Britain

runs it silly course, amid singularly little public interest despite the eminent names attached to it. In the whole matter there is great confusion. Even Lord Russell has adduced only one serious point. It is that if all the small powers follow the lead of the great powers, and acquire their own H-bombs, an explosion becomes sooner or later probable. Even so the moral gesture of Britain's renunciation would not make the slightest difference. For example, how much effect would it have had in old days on a Bulgarian with a chance to acquire a new weapon for the purpose of beating a Serbian?—and the further East you travel, the hotter becomes the collar. Moral gestures of this kind are dankest fudge.

Lord Russell's argument leads to only one conclusion. It is the rapid union of Europe and the confinement of these weapons to three great powers, until we can get disarmament by agreement between them. These powers would be America, Europe-Africa, and the Soviet block. The world would be divided appropriately into their various fields of influence, and only these three decisive powers would be allowed these weapons. In conditions of relative calm, science could then in due course provide the means to make disarmament secure by effective mutual inspection. The answer to all current problems is, make Europe; and the work can begin tomorrow if the will be there.

EUROPEAN.

EMPIRE — COMMONWEALTH— WHAT NEXT?

A STUDY OF THE STERLING BALANCES

by ROBERT ROW

THE British Empire was a unique institution. It was not neatly blue-printed in some social planner's office. It was not even erected by a military genius such as Alexander or Napoleon. British Empire was built over centuries of striving and hardship and became the end-product of a great outpouring of surplus energy, intrepid enterprise; there was some sharp practice and personal gain, but a great deal more of devotion. It was built by sea-captains such as Drake, lured by adventure and profit; by former black sheep like Clive, who won the wealth of India; by transported convicts, whose descendants made modern Australia; by invalids like Cecil Rhodes, whose prophetic vision encompassed an Africa which is yet to be realised.

In certain periods this mixture of adventure, business acumen, heroism and throat-cutting was directed and canalised by leaders such as Queen Elizabeth, seeking expansion to the West to balance the world-power of Spain, and by statesmen like Chatham, who took India and Canada through a brilliant alliance with the Germans in Europe. Speaking in 1763 on the Seven Years War he said: " We were winning America on the plains of Germany." Captain John Hawkins helped to found the American colonies through the slave-trade, and Lord North threw them away, but the magnificence of Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham outshines them both. Later came the Industrial Revolution and the wonder of early science, in which Britain led the world. The time was reached, at the beginning of this century (the era of Joseph Chamberlain) when Britain held an Empire embracing the land-masses of Canada and the Australias, much of Africa and Southern Asia, and a hundred smaller territories. She commanded the seas, dominated world finance and was universally respected.

All had been achieved by a few brilliant statesmen and a host of adventurers, imbued with the will-to-expand beyond the seven seas They had the normal percentage of rogues in their ranks whose short-

comings have been exposed with gusto by critics living in comfort in modern England; but the rogues and the greater men, the Raleighs and the Cooks, built a great edifice in primitive conditions with their hands and on their feet, very often racked with disease, decimated by famine and having empty oceans at their backs.

They handed down a vast heritage with undreamed-of opportunities to the generation of today, which has had the advantages of power, science, rapid communications, medical knowledge and progress of all kinds. They could have built the highest civilisation known. What have they done with it all?

Let us consider some facts. In 1939 British Empire covered 14½ million square miles. Over 640 million people today live in the countries which were once the British Empire. The uranium of the Witwatersrand and Rum Jungle, the oil of the Athabaska tar-sands territory, the wool of Australia, the wheat of Canada, the dairy produce of New Zealand were some of its many assets.

It was a heritage barely touched. Wide regions held unknown resources; shortly after 1945, half a century after Cecil Rhodes, the Conservative Party admitted that their long-discussed geological survey of Central Africa had not yet been made. On the other hand British industry, which could have been mobilised to open up those possibilities, was grossly underemployed. There were always from two to three million out of work in Britain during the years 1918 to 1939. Industrial areas such as Jarrow and South Wales were stagnant, rotting pools.

Entire continents cried out for development; yet the means of development were idle in Britain. Vigorous Government leadership could have brought life to South Wales in a great drive to develop British Empire. The City of London, calling on its £4,000 million of foreign assets, could have financed the enterprise. The Empire's millions of manpower could have supplied the labour under decent wages and conditions. Pre-war youth would gladly have exchanged the dole-queue in Lancashire for the chance to make a fortune in Rhodesia or elsewhere.

Soon science would have brought the age of nuclear power, automation, jet-propulsion to give added impetus to the great imperial drive.

But the party leaders of the present generation chose war instead. What was the outcome of the decision to destroy instead of to construct?

Again, consider the facts. Britain went to war in 1939 as potentially

the most powerful country on earth: she emerged in 1945 victorious in arms but virtually bankrupt. Most of the £4,000 million of foreign assets had been spent on the war. American Lease-Lend had kept her in the fight. A year after the end of the war she had to borrow £960 million from America and Canada.

This was followed by American Marshall Aid,* and again by American "Off-shore" Aid. And what is the position today, after all this propping up and after the immediate post-war sellers' market period when Britain's rivals, Germany and Japan, were out of action, America was concentrating on her own home market, and Britain had world markets to herself? Where is Britain after the prosperity of the Korean War arms boom?

To quote Mr. Harold Wincott, assistant editor of the *Financial Times*, writing in that paper on 28th May, 1957:

> "Before the war we had total sterling liabilities overseas of $4,039 million. At the end of 1956 the comparable figure was $9,590 million. Before the war we had no foreign currency debt. At the end of the last fiscal year such debt amounted to $5,800 million. Before the war we had gold holdings of $4,141 million; the latest comparable figure, including $561 million drawn on the International Monetary Fund—part of our last-ditch reserves —was $2,320 million. In the meantime we've lost many of our foreign assets and we've had enormous assistance under, for example, the Marshall Plan. We have raised our internal debt from £6,994 million in 1937 to £24,940 million at March 31 last."

So no one can say the war of 1939-45 was a financial success for this country.

Nor was it a political success. We went to war in 1939 ostensibly to defend Poland against aggression, declaring war on Germany, though not on Russia, for aggression against Poland. We wanted war against Germany, and Germany alone.

We got rid of what was described as German tyranny, and in its place have directly helped to create a communist tyranny that proclaims its determination to rule the whole world and already dominates half the human race, holds half Europe down by force, maintains the most formidable conventional military strength and has perfected the intercontinental ballistic missile ahead of America (with the aid of

* Britain received over £1,000 million from Marshall Aid, or more than twice what Germany received; yet Germany now has replaced Britain as the world's largest exporter of manufactured goods.

Western science). The position in nuclear weapons is now such that war would bring complete destruction to industrial Western Europe; this country would be just another graveyard.

No one can say Britain feels safer as the result of the war.

In the process of destroying our own strength and enhancing communist strength we have also got rid of the Empire, on which our former position rested. The post-war Labour Government "liquidated" the British Empire in 1947 when they gave self-government to India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma. Conservative Government has since made Ghana and Malaya independent countries. Other territories, such as Nigeria and the West Indies, are on the point of similar status. In place of the British Empire we have the Commonwealth. And what is the Commonwealth? It was described by *The Economist* some time ago in the following terms:

> "Setting the bounds of the Commonwealth wider still and wider is hardly a definition of function. The new members will find it easier to grasp what it is not than what it is. It is not of course the Empire they knew . . . It is not an alliance even of the loosest kind . . . it does not in any way abridge their independence or curtail their liberty to have free foreign policies of their own. They can espouse policies that bring them into conflict with other members, to the verge of war . . . nobody yet knows whether even going to war with another member requires resignation. But these contradictions form the only conditions in which Canada, India or Pakistan will stay in the Commonwealth or in which newly-emancipated colonies will join it. There is no community of religion, culture, language or race among the Commonwealth members . . .
>
> "What, then, is the worth of so negative an association? For Britain, the Commonwealth is a gentle let-down, a featherbed of fine phrases and outward forms, to ease the psychological impact of a loss, now approaching its last phase, of a powerful Empire."

The result of the war is that Russia is strong, but Britain weak, heavily in debt. facing severe competition in an intense world trade war, with the Empire gone and an uncertain Commonwealth in its place.

Even the Commonwealth member-countries cannot find the new relationship too happy. They all aim at industrialisation, but most of them still largely depend on selling their raw materials on world markets. Today, the bottom is being knocked out of prices for their raw materials. The result of the war has been to tie world prices to events in America, or at least to the policy of the American stockpiling authorities.

Great productive facilities were built up in the Commonwealth countries—yet they have only got into full production in time for the American stockpile to start ordering much less. In the year ending June 30th, 1951, orders from the stockpile reached $2,075 million; in the year ending June 30th, 1957, the contracts were down to $190 million. Now another menace arises, one which even America cannot control: the export on to world markets of raw materials from the Soviet bloc. Russia built up a vast industry to supply the Red Army, but is now going over to missiles increasingly; missiles do not need anything like the steel and other metals which tanks and guns need. Russia has therefore a great surplus of materials on hand, as has America, and is unloading that surplus on to world markets—at the usual undercutting rates.

The *Financial Times* of March 11th last said: "One must expect the Soviet Union to become increasingly an exporter of its surpluses . . . which . . . must continue to exert a depressing influence on commodity markets in general." Both in Europe and the United States there is widespread apprehension. The Aluminium Company of Canada has asked the British Board of Trade to investigate Russian dumping. Aluminium Limited is offering "loyalty discounts" to British consumers who continue buying from Canada.

American over-production plus Russian dumping therefore mean depression for Commonwealth markets. Depression for the latter means depression for this country later on.

That is not all. Britain is banker to the Sterling Area, which approximates to the Commonwealth. While world trade was prosperous, during the post-war boom, the Sterling Area could be described as a going concern. But successive British Governments have taken advantage of their position as banker since the war, hogging in London the dollar earnings of Sterling Area commodities and giving sterling balances in exchange, most of them blocked.

The sterling balances began as war-incurred debts, the outstanding case being India, which had £1,250 million of them at the beginning of 1946. Mr. Swaminathan of the High Commission for India made this clear, in a letter to the *Financial Times* of November 8th, 1957:

> "It would be as well to remind readers in Britain that a large part of the sterling balances were accumulated by India during the war by making supplies representing a considerable contribution to the Allied war effort, and that it had been publicly stated by the then Government that these balances were intended to be used after the war for the economic development of India."

Britain made a loss on the war: India made a profit!

In 1946, when it accepted the American and Canadian dollar loans, the British Labour Government agreed both to scale down and to fund the debt to India. But in practice the debt was allowed to stand. Labour took the view that, if a slump came, the repayment of the debt would help to keep Britain going. (We will come to that shortly.)

Since 1946, the character of the sterling balances has changed considerably. India has drawn very heavily on hers, using them partly to finance post-war development and industrialisation. Yet today the balances stand higher than ever before. There are £3,267 million of them owing to other countries, mainly in the Commonwealth. As Mr. Harold Wincott says:

> "They have been accumulated, largely, because the dominions and colonies have turned over their dollar earnings to the central pool and accepted in exchange sterling I.O.U.s which we've often not been able to redeem because we lacked the productive capacity to do so."

So here we are, with a world slump threatening on the horizon, owing £3,267 million in sterling balances, against which we have hard currency reserves of less than £1,000 million—about one-third. We have a knife-edge balance-of-payments problem, in which we have a permanent trade gap between imports and exports. Are these the conditions for paying off the sterling balances now that slump is a distinct threat?

It should be pointed out that even to start paying off our debts, instead of letting them mount steadily upwards, would mean a decisive reversal of the me-too policy of the post-war years, the imposition of austerity and self-sacrifice on the British people who have lived on the Sterling Area since the war. Piling up debts is easy; paying back is painful.

Would the process of paying back be gradual, as the Labour Government planned, or would it be severe? Would our Commonwealth creditors want dollars out of that shrunken pool, or would they accept manufactured goods instead?

Ghana and Malaya are two countries which may soon demand dollars. Both could point out they have made considerable contributions to the dollar pool in the past; together they bring in 22 per cent. of the Sterling Area's hard currency income. Towards the end of 1956 Malaya made it clear she was not satisfied with putting into the pool without taking out: she asked for a separate dollar account

for her own use. Now she is independent she may use stronger language.

Ghana has also strongly hinted at reinvesting her £160 million worth of British Government securities. Now a four-man committee under Lord Piercy is sitting to advise on the investment of Ghana's sterling assets over coming years. Ghana is certainly one of the more restive Commonwealth countries; she wants to develop her bauxite resources and the Volta River project, and she may want dollars to pay for it if the Americans get the job of development.

What if both countries want large sums from the jealously-guarded reserves? What if Britain refuses? Dare she risk offending two countries which together bring in almost one-quarter of the Sterling Area's dollar income? If Ghana and Malaya walked out, how would the reserves stand in future?

But suppose Britain has her way, the Commonwealth countries remain docile, the dollars are carefully husbanded in London. Would the Commonwealth countries want British manufactured exports instead to pay off the sterling balances? A Labour Government may be elected next time: would it try to keep British industry running (as it planned it would in 1946) to pay off sterling balances to Commonwealth countries? But the world of 1958 is a very different place from the roseate dreamland of 1946, when these schemes of mice were laid. In the first place, many Commonwealth countries may be none too keen on accepting a very wide range of British goods. They may get some things more easily and cheaper from Japan. Many Commonwealth countries also have since built up their own industries (Australia for example), and in Asia the Labour Party thinks it adds to the "human dignity" of backward countries to have steel-works and cotton mills working round the clock, producing goods cheaper than Britain can do. After the First World War, a lot of British workers were put out of their jobs by German reparations; are the Commonwealth countries going to put their own workers off by accepting British reparations?

Even if the sterling balances were paid off this way, by sending them British manufactures, the Commonwealth countries may want to pick and choose what they take. This might be all right for some British industries, but all wrong for others. Probably Commonwealth countries would want to take British capital goods; are we then to have a future Labour Government paying off its debts by equipping every backward country in the Commonwealth with the industrial means to undercut British exports of the future?

But all these questions are overshadowed by the still greater question: will Britain be able to do it at all? Will she be capable of sending goods abroad for which she will get nothing in return (that has been already spent) when today she cannot export enough to cover present imports?

Mr. Harold Wincott, writing in the *Financial Times* of January 21st last, was perfectly frank as to what this would mean, advocating nevertheless that it should be done. He saw a slump as an opportunity to reduce "the incubus of these debts" and emerge at the end of it stronger and healthier.

But this meant "the needs of the home market must come an easy last"—in other words, British trade unionists would have to stop asking for higher wages, accept lower wages in fact, while Dr. Nkrumah and the other coloured brethren would see ship after ship arrive loaded with Britain's latest machinery. Is any future Labour Government going to tell British trade unionists that?

Mr. Wincott continued: "For generations we in this country lived on other peoples' unrequited exports to these shores, the payment for these exports—our imports—having been made by the hard work and abstinence of our forebears in building up our formerly massive overseas investments. Now the boot is on the other foot with a vengeance." So it is—but will the British people wear it? Would any future Labour Chancellor (the popular Mr. Harold Wilson, for example) dare to get up at the Trades Union Congress and tell them all to start sweating?

But remorseless Mr. Wincott presses home his argument: "For if indeed we exploited the rest of the world in the nineteenth century, as some people try to argue, it is now the turn of the rest of the world to exploit us, unless we're to resort to bilking." He sums up: "What we need, indeed, is the necessary increase in output without a corresponding increase in home demand; or to be really brutal, more work without more pay" (who can envisage Labour rallying the country with that slogan?) . . . "It only remains for us to prove that we can't pay them in times of recession, at a time when we clearly have unused physical capacity to pay them" (and Mr. Gaitskell recently insisted this was already actually the case) "for our creditors to get finally sick of the game.

"When that happens you can write 'Finis' to the Sterling Area and maybe the British Commonwealth of Nations. And jolly good luck to the 25 million of us these islands can't support."

That, of course, is the point. We have one of two courses under

the present system: either pay up the sterling balances, so screwing down wages for at least a decade while Ghana and a possibly communist Malaya take the cream of Britain's inventive skill; or "bilk," see the Commonwealth break up, see the countries which have fed us walk over to the dollar bloc or the rouble bloc (what a trumpet of triumph in Moscow!) and, inevitably, see our people go hungry at home.

To complete this situation of fantastic danger, we now have the present Government upsetting a long-suspicious farming community by cutting their subsidies instead of giving them a real policy with security; not the way to encourage farmers to start producing more in readiness for the approaching "siege economy." The Labour Party has lightly used that expression to show how they would face a finally-affronted America which cut off their dollars: it looks like becoming grim fact indeed just when the next Labour Government march into office to take up again the threads of the sterling balances question they so lightly sketched for the future in the palmy "victory" days of 1946.

Britain's predicament was summed up by Mr. Joseph Alsop, the American commentator, writing in the *New York Herald Tribune* on March 1st last:

> "At present Britain is selling her manufactured goods high and buying her raw materials cheap, which is profitable while it lasts. But if the raw material producers continue to be pinched, they will begin to ask banker Britain for long-term credits. Next, they will present heavy drafts on their balances in London. Then they may ask for parts of their balances in hard currency. They will end, if the process reaches its worst conclusion, by breaking the British bank altogether . . . the political consequences hardly bear thinking about."

What a way to finish up after centuries of glory! Or will the national fighting spirit reassert itself, once shown a way? It is possible not only to avert this dark disaster but to reach out to even higher things than the achievements of the past. Expansion was once the way to greatness and wealth; expansion is still the way, led this time by the continuing dynamism of a scientific government.

The goal is not a re-hashed old style imperialism but the deliberate creation of a highly-developed estate in Africa held in common by the countries of Europe a Nation working as a team. Africa must also hold a black man's estate, which he must build with the aid of European science or possibly American assistance. But these remain

dreams until action is taken, and there is not much time.

Only energy overcomes problems of time, yet even energy is wasted unless it is led in the right direction; in Europe's coming situation, which will he a dangerous one, all energy must be concentrated to get rapid results. Everything depends on leadership; leadership by a European Government commanding all available resources. It must create a machine to work quickly, drawing the right men to points where they are needed and drawing out the best in the freedom-loving Europeans. Given a machine based on incentives, Europeans will come together in enthusiastic teams and build Europe-Africa in the short time left.

The machine is the Wage-Price Mechanism, frequently described by Sir Oswald Mosley. He has shown how the age demands leadership by an équipe comprising the finest minds of Europe, working with scientists. This European Government must find in Europe the same type of adventurous spirits who built empires in the past (three hundred million today can surely find enough men; as did the four million of Tudor England) and the way to find them is to offer great incentives. They will have virtually unlimited finance behind them, balanced by the mass-production of which automation today is capable, as well as modern air travel, medical attention, the resources of a civilisation. If they cannot make Europe-Africa then we can all lie down and die.

But the Wage-Price Mechanism will ensure Europe-Africa is made. If the incentive is high enough (high wages, fair taxation, good living conditions, boundless opportunities) men will work hard for themselves and their families. The Wage-Price Mechanism will be designed to give these incentives to the pioneers who open up Africa (the road and rail builders, airport makers, town creators, surveyors, mineral prospectors). It will give high rewards to the farmers and other primary producers who will take over the land from them. In the black man's part of Africa it will be the same, though no doubt slower than in white Africa. Two great markets, plus the European market, will expand for the automation industries at home in Europe. Markets scientifically created by scientific government which in fact will be able to overcome the greatest tasks by high reward offered to free men and women.

This new precision instrument of government is the means to cut through a collapsing system and so escape disaster. In the future it will also become the way to a higher, wider life when the situation is no longer desperate.

A EUROPEAN LANGUAGE?

by JEREMY MUNFORD

MANY problems must be solved when the union of Europe takes place, and one of them is the European language problem. In this matter our aim should be, as in the question of the European Constitution, to combine a respect for the past, on whose shoulders we stand, with a faith in our own capacity to use our language for great purpose in the future. Therefore the language which Europe ultimately decides to adopt as its own must have European roots, but must also be a language competent to express ideas and to be used by science, in an age of epoch-making new science and thought.

In September, 1956, the "Living Latin" Congress took place at Avignon, France; contrary to what one might expect, the proceedings were not in Latin, but in French, German, and Italian. Any attempt to revert to the happier if more leisurely days of the Middle Ages and make Latin the common language of educated Europeans must shipwreck on the twelve inflexions of the noun, the thirty-six inflexions of the adjective, and the lack of modern scientific terms. It is, in any case, doubtful if Virgil and Caesar ever spoke the language they wrote, though Queen Elizabeth managed to express herself in Latin. But it would be equally dangerous to adopt an artificial language, constructed, like the latest "Interlingua," by a committee of linguists in New York, the International Auxiliary Language Association (IALA). So far as one can find out, only a handful of the artificial languages which have been invented since the days of Pascal (some 500 of them)

have ever been spoken. Only one of them, Esperanto, has any kind of living tradition.

Why not elect a living language, like, French, English, or German, it may be asked. Up to 1914, French was the language used generally in diplomacy; English is the language of world commerce; German is used, to a certain extent, as the world language of science. French and English have largely discarded the trying inflexions of Greek, Latin, and Russian, though German is still the most inflected of the Romance and Teutonic languages; English has gone further in the direction towards an analytical type of language like Chinese, than has French, and is consequently easier to learn. On account of its mixed parentage, English contains both words of Latin and of Teutonic origin, and it can consequently be learned by Germans, Dutchmen and Norwegians with almost as much ease as by Frenchmen, Spaniards and Italians. In addition, the scientific vocabulary of English is already international.

The disadvantage of English can be summarised as follows: there is practically no correspondence between the spelling and the pronunciation, and it contains a large number of unnecessary synonyms. (Where French has one word "pardonner", and German one "vergeben", English has two, "pardon" and "forgive".) Some would say too, that English has become too flexible, too economical. (Vincent Murray has quoted the example of the poster which proclaimed "Exhibition pronounced success"; a foreigner saw it and promptly committed suicide.) Nevertheless, if the decision is made to reject artificial languages and make a living language the normal method of pooling scientific information, conducting parliamentary debates, facilitating trade and co-ordinating town-and-country planning within the new Europe, then English is in many ways the best. The very character of the English language represents the merging of Teutonic and Latin elements to form a successful whole. That is Europe's problem in a wider sphere.

But it is easy for an Englishman to conclude that his own language is the most suitable for use by a United Europe. Our aim must be equality of the nations of Europe within the state of Europe, and there must be no cultural domination of one over the others. On account of this, some would advocate either a dead or an artificial language as the solution of the European language problem. The writer has pointed out above the deficiencies of Latin for this purpose; and the same is true of Greek. These were once, it is true, the common languages of civilised Europe, but to pretend that they can be used

today would be the conservative, the first of the two errors mentioned above. The opposite error would be to adopt a language which looked like this:

"O fat obas, kel binol in süls, paisaludomöz nem ola! Kömomöd monargän ola! Jenomöz vil olik, äs in sül, i su tal."

That is the beginning of the Lord's Prayer in Volapük, a language which gained a quarter of a million adherents during the '80s of the last century. Volapük has been called the last of the artificial languages aimed at logicality and symmetry; Esperanto, its successor, the first of those aiming at the maximum ease for the learner. Esperanto, despite the fact that the man who created it, Dr. Zamenhof, was not a professional linguist but an idealistic believer in the brotherhood of man, remains in most respects the best of this latter kind Esperanto still claims many supporters, and is the best known of the several hundred artificial languages invented. It is frowned upon by many professional linguists on account of its retention of such features as the accusative case, agreement of adjectives with nouns, and its accented letters. Nevertheless, these features give it flexibility of word order, and a consistent pronunciation. One can go on forming Esperanto words almost *ad infinitum* owing to its complicated system of affixes (e.g., *sana,* well, healthy; *malsana,* ill; *malsanulo,* an ill person; *malsanulejo,* a hospital; *malsanulejano,* a hospital attendant, nurse, etc.). All subsequent artificial languages, among them Ido, Interlingue, and Interlingua, have become more and more Latin in character, which has made them less mongrel, but also more difficult for the Teutonic and Slav peoples to learn. They have also renounced Esperanto's flexibility of word order and wealth of word-forms in favour of immediate ease of comprehension for educated Europeans. A comparison between the following passages in Esperanto and Interlingua (IALA) will indicate the differences:

Esperanto: La uneco, kiu permesas komunan agadon por la komuna bono kaj kontrau komunan dangheron estas la sola metodo per kiu, en tempo de paco, la nacioj kiuj amas la pacon povas garantii al si sendangherecon kaj progreson bone reguligitajn kun libereco kaj justeco.

Interlingua: L'unita, quel permese action comun por le bono comun e contra le periculo comun es le sole metodo per quel, in tempor de

pace, le nationes queles ama le pace pote garantir-se securita' e progreso ben regulate con liberta' e justitia.

A more valid objection than that of the linguists towards the character of Esperanto is perhaps that of good Europeans towards the Esperanto movement. Recently an American Esperantist, Mr. G. A. Connor, accused a travelling propagandist for the Universal Esperanto Association, Tibor Sekelj, of disseminating communist propaganda. U.E.A. maintained its absolute neutrality, which meant the liberty of any of its members to believe what they like. Mr. Connor refused to take back his accusation, and was backed up by the Esperanto Association of the United States; this Association has now been expelled from the U.E.A.

Whatever may be one's opinion of this rather unsavoury little episode, Zamenhof's language remains free for anyone to use. (Some artificial languages are copyright; the exclusive rights of "Basic English" were bought, in a moment of lunacy, by the government for £23,000.) Esperanto is the only language artificially constructed which has been spoken successfully by more than one generation, and it has a 70-year tradition behind it.

Of course, neither English nor Esperanto is entirely satisfactory. If English were chosen as the European Auxiliary Laguage, we might be deliberately depriving ourselves of the chance of European understanding on a new scale, on account of the obscurities, redundancies and difficulties of English, which are all avoided in Esperanto. If Esperanto were chosen, we might find the whole spirit of the language uncongenial; new difficulties might appear when it was put into general use; it might, despite our efforts, eventually begin to *take the place* of the already existing languages, a danger which must be guarded against. It might discourage the learning of national languages other than one's own. (As a matter of fact, there have been some successful attempts to teach Esperanto in schools as a substitute for Latin, which classicists alway maintain is a good foundation for the learning of other languages; Esperanto could certainly be useful in this way.) But, it is said, a language must be the product of growth: Esperanto has no roots and no soul. Personally, the writer has enough faith in the European spirit, and in the things it can do and leave behind it, to be unperturbed if the past is sacrificed to the future. In no century before our own has so much care been taken of what remains of the achievements of the past; in no century have men been able to create so little that looks like lasting themselves.

This is true of language as well as of art. He therefore favours a new start in a new language which will perpetuate none of the national rivalries which have wrecked Europe's past.

Ultimately the choice of language for Europe will have to be made, however, on the following considerations.

Is our language to be used only by scientists and businessmen, and in the European Parliament; or is it to be used also in ordinary contacts between Germans, Portuguese, and Hungarians?

Do we envisage a European literature, in a European language?

Should we reject the idea of an international language, and instead officialise a number of national languages, as has been done in the Council of Europe, and the European Coal and Steel Community? If so, where is the line to be drawn? The Council of Europe started off with two official languages; there are now four, English, French, German, and Italian, "and there is no reason why other languages should not receive the same advantage." There is enough time-wasting at Westminster: imagine the position if, in the European Parliament, each speech had to be translated into three or more different languages before the proceedings could go on.

Is our language also to be used outside Europe? Cannot we win the world ideological battle against communism more easily if we can meet our opponents on the neutral territory of a clear and concise constructed language? On the other hand, if our language is to be for use by Europeans only, may not its construction be easier than that of a world language, in view of the fact that all European languages except Finnish, Esthonian and Hungarian have a common Aryan ancestry? So far, all artificial language projects have been for the whole world; might it not be possible to do away with some Esperanto redundancies if we were planning for Europeans only?

As a matter of fact the question of choosing a language which is the easiest to learn is not as important as has been sometimes made out. An extremely encouraging reminder came not long ago from an American linguist, Dr. Mario Pei. In his book, *The Story of Language*, he reminds us that Interlinguists "lose sight of the fundamental fact that every language, however intricate it may seem to those who learn it as adults, is simple to its own native speakers, who have learned it from childhood by natural speaking processes." All that is required is a common decision by the educational authorities of different lands to introduce at a given point of time the teaching of the auxiliary language in elementary schools. Adults, who have to learn language the hard grammatical way, may be allowed to learn

the language or not, as they choose. All that will be necessary will be the preliminary training of a few teachers, and the children will learn the language at the junior stage just as they learn their mother tongue, without tears, however difficult the language may be. That is the way that many Welsh, South African and Canadian children become bi-lingual.

Dr. Pei, who thinks in terms of a *world* language, admits that his proposal may have something of the deceptive simplicity of proposals for universal disarmament. That is true, in terms of the world. But a common European Government would have exactly the power that is needed to compel simultaneous learning of the language in different parts of Europe.

In the words of a man who has done what is almost the impossible in the twentieth century—shown himself both a true patriot and a good European:

"The barriers between us (the European peoples) are language, and memories of past wars. Both, in different degrees, are temporary."

A man like Mosley has surmounted, through his life, the second barrier. We await the united will of Europe to surmount the first.

MOSLEY: THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS

by MARTIN PRESTON

MR. COLIN CLARK, a talented and forthright economist, has written an article in the April issue of *Encounter* entitled "What's Wrong with Economics?" Looking back over the past fifty years, he shows how often economists have been hopelessly wrong with their suggestions for the rectification of contemporary economic problems. He states that this faulty leadership by the experts is largely to blame for the evils of unemployment and rising prices (Mr. Clark hates the word "inflation") which have cursed the British people successively in the thirties and the fifties.

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The main fault of the economists has been their preoccupation with the problem extant a few years before the contemporary problem—in other words they are always behind the times. While this results in little more than stagnation in other sciences, it is disastrous in economics, where different situations require quite different and often opposing policies. Mr. Clark outlines how in the early twenties the economists were concerned with the liquidity and stability of the banking system as a result of acute American banking crises in 1893 and 1907; inflation took them by surprise. Then, when deflation plunged the world into slump, they were so preoccupied with the fear

of inflation they were incapable of proposing remedies for the slump.

Mr Clark records that "Keynes in those days was a very isolated figure, disliked by Labour politicians almost as much as by Conservatives," and goes to the trouble of mentioning in a footnote that Mr. Harold Macmillan was one of Keynes' few loyal supporters in those days. The 1930 Labour Government was "so confused" over unemployment that it did not refute the extraordinary statement of Lord Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, that financial policy had nothing to do with unemployment. Then Mr Clark makes an amazing admission. "The miseries of unnecessary unemployment in the 1930s were brought to an end, before the decade terminated, in two countries, Germany and Japan. Their economists did grasp the point that in a time of widespread unemployment the correct thing to do was to unbalance the budget, to spend government money freely on objects at the time deemed desirable, and to encourage private investment." Thus for the first time a leading economist refutes the absurd statement that it was only Germany and Japan's preparation for war which enabled them to solve their economic problems. "If they had spent money on peaceful objects they could have restored full employment equally well," he declares.

So Mr Clark acknowledges that the economic policies of Germany and Japan were in advance of the rest of the world. It is interesting to know that a mere 25years after the accession of National Socialist Government in Germany, the donkeycart of British economic thinking has progressed far enough for one economist to state that their policy was right while the policy of British Government was at best a "mild insanity."

For Mr Clark goes on to state of Britain: "Looking in retrospect at the ideas of economists and statesmen of those days, with all the frightful consequences which flowed from them, one may well feel inclined to accuse them of criminal irresponsibility, or at least of mild insanity. This is now generally realised." Is it? Mr Clark is a man of penetrating insight, with considerable knowledge of the 1930s. How, then, can he sweepingly condemn all British "economists and statesmen of those days"? Is Mosley a myth, a man who never was? Surely Mr Clark knows that in those days, when Harold Macmillan was unimportant, Mosley was a Minister, and that he resigned in protest because the 1930 Labour Government was "so confused" that it refused to enact measures to solve the unemployment problem. Mr Clark must know that Mosley, in his famous Memorandum, proposed those very policies of government expenditure

which he states "are now obvious to a second-year undergraduate." Why, then, is Mosley purged from his view of the 1930s as though he never existed? Surely an economist courageous enough to state that the politics of Hitler and Tojo were right, and those of Baldwin and Macdonald were "mildly insane," does not fear to establish Mosley in his rightful place in British history? Why Mr Clark's reluctance on this point, or his sudden loss of memory?

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The most likely explanation is that Mr Clark has found himself in a position often attained by a ruthlessly enquiring scientific mind hampered by woolly liberalism. The point he has reached is on the verge of the truth; holy, pure, terrible. And he pauses on the verge, fearful of the results of acknowledging the truth he has so fearlessly sought. Mr Clark knows that to acknowledge the truth about Mosley would severely damage his reputation and his career. It would bring down upon him the opprobium of all those dark interests of finance who profit from the chaos of capitalist economics, and who recognise Mosley as a man of insight, high courage and idealism, as a man who can still wreck their international rackets. Mr Clark knows that to recognise Mosley as the only statesman of the 1930s who was right in his policies for lifting the burden of unemployment from the British worker and bankruptcy from the small businessman, is to recognise the unique position of authority he holds when he proposes remedies for Britain's economic problems of today. A man who can switch his programme from empire development to unification of Europe, to conform with contemporary realities, without deviating from his principles, is no man living with the problems of the past. Mosley has already pointed the way to solving inflation: insulation of the British economy from crazy international trading fluctuations which suit best the international racketeer (the gambler in the food and commodity markets) by European union and African development; at home by stabilizing wages and prices with a Wage-Price Mechanism (neutralising the national racketeer and obviating "business profits too easily earned" which Mr Clark objects to). These remedies were propounded long ago in *The European* and other organs before *Encounter* was thought of.

If Mosley was (together with men in other countries whose political thought was on similar lines) the only man in the 1930s whose economic policies were correct, do not his remedies for con-

temporary problems deserve serious consideration? Perhaps Mr Clark is scared Mosley is right again. The formidable frame which expounds to packed meetings in London, Midlands and the North is too solid to be a myth; his movement is too much a reality for Mr Clark not to notice it, unless he fears it is right, as it was in the '30s. And why should Mr Clark fear it? Perhaps because despite his histrionics about economists, and chatty personal details ("I was invited by Sir Stafford Cripps to join his economic staff at the Treasury . . .") Mr Clark has little more to offer in the way of constructive economics than a return to the 19th century policy of free trade to beat a 20th century inflation. This angry economist's contribution to economic thought is to stumble into the very pitfall he condemns—proposing an outdated policy for an economic condition (inflation) whose problem is already fading as the world economy totters towards a slump.

Mosley cannot be purged from history by the timidity of Mr. Clark. He will achieve his rightful position after the British people have realised the wisdom of his economic policies for the '50s and '60s. The world staggers ignorant and disunited on the brink of a slump which shows every sign of being the worst in the history of the capitalist system. Mr. Clark is very much part of the "complacent short-sightedness" he condemns.

TRIBUTE TO MACHIAVELLI

by BERTRAM PEEL

JULIAN DE MEDICI entered Florence on September 1, 1512, at the head of the Spanish troops that had already sacked Prato. Women were violated, children slaughtered and thousands of freeborn men put to death, including Julian's own brother John. Once more the Italian peninsular had been disturbed, and indeed the people would suffer many more changes before the peninsular became the country of Italy, centuries later.

Nicolo Machiavelli, public official in the Florentine Republic for fourteen years, escaped death, to be thrown into prison, beaten and tortured. He was formally committed to remain within Tuscany and forbidden to enter the precincts of the Law Courts. Not that this mattered either way as there was little chance of his gaining a hearing there in the immediate future, since the magistrates had submitted easily enough to the Medici rule; but he was suspected of plotting against the new regime, even though he had made several attempts to regain his former post.

Within a short while he was released through the good offices of his friend, Francesco Vettori, and finding himself still unwanted by the new rulers, he retired to his house at Percussina, south of Florence. There he wrote his *Discourses* and *The Prince*.

Machiavelli was a patriot, serving faithfully a militarily weak republic surrounded by powerful monarchial states. Against their hordes of mercenaries and auxiliaries, the Florentines had needed to rely on sharp-wittedness and their own resources. In this, Machiavelli had played a leading role. Some years earlier he had attempted the diversion of a river during a siege, and now, on the arrival of the Spaniards, he had gone from town to town in Tuscany in an endeavour to recruit citizens for a national Florentine army.

This was a completely new idea in Europe, and in this way, as in others, Machiavelli showed himself ahead of his contemporaries. He was a revolutionary-minded patriot, given to steady thinking or to bold action according to the needs of the moment.

All this was over now, and his beloved Republic had fallen. As in the case of so many who have followed him, rejection and defeat stimulated a re-thinking of beliefs and a desire to surmount the apparently unshakeable Establishment which, in this case, had crushed the new republican spirit of Florence. He was now 43 years of age, and had 15 more years to live. A revolutionary idea had been stifled by the old orders, who had everything to gain from keeping the Italian peninsular in a state of continual strife. In the moment of defeat Machiavelli conceived the notion of unity—Italy as one nation. It was with this end in view that he wrote *The Prince*, expressly to Lorenzo de Medici (who ruled Florence from 1513 onwards), and the last chapter of which is a stirring "exhortation to take Italy and deliver her from the barbarians."

We must add to this the refusal of Machiavelli to deceive himself or Lorenzo de Medici that things were what they were not. Machiavelli's method is reduced to the following simple terms: an exhortation to Lorenzo de Medici to assume leadership (because he was the only figure with sufficient ability) in the building of Italy as one nation, by means of the most modern techniques in the realm of statesmanship and psychology. Hence it is that *The Prince* consists of twenty-six chapters dealing almost entirely with military techniques and with methods of avoiding internal division. And if it is remembered that armed force in those days was equivalent to economic power today, we have a completely analogous situation between sixteenth century Italy and twentieth century Europe.

Machiavelli's remedy for the strife of the era was an extension of patriotism, put forward as a mixture of political theory and historical analysis; a valid combination, since observation by scientific method is the only genuine way of arriving at a political opinion at any one instant. We may thus expect to find among the students of Machiavelli later figures with the same combined approach of the historian and politician. In fact this is so in the case of Henry IV, Richelieu, Hegel, Lenin, Mussolini—to name a few who have since closely examined the views of a man who so greatly preceded his time.

Conversely, those who have not even bothered to open *The Prince* or the *Discourses*, or the other major work *The Art of War*, are the very people who most use the word Machiavellian in its erroneous sense. Two simple themes run together through the whole of Machiavelli's thought: one is that it is better to be strong than weak; the other is that all men follow their own interests. In regard to the first, the fact that in the sixteenth century power meant military power while

today it means a combination of economic and cultural power, by no means invalidates Machiavelli's theory; as to the second point, it is a well known principle of any true philosophy that all men seek what appears to be "the good," whether they be saints or sinners of any belief or none. So it happens that, in our day, those who perceive Machiavellism to be mere selfish trickery, are the ones to judge communism by its irrelevant excesses, and fascism likewise. The chief opponents of all three firmly believe that it is better to be weak than strong, and that all men are fundamentally loving brothers — an arbitrary opinion of no value whatsoever. (Such people, incidentally, are also opponents of Nietzsche, whose philosophy of power they similarly misunderstand; after all, if a man has a belief his ultimate aim cannot be other than to achieve the power to impose it by some means on the entire universe, and the so-called free-thinkers are as zealous as anyone else about it.)

Classification of knowledge is a powerful human urge, and in politics it is most convenient to pigeon-hole once and for all a number of large and awkward sectors of thought. Especially is it useful to be able to dismiss Machiavellism, communism and fascism as being "wrong," "evil," "brutal," "barbaric," and so on, according to choice. Nothing is more dangerous than to take up this attitude, since it is true to say that these three are the positive forces that have played upon Europe, and hence the entire world, since the Renaissance.

Machiavelli ensured the break-up of feudalism, and his successors brought about the fall of the monarchy that was, so to speak, left out on a limb. Whiggism (or liberalism, or, in France, the myth of *la Revolution*) has played a transitional role leading to the struggle between communism and the leadership principle that is about to take place in Europe. The leadership principle is the natural one, and communism is merely an egalitarian reaction against certain evils of Whiggism.

It is certainly possible that whiggism will continue for some time in its strident form in America, just as communism seems set for decades if not centuries in the East. But in Europe, as previously observed, we appear to have reached a stage similar to the one which faced Machiavelli. He saw the conflicts of a dying feudalism, and we are witnessing the most violent antics of a decadent whiggism. In both cases, the remedy put forward by the leadership principle has been unity.

Against this current of feeling there is a truly enormous weight of opinion trying to maintain the present status quo in Europe. To this,

Machiavelli says in his *Discourses*, "Since all human affairs are in flux and cannot remain stable, they must go forward or fall back, and necessity urges us on where reason will not take us in many things. So that, if a system were to be established in such a way as to remain constant without growing, then if necessity obliged it to develop, that system would fall about its very foundations."

The whig view of history with its smug sense of progress over many centuries culminating in the present age of perfection, is held by the vast majority of Europeans. That is why they hate any new movement that threatens to give the lie to this, and take Europe on a stage further. Meanwhile communism proceeds rapidly to undermine the whole whig structure, having been assisted by whiggism in the removal of its greatest obstacle — the leadership principle in the forms of fascism and national socialism.

It is refreshing to come across this important note in the 1938 Cluny (Paris) edition of the translation by Jacques Gohory of *The Prince*: "Machiavelli is a democrat without being a liberal; liberalism consists in giving the value of eternal and absolute principle to democratic conceptions, such that historical necessities are soon neglected and formal democratic regimes are established whose nature is little similar to appearances. Numerous examples have been seen in Europe, notably in states born of the Versailles Treaty. The confusion between the democratic and liberal spirit is an important cause of errors of interpretation committed in respect of *The Prince* and all Machiavelli's thought. He is seen to be not liberal, and therefore assumed to be not democratic."

In the introduction to the same edition, Yvres Levy stresses quite simply: "Machiavelli conceived neither continuous progress nor definitive state, but one social and intellectual structure succeeding upon another social and intellectual structure." Doubtless there are many millions of communists who still see life and history in terms of class war leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and certainly there are millions in the West who still believe the whig myth of progress; but, as communism increasingly uses capitalist methods of conquest, and as liberalism more and more fails to meet the needs of the age in the West, the honest enquirer cannot be blamed for taking another look through Machiavelli's telescope rather than the other two.

When Marx and the whig philosophy are dead and gone, the theories of Machiavelli will continue to be a subject of fruitful study to mankind.

LOOKING FORWARD IN HOPE

by JOHN PATRICK BURY

THE Angry Young Man movement has died. Of all that raucous storm of dangling participles and slip-shod syntax hurled against the Establishment there will soon be naught left but a whisper in the text-books of Eng. Lit. For in the best traditions of British traditionalism, the Angry Young Men have risen on the stepping-stones of their dead selves to their Austin Healeys, new wives and lionisation on the TV screen, and they are finding that after all, they Like It Here. At this rate one expects to find many of them patriarchs of the Establishment before they are thirty, engaged in despatching inter-suburban ballistic squibs against all rash critics of monarchy, democracy, kynolatry and the other fine old institutions which made this country What It Is.

The unfortunate part about it all, though, is that those circumstances which produced all that upsurge of Angst *chez* Amis, Wilson, Osborne, Wain, Braine, etc., a year or two back have not changed one whit. Unfortunately, as with so many phenomena for which fond hopes that they will produce a finer world are entertained, things are just as bad as they were before. For aren't all the targets of the AYM's there still in all their monstrosity?—viz., vegetative culture, the peep-show monarchy, *Daily Mirror* aesthetics, Ibsenism in Subtopia, and the drear round of smoke, rain, tube, office, spectacles, cigarettes, food from cans, ulcers, forms, queues, British frigidity, Puritanism, and more smoke. Aren't we still the victims of that arch-problem of the 20th Century—the infliction on the stock of the Vikings and the Elizabethans of the horrendous Admass blight?

I think the AYM's howls vanished away into history because they never were more than howls—vague, inchoate and undirected. Unlike the movements of protest which have been a signal excellence of European civilisation, the AYM movement never suggested even a

shadow of a hint of a constructive suggestion as to the alleviating of the things it railed against.

In this article I am going to start from the assumption that there are continuing reasons for looking back, and forward as well, in anger: BUT also I am going to go beyond that consideration to ask whether there is not also some way by which contemporary pessimism can be combatted, outwitted, overcome, finally surpassed.

Let us begin by abandoning the Osborne position. Viewing an Osborne play reduces one to a state of self-pity and gloom: it presents, with considerable potency, your and my life—so seedy, so banal, so narrow, so provincial. But there is the flaw in the Osborne concept: it is so very provincial.

When one stops to consider it, the Angst and alienation of which our AYM complained is not a phenomenon unheard of before. Belief in the esential futility of life is reported rife in France too, and America, and Italy, and Scandinavia. Therefore I suggest that the way to break out of the pessimism of our indigenous AYM is by consideration of what answers are being mooted abroad. (England has always been twenty years behind Europe in intellectual matters this last half-century: Surrealist writing, for example, which was the vogue in the 1920s, did not reach here till Dylan Thomas's time in the 1940s, while Existentialism, the dominant mode in European philosophy since the 1930s, does not appear to have been expounded by a native until *The Outsider* came out in 1956.)

Casting out into the broader stream of European thinking however, I feel there has been some progress. As to questions of private ethics, in plotting out the way to combat Admass, novelists, dramatists and poets have given much counsel and solace. As to questions of public ethics, on the other hand—politics and ideology—progress has been less notable, on the Continent as in England. Politics, causes and ideals are out of date: a point to which I propose to return.

Still, there has been progress in the re-appraisal of private ends. The Existentialist movement takes much of the credit for this. First, the absurdity and alienation of industrial man was recognised: then it was shown that not only in his Admassinity but in his just being flung down haphazardly on this planet there is an absurdity of a still greater degree. All conditions of man in fact are absurd. Then it was argued that nevertheless we *are* here and must make the best of it. From this there has been a recognition that some things, if only summer evenings and swimming from Mediterranean beaches (e.g., in Camus's *l'Etranger*) are worth living for: that in the midst

of absurdity we do have will, to organise our impressions and create a meaning of our own as in art (e.g., as in Sartre's *Nausea*); and that, granted we all die in the end, we may as well strive valliantly before the inevitable as not (e.g., in Malraux' *Royal Way*.)

There has even been a certain optimism in some of the latter-day writers. Indeed, it could be argued that Colin Wilson's celebrated gallery of lost, sad or mad sages is a hopelessly one-sided work: that not everybody in either Europe or its literary circles is a self-lacerating beetleman sustained only by the bleak self-sufficiency of the Sartre-Camus school. There are some serene Insiders: writers such as Halldor Laxness, with his Icelandic tales of man against nature, Juan Ramón Jiménez, celebrator of the continuing happiness and beauty of Spanish village life, or that European-by-choice, Ernest Hemingway —all Nobel Prize winners and wielders of styles and philosophies not less healthy and dynamic than anything produced in our allegedly more glorious past. Not to mention Jean Giono, Antoine de St. Exupéry, Knut Hamsun, Pio Baroja, Henry Williamson, Dylan Thomas . . .

Working inductively from Existentialist literature, one could argue that steps have been taken towards a pattern for living which imply a belief in:

—a philosophy of intuition
—a man-ordained scale of values
—stoic self-reliance

The Existentialist movement has had this historical importance: it made for the survival of the individual in the world of Admass; approved of our instincts and among them found sanction for adventure, art and self-development: did not purport to explain inexplicable final causes and thereby released us from worship of outworn dogmas, idols and entities. This last was a particularly important achievement, historically, of Existentialism, in that it showed up the philosophical inadequacies of totalitarianism—inadequacies as far as the Admass problem was concerned, because totalitarianism sanctified Admass in furnishing it with a telos, namely, its hoped-for maturation into some kind of people's paradise. Existentialists were more inclined to see such paradises, due to human nature, as more likely to be materialist, vulgar, crass, caste-ridden, bureaucratic and byzantine than Admass neat. Existentialism came into vogue in face of nazism and communism, and made great appeal to European youth, including myself.

Unfortunately, Existentialism, while doing a good job in creating

a workable personal philosophy in the world of Admass, had a deleterious effect in the realm of thinking about ultimate ideals. For it got rid of the pomposities of liberal, communist and fascist mythology only by doing away with mythology itself. The central metaphysical tenet of Existentialism is that we can know nothing of ends, ideas, essences and ideals. Thus, while furnishing us with a certain grass-roots code for individual living, yet in the social sphere, and politics and ideology, there is a vacuum. This is a notoriously cynical and un-political age.

Unfortunately, however, I doubt whether we can dispense with politics as easily as that. There is a widespread attitude that folk should live existentially, heroically perhaps, for themselves, and let the community go hang: but I should like to submit it is not so simple. A heroic-individualist morality might be fair enough for the young and single: but what about the not-so-young and married, who have to settle down in one fixed place and conform to a routine? Then consider the image of the young, liberated Existentialist returning from Dionysiac moments in the concert hall or the tavern or the hills—to the drear realities of Subtopia and those who, to quote Osborne's *Entertainer*, " don't know what life could be." The fact is that a code of heroic individualism in a world of Admass, except for those fortunate enough to be able to emigrate to less developed parts of the world, creates an intolerable gulf between self and society, and turns whoever essays it into a complete Outsider. Thus rises the problem of the near-delinquent Rebel without a Cause.

To me, the concept of a Rebel without a Cause suggests the possibility of a Rebel with a Cause. If for the craving in youth for some alleviation of the Admass life could be found something that would engage their vigour and enthusiasm, then there might be some way out of pessimism, apathy and the tendency among so many English young people of late to retire, beaten, resentful, cynical, to expresso-bars to wait for Godot.

I am inclined to ask whether Existentialist morality, which has worked so well in facing up to the problems of private conduct, could not be developed to suggest

—a new scheme of social ideals

—a re-appraisal of the great mental achievements of the past which gave direction to previous generations with a view to seeing if there is not some direction discernible for us.

To do this, one must get over the Existentialist root-objection to ideals. To the Existentialists, essences or ideals are seen as shackles

which, congealing into doctrines and recruiting men to their service, reduce men to so *many* cells in the process of some ponderous Absolute (e.g., the Racial Utopia or the Proletarian Apocalypse) whose validity is at best doubtful and which, at worst, have issued in fearsome byzantinisms which have only worsened the lot of Man the Absurd.

These ideals, say the Existentialists, are monstrous illusions in face of the sovereign reality of man and his Angst and his daily crucifixion upon an 'eternity of appalling choices.' And so we arrive, through orthodox Existentialism, at an impasse: on the one hand, ideals are just sky-wash. on the other, the dilemma of all anti-idealists, lostness in an absurd world.

Here I submit some arguments for the re-instation of essences or ideals into our way of *thinking*; which I derive from Existentialism itself.

First it could be pointed out that in Existentialism, ideals have been abolished; one ideal nonetheless comes in at the back door—namely, the Definitive Act, or the heroic life of the existential man: and if heroic freedom is permitted as an abstractable cognisable and describable ideal, why not, logically, other ideals too? *Second*, just as it is an existentialist principle that man being here must nevertheless rise up and live, so it is also an existential fact that man, being here, is here in a social state—as a political animal, in fact, to quote venerable words: therefore there must be a series of Definitive Acts by which man faces up to the absurdity of his social existence, and therefore, a nexus of ideals to pursue in social life. The sum total of these could make a political code. It is at this point that I feel there is some basis for looking forward in hope.

When trying to recreate a base for idealism we must naturally pay particular attention to the way in which preceding ages created their ideals, to see if we can learn from them. Here Europe's long heritage may help us: although not perhaps in the way one might think.

One of the most forceful books I have read for a long time was called *The Uses of the Past*, by Herbert Muller, American Professor of History at the University of Istanbul. Professor Muller relates how he was surveying the Cathedral of Haggia Sophia, one of those great shrines raised by nameless dedicated craftsmen and visionary rulers in our more splendid past—or so say the pessimists with snide remarks about today's supermarts and pin-table arcades. Muller was intrigued at Haggia Sophia by a number of things: he noted, for example, that all the tiles bore their designers' signatures. Muller

found himself asking why. For pride in their own creations? Or was it not also that these designers might claim their pay? The decorations of inconspicuous columns was often unfinished. Why? Because Justinian rushed through the work in six years. Why? Did he think God could not wait longer than that, or was it that Haggia Sophia was part of Justinian's plan to revive the splendour of Byzantium by spectacular propagandist works? We remember Justinian, or Alexander, or Charlemagne for their great achievements, but was there not always a petty, mean, and sordid side, and did not their greatest triumphs crumble long ago?

Was grass really greener—and this is the point of Muller's argument—in those "great old days"?

From a consideration that the glorious past is no more glorious than the inglorious present, one could derive an even greater, cosmic sense of human futility than from considerations of merely the futility of the present century. Cynics might argue that every age which strives to produce improvements to the human condition only lives to see such gains lost by its successor: as the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic epics brought forth a century of singularly pedestrian government in France and the Bolshevik "liberation of the proletariat" in Russia brought forth nought but a New Class and a New Byzantium. Truly consideration of our "glorious past" could lead to *Sisyphusisme*, a term coined byAlbert Camus, or comparison of mankind to Sisyphus, the mythological character who was doomed to spend eternity pushing a stone to the top of a hill only to see it roll right down again.

But—and this is the core of Muller's argument in *The Uses of the Past*—Haggia Sophia got built. Despite its imperfections, Haggia Sophia exists. Muller is not depressed by *sisyphusiste* conclusions; he admits the futility of history *in the long run:* but then points out that in the short run something was achieved. This is essentially existentialist argument. Despite everything the Byzantine Empire existed and kept some order, and probably earned the obituary pronounced by Charles Diehl that it was 'the champion of Christendom against Islam, the defender of civilisation against barbarism and the educator of the Slavic East.'

Similarly, despite corruptions, I would ask—would it really be better of the French Revolution, or even the Communist Revolution and the Nazi Revolution had never happened? In all cases something better could have happened: but it did not, and what happened only happened because what preceded it was exceedingly bad. Thus, post-

revolutionary France, despite everything, was an improvement on pre-revolutionary France, and, though there are theoretically better possible outcomes which might have occurred, it would be very difficult to argue that Khrushchev's Russia is not an improvement on Tsarist Russia or the dynamic Hitler Reich on the flaccid Weimar Republic. True: all revolutions, reforms, wars, empires produce new chaos and travail for future generations: but then in a universe of chaos does one really expect perfection at one step, and if an empire creates peace for a few years, or a revolution inches one generation forward a little, should we not be thankful for small mercies *in hac valle lacrimarum*?

Muller admits ultimate uncertainty about human success—but then hastens to add that "The admission of *ultimate* uncertainty does not mean *complete* uncertainty," and then argues that even absurder than the philosophies of the system-builders is the claim that because men do not know ultimately what will happen in the future, we ought to give up striving in the here and now. Muller argues that we can at least make some *ad hoc* arrangements for the amelioration of the present.

Thus reverting to two points I have mentioned before

—that man is here in a social state
—that man can fall back on instinctive wisdom to create his own ideals

I feel we should and must make ideals for our age, even if they be unillumined by any final rationale. It seems to me that where communism and nazism went wrong is that they did purport to explain the final meaning of history, and involved themselves in all sorts of difficulties and tyranny when they tried to force facts and human nature to change so as to fit in with their preconceived Utopias.

What should we base our ideals on? Again op. cit. Muller—"They are implicit in the common structure of man . . . all display an aesthetic sense, an interest in creating beauty, all have and enforce a code of morality which generally comes down to something like the Golden Rule . . ." That is, the old humane common-sense instincts our instincts crave.

I think the errors of the early twentieth century idealists are traceable to a specific cause: and that cause I find thinking according to habits found in the philosophy of Hegel. Hegel, by his abolition of the distinction between mind and matter—spiritual monism—produced a metaphysical climate where ideologies could flourish which

saw the cosmos as one unitary, coherent, knowable process, as, eg., in the Hegelian Marx, a process leading to the communist Apocalypse. The arguments against Hegel are generally that in his system the free will is abolished, that factors of fate and accident are not recognised, and that individuals are reduced to cells in the processes of an Absolute which. unfortunately. being interpreted by the humanly limited mind of Hegel or the Hegelian himself, is not necessarily absolute truth. The reaction to this deification by Hegel and the Hegelians of metaphysical imponderables is a disgust with ideals and our anti-idealist epoch where flourish such polarities as those represented by the Angst-ridden Dane Soren Kierkegaard and the hedonistic American Elvis Presley.

But, as has been argued before, misinterpretation of idealism does not mean the invalidity of idealism: cults of false gods do not invalidate the idea of God. Isn't there any other sort of idealism beside the Absolute Monism of Hegel from which to seek counsel: and the answer of course is, yes.

There is the stream of European thinking, going right back to the founders of idealism, Plato and Aristotle. We may never be quite sure of how we know these ideals, never be sure as to their ultimate metaphysical status, but they are, to quote Muller's words again, "implicit in the common structure of man." The ideals of Plato and Aristotle are civic patriotism, distributive justice, the rights and duties of the citizen: they do not evolve, they do not change, they do not drag us willy-nilly like Marxist ideals in some frozen party line, but they exist as unchanging hopes of men.

I cannot understand why Existentialists have rejected faith in them: if so they act out of key with their tenets, for what is there which exists with more century-defying persistence here in our world than those ideals? Themes like liberty and justice, patriotism and the tradition of campaigning for the amelioration of wrongs are surely the most existential existents of all.

We must come to terms with these ideals and introduce them into our lives, campaigning, marching and fighting for them. Disgust with false ideologies of the recent past has gone far enough: the ills that flesh is heir to and which the ideologies rose to combat flourish with all their virulence as before. All is not well with the Western world as *Time* magazine would have us believe. Poverty, oppression, corruption, tyranny, ignorance, Occidental grasping and Oriental sloth flourish as of yore. As in Greek times, faith in ideals is necessary if any attempts at order and progress are to be taken forward.

Looking forward in hope involves the return to belief in ideologies, movements and myths, which will struggle, of course, but from whose strife limited improvements can be expected to emerge. Anything is better than apathy, or being a rebel without a cause.

The next problem is—what are the ideals for which we ought to strive? I have hinted at some: ideals of liberty, justice, civic patriotism, honoured by time; pursuit of beauty and knowledge, power, honour and adventure and virtù—the Classical, the traditional, the liberal, the Hellenic, the Christian and European virutes. Flouting the futilitarians, we can use our reasons to further these beliefs: the corollary of the argument that we cannot know the final worth of these in the ultimate cosmic sense is that we can know them in the immediate worldly sense—so let us use that reason which we have to tackle problems in the light of these beliefs.

Perhaps an anomaly will have struck the reader in the previous paragraph. I am calling for the return to ideals of liberty and social justice, which sound leftish, and at the same time to uphold patriotism and imperialism, which is of the right. This is not really an anomaly. The point is that I am advocating a re-appraisal of all ideals, not expounding any particular party line. Because I am an Existentialist, I see all ideals, as a form of existent, as of some validity and significance.

Thus one can believe in Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and at the same time uphold Property, Patriotism and Empire. The reason of course for the present dolours of the world is the great rift between Left and Right: the problem is to find balance and harmony, to steer between deficiency and excess to a Golden Mean—again, as among the incomparable Greeks.

The ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity are not incompatible with those of Property, Patriotism and Empire: the one set balances the other. In the early twentieth century. systematisers with limited visions latched on to some one of these ideals as a sovereign panacea: with disastrous results. On the left—liberty turned into licentiousness, equality into levelling-down, fraternity into what Ortega y Gasset called the revolt of the herd, and indeed, Admass. On the right—property turned into oppression of the have-nots, patriotism into chauvinism, imperialism into the exploitation of have-not races. Taking ideals to a logical conclusion in an illogical world had results that made one doubt the principles of logic, or again to quote Aristotle, to appreciate grimly how the perversion of the best is the worst.

But I prefer to deny that the ideals of the left and the ideals of

the right are irreconcilable — in a synthesis according with the principles of Hellenic-European thought. It must be the task of philosophers of the future to show that equality is best served by property as widely distributed as possible (under distributism, or under workers' participation in ownership under syndicalism). That the largest liberty is best secured by active participation in ideological activity (not sitting cabbage-like before the TV screen), i.e., by active patriotism. That imperialism could be the agent of fraternity at its highest level—that of the diffusion of civilisation and its benefits from the more-advanced to the less-advanced, a process which would offer the frustrated youth of Suptopia the opportunity their forefathers had, of going forward to virgin lands to live a healthier life.

It is the task of the thinking citizen to commit himself to the achievement of this synthesis. The committed citizen can both borrow from the Marxist opposition to the abuse of property and from the Fascist defence of culture from the herd. I see the committed man, without being a fanatic for either, exemplified by that old English concept of the Trimmer. The Trimmer is the man who is neither left nor right, disabused of any idea that either right or left have a monopoly of truth, and who has no monomaniac desire to destroy the other side root and branch, a mode of thinking better left to the Saturday morning cinema screen.

A world in which ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity are again mooted, and the responsibilities of patriotism and empire are recognised, would be expected to issue in a revival of ideologies, discussion and movements. Return to such activities would give youth some goal in life, away from the futile and flatulent diversions of the Admass existence, the TV screen, the juke box and the pin-table arcade. Once they started to think about their existence they would be on the way to a constructive anger; by enrolling themselves in ideological action, they might look forward in hope.

TORTURE AND DRAMA

Notes on a Play by Stuart Holroyd "The Tenth Chance"

THE torture or ill-treatment of prisoners in order to obtain information is one of the most deadly diseases of modern civilisation. It is a theme which merits attention in serious drama directed to moral values. Mr. Stuart Holroyd dealt with the subject seriously and ably in his play — given at the Court Theatre in March. He left at least this non-professional critic with a desire to revisit any theatre where this earnest mind seeks truth in modern problems, with an array of natural endowments which seem admirably suited to the medium in which it is working.

This favourable impression was not even vitiated by the bad habit of always presenting the villains of such pieces as Germans. Most great nations have done things of this kind in varying degree within relatively modern times, and, in any competition of atrocities, the Russians are, of course, easy winners; particularly as their atrocities in the calm of peace exceeded those of all rivals in the heat of war. The probable reason for never presenting Russians in this role is the fear of demonstration, but Mr. Holroyd had the demonstration all the same, on quite other grounds (rather a pathetic effort by the standard of old hands at demonstrations). There lies a lesson reaching far beyond this trivial incident; you get the demonstration in any event directly you do anything real, so nothing is ever gained in the end by placating the groundlings.

But more curious than this quaint little scene was the attitude of some of the professional critics. Two of them appeared to be much concerned with their surmise that the prisoner reappeared after his interrogation covered with 'tomato ketchup.' Did they attach any

particular dramatic importance to the alternative methods of red paint or lipstick? Or did they require that the actor should really be beaten up between the acts, surely a rather exacting role.

Once again the different vision of the amateur and the professional eye was noticeable; this seems to occur whenever we stray from our proper sphere to read or to see anything which is the subject of professional comment, whether it be a book on philosophy or a horse race. The professional eye appears often to be concentrated entirely on the trivial and the irrelevant.

This was at least a serious and interesting attempt to deal with a profoundly serious subject. It certainly merited far more serious attention than it generally received. It should surely be of interest to some professional critic and analyst of the modern drama to go a little more deeply into the immense theme for the theatre which was presented.

For instance, we have read much in modern literature concerning the prisoner's feelings and reactions on such occasions; a fairly straightforward and simple subject which was well handled with considerable dramatic effect on this occasion. We have not yet heard so much of the far more complex motives on the other side of the drama, and of the far more difficult moral questions there involved.

How much torture a man can stand before talking is a horrible but comparatively simple question. It is a question of degree; most things crack at last. It is like the question of troops under heavy fire. A rabble cracks at once; while the degree of endurance in a great regiment can be one of the wonders of the human spirit. But if the barrage be long enough and heavy enough, most things crack at last. In the case of this play, the sceptic cracks under torture into religion; an event rather naively presented as revelation. All such matters are simply a question of degree; a degree partly physical and partly spiritual. They are among the most horrible questions of the dark period, but relatively simple.

What is far more complex is the question why so many men, sometimes even relatively high types, in so many great nations have lent themselves to the torture of prisoners in certain conditions. Here we approach deep and dark moral questions, some of which are not yet entirely answered, and therefore demand the enquiry of great art. Why do such men use methods of torture? We cannot effectively and finally eliminate this horror until we can analyse the motive.

The first answer is surely that they torture to obtain information. They apprehend that if they do not get the information, the lives of

their comrades will be lost; they may even believe in the heat of the struggle that their whole civilisation will be lost, with all its past achievement and limitless future. These are often the motives; the matter has sometimes nothing to do with sadism. But whatever the motives are, they can never be justified. They must be condemned by a rigid law of universal application, and then stopped by a ruthless justice. But the question is not so simple as the situation which drama so far presents.

Let us take Mr. Holroyd himself as a really serious and good young man with a high sense of moral values and a deep religious feeling. Let us conceive him as a member of an occupying army, alone in a cell with a prisoner at 8 p.m. Mr. Holroyd and the prisoner both know that at midnight a mine will explode which will kill Mr. Colin Wilson, Mr. Bill Hopkins and every friend and every relation whom Mr. Holroyd holds dear in the world. (This is surely not more than a legitimate dramatisation of a frequently occurring situation, in which the troops of an occupying army desire to obtain information to save the lives of comrades in pending ambushes; a situation unpleasantly familiar from the time of the Black and Tans in Ireland until some very recent occurences, in which Germans have not been concerned.) The prisoner knows how to prevent the explosion, but Mr. Holroyd does not. So the prisoner is laughing at Mr. Holroyd because he knows that he is too good a Christian and too much of a gentleman to lay a finger upon a helpless prisoner, even though that prisoner be a feeble, hysterical type who would require only the minimum of violence to bring him to the talking point. There we may leave Mr. Holroyd in the assurance that he would resist all temptation.

But supposing that the soldier alone with the prisoner were a man of equally high moral principle and religious feeling, but of such passionate temperament that he broke down as midnight approached and beat up the prisoner. Thus he obtained the information and saved the lives of his friends. To make the drama still more painful, let us then conceive that the soldier is an officer in a corps d'élite, which is animated by certain eternal principles that are as vital to the preservation of morale in a great army as they are essential to the maintenance of honour and justice in a great society.

Some old 'square' of a general would then enter, whose principles in the matter would be precisely the same as those of the writer of these notes; principles which are hard but indispensable. He would say: "You have tortured your prisoner, and that is against the law.

No army and no society can endure if such things are permitted. You have saved the lives of your friends, but no excuse or plea in mitigation can be valid. If we ever admit this, there is no end. There is too much of this in the modern world, and it must stop. The law is that anyone who tortures a prisoner shall, on conviction after proper trial, be shot. The evidence is overwhelming in the state of the prisoner, and you must draw the consequences."

For a little further complication we might borrow slightly from von Kleist's great play. The inevitable fiancée would then enter with the ineluctable laurel leaf, to say: "You have saved the lives of your friends who will live in happiness by reason of your sacrifice. But you have broken the law of a great army, and so must die. Yet it is shameful for an officer in such a corps to be shot for disobedience to orders, and, in particular, for so ignoble a crime as the ill-treatment of a helpless prisoner. So you will, of course, commit suicide before the Court Martial." She departs, discreetly depositing the inevitable pistol in the appropriate position, and leaving her beloved to forfeit not merely his life, but also, as a suicidal Christian, to forfeit his immortal soul in the cause of honour; a good man entangled by the fates in the irresistible forces of Greek tragedy. A rather more complex theme; I bequeath it to the angriest of dramatists, yet unborn.

O.M.

A DIARY

EVEN at Easter, if you keep away from the great roads like N7 and N6, motoring in France can be a great pleasure. Even *this* Easter, which was so bitter cold and sunless, with no vestige of green in the hedgerows and only a few cowslips in the grass, when threatening snow-laden winds blew ceaselessly from Siberia across Western Europe.

I thought it might be the weather that had kept the roads relatively empty, until a few miles on N7 provided the usual exhausting scramble of hurrying, cross drivers and smelly lorries.

Getting off it again as quickly as possible, you can drive peacefully through miles of fertile country and well-kept forests, past lovely villages and old manors and castles. Unfortunately almost every town and village has a few horrors in it, and an enormous number of quite unnecessarily palatial filling stations are under construction. There seems to be no particular reason why petrol pumps should be so spectacular. They manage to be fairly harmless in Venice where the motor boats fill their tanks, and also, for example, in the Boulevard des Invalides.

★ ★ ★

The prettiest town I have seen for ages is Alençon. Towns which have given their name to lace should be attractive, but a visit to Valenciennes soon demonstrates that they are not always so. Alençon had the good fortune to be rich in the eighteenth century and less rich subsequently; for this reason it has remained lovely, with hundreds of charming houses and many old streets and squares.

Climbing some stone steps in order the better to see the fine seventeenth century palais de Guise, I found myself at the door of a chapel dedicated to St. Theresa, the Little Flower. Apparently she was born in the next-door house.

In the chapel there is a grille through which one can see St. Theresa's parents' nuptial bed, a Second Empire mahogany bed hung with red curtains; and behind these curtains, a printed notice relates, the saint as a child used to hide when she wanted to think about God.

Round the top of the chapel walls are some delightful frescoes depicting scenes from her life. In one of them she is shown, as a

little girl, " courant seule vers l'église malgré la pluie "—an act of courage which could, I daresay, be paralelled in many an Irish village on almost any Sunday. It probably rains more in Ireland than it does at Alençon.

Below the frescoes the walls are covered with slabs of marble given in gratitude by people whose prayers have been answered through the intercession of the saint. Some announce cures: " Guérison obtenue par la puissante THAUMATURGE Française du XXme siècle 25 Juin 1926 "; while several bear witness to other practical results of prayer: " Succès d'examens B.T. 1928 " says one shortly.

★ ★ ★

I visited some of the Loire châteaux so extravagantly admired by our grandparents. At Azay le Rideau and at Chenonceaux huge lamps cluster like poisonous blooms near the water, facing the castles from every angle. Red, green, blue and orange, even seeing them in daylight gives one a fair idea of how ghastly at any rate the *lumière* part of *son et lumière* must be.

The setting of Chenonceaux astride the river among woods is uniquely beautiful; unluckily the splendid gallery, of which every window down both sides hangs over the water, was embellished by a nineteenth century owner with very nasty sculptured medallions representing historical personages. These medallions slightly spoil the grandeur of this noble sixteenth century room.

Valençay is another castle worth seeing. It is a huge house, built on an eminence. Visitors are shown the table used at the Congress of Vienna, and many other possessions of Talleyrand; also the bedroom used by the Spanish King Ferdinand during his enforced stay in France while the Peninsular War was being fought. From the windows the park looks like a piece of old needlework, full of an assortment of creatures: fallow deer, white peacocks, flamingoes, geese, and even a llama.

★ ★ ★

However wrong-headed the Aldermaston marchers may have been, however wickedly irresponsible their demand for unilateral disarmament, it was impossible not to feel sorry for them as they trudged along in the snow and slush and wind. Luckily most of the men had very long hair and some of them beards, which must have been a

great comfort; and I suppose the parsons—Canon Collins and company, Father This and Father That, taking time off between the usual round of Easter services presumably—could pile plenty of vests and jerseys on underneath their cassocks. But what about the poor women, in their thin tight trousers?

On Good Friday they kept the blood coursing through their veins by jam sessions of rock and roll; there was a spirited photograph of this in *The Times*. But by Holy Saturday they must have been too footsore for that kind of sport; and it snowed. Feeling worried about their fate I rushed to the French newspapers, but the march was not mentioned, and there were no English papers to be had. As so often happens, however, my sympathy turned out to be completely misplaced, and I am only thankful to remember that I did not allow it to spoil my holiday. For, according ot the left-wing weeklies, it appears that the marchers loved their march and arrived at their goal after three days of it with heads (and presumably beards and cassocks as well) held high. One of the negroes went so far as to tell a reporter that it had been a "beautiful" march.

They were all a bit tired at the end, no doubt, which accounts for their behaviour to an Oxford geneticist, who, exercising the old English right of free speech, criticised the notion of unilateral banning of the H-bomb. It seems that on hearing his words some of the girls broke ranks, and tried to pull his motor car to bits. Only when the lady leader of the march, calling above the surrounding din, reminded them that they were supposed to be pacifists, did they resume their dignified progression.

★ ★ ★

Women this spring have achieved a really new look, especially about the head. Neat and tidy hair has had a long innings of just forty years, ever since the birds' nest bun coiffure was superseded by the shingle soon after the first war. Now the fashion seems to be for a large purple or orange chrysanthemum with a slender stalk, set on a tall thin body and spindly legs. These shaggy heads are not easily come by; it is no use thinking that to drag the hair through a hedge backwards will get the proper effect—only a hairdresser can artfully arrange the artless disarray. A bell-shaped hat would add to the horticultural effect: a huge flower under a cloche.

D.M.

ENTERTAINMENTS

Henrick Ibsen's
LITTLE EYOLF

LYRIC THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH

by MICHAEL HARALD

AN audience for the later plays of Ibsen no longer needs to be coaxed and collected by the subscription method. It is small, but it is sure; and this enables the manager planning a limited run to predict his receipts and arrange his costs accordingly. With Ibsenites, it's the play that counts; not the theatre, not the trappings, not the star. We're an odd bunch; Ibsen himself made fun of us from time to time. In the street, we're indistinguishable from normal people (the ones who find Ibsen either dull or disgusting, and booked up months ago for *My Fair Lady)*, but inside the theatre we are readily detectable. We resemble uneasy hosts in a crowd of vivacious guests. Note well our gritty tenseness in the bar-queues; our inability to get a drink before the bell goes (if we do, we slop it down our trousers); note especially our evil-eyed tolerance with the gushing guest who wonders whether it's right to laugh at *The Wild Duck* "because it's really supposed to be a sad play, isn't it?" We're an exclusive band. A rise in membership would not be worth £50 a week to the box-office if *Rosmersholm* or *The Lady from the Sea* were announced at Drury Lane with a cast so starry that twenty-five leading theatrical knights were compelled to joust to determine who played what with which theatrical Dame. Our ranks would not be appreciably thinned by a production of *The Master Builder* at the Mechanics Hall,

Somers Town, with the unhappy Mr. X (who never knows a line) and the unfortunate Miss Y (gin and laryngitis) in the leading roles. We provide an indemnity against financial ruin to any management that knows a fjord from a *fantoccini* and insists that its director and cast are similarly enlightened. It follows, then, that a manager presenting *Little Eyolf*—far from meriting a surge of critical goodwill on the grounds of his artistic intrepidity and freedom from commercial taint—should expect to find his offering subjected to close, even suspicious, scrutiny. With any other author he might suitably be left to expiate a bad production in bankruptcy; with Ibsen there is no such risk. As judged by severely—but not, I think, unfairly—high standards, by the expectations which *Eyolf* arouses on the printed page, the production at Hammersmith is very nearly a total failure.

To what degree, then, if any at all, is the dramatist himself responsible for this failure? Is it that the play, like his last great masterpiece, *When We Dead Awaken,* is too "difficult" for the average director and player? Are the transitions from domestic realism to soaring symbolism, and back again, too obscure in motive and origin to be understood and effectively represented? I do not think so. It may be, indeed, that we have to look outside the play and inside the stage profession to discover why *Eyolf* has never been popular with actors. It was written in 1894, when Ibsen was sixty-eight; it was quickly translated by the indispensible William Archer and produced by the New Century group two years later. In the sixty-two years since that first production, London has seen only three revivals of the piece (the current one is the first in my time; yet I have seen *A Doll's House, Hedda Gabler* and *The Wild Duck* at least three times each in the past ten years). A plausible explanation of this neglect is, I think, that London leading players, who are always pleased to impersonate ineffectual husbands or shrewish wives, are yet reluctant to appear as unnatural parents. The Eyolf of the play is a cripple as a result of a fall sustained while his parents were engaged in an activity which is usually reserved for the time when the children have been put to bed. He then selects a moment when his parents are quarrelling and follows the strange visitor, the Rat Wife, to the neighbouring fjord, and is drowned there. Parental indifference, not to say downright negligence, would seem in the English theatre to carry a stigma greater by far than breaches of the laws of Zeus, the Ten Commandments, or the penal code. One must therefore thank Mr. Robert Eddison and Miss Heather Chasen for risking professional obloquy by assuming the roles of Mr and Mrs Allmers in the current

revival. (It may be, of course, that both performers are unmarried, and consequently above suspicion of practising under their own roofs the actions set down for them in the play. I think this even *likely* in the case of Mr. Eddison: no married man would turn his back on an angry wife, close his eyes, and elocute his excuses to the Dress Circle —unless he had first taken the precaution of trussing her hand and foot.) But it would be hypocritical to thank Mr. David William, the director. His complete misjudgment of the play has left his actors in an absurd plight; for along the lines he has drawn, the better they act, the worse for *Little Eyolf*.

Now contrary to green-room rumour, many directors do actually *read* the play entrusted to them; and Mr. William has obviously studied *Eyolf* very carefully— as *literature*. The consequences of this error would have been both logical and unimportant had Mr. William, instead of producing the play, elected to write a thesis on it: in the theatre they proved fatal. This was Ibsen as he might have been interpreted in South Kensington drawing-rooms on cultured Sunday evenings long ago. A sickly, *fin de siècle* gloom pervaded the theatre, and an intrusive prissiness which I do not care to define more closely. I should perhaps stress that the new translation (Mr. Michael Meyer) in no way contributed to this. It followed Archer's version, more or less, as far as I could judge, and was neither incongruously modern nor comically Victorian in idiom. Certainly there was nothing here to encourage Mr. Eddison's poetry-voice or Miss Chasen's rhetorical style as alternatives to genuine characterisation and natural delivery (that the spirit which dominates all these later plays is a *poetic* one is another matter altogether). Miss Chasen's dissatisfaction with her husband seemed hardly to touch him, and this is not surprising, for it was communicated, not to Mr. Eddison, but to another actor at the end of my row of stalls, who was clearly not to be drawn into the argument. "The sham!" she hissed. "Pain stood there, but you never raised your glass." This was new and intriguing to me; and I hurried home to check with Archer. Yes, indeed: "There stood your champagne, but you tasted it not . . ." The evening crawled funereally. The play was buried (finally, or at any rate for another ten years or so, I am sorry to say) with a dull thud.

Miss Selma Vaz Dias was adequate as the Rat Wife, though this small part will hold at least six times the acting she put into it; Miss Barbara Clegg was unassumingly professional as Asta Allmers; and a boy-actor, John Hall, spoke his lines clearly but left my withers

regrettably unwrung at his early demise: he was a reassuringly solid and rather unlovable little Eyolf. Mr. Michael David was miscast as Borgheim, though his neat, natural movements and conversational delivery served to illustrate the fact that Ibsen needs no loud-speaker, no trumpeting of his ideas, to be acceptable. I leave the producer and his principal players to digest this thought.

CINEMA

Porte des Lilas, Bitter Victory, The Brave One, The Seventh Seal

by VINCENT MURRAY

COMPLAINTS about the scarcity of artists working in cinema are punctuated periodically in these notes by sighs of relief when one of the rare birds produces an opus, and this is one of the months when it has happened. 'Written, produced and directed by René Clair' reads the credit, and the stamp of the master is guaranteed. **Porte des Lilas**, his most recent work, reflects his maturer mood in its deliberate playing-down of the comic-balletic element so notable in his earlier films. The story is rather sad: Ju Ju, an amiable good-for-nothing who spends most of his time with a guitar-playing character known only as the Artist, suddenly finds he is called upon to be of some practical use to somebody when a gangster takes refuge at the Artist's house. Only when it becomes apparent that the gangster is making love to Ju Ju's girl-friend, Maria, simply in order to obtain money from her, do any feelings of conflict arise in Ju Ju. In a struggle with the gangster he kills him, and returns the money to Maria.

Emphasis on character has been gradually increasing in Clair's work, and now the affectionate observation of his characters takes precedence over mechanics of the plot, a feature that makes his films more personal and gives them a quality that will keep them as

sought-after in fifty years' time (assuming there is such a thing as 'cinema' then), as they are now. Connoisseurs will note the beautifully nostalgic framing sequences; but they may wonder, as I did, why Clair chose such atmospheric settings to surround a contemporary story that has nothing in common with *Le Quatorze Juillet* or *Sous les Toits*. Clair is probably as nostalgic as the rest of us. Pierre Brasseur (how expansive since the days of *Quai des Brumes* or even *Les Enfants du Paradis!*) plays Ju Ju with quiet, simple humour that contrasts beautifully with Henri Vidal's vicious gangster, and shows up so obviously the failings of George Brassens, a chansonnier called upon to play the part of the Artist. Brassens' songs, though, are well worth listening to.

What influence, if any, can a film critic have on contemporary film-production? A difficult enough question to answer, even if one considers only the critic who is content to make his presence felt through the columns of a newspaper or magazine. What, however, about the critic who moves over to the other side of the fence, and helps in the actual production of a film? Readers may remember my comments some time ago when Gavin Lambert, a leading British film-critic, went to America to work as adviser to Nicholas Ray, a director whose work was at that time much in favour over here. To judge by *Amère Victoire* (**Bitter Victory**), directed by Ray and partly scripted by Lambert for a French production company, the critic's influence, at least in this first production, is very slight indeed. The story tells of the relationship between Brand and Leith, two officers in the last war who are engaged on a raid on an H.Q. in Benghazi. The plot is probably a little more poorly contrived than standard Hollywood scripts, and only the action sequences have any life about them at all. The dialogue is as wooden as that usually associated with the lavish epic, and the characterisation is one-dimensional. Curt Jürgens and Richard Burton can make nothing of their parts.

The Brave One will probably prove a very popular film. It has an appealing child actor in the lead (Michel Ray), some really splendid colour photography (Jack Cardiff) and a great deal of picturesque Mexican scenery to look at. The sentimental story, though, does not move as easily as it should amongst these positive attributes. The fault lies mainly in the script, for the dialogue is stilted and development of plot shows but an elementary knowledge of film technique. The story is of Leonardo, a Mexican peasant-boy, who is given a bull by his father's employer and has to struggle hard, first to try to prevent it being put in the arena and then, when this has failed, to obtain a 'pardon' for it, which he manages to do. Like most child-actors these days Michel Ray has had a lot of time spent on him by the director (Irving Rapper); but Mr. Rapper is no Carol Reed, and frequently it is painfully obvious from the boy's performance that the ideas have originated from the other side of the camera. This is a pity, because at times Ray's performance has

a freshness which might have won me over to the film had it been maintained throughout. As it is, I admire the film's technical skill (it is invariably a treat to look at), but its content is a little too lush for my taste.

A film on a higher intellectual plane, but which nevertheless I find difficult to accept as an honest piece of film-making, is Ingmar Bergmann's **The Seventh Seal**. It is an allegory telling of the wanderings of a knight and his squire through Sweden in the Middle Ages after the exhausting struggles of the Crusades. Contemporary man's obsession with various forms of death finds vivid expression in the revelation of chaos in the wake of war. Plague, terror, mob-violence, corpses and a personified death-image are all encountered by the disillusioned knight. Again the technique is masterly, but I beg to doubt the sincerity of the content. Bergmann seems constantly to strive for effect. What could be more precious than an eerie game of chess with Death on a deserted sea shore? The nausea, the corruption, the rotting stench of evil fascinates him, as indeed other sordid aspects of life have engrossed him in previous films. How much more could have been achieved through the power of suggestion? A film on a similar theme, that relied mainly on the veiled hint for its impact, might well be almost unbearable, but at least its director could not be accused of wallowing in squalor.

Next month in *The European*

THE SOVIET UNION

by Roy Macgregor-Hastie

the first of three articles on literary and artistic aspects of Eastern European countries entitled:

The Curtain Corroded

NEW BOOKS

Visiting the Islamic Poor

TRAVEL books, pressure-cooked on international airports, will, I suppose, soon take the place of the robust old-fashioned brew that came of foot-slogging and long residence in foreign parts. Like tinned vegetables, the new product can look savoury, but tastes watery and metallic. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell's flight round the Near East in 1956, recorded in *Arabesque and Honeycomb* (Robert Hale, 35s.), bears witness to this sad and modern truth. "The present work has been long maturing," he writes, "for it may be said that from the moment I set foot in Morocco in the spring of 1927 and saw its mosques and human beings, I was determined to go to Persia." As a long-matured account of the mosques of Persia, this book cannot surely be of great technical value, for, apart from photographs of domes and façades bathed in well-filtered atmosphere, it offers no architectural drawings or plans and little concrete information to offset his aesthetic observations. Lovers of fine writing will find much to admire in the description of the mosques of Shiraz, though architects will be disappointed and grammarians intrigued.

"Being Ramazan, we did not enter any of the mosques, but had to be content with their characteristic flower-tiled portals with red and yellow roses which, prettily tawdry as they are, have their own word to say of flowers and sunshine, such a message as one used to get on opening a box of Italian wax-matches with trigger-fastening of elastic, and as likely as not a burnt finger, but on the cardboard lid some Tetrazzini or other human nightingale of the warm South singing among roses and carnations, and my memory going back to long ago, the bersaglieri, hats with curling green-black cocks' feathers on one side tied under their chins, rushing past on their bicycles playing shrill marches on their bugle-band."

An association of outlandish oddments and a syntax out-Prousting Proust divert us from the admission that, at Shiraz at any rate, he never saw the mosques at all. Here, of course, the aeroplane timetables and the clockwork of modern life were much to blame, but, granted these conditions of modern travel, anyone passionately inter-

ested in mosques, rather than interested in seeing mosques (there is a distinction, I think), would never have undertaken such a journey in Ramazan, whatever his domestic or financial circumstances. Lent or the Month of Mary would never have been allowed to put a serious obstacle in the way of Pevsner's studies as he travelled through Europe. Islamic architecture must still wait for its Pevsner.

If his mosques are skimped for the time-table, the human beings (the other half of his programme) are shown without kindness—except those of consular rank or above. Only prejudices mature in aeroplanes. No bond of sympathy has time to grow. The everyday Persians and Egyptians are treated as exhibits in a Near Eastern raree-show or as a hostile generality. At Meshed, where "we were by now the guests of the American Consul in his old house with several courts, etc.," a lady who lived in a kennel and had a stronger sense of human dignity than the author's, slammed her door in his camera's snout; so little did she care for someone who had been the guest of honour at "a huge dinner party attended by all the élite of Meshed."

In Cairo, despite a choice between Aphrodite, Apollon demi sec, Osiris dry and Cru des Ptolemées for dinner, the pained astonishment of the author deprived of his air-conditioned carapace, turns to chagrin and alarm. Confusion creeps into his text. On one page we read that: "Cairo has not changed in more than twenty years, except that it is dustier than ever and that nearly every building needs a new coat of paint." On the next, he writes: "That the city has much deteriorated since I saw it before is not to be disputed. There is a howling poverty and a hopelessness of dust that cries aloud. The wealthy have been robbed but it (sic) has not enriched the poor."

In Persia, the American presence has so far saved the wealthy from being robbed, although the Shah's Government is noted for its absolutism, nepotism and extravagances. The Cairenes, on the other hand, no longer having a European presence and a hereditary monarchy to tutor them into unconditional respect, do not merit Mr. Sitwell's approving epithet of picturesque. The decorous Persians merely whine for alms; the Egyptians, unenriched despoilers, howl. "In another quarter of an hour we are at the hotel surrounded by a mob howling for bakshish, some of whom in the guise of guides or dragomen follow one right into the hotel." This style of writing reminds me of the memoirs of my Aunt Margaret who sailed up to Luxor in 1910. She knew for a fact that the disguise of guide or dragoman hid intentions more sinister. Although not a wealthy

woman herself, she was always ready for the brigandage to begin. And imagine, she would later exclaim to stay-at-home Aunt Cissie, imagine the impudence of following *one* right into the hotel!

Passing through the station square, embellished by the Revolutionary Government, Mr. Sitwell notes that a colossal statue of Rameses II now dominates the "evil crowd." The jacquerie were in full cry that day, it seems; yet in all his twenty-four hours or a little more that our intrepid author wandered through this howling wilderness, he does not record one single personal experience of manhandling, drugging, robbery or abduction. And this is another disappointment, for the "evil crowd" promised well for an adventurous ending to the book.

The Puritan bourgeois mind readily leaps to the conclusion that because a man is poor, he must be lazy; rarely faces the truth that a man is hopeless and lethargic because he is irremediably poor; and more unwillingly still considers what factors of incompetent government should produce irremediable, hopeless poverty. Yet on Mr. Sitwell's page, though the logical connexion is never grasped, the factors are set down. Faced with the poor, under-nourished, and diseased citizens of an over-populated, under-developed and hitherto ruthlessly exploited country, Mr. Sitwell sighs for the days when the Mamelukes rode by, "almost covered by gold and silver." Where did the gold and silver come from, if not from fines and taxes? And it is very much less than twenty years ago, very much later than his previous visit to Cairo, that the dynasty of Mohammed Ali owned, as absolute lords, no less than six per cent. of the total of the best of the cultivable land of Egypt; less than twenty years ago since Imperial Britain was free to dictate just how the Egyptians were to employ their resources and energies to the profit of the Imperial Treasury and the foreign investor. It is not true, as Mr. Sitwell suggests, that the wealthy have been robbed indiscriminately and violently. The Statute of Land-Reform awarded compensation to all landowners whose estates were redistributed, the members of the ruling House excepted. These latter only were expropriated without compensation, and they had, as their present state on the Riviera shows, made ample provision already for such a contingency.

The Puritan bourgeois mind, having concluded that one poor *man* is a lazy man, reasons on that poor men collectively must be evil men. Before you can spell Tetrazzini, you have persecution mania, evil crowds, disguised dragomen and "roars and yells for bakshish" that threaten your own embalmed position in society. You become con-

vinced, like old Margaret Sopwith, that every Egyptian who clears his dusty throat within earshot would be spitting at you if he dared. And you dash with relief to the airport, where everyone looks as well-heeled, benign and charitable as yourself, but where the poor cannot get in to solicit you.

How happy the middle classes would feel, how unmenaced, how untrammelled, if suddenly all the slums were empty and the unemployed and the refugees had vanished like smoke; life could be dinner parties and wax matchboxes for ever and no burnt fingers or nightmares of spoliation. When I read travel books (more than three-quarters of humanity qualifying as poor) I look particularly to see how the writer treats the poor man whose ancestors raised the monumental objectives of the globe-trotter.

Mosques and human beings? — The world being Mr. Sitwell's museum, as the vast list of his travel books declares, he could afford to pretend that all the poor people have ceased to exist. It would be preferable to have just his unentered mosques and entertaining consuls without an inhumane arabesque of beggars and dragomen — his Persian sisters and Egyptian brothers, when all is said and done,— spoiling, like noxious flies, his aesthete's honeycomb.

R.K.S.

Waterloo to Peterloo by R. J. White (Heinemann, 18.).

THE 1817 Derbyshire Rising, known locally as the "Pentrich Revolution," was the inspiration for this work, the author having grown up in the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire border-country where it took place. The rising itself occupies only one short chapter, but Mr. White ranges both back and forward to discover the causes of the tragic events of the years following the battle of Waterloo and culminating in the massacre at St. Peter's Fields. In doing so he has given us a fairly comprehensive picture of life in Regency England.

We are taken back to Cobbett's "golden age," by no means as golden as Cobbett would have had people believe, and then forward to the machine age which was disrupting the established order. The lives and thought of both governors and governed are considered with sympathy, though as a Burke-ian Tory Mr. White has a sentimental regard for the old order which was passing.

He deals fully with the repressive policy which a frightened government inflicted upon a hungry population. It is not a story of villainy —on either side. Rather it is one of muddle. The machinery of

government was out of date, a relic of a more leisurely time and the ruling philosophy of laisser-faire only increased the ineptitude of the government. Without any properly organised method for the maintenance of law and order, in troubled times the government was forced to fall back on military repression and a spy system. Even these were used in a most haphazard fashion. The Peterloo massacre itself occurred simply because a group of inexperienced irregulars manoeuvred themselves into an impossible position.

The innocents who died at Peterloo, like Jeremiah Brandreth and the martyrs of the Derbyshire Rising, were the victims of an obsolete governmental system trying to cope with a revolutionary age. There is a moral here for our own age.

P.W.

Claudel by Wallace Fowlie.

Martin Buber by Arthur Cohen (Bowes and Bowes, 10s. 6d. each).

THE study of Claudel is a lucidly written book about a man whose intellectual position over a period of fifty years had the advantage of being clearly defined, but whose uncompromising Weltanschauung made him too strong a brew for many. Indeed, he was recently described by the literary editor of the *New Statesman* as " nastier than Belloc, nastier (if that were possible) than Roy Campbell. From the day of his conversion in Notre Dame in 1896 Claudel became a full-blooded Roman Catholic propagandist; he roamed the world as a diplomat, survived wars, Dadaism, and the Occupation; the more he experienced, the more his faith was strengthened. He lived his life by stern principles with a faith that was no easy burden to bear, writing that " the Catholic faith is easy to give up. It is extraordinarily difficult to return to it and live by it again." This book is divided into four parts, of which the first is biographical and the remainder entitled: " the Poet, the Dramatist, the Apologist."

That great figure of twentieth century Judaism, Martin Buber, described himself as " not a Jewish theologian, but a Hebrew thinker." Mr. Cohen's thorough study of his thought sweeps away the mist surrounding this almost legendary man. Buber sees the holy as the centre of the human situation. As a result of his study of Hasidism and his theory of Dialogue (the I-thou relationship at the basis of life as expounded in his book *The Question to the Single One*) he came to the conclusion that " God has been shrouded by man; it is for man to remove the veil."

R.B.

TROOPING THE COLOUR

by G. L. NICOL

WE sailed on New Year's Day from Southampton. An elderly major-general in a British warm waved from the quayside. The band on deck played a patriotic medley. We were sailing, one entire battalion, to Port Sudan. With us were a few Sandhurst R.A.S.C. officers, newly-commissioned and rather far down the pass-out list. Our battalion had come from Germany and we were very conscious of our 'scheme' fitness. Hell, Nigel, the bar closes at eleven. It did. We could only stand with empty glasses and watch a girl in a sailor's cap dance the old year out.

Khartoum. Anyway no more 'schemes.' You are going out there to show the flag, we had been told. Guard-mounting, cricket and garden parties. Nicely proconsular and plenty of girls. The C.O. realised that it would be 'cushy,' so we trained for any and every eventuality. Rifle exercises, unarmed combat, I.A.s on the Bren, and concealment films. In the Bay of Biscay we saw strangely lyrical War Office films shot on Salisbury Plain. Kill or be killed. Tense faces and the traffic moving along a main road to London. By Gibraltar, desert warfare seemed as far away. I saw a book, *Imperial Policing*, on the adjutant's deck-chair.

I shared a cabin with four others. It was very small and stuffy. My bunk was under the port-hole and the climb-up was particularly difficult in a heavy sea. Bill, Pat, Nigel; all good second-lieutenant names. Almost straight from school, we were very conscious of officer status, with monogrammed coat-hangers and snap-shots of 'nice' girls in our wallets. Our batmen would come in about six o'clock in the evening and polish brasses and boots, squatting on the floor. Sometimes we played cards with them, cigarettes dangling from the corners

of our mouths, like professional gamblers. You rock ape, one of them always said, if I missed a trick.

The senior officers had wives and children, as well as luggage. For them it was very much a matter of servants, verandahs with sun-blinds and dinner parties. A country for them was measured, entirely, by the condition of its service accommodation. Off duty we were on Christian name terms with some of the senior officers. Thirsty, Pat? What you having? In the bar most of the conversation was about Germany, or someone putting up a black, or a woman, or that hell of a good party when old Henry . . . Perhaps a major after his fifth whisky would talk about Sicily. Christ . . . Bloody good show . . . shit flying everywhere . . . sergeant what's his name of the M.M.G.s, he'll remember. They had, and it made us respect them, been at the sharp end of things.

Off Malta we had a ship's dance. As far as women were concerned, we were fairly well placed. There was a party of school-teachers going out of Suez. They had north-country accents and wore nylon stockings with thick dark seams. They had been invited by the adjutant, but some preferred the sergeants' 'do.' It was rather heavy Palm Court, the atmosphere. The regimental band played selections from 'Oklahoma' and 'Bless the Bride.' Some of us danced, but most just drank or talked to the C.O. and his wife. One of the Sandhurst R.A.S.C. sat playing sedate cards the whole evening with a pimply girl, her mother and two journalists. Later, according to hallowed tradition, the colonel called on the subalterns to perform. Like a group photograph we lined up in front of the scarred piano. We sang a number from an American musical with a loud chorus about 'dames.' One or two were missing on deck. Pat swore he was locked in a bathroom with an Irish girl who had brought her riding habit in her luggage. By about one most people were drunk. The senior officers drifted off to their nuptial bunks. I expect we played rugger among the broken glasses and paper.

Disgorged from the canal, we stopped training. The Red Sea was too hot for anything. The soldiers lay about on their decks in P.T. shorts. We gave short talks on the Anglo-Egyptian Condominion and the Gezira cotton scheme. Sketch in the background, just a few facts, we were told. In the evening we played deck tennis or quoits on the sun deck. The C.O., adjutant and second in command in short white shorts sat sipping lime juice. They stared across the still sea at the jagged backbone of Arabia through tired eyes. It could have been India, again, but no, Khartoum was to be a short posting. Those

evenings had the almost timeless quality of English middle-class life. Scarcely a breeze; and their wives lay back in deck chairs, their arms limp and eyes closed.

My tour of duty as orderly officer took me to the hold. Here most of the men slept in hammocks. The sergeant accompanying me wore a red sash and was confidingly pleasant. There was a foul smell of stale sweat and heavy cacophonous breathing. The hold itself was almost dark. Suddenly a man swayed towards us. His hair was close cropped, like worn down bristles and his face was thin and tired. I stepped aside to let him pass. Two months later I was to see the same man in a guardroom cell. He was standing by his bed rigidly at attention in denim trousers and a red vest. In the camp bed all his kit was neatly arranged. He had gone absent for a day and was found in a native brothel, hiding in the cupboard. I was glad of the clean night air.

The night before docking at Port Sudan we entertained the ship's officers at a cocktail party. All the conversations were about Khartoum. Speculation nibbled among the cheese biscuits and olives. The soldiers, I suppose, were drinking warm N.A.A.F.I. beer in their canteen. One or two belching quietly to themselves, and lonely. The five of us were invited by some junior engineer officers to their cabin. It was even smaller than our own, with sickly green walls and a huge revolving fan. Three bottles of whisky and a mountain of cigarette packets on a small table. We drank and sang. One of the engineers got very drunk. He stood up, a whisky in his hand and started on 'Scots wha hae.' He fell across the table scattering cigarettes. His face was a pale green. Jolly good chaps, we said, pushing each other hard against the corridor walls.

Port Sudan was very hot. Kites hovered above the quayside. It took us the morning and most of the afternoon to unload. We had changed into khaki drill and strolled among the sweating unloading party and fingered our revolver holsters. Soon the train for Khartoum would pull in, milk-white and glinting in the evening sun. Take your platoons, we were ordered. Over there with the platoon book under his arm stood your sergeant. Across to him you marched, brown boots surfed with white dust. A sharp salute, and the final inspection. Fasten this strap. Haircut in Khartoum. Look to your front, man.

I could smell the sea. Perhaps three days to Khartoum. Lead on corporal, I said.

LETTERS

BANTU CULTURE

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

Mr. Martin Preston's article in your March issue is an excellent presentation of the case for Apartheid (which has been supported by a negro who broadcast through the B.B.C.); but how does he propose to "preserve Bantu culture" and, at the same time, convert all the Bantu in South Africa to Christianity? The two co-exist in Buganda, Nigeria and Ghana, but there are few Europeans in those countries and they are mainly transients. Furthermore, the first is partly Moslem and the other two contain a mixture of Christian, Moslem and Pagan communities. It has been suggested that Islam, which does not insist on monogamy, suits the Bantu better. It is a faith which ignores racial differences. Christianity is equated, in African and Asiatic minds, with European imperialism and it has failed to oust Paganism completely among Central and South Americans of indigenous stock—or, for that matter, Brazilians and Haitians of Bantu descent. Christianity did not put an end to tribalism in Albania, Ireland, Scotland and the subcarpathian Ukraine, but they were not settled by imitative Bantu.

Mr. Preston says that the million or so Bantu who entered Iberia in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ". . . were completely absorbed into the European population, leaving hardly a trace behind them." They left a marked trace in Portugal, where there are many mulatto types, as there are in her daughter-state, Brazil. The Portuguese were the first European imperialists after the collapse of the Macedonian and Roman Empires, but they paid dear for their enterprise. Their best men were lost through the wars and diseases of tropical countries and their places were taken in the motherland by Africans and Asiatics (especially in the southern provinces, the northerners remaining Celto-Mediterranean). This produced a race with a great capacity for hard work but with none of the adventurous spirit which seems to be the outstanding characteristic of Europeans, especially those who live in Teutonic, Celtic and Latin states, as well as Greece and Great Russia.

Yours faithfully,

PATRICK J. N. BURY.

Ballymountain House,
Waterford, Ireland.

ART SCHOOLS

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

I agree in the main with Mr. Bradshaw's letter about art schools, but to reform them would not Mr. Bradshaw have to reform the whole English attitude towards art? He would have to begin, surely, with the heads of secondary schools, who think art should be allotted only to the 'B' stream.

Then he would have to start at the top in art schools by attacking the present establishment of examiners, inspectors, principals and heads. Most principals and heads are ex-metal workers, water-colourists, etc.; half of them are philistines, and many of the others merely "indulgent" towards fine art and artists. There are good artists amongst younger teachers in art schools, but most of them soon abandon the struggle in favour of the pocketed ease and tasteful living that art teaching offers them. And then there remains the problem of the lecturers and heads of departments, whose responsibilities have dwindled or vanished, but who continue to sit, irremovable, on empty nests. The situation is as bad as this in the north, but it improves the nearer one gets to London, that great outpost of Europe.

Yours faithfully,

TEMPORARY HEAD.

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