THE EUROPEAN

THE JOURNAL OF OPPOSITION

AUGUST 1958 Vol. XI, No. 6

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August — 1958
Number Sixty-Six

Printed by Sanctuary Press, Ltd., S.W.1.

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ANALYSIS

HOLD and develop what lies within your control; put neither trust nor money elsewhere. What lies within the control of a United Europe is enough to give all Europeans a good life. But the attempt by relatively small, individual nations of Europe to hold outposts outside their effective control, is bound to fail; and to rest the economic life of a nation on such positions is sheer insanity. Surely the Iraq experience has at last driven these simple, basic lessons of real policy into even the dullest mixture of stupidity and arrogance which fills any conservative head.

Folly in Jordan instead of building Europe.

The government of Great Britain has long been the chief hindrance to making Europe. It prefers instead to maintain the positions of an outworn colonialism, after disseminating doctrines for war purposes which made their maintenance impossible. So the vital oil supplies of Britain were derived from areas over which we had not even the remotest real control; and from areas which in theory we had taught to reject our suzerainty and in practice had alienated by the hysterical adventure of Suez. Even then, we preferred the illusion that we still ruled Iraq to the reality of a constructive labour in making a United Europe with its own supplies in a contiguous and controllable Africa.

The forcible-feeble method without object.

Once again, the forcible-feeble method of Conservatism has been employed in Jordan. We may well ask, what was the exact purpose of this exercise? To use Jordan as a bridge head for the reconquest of Iraq would at least be intelligible. To send British forces to suppress the revolt in Iraq and to establish there a Hussein government would certainly put Britain back on the map with a bang; however disastrous the final consequences. It would at least be an intelligible operation of clear-cut purpose; a calculated risk for great ends.

It is in our view a risk we should certainly not take, because, apart from all moral considerations, Iraq is outside the area of our effective control, and, in the end, we should fail and finally lose the

Middle East. A holy war of all the Arab peoples would eventually be launched against us, and a flood of Russian "volunteers" would be sent to their aid. We should, also, run the risk that Russia would intervene officially, at the request of the new Iraq government, and would use as justification precisely the same formula employed by Britain and America in Jordan and Lebanon; — that Russia was so acting until U.N.O. was itself in a position to defend small nations from external aggression.

Another fatal half-measure foredoomed to failure.

An invasion of Iraq by British forces would, therefore, be the final folly, the suicide of our struggling economy, and the gift of the Arab peoples to Russia. Yet it would at least be an operation with the intelligible purpose of restoring Britain's prestige and securing our oil supplies. But what is to be said for going into Jordan, and stopping there? What purpose can it serve except an exercise of spleen through the indulgence of a petulant vanity and the gesture of a palsied futility?

So we set the whole Arab world against us without purpose. So we present our moral position in the Middle East to Russia, without real objective of any kind. It is just another of those fatal half-measures which are foredoomed to failure. It is simply to place our head under the Russian arm, while the Arab toe is relentlessly applied to the other end; a position just as ridiculous, and far more painful than the attitude of the classic ostrich with its head in the sand. Surely, before long, Britain will have enough of a ruling caste which has not only thrown away our world in the course of one generation, but is now busy making us the laughing stock of the Levant as a prelude to making us the tragedy of history.

"He who hesitates is lost"

The present situation is in many ways reminiscent of Suez, whose controversies it is bound to revive. Surely all men of any realism can draw at least one lesson from that occasion: "he who hesitates is lost". Two diametrically opposed policies were available; either of which could have been pursued resolutely to success. The first was to realize that Suez was no longer a lifeline of Empire for three good reasons: (a) we had given away the Empire at the other end of the lifeline; (b) it was cut for two years by submarines and aeroplanes in the last war; and (c) it could be cut for good by one A-bomb in the next war, without the enemy even bothering to waste

an H-bomb. Therefore the only practical means of drawing oil from the precarious resources of the Middle East was by pipe lines across the desert, or by tankers round the Cape. As the Arab peoples could at any time cut the pipe lines, it was vital not to antagonize them. Also it was important at almost any cost to preserve their friendship in order to cover the oil fields, and to prevent infiltration of these temporarily vital areas by communism. That clear cut view indicated an equally clear cut policy of sacrificing Suez, if necessary, to the maintenance of Arab friendship, and using every device of diplomacy, military support and money power to bind them to our cause.

The necessity of realistic calculation in advance.

The other view was that Suez was still a lifeline of Empire which was still vital to our existence, and therefore must at all costs be defended. In that event, of course, we should never have left Suez at all, but have exerted overwhelming force to hold it throughout. Ministers who abandon something they really believe is vital to the life of their country, should simply be impeached. Having abandoned Suez, however, we should have been in a position of constant readiness to go back at any time if it were seriously threatened. And we should have weighed long in advance the consequences of such an intervention in Egypt.

The consequences were quite plainly the anger of America and the menaces of Russia. But any realist calculation would have grasped the fact that the Americans could not give practical effect to their anger without destroying the Western Alliance, which they could not afford. Also the Russians could not give practical effect to their rocket measures without starting a world war, which they could not afford, and it is quite certain that if Russia meant to start a world war, they would not begin by rapping us over the fingers but by striking at the heart. Really to bombard London, would lead to world war. Russia would not start a world war by accident as the result of a Middle Eastern incident. If they really meant world war they would start it deliberately, and would seek at once by a surprise blow to knock out every capital and strategic centre of the West.

The fatality is to advance like lions, then run like lambs.

A British government which had weighed the consequences and resolutely struck at Suez, would therefore have been sure that

neither America nor Russia would have intervened with force. Yet at the first rude message from America, and at the first rough menace from Russia, they turned round on their tracks and ran. They went in like a lion without a moment's thought, and they came out like a lamb without a moment's resistance. That plunge, hesitation and scuttle lost us the Arab world that day, and the oil fields of the Middle East the next day. Hence this brief retrospect, which has a considerable bearing on the fatal recurrence of present events.

Only one real reason; a bridgehead for the defence of Israel?

Yet England still has to put up with the same men and the same folly. All the old errors are being repeated. They have even managed now to make the Americans as silly as themselves. We return to the question, what is the object of the Lebanese and Jordan adventures, now the oil fields have been lost? If Britain now landed in Kuweit, there would at least be a practical object; a very large part of the oil supplies could be saved by this application of force and could be permanently defended in that position by sea power. But that would be too overtly looking after our own interests for current hypocrisy to tolerate. We must always have humbug without a reason, or at least the reason must have nothing in the world to do with British interests. There is only one conceivable practical reason for the occupation of Jordan — for heaven's sake let us cut out any more cant of moral reasons, obligations etc., or we shall soon be at war again to liberate Poland and all the other places we have sworn to defend and have betrayed to the Russians — the only practical reason for the occupation of Jordan is to form a bridgehead for the more convenient defence of Israel.

The West has other means to prevent massacre of Jews.

Let no-one think that on this or any other occasion we are animated by anti-semitism. On the contrary we think the West should make it quite clear that neither now nor in the future will we permit any Arabs to cut two million Jewish throats. This matter must be settled by the reason of a great policy and not by murder. We do not ourselves believe that any man with Nasser's record of realism, would contemplate any action which violated all considerations of humanity and set the whole world against him. But we should make it clear that we would not permit it to happen and, in that case, it would not happen; whether we held a bridgehead in Lebanon and

Jordan, or not. The right place to implement the humane and proper purpose of preventing a massacre of Jews by Arabs, is on the wide seaboard of Israel; it is easily accessible and would be a very suitable operation for sea power. But, another clumsy violation of Arab territory and rights in nominal defence of internal regimes which have difficulty in sustaining themselves in face of their own people, is more likely than anything else to set the Middle East aflame and precipitate an eventual attack on Israel.

What makes the dead doll tick?

The West has quite power enough to keep order in the Middle East, at least to the extent of preventing wholesale murder without all this dangerous buffoonery. And if. our politics and propaganda had any skill at all we could oblige Russia either to support us in the prevention of widespread massacre, or to stand branded as a criminal power just at the moment it is striving for various purposes to emerge from a criminal past. It is quite possible to preserve the essentials of order in the accessible areas of the Middle East without making further fools of ourselves by plunging about Arab territories in a series of minor military operations. What we object to in this matter is the fact that British government is so slow to act in defence of British interests, and so hysterically eager to act when certain outside interests are involved. It seems to be only when this particular button is pressed that the dead doll of present government ticks at all.

Why not support the real European interest in Algeria?

If British government had shown a tenth of the zeal in building Europe, or even in defending the vital supplies of Britain until Europe were ready, we should face to-day a future of stable prosperity rather than of desperate precariousness. Once again now we abandon the reality for the shadow. The future of Europe is being decided in the real bridgehead between Europe and the riches of Africa, which is Algeria. The struggle of France to preserve that position is regarded with icy indifference or with active hostility by Britain and America. Yet, surely, real policy should face the fact that in this area we can secure reliable access to safe oil supplies and all other necessary primary products, which could be entirely under the control of the United Europe; while in the Middle East we now have to fight a war to subjugate the whole of the Arab peoples — at vast cost and in complete violation of all our moral

principles — or lose all sure control of our oil supplies, even if we do not lose them entirely.

Make Europe before we have nothing else left.

Yet at this eleventh hour it is still not too late to return to the only real policy: back France in Algeria and develop the riches of Africa as a United Europe. In return for Arab support in this limited region of Algeria, offer the whole renascent Arab world peace, our friendship, economic assistance and military support of their independence, if they so desire, against communist aggression and infiltration. The other little questions which divide Europe and the Arab world could be settled most peacefully, humanely and equitably if the governments on both sides had a little sense, realism and constructive energy.

For present follies one thing alone can be said: they hasten the coming of a United Europe because they deprive us of all other means of life. As a statesman-historian once observed: the scavengers of history play their part; they clear the way for the builders.

EUROPEAN

NEXT ISSUE

EUROPEAN writes on the compelling reasons for virtually continuous conference with the Russians.

EUROPE:

FAIT HandPLAN

by OSWALD MOSLEY

who writes in this journal

over the name EUROPEAN

12s 6d

From all booksellers or from

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302 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1.

BRITAIN'S STIFF LOWER LIP

by BERTRAM PEEL

THE MOST significant difference between this recession and the others since the war is that this time Europe's production increase is slowing down in unison with the United States decrease, whereas in 1948-49 and 1953-54 it carried on growing. This time is also the first occasion on which all commodities have been falling together; wheat, maize, sugar, jute, copra, rubber, cotton, wool, lead, zinc, copper and tin have all dropped. The result is that although the West as a whole has previously managed to keep going, now the entire non-communist world is seriously preparing itself for a prolonged "pause".

Massive investment in under-developed countries over the past decade has brought about a steady increase in raw material availability, notably steel, which is now unwanted owing to the lessening of demand in industrial countries over the past eighteen months to two years. The vicious circle has begun, and such is the speed at which these spirals can develop (in terms of unemployment) that only an immediate rise in activity in North America and Europe can stop the rot.

The bewilderment with which these developments have been received in the West is undoubtedly genuine. A year ago nobody believed that another depression or anything like it could ever occur again. At the first signs of unusual unemployment in the United States last year, the writer himself was assured by a man from the London School of Economics that the methods of handling these little upsets were now well known, and advised to get his head examined if he thought he knew better than Keynes; some basic organisation when the time came and a certain amount of well applied investment at the right moment would do the job.

Unfortunately the American public did a very unexpected thing; it decided to start paying off its hire purchase before buying anything else. This was a real shock to the consumer durable makers and completely upset their market research; production was cut and the workless rose in number. Yet prices did not fall, and the Administration has been frankly at a loss to know how to fend off a slump in the midst of a continuing inflation. So, in the end, nothing was done, and what with built-in stabilisers, the "basic health of the American economy" and a bit of help from the Defense Department, America hopes to pull through on the home front. The signs are that she will succeed in the end.

The application of Keynesian techniques to the external problem of slumping commodities has also been frustrated by an unexpected trend. According to a United Nations estimate, a drop of about 4 per cent in revenue from the basic exports of the raw material producer countries will wipe out the entire effect of the aid which the Western Powers are now pumping into these under-developed countries. Now, in the case of the United States it is highly improbable that she will be able to step up her aid still more. Not only are American tax-payers heartily sick of equipping under-developed countries, only to see them turn communist, but the future pressure will rather be towards a decrease in taxation in order to stimulate consumer demand at home.

As to the other chief lender, the United Kingdom, Mr. Macmillan recently told the Primrose League that Britain was investing in the Commonwealth at the annual rate of £150 million a year. But according to a written reply in the Commons on 27th November last, Britain still had to pay back £2,293 million from "loans, gifts and other economic aid received by the U.K. Government from other countries from July 1945 to October 1957," excluding transactions with international organisations of which the £201 million World Bank loan in 1956 (vide "The Cost of Suez" *The European* April 1957) was the most important. So that, with our precarious balance-of-payments, it is unlikely that this country will for many years be in a position to increase her aid to under-developed countries. As far as Britain is concerned, we have reached the absurd position of borrowing in order to lend so as to sell in order to pay back the original loan. In other words, as an independent unity the Sterling Area continues to exist only so long as the American tax-payer feels he has to kep it going. Thus from the point of view of investment, all talk of dollar-Sterling co-operation

and of interdependence is, so to speak, merely the appearance behind the reality (sic). Not only is America effectively financing the Commonwealth in this way, but she is responsible for the employment of half a million people in about 300 U.S. industrial concerns at present in the United Kingdom; they specialise notably in machine tools, refineries, civil engineering equipment and office machinery. Between 1950 and 1955 alone American firms invested £250 million of new capital in the British manufacturing industry. At the beginning of 1957 about 600 other U.S. and Canadian concerns had had investment proposals approved by the Board of Trade since 1950. Moreover, at the very time when the British Government was clamping on the investment restrictions last year, the Board of Trade published a booklet entitled "Make it in Britain" to make the advantages of investment here more widely known to businessmen in North America. So far as is known even Lord Beaverbrook did not give that any publicity. And now, when 76 per cent of members of the Federation of British Industries are already working under capacity, the Government has brought down the Bank Rate and released credits for factory building. The 52 per cent of companies admitting to a fall in profit margin and with a tough market struggle ahead, may well feel this is a little late.

Meanwhile unemployment steadily rises above the half million mark, the diminishing pound continues on its gloomy way, earnings from oversea invisibles slowly decline and our share in world trade grows less. With the outlook as it is, and for reasons given above, it seems possible that America will think twice about "making it in Britain" in the near future.

A considerable body of opinion has made an attempt to tackle the problem from the other end. If further investment is not practical, they say, why not stabilisation of commodity prices? Alas, as anyone who has worked the markets knows, money can be made out of falling prices just as much as from rising prices if the timing is right; and even if the manufacturing interests could persuade the trading interests to accept stabilisation, there is the communist bloc to contend with. A United Nations conference is being held next September to discuss the stabilisation of lead, zinc and copper, but the prospects are not good as, in the words of *The Times*, "the attitude of the Soviet bloc cannot be foreseen but it would be surprising if it proved particularly helpful." Once before, the arrangements for tin were upset by heavy selling by Russia and Poland at a key moment. In the case of wheat and sugar, which are also

already the subject of a nominal agreement, the communist bloc have not needed to interfere as the serious fluctuations have occurred all on their own.

Is another capitalist seizure about to take place? It seems now that even the dullest of our politicians are beginning to suspect something. In a great burst of goodwill, politicians from left and right are declaring that the barriers must come down and the West must organise itself collectively or else perish; even Sir David Eccles, ever willing to offer comment on a new economic idea, has declared, "The West has to show that it is possible to combine personal freedom and orderly expansion in such a way that communist economics make no appeal." With a caution not usually associated with him, Sir David put forward no suggestions, however.

What is ideally required is a correct balance between the four stages: raw material prices, investment, production and sales. But this will never be achieved while our economic rival, communism, is able to provoke instability by dumping commodities, extending enormous credits, fostering strikes to reduce productivity and selling at prices well below the West's cost price. In any attempt to create stability the West is likely to be frustrated not only by the international operators who make their living specifically by the fact of instability, but also by the planned activities of capitalism's avowed enemies carrying out the dialectic part of their materialism. The two almost seem to have acted together over the past forty years to frustrate the efforts of primary producers, bankers, manufacturers and salesmen to provide the world with a better standard of life without the necessary appendages of war and slump. After forty years of fluctuation it should indeed be possible for the non-communist world to obtain freedom and orderly expansion, and it is encouraging that at last quite a number of our opponents in this matter are beginning to find this desirable. But we do not have to wait for some kind of world order to achieve it.

Stability can be obtained only within a system that is both self-contained and fully controllable. The two features are essential. We have reached the existing precarious situation in the world because both capitalism and communism are striving for world mastery, and it is certain that as things are, communism will win the day simply because it is both self-contained and controlled. Europeans of many shades of feeling are increasingly reaching the conclusion that a division of the world into three separate economic units would offer the best chance of peace and prosperity. As pre-

viously mentioned, the Americans are more than a little dismayed to see the people of Asia falling into the lap of communism one by one, despite the aid they have provided. For their part they would gladly withdraw from this thankless task and let communism bog itself down and take the brickbats. After all, America has no need of these trade outlets; she can work her own way out of a slump in her own self-contained system.

Yes, the work of establishing Europe-Africa could go firmly ahead tomorrow (instead of merely ticking over as it now is) but for the determination of the British Government and Opposition to tie Britain, Europe and the Commonwealth permanently and irrevocably to the United States, and a vague humanist-religious *je ne sais quoi* which *ils ne savent quoi* as well, with regard to the under-developed peoples of Asia.

Quite apart from the obligation that all politicians have of avoiding occasions of conflict, the moral worth of the British way of life to the people of Asia must by now be very small indeed.

Far better would it be for Britain to enter fully into economic community with Europe. The author made this suggestion originally in these columns nearly two years ago when the Common Market and Euratom schemes were beginning to take serious shape. Nothing has changed since then — nothing serious, that is. Unemployment is only half a million, the Commonwealth is still as indefinable as the world-wide Anglican Communion (which even embraces Russia and Japan), the succession of visits to Washington for a hand-out continues and the U.K. Government rather sadly hawks its Free Trade Area between London, Paris and Bonn. And has anyone thought of the cost of the latest Middle East adventure, doomed to certain failure, not least because it has no purpose? Never mind, send the bill to Washington. Times are hard, and the world is in a mess but, with a stiff lower lip, the Government means to see us through.

THE REELING ENGLISH ROAD

by CELIA GOODWAY

"Before the Roman came to Rye or out to Severn strode,
The rolling English drunkard made the rolling English road.
A reeling road, a rolling road, that rambles round the shire, . . ."
G. K. Chesterton.

THE MINISTER IN CHARGE of Belgian Road Development has said: "Thorough studies have led to the conclusion that of all public works road-building is probably the most productive and of most benefit to the whole nation." This is the soundest argument against those who say that Britain cannot afford an extensive road building programme. The Belgians have also found a way of raising money. In 1956 the Belgian government floated its first public loan for new roads. The amount aimed at was £17,000,000, and this was over-subscribed within three hours. It was an attractive proposition, offering interest of 5%, tax free. Last year another public loan was successfully raised. So here is one European country which has solved the financial side of the road-building problem.

Anyone who has motored from Ostend to Brussels on the new road will realise that the money subscribed has been put to excellent use. The first thing the British motorist notices, with relief, is the lack of round-abouts, now considered as obsolete, except by Britain. Where roads meet, one goes under the other.

I mention Belgium, not necessarily as having the best roads in Europe, but as an example of a small country which, since the end of the war, has spent money on modern road construction. A United Nations report on roads last year stated that although Britain has the worst traffic problem in Europe she spends the smallest per-

centage on roads. £500,000,000 is quoted by the Roads Campaign Council as being paid annually by all types of road users in Britain. Out of this 10% is spent on new roads. France spends 40% of total road taxation on new roads, Belgium 30%, Italy 31% and Sweden and the U.S.A. 100%. Now at last the Minister of Transport tells us that £240,000,000 is being authorised for roads during the next four years. Authorisation is a far cry from realisation, and at present Britain is still having to make do with roads built for the old horse and cart days.

Dual- carriage trunk roads with fly-unders and fly-overs, although regarded as some kind of marvel in Britain, are not even post-war ideas. The wonderful system of autobahnen in Germany is one of Hitler's legacies that cannot be erased, and these roads save the German economy millions of pounds. It has been estimated that an increase of 2 m.p.h. in the traffic in Birmingham would save £2,000,000 a year. What, then, would be the saving to the country as a whole of a good coverage of arterial trunk roads? Italy has long stretches of autostrada, laid down by Mussolini, and France has fine new fast stretches on the N6. and N7. trunk roads. Britain this summer will still have to face the deadly crawl and murderous overtaking of congested stage-coach roads. As all motor tourists know, it is quicker to cross from France to Dover by boat (including driving on and off the boat and going through customs) than to go by road from Dover to London. True, the drive from Folkestone to London should be considerably eased this summer by the new dual-carriage Ashford by-pass. To the continental visitor this short stretch of road will not present a "new look", and a disappointment awaits him for the rest of his motoring through Britain, as far as roads are concerned.

The problem of how to drive through or where to park a car in London, or for that matter in any large city in Britain, is a nightmare to the British driver, and must be ten times more difficult for the foreign traveller, coping with traffic jams and unaccustomed driving on the left. The number of cars in the London area is increasing by about 8% every year, but the only idea the London authorities seem to have for dealing with this situation are restrictive and retrograde steps endeavouring to keep as many cars as possible outside London. There has been no large-scale, imaginative plan for parking, and keeping city traffic flowing. America, with vast urban roads running at two to four levels, has arrived at a solution. In Europe, Brussels has just opened a new four miles of straight viaduct roadway, where

the motorist can drive unimpeded through the heart of this busy city. Driven to put some scheme forward, a double-deck road is now being planned by the Ministry of Transport as part of a new route to London airport. This will be supported on piers for a short distance above the existing Great West Road. But this only deals with one short strip of roadway going to a specific point, and does not relieve the congestion of London's general traffic. Improvements being made at Cromwell Rd., Notting Hill Gate and one or two other points in London have been described by the President of the Association of Metropolitan Engineers & Surveyors as "just about as good as a plaster on a wooden leg." A bold plan is needed which "would not count the cost unless it also counted the savings which would accrue from it."

It has taken Britain years to import from the Continent one very simple, but effective, idea for increasing safety on the older type of roads (i.e. most British roads). The double white line will be appearing on many roads this summer, which when unbroken means no overtaking; a practice strictly adhered to on the continent.

With great acclaim the Minister of Transport set in progress the work on Britain's new road from north London to Birmingham. Further north, work is now proceeding on the Preston and Lancaster by-passes. We are told that a new word has come into our vocabulary:— 'motorway'. But what no-one points out is that it is nearly thirty years since any main road building was done in this country. A great opportunity for imaginative, large-scale road construction existed in the 1930s, but neither Tory nor Labour politicians had the courage to grasp it. In 1930 Oswald Mosley resigned from the Labour Government when it became obvious to him that no real attempt was being made to deal with unemployment. He saw the necessity of a network of main roads as one means of getting Britain out of the state of industrial depression and stagnation. In his resignation speech he said in Parliament: "I am one of those who believe that the great main roads of this country should be national concerns, and that it is as much an anachronism to leave these roads in local hands as it would be to leave the railways in local hands." Later in the same speech he said: "On every turn when we want to build roads we are told it will damage the railways." The result of this short-sighted policy is that now, nearly three decades later, Britain has not only an archaic road system which lays an extra burden of millions of pounds on industry, but also railways which annually show a deficit.

Even now the new roads planned only have a patchwork quality about them. It has already been discovered that when the two by-passes at Preston and Lancaster are finished there will be a gigantic bottleneck between them, and as yet no authority has been given by the Minister of Transport for a new road to link them up. Instead of an over-all plan for a modern road network to cover Brtiain there has been piecemeal tinkering. All too frequently where small, new portions of road have been built the old errors have been allowed to remain. At Markyate, the notorious bottle-neck village on the main road from London to Birmingham and the north, a new by-pass was opened only nine months ago. Since then there have been nearly fifty accidents, including five deaths, on this strip of road. This new road still only has a three lane carriageway — surely the most dangerous type of fast road, — cross-road junctions instead of fly-overs, and keep-left bollards which are sited dangerously. This was all Markyate, a village on the busiest trunk road in Britain, was given after nearly fifty years of demanding a by-pass. In 1916 stakes were laid for the new road, but rotted for lack of "available finance"!

It would perhaps be too fantastic to consider roads such as the Thruway from New York City to Buffalo, when writing of British roads. They seem to be things belonging to completely different eras. For 472 miles along the Thruway there are no cross-roads, no sharp curves, no steep hills and no traffic lights.

Someone has said that Britain is fast becoming the museum of Europe — a museum round which it will soon be impossible to tour.

THE CHURCHILL CORRESPONDENCE WITH STALIN

by ROBERT ROW

ON September 3rd 1939 Britain declared war on Germany. That country had invaded Poland: Britain was obliged to go to war, claimed Mr. Chamberlain, then Prime Minister, because of an undertaking of the previous March that if Poland were invaded Britain would go to her aid.

Thus began the second world war. Germany was the invader, and Britain declared war on the invader. But during the course of the following weeks (while Poland was defeated and Britain stood helplessly by, unable to alter the course of events) a new situation arose. Poland was invaded by Russia from the east. All Polish resistance crumbled. The German and Russian forces met, and agreed upon their respective spheres of control.

Both countries were aggressors — or so it appeared to the outside world.

This was not the view of the British Government. For Mr. Chamberlain there seemed to be only one agressor in Poland — Germany. He appeared to hold the view that one invading army alone held down the conquered country — that of Germany. Whitehall levelled a metaphoric Nelson's telescope and with a blind eye failed to see any Russians in Poland. The eye observing the Germans in Poland was perfectly sound. Britain did not declare war on Russia.

In July 1941 the situation changed again. Germany and Russia began to fight. At once British Government came to life: the Russian troops it had hitherto failed to see on Polish territory became "friendly" forces. Mr. Churchill, now Prime Minister, immediately agreed on a treaty of "twenty years friendship" with Russia, who had already attacked and invaded his Polish ally. When Russian troops were driven out of Polish territory this was considered disastrous by the British Government that had "guaranteed" Poland against invaders.

How did this "treaty of friendship" work out in practice? Much revealing information may be gathered from the pages of *Stalin's Correspondence with Churchill, Attlee, Roosevelt and Truman, 1941 - 45*, published recently by Lawrence and Wishart. It was a strange friendship indeed. For Mr. Churchill had been one of the most outspoken opponents of communist Russia from the 1917 Revolution onwards, and indeed an active supporter at Westminster of military intervention in Russia in 1920 against the Soviet Government, in which Stalin served.

The earliest pages of the book show that "friendship" was not the right word. Stalin incessantly demanded arms, fighter planes, ammunition and supplies to equip his troops falling back before the "Nazi robber-hordes", frequently bitterly complaining at the lack of help from the West: Churchill apologised, parried awkward questions, lavish in his praise of "your vast heroic struggle".

Throughout 1942 Stalin steadily applied pressure for supplies to reach him by the northern sea route, brushing aside Churchill's objections that this route meant heavy losses:

> " . . . no major task can be carried out in war-time without risk or loss. You know, of course, that the Soviet Union is suffering far greater losses now. . ."

A typical Churchill letter discloses (July 31 1942) what supplying Russia involved:

> " We are taking preliminary steps to run a convoy of 40 ships. I must, however, tell you outright that unless the air threat to German ships in the Barents Sea is so strong as to prevent them from operations against the convoy we shall have little chance, as the experience of PQ 17 convoy has shown, of getting so much as one-third of the ships safely through."

On August 13 he disclosed what convoys to Malta were suffering:

"Latest reports show that we have suffered the following casualties:

(a) Sunk—Aircraft carrier "Eagle," 5 merchant ships;
(b) Mined or torpedoed, but condition not known—3 cruisers, "Nigeria," "Kenya," "Cairo."
(c) Damaged—Aircraft carrier "Indomitable," destroyer "Foresight."

To Stalin (whose method of clearing a minefield was to send a company of Russian infantry over it, so detonating tthe mines) these reports meant nothing.

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Early in 1943 the celebrated "friendship" was wearing thinner. Stalingrad had been fought, and the long-promised "second front" in the west had not materialised. In April of that year the Germans announced their discovery of mass-graves in Katyn Forest, near Smolensk, where an estimated 15,000 Polish officers had been murdered and buried. Germany called in the Polish Red Cross, which reported to the International Red Cross at Geneva they were satisfied that the massacre had taken place in March or April, 1940 (a time when the Germans had not been within hundreds of miles of Katyn Forest). This received wide publicity in the Polish Press in Britain and the support of the Polish Government in exile in London.

The outcome was a tirade from Stalin addressed very pointedly to his comrade-in-arms, Mr. Churchill. The crime, said Stalin, was the work of the "Fascist monster, Hitler." Furthermore the Poles under General Sikorski were "Fascists" themselves, working "in collusion with the Hitler regime," and the Soviet Government had no choice accordingly but to break off relations with General Sikorski.

Churchill replied (April 24, 1943): any International Red Cross probing was unthinkable, he agreed. "We shall certainly oppose vigarously any investigation..." A reference was made to General Sikorshi "...Mr. Eden is seeing him today."

Sikorski and the Polish Press in Britain were indignant. Mr. Churchill's next communication (April 25) carried a rather different note:

"Mr. Eden saw General Sikorski yesterday evening. Sikorski stated that so far from synchronising his appeal to the Red Cross with that of the Germans, his Government took the initiative without knowing what line the Germans would take. In fact

the Germans acted after hearing the Polish broadcast announcement. Sikorski also told Mr. Eden that his Government had simultaneously approached Marshal Bogomolov on the subject; Sikorski emphasised that previously he had several times raised this question of the missing officers with the Soviet Government, and once with you personally."

So Stalin's bluff was called. The rising storm of indignation blew itself out when the grim facts were raised. Stalin and Churchill apparently let the matter drop. Nevertheless the Russian leader carried out his threat to break off relations with Sikorski, claiming that the Polish leader was surrounded by a "vast, pro-Hitler following" (did this mean that the Poles were having second thoughts about going on with the war by that time?)

And what of Churchill? Did he dismiss from his mind any question whether the comrade-in-arms he flattered in every letter had hidden dark secrets beneath the soil of Europe wherever his murder-squads had occupied.

Did he think of demanding a Nuremberg trial for an ally which it seemed had committed crimes against another ally, the one for which Britain had gone to war? Or were such considerations swept away in the final exultation of shaking hands with Communism across the River Elbe?

By February 1944 a new issue was raised. Mr. Churchill had seen the Polish leaders in London to clear up the question of Poland's eastern frontier when peace returned:

"I said that although we had gone to war for the sake of Poland we had not gone for any particular frontier line, but for the existence of a strong, free, independent Poland. . . ."

What exactly did this statement mean? Had the same principle been applied to Germany in 1939? Hitler had not demanded any drastic revision of Poland's western frontier. He had simply asked for:

(1) Danzig to return as a free state into the framework of the German Reich;

(2) Germany to receive a route through the Polish Corridor and a railway line at her own disposal possessing the same extraterritorial status for Germany as the Corridor itself had for Poland.

In return he was prepared:

(1) To accept the 1939 boundaries between Poland and Germany, and to regard them as ultimate;

(2) To recognise all Polish economic rights in Danzig;

(3) To ensure for Poland a free harbour in Danzig of any size desired which would have completely free access to the sea.

Thus Germany was prepared to give up her claims to Upper Silesia, a territory which had voted as far back as 1921 in favour of returning to Germany. In a plebiscite held that year, under Polish supervision and with the utmost pressure brought on the German-speaking population, the voting was six to four in favour of a return to Germany.

Poland had rejected these terms, and the British Government, with Mr. Churchill's complete support, had gone to war on behalf of the strict integrity of Polish territory.

What changed Mr. Churchill's standpoint by 1944, when he supported the re-drawing of the Polish eastern frontier along the Curzon Line? On February 1, 1944, he told Stalin he supported this new policy because:

> "the liberation of Poland from Germany's grip is being achieved mainly by the enormous sacrifices of the Russian armies. Therefore the Allies have a right to ask that Poland should be guided to a large extent about the frontiers of the territory she would have."

In other words the Red Army was driving west. Did Mr. Churchill really believe that Russia was prompted solely by disinterested motives on behalf of "enslaved peoples"? Soviet Russia, indeed, had already claimed to be the disinterested champion of the "downtrodden proletariat" of Europe when the Bolshevik hordes had stormed through Poland in 1920 and were only stopped at the gates of Warsaw by Pilsudski and General Weygand. Mr. Churchill had been so alarmed on that occasion that he moved heaven and earth to aid Pilsudski.

Against his new standpoint he now proposed to square the account by allowing Poland to compensate herself at Germany's expense. Silesia and Pomerania were to be taken permanently from Germany. Stalin agreed; but with the amendment, in a letter dated February 4, 1944, that he wanted the north-east part of East Prussia, including Koenigsberg as an ice-free port.

So the war which began with resounding pledges to safeguard all Polish territory (indeed, defend the territory of all small nations) was to end with Russia helping herself to eastern Poland and a part of eastern Germany (including a port which today is a base for

Russia's powerful submarine fleet; Mr. Churchill, as a naval authority, must realise that this is a grave menace to Britain).

When the British Government went to war it stated it was not fighting for any material gains. Sir Edward Grigg, late Secretary for War, told his constituents at Alterincham in November, 1939, that Britain's war aims were not territorial aggrandisement for herself. Then were Britain's war aims territorial aggrandisement for Russia?

On August 14, 1941, Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt signed the Atlantic Charter. Article 2 of the Charter stated:

> "They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely-expressed wishes of the peoples concerned."

Were the wishes of the people of Koenigsberg consulted when Mr. Churchill, signatory to the Charter, agreed that Stalin should have Koenigsberg? They were not.

Were the people of Poland consulted when he agreed that Stalin should have eastern Poland? On the contrary, on February 2, 1944, he suggested to Stalin that the people of Poland should not know about any forthcoming changes in their frontier with Russia. If they got to know, said the signatory of the Atlantic Charter, the changes:

> "...would immediately be repudiated by a large part of their (the Polish) people abroad and by the underground movement in Poland."

When he broke the news (in private) to the Polish leaders in London:

> "... the information came as a shock to the Polish Government."

But it seems that, by then, he had abandoned hopes of getting the Polish Government in exile to fit in with his policy towards Soviet Russia. They relished a Soviet Koenigsberg as little as did the Germans. On March 7, 1944, he informed Stalin:

> "If nothing can be arranged" (to get the Poles and the Russians to agree) "I should be very sorry. Our only comfort will be we have tried our best. All my hopes for the future of the world are based on the friendship and co-operation of the Western democracies and Soviet Russia."

Despite all he knew of Soviet ambitions, despite all he had said about Communism in the past, Mr. Churchill seemed determined to trust Stalin. In August, 1944, there occurred a glaring example of Soviet faithlessness which has gone down in the history of the war as the classic Communist betrayal.

This was Stalin's refusal to help the rising of the Polish underground forces in Warsaw against the Germans. Yet the Russians had a powerful army on the other side of the Vistula. They sat there, watching the Poles blown to pieces, without raising a finger—until it was too late.

On August 4, 1944, Mr. Churchill notified Stalin that:

> "At the urgent request of the Polish underground army we are dropping, subject to the weather, about sixty tons of equipment and ammunition into the south-western quarter of Warsaw where it is said a Polish revolt against the Germans is in fierce struggle. They also say that they appeal for Russian aid, which seems very near."

On August 12 he sent a more urgent appeal:

> "I have seen a distressing message from the Poles in Warsaw, who after ten days are still fighting against considerable German forces which have cut the city into three. They implore machine-guns and ammunition. Can you not give them some further help?"

But Stalin's reply on August 16, was cold and contemptuous:

> "Now . . . I have come to the conclusion that the Warsaw action is a reckless and fearful gamble. . . Things being what they are, Soviet headquarters have decided that they must dissociate themsleves from the Warsaw adventure since they cannot assume either direct or indirect responsibility for it."

On August 20 Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt sent a final joint message to Stalin:

> "We are thinking of world opinion if anti-Nazis in Warsaw are in effect abandoned. We believe that all three of us should do the utmost to save as many of the patriot Poles of Warsaw, or will you agree to help our planes in doing it very quickly?"

So Stalin moved at last, full of threats about "crushing the Hitlerites" and "liberating the Poles," the champion of the underdogs again. But by then it was too late. The old trick of standing back to watch two anti-Communist enemies destroy each other, then moving in to snatch the real victory for Communism, had worked again.

Did Mr. Churchill, helpless to shape events by that time, recognise in the tragedy of Warsaw the real portent of the war he had been so ready to start? Had he begun to understand the whole war was destroying the strength of Britain as well as of Germany, principal obstacles to Soviet world power, while Communism stood to gain immediately all eastern Europe (Germany's economic sphere) and later British Empire in Asia?

By 1944 Stalin was ready to complete his plans for Poland: with the Red Army there arrived the Lublin Committee, a group of Polish Communists domiciled for years in Moscow where they had been trained in Stalin's tough school for the task of administering Poland on his behalf. He installed this Red administration in Warsaw as the only legitimate Government of Poland. The Polish leaders in London were contemptuously dismissed as "elements who have lost touch with the national soil and have no contact with their people"—as indeed had been true in the case of the Lublin Committee.

The new Polish Government, he blandly informed Mr. Churchill on December 8, 1944, "has made substantial progress in consolidating its democratic organisations on Polish soil. . ." In other words, Polish Communists were completing the work of Russian Communists.

To all this Mr. Churchill could only reply on January 5, 1945: "Naturally I and my War Cabinet are distressed at the course events are taking. . . ." Nevertheless, several days previously he had sent a lettter to Stalin glowing with praise:

> "I saw last night for the second time the film which you have given me called 'Kutuzov'. . . Never has the conflict of two will-powers been more clearly displayed. Never has the importance of fidelity in commanders and men been more effectively inculcated by film pictures. Never have the Russian soldiers and the Russian nation been presented by this medium so gloriously to the British nation. Never have I seen the art of the camera better used."

The following day he assured Stalin:

"I believe that your life is very precious to the future of the world."

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Poland was by no means the only country misled into believing she had a firm ally against Russian encroachment.

There was also Yugoslavia, encouraged in the spring of 1941 to make things awkward for Germany during the period when Hitler was preparing his first attack on Russia. Germany took Yugoslavia in a short classic invasion, and its monarch, King Peter, sought British protection for the duration of the war. It is on record that Mr. Churchill was no less lavish in his promises to the King than he was in the case of other prospective allies. It is clear that King Peter believed he would be returned to his country with victory, enthroned and no less powerful than his father before him.

The war brought drastic changes New figures appeared in Yugoslavia: Tito and Mihailovich. King Peter may have cherished post-war illusions so long as Mihailovich, the royalist partisan leader, was hailed in Britain's war-time Press as the hero of the day. When Mihailovich was dropped in favour of the Communist Tito it was another story.

By January, 1945, the King was proving averse to Mr. Churchill's desire that Yugoslavia should be ruled by a regency composed of Tito and Subasic. On January 11 Mr. Churchill complained to Stalin:

"Mr. Eden and I tried our best on several occasions with King Peter. He is a spirited young man and feels that the Tito-Subasic agreement is virtual abdication."

But Mr. Churchill at that stage of the war was not to be stopped by the protests of one of his smaller allies:

"I now suggest that we make the Tito-Subasic agreement valid and simply by-pass King Peter II."

On January 23 he wrote:

"King Peter, without informing us of his intention, dismissed Subasic and his Government last night. We are informing Dr. Subasic that the King's action does not affect His Majesty's Government's intention to see that the Tito-Subasic agreement is carried out and that we are therefore ready to transport him and his Government to Belgrade. I suggest that the three Great

> Powers should now decide to put the Tito-Subasic agreement into force and that Tito be informed that, if he will concert with Subasic and his Government, to carry out the agreement, the three Great Powers will recognise the united Government formed in accordance there."

This was done, and was followed by the awakening on April 28, 1945, which Mr. Churchill experienced in all his dealings with Communism. He then wrote to Stalin:

> "I must say that the way things have worked out in Yugoslavia certainly does not give me the feeling of a fifty-fifty interest as between our countries. Marshal Tito has become a complete dictator. He has proclaimed that his prime loyalties are to the Soviet Union."

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It has frequently been claimed that the "unprovoked" Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941, was not quite what it seemed. Certain American authorities have brought formidable evidence to support this view. Prominent among these were Mr. James Forrestal, late Secretary of the Navy, and Professor Charles Callan Tansill, technical adviser to the U.S. Senate Committee of Foreign Relations and the foremost authority on American diplomatic history.

The *Forrestal Diaries* published in 1952 showed unmistakably that President Roosevelt had wanted war with Hitler throughout the summer of 1939 He went to the extent of telling his Ambassador in London, Mr. Kennedy, to "Put some iron up Chamberlain's backside." But the United States itself was not involved until the end of 1941, due to resistance to war by Colonel Lindbergh and other isolationists. It seemed clear that Americans would fight only if their interests were directly involved.

The situation was changed dramatically at the end of 1941.

Professor Tansill, in his book *Back Door to War*, insists that President Roosevelt determined on bringing in the United States after the fall of France. He took steps to nullify the American "neutrality" legislation to give maximum aid to Britain as the remaining belligerant against Germany. He thus committed a breach of international law and gave Hitler every reason for declaring war. But the "warmongering" Hitler refused to act and live up to the reputa-

tion conferred on him by the "peace-loving" President Roosevelt.

There is plenty of evidence in the Churchill-Stalin correspondence to support Professor Tansill. For example, we have Mr. Churchill telling Stalin on July 28, 1941:

> "Mr. Harry Hopkins has been with me these days. Last week he asked the President to let him go to Moscow. I must tell you that there is a flame in this man for democracy, and to beat Hitler. A little while ago, when I asked him for a quarter of a million rifles, they came at once. He is the nearest personal representative of the President. You can trust him absolutely. He is your friend and our friend. He will help you plan for the future victory. . . ."

Strange conduct for a highly-placed official (the President's closest adviser) of a "non-belligerent" country!

On September 1, 1941, Mr. Churchill assured Stalin he could supply one-half of the aircraft and tanks which Russia wanted. He continued:

> "We hope the United States will supply the other half of your requirements. . . ."

In addition at this time Churchill had prevailed on Persia (another neutral) to allow supplies through to Russia:

> "...if the Persians submit we shall resume the payments of the oil royalties now due to the Shah. We are instructing our advance guards to push on and join hands with your forces."

Another country he tried to treat (with less success) was Turkey: "It is hoped to encourage Turkey to maintain at least faithful neutrality" (as George Orwell might have said—all countries are neutral, but some countries are more neutral than others).

Finally, there was Finland (another small country whose territory was to be defended, etc., etc., but which had been savagely attacked by Russia without any declaration of war from Mr. Churchill). The latter said (September 4, 1941):

> "We are willing to put any pressure on Finland. We are asking the United States to take all possible steps to influence Finland."

So the United States, though not at war and professing peace was already taking part in the war by supplying one side but not the other, and now was to take part in the war game of diplomacy by threatening pressure.

A further letter followed from Mr. Churchill dated September 21, 1941:

> "The United States are resolved to give us virtually the whole of their exportable surplus... I am hopeful that a further great impulse will be given to the production of the United States and that by 1943 the mighty industry of America will be in full war swing."

It is clear that President Roosevelt was all for gettting into the war and needed little excuse to join in. Professor Tansill goes on to allege, in his *Back Door to War*, that President Roosevelt grossly provoked the attack on Pearl Harbour.

He states that the State Department applied all possible pressure on the Japanese; that the American trade pact with Japan was denounced; that all Japanese assets in the United States were frozen in July, 1941, effectively cutting off American oil supplies to Japan.

Mr. Churchill referred to this pressure by telling Stalin on September 21 that:

> "The attitude of the United States, resulting from my conlatest battleship the 'Prince of Wales,'* which can catch and kill sober view upon the Japanese Government . . . should the United States be involved in war with Japan Great Britain would immediately range herself on her side."

On November 7 he wrote:

> "With the object of keeping Japan quiet we are sending our latest battleship the 'Prince of Wales,' which can catch and kill any Japanese ship, into the Indian Ocean, and are building up a powerful battle squadron there. I am urging President Roosevelt to increase his pressure on the Japanese and keep them frightened."

The outcome was war—inevitably. No country, least of all a proud nation like the Japanese, could remain quiescent under such intolerable pressure from a country already at war and another itching to get in. Professor Tansill claims that President Roosevelt (to make

* Sunk by Japanese dive-bombers.

the shock of Pearl Harbour all the greater) deliberately withheld from his men at Pearl Harbour the information that they were about to be attacked; that the American Intelligence services had broken the Japanese naval code and knew all about the impending onslaught; that no adequate warning was sent to Honolulu; that the officers and men there remained in blissful ignorance until the first bombs fell.

Whether this last claim is true or not, it remains true that President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill between them brought America into the war by forcing intolerable pressure on the Japanese. Thus total war was ensured. Thus the major bulwark against Communism in Asia (Japan) was to be destroyed, resulting in a Red China today and probably a Red India tomorrow.

The way was paved to the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and so to the age of threatened nuclear annihilation.

The atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was the worst example of the bombing of civilians in the history of the world. About a quarter of a million Japanese men, women and children died in the attacks or from the results of their wounds. Yet the atom bombing of civilians was in keeping with the war policy of the Western allies: it was they who started the bombing of civilians. This was made clear by a highly-placed British Government official, Mr. J. M. Spaight, formerly Principal Assistant Secretary at the Air Ministry; a man who knew the facts.

At the outbreak of war in 1939 Mr. Chamberlain, then Prime Minister, declared that whatever other belligerents might do, the British Government would not resort to the deliberate air bombing of civilians. Much the same limitation applied to ground bombardment.

Mr. Spaight says of the next government in his book *Bombing Vindicated*, published during the war:

> "Because we were doubtful about the psychological effect of propagandist distortion of the truth that it was we who started the strategic bombing offensive, we have shrunk from giving our great decision of May 11th, 1940, the publicity it deserves. That surely was a mistake. It was a splendid decision."

In May, 1940, Mr. Chamberlain was driven from office by a Conservative "revolt" in Parliament, and Mr. Churchill took over. Mr. Spaight describes the change in war policy which followed:

"The change in May was heralded by a statement issued by the Foreign Office on the 10th of that month. It began by referring to the assurance given to the President of the United States that the Air Force had received orders limiting bombing to strictly military objectives and went on to state that His Majesty's Government 'now publicly proclaim that they reserve to themselves the right to take any action which they consider appropriate in the event of bombing by the enemy of civil populations whether in the United Kingdom, France or in countries assisted by the United Kingdom'."

Mr. Spaight continues on the same page:

"Action followed swiftly on the warning; and it was action *from our side.* We began to bomb objectives on the German mainland before the Germans began to bomb objectives on the British mainland. That is a historical fact which has been admitted." (Author's italics).

And a few pages later:

"We offered London as a sacrifice in the cause of freedom and civilisation. Retaliation was *certain* if we carried the war into Germany. There was no certainty, but there was a reasonable probability, that our capital and our industrial centres would not have been attacked if we had continued to refrain from attacking those of Germany." (Author's italics).

General de Gaulle, in his memoirs published in 1955, describes Churchill's frustration:

"I can still see him at Chequers one August day, raising his fists towards the sky as he cried: 'So they won't come!'

"'Are you in such a hurry,' I said to him, 'to see your towns smashed to bits?'

"'You see,' he replied, 'the bombing of Oxford, Coventry, Canterbury, will cause such a wave of indignation in the United States they'll come into the war'."

By 1942 there was no longer any pretence that civilians were not being attacked. The Chief of Bomber Command, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, told the Germans by broadcast he was bombing their homes.

Mr. Churchill publicly said:

"As the year advances, German cities, harbours and centres

of production will be subjected to an ordeal the like of which has never been experienced."

His correspondence with Stalin reveals how this was carried out. On July 28, 1941 he wrote:

"A terrible winter of bombing lies before Germany. No-one has yet had what they are going to get."

On July 8, 1941:

"We are making very heavy attacks both by day and by night with our Air Force upon all German-occupied territories and all Germany within our reach. We have only got to go on fighting to beat the life out of the villains."

On March 28, 1943:

"Last night 395 heavy bombers flung 1,050 tons on Berlin in fifty minutes. This is the best Berlin has yet got"

On May 2, 1943:

"Photographs show about one-third of Essen in ruins."

Since the war, on four separate occasions, Sir Winston Churchill has said that only the possession of the atom bomb in American hands kept the Red Army from invading Western Europe after the war.

Yet no-one did more than Mr Churchill to place Russia in the position where she could threaten Europe. He failed to declare war on Russia for invading his ally Poland. He foisted a Government on Yugoslavia which let to communist dictatorship there. He schemed for the means to bring America into the war and so destroy the Japanese power that held communism in check in the Far East. He started civilian bombing, and he block-busted German industry with great energy, destroying the power of Germany to oppose the Red Army.

He brought the Russians to the Elbe. The atom bomb in American hands prevented them coming any further, and saved Western Europe. Yet Mr. Churchill had no more idea than anyone else that the atom bomb was going to be invented.

No better description of the man can be provided than his own

sentence in November 1953:

> "Ernest Bevin went to the Foreign Office at a time when hideous disillusionment fell upon us through the absolute change in the Russian demeanour from what we had expected it to be."

He said in the final volume of his war history, significantly entitled *Triumph and Tragedy:*

> "I moved amid cheering crowds or sat at a table adorned with congratulations and blessings from every part of the grand alliance, with an aching heart and a mind oppressed by forebodings. . . ."

He said he asked himself: "Hitler and Hitlerism were doomed; but after Hitler, what?" That was the question he should have asked himself before the war, not after it was over.

The Curtain Corroded
III — POLAND

by ROY MACGREGOR-HASTIE

I WAS TOLD in London that it was much easier to get into Poland than into Czechoslovakia, even with a tape-recorder hanging round your neck and a microphone protruding from what was obviously not a picnic basket. I decided to avoid Czechoslovakia altogether, to fly over it from Milan where I had been recording suitable background noises to colour pieces for "Saturday Night on the Light." Unfortunately, the travel agents in the small Piemontese village where I had been spending Christmas forgot to make the double reservation necessary for flights behind the Iron Curtain. On January 27th I was left with forty-eight hours in which to get to Warsaw, if I was to be there in time to cover the elections, and a minimum delay of a week for an airline clearance in. So I took the train to Venice, from Venice to Vienna and then on to the through train to Warsaw. It was quite a comfortable train, but I couldn't sit easy in the compartment knowing as I did that my passport was innocent of a Czech visa. I remembered all I had heard about frontier police in the days of Stalin. I remembered leading articles which, just before I left, had pointed out to me and to all the other readers of the semi-popular press that Stalin and his ideas were still both very much alive in Prague.

It was something of a shock to see at least forty frontier police board the train on the Czech/Austrian Frontier. A brawny Czech with epaulets wider than the compartment door burst in on me and said "Passport?" The only reply to this question which is non-committal enough in the circumstances is "Yes!" So I said "Yes." He took my passport, flicked through the pages and said "You have no Czech visa." I trembled in my corner seat and said "no". Then, he burst into laughter, beat me about the shoulders with his hand, the size and weight of a concrete lampshade, and offered

to let his friends know of my predicament. They all burst out laughing too. Eventually, they sold me a spare visa for 50 Crowns and I went on my way. If this is what it is like in Stalin's Czechoslovakia, Gomulka's Poland should be a piece of cake. In fact, my first taste of it was more like a hard ship's biscuit. Though I had three assorted visas and the best intentions, my luggage was searched, my pockets were turned out and for three hours I had to stand in the snow at Petrovic Station.

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I was not in the best of moods when I finally touched down on the platform at Warsaw Central. There were no porters. At half past five in the morning, there wasn't a taxi in sight. Nobody seemed at all anxious to take me into town and put me up at a hotel.

It was not until I had been in Warsaw for a week that I realised that I was lucky to have found a station still standing. Of all the war-torn cities I have seen, and Hamburg and Coventry had been my previous worst, Warsaw was the most bombed and the least rebuilt. When the Soviet Union had finished liberating Poland, they swallowed up all the eastern provinces in which the building and crushing stone was quarried. So even the houses and shops which have been partially rebuilt were unfaced. Warsaw's cement allowance for a year is something under a thousand tons, which is what you would use in a month on an L.C.C. building site. For this and other sentimental reasons, they have rebuilt the main street, Novy Swiat, to the plans of the 18th Century Italian architect who was brought in to redesign the city by Bonnie Prince Charlie's nephew, King of Poland. Having reconstructed Novy Swiat, they decided to remodel Stareye Mesto (the old market) using the same stucco and fresco painted, instead of the normal brick facing. Although about half the city is still in ruins, by 1950 it must have looked quite picturesque and olde worlde — if you can call a museum in the middle of a bombed site "olde worlde". Then the Soviet Union, in a helpful mood, successfully dispelled the 18th Century mist by donating to the people of Warsaw a Palace of Culture; this monstrosity, a five-hundred foot white marble spire with a red star on top, dissolving in the 43 smaller spires over seven neo-Corinthian porticoes and a sunken garden, dominates the city from every aspect. It is an inescapable reminder that whatever successive de-Stalinised governments may do, to aim at independence,

there is always Big Brother waiting outside the nursery door, liable to break their toys.

I had always thought of Poland as a Slav country, Slav-conscious and anxious to emphasise their Eastern connection, even if they had good cause to regret it. But although in a hundred small ways the influence of Moscow was unpleasantly obtrusive — tea drinking is almost a compulsory pastime, and wine has almost vanished from the Polish table — the Poles insist on explaining to the interested tourist that they are not an outpost of the East in the West, but an outpost of the West in the East. Christianity, culture and trade have all come in the past from Paris, Rome, Berlin and even London. Very little of any permanent value has been added to the Polish way of life by her neighbour to the East, and quite a lot has been taken away. The feeling of gentle passimism which obscures the smile on the faces of many Poles is due to a realisation of the futility of reconstruction in a country which almost certainly will again be a battlefield in a score of years.

The Pole is rationed to 12 sq. metres floor space per working man and 6 sq. metres for a dependent. Furniture is crudely made and very expensive. Neither factory output nor house building seems to go on at anything faster than a snail's pace. Work seldom starts before 10 in the morning, and by half past three people in offices are already on their way home. There is no incentive apparent anywhere to hard work for the future, because nobody really believes that Poland has a future. Most Poles would like to emigrate if they could, but paradoxically again most of them seem to come back after twenty or thirty years in America, Britain or Australia. The Minister of Economics, Dr. Oscar Lange, was for years a professor of economics at an American University. He knows that his prospects in Poland are obscure to say the least of it, but he prefers "to die in his own country even if he cannot live there in comfort."

Polish politics are dominated by the ever-present Soviet Union and the invitation to the dance proffered from time to time by the United States of America. I got the feeling that Gomulka would like to do a Tito in northern Europe, taking roubles and dollars without discrimination, but at the same time getting on with the business of making his country habitable. But it is too late to recreate the conditions which once more made Tito-ism acceptable to both East and West.

This is not to say that Gomulka hasn't taken the first steps in

that direction. He has made almost unbelievable concessions to the Catholic Church, and has entertained Cardinal Vishinsky to dinner many times; Vishinsky has managed to wring out of him religious instruction available in every Polish school, and though R.I. classes are always the first in the morning and the last in the evening so that it is perfectly possible for a child to miss them, the fact of a priest's admission to State schools is not one you would expect to see established behind the Iron Curtain.

More surprising, perhaps, than his flirtation with his former enemies, is the way in which Gomulka has jettisoned his friends on the Left who took him to power. Adam Wazyk is the only twentieth century poet on record who, almost unaided, succeeded in starting a revolution; it is not untrue to say that Wasyk's Poem for Adults was a major factor in the deposing of the Stalinist clique. Gomulka shows himself less and less sympathetic and grateful to Wazyk as each month passes. He has withdrawn his permission for a publication of a political literary magazine, *Europa*, which was to have been edited by Wazyk, and he has even gone so far as to censor two of Wazyk's poems submitted to *Nowa Kultura*. This last is analogous to the *Poetry Review* refusing to accept for publication the latest bit of doggerel from the pen of the Poet Laureate, and its political consequences were far graver. Wazyk resigned from the Communist Party and took with him most of those who had fought the Germans from exile in the Ukraine, the original Kuzhnitsa, which was the intellectual hard-core of the Polish Liberation Movement.

Far from allowing a hundred flowers to bloom in his political garden, Gomulka is slowly strangling all the literary outlets of the minority groups which are neither in favour with the Party nor with the Catholic Church. There is only one free newspaper left in Poland which is not so censored before publication that it reads like a Government handout. This is the monthly "Wspolczesnosc," edited by Szymanski, one of the young men responsible for the closing down of Po Prostu. While we are skating over political-literary ice, it might be as well to mention to the few who will have been taken in by it, that the article in last December's *Encounter*, written by an emigré Pole obviously out of touch with current events in his own country, purported to tell the true story of the decline and fall of Lasotta and the other editors of *Po Prostu*. The closing down of *Po Prostu*, whatever else Gomulka may have done since which we would not commend him for, was not the action of

a hard-core Stalinist persecuting a magazine of Liberal opinions. *Po Prostu* was in fact the sounding board for an irresponsible group of middle-class journalists who tried to climb on every band wagon, and have only themselves to blame if they fell off the one propelled by Adam Wazyk; he was so disgusted by the excesses of Stalinist censorship that he retired in 1950 to his editing of the complete works of Appollinaire and contributed nothing to literature as an organ of opinion until the *Poem for Adults.*

It is to young men like Szymanski that the part of Poland not offered up as a sacrifice to either its Eastern or Western neighbour must turn for leadership. I find them unwilling to accept the role of action leader, though they are not reluctant to direct the thinking of their immediate circle of friends. They talk a lot, which is a good thing, even though the things they talk about may have made stale conversation among the older habitués of Left Bank cafés in the Paris of the 30's. Poland must be the only country in the world where futurism, existentialism, surrealism and anarchism are still taken seriously, and at the poetry readings and literary gatherings in the offices of Szymanski's paper, their dead gods are invoked with all the sartorial and jargon ritual we used to see in the streets of post-war Rome. So many literary fashions have had to wait on the Polish frontier, until the climate changed politically to allow them to be admitted without perishing, that they all arrived together in 1953 when the temperature went up. But it seems likely that they will outgrow them altogether, just as unusually.

★ ★ ★

If a literary life is a possibility, other art forms are restricted. Whenever the Red Army comes marching into a country, folk song and folk dance ensembles seem to spring up in its wake, and Poland was no exception to the rule. The classical ballet is still alive, but kicks its heels to the time beaten out by the big drum in the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. There is only one dance group which has escaped contamination and that is Mazoswe, a scientific experiment run by the widow of a former professor of social anthropology which she describes as a living museum of Polish song and dance. And certainly there is nothing phoney about her school or about her dances.

There is one other anomaly in Poland which is not found any-

where else behind the Iron Curtain. The success of a planned economy depends largely on there being no considerable private sector to compete with the public sector. In 1946, when the funds of the Catholic Church were depleted by the direction of all surplus civilian income to reconstruction, a group of Catholics decided to start a small-scale industrial enterprise and use the profits to maintain the Catholic University at Lublin and the Catholic School in the capital city. They hoped to be able to pay for the rebuilding of a number of Catholic churches, all of which were at least partially destroyed during the Warsaw uprising in 1944. From a handful of men making fire hoses for local fire brigades, this organisation, "Pax," has grown to be what Dr. Lange described to me as Poland's second problem, the first being alchoholism. At the first Municipal Elections which really mattered, in February of this year, with the decentralisation of Government an accomplished fact, Pax put up 900 candidates and got a third of them in. What their influence will be able to achieve in the way of a mitigation of the direction of surplus wealth to capital projects in the Warsaw district, which has destituted many rural areas, nobody knows.

But whatever happens in literature, art, the theatre, or the new curiously complicated industrial set-up, the next year will be a decisive one for Poland. The only way the West can help is to recognise the separate existence of Poland as an indissoluble power, and the rejection of the Rapacki plan is not calculated to help much in this. But then it would be too much to expect Mr. Macmillan, with his limited knowledge of European affairs, to be able to look beyond the Paris in which the King Edward VII he so much admires unwittingly succeeded in upsetting the balance of power fifty years ago.

A DIARY

THE art critic of a French newspaper complained (in connection with the Biennale exhibition at Venice, which is apparently even more ghastly than usual) that everyone now suffers more or less from what he called the Cézanne complex. Those with a Cézanne complex are terrified lest by laughing at or ignoring some ugly daub of abstract painting in 1958 they may be earning themselves the despised niche in the history of art which we now allot to the people who failed to recognise the greatness of the Impressionists.

Personally I do not care in the very least whether my grandchildren's generation despises and rejects my choice of pictures, or whether they themselves will blame me for not having bought a bunch of twisted iron arranged by a "sculptor" whom they consider a genius. I suppose it is different for art critics, who are by way of "knowing" something or other, but I cannot understand why anyone else should mind what future generations think about their taste. Yet it undoubtedly worries some people, even those who pride themselves on their indifference to contemporary judgment of their knowledge, opinions, good nature or whatever it might be. This is odd, because even though "sticks and stones may break your bones, words can never hurt you" may be true, yet the arousing of contemporary hostility, for example, might have unpleasant consequences for the living, but cannot matter for those who have, as the French say, disappeared.

It is in any case one of the strangest evidences of human vanity that a person should care about the opinion of posterity; the opinion, that is, of descendants of the crowds milling along Oxford Street, or the Boulevard des Italiens, or in and out of St. Mark's on an August afternoon.

★ ★ ★

As for the Cézanne complex, it is tiresome for an art critic to think he might be derided at some future time, but those who are

not art critics are really, no doubt, haunted more by the money aspect. If my grandmother, a man might say to himself, had only had herself painted by Picasso instead of by Lazslo (or by Renoir instead of the Hon. John Collier) I could buy myself a cottage in the country and retire, on the proceeds of her foresight. It is only a step from this happy thought to the next: whom should I be painted by? Isn't there some very poor painter somewhere who for a few pounds will do me a portrait which will soon be worth a fortune? Well, perhaps not a portrait — just an incomprehensible abstract painting which posterity is going to love, even if I am not quite clever enough to love it myself?

The result of this sort of speculation, added to the dissemination of western culture throughout the globe, is that abstract painters make a rather good living, and multiply at an alarming rate. What was formerly an European monopoly has become a world-wide industry. They owe a great deal to our neuroses.

★ ★ ★

Between them, the Germans, English and Americans did a frightful amount of unnecessary damage in western Normandy at the end of the war. A fine château full of pictures, furniture, books, archives, burnt to the ground by Germans; old towns and villages, churches, castles and manor houses, bombed and shelled by Anglo-Saxons for no reason at all, since they contained not a single German soldier... it is nothing to be proud of. The result is that a great deal of new building is going up in that part of France; some of it is rather good, some of it both silly and inappropriate, particularly the churches with artfully contrived disequilibrium.

A great deal of thought and imagination has gone into the variety of blocks of flats in Lisieux, each more hideous than the last. It should be an easy winner in any competition for the ugliest modern town of its size in Europe. But the countryside is lovely, and there are still numberless castles and houses which survived the war and are well worth a visit.

★ ★ ★

A friend writes from Tokyo: "There is everything here, everything; there's not a thing the Japanese don't do, from striking in the coal-mines and on the railways, to writing existentialist plays, to

wearing the "sack"... Every conceivable foreign book has been translated, and the Japanese are terrific readers. I have a friend who is a great translator — all Hemingway, Maugham, and dozens of other books. He's now translating *Lucky Jim,* which he carries around with him in a despatch case. From time to time out comes *Lucky Jim* and some questions: "What is a pacifist? — What is an old towser? — What does *spewed up like a broken spider-crab on the tarry shingle of the morning* mean?" I try to explain, but I wonder what the translation will be like. I wonder what all the translations are like. The Japanese seem almost greedy to know things, to read everything, but I feel it's a sort of possessive desire, a desire to "possess" Hemingway simply by reading a translation, forgetting it, but keeping the book....."

Apparently it is very difficult to find the way in Tokyo because the streets are not named. General MacArthur gave them numbers, and also numbered the houses, but nobody pays much attention — in fact it has made things even harder, because some Japanese are keen numerologists, so that several people in the same street may choose a lucky number, like thirty-four. The postmen in consequence have a terrible time of it, and often commit suicide because their sense of failure overcomes them.

★ ★ ★

More by accident than design, I flew to London on the Air France luncheon aeroplane the other day. The meal was smashing: champagne, caviar, smoked salmon, chicken, foie gras and peaches, and little bottles of Martini and Courvoisier brandy to take away if you haven't time to enjoy them. No wonder the passengers arrived at London Airport glowing with bonhomie. It even inclined one to overlook the 30 minutes delay in starting which, at Orly, had been our lot.

Air travel can be exasperating. Here is what happened to a friend, a few weeks ago.

> "Departure was announced and we trooped to the waiting-room in time for normal take-off at 8 p.m. At 8.30 they announced a take-off for 9 p.m., with no explanation for delay. At 9 p.m. they announced that we would dine at the airport, again with no explanation, and take-off at 10 p.m. By serving very slowly they made the meal last until after 10.30 p.m., when they announced take-off for 11 p.m. All this time there

had been no broadcast explanation, but on enquiry we were told that the original aeroplane was not serviceable and that the replacement was run into by an airport 'bus! We returned to the waiting-room just before 11 p.m., had a long wait there, in the 'bus and in the aeroplane, before taking off at midnight."

This story is typical. Nobody wishes or expects an airline to use an aeroplane that has been run into by the aerodrome bus, (which seems rather careless, as accidents go). But what is so irritating to passengers is the way in which they are treated like children, or patients in a lunatic asylum, or even sometimes like convicted prisoners. Told nothing of what is happening, they are locked up in a stuffy waiting room enphemistically called a lounge to await the dispensations of providence.

Meanwhile, they are fed. While this is preferable to being left to starve, it by no means compensates for the inconvenience of late arrival.

I remember years ago an aeroplane in which I was travelling to England from Spain was landed at Hurn because there was fog in London. With other passengers arriving from everywhere imaginable we were herded into a hangar furnished with some straw chairs, locked in and told to wait. Every few minutes the door was unlocked and another twenty or so stranded travellers were pushed in. The hangar soon filled up: people began sitting on the floor. Outside the window several charabancs could be seen, their drivers chatting together and smoking. Luckily my companion, an impatient man, soon wearied of the dull situation. He threatened the officials with a writ for unlawful detention, and thus we made our escape. I expect the others are there still, their bones whitening.....

D. M.

ENTERTAIMENTS

DESMOND STEWART'S

Room In The Paradise

(BELGRADE THEATRE COVENTRY.)

Room in the Paradise, the first play in English, possibly in any language, to analyse the Arabo-European conflict, had its first night on Bastille Day and the first day of the first year of the Republic of Iraq. The subject of the play is Conscience, the problem of what is permissable in an impossible situation. Colonial soldiers cut off from reinforcement are encircled by insurgent Nationalists. What should the soldiers do: fight on? give in? how far can they allow themselves to be humane in an ideological trap sprung long before they ever enlisted?

The action is set in North Africa; in Algeria we conjecture; but the dilemma is not specifically a French one. In any colony, under any mandate, in any retarded country where Europeans enjoy extra-ordinary privileges, treaty ports or military bases, the dilemma is the same. The occupiers have indeed conferred benefits: order, perhaps even justice, certainly roads, barracks, elementary education, cheap serviceable goods, wealth; have built dams, reclaimed dezerts. But in reclaiming deseets, they have rehabilitated the dwellers of the desert. Can the process of rehabilitation be arbitrarily checked so that the beneficiaries remain forever clients of the benefactors? Every colonialist, and many a colonist too, would like to be able to answer *yes*, and believe it. Captain Clerici (Leonard White) answers *yes*. Corporal Romberg, beautifully played by Ian White (no relation' answers *no*. They strive for the allegiance of Private Bienfait who admires the one and loves the other. What happens to protagonist and antagonist in the debate, or what their judge decides, would not be fair to reveal.

The complexity of the issues at stake, the ironic savagery of the defenders of civilised values, and the excitement of the plot were rendered with an intuition that must have delighted the playwright. None of the actors at Coventry looks old enough to have yet had direct experience of the colonial trap. But I left the theatre, saying *no* again and again to myself, moved at the fate the world accords the generous-hearted and furiously aware that the upper room in the Paradise Theatre might give on to any street in Beirut, Amman, Baghdad or Port Said.

This play should be brought at once to the West End and the Cabinet should be herded to see it before we hear any more from them.

Producer: Gerard Dynevor. Set: Jack Inglis.

R. K. S.

CINEMA

Orders To Kill, Touch Of Evil, Notti Bianche, South Pacific, Merry Andrew.

by VINCENT MURRAY

ANTHONY ASQUITH has always been something of an enigma in British cinema. Starting in the 'thirties with *Shooting Stars* and *Cottage on Dartmoor* he revealed a talent for the visual image that has been in evidence only intermittently of late. Theatrical subjects *(The Browning Version, The Importance of being Earnest)* have, from the film-enthusiast's point of view at any rate, taken up far too much of his time. Now, however, with **Orders to Kill** Asquith turns to a contemporary subject which seems to have greatly interested him. Gene Summers, a young U.S. bomber pilot, is selected to undertake a secret mission in France, goes into the affair like a Boys' Own hero full of the "daring" of the adventure, and comes out of it a lot more conscious of the need to bear responsibility for one's actions. For the man he has killed is later proved to have been an innocent family man, and not an enemy-agent as had been thought.

I should have preferred a peace-time theme, illustrating the developing consciousness of responsibility, for war-films are heavily over produced these days, but I can see that the dramatic emphasis of a war-time killing makes the problem of individual responsibility

exceptionally vivid. Once accepted, the theme is splendidly developed. Asquith's direction reaches a pitch as refined as in his *Young Lovers*, and his control of a very mixed cast is assured. Paul Massie (as Gene) is not an experienced actor by any means, yet he does not come badly out of the scenes wtih veteran Irene Worth (as a woman agent). One has only to think of the performance of Jean Seborg against experienced players in Preminger's *St. Joan* to understand what has been achieved here. At a time when most British films seem concerned with running away from reality, and *Orders to Kill* has made a welcome and, one hopes, significant appearance.

Last month I mentioned Orson Welles in his capacity of actor ranting and roaring his way through *The Long Hot Summer*. This month he directs (and acts in) his first American film since *Macbeth* in 1948: **Touch of Evil**, also starring such excellent players as Joseph Calleia, Akim Jamiroff and Ray Collins. When I note that the script too is by Welles, the addict knows he must expect fireworks, and, as far as the first half of the film is concerned, he should be fully satisfied. I think the film should be seen at least twice to be fully understood (those who have seen Welles' *Lady from Shanghai* will not be surprised at this) and even then one begins to wonder... At rock-bottom the story is of the feud between Vargas, special narcotics investigator for the Mexican Ministry of Justice, and Quinlan, an American detective in charge of a time-bomb case. Vargas discovers that Quinlan's brilliant crook-catching record is the result of intuition supported by a load of fake evidence. I leave you to take over from there. The first half of the film is one long sequence of rapidly moving images, which at the time bear little resemblance to each other. The stories they tell (and there are two sub-plots as well as the main one) slowly unwind in the slower, more conventional final reels. For star-spotters Marlene Dietrich makes one or two "guest" appearances, and Zsa-Zsa Gabor also makes her presence felt. But *Touch of Evil* is really for Welles addicts only. For them it provides a pleasure rare in American cinema today.

What is one to make of Lucino Visconti? A theatre-producer of great ability, he specialises in enormous stage-productions; turning to the cinema he directed one of the first, and certainly the most sensitive, of early neo-realist films known here as *La Terra Trema*— in style as stark and simple as his theatre productions are sumptuous. Now comes **Notti Bianche**, a version of Dostoevski's "Byelie Nochi" (White Nights), romantic, evocative, melancholy, far removed from anything Visconti has yet attempted. With such a rich variety of achievement, analysis of style becomes a most complex matter. It will suffice here, however, to stress his skill in portraying shades of feeling, a quality evident throughout his latest work. The story is simple: a young clerk is attracted to a young girl he

sees one night while she is waiting for her lover to return from sea. The lover appears to have deserted her and she seems to be growing fond of the clerk when suddenly the lover appears and the girl runs to him leaving the clerk dejectedly walking back home. A trifle, but in the hands of a master of atmosphere it appears far more than this. For those who want to look a little further beneath the romantic surface Visconti provides a glimpse of reality in the form of realistic description of the clerk's hum-drum life. The contrast makes the romantic world all the more vivid; its atmosphere of swirling mist, light and shadow takes on added significance. Players always seem to find difficulty matching up to a romantic mood. Maria Schell gives a far from ideal performance as the girl, her mannerisms frequently detracting from the character she is supposed to be playing. Visconti, I think, is more at home with natural types — in the cinema at any rate.

Two musicals to finish off with. Both have good sequences, but each is hardly a full-blooded success. **South Pacific** is gigantic (Todd A-O), loud and, from the point of view of colour, hectic; **Merry Andrew** is wide (Cinemascope), heavily dialogued and has Danny Kaye. The former will attract because of its size, of course. It could not attract for any other reason. The screen is too large for any of those tiny moments of wonder, suspense and delight which make film-going worth-while. Todd A-O is simply non-creative. Cinemascope does allow a certain amount of flexibility which Michael Kidd, director and choreographer of *Merry Andrew*, exploits in his dance-sequences. The snag here is the plot, which occupies far more running-time than the dance sequences, and it simply isn't good enough to stand it. Mr. Kaye, though, is a charmer of the first order, as indeed he needs to be in this film.

NEW BOOKS

The Mist Procession by Lord Vansittart (Hutchinson, 35s.)

DURING the thirties it was supposed by many people that the anti-German lobby in English politics was beckoned and led, or at least pushed and prodded, by Sir Robert Vansittart, who occupied the important post of Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. At the end of his life, this neurotic and prejudiced man wrote an immensely long autobiography; he died before it was finished, so that it reached only as far as the year 1936. It is not an easy book to read; aphorisms, facts and fancies, opinions, anecdotes and puns are jumbled together with the potted history of thiry years; the style is loaded and awkward. But it can now be learned from Vansittart himself how right those people were when they objected to the appointment, and retention, of such a man in such a position. He should, of course, holding the views he did, have resigned from the civil service, gone into politics, and taken his stand openly, as did his friend Mr. Churchill.

In this book he shows that he knew what was being said about him at that time. He first quotes Geoffrey Dawson, editor of *The Times*, as having written: "I do my best, night after night, to keep out of the paper anything that might hurt their (the Germans') susceptibilities," contrasting this with his own efforts in the same sphere: "I tried day after day to get more into the press for rousing our people against their enemies. In consequence some organs laid smaller stress on the danger than on the indiscretions of a public servant." Then he goes on to cite two opinions held about himself, but whether by Dawson or other members of the "Cliveden group" is not made clear: "Van hates the Germans as much as Warren Fisher hates the Americans," and: "Diplomatists should have nothing to do with hatred of anybody. It is both silly and dangerous." His comment on the latter truism is "Dear prig!" Far from denying it, he boasts of the back-stairs work in which he was constantly engaged during the years when he was head of the Foreign Office.

Vansittart's chief hope in Parliament was Sir Winston Churchill, who, although he could always be relied upon to speak about re-armament or the need for parity in the air, was not always as

violently anti-German as his mentor desired. "He needed guidance" wrote Lord Vansittart, "for he was always more magnanimous than I and thus less intransigent toward Germany."

He goes on to complain that Churchill was "an embarrassing ally. At first he only telephoned to my house in Park Street to test parts of speeches on me. Then he would come there after hours and that was all right too. It was not all right when he took to striding into my room at the Foreign Office and turned our connivance into an open secret. He cost me more than he knew." What did the pair of them cost Europe?

At that time, of course, Sir Winston Churchill was out of office, and was likely to remain so as long as peace lasted. "I have cheerfully and gladly put out of my mind all idea of public office," he is quoted here as saying. But Vansittart did not believe him for: "without office he was miserable, though I could never understand why."

Like another hater of *Deutschtum*, Duff Cooper, Lord Vansittart wrote poetry; his verses are liberally scattered throughout this volume. He considered himself, so he says, a failure in his public life, and evidently wishes to be remembered as a man of letters, and also as the man who was right all through. In fact, he will be remembered as one of those who made war possible. He wrote in connection with Eden and the League of Nations: "The real crux was that the Leaguers were anti-Italian while I was anti-German."

And this seems, by his own account, to have been the simple truth. It was hatred of Germany (of *Deutschtum* as he himself says—not particularly of the "wicked Nazis," for once) which made him tick. With complete disregard for the result to England or to Europe he was determined, in so far as he had influence, to use it to bring us into war. He was far too modest, with his talk of "failure". The 3rd September 1939 crowned his hard work of unceasing intrigue with complete success.

D. M.

The Next Hundred Years: Man's Natural and Technological Resources. Harrison Brown, James Bonner and John Weir. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 18s.)

EXPANSIVE thinking is not characteristic of the English. What reception will they give to this book, by three professors of the California Institute of Technology? The authors attempt to forecast

man's material progress over the next 100 years, and their authority to do so is impressive. Harrison Brown is a professor of geochemistry; James Bonner a professor of biology; John Weir a professor of psychology. A bibliography shows the sources of their information, which range from the annual report of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to Malthus' essay on population. In addition, the subject-matter was discussed intensively by groups of experts and industrial leaders, many of whose ideas have been incorporated in the book. The authors have used a well-known method of forecasting — projecting past and present trends into the future. Working with recent discoveries in the fields of physics, agriculture and psychology, for example, they can fairly predict that things now outrageously expensive will become economical as development proceeds.

They also demonstrate the close link between living standards and steel production, which explains the frantic, almost vicious campaign in the U.S.S.R. to boost production. Annual production of steel per capita is 1,300 pounds in the U.S.A., 700 pounds in this country, 175 pounds in Japan and as little as 7 pounds in India. Japan is the country of surprises. The death-rate there, at 8.2 per thousand, is lower than the U.S.A. (9.2 per thousand) or the U.K. (11.4 per thousand). A combination of cheap labour and agricultural science has meant Japan produces more food calories per cultivated acre than any other country in the wold.

As for the future, the professors are not greatly worried about either food or raw material resouces. With wider application of present technology, food production can be expanded at between 2 and 4 per cent annually, which will take care of increasing world population. Up to eight billion people could be fed by intensified conventional agriculture, without resort to expensive schemes for seawater horticulture or desert irrigation. But — and this is a dangerous fact — most of the food expansion is to be achieved in North America, which is not the place where the food will be required. The position is happier for raw materials. Even when no rich ore-fields remain to be discovered, raw materials will be available from more common rocks. Such extraction is possible now, but is obviously uneconomical while richer fields remain. The decline of oil as a fuel within this century is predicted; but, less obviously, the authors predict a steady increase in coal extraction for some centuries to come, despite the fact that by the year 2000 they expect nuclear fuels to overtake coal in importance.

The main conclusion of the book is that man's material progress will depend on the quantity, quality, and utilization of brainpower. The authors make it clear that all is within our grasp, providing we train enough scientists and engineers; and as food and raw materials become harder to wrest from the earth the scientific élite will assume ever greater importance.

M. P.

THE PISAN CANTOS

CANTO LXXV: A MUSICAL INTERLUDE

by ALAN NEAME

EZRA POUND'S *Pisan Cantos* and *Rockdrill* are not easy to read. Their lack of sustained thought, their unfamiliar references and their broken syntax reflect all too clearly the broken life of their author. Yet these poems are more than a record of the suffering of one man crushed by the political machine. They record also something more catastrophic, the shattered life of a continent, of a culture and of a myth that for many people came to a fiery end on May 1, 1945.

Of these later poems, decorated with Chinese characters in the margins and sprinkled with Greek and Latin tags, Canto LXXV presents the strangest aspect of all. It is the shortest, consisting of only seven lines — which makes it remarkable in the first place; but these seven lines are followed by twenty-three lines of musical score covering a page and a half. At the head of the score, with the aid of a magnifying glass, one can read the following words written in a minute but elegant hand:

Sidelights from Salem; — La canzone de li ucelli —
Francesco da Milano (5 cento) — Gerhard Muench (9 cento)
Parte del Violino (per metamorfosi)

One hundred and sixteen bars of music follow, and after the double-bar line, in what looks like another hand, is a date, 28.9.35, the name *Milano* and the Chinese character for *bird* in its archaic form. At which point the canto ends.

Why is the music there? — Eccentricity, says old Toad-in-the-Hole who sees wilful obscurity in any departure from the norm of

composition. — Originality, claims Starry-Eyes who hails every departure from the norm as a sure sign of genius. Both parties habitually make fools of themselves, mislead others and give no-one but themselves the benefit of the doubt.

But, giving the poet the benefit of the doubt for a change, is the music perhaps intended as a setting for the words of the poem? There is no indication to think that this is so. Thirty-six words of text do not go very happily into one hundred and sixteen bars of music for a solo violin. And, to argue from minutiae, at the end of the poetic text there is no full-stop, which seems to suggest rather that the words should be recited and that then the music should be played afterwards. Not of course that the last point need be conclusive, proof-reading being what it is — a bore.

Toad-in-the-Hole and Starry-Eyes in their snorts and transports overlook the precedent for such a mixing of words and notes. James Joyce in 1922, twenty-seven years before this canto appeared, had printed a stave of music in one of the early chapters of *Ulysses*. In the same work, Joyce organised the chapter known as *The Sirens* to be read against the artfully suggested background music of Flotow's *Martha* played on a pub piano. Is the music of Canto LXXV to be played as background music to the words? Here the same difficulties arise as above: how would one synchronise the dual performance? how would one read against the fiddle? And, again, there is still not the full-stop, like the non-barking of the dog in the Sherlock Holmes story.

★ ★ ★

While Pound was living in Rapallo between the two wars, he organised a series of concerts as a contribution to the social and intellectual life of what was in those days little more than a seaside village. On October 10, 1933, the concert programme included a work called "La Canzone degli Uccelli" (The Song of the Birds) for violin and pianoforte. The violinist was Gerhart Muench, a German who paid frequent visits to Rapallo from the Reich; the pianist was Olga Rudge, the English archivist of the Accademia Musicale Chigiana of Siena; both were intimate friends of the poet. The piece of music printed in the canto is an item from an old concert programme, preserved for sentimental reasons — a token suspended in the fluid of a poet's memory of the days before the barbed wire went up and the bombs began to fall.

But there is more to this particular piece of music than its private associations. It has undergone a long history of transformations. The manuscript that Gerhart Muench transcribed for the Rapallo concert was one of a large cache of forgotten early Renaissance musical manuscripts discovered in an old chest after the First War by an Italian advocate called Chilesotti. The Chilesotti manuscript of *The Song of the Birds* was an arrangement for the lute alone, by the sixteenth century Italian composer, Francesco da Milano. But this was still not the original form in which the piece had been written. For Francesco da Milano had adapted the composition of an even earlier French composer, Clement Janequin, born in the second half of the fifteenth century. This earliest form of the work known to us was a chorale for voices, with sounds *but no words* for the singers of the various parts of the chorus. Where did Janequin find the idea of making human voices imitate the wordless song of birds, within the discipline of musical convention? Possibly, we may say even probably, in some surviving tradition of Troubadour art. Of the Provençal poet, Arnaut Daniel (1180-1210), we have a remarkable poem called *L'aura amara*, the words of which are more onomatopoeic than intelligible, and imitate the chatter of birds at the onset of autumn. If we may be bold to trace some connexion between the fifteenth century musician and the twelfth century poet, it would be this: that Janequin has preserved the onomatopoeic concept of Daniel, but suppressed the almost meaningless words in favour of the new counterpoint. Beyond Daniel we should hesitate to carry speculation back, whether into the Christian Dark Ages or into Islamic Spain, though the latter might prove the more rewarding.

The history of this *Song of the Birds* is then ancient and mysterious. But stranger even than its survival is the way in which its onomatopoeic quality of bird-song has been preserved through successive arrangements for the human voice, the lute and latest the violin. "Having heard the original Janequin sung badly," Pound remarks in an essay called *Civilisation* (before 1937), "I am inclined to wonder whether any chorus was ever sufficiently perfect in execution to give the intervals with the clarity of the fiddle, or if Francesco da Milano's lute could ever have rendered them as effectively. There is no valid reason for idolatry or antiquolatry. There is no reason why the re-creation of beauty should always fall below the original." The point is valid, as most people will agree who have sat through antiquarian concerts of breathy Bach-organs

and tinny Mozart-pianos. There is something to be said for technical progress in the arts.

Besides its personal associations then, this piece of music is important in itself. It is the product of a culture, through which it has evolved with augmenting clarity, and which it has survived. Having proved its fitness by survival, it becomes one with those other artistic and philosophic criteria by which the heirs of a tottering civilisation can measure their own achievements: the *Song of the Birds* for a musical criterion, the Tempio at Rimini for architecture, the *Odyssey* for poetics, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for religion the Confucian *Classics* for rational principles of government, the Malatesta post-bag for energetic living, Thomas Jefferson's letters for polite statecraft. In fact, the *Song of the Birds* is one of those texts, so often misunderstood and dubbed 'unassimilated lumps', 'wholesale purloinings', 'reader's indigest', 'culture-hokum' and other gross terms, but that serve as documents of reference scattered through the body of the *Cantos*, acting as magnets to establish order and pattern in the heterogeneous and episodic materials collected by the poet on his personal odyssey.

Sidelights from Salem apart, we have in Canto LXXV and the last few lines of the canto that precedes it a spotlight on the way that the mind of this poet works at its task of ordering, refining and eliminating. In the *A.B.C. of Reading* (1934), Pound, writing of the enduring property of true art, cites Janequin's *Chanson des Oiseaux* as an example:

> "Clement Janequin wrote a chorus, with sounds for the singers of the different parts of the chorus. These sounds would have no literary or poetic value if you took the music away, but when Francesco da Milano reduced it for the lute, the birds were still in the music. And when Muench transcribed it for modern instruments, the birds were still there.
>
> "They *are* still there in the violin part.
>
> "That is why the monument outlasts the bronze casting."

By 1938, this thought has developed several accretions. In the *Guide to Kulchur*, he writes of "the *forma*, the immortal *concetto*, the dynamic which is like the rose pattern driven into the dead iron-filings by the magnet, not by material contact with the magnet itself, but separate from the magnet." Pound is not far here from the

theories of substance put forward by the Schoolmen. "The *forma*, the concept, rises from death," he says, and goes on to quote the celebrated lines of Austen Dobson:

> The bust outlasts the throne,
> The coin, Tiberius.

Surprisingly, he does not note that these lines support his theory in their own medium of poetry, being themselves a very skilful translation of a poem by Théophile Gautier, who was, (but my memory may play me false), in turn imitating Horace. At any rate, he immediately proceeds from Dobson to a discussion of Janequin, whose concept "takes a third life for our time, for catgut or patent silver;" while on the next page (p. 153) of the book occur the words 'not of one bird but of many'. We now have five elements: the *forma*, the power of the magnet over the iron-filings, Dobson's couplet, Janequin and the idea of the birds being 'many'.

By the time the poems come to be written, the *forma* and the *immortal* concetto have disappeared into a didactic limbo, but the image of the dead iron-filings wheeling in their patterns at the pull of the remote magnet has become:

> Hast'ou see the rose in the steel dust
> (or swansdown ever?)
> so light is the urging, so ordered the dark petals of iron;

Dobson has been suppressed, but a new thought has been intruded: that those whom the war has seared and set aside can perhaps see the eternal pattern best; and Canto LXXIV concludes on a reference to these sufferers:

> we who have passed over Lethe.

Now, Lethe (forgetfulness) implies Phlegethon (purging), and traditionally the two rivers of the Underworld complement each other. They continue to flow together through the works of the Christian poets. Dante mentions them together in *Inferno* XIV, 131; Milton, in *Paradise Lost* II, 580-586; and Pound too uses the twin Tartarean streams, to link his seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth cantos, for the latter begins at once with the thrice repeated exclamation of astonishment, delight and envy:

Out of Phlegethon!
out of Phlegethon,
Gerhart
art thou come forth out of Phlegethon?

It is an almost invisible link, but as inevitable as the flowing of the river of Death itself. Three lines later (LXXV, 7.) comes the fifth element from the *Guide to Kulchur*, unchanged for the passing of a decade:

— not of one bird but of many

and then, without intervening mark of punctuation, the poem fades into Muench's transcription of the music of Janequin in its third metamorphosis for performance on 'catgut or patent silver'. The next canto attacks new subjects, but Cantos LXXIV and LXXV should undoubtedly be read as one, with the *Song of the Birds* played as a coda.

Pound is generally reckoned to be a didactic poet at heart. If we choose to find a meaning beneath the images and references, it lies in that suppressed couplet of Dobson's: that art has a mysterious power of survival, independent of institutions or political upheavals. In the despair there is a breath of hope. Among the incoherent fragments of personal and public calamity in the *Pisan Cantos*, these twenty-three staves are set to witness that despite disaster, time and change, some creations of the human genius still miraculously survive intact, even while our whole cultural edifice seems permanently doomed to lie now

at the mercy of a tack hammer
thrown through the roof.

CANTO LXXV

Out of Phlegethon!
out of Phlegethon,
Gerhart
art thou come forth out of Phlegethon?
with Buxtehude and Klages in your satchel, with the (5)
Stammbuch of Sachs in your luggage
— not of one bird but many (7)
(23 lines of music)

Line 1. **Phlegethon:** one of the Infernal rivers, in whose waves the damned are tormented; here, a symbol for the horrors of war.

Line 3. **Gerhart Muench,** German violinist, joined the poets, Pound, Yeats, Gerhard Hauptmann, resident in Rapallo in the interwar period. Having survived the war in Germany, he migrated to the U.S.A. where for some time his artistic career suffered from the prejudices aroused by his German antecedents. When Muench first came to Rapallo, his luggage in toto, according to legend, consisted of the works of Buxtehude, Klaj and Sachs, and one overcoat.

Line 5. **Dietrich Buxtehude** (1637-1707), Swedish composer and organist. He greatly influenced the aspiring J. S. Bach, who once made a 200 mile journey on foot to hear him play. **Johann Klaj** (lat. Clajus, 1616-1656). German poet and cofounder with Georg Phillip Harsdorffer of a literary society known as the Pegnitz Order (Nuernberg, 1644).

Line 6. **Hans Sachs** (1494-1576), German cobbler, dramatist, chief of the Meistersingers of Nuernberg and poet of the German Reformation second only to Luther. **Stammbuch:** collected works, but the poet is mistaken; Muench carried Sachs' **Staendebuch,** a satire on the Three Estates of German society.

The Music. **The Song of the Birds:** copied for the **Pisan Cantos** by Muench in Salem, Mass. from an earlier transcription (Milan, 28. 9. 35). **Per metamorfosi:** through transformations.

PIGEONS

by ALAN NEAME

When dawn floods over eastern cities
To gild their dual carriage-ways,
And night-bound earth slips off her moorings
To sail into the bight of day,

Grandfathers crawl up rickety ladders,
Coughing and rubbing filmy eyes,
To unwire cages in their attics
And give their pigeons exercise:

Soaring, circling, wheeling, diving,
Clapping, clattering, drifting, gliding,
While the old man whirls a duster
On a pole to keep them flying.

Cinemas lurch, roads tilt, mosques flatten
Then bulge beneath their stable orbit,
The desert round the suburbs
Ripples like a beaten carpet.

If with hovering wings and scarlet
Legs outstretched they try to settle
On the flats and domes below them,
Faint old cries urge them to scatter.

Not until the pigeon keeper
Lays aside the sign of power,
May they home to peck up lentils
Sprinkled on the attic floor.

They above, so we below must
Gyrate to the fancier's whim
As long as whirling pole and duster
Set our course and flying time.

But when our old man exhausted
Lays his power-pole on the shelf,
Man less happy than the pigeons
Finds he has grown old himself;

Some new keeper grips the power-pole;
We revolve obediently
With continued clattering and clapping
To the ever old man's cry.

A MORNING WITH THE GREAT

by IVOR POWELL

I WAS NERVOUS, because I had rarely been face to face with anyone who could be called a great man. I supposed it was my duty to record every one of his remarks, but even as I took up a notebook and pencil I knew I wouldn't. The elements which go to compose greatness are easy enough to recognise in whatever sphere of activity they may combine, and the process of tracking them down has become hackneyed. Their exact nature, nevertheless, nobody seems able to agree. Interrogation of the marked man or woman is usually not very helpful. Brightly, but respectfully, press the right button, and only platitudes or details of interest to women's magazines come pouring out. Of one thing I am sure: few have greatness thrust upon them. It is something for which you must go into training, the basis of which is, from my pesonal observations, a good memory and an ability to get up early in the morning. I have a memory like a sieve and my conscious day starts about lunchtime.

One ingredient of greatness is obvious even to the most disillusioned of us, and that is Dedication, and the authority which springs from it. The dedication that springs, or should I say uncoils, from authority, on the other hand, is not such a sure sign, and is an aspect of mere success. It may be argued that there is nothing mere about success, but that is a matter of which I know little. Greatness, however, gives men and women an unmistakeable air, but this is an air which is only too easy to assume: there is, after all, something Olympian about a pekinese in repose.

Of the great whose pictures do not appear in the paper, who have never been on television, and at whose uncouth appearance any head waiter would shy, it is unfair to speak; these are the unsuccessful great, and it is only after their death that people fold themselves

in two to run up biographies and monuments for them, severally asserting "I knew what they were like all the time."

As I say, I had never met anyone who could really be described as great. I have several near misses among my acquaintance, or who are embryonic "greats". With the latter, time and circumstance will combine to affirm or deny, with the former I am mostly ill at ease. Important people (who are usually near-miss greats), are always terribly busy, and never waste time, so that when I am with them I can see them thinking "Is this fellow Worthwhile?" And as I can see the answer is "No", I don't get very far with them.

Monsieur Cocteau's note asking me to visit him was itself a work of art. I wanted to keep it and put it in a frame, but lost it almost immediately, finding in my pocket only small pieces of paper inviting me to send my cheque by return. Used to the grand, stiffly corseted ways of certain literary persons, I was afraid that I would be disappointed. I half expected to see a weary, remote Olympian, aglitter with hints of poetic fantasy he surely would not bother to display at half past ten in the morning, above all in the lounge of the Randolph Hotel.

I was greeted by a warm handclasp (what a pity we don't shake hands more often in Britain) and a smile which made me tell myself that here was one of the most beautiful people I had ever met. Age can sometimes fashion in people a rare kind of beauty, fragile and venerable: this he had, and with it the air of some blithe immortal who was playing at being old. Yet there was no trace of pretence about him. He had the fresh charm of that very summer morning, and I was at once under his spell. He asked me to go with him while he sat for the photographer, and I helped him with the splendid gown he had received the day before with all the pomp which Oxford can provide. I asked him if it had been specially designed, like the coat and sword he wore for his installation in the French Academy, but he denied it. Under the robe he kept on his new waistcoat, a tartan affair which he happily called his *gilet anglais*, bought to keep out the chill, damp air of Oxford in what, to us cold-blooded creatures, appeared to be a heatwave. Around his neck he had a chain of pearls and precious metal, worn with inconspicuous negligence. I wished I could have looked at it more closely, and forbore to ask what associations it had for him.

He was delighted with his academic cap, its stiff shape and sombrely shining stuff evoking, he said, all the solemn grandeur of the University and its traditions, of which he spoke with wonder,

as though nothing so marvellous exsited anywhere else; strange words for the *enfant terrible,* who, as we talked, I became certain was nothing of the kind. Seer, yes, poet, yes, who has cast so splendidly the strong, united radiance of fantasy and reason over the mean, the blatant, and the terrifying.

After patiently submitting to the camera he was helped into his jacket again, and we went into the blank, empty bar, familiar and impersonal, which should have had its small garland for this occasion, as after all the whole City had set out to do him honour. He accepted homage with such ease and grace that I at first took this for an assumed courtliness, but then recalled that, although he is one of the dynamic persons of our century, his background and upbringing are of the era prior to 1914, when manners were still cultivated, and leisure could be turned to pure gold by those who were fortunate enough to possess it.

At that time I was doing some work for the left-wing Theatre Workshop, a group whose vitality he admired. I told him how conscious they were of their message. "And do they manage to interest their audience in it?" he asked. But I fancied that politics did not interest him at all.

Not, at any rate, on that particular morning.

I was anxious to know how he liked England, and he enthused over our gardens. "One sees them from the train," he said. "All the houses, even the rows of suburban dwellings, each with its patch of flowers and green grass. It is the kind of first impression which makes one feel very well disposed towards the English. And everyone is so courteous!"

He was enthusiastic about English food, which he said he thought must be the most delicious in the world. He cannot have eaten in the Oxford hotel where, to my alarm, I was offered pilaff with boiled vegetables, and, when the soggy mass of rice reached my plate, I rather regretted I had not allowed it to be covered in cabbage. From roast beef and raspberries he went on to tell about the reception given for him by the Oxford Union.

"This was the England I had always dreamed of!" he said. "All those splendid young lords, in perfect evening dress, and their President, an Adonis in a cape lined with scarlet — it was the most beautiful and romantic thing I have seen for a long time. Their deference, too, not just to their seniors, but to each other, was something one doesn't see in France. We have lost all that."

We talked trivialities, and he appeared to be aware of everything

of interest, to take an interest in everything but himself, and to have a terrific capacity for observation and enjoyment, delighted by the landscaped quality of the Southern English country-side, with the slow little trains puffing across it, and by the carefully-cherished magnificence of our ceremonies.

It was midday. He had been busy since early in the morning, and was to go to a luncheon before giving his lecture on poetry in the afternoon. He had been ill, and was still by no means strong, — a proof, here, that greatness demands, not physical strength, but an immense vitality, a conviction of the importance of each moment as it passes.

He did not once try to be portentous, nor to say something memorable while revealing nothing of himself. There was nothing hidden about him. He conversed lightly, agreeably, and with a kindly wit. This frnak, Epicurean manner I found immensely pleasing, controlled as it was by a true classic tranquillity. Here was a man, I thought, who had learned to be equal to anything, had learned by the hard exercises set by life and by art, and had put his findings back into life and art again. His quality of enduring youth was, perhaps, not so strange in one who has been touched by death enough to write two masterpieces about it; no abstracted, egocentric meanderings, but vibrant dramas which, telling of death, are assertive of life. I believe that his *Orpheus* and *The Eagle Has Two Heads* will be remembered as two of the great plays of this century. I told him so. He smiled indulgently. "You are very kind," he said.

We said goodbye. I watched him with his entourage step out into the sunny street, between the flowers in the hotel portico. Two young lords, passing by, stopped and stared.

LETTER

CHRISTIANITY AND BANTU POLYGAMY

To the Editor of *The European.*

Sir,

Mr. Martin Preston, whose letter you publish in your July issue, may be right about Islam, the Bantu, Christianity and monogamy. However, a book called *Defeating Mau-Mau,* by Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, touches upon the clash between Christianity and Bantu polygamy, and supports the African argument that the scriptures nowhere condemn the latter in general terms, but only in the case of "deacons" (priests). Dr. Leakey is an authority on Kenya and the Kikuyu.

As for Islam, the American magazine *Newsweek,* issue of May 12th, had this to say: "Tens of thousands of Africans are quitting the Christian faith every year. The Moslem religion, better equipped to fulfil African desires (e.g. polygamy), is taking up the slack."

A resurgence of the murderous leopard-cult in western Africa a few years ago was said to be due partly to the declining influence of Christianity, which lost prestige when Africans saw that Europeans did not practice it. On the other hand, many Kikuyu died for their faith at the hands of the Mau-Mau— the so-called white man's faith, which began in Asia and northern Africa and shares some parts of Europe with Islam even now.

Yours sincerely,
Patrick J. N. Bury.

Ballymountain House,
Waterford,
Ireland.

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U.S.A.
1 Year $3 6 months $1.80

Cheques should be made payable to *The European* and sent to *The European,* 302 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1.

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