THE EUROPEAN

THE JOURNAL OF OPPOSITION

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TO ALL OUR READERS :-

THE next issue of *The European* will be merged with the journal *Action*, which will become a weekly from the 7th of March. A quarter of the new *Action* will be given to the literary, theatre, etc., criticism which has appeared in *The European*; the rest will be politics.

For the moment the purpose of *The European* is fulfilled. Six years of creative thinking and wide discussion have at least clarified all immediate issues. We now enter a phase of intensive political action with its mass appeal and more decisive electoral tests. Resources are limited and we have to decide, in existing circumstances, what matters more and what matters less. What now matters most is direct political action. Time for more reflection and creative thinking will one day return, and with it *The European.*

In the meantime we would ask our supporters to be so good as to allow us to transfer their subscriptions to *Action*—which we will do for them unless we hear to the contrary—with our warm thanks to their encouraging interest and generous co-operation.

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ANALYSIS

THE choice before Britain becomes ever clearer; it is between the past and the future. It is also increasingly clear that the old parties have chosen the past. They believe they can live in the 1950's as they lived in the 1850's; as an empire which is also a world financier. They have not yet observed that they no longer possess either the Empire or the strength for world finance. They lost both in the war which they both supported.

The precarious economic basis of the pound.

The idea is to have one foot in the Commonwealth, another foot in Europe and the head in the golden cloud of high finance. But the head can only remain in the traditional position if the feet are firmly planted. The foot in the Commonwealth grips a slippery slope on which it can only retain hold at all by large financial contributions to countries such as India and the black colonies; the voracious demands of their war-won independence are quite beyond Britain's war exhausted strength. The foot in Europe is being dislodged because the six countries which are all too slowly and timidly fashioning a political and economic entity are tiring of a partner which seeks always to play a double game at their expense. The situation is a tragedy for the British people because the leadership of Europe was Britain's for the asking a decade ago; it can become a tragedy for all Europe because the absence of a people so vital and only twenty miles distant is an affront to nature, and in modern conditions could become a strategic, economic and political menace. But for practical purposes of the immediate future it is only necessary to note that the economic footholds in Commonwealth and Europe on which rest the financial dominion of the pound sterling are extremely precarious. As more than half the world's trade is financed in that currency the danger is not confined to Britain.

Why the convertible mark is strong.

The lesson has been underlined by the full and complete convertibility of the German mark, while as we have already noted

the only real effect of the concomitant measure taken in Britain is to enable some foreigners to buy a pound one cent cheaper than they could before. The German people are now entirely free; they can change their currency into dollars, Swiss francs or any other money exactly as the British could before the war. The British people on the other hand are limited to £100 per annum travel allowance. The wheel has indeed come full circle.

What is the basic cause of all this, stripped of economic jargon? It is that Germany has concentrated on doing possible things which are within its strength, and Britain has tried to do impossible things which are quite beyond its individual strength. Germany has used the immense energy of a highly gifted and a very hard working people in a maximum productive effort at highly competitive prices which has piled up a very large surplus in its balance of payments. Britain has dissipated the effort of the British people in trying to support at the same time a welfare state which is a heavier proportionate burden than that of America; backward black colonies which perhaps used to be exploited by us (although we gave much in return) but now very thoroughly exploit us by demanding large sums in respect of sterling balances or by way of fresh loans to finance a development much more rapid than they can assimilate; a military burden which is supposed to make an overtaxed island an effective competitor with America and Russia; and finally a currency which is not only responsible for all this but also for financing more than half the world's trade. A year's reading of all the profoundest obfuscations of the economists will not make the causes of our present situation any clearer than a short consideration of these salient and obvious facts.

The musical chairs of economic disaster.

Britain is just fuddling along like any tired old fellow in private life who has got into the foolish habit of trying to do too many things at once and has not the will and energy to get out of it. The first lack is clear decision concerning what we will retain and what we will discard. We are faced with the necessity for that decision and for much more; we have to reshape our entire life, because the old ways simply will not work any longer. It is not enough to divest ourselves of some parts of our present burden; retrenchment is quite inadequate.

It is true we could greatly strengthen our position against any international crisis by the kind of measures which were sug-

gested by the resigning conservative ministers, or by the measures just undertaken in France. We could thereby improve our competitive position on world markets and make it less likely that we should find ourselves in the position of failing to pay by exports for the imports necessary to our restricted island position. But as experience now shows, other nations can do the same thing. A competition in belt tightening, accompanied when necessary by competitive currency devaluations, can very easily occur.

The weak and strong members of this competitive European community can in this way change positions overnight. The European powers play an economic game of musical chairs with disaster for the odd man out. In the end we come back to the root fact that all cannot at the same time sell more than they buy on world markets. Within the conditions of the present system, someone must always go under. Yesterday it was France; tomorrow it is more likely to be Britain. The least likely event in present conditions is another disaster for the country which a decade ago was down and out, and as a result of that experience and of hard work has re-entered the ring with nothing to carry.

Germany alone in Europe to-day has the financial strength to do what British government wants to do; the power with one hand to promote and thus to direct European development and with the other to play high finance on world markets. But apart from the question whether Germany either knows how to do it or has any interest in the game, even that position is precarious if neighbouring Britain and partner France are thrown by the present system into recurrent difficulties and the continual malevolence of the most powerful neighbour is ready at any moment to turn the situation to the advantage of communism.

The choice between past and future.

So we return to the constant theme of these pages; the art of political pursuasion is continually to draw from contemporary developments fresh illustrations of the necessity for a great principle. This problem simply cannot be resolved without the complete unity of Europe; Europe a Nation is even more evidently necessary to-day than it was when nearly twelve years ago we first summarized the whole policy in that phrase.

Plain sense for Britain is first to determine what any man of sense must decide in such a situation; what matters and what does not matter. We cannot do everything at once; the attempt to

straddle all positions will end inevitably in a fall beween all stools. What matters is the future, and what does not matter is the past. In our context this is an understatement because if we cannot soon get rid of the past, it will ruin us.

The past is the nostalgic illusion of remaining empire; India, the black colonies, etc., and the world finance which is now occupied with their development. In hard practice the British people are required to divest themselves of a large proportion of their total production in order to equip these backward areas with the loans supplied by finance. For what purpose?—to create there precisely the same conditions which prevail in Europe, the same machines to produce the same goods; only one difference, cheap labour to work them and consequently higher profit for the financiers.

This is not the demagogy of the platform, it is a factual account of what will happen and is happening in a system without direction or control which permits the union of high finance and cheap labour under cover of an obsolete idea of state. If this principle is included in any system, British, Imperial or European, it will wreck it. It is a principle entirely supported by the Conservative, Liberal and Labour Parties, and also supported on much the same ground but for totally different objects by the Communist Party. That is the past; once a fact, now an illusion, soon a disease.

The future is the deliberate decision to enter a community of 300,000,000 people of the same family, culture and basic tradition, with a standard of life so nearly comparable that it can easily for all practical economic purposes be made similar, and with an area in Europe and white Africa at disposal which contains every potential of food and material production necessary to establish the wealthiest and strongest power in the world. There is scope not only for the scientist and technician, for workers skilled and unskilled in assured conditions which can steadily be improved as science increases the means to produce, but for financial and creative ability of all kinds which is willing to gain the great rewards of great service rather than to pick from decay the lesser and continually diminishing prizes of demolition. The choice is plain in grand design and detail; all issues become clear. The phase of thought and discussion draws to an end. The hour of action comes.

EUROPEAN

THE COLOUR QUESTION IN BRITAIN

by ROBERT ROW

SUDDENLY the question of coloured immigration into Britain has become a burning issue. Previously this social phenomenon was regarded quite complacently as an example of British tolerance and understanding of the needs of other peoples. The South Norwood Labour Party staged a calypso celebration to welcome immigrants to the Borough in 1952, and the Mayor of Lambeth organised dances in 1955 to show that local white and coloured peoples "can mix socially" without trouble.

The racial riots of Nottingham and Notting Hill during August and September last year shattered this dream-world. It became clear that black and white peoples do not mix easily after all. Since the outbreaks (and there have been minor and sporadic instances of violence more recently) the press has treated the question of immigration as of vital importance. Why should it be important? The number of coloured immigrants into Britain is insignificant compared with the population of these islands; it is less than the number of Irish immigrants each year. The question of race itself has been treated for some years as of minor significance or even avoided altogether: was not Hitler's racial "myth" demolished with his defeat in 1945? Have not the British been taught since then, through the opinion forming media of radio, television,

cinema and popular press, that the world consists of one great brotherhood, and that "race" is a wicked word? Yet in August and September last year sudden violence erupted in two of our largest cities, and racial rioting (the worst examples of violence since the war) became a national topic. Why?

Why do coloured immigrants come to Britain in the first place? Why not stop at home in their "islands in the sun," where Lord Beaverbrook and other wealthy people go as often as possible to enjoy the amenities? What causes coloured people to come to wintry Britain? To understand the immigration we should find out what causes it, go to the roots of the trouble in order to find the answer to the problem.

Coloured immigration has been in progress for several years. There was a good deal of it immediately after the war when, we are told, many coloured ex-servicemen, stationed in Britain during the war, decided they preferred to live in the welfare state rather than at home. There was no welfare state at home.

After 1950 the rate of immigration began to shoot up. There must have been some reason for this rise: there was. Most of the immigrants came from the West Indies, and the West Indies were becoming a socially and industrially depressed area.

The British West Indies are almost entirely dependent on agriculture for a living. They produce mainly sugar, also some tobacco and fruit. Some islands, such as Barbados, produce sugar only. Their population is continuously increasing, and unless they get a good price for their produce their people face unemployment and destitution. In Barbados, for example, there is regular work in the cane sugar industry for four months of the year: for the rest of the year they are largely idle, and any unemployment during the working season hits them badly.

Before the war, during the great world depression, they suffered much distress because of low prices. In 1938 Jamaica saw some very bloody riots. This happened while a Conservative Government was in power in Britain, and the Labour Party, being in Opposition, attacked the Conservative Government for its heartlessness in not helping the West Indies more.

In 1945, after a successful war, a Labour Government came to power. How did it treat the West Indies then, once it had a large working majority in Parliament, six years of power, and could therefore carry through any enlightened social changes it wished?

The answer is that Labour leaders brought poverty back to the West Indies themselves. (During the war the West Indies enjoyed a spell of relative prosperity because of the demand for their produce).

The post-war Labour Government began by offering the West Indies a glowing future. In December 1947 they proposed to give £26 5s. a ton for their sugar, bringing it close to the price they were paying the much-favoured Cuban producers (£27 a ton). At that time the Labour Government offered the West Indies security if they put part of the increased price into reserve to develop the sugar industry, plus stabilised prices to the growers. It sounded very nice.

In 1948 the Ministry of Food undertook to take all the sugar the Colonies could produce, up to 1952, and urged the maximum expansion of production. This was the period when Mr. Strachey was busy making speeches on a permanent shortage of food throughout the world, and launched expensive ventures, such as the East African groundnuts scheme, to raise production by hook or by crook. The West Indies were enjoined to turn out all the sugar they could.

But Jamaica, led by Mr. Bustamante, remembered the pre-war days of gluts and asked for guaranteed markets to take all the sugar they could produce. They could turn it out all right if they were guaranteed adequate markets. Sugar, like other agricultural crops, does not grow out of conjurors' hats: it needs about three years to expand production effectively. The West Indies asked for a guaranteed annual market of 1,800,000 tons under a 10-year contract at a reasonably remunerative guaranteed price based on local conditions. They based this demand on the expansion they estimated could be achieved, and which would justify the considerable outlay of new capital.

The Labour Government's reply was that it could not go beyond the year 1952, and that it intended to work for a new International Sugar Agreement; international trade and "export or die" being its articles of faith.

Early in November 1949 the West Indies sent over a delegation to try to reach some agreement with the Labour Government. But by now the latter had made it clear what it would take from 1952 onwards: no more than 640,000 tons a year, when the West Indies were prepared to produce nearly three times as much, 1,800,000 tons a year if they had the market. The Labour Govern-

ment's policy appears to have been to encourage the maximum output of sugar up to 1952, with much outlay of capital necessary for this expansion; then, once the capital was sunk in the industry, to cut down production after 1952 to a figure one-third of the West Indian potential production.

Mr. Strachey of course followed the same policy of blundering waste in his nuts scheme in East Africa. The British taxpayer footed the bill. But the West Indian people could not afford such a great outlay in the first place, and could not invest in their sugar industry without adequate guaranteed markets. Discussion ended in January 1950, without agreement.

Meanwhile, West Indian leaders at home were saying forcefully what the Labour policy would produce. Mr. Bustamante, the Jamaican leader, said (*Daily Mail*, 23.1.50):

> "The British Government's policy towards the West Indies is stupid, and possibly dangerous. I am not threatening—I understand Sir Stafford Cripps told our delegation he did not like such a word—but trouble will come from the people themselves without any urging when they find conditions impossible.
>
> "Rather than be destroyed by His Majesty's Government under His Majesty's flag, we prefer our independence, and we are prepared to fight for it . . . if London won't listen to our suggestions . . . a lot will happen."

(Prophetic words! A lot *has* happened. A lot of coloured immigrants have come to Britain since 1950; instead of violence in Kingston, Jamaica, as in 1938, a flood of refugees from a ruined Jamaica have come to Britain, resulting in violence in Notting Hill, London, twenty years later).

Mr. Kirkwood, chairman of the Jamaica Sugar Association, said:

> "Our farmers and cane-workers have had a raw deal. The methods used in London were like cut-price haggling in a bargain basement."

So much for the opinion of a Labour Government held by some of the most "under-privileged people of the world," on whose behalf the Labour Party constantly assures us it is working.

But the Labour Government was still hypnotised by the fetish

of international trade. In June 1950 its spokesmen informed the West Indians they were not entitled to the same protected price arrangements as were, for example, British farmers who produced sugar beet.

Mr. Dugdale of the Colonial Office, and Mr. Webb, Minister of Food, refused to guarantee either markets or prices to West Indian sugar producers. They went still further, and stated that the Labour Government could not "insulate sugar producers in the Commonwealth wholly from the movements of world prices." They explained they were working for an international sugar agreement, and they stated that if Britain were to take part in an international agreement, the United Kingdom must set aside a share in its home market for the sugar producers of the world.

It had altered its views considerably from the days when Mr. Strachey made speeches deploring permanent world shortages of food. Now possibilities were arising of playing off one primary producer of sugar against another. That is virtually what the Labour Government told the West Indians in 1950, and that is why the latter were refused the adequate guaranteed markets which they required to keep their people in jobs, even if they were able to show they could produce enough sugar for Britain to go off rationing in a relatively short time.

The following year saw the reason why the Labour Government insisted on this policy. On 10.8.51 it signed its now notorious "Black Pact" with Cuba. It refused an adequate guaranteed market to the West Indians, but it guaranteed one to Cuba. It agreed to take 1,500,000 tons of sugar from that country over the three years 1951/53 and to allow the importation of Cuban cigars into Britain to the value of $500,000 during each of the years 1952 and 1953.

In return, Cuba agreed to reduce import duties on British goods down to the preferential level which the United States of America then enjoyed in the Cuban market. In return for the ruin of the West Indies British goods gained a footing in the Cuban market. But what on earth possessed the Labour Government to assume that this was a market of any real significance? Had Cuba ever featured among Britain's major customers? Britain, furthermore, gained no real advantage from the Cuban market. Under the terms of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trading, signed after the war, this reduction of import duties had to be applied also

to the other 30 countries which signed the G.A.T.T. agreement. Britain was not allowed to enjoy this advantage alone, but had to compete against the United States, with its shorter sea-routes and mass production methods. Cuba was not a significant market for British goods before the "Black Pact," and has not been one since. Yet the Labour Government did not hesitate to ruin the West Indies in pursuit of this daydream.

Two years later the blunder was repeated. A Conservative Government was now in power, and signed its own "Black Pact" with Cuba in April 1953. It agreed to take 1,000,000 tons of sugar, to be paid for with precious dollars (which Britain could ill afford) whereas the West Indies could have supplied all this sugar for sterling.

Between them, the Labour and Conservative governments contrived to cancel out the advantages they claimed they were reaping from their bull-in-a-china-shop trading policy. Dollars which the first "Black Pact" painfully won for Britain by competing against 30 other countries in the minor Cuban market were promptly sent back to Cuba, under the second "Black Pact", to pay for the second lot of sugar: the old parties often claim "progress" when in fact they are standing exactly still.

Lord Lyle's comment (he was head of the big sugar combine) was to say that

> "Because of this blunder Britain's larder is now stuffed with around 1,750,000 tons of sugar. That is 1,000,000 tons more than is needed to keep the nation sweet." (*Daily Express*, 14.1.54).

So much for the efforts of both parties in government to keep Cuba "sweet" by wasteful bulk purchase. It is also a curious example of a Conservative Government conserving the disastrous bulk-purchase method of a Labour Government while winning an election on the slogan of "free enterprise", to which Lord Lyle himself contributed much by his "Mr. Cube" publicity.

What has happened to all the sugar which Lord Lyle claimed was "stuffed" into Britain's larder? Did it get as far as the British consumer, who by then had developed a pronounced taste for sweet things after years of warfare and Labour austerity in sugar rationing?

Much of it never reached the dining tables here. On 31.3.58 the *Daily Express* reported:

> "An estimated 1,000,000 tons of Cuban sugar, worth nearly £80,000,000 in the shops, is stacked on disused airfields in East Anglia. It has been there for five years. There is no sign that it will be moved. Much of the sugar was bought from Cuba under the 'Black Pact' of 1951."

What is the position today? Mr. Bustamante's warning of 1950 has indeed been borne out. Trouble has come, as he said it would, from the West Indian people themselves; not in the form of riots, which they learnt in 1938 could be suppressed by troops and police, but through the more subtle if spontaneous method of migration (which in any case is one of their traditions) to live upon the country which has ruined them.

This migration has caused trouble in Britain in a variety of ways. Firstly, over-crowding in the "black belts" of our big cities, with its attendant evils of taking houses which should be inhabited by the British who built them, and the ever-present danger to health.

Secondly, the danger to jobs, which is increasing today as a large pool of up to a quarter of a million coloured men and women is available to the more unscrupulous employer who will always lead the way in cutting wages in order to compete against his more honest rival. A large number of firms today employ coloured labour at lower wages than a white man would accept. This trend is certain to go on. Other firms are dismissing coloured workers when redundancies occur; yet this simply throws more coloured unemployed workers into competition with white workers for the jobs which remain.

Thirdly, the clash between black and white when both are herded together in crowded houses and streets, with dissimilar habits, leading inevitably to racial tension and violence.

There are about a quarter of a million coloured immigrants in Britain. Last July Miss Hornsby-Smith, Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs, gave the figure of 190,000. Mr. Cyril Osborne, M.P., put it at 210,000 in November; the *Daily Telegraph* said it was 250,000 at the same time. Mr. Osborne indeed claimed we shall have up to 6 million coloured inhabitants of this country in 20 years' time if the present trend continues. He predicted: "we

will have Nottingham and Notting Hill over and over again"—a future of continual race-rioting, it seems.

On 23.10.58 the *Daily Telegraph* published a report on the situation in the West Indies and the likelihood of the coloured immigration to Britain continuing, which clearly showed the extent of the breakdown. The newspaper's representative, who travelled a round journey of 12,000 miles, made it clear that Britain has yet to feel the full impact of coloured immigration.

He pointed to four main causes:

(1) "The historical fact that West Indians . . . have ever been a migratory people to countries of greater prosperity";

(2) "The enormous birthrate . . . which will exert continually increasing population pressure";

(3) "The certainty that the anticipated rate of economic and industrial development will hardly touch the unemployment and poverty of the mass of the people."

(4) "The firm . . . determination of even the most enlightened leaders to 'pack off' surplus population, preferably the least skilled, at all costs."

Any suggestion that recent racial trouble in Britain would slow down the rate of immigration, or even reverse it, was ruled out by the report. The *Daily Telegraph* editorial for the same day went as far as to say:

> "The possibility of broken bones in Notting Hill will seem a small risk to take to avoid destitution and unemployment in Jamaica and Trinidad."

What that destitution means can be gathered from the report, which stated:

> "Barbados, barely the size of the Isle of Wight, with a population of 230,000 and a density of nearly 1,500 people to the square mile, has one great problem. This is how to give regular work to the 22,000 men and women who, for only about four months of the year, are engaged in the harvesting and milling of the island's only crop, sugar cane. During the rest of the year, May to December, these people live . . . 'off the smell of an oily rag' "

The report continued:

"Why do West Indians leave the cheerful, gregarious sur-

> roundings . . .? They leave because they want those things which radio, films and books tell them are available if they can work overseas."

Their governments want them to leave. The *Daily Telegraph* report made it clear, not only that their policy was to 'pack off' their surplus population, preferably the unskilled, but also that:

> "There is no question of 'screening' any convicted person applying for a passport. Secondly, they were not in favour of the medical examination of emigrants."

Looking at it from their point of view, it is quite understandable for West Indian governments to adopt this attitude. If they have to get rid of surplus population, why keep the crooks, the unskilled, and the medically unfit at home, and export their best people to another country?

When that other country is also the country which has refused them their traditional guaranteed market, on which they depended to employ their people at home; the country to which they have been stoutly loyal in the past; and which repaid them by giving the guaranteed market to Cuba; when this has been the policy of politicians who talked largely of looking after the underdogs of the world; then it can be understood that West Indian leaders will be the last in the world to hold back their unemployed from an even bigger migration to Britain in the future.

British government policy is entirely responsible for this misery and unemployment. It has ruined the West Indies since the war; now the British people suffer a great coloured immigration which clashes inevitably with worsening unemployment here.

Sir Oswald Mosley has the distinction of being the only political leader to warn for the past ten years that this clash was inevitable because of the policies the old parties followed.

He has advanced a solution which deals with the coloured question. It is:

(a) Send the coloured immigrants home, with their passage paid by the people who brought them here;

(b) Send them home to good jobs in their own countries, which can be secured by giving them the guaranteed market in Britain for which they have always asked. Give them this market, not

for the 10 years they originally suggested, but on a permanent basis;

(c) Give Britain at the same time the same rights as the British Dominions, which have long exercised the right to choose which immigrants shall be allowed through their ports. The right of entry for students coming here to learn would always be respected; they could come here for a definite period, after which time they would go back to their own countries.

Under this policy, the minority of crooks among them would be expelled because of their habits. The majority of decent people among them would be sent home to good jobs among their own families.

How would those good jobs be given them? The answer lies in Mosley's policy of the Wage-Price Mechanism, which in the hands of European Government would fix wages in all industries and prices in monopoly industries, and, in particular, farming.

The West Indian sugar farmer would be treated in the same way as the British home farmer. He would be offered high prices for his produce, but he would have to pay his workers high wages. Britain would take all the sugar he could produce, not for a few years but throughout his lifetime and that of his sons. In fact the whole of Europe would become his market: European Government would greatly raise the purchasing power of 300 million Europeans, creating a vast demand which would absorb all the sugar the West Indies could possibly produce.

The Wage-Price Mechanism is not only designed to raise systematically the internal standard of life of the Europeans. It also offers unparalleled means of drawing together the great white countries of the former British Empire. The West Indies and other friendly purchasers, whose goods did not conflict with European Marketing, could come in on the same basis if they chose: if they refused, where would they get such attractive terms?

At once a great market would be created for Australian wool and Australian and Canadian wheat, New Zealand butter and West Indian sugar, a market continually expanding as European Government raised the living standards of the Europeans. Thus the "over-production" of Australian wheat and the under-consumption of West Indian sugar would vanish—as would semi-starvation among the whole of the Southern European peoples.

BLACKOUT ON HISTORY

by NOEL STOCK

I

LET us pray for one live mind among the many who are paid to write history. For one lively curiosity among professional historians. Elbert Hubbard, 1911, wrote that "A wise Economist could have figured out exactly how long Babylon and Nineveh would have lasted." There is no sign in the academic and liberal circles of 1959 of a curiosity strong enough to connect the legal interest rate of a civilisation with its duration. The reason for this deadness is partly, at least, economic. If professors are not given leisure in which to cultivate their own minds, if they are kept at courses, irrespective of the value of the courses, and at excessive administration, then education will sink still further into mere brainwash. Professors will come to tolerate, without even mental reservations, the filthy state of public life in which the english-speaking peoples now wallow.

II

The extent of the blackout on history, ancient and recent, is seldom understood even by those actively fighting it. The annual report of the Rockefeller Foundation, 1946, admits the subsidising of historians to counteract or frustrate attempts which might be made to revise the 'official' story of World War II. Professor Harry Elmer Barnes of California is one professor who has made a fight for some sort of decency inside the historical profession. In 1953 he edited *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace*, which is an examination by a number of American historians of Roosevelt's foreign policy. His introductory chapter called "Revisionism and the Historical Blackout" shows how the "great foundations" and associated groups have influenced book reviewing and history studies in the United States.[1] Professor Barnes mentions the "case" of Francis Neilson:

> One of the most impressive examples of the ignoring and obscuring of the writings of men critical of our foreign policy since 1937 is presented by the case of Francis Neilson. Mr. Neilson is a distinguished publicist and he served as a mem-

[1] See also analysis of the reviewing racket in John T. Flynn's *While You Slept* (Devin-Adair, N.Y.).

ber of Parliament before he came to the United States. He was the principal "angel" of the original *Freeman* and, like John T. Flynn, was once a darling of American liberals who were, in those days, revisionists and anti-interventionists . . .

When Mr. Neilson opposed our interventionism after 1937, his erstwhile liberal friends fell away from him. Being a man of means, he was able to publish his gigantic five-volume work *The Tragedy of Europe*, privately. It was scarcely noticed in any review . . . In 1950 Mr. Neilson published, again privately, a condensation of the more vital portions of his larger work, entitling it *The Makers of War*. The book contains a great amount of valuable revisionist material not embodied in any other revisionist volume on the second World War. But, Mr. Neilson assured me personally, it has never been reviewed at all.

I have come at this subject by way of economics and banking. I am not primarily interested in the diplomatic intrigues, but have had to read a good deal of it in process of collecting and sorting facts for a brochure on the economic and monetary causes of the war. There is no doubt that *Makers of War* is the best single book available on the combination of decay, greed and conscious planning which brought about War II. Mr. Neilson's *The Churchill Legend* neglects the Gold Standard business of 1926, but otherwise places him, and his followers and admirers, where they belong. Neilson is the only historian I know of, who has obtained a copy and quoted from the pamphlet called *The German Menace to Trade* which was, he says, circulated among British bankers and industrialists some time after March, 1939.

In 1935 Professor Barnes was a well-known historian. His two-volume *History of Western Civilization* was given emphatic praise in the *Saturday Review of Literature* of September 14, 1935, and in the *New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* of September 15. But when, under pre-war and wartime pressure, the U.S. education and university system was fully transformed into an instrument of policy, Professor Barnes was among the few who continued to seek and publish facts about the war and its causes. A few months ago Prof. Barnes wrote to me in a letter that:

> *Perpetual War*, so far as I know, was not reviewed in any of the important literary review journals. My history textbooks have been driven out of university and college use, and the same is virtually true of my sociology books.

The whole business is so utterly and unbelievably low that one has either to put it into verse, or simply direct the reader to some of the more important publications. Taking the latter course I attach a bibliography at the end of this article.

It would be impossible to build anything decent on the foundation of lies that exists in the world today without first clearing some of them away; lies so thick that intelligent people, men of goodwill who want to know, are bogged down in the refuse. It is not the fault of a Barnes or a Fuller or a Neilson if the facts get uglier the deeper one digs.

Conservatives, lovers of Empire, who try to build on the lies and leftovers of a decayed world, are simply helping to create more trouble. Cyprus 1959 is a reward for sickening piety over Abyssinia in 1935. Nor is the historical blackout confined to World Wars I and II, or the years in between. Perversion of texts has been going on for thousands of years; it can be found in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Italy. M. V. Hay in his *Chain of Error* (London 1927) shows that Protestant Scotland was poisoned by false history for so long that it lost touch with several hundred years of important scholarship in Europe.

Whether it is the acquisition and rewriting of some other race's history for the sake of national or racial glory in ancient Mesopotamia, a professor of history hiding an earlier opinion to pass it off as his own or because it destroys his own inferior opinion, or simply a lecturer too stupid or lazy to look up the meaning of a word, it is the same power at work, the power of putrefaction, which corrodes the nerve centres of communication. It has destroyed communication between those who know and those in charge, between intelligent men of goodwill in the various countries, and between scholars in the different branches of knowledge.

Publication of *The Kuan Tzu* by Lewis A. Maverick in 1954 revolutionised historiography and was at the same time a distinct gain over the power of putrefaction. Written about the third century B.C., the *Kuan Tzu* is a record of the monetary and economic ideas of Kuan Chung (7th century B.C.) whom Confucius regarded as one of the roots of Chinese civilisation. It revolutionises historiography because it shows exactly how much was known about money at a given period in China, it enables us to gauge what has been lost or destroyed.

III

It is a disease of thought which leads men to destroy or mutilate history. Diseases of thought are catching, anybody failing in necessary mental sanitation or antisepsis can catch them. They are not confined to any one race, and no race is immune. The

Russians, having caught an imported disease, turned their country into a hell the viciousness of which probably exceeds the viciousness of the original carriers.

The power of putrefaction can, given opportunity, find its way into anybody's thought, yours or mine. A lazy appraisal or lapse of curiosity which leads to the burying of some important information or to a false judgment, is evidence of the presence of putrefaction.

For those interested in genuine gain and increase over this power, the regathering of important information from the past is a work of practical importance, with a distinct bearing upon what is happening now.

IV

In place of curiosity we have our contemporary historians. Only three or four years ago Hugh Trevor-Roper was writing about the first World War in an American newspaper, the sort of stuff still printed regularly in the press of the english-speaking nations. Francis Neilson dealt with Professor Trevor-Roper in the American Journal of Economics and Sociology in 1955. After thirty years of rather patient and detailed explanation of the mess which led to War I, Neilson no doubt felt entitled to kick the pants of a professor of history who still did not have the slightest idea of what it was all about. Or if he did have, he certainly wasn't committing it to writing.

> ". . . the German General Staff launched the war," wrote Trevor-Roper. "I regard it as proved that the War of 1914 was caused by deliberate German aggression."

As if the thing did not have a history stretching back 15 years or more: a history of intrigue on the part of Russia, France, Britain, the United States and Germany. One can start with Bismarck. It is not a fool or callous war monger we read about in *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of His History* by Moritz Busch or in *Bismarck's Relations With England* 1871-1890, which give an idea of his attempts to reach an understanding with England and to get some sanity into the life of Europe. He certainly knew a thing or two about the American Civil War, and had a better grasp than most of what was going on in the world. He even burnt his fingers trying a little speculation.

In *Bismarck's Diplomatic Relations* there is a despatch from London, dated 1882, in which the British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Sir Charles Dilke, complains about French colonial expansion:

> The French are at present very troublesome to us in Madagascar, but we cannot yet declare war on them on that account. They are trying to squeeze us in other parts as well, e.g. on the Niger and Congo they have made treaties with native chiefs allowing Frenchmen monopoly of trading rights.

Bismarck's marginal comment on the despatch is: "You might let them have a corner."

In a series of articles in the American Journal of Economics and Sociology from 1950 to 1958, Francis Neilson uncovers a good deal of the background to World War I: the Comité du Maroc; the increase in naval expenditure of the various nations from 1897 onwards; John Hay's visit to London as representative of President McKinley (with Mark Hanna, the gold and steel man, lurking nearby); the partition of a large area of Persia between Britain and Russia and their fear that the proposed Baghdad railway might enable Germany to exercise some power in what was left. All this, and much more besides, led in the end to four crazy years which proved that whatever trappings were left, the civilisation was dead on top. Versailles was their idea of peace; the League of Nations and Bank of International Settlements their plan for universal tranquillity. Ruskin had warned years before that

> . . . having no true business, we pour our whole masculine energy into the false business of money-making . . . It is simply and sternly impossible for the English public, at this moment, to understand any thoughtful writing — so incapable of thought has it become in its insanity of avarice . . . Above all, a nation cannot last as a money-making mob: it cannot with impunity — it cannot with existence — go on despising literature, despising science, despising art, despising nature, despising compassion, and concentrating on Pence.

V

Controversy is useful if it brings out important information or enables us to correct errors of fact or emphasis. Often it serves to keep attention from the few facts that really matter. This has happened again and again, consisting probably of clever propaganda applied to known human weakness. Here are a few items which have been obscured by controversy or overshadowed by 'more important' events.

Russian Gold.

In 1913 the Czar had more than 600-million dollars in gold. Some of it may have been used to import war material, but what

happened to the rest of it after 1917? Russian gold and its relation (or non-relation) to the London bullion market, was a live question back in the eighteen-nineties. Gold statistics published by W. H. Gibbs in *Colloquy on Currency* (London 1894) suggest that the Czar may not have been playing the game according to rules fixed in London. We would like to know the bearing of this on the events of 1917.

Sisson Papers.

Controversy over the Sisson Papers and similar documents from Russia has been going on since 1918. It has involved such alleged heavyweights as George Kennan, and is continued by Alan Moorhead's recent book *The Russian Revolution.* The Sisson Papers were sent to Washington in 1918 by Francis, the U.S. Ambassador in Russia. They were published in 1931 by the State Department in a collection called "Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Russia." Similar documents have come to light from other sources, all of them indicating a connection between the Russian Revolution (or revolutions) and certain bankers in Germany and Sweden. The long controversy over whether these documents are forgeries is irrelevant, because Ambassador Francis, in sending the documents back to the U.S. sent also an explanatory note, and it is in this explanatory note, signed by the ambassador, and not in the disputed documents, that we read of a connection between the Bolsheviks and financial organisations in Sweden and the United States three months after the October revolution. The message from Francis is dated February 9 to February 13, 1918:

> Olof Aschberg, one of the heads of the Nya Banken, came to Petrograd a month ago and boasted that the N.B. was the Bolsheviki bank . . . he negotiated with the State Bank, February 1st last, contract for buying cash roubles and establishing foreign credit for Russian Government and is opening others with the John MacGregor Grant Co., exporting concern which it finances in Sweden and which is financed in America by the Guarantee Trust Co. . . Aschberg now in Stockholm but returning.

Depression 1920.

The American depression of 1920-21 is an established fact. It wiped out many local banks, brought greater centralisation of the financial system, and destroyed a good deal of the country's independent agriculture. Some years ago Congressman Usher L. Burdick of North Dakota published a shorthand report of a meeting of the Federal Reserve Banking system in Washington in May,

1920, at which it was decided to call in loans. All the names are there and all the statements recorded. Many books have been written since then on the subject of 'economic depression', many theories have been aired, but it is all waste of time when a shorthand report is available of a discussion among leading bankers only a few weeks before they started contracting the money supply.

My purpose here has been to indicate that history is largely in the hands of men who in many cases seem to be hamstrung by attachment to 'vested interests'. A country can only be as good as its top people, no matter how decent or solid are its bottom and middle layers. The socialist mentality is fairly well understood, I think, we know how it works and what it is trying to do. But I find it difficult to ascribe even the word "mentality" to the conservative who sits on his backside and moans about the Welfare State and high taxation, without any knowledge of, or desire to find out, how and why these things came about.

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BAGHDAD TRIAL

by DESMOND STEWART

THE leaders of the 'destroyed regime' are being tried in the old Iraqi Parliament: only the turning fans show that this hall is not 'Big School,' disarranged for theatricals. People greet their friends in the public seats. Three TV cameras are tended by Iraqi technicians, one to focus on the dock, a child's playpen in the centre of the court, another on the military Prosecutor, a third on the military Judge, enthroned between four officers. (The leads of the cameras relay the trial to the congested coffee-shops: by popular request, the trials have been held at night, not during the working day). Above the Judge the single Arabic phrase: *bism al shaab*, in the name of the People. There are two Iraqi flags, the same as before, two stars for the two rivers, green, black and white for famous dynasties. There is an atmosphere of fiesta, nothing sinister or vengeful. A small box transmits an English translation in a whisper to the Press: I recognise the voice of a Palestinian girl to whom I taught 'Julius Caesar' in 1950. We have armchairs of such luxury that I appreciate a literal meaning to the old phrase about 'So and So wanting to hold on to his chair.'

A military policeman, very smart, sunburned, in shorts and white gaiters and highly polished boots, shouts in a sudden stentorian voice: The Defendant Fadhil Jamali !

Dr. Jamali comes in, nervous, neat in a smart blue suit. A current story quotes the late Nouri Said as saying: "I have reached the summit of power, only three things I have been unable to accomplish: to satisfy the greed of Towfik al Suwaidy, to curb the tongue of Jamali, to make a man of my son.' This loquacious man, whose father was a doorkeeper at Kadhimayn

mosque, who started work in 1918, as an assistant teacher for less than £4 a month, whose thesis at Columbia University was on the education of the Bedu, who was a Nazi sympathiser during the '30s, a British-imposed Minister in 1943, is a Charles Malik with the brains bashed out. The first time I met him was when he read me a UN speech, in toto, against Zionism, at a cocktail party (he carried his speeches with him in his pocket); another time we were both judges for a painting prize. Then he was basking in glory, boastfully satisfied with his ignorance of modern art, talkative about a long walk he had taken with His Majesty the King. But even a Revolution does not try a man for liking chocolate box art, or the company of Kings. Jamali is accused of more serious crimes. The Prosecutor recites them in an impassioned rhetorical manner that is not impressive even to educated Arabs, but doubtless convinces the coffeeshops: imprisoning students, depriving Iraqis of their nationality, plotting against sister Syria, and then sister Lebanon, attacking Arab nationalism and Arab nationalism's supreme leader, being servile towards imperialism, preparing war against the noble Iraqi people at home and other noble peoples abroad, being party to a dictatorial state, rigging elections, and steeping the country's soil in blood. As the charges are read out, Jamali standing in the playpen, writing pad in hand, a stalwart policeman behind him, holding handcuffs, there is something pathetic about this well known head, that has bowed to Dulles, that has accepted the compliments of Mr. Cabot Lodge, that has talked and talked in Ankara and London and New York, the eyes twinkling behind glasses at a world so much more impressive than the lanes of Kadhimayn where he began. The Prosecutor's voice vibrates with genuine emotion when he reads the numbers of soldiers and civilians killed in the last war. His accusation is that the defendant wanted to link Iraq, a small poor agricultural country, in pacts which would lead to another war, that could confer no benefit on the Iraqi people. This assertion of neutralism, reinforced with a quotation from the Prime Minister, Abdul Karim Qassim, "Our Republic is neutral between blocs," echoes the strongest force in Arab public opinion: the desire not to be involved.

It was Nasser's understanding of this force, after Bandung, which led to his supreme popularity. It was Jamali's hysterical refusal to take account of it which cut him off so finally

from his country, which led him into the Baghdad Pact, and now into this unhappy limelight. For to maintain Iraq in military alliance with the west, all the other crimes followed: the arrest of students, the suppression of all newspapers except his own and a few eunuch sheets, the bribing of electors, the interference in Syria, and worst of all, the intervention in Lebanon, where Iraqi pilots were already present by late June, to which the very brigade that made the Revolution believed itself intended. The charges cannot, in substance, be denied: the only thing that can be denied is the justice of retroactive law, as at Nuremberg: though here the judges and the judged are of the same nation, which is, perhaps, an improvement. The documentation is far more impressive than the state's conduct of the case. The telegrams do not lie, and Jamali is allowed to say whether he accepts them as valid or not. One he rightly disputes, where he is alleged to have spoken of Israel as early as 1947, before the state's foundation; it is a misprint for 1949. But others are damning, proving, at the least, corruption, the bribing of newspapers in Damascus and Beirut, the subsidy of President Chamoun, and an intimate collusion with the fascist PPS in Beirut.

Some of the witnesses are woolly; most are evasive; a common reply, by apparently responsible officials, is 'I don't remember.' (People complain that the defendants were lodged together in prison, where they arranged a common attitude to the charges). Some of the evidence is trivial: an ex-officer, unintelligible in Arabic, since he is a Kurd, says there was a racket in Iraqi visas in Teheran, and Jamali, then at the Foreign Office, did nothing to stop it. Towfik al Suwaidy, who in an earlier trial achieved notoriety for having 'lost' a vast sum in cash which he had taken to Chamoun, denies knowing whether Jamali played any part in the plot against Syria. Whereupon the Prosecutor with evident rage produces a copy of Suwaidy's own Memoirs, where he wrote that "Jamali's elevation to the Prime Ministership was not due to any inherent qualification for the post, but was a reward for his energy over 'the Syrian question.'"

Foreign critics do not like the trials. Although no one alleges any ill-treatment of the defendants, and none of the thirteen so far charged has made one of those confessions which disgrace justice elsewhere, the Court is not impartial. It is orderly; there is no applause, no booing; only occasional laughter. But the stern-

faced Judge is clearly on the side of the Prosecution. (Is this the French tradition? The Iraqi law derives from France, not England). Jamali's defence takes more than two hours to read, after a week of sessions, and is listened to with ironic patience: he pleads life-long Arab nationalism, life-long detestation 'of the twins, Zionism and Communism.' But people's minds are made up; they listen, but do not hear.

To understand the trials, their background must be understood. The popular rage on the 14th July, when the previous dictatorship was overthrown, terrified even supporters of the revolt. (A large proportion of the arrested politicians themselves telephoned the Defence Ministry, asking to be arrested; the present trial is a big advance on lynch law). They are also being protracted, deliberately, as much to benefit the accused as anything else. No sentence has yet been carried out,* and not one person I met in Baghdad, in the coffeeshops or the salons, thought that they would be. 'If they are severe, they will soon be modified.' At the moment, the Revolution is still in neutral gear; soon, a forward lunge will be taken, on a constructive road. Passions about the past will then die, overruled by interest in the future.

The Arabs are not a vindictive people. But as Dostoievksy saw, they love a spectacle: and no one in Baghdad misses these trials. Every taxi in Rashid Street transmits the loquacious voice of Dr. Fadhil al Jamali; the charges and the replies are repeated from mouth to mouth.

* Dr. Fadhil Jamali was condemned to death, but at the time of going to press the sentence of the military court had not been executed.

SOME CRITERIA OF POETRY CRITICISM *

by ROY MACGREGOR HASTIE

NO poet great or small can afford to ignore the work of the bonafide critic, whose evaluation of the relevance, form, intention and language of a poem is the only permissible interference in creative activity. Most poets would do well to ignore the *reviewers* of individual collections or anthologies, whose incompetence in the free expenditure of ink by which they turn an honest penny is proverbial. A reviewer is a journalist, writing against time; often innocent of ideas until an hour before the deadline, the word *criterion* is associated in his mind with restaurants or with a now moribund magazine.

Yet how can even the critic isolate criteria which will be universally and for all time valid? Difficulties present themselves at the outset. How is it possible to agree on universally, if temporarily valid criteria when the critic and the poet whose work he is evaluating approach the fundamentals of conscious existence from different premises? Is it possible, even if undesirable, for a Christian Liberal critic to evaluate the work of a Marxist poet? Can a Marxist critic find a start point for analysis in the creative writing of a subscriber to one of the many religious orthodoxies? Can a man who believes that the universe consists only of ideas in the mind, or in motion between minds, accept a poem's objective existence as 'real'? The answers to these questions are more properly within the scope of metaphysics, but 'if we allow ourselves to believe that the poem only exists in the minds of the poet and the individual reader, we soon discover that in that case no two readers will have read the same poem, so that there can never be any discussion, and hence criticism of any work' (T. M. Gang); it is permissible, I think, to suppose the dual existence of a poem, or rather two aspects of a unique existence, the objective and the subjective, and to try to establish objective criteria in the certain knowledge that these will not affect in any way the individual accept-

* This essay is a sequel to the essay on "The Crisis in Contemporary Criticism," published in "THE EUROPEAN," January, 1958.

ance or rejection of a poem. It is stupid to say that subjective criteria have no universal value; one way in which it can be generally agreed that this collection of sounds is or is not a poem is by a summing of the individual satisfactions of the general formula:

Emotional Stimulus—Activated Intellect (catalysed) =
(The Poem)
Emotional Impact—Activated Intellect (to action physical, intellectual or a further emotional stimulus).

If the response generally associated with the reception of a 'poem' is found in a significant proportion of those who apprehend an image sequence, then a poem has been received; the catalysed emotional occasion of a poem, the emotional stimulus to intellectual activity, has had the effect on the receiver which distinguishes the reception of a poem from the reception of other stimuli. And there *is* a distinction, making nonsense of comparison with anything other than the reception of other poems, making nonsense, too, of platitudinous gabbling about 'poetry of this symphony', the 'poetry of this cathedral'; either a poem is or is not a poem, either poetry is or is not poetry as distinct from architecture, painting, sculpture, music—if it were not so there would be no justification for the existence of 'artforms', as distinct from Art. But, of course, it is equally stupid to pretend that subjective criteria are critically sufficient, as Stephen Spender did in his answer to a recent questionaire. There *are* objective criteria, some new some old; the new are little tried, the old must be purged of anachronism.

There was a time when the only literary squabble to assume major proportion was that between the Classical and the Romantic 'Schools'; it was characteristic of these 'Schools' that, like their successors today, they held it to be self-evident that a writer who belonged to neither must be insignificant, not worthy of serious consideration.

Their squabble was mostly about 'form'; the Classical critic held that the Romantic poet was 'untidy', that the 'untidy' theme set in a temporally untidy vehicle was not a properly formalised 'poem' at all. Romantic extravagance was anathema to Arnold:

> "Greek Literature can help us to cure us of what is, it seems to me, the great vice of our intellect, manifesting itself in our

> incredible vagaries in Literature, in art, in religion, in morals; namely that which is fantastic and wants sanity. Sanity—that is the great virtue of ancient literature; the want of it is the great defect of the modern, in spite of its variety and power."

Arnold was tilting at the treatment of theme, at the variance of the objective correlative; he would have been horrified to see the extension of suitability of themes for poetic treatment which is the principal characteristic of Eliot and after; he would have been even more horrified at the 'insane' abandonment of the ode, the sonnet, the old 'forms' he thought suitable for his suitable themes. But though it is reasonable enough to explore the strait-jacketing of emotions of varying intensity into set rhythmic and temporal dimensions, in the directly opposite, but equally ridiculous way of the deflation and inflation of women to fit a constantly changing complex of fashionable dimensions, some general rules about the optimum length, breadth and depth of a poem should not be beyond our formulative capacity.

Poetry, ideally, reflects the patterns of speech current in a given Society at a given time. Where Society is formal, and consists of a literate 'polite' Society and the Rest, it is reasonable to expect a formalised poetry, mannered in language and in the individual complexes of words. The number of possible relationships, the number of possible ideas—the extent of social activity as a source of emotional input, and the extent of knowledge as a source of speculative thought—have an obvious influence on the pattern of communication prescribed for the poet. But there is no evidence that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was any assumption that poetry was of value unless part of the solution of the whole problem of communication, public and private; poets did not smirk behind self-inflicted beards, defending their obscurantism on the grounds that their verse was never meant to be read, heard or understood. Where publicity expressed emotive activity was restricted to formal quantity and formal quality, poetry assumed the same pattern of 'prescribed theme and form.' In 'impolite' Society, where a social mannered formalism did not exist at peasant level (though existent, of course, in idea-movement upwards through the social pyramid) no formalised social poetry existed either; the subjects for the ballad and metrical chronicle were not less numerous than those available to a contemporary poet— the only formalism was the containing metre/rhyme struc-

ture which governed the 'width' of the poem, though even this was varied at will—and the Time-length dimension was never restricted.

When the sector of Society from which poetry may come, grows with the spread of education across a country and down through the social pyramid, form-formalism disappears with class frontiers. The ode, the sonnet, are no longer 'logical' as a mirror to the mannered speech of a mannered Society. Poetry expands in all directions, just as speech tends to do, at a time of social revolution.

The tragedy in the advent of literary and political democracy is that the newly liberated become aggressively illmannered; this applies as much to the freed poets of the post-Eliot era as it does to the enfranchised proletariat. If the factory worker celebrated his new-found franchise in an orgy of statue smashing and church-burning, throwing symbolic bricks through symbolic windows, the freed poet vandalised his 'liberation' in a similarly reactionary way—by eschewing any association with rhyme, metre, predetermined length, breadth or theme. The majority of poets, now, have no idea at all of what they are supposed to be doing, why they are supposed to be doing it, or how.

Yet it is reasonable to suppose that even in a democratic society, anger, fear, love, hate, ecstasy, will exhibit at least one of the characteristics they exhibited before the overthrow of the ode, that for most people each of these emotions has a distinct duration, comparable with the mean length of any other. The emotional occasion of a poem, that is to say, will determine the duration of the poem, and where it does not, there is a prima facie case for criticism of the poem as defective; an inspection of any life past would give a reasonably accurate picture of the average duration of these emotions, and any poet, presumed to be a highly disciplined assessor and controller of his emotions, could be expected to know and control his own emotionally originated output. It would be impossible to prescribe a fixed length for any poet's love poems; the intensity of his feeling for one woman might well be different from the same feeling by a different poet for the same woman; his feelings for different women, though all classifiable as love, may differ from poem to poem. But it is possible to establish as a criterion that a poem, originating in anger, love, fear-cowardice, or in any of the states of mind classified and classifiable by the psychologist as of short duration, should itself be of short duration.

It should, indeed, be possible to subject a poet to a rigorous analysis by psychologists, to find out to what limits this criterion could be applied to his output. I can see no reason why a poet should shelter behind a mystic veil of non-inquiry, why he should refuse to avail himself of the facilities offered by medical science and technology for a partial assessment of the sincerity of his work; if he refused to take a proven test he would be placing himself in the same category as the priest who refuses to have his miracles investigated, the quality of his poem a question of faith rather than of critical conclusion.

If the optimum length of a poem of a particular type could be isolated then it seems likely, too, that the breadth (i.e. the rhythm) of a poem could be similarly treated. The speech-rhythm of the social group or groups to which the poet belongs could be measured (analysed much in the same way as Hopkins analysed post hoc the 'Sprung Rhythm' of his verse.)

Poets have come to maturity in recent years, from regions and social groups distinguished by clearly evident variations from the standard (B.B.C.?) rhythm and intonation of English—Dylan Thomas comes quickly to mind—and a measurement of the *natural rhythm* of the context of their speech could give some indication of the distance their poetry travels away from the ideal of a close approximation.

An interim form, usable before a natural form (emotion-determined length and speech-rhythm-determined-breadth) is isolated could be something like the 'elastic sonnet'—a device which has one constant dimension, and the other two variable (say a constant length, 14 lines, with the breadth, metre rhythm varying with the depth-emotional input). An attempt by the poet to devise his own forms should always be taken as evidence of an interest in his creative activity other than that of self-satisfaction after delivery.

After appraising the form of a poem, it is reasonable to turn to the language in which it is written—assuming that a poem is a *something* which has as its object the communication of an intelligibly *different something*. If a poem is full of obvious obstacles to intelligibility (the intelligibility desirable on the re-inspection of a poem after a first hearing)—private jokes, known to only a few of the poet's intimates, or any sort of allusion or social reference which limits the universal appeal of a poem—then it is easy to say that at best this is a minor poem, at worst a confessional overheard. And here it is perhaps not out of place to observe that

the writers who questioned the fixed orbits of individuals in the socio-economic universe, the sort of relationship of a special psychological significance which exists between the priest and the confessee, have been the first (perhaps unwittingly) to introduce this atmosphere of the confessional into their prose work and poems—with one important departure from the character of the religious relationship, that theirs is the confession of the weak to the weak.

Before a judgement can be made on the way in which language has been used in a poem it is always necessary to know something about the context, individual and social, in which the poem was set at the time of writing. This applies of course to everyday judgements passed on everyday prose, spoken or written; the words "Argyll's will not retire from this position" were not intended as prophecy, but as a command — the Army jargon context of the words, apparent from the inclusion of the name of a regiment in an unambiguous setting makes this clear enough.

And were this a necessary precedent to a complete understanding of the poem, a poet may reasonably expect a critic to arm himself with the minimum of information about the general circumstances of his poetry — not only whether he is or is not Marxist, Christian Liberal, or otherwise committed, but where he lives, and how, and what his movements have been in the past; physical, intellectual and emotional; all of which may colour detectably the language he uses. An obvious example of a language-unit, for which there is no synonym, which has nevertheless a variable meaning, is the word *'Autumn'*, in a poem by an Australian poet, read by an English critic; *'Christmas'* in an English poem read by an Australian critic, with its associated ideas of sunshine, turkey on the beach and a midnight swim, is another word to consider carefully. Of course, if there is no information about a poet available, then a critic cannot be expected to turn detective in the time at his disposal; in this case a 'difficult' poet can be justifiably critically labelled obscurantist for failing to provide what might well be a very simply forged key to his verse. The words Heaven, Hell, Angel and Devil in Blake's work do not mean what the orthodox Christian might take them to mean in another context, but a moderately well-read person should know something of Blake's peculiar concept, and a critic can be expected to know considerably more. Given a minimum of essential autobiography, a poet can be excused for assuming

that a critic would find it, whenever published (within reason) — after all, the critique of a poem should be undertaken in a more seriously enquiring frame of mind than that of a factory inspector faulting parts of a sausage machine on a production line.

Similarly, given a divergence of opinion on whether or not a poem, like a piece of music, exists only or optionally in sound, it is essential that the critic should know to which 'school of thought' the poet belongs. Those who would agree that a poem, like a piece of music, comes alive only when reproduced in sound, will find only marginally satisfactory the contrived verse of many of the 'cerebral poets' of today. Where both the critic and the poet agree, then the criterion of convertibility into sound will be valid; where they disagree, the critic should try to appraise the poem both as an aurally and as a visually satisfactory sequence of images; this criterion is, of course, directly related to the intelligibility criterion, and they should be applied together.

But the word 'meaning' has itself two meanings. Even if the words used by a poet have a *first* meaning when set in their proper context (i.e. if it is quite clear that our poet wrote the word "autumn" in Australia in the same language in which the poem is read) then this is no guarantee that they will have a *second* meaning, a poetic significance distinguishable from the prose significance of the words. If the word is to be evaluated — i.e. if its intelligibility *and* its significance are to be isolated — then, first, the words organic to the shape of the poem and the intention (general and specific) of the poet must be ascertained. Assuming the feasability of the isolation of the shape intended by the poet, then any word, whether intelligible or not, which is not organic to this shape is superfluous, and the poet may be criticised for hanging words, and probably metaphors too, on his poems in the manner of a tasteless suburban housewife over-loading a Christmas tree with silver bells. Similarly any word which is not organic to the total meaning of the poem, which may or may not be the same as the poet's specific intention, is susceptible to criticism.

Here is disputed territory. There are people who say that it is no criticism of the poem to say that it failed in its specific object, that the critic has no right to condemn a love poem because it demonstrably failed to weaken the resistance or strengthen the devotion of the woman to whom it was addressed. But if a poet's energies, emotional and intellectual, were committed to the seduction of or maintenance of affection in a human female, then

surely if the consequent poem failed to achieve one or the other there is a prima facie case of insincerity. Either the poet's affections were engaged elsewhere, and the poem was an habitual adoration of a mistress soon to be discarded (as many of the Marvell-Lovelace-Suckling poems were), or the woman in question was in love with some other man and could not reciprocate the poet's feeling: in both cases the emotional traffic would be one-way, and though the writers of popular ballads and novelettes for women's magazines believe this to be emotionally possible, psychologists and honest men tend to think otherwise.

Similarly, if a poet intended that a certain poem should communicate some of his own intelligible fear of the consequences of war to a reasonably sensitive and intelligent audience, and has failed to move even one man to congruence with his conclusions, then the poem must be considered 'at fault.' Only the people who still cling to the shades of art for arts sake would suggest that a poem should have no object at all: that the poet's intention should be to produce 'a poem' without it ever being discoverable objectively whether or not he has succeeded in producing a great, good, bad or very bad one. But it is fair to say that where a poet *partly* achieves what he set out to achieve with a poem, or where he achieves something which one could isolate as his unwitting intention, then the poem with which he does it is a good poem. As far as I know, none of the younger English poets have ever achieved anything of intentional significance with their poetry, but Baconski in Roumania and Adam Waszyk in Poland both precipited 'emotional revolutions' with theirs; this rather bad-tempered criticism of the Movement and the Mavericks is relevant here, because if a poet is not aware of the context of intentions in which he is set, he will undoubtedly be a bad, at best a minor poet — and one of the reasons for the contempt with which new verse in England is treated in Europe is the smug isolation (in Larkin's case something approaching xenophobia) in which its authors exist.

There are people, of course, who for one reason or another, suggest that though it would not be a bad thing for the poet to have a specific intention, this is impossible. These people are usually psychologists, who, having enthusiastically misunderstood Jung, Freud, Adler and Macdougall, suggest that the subconscious (by which they mean the Individual Unconscious) is the source of all human act and endeavour, including Art; they deduce that

poetry is inevitable in a certain state of mind and therefore in no way can a poet be credited with intending it; they conclude that a poet can have no general intention either, for the same reason, and because his behaviour is predictably not his own.

Now not only would Jung have disagreed emphatically with this conclusion, we can see that it is demonstrably invalid. There are many different threads to the fabric of a poet's life, any grouping of which might be said to be his general poetic intention; where he has a substantial quota of critical writings, his general intention may be discernable from these—or his friends may know it, and write about it — or he may have no general poetic intention at all but be content with the production of poems with specific objects hoping for a continuance of the patronage (publisher, private or B.B.C.) he will most certainly be enjoying, if he is this type of 'poet.'

The work of the artist is directly concerned with the movement and re-alignments of the pattern of related consciousness; where it is not, he is quite simply not an artist — to be an artist implies an active relationship with the other component parts of the Collective Unconscious. If we take as a Time-dimension of human conscious-existence A-B-C-, then A is the point of origin of the conscious activity, B the Now, and C the indeterminable end of conscious activity; at A the Collective Unconscious, the Individual Unconscious and the Individual Conscious elements are One — as Time moves so these fragment, go their separate ways at different 'speeds.' The Collective Unconscious is the storehouse of ideas, present, past, used, concluded and still incomplete — it is the broad base of the continuum, the 'Eternity' particle appropriate to Man.

It has been said that all objective criteria are only, in the last analysis, the subjective criteria of a strong-minded, plausible man with explicable prejudices, and this may be true; nevertheless both the critic and the poet need criticism of their work, based not only on likes and dislikes without general relevance, but on a broad framework of critical principles onto which academic elaborations may be hung to dry. Even with critical principles established the critic would undoubtedly make horrible mistakes, but at least his more sympathetic colleagues would be able to demonstrate how and where he had gone wrong. At the end of the first decade of the second half of the twentieth century it is difficult, where criticism exists, to see why it is occasionally useful and valid.

ROY CAMPBELL: A PORTRAIT

by HENRY WILLIAMSON

RICHARD ALDINGTON'S tribute to Roy Campbell in the January *European* makes splendid reading, which surely will lift the hearts of most readers. For one at least it brought a feeling of pride that after the first meetings with both poets, each began to live steadily in the mind. Both revealed integrity: the one held back in his early years in an old country, the other reared in the freedoms of a new. For that reason the clouds did not hang on Roy Campbell; he came to England tempered by the sun. That was how one felt at the first meeting, early in 1924, in a publisher's office near the old Adelphi brick arches, in one of those cobbled streets now gone. I had gone there with a friend to meet Edgell Rickwood, or Rickward, a blond youth whose life seemed to be lived at some distance from his body, which was extraordinarily quiescent. His thoughts were far away, he hardly spoke at all. He had been badly wounded in the battle of the Somme, a subaltern of 18 years, also he had lost an eye.

I had been in that dark little room, on that occasion, when I became aware of someone else in the company of the blond poet, the publisher, and myself and friend. A figure in shadow was sitting on a stool, leaning forward in an attitude of expectant composure. At once I thought of Shelley—I should add here that I had not, at that time, seen the bust of that poet made by Mrs. Leigh Hunt, in Wilfred Meynell's house at Greatham: a bust that showed a face entirely different from the usual romanticised portraits. It had protuberant eyes, loose mobile mouth, and receding chin which often, contrary to Edwardian fiction, goes with strength of character based on intelligence. However, it was the eyes of the perched figure in Wishart & Co.'s office which held one. They were of an intense glittering blue, the expression was one of contained eagerness, the brown face was the shape of a partridge's egg —pointed at the base, beautifully balanced below the brow.

Leaning forward, the stranger began to talk. One had the feeling that he was a wood spirit, apart from life, compounded with joy and zest. He began to talk. His words flowed on; his stories were autobiographical, but also romantic. There was no trace of scorn, complaint, or derision. An hour went by in a few moments. I recall, thirty-five years afterwards, a rollicking description of a near-fight between two major artists, both much in

the public eye at the time, both very much figures of Bohemia, who had let fly insults at one another until it seemed that, as the shorter, squatter figure advanced upon the other, with clawed hands, which had moulded a considerable quantity of clay in their time, ready to deracinate the most precious part of his opponent's anatomy, a disaster was unavoidable. But when the rhinoseroid charge took place, the other man, who had something of the fox in his face above a tall and heavyweight torso, suddenly raised a protecting knee to his opponent's chin, whereupon 'Schnakkeribs" went down upon the floor to sleep for awhile.

Such was the fascinating story; it was not until a few years had passed that I heard it was the storyteller who had parted the two before blows were struck, probably to their mutual relief.

"But how could Roy Campbell have done that? He was so small!". For Roy had seemed to be bodiless as he perched on his stool, creating for his listeners—except perhaps the maimed poet, who remained, it seemed, 'where shell-storms spouted reddest spate'—a feeling that he was some sort of wild spirit from the veldt, magic of Capricorn gone into a white child, whose fate was to remain ageless, like the earth or rather the stellar system.

"Small? Roy was a big man!"

When I came to know him later, when in a crowded room or pub our eyes would meet and we would go forward to meet one another, I never ceased to be a little startled that his was a powerful, tall figure, containing courage without tension. For he was that rarity, a natural man truly civilised, because he had been reared from childhood in courage, a quality which has to be learned from little beginnings, just as a child has to learn to walk and talk, without its growing confidence being impaired. Roy Campbell had learned to be courageous, not desperately and alone as has many a child who has been overshadowed by one or another or both of its parents, but as a child reared in love, by both white parents and coloured African friends, so that all through his life an inner sun had shone forth, and he had cried to the holly, This life is most jolly.

Roy Campbell is the only unencumbered man of genius I have known; his poetry is clear air and light.

> 'Ten welspun lustres sent thee speechless hence
> Thrice childe in age, always in innocence
> To smooth thy Entrance, where true bliss doth raigne,
> Natur's and Grace would have thee borne againe.'

THE SHAKING CELLARS

by DESMOND STEWART

Nowhere that is left,
No road that's to be taken,
Can lead my steps back;
No ticket, no wish, no pay can.

It is gone, it is lost,
The town of my youth;
They are gone, those growing ones
With whom my young man's growth

Within my pocket burned,
The more than power of money.
The trees are different, the cafés now
Change names, the one we

Sat in late, knee close to knee,
Even stands, but it is not ours,
And the house stands still,
But there is silence behind doors.

Sleep now may be exotic,
On mattress under white
Bright constellations,
But in vain I clutch the night

Of fear, and the tubes crowded
And the cellars shaking.
I return to those days, those walls,
And in them know an aching

For those fears and the pale moon,
For the bare twigs and the plane's threat
Over fragile roofs. For then
Love knew itself both pure and short.

I recall, I redesire
Those anonymous those youthful faces,
To whom no road leads back,
Those fears on winter nights, those kisses.

A NOTE ON E. E. CUMMINGS

by NOEL STOCK

WHAT English poetry needs is some E. E. Cummings. Which might almost be extended to read "England needs Cummings". She certainly needs him as much today as twenty-five years ago when he produced *Eimi*, which was certificate of his candour and evidence that Cummings, although an American using the American language, could be of more use to England's apprentice poets and novelists than the country's 'established' writers.

His candour, his technique, his grasp of language as people speak it, these are things which English poetry, English literature, need. That is to say, England needs a poet capable of building himself a voice out of current English speech, as Cummings has out of current American speech, out of natural cadences and emphases, the natural stretch of words. There are qualities in Carlos Williams and Marianne Moore, important qualities, not dangerous for the young American poet, which in England might lead the local apprentice into increased prissiness and flatness, precisely those errors which have damned his elder contemporaries and which the apprentice, if worth anybody's time and trouble, will be trying to escape. Cummings on the other hand has the poetic virtues in just such proportion as the English poet needs them in order to get out of the contemporary coma and write a live poem.

Cummings' so-called tricks leave him wide open to easy criticism, it is a sign of his candour. He has been called "the most intelligent man in America," he could cover himself if he wanted to, but he does not; he is not somebody's (or group's) pet poet writing to a rare or delicate or unpopular formula. He seeks simply to set down a record without falsification.

Anybody who wants to know why he has been called the most intelligent man in America should read *Eimi*, a record of his trip to Russia in 1931, first published 1933.[1]

[1]The Grove Press reprint, New York, is being distributed in Great Britain by John Calder Ltd.

" I say it " Turk confirms " but I don't say it gladly."

This sort of thing, recorded calmly, without nastiness, does not make ammunition for anybody, save perhaps a few people trying to preserve good living and justice wherever they find them, or to restore these things to busted areas, or create them where they never existed before.

The method of *Eimi* is to compare Russia with adjacent countries and civilisations, but it is comparison in no sense partisan. The style is Cummings' own, it must be read slowly, especially the first few chapters, and every word counts. On first looking at it, one is inclined to say that every word does not count; but every word, every roundabout or extended sentence, so much like playfulness at first sight, is, in fact, part of a process so big, so intelligent, that it required a way of recording which had never been used before. *Eimi* is an advance in the art of communication.

> our friend, comrade professor, a scientist, found himself
> in class next-to-bottom; he 1 day refused to "volunteer"
> " as they call it; such a charming word "
> for woodcutting: this audacity cost him all but 1 microscope
> and all his specimens and his laboratory (not to mention
> almost his residence) and his past present future
> " but not his, shall we say, life?"
> murmurs my (far more gently than even gently) informant.

Pages 83 to 87 must surely be the best condensation ever written of the type of mind and ideas which cause the Russian hell. The condensation, the picture of Stephen Daedalus which follows, are the work of a man who watches and weighs. *Eimi* is proof that Cummings has a great mind, that in 1931 he was 20 years ahead of his time, and that his attitude in 1931 was based upon the right data.

In his poetry he can come to the point quickly. Why write a poem if you are not sure until half way through, what it is you are writing about? Mr. Cummings is seldom in doubt as to what exactly he has in mind:

> a salesman is an it that stinks

is the opening line of poem no. IX from *One Times One* (1944). He has written plenty of "irregular" and unrhymed verse. Unlike

most people who write "irregular" and unrhymed verse, Cummings can get natural cadence into stanzas tightly rhymed:

> (While you and I have lips and voices which
> are for kissing and to sing with
> who cares if some oneeyed son of bitch
> invents an instrument to measure Spring with?

And he knows the possibilities of the language better than anybody in England:

> jake hates
> all the girls (the
> shy ones, the bold
> ones; the meek
> proud sloppy sleek)
> all except the cold
> ones
> paul scorns all
> the girls (the
> bright ones, the dim
> ones; the slim
> plump tiny tall)
> all except the
> dull ones

Also from *XAIPE* (1950) are poems as different as the two beginning:

> o to be in finland
> now that russia's here

and

> when serpents bargain for the right to squirm
> and the sun strikes to gain a living wage—
> when thorns regard their roses with alarm
> and rainbows are insured against old age
> when every thrush may sing no new moon in
> if all screech-owls have not okayed his voice
> —and any wave signs on the dotted line
> or else an ocean is compelled to close . . .

To puncture, deflate, debunk by lucidity are among the main functions of poetry. The whole process is dependent on the ability of the poet to look at, examine and dissociate. Without such ability literature falls away and withers.

Eimi is a great book, as great as *Ulysses*, or at any rate somewhere in that vicinity. It is a horror book, a book about hell. Some of what he got to and understood instantly in 1931 has filtered through since then, painfully, a bit here a bit there. In recent years highbrow journalists have told us that the Kremlin leaders are Victorian in their tastes. Mr. Cummings saw that, clearly, in 1931, when the highbrow journalists were praising Soviet immolation of man to machinery, under the impression that it was modern, whereas of course it was Russia just catching up, or persisting with, an old 19th Century habit.

He saw the whole thing for what (by 1931) it really was: a drab lousy Russian version of western economic unnaturalness. Men serving projects, rather than projects serving men, and bureaucracy running all over it like lice.

In a world infested by the victors of Versailles, it was perfectly understandable for Comrade Stalin to want factories and armies, but there was no excuse for a man who deadened the qualities of life, consistently, stupidly, year after year.

Cummings' candour I have mentioned. It is the candour (more than the style perhaps) which prevented *Eimi* from becoming popular or required reading in so-called Anti-Communist circles.

> "Isn't there a single redeeming feature?" I timorously inquire.
>
> "No" snaps genial.
>
> "Yes there is" Assyrian quietly contradicts "the idea's right; the means of carrying out the idea are wrong—"
>
> "Pfg!" semidemi, indignantly.
>
> "What" I ask "idea?"
>
> "The idea" Turk explains "of greater individuality."
>
> "Greater Garbo" snorts omnipotent.
>
> "The idea" explains Turk "that if everybody has to work only twenty minutes a day there'll be more leisure, which will enable more people to experience the socalled finer things of life, which will result in more individuals—"
>
> "yeeruh" sneers almighty. "And what's been the effect o' that idea? Huh? How's it worked out? Eh?" leaning forward
>
> "the effect of its application has been" Turk almost silently stated "more disastrous to Russia than was the tyranny of Peter the Great."

A DIARY

PEOPLE who feel nostalgic about *la belle époque* had better steer clear of the Toulouse Lautrecs, now being shown at the Musée Jacquemart André in Paris. These extraordinary pictures were offered to the Louvre by the artist's mother after his death, but the Louvre refused them and they belong to the museum at Albi. Only for this once is Albi allowing them to travel.

They make a terrific impact. They are for the most part posters for cabarets, circuses and music-halls, and raffish paintings of the inside of brothels. Montmartre was so much accustomed to Toulouse Lautrec that he and his easel had the entrée everywhere. He certainly looked with jaundiced eye at the filles de joie, and the famous gaiety which attracted all Europe to the Paris amusements of those days. The women, portrayed as they sat about in abandoned, exhausted attitudes waiting for their clients, or singing, or vigorously dancing the can-can, are hideous beyond words. Misshapen and graceless, they somehow contrive to be both fat *and* ugly.

It is in a way surprising that the poor sitters, who cannot have liked what they saw of themselves being immortalized, did not rise in a body and chase the Count out of Montmartre. Apparently Yvette Guilbert did manage to get a poster (depicting her singing with strained, stringy neck) withdrawn. "Lautrec, pourquoi faites-vous toujours les femmes si laides?" the beautiful actress Misia Natanson once asked him. "Parce qu'elles le sont," replied the artist.

Emerging from this peep behind the most sordid of scenes transformed into great art, it was somehow incongruous to meet a party of school children being led in by their governess, who bought them cheap students' tickets. One somehow imagined the exhibition would have been "interdit aux moins de 16 ans," as are so many rather innocent films.

★ ★ ★

"All we like sheep" sings the chorus in the Messiah over and over again, adding by way of an afterthought: "have gone astray." In the London rush-hour the description has always seemed terribly apt. All we like sheep, being herded and harassed and shoved about by nasty ill-mannered shepherds on buses and tubes. My personal experience of London Transport in recent years is slight, yet I have twice noted cross, tight-lipped, trousered shepherdesses roughly telling the tired bus queue: "Only one more, only *one* I say," barring the way onto the step and wildly ringing the bell so as to make a quick get-away, when everyone could see there were three or four empty seats.

Of course nobody would choose to be a bus conductress, or a tube man whose whole day is spent in the smelly underground; nevertheless they are much less civil than they ought to be, and in the exercise of their rudimentary will-to-power they have at last succeeded in turning the sheep into men who are insisting on a reform of London Transport methods. I am a hundred per cent on the side of the passengers in this dispute. London Transport, British Railways and B.E.A. are maddening institutions, and the first two are monopolies. If they were not, nobody would use them and the conductors would only have each other to tease.

★ ★ ★

Sir Frank Medlicott, National Liberal and Conservative M.P. for Norfolk Central, is reported as saying: "Imprisonment without trial is anathema to British people. We are getting slack about this." Apparently they had nabbed a couple of foreign seamen and omitted to charge them. I agree with Sir Frank Medlicott about the slackness, but I do not feel too sure about the anathema. I don't believe the British people give a button

for Habeas Corpus, though I suppose they might if they were nabbed themselves. I do, for example.

★ ★ ★

The line which is being pushed so busily: "look what a ghastly mess we were in two years ago, and see how we have recovered; everything rosy, safe in the American alliance, being wrong together, etc." is the gist of Tory propaganda just now. It might seem more cynical than is altogether wise, assuming as it does that the public has forgotten, in the space of two years, that the ghastly mess referred to was made by the Tories themselves.

★ ★ ★

A doctor told a friend of mine that 700 different chemicals are used to preserve food. He said that nobody knows what effect they may be having on the human body. He added that of course food must be preserved if vast agglomerations of populations are not to starve. The same argument is used about chemical fertilizers. As the poor little suicide boy in Hardy's novel said in his farewell note: "because we are too menny."

Possibly we need a Bertrand Russell of chemistry to point out the dangers in our foods; in any case, patient research is required. Maybe the 700 chemicals do no harm at all to A but give B the permanent stomach-ache which makes his life such a bore. I suppose it is on the cards that if the brains and energy which are lavished on satellites were given to medical research, and if an equal international prestige attached to healing the sick as now accrues from the conquest of space, preventions and cures would in fact be discovered and mankind would suffer less.

Is the Devil at work in the world, or is it just the dark side of Nature which forces men to struggle on, trampling and discarding the weak as they go. Who knows?

★ ★ ★

A correspondent informs me that it is not the Sudanese who invented the veiling of statues, but Max Beerbohm; he thought of it in 1911. Ah, but did it just stop at being a clever notion,

or did Max Beerbohm actually succeed in veiling any? And if the answer is that he did, was there a military band and an ambassador at his veiling ceremony? The Sudanese veiled so stylishly.

The veil itself, on the Kitchener statue, looked like an immense ballet skirt, with the horse's legs playing the parts of Robert Helpmann and Margot Fonteyn in a pas de deux.

★ ★ ★

Slightly alarmed by icy roads which made headlines in the *Cork Examiner,* I motored across Ireland to an extreme tip of Co. Kerry. The Reeks were as white and glistening as the Alps, and there was a sprinkling of snow on all the mountains which stand in the dark blue sea. Yet the house where I stayed was hidden in a green jungle of huge rhododendrons, cedars, every variety of giant cupressus, tree-ferns, palms, and towering eucalyptus, where one quite expected to see poisonous snakes, hanging from the tangled, tortured boughs, or brilliant humming birds and parrots in the tree tops. It was freezing, but it *looked* hot.

In the far off hills, miles away from the road along a grass track that wound among the rocks, I made the acquaintance of a hermit. He was dressed in the clothes that were remarked by English visitors to these parts two hundred years ago — trousers tucked into wide boots, a long thick knitted jersey and an old leather jerkin. Living so completely alone in the mountains, in a district where ninety inches of rain in a year is not uncommon, I questioned him about his mode of existence. The strange truth emerged that he dreaded one thing only: that a neighbour (were there any? not visibly) might call around half past six and not go away again in time for him to listen to "the Archers."

As we said goodbye his dog jumped up, with his paws on my mackintosh. "Down, down," he said, and then fixing his eye upon me: "He would jump up, for sure, even if 'twere a wedding dress."

I asked one of the children from the jungle house how the hermit came to lose his other eye. "Oh, he did tell it me once," was the reply, "but it was a very dull story and I can't remember it." Which put me in mind of the super-tramp and his lost leg, because surely the loss of an eye must be dramatic.

Reading about Ireland as it was in the 18th Century, one is continually struck by how little it has changed. The Archers have barely dented the surface. A few years ago I lived in an old house in the middle of a bog. On Sundays after Mass the village men and boys would assemble, with mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound and curs of low degree, and hunt foxes on foot over the part of the bog which was inaccessible to horsemen. The countryside echoed with their wild cries of "Ya-hoo," when they found. (It was not quite the ordinary holler of somebody who has seen the fox). Next day at a meet of the local foxhounds even the poorest farmers would be mounted on beautiful fine horses of good breeding.

The point of this story is that "the Great Dane," as the Irish called Jonathan Swift, often stayed with his friend the Bishop in our house, which was old even in his day. A clever English boy who used to hunt on foot and on horseback in this neighbourhood observed to me that it must have been here that he conceived his idea of Houyhnhnms and Yahoos.

D. M.

RUSSIAN PAINTING FROM THE 13th TO THE 20th CENTURY

THE exhibition of Russian painting at the Royal Academy is not designed so much for art-lovers as for ideologues. Reactionary obscurantists rave in the first two galleries of medieval cult-pictures; Progressives rave in the last four galleries of Soviet social realism. How anyone can find anything of interest in the intervening galleries (III-VII inclusive) I cannot imagine—unless it be the titles of some of the pictures: *The Hermit Feodosy Boretsky handing the Sword of Ratmir to Miroslav, the youthful Leader of the People of Novgorod, who was designated by Martha the Regent as a Husband for her Daughter Xenia;* or *A Guardsman awaiting Execution.* This is not quite fair perhaps; among the

provincial efforts to imitate the post-Renaissance schools of Western Europe — the Renaissance never hit Russia — the canvasses of Yaroshenko: *A Girl Student* (1883), Repin: *Portrait of Tolstoy* (1887) and Korovin: *A Café in Yalta* (1905) are outstanding for their confidence and sincerity. But this confidence is not found until two hundred years after the europeanisation of Russia by Peter I. Who wants to see a *View of the Palace Quay from the Peter and Paul Fortress* (1794) painted in the manner of Canaletto?

Going back to the icons: being no expert, I can only say that they seem much prettier than the Byzantine ones exhibited at the Victoria and Albert last year. Whether their greater animation and gayer colours stand in their favour as works of art I cannot tell, but I was particularly taken with the cross-eyed lady-martyr *Ulyana* (School of Pskov—14th Century), and a wondrously elongated *Prophet Elijah* (School of Yaroslavl—17th Century) framed in Players-packet-sized scenes from his life, these scenes in turn glossed in golden calligraphy on the wooden surround. The *Elijah* is late as icons go, but the catalogue does not say if it is decadent or not. Those exceptions apart, it might be difficult to name any art form more rigidly subservient to an intellectual system than this.

Forward to Soviet realism: where a matron in heavy fur before Pimenov's affirmative *District of Tomorrow* exclaims loudly: I'm glad I shan't have to be there! —From the walls where Sir Alfred Munnings' racehorses used to cavort, stern-browed crane-operators and young geologists gaze down. The frowsty Russian 19th Century has been swept away. Johanson's *Communists under Cross-examination*, Deineka's *Defence of Petrograd*, Plastov's *Collective Farm Thrashing*, Gavrilov's *Young Geologists in Camp* dominate successive galleries. All is light, health, energy, devotion, sacrifice. The prophets, confessors and martyrs of the icons of Old Russia, after three centuries of slumber, have put on living flesh and reappeared as Lenin, embattled workers and collective farmers. The golden heavens of the virgin saints have become the golden cornfields of the virgin lands. The idealistic soul of Russia has re-affirmed itself in a new system of conventions.

As I said before, tachists, surrealists, abstractionists and other 'formalistic deviates' will not enjoy the show; but ideologues will thrill to these cycles of guided art.

A. J. N.

ENTERTAINMENTS

Andre Roussin's
HOOK LINE AND SINKER

by MICHAEL HARALD

FOR the first two acts of this comedy we detect a thin man striving to escape from Mr. Robert Morley's uneasily rotund performance; and this, though not at all within M. Roussin's intention, is the actor's mute apology for his size and shape. Mr. Morley is miscast, and he knows it, and he shows it. In the third act, where the action demands that an eight-stone weakling should violently assert himself against his ex-convict brother-in-law, the actor throws the pretence of characterisation to the winds and dominates the stage and his opponent like a London magistrate whose authority has never once been questioned in half a lifetime on the Bench: he has never purred more menacingly.

This well-liked actor makes nonsense of Roussin in much the same way that Shakespeare made nonsense of Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Men of the girth and stature of Sir John and Mr. Morley should never be cast for the role of unheroic victim; let the Gods make sport of them, but let not this licence extend to their wives, in Mr. Morley's case; to other men's wives in the case of Sir John. Their humiliations are un-Aristotelian and painful to us; we do not care to think of these giants "cooled, glowing hot, in the surge, like a horse-shoe . . . hissing hot." Mr. Morley's antics on the living-room carpet after his plunge into the river galvanised me into dutiful and mildly hysterical laughter; but Falstaff's lines about water swelling a man—"I should have

been a mountain of mummy"—disturbed my mind during the interval.

The play is quite as good, on its trivial level, as M. Roussin's *The Little Hut;* and perhaps all concerned would have done better to consult Miss Mitford, whose English version of that overrated success was smoothly geared for English actors and London (though not provincial) audiences. Mr. Morley's translation of the current Roussin has too obviously been contrived with the characteristics and limitations of its leading players in mind. There are, all the same, frequent if largely fortuitous felicities attached to the performance: I have passed duller evenings than this in London theatres.

The programme announces that we are still in France; and the orchestra does its bit with *J'attendrai* and *The Last Time I Saw Paris;* the characters are allowed to retain their native names (though Mr. Morley is the only member of the cast to succeed in pronouncing them). Mr. Morley, with an air of martyrdom which may pass as Gallic melancholy at a superficial scrutiny, affects a beret and a striped shirt and gesticulates freely. So far, so good. But in the third act, when he decides to shoot his wife, he opts for Saville Row at its most conservative; a sartorial whim which, I am bound to say, struck no-one but myself as odd. His wife, Miss Joan Plowright, missed being Miss Dora Bryan by the narrow margin of, I would guess, half a county; but that county was unmistakeably Lancashire; her rear view, however, which she frequently displayed, was so delicious that I am prepared unhesitatingly to pass it as French. Her brother in this polyglot ménage, Mr. Bernard Cribbins, cleverly simulated the voice and habits of southern Ted-land; and Mr. Stanley Lloyd played a race-course tout with a strong Irish accent and a decent determination not to giggle at or with Miss Plowright, who seemed to find the spectacle of a small and damp Monday-night house irresistibly comic. The drink throughout was cognac; and at one point Mr. Morley wonders where Mr. Lloyd gets the money to drink the stuff. If M. Roussin's tipple was not whiskey (as I suspect it was), then it should have been.

The plot concerns the efforts of a young wife to get rid of an elderly husband. But he still lives; and the re-united pair should occupy the Piccadilly theatre for the next year or so. I hope they do; for, in the present state of the English theatre, one could and probably would do worse than this.

Ronald Firbank's VALMOUTH

by ALAN NEAME

Valmouth, playing to full houses and with an excellent press, had to come off to make way for a pantomime. I attended the last matinee but one, fully expecting a thin house, rattling with teacups, aniseed-balls and provincial bewilderment. Not a bit of it. It was an audience of Firbank experts, and the performance, punctuated by hectic laughter, ended with a manic ovation. (It is now at the Saville Theatre). Purists might cavil at the intrusion of Pirelli, the excessive hedge-priestliness of Fr. ('He do press so') Colley-Mahoney; nor did I hear the splendid line: "Yield the *pas* to a negress? *Never*!" But there were not many tricks missed. The carriage, the swing and the terrifying destruction of S. Dorothy's . . . it was all there.

I particularly adored Mrs. Hurstpierpoint (Barbara Couper), tottering fantastically, frantically calling for her relics during the first thunderstorm. In successive scenes, her costumes (designer: Tony Walton) became more and more Byzantine, so that it was hard to tell whether she was dressed as the Empress Theodora or the Photian Schism. Her trio with Lady Parvula (Fenella Fielding) and Mrs. Thoroughfare (Betty Hardy) was out of this world. The whole show was; particularly Bertice Reading as Mrs. Yaj. Only Maxine Daniels failed, as Niri-Esther. In the rarified air of Valmouth, the child of nature could not make up her mind whether she was the only normal human-being in the town or the most monstrous of the lot; the result was a dead-spot where there should have been an electric discharge. For it is Niri-Esther's love for Captain Dick, Niri-Esther's marriage to Captain Dick, that destroys Valmouth and its centenarian inhabitants, that blasts the groggy reputation of the Cardinal, that brings on the second and most terrifying of thunderstorms, in which Granny Tooke (Doris

Hare), the co-eval cathedral, the relics human and ecclesiastical, are swept away into the limbo of the Wicked Cities of Scripture. Only the negresses and Captain Dick escape. Miss Daniels seemed to *claw* the place down. I don't like to think how she would have played the final scenes if the alternative ending to the story had been adopted and all the inhabitants of Valmouth had been stricken by yellow fever—caught from her presumably.

But the unwritten *Fever Ensemble* would have provided another magnificent opportunity for Sandy Wilson, whose range through wit, triumph and true pathos ('I will miss you') galvanises and delights.

CINEMA

Andy Hardy Comes Home, What Lola Wants, The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw, Me and The Colonel, The Reluctant Debutante, In Love and War

by VINCENT MURRAY

I suppose it was inevitable that one day Howard Koch, a script-writer with strong views on the pre-eminent position of his craft in film-production, should himself turn to direction. That he should be saddled with such a script as that of **Andy Hardy Comes Home** is both unexpected and ironic. The relationship between director and scriptwriter frequently crops up in these pages as a subject for discussion, and it is enough to say here

that each has the ability to make or mar the film. What is even more interesting about this film, however, is that M.G.M. is apparently considering reviving the Andy Hardy series, which, with Lewis Stone, Judy Garland, Ann Rutherford, to mention just a few of the personalities involved in it over the years, was remarkably popular both over here and in America before the last war. The all-too cosy picture of American family life seems vastly outdated today, however, when screens are full of small-town hatred and violence. Its appeal is primarily nostalgic; further films in the series will need a far stronger plot to hold them together. Mr. Koch could serve the series better in his rightful capacity.

Far more sure of itself is **What Lola Wants** (called *Damn Yankees* over there), a musical with rather a lot of plot and unrelenting verve. It's quite a remarkable thing how Stanley Donen has changed his attitude to the musical. A few years ago he was helping Gene Kelly to produce *On the Town*, a film which brought renewed live to the musical by revealing its ability to get along without much plot provided the songs and dances sprang logically from the situations. Other musicals followed suit, but Donen has apparently been having second thoughts. His recent *Pyjama Game* had a basically serious theme, and *What Lola Wants* is a version of the Faust legend (shades of Oedipus Rex in 'The Band Waggon'!); both hark back to a far more literary style of musical, but differ from it in their tremendous zest and drive. Lola has the additional advantage of a new face, Gwen Verdon, whose individuality is at present free from the familiar Hollywood deadening influence. How long she will retain her freshness if she remains where she is, is anybody's guess. There have been many Devils in the innumerable screen Faust stories, and Ray Walston makes his quite an interesting characterisation, though my favourite is Walter Hustons's in Dieterle's *All That Money Can Buy*.

Addicted as I am to Westerns I can nevertheless find little to praise in **The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw.** The tongue-in-cheek satire should be as firmly controlled as the real thing, but here even the veteran director Raoul Walsh allows character and plot to get out of hand. Joke after joke is oddly unfunny; no situation is pointed enough. Kenneth More plays the unwitting and unwilling fast-shooting hero who becomes sheriff of a small town way out west. His adventures with Indians, ranchers and Jane Mansfield (as a saloon keeper) make up the rather cumbersome plot, and, despite some good support from Robert Morley and Ronald Squire, one is glad when the last shot has been fired.

A poor month for comedy is helped out a little by a typically disarming performance from Danny Kaye in **Me and the Colonel.** His portrayal of the wily Jewish refugee is a far more varied performance than that of Curt Jurgens as the Polish colonel com-

pelled by circumstance to travel with him. Their escape through France, episodic as it inevitably is, receives quite inventive treatment from director Peter Glenville (whose second film this is), but really the film depends for its gentle humour on its principal players, and it's not Danny Kaye's fault if some sequences are not as good as they might have been.

One associates Vincente Minnelli with the sophisticated musical, though his talents have indeed been more wide-spread, and one is a little surprised to find his name on the credits of **The Reluctant Debutante.** The original play by William Douglas Home must have offered some attraction for him, but it has undergone such a change of mood that one wonders if he is satisfied with the result himself. The film depicts a section of English society seen through American eyes; the loud laugh replaces the quiet chuckle. A pity, but one can still enjoy the performances of Rex Harrison and Kay Kendall as the deb's parents.

Finally (could one avoid it?) another war-film: **In Love and War.** Not as long as most in the current cycle the film still manages to cram in three stories, each about a U.S. Marine, his background, war-adventures and after. Although the action sequences are extremely well done the human element is, as so often happens, found dramatically wanting. A drunken father, a neurotic fiancée, a forced wedding, a suicide — those are just a few of the plot complications which Edward Anhalt has had to trick out his script with in order to maintain interest. There are many competent performances, one or two good ones, but the situations are really so basically stereotyped in spite of the sensational "gimmicks' that the players cannot be expected to do more than skim the surface of their rôles. I for one will be glad when the war-cycle comes to an end.

NEW BOOKS

Love and The Loveless by Henry Williamson (Macdonald, 16s.)

IT'S 1917 now. Haig takes on more than eighty divisions in the battle of the Ypres salient; there have been serious mutinies in the French Army; the Yanks are coming; *The Bing Boys, John Bull* and an assortment of middle-to-upper-class whores *chez* Rosa (Mr. Williamson calls her "Flossie") spread sweetness and light on the home front. At Poperinghe, outside a tall grey house, hangs a sign, *All rank abandon, ye who enter here*: Tubby Clayton is at home in the first Toc H to "all and sundry, publicans, sinners and the righteous alike." This is Phillip Maddison's fourth year in the trenches . . .

This is the best portrait of Phillip that Mr. Williamson has so far drawn (it is, perhaps, less of a *self*-portrait than in the other books). Indecisively active, tactless and brave, Phillip is utterly credible. An idealist himself, he is never idealised; we see him warts and all; and until we realise that he's "different" because he can't help it, he irritates us quite as much as he did his superior officers. His lack of ambition, coupled with his craftsman's instinct, allows him to squeeze solace from the set job done well. He drinks a bottle of whiskey a day and reads a lot of inferior verse, yet we never feel that he's likely to crack under the strain of what surely must have been the most terrible trench warfare of all time. This invulnerability, owing nothing to any identifiable traditions of class, school or regiment, is what the bullies of the book probably found most annoying: his habit of quoting Francis Thompson and identifying birds would not go against him in any army in any war, for roughs and hearties in uniform warm quickly to the sensitive one in their midst and only begin to dislike him when he reveals equal or superior stamina in action.

This was it, then; this is how it must have been; for the author writes, as it were, on oath—

> "It was Charlie Chaplin funny to see someone slip off a duck-walk beside a mule slowly pumping itself along, *sock-plug-splosh* of feet, to haul out of a shell-hole the troglodytic driver the heavier by more than a hundredweight of slurry . . . One driver had been killed on the way up, by a shell. At last the body, after several back-slidings, was secured upon a mule's back and tied by feet and hands under the mule's belly . . . The truth was, it did not seem right to leave Daddy M'Kinnel in that lonely waste of mud and water."

One realises suddenly that these novels are the last, or nearly the last, of the *genre*, that soon now major critics who look as

young as Boy Scouts will appear on the parade ground, swivelling cold eyes on a whole battalion of old Contemptibles: Barbusse, Romains, Remarque, Ford, Montague, Aldington, Hemingway, Williamson, *et. al.*, I hope that, in the rush to consider *Under Fire, All Quiet, Rough Justice, A Farewell To Arms* and—perhaps the greatest of these—*Death of a Hero*, the Phillip Maddison books will not be forgotten. Lumped together, they are surely of greater documentary value than any other existing record: they are also (a fact not stressed; sometimes, even, not admitted; by the others) a testimony to the truth that the human spirit is sometimes unbreakable. One feels—wrongly, no doubt; certainly unfashionably —a surge of pride to be of the same race as this proud and gentle man, this magically evocative writer.

The book needs a map, for only the over-sixties can be expected to know much about the deadly triangle formed by Arras, Cambrai and St. Quentin. The author, of course, needs no map; he was, in the only sense that matters to him and to us, his readers, *born there.* M. H.

The Sultan, the Life of Abdul Hamid II by Joan Haslip
(Cassell 25s.)

OUT with the whitewash! Off with the Zebo!

In the days when one saw maids on their knees blacking grates, Abdul Hamid II still passed for a great villain, unspeakable Turk, Armenian-killer, Tartar in disguise. Was there not a Beerbohm caricature of William Archer or some such, being inbosphorated in a sack? Miss Haslip, like the tireless rehabilitators of William Rufus, Richard III and James II, stands for a change, and soon, I see, there will be nothing left of Little Arthur's theory of English History, and precious little of my Grandfather's appreciation of the Red Sultan.

The Sultan was the victim of circumstance, of heredity, of tradition, of rank. However much he wished to modernise himself or his empire, the task was totally beyond him. He had had no proper education; as Caliph he was hampered by his own impeccability, as politician he existed by courtesy of the Great Powers, as reformer he dreaded revolution and despised democratic institutions. As a man he was charming, by no means inhuman, though devious and desperately neurotic. What the Bible Societies called religious persecutions, Miss Haslip very rightly explains were repressions of separatist movements in metropolitan Turkey fermented by foreign Powers. She does not challenge the legend of their ruthlessness. All this is very refreshing.

Miss Haslip does not underestimate the difficulties that a liberalising sovereign had to face in the XIX Century, most especially in countries traditionally ruled by Pope-Kings; though, if she could have broadened her scope to compare Abdul Hamid with Pius IX or the Emperor Meiji, rather than concentrate on

the Sultan in terms of relations with his Turks and with the Powers, her treatment would certainly have gained. As it is, Abdul Hamid's problems seem to exist in a Far-European Near-Asiatic time-vacuum, occasionally penetrated by a British Ambassador or the Kaiser and Kaiserin. In fact, the Sultan felt an autocrat's solidarity with the autocrats of the world, even with the distrusted Czar when an attempt was made on the life of the Autocrat of all the Russias. The problems he had to face were very similar to theirs. Miss Haslip notes the solidarity but does not develop the comparison.

Though Turkey's diplomatic relations in the XIX Century lay largely with the West, the empire that kept Turkey going lay largely in the East. Granted that Abdul Hamid never visited his eastern satrapies, that his only real excursion was through Paris to London, yet he was still the ruler of a colossal empire; Stamboul was not an isolated city between West and East in Hamidian times, as it had been in the last days of the Byzantines. Miss Haslip seems to have projected the isolation of contemporary Stamboul back on to the Stamboul of the Padishah. Abdul Hamid was not primarily a king in Europe, but a Lord of Asia, venerated as The Shadow of God on Earth, even where he was flouted as temporal sovereign. The portrait of this man must be incomplete when Oriental and particularly Arabic sources are not used—difficult though this perhaps might have been for the biographer. From very extensive western sources, Miss Haslip has given us one profile, of the Sultan facing West. A. J. N.

Evelyn Waugh: portrait of an artist by Frederick J. Stopp. (Chapman & Hall, 21s.).

THE photograph on the book-jacket will impress nobody; though it might embarrass his friends and spur his detractors to pleasurable venom. It is the face of a Balzac *curé* disturbed at his devotions or his dinner, a reminder that piety and pettiness are often coextensive terms. Only the eyes are alive; the set of mouth and pudgy jaw show Superman unconvinced and unconvincing. Under the face, hammered to a gate or fence, is a notice: ENTREE INTERDITE AUX PROMENEURS; and this is presumably useful in keeping Gloucestershire folk away from the house. The gate or fence seems to need re-painting.

Evelyn Waugh is a safe, indeed a delightful, subject for a non-*promeneur* reader like myself. The trick is to keep away from Gloucestershire and concentrate upon Whispering Glades and the Bollinger Club. Many critics and feature-journalists have not learned this trick; and perhaps they do not wish to. They have been soured by Mr. Waugh's success, which has been achieved, for the most part, in spite of them; they have been affronted, in this chummy world of Welfare and Butlin, by his Coriolanic rejection of herd values and by the theatricality of his performance as

Catholic country-gent and high jumper. A few of these critics (Mr. Stopp lists them in his Select Bibliography) have contrived to be amusing as well as splenetic. I like best Mr. Pritchett's "He just wants a club for those who refuse to know the Reformation socially"; and both Neame, A. J. and Savage, D. S., have revealed as much wit as wrongheadedness in their time. Mr. Priestley, who is himself a novelist as well as a critic, took a Jungian line in a review of Waugh's last book, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold;* and Mr. Heppenstall, in a recent article on the book under review and another book on Priestley, took a sensibly straightforward line on both of them. His point was that a good many people respect Mr. Priestley's views, but cannot bring themselves to read his books; and that in the case of Mr. Waugh, the reverse applies. Better writers than Mr. Priestley and worse writers than Mr. Waugh could, of course, be substituted here without affecting the truth of the observation; and the game cannot be played at all with the very greatest thinkers, who do not often write novels, and with the very greatest novelists, who are usually dead before anyone pays much attention to them except in the way of slander and suppression.

Mr. Stopp's portrait is a thank-offering for thirty years of enjoyable reading, and as such is to be commended. But it strengthens my view that there is little in Waugh's genius to justify a long critical study: like Thurber, he has created a small and perfect world, a puppet platform that speaks for itself. Its fun stales and its fantasy blurs when they are insisted upon with quotation and paraphrase: for all his expository excellence and some shrewd analysis, Mr. Stopp puts me in mind of a prosaic parent explaining the tricks of glove-puppetry to a child who has just *seen* the magic plain. Polite yawns have always blocked my attempts to convince somebody that the convicts' rendering of "O God, Our Help in Ages Past" in *Decline and Fall* is the funniest thing in modern literature; and even Mr. Stopp's "Who's Who in Waugh", though wittily compiled, prompts the thought that Waugh himself would have done it far better had he thought it worth doing at all. In short, this is not a book for the specialist—one who re-reads the whole of Waugh every five years; it is for the casual reader who has picked up a few Penguin Waughs, and laughed a good deal, and needs to be guided towards *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen*. But I do not wish to seem ungrateful to Mr. Stopp. I have learned that the killing and burning of Aimée in *The Loved One* was "his (Mr. Waugh's) own private rite of expiation" for the romantic excesses of *Brideshead Revisited;* I have been reminded of the vast tracts of religious and mythical symbolism in Mr. Waugh's work, and have set myself a New Year's task of finding a rival gimmick to eschatalogical *chic*.

His world, like Thurber's, defies close definition: "burlesque allegory" is simply not good enough. It is an anarchic world, but, as Mr. Stopp says, "the general implications are moral . . .

fates are poetically just." His characters live only with the maestro at the strings; they die with darkness and the incoming tide. They can only be recollected in the context of situations and events which Mr. Waugh has set down for them. Mr. Spender, in a well-known essay, wonders what Basil Seal is doing now: no-one, except Mr. Waugh, can hazard a guess, for only the puppet-master can place him. We know what Basil looks like, but his face, like a film-star's familiar to us only from the screen, dissolves into the wall-paper when we try to look him in the eye. In fact, he convinced us least when, for a while, Mr. Waugh jerked him into a setting of cold-war austerity, one which his creator was not, at that time, able or willing to fantasticate in his usual way. The Basil of *Black Mischief*, we feel, after reorganising the empire of Azania and eating his ex-mistress should have been set nobler tasks than applying for army commissions and struggling with billetees in *Put Out More Flags*.

M. H.

A History of the Guillotine by Alister Kershaw (Calder 21s. — *profusely and gruesomely illustrated*).

MR. KERSHAW is not one to turn pale at the sight of blood, but neither does he embrace the butcher; his research into the genesis and history of 'The Widow' is a model of zany thoroughness relieved by a twinkling eye and a twitching lip. Here is no subject for indecorous levity, he hints; his capers are a model of grave elegance. The book should be read in two instalments: the first late at night, and the second — the post-*cauchemar* one — shortly before the extraction of a wisdom tooth.

Mr. K. convinces me that there is an art, a *mystique*, of the guillotine, governed by laws no less austere than those of the Spanish bull-ring. He expects a true, butch and traditional performance from both the victim and the executioner. He may feel compassion for a poor performer, but this does not blind him to the deficiency, the fall from grace. He is a classicist; yet I feel he rather approves the romantic technique of a Troppmann who enlivened his execution eighty years ago by biting the hand of the assistant executioner at the moment the knife fell: this with Sardou and Turgenieff in the audience.

On the subject of the great executive dynasties, the Sansons, the Etiennes, the Deiblers, Mr. Kershaw is porkily informative. He shows too that the female line is just as much involved in the continuity as the male:

> For a young woman to marry a headsman is almost automatically to condemn her sisters and nieces and cousins to remain spinsters or to accept helpmates following the same profession . . . There are innumerable instances of eligible executioners frustrated in their natural desires by the intended parents-in-law . . .

Judging by the photograph of Louis Deibler's wife, however, the womenfolk of the great profession are not, by French provincial standards, unduly brutalised: one may see faces like theirs anywhere in the Midi or even nearer Paris, in Seine-et-Oise.

My final impression of this history is one of that most elusive of composites: *la danse macabre — enchantée.*

M.H.

The Choice before Europe by Marshal Juin and Henri Massis (Eyre and Spottiswoode 12s. 6d.)

THIS book was first published in France last year under the title *L'Europe en Question.* It consists of two essays, the first by Marshal Juin, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces in Central Europe, 1951-6, and the second by Henri Massis, the author of *Defense de l'Occident.* Marshal Juin gives a good outline account of the defence of Western Europe, and his conclusion is that " the union of Western Europe " is " a good thing."

The essay by Massis is much the longer of the two. His concern is with the spiritual defence of the West. He contrasts the tendency towards collectivism of both America and Russia with the individualism and diversity of Europe. The only possible defence of Europe is that which, he puts it, " starts from the principle that nothing in life is predestined and inevitable, that will-power is the supreme creative force of history." We must choose, not between Americanism and Communism, but between " the modern world " and " the Christian world." That is the " choice before Europe."

On the other hand, Massis fails to recognize that the defence of Europe and of her independence necessitates a closer union between the European states. He is against any kind of federation, on the grounds that it can only be achieved by force (but surely the case of Switzerland disproves this), and that it would mean the predominance of one state. But in fact, if Europe remains divided, the domination by a non-European state is practically inevitable.

Massis spoils his case by overstating it. He maintains, for instance, that " Americanism and Communism are not moving in opposite directions; they are moving in the same direction, but Communism is going farther." His essay is marked by an exaggerated anti-Americanism, which leads him to such extremes as the defence of the Suez adventure and of the bombing of Sakhiet.

Even Marshal Juin has vague fears about the " technocracy " which, he says, animates the whole of the movement towards European union. This book is important because it represents the views of good Europeans who have still to come to terms with the basic realities of the mid-twentieth century.

Jeremy Munford.

CI DE LOS CANTORES

by EZRA POUND

Finding scarcely anyone save Monsieur de Remusat
who could understand him
(junipers, south side) M. Talleyrand
spruce and fir take the North
Chalais, Aubeterre,
snow-flakes at a hand's bredth, and rain.
Trees line the banks, mostly willows. Kublai,
Te Te of Ch'eng, called Timur, 1247, came hither
Forest thru ice into emerald

in Tan (dawn, that is)

larix, corayana and berberis,
after 2 stages A-tun-tzu
a distance of one hundred li
Pinus armandi,
Talleyrand, Thiers, tried to get sense into princes.
6 to the public; 3%, and then one to the state
(Simon admits it)
4 letters patent, 5 seals
after the 4th year of Yung-lo
12th May, 1406, and a gold belt
inlaid with flowers, pay for the troops holding
passes; rations, chair-coolies, horses.
—"To write of today", said Mr. Kennan, "is not scholarship"
and, going toward slavery, have mislaid family names.
40 years trailer life, non-productive,
non-agricultural
(del Pelopardi
came on cunicoli)
tho' avoiding the squalor of taxes
by cretins imposed;
"Not attempting" as Peabody, Warren G. "Peabody Coke
and Coal", said, "to unscrew the inscrutable"
"infini" as measured by Renan
"la bêtise humaine."
That one dollar's worth of oil sell @ 5 dollars.
Talleyrand, Austerlitz, Mme. Remusat:

"90 francs free for obtaining gold for
a one thousand franc note (1805) . . .
and Cambaceres
A constitution given to Italy,
Xmas day of that year, Bonaparte's maXimum.
"that intelligent men can believe"
non-sectarian
Marbois and then Mollien at the Treasury
and then Gaudin,
Mt. Cenis, Simplon, Mme. Remusat
Wouldn't swallow it (i.e. that
a great mind could seek glory in war.)
1806, 12th December.
"Studies at Jena will be continued,"
"Liberty for a small privileged class"
a necessity
Hottenguer, Neuflize, their Nessus
"Were in France" (Mme. de Remusat) "wholly ignorant"
of what was then passing outside."
Gaudin did not pay interest on government credit. Nor did
Kang Hi.
Mme. d'Houdetot never perceived evil in anyone.
"Sort of ignorance," said the old priest to Yeats in a
railway train
"is spreading every day from the schools!"
Obit 1933, Tsung-Kuan, for Honour.
Bears live on acorns
and come raiding our fields. Bouffier,
Elzéard has made the forest at Vergon
under Kuanon's eye there is oakwood. Sengper ga-mu,
To him we burn pine with white smoke,
morning and evening.
The hills here are blue-green with juniper,
the stream, as Achilöos there below us,
here one man can hold the whole pass
over this mountain, at Mont Segur the chief's cell

you can enter it sideways only, TSO 笼 is here named

from the rope bridge, hemp rope? a reed rope?
and they pay the land tax in buckwheat.
Food was in Tolosa, not chemical, and in Gubbio
L'il Josephine on the radio and a bull-fair
and they had sent the stone door-frames to America

not in war-time, antiques.
"No money, no Swiss" quoted Wilson (McN.)
KALON KAGATHON, and Marengo,
This aura will have, with red flash,
the form of a diamond, or of crimson,
Apollonius, Porphery, Anselm,
Plotinus EN THEORIA 'ON NOUS EXEI
had one vision only, and if the stars be but unicorns . . .
or took the stars for those antelopes.
HS'UAN TSUNG, 1389 natus, painted kittens,
and Joey said, "are they for real"
before primitives in the Mellon Gallery.
Washington
"Should", said H. J., "for humanity's credit
feign their existence
With the sun and moon on her shoulders,
the star-discs sewn on her coat
at Li Chiang, the snow range,
a wide meadow
and the ^{2}dto—^{1}mba's face (exorcist's)
muy simpático
by the waters of Stone Drum,
the two aces
Mint grows at the foot of the Snow Range
the first moon is the tiger's,
Pheasant calls out of bracken
Rossoni "cosí lo stato . . ." etcetera
Delcroix: "che magnifica!"
(prescrittibile)
he perceived it:
The green spur, the white meadow
"May their pond be full;
"The son have his father's arm
and good hearing;
(noun graph upright; adjective sideways)
"His horse's mane flowing
"His body and soul are at peace."