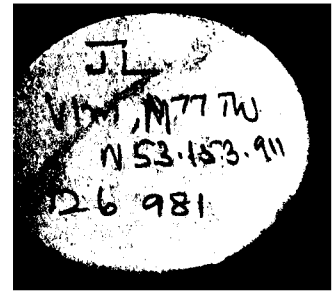

J.L.
N53.153.911
126 981

THE TWENTIETH Century

CONTENTS

VOLUME CLIII

JANUARY–JUNE

1953

STATE LEGISLATURE
1 - NOV 1955

FORMERLY THE NINETEENTH CENTURY & AFTER

1877 1953

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER LIMITED
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

A Special Correspondent . . . . Marshal Tito 246
Moscow's German Satellite 335
Alexander, Mark . . . . . Middle Eastern Battleground 209
Allen, Rev E. L.
Amery, Julian . . . . . Myth and Message in the New Testament 431
Arnold, G. L. Racial Equality: a Reply 87
The Cold War – I 165
The Cold War – II 249

Book Notes
Cohn, Norman 76, 147, 235, 309, 391, 475
Correspondence The Magus of the North 289
Davenport, John. 395
Davie, Donald Dylan Thomas 144
'Essential Gaudiness': The Poems of Wallace Stevens 456
Herbert Read's Romanticism 295
Syntax in Poetry and Music 128

Editorial
Edwardes, Michael 3, 83, 163, 243, 323, 403
Rudyard Kipling and the Imperial Imagination 444
Findlater, Richard . . . . . Graham Greene as Dramatist 472
The London Theatre 370
Gordon Walker, P. C. . . . . Crown Divisible 486
Haffner, Sebastian The Meaning of Malenkov 306
The Renascence of Monarchy 416
Hargreaves, J. D.
Hayward, H. M. . . . . Idealism in African Politics 340
Himmelfarb, Gertrude The Eternal Triangle in Soviet Literature 219
Hudson, G. F. . . . . The Hero as Politician 356
Huizinga, J. H. Professor Toynbee and the West 210
Kohn, Hans . . . . . Bridgeheads Across the Rubicon 269
Landers, W. M. An Historian's Creed for our Time 118
Lowenthal, Richard . . . . . The Military Necessity 377
Stalin's Testament 180
Miller, Bruce . . . . . Why was Slansky Hanged? 18
Munby, D. L. Chamberlain and Gladstone 362
Newman, William J. . . . . E. H. Carr and 'The Economic Order' 106
Pankhurst, Richard, K. P. Propaganda and the American Intellectual 30
Paul, David . . . . . Saint-Simonism in England – II 47
Syringa, Iv'ry Pure 302
The Immoral Gods 59
The Novel Art 497

Review of Reviews
Pendle, George . . . . . Hispanic Reviews 351
The Spanish Reviews 123
Todd, Olivier . . . . . The French Reviews 56
Wall, Bernard The French Reviews 276
Schlesinger, Prof. Arthur, Jr. . . . Stevenson and the American Liberal Dilemma 24
Seton-Watson, H. . . . . Eastern Europe and the German Problem 195
Strachey, Rt. Hon. John Racial Equality 7
Swanzy, Henry . . . . . Background to Mau Mau 13
French North Africa 345
Symons, Julian . . . . . The Future of Poetry 66
The Commonwealth Conference and After
I. Bareau, Paul . . . . . Towards Free Sterling 93
II. [illegible] B. Barriers to Agreement 99
W[illegible] . . . . . The Strategy of Victorian Poetry 383
[illegible] Theatre Royal 464
[illegible] Benedetto Croce 43
Wightman, J. G. A Child of the Century 72
A Pedant Finds Fault 135
Littérature Engagée Again 226
Loyal Thoughts of an Ex-Republican . . 470

126981

CONTENTS FOR JANUARY 1953

Editorial 3

Racial Equality: THE RT. HON. JOHN STRACHEY, M P 7

Background to Mau Mau: HENRY SWANZY 13

Why was Slansky Hanged? RICHARD LOWENTHAL 18

Stevenson and the American Liberal Dilemma: PROFESSOR ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR 24

Propaganda and the American Intellectual: WILLIAM J. NEWMAN 30

The French Reviews: OLIVIER TODD 36

Benedetto Croce: BERNARD WALL 43

Saint-Simonism in England: II: RICHARD K. P. PANKHURST 47

The Immoral Gods: DAVID PAUL 59

The Future of Poetry: JULIAN SYMONS 66

A Child of the Century: J. G. WEIGHTMAN 72

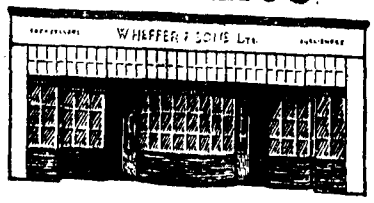
Book Notes 76

Volume CLIII, Number 911

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

HEFFER'S



A CAMBRIDGE BOOKSHOP THAT IS KNOWN IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD

W. HEFFER & SONS LTD
Petty Cury, Cambridge

Bellometti
LE PERROQUET

The restaurant in the heart of entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

Please supply { one year's / six months' } subscription to

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Name.....

Address.....

Annual subscription post free, 50/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $8.75.
Six months' subscription " " 25/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $4.40.

If unable to obtain from your newsagent, please post this form direct to the Publishers.

EDITORIAL

It is only human nature to wish both to eat one's cake and have it, but only too often the time at last comes when one simply has to choose which it is to be. It may be that such a time has now come with regard to the war in Korea. For two years the Allies in Korea have been persistently hoping that they would be able to settle the issue, or at least put an end to the fighting, on acceptable terms without having to 'spread the war'. But the outcome of the United Nations Assembly's deliberations on Korea and the Russo-Chinese rejection of the Indian plan for the repatriation of prisoners of war is that the expectation of both keeping the war localized within present limits, and ending it without a disastrous surrender of principle, has become extremely slender. The Allies are morally and politically in a position from which they cannot withdraw without disgrace, while the Chinese Communists are apparently prepared to go on with the war indefinitely until their terms are accepted. President-elect Eisenhower, with a virtual mandate from the American people to wind up the war in the very near future, has been to the Korean front, talked to the commanders on the spot, and made a soldier's appraisal of the situation. In the ensuing press conference he said as little of what he thought as is possible for a man in American public life, but his dilemma was sufficiently expressed in the much-quoted sentence:

> How difficult it seems to be in a war of this kind to work out a plan that will bring a positive and definite victory without possibly running a risk of enlarging the war.

This sentence, coupled with a declaration that much could and would be done to 'improve our position', has generally been taken to mean that Eisenhower is opposed to any idea of 'hitting China'. It can also, however, be interpreted as indicating that he would be prepared to take the risk mentioned if 'positive and definite victory' cannot be obtained in any other way. Probably he has not yet made up his mind and is in any case unlikely to commit himself publicly to a policy before he is in a position of full authority for taking action - that is to say, until his inauguration as President. Meanwhile he can consider the problem from every angle in the happy position of a man who has the certain prospect, but not yet the current responsibility, of executive power.

What are the factors which he has to weigh? The first of them is undoubtedly the great moral and political gain to the Allied cause from the adoption of the Indian plan on the prisoner repatriation issue by the U N Assembly. One of the most serious weaknesses in the position hitherto has been the fact that India, in spite of her delegate's participation in the Security Council's original resolution condemning North Korean aggression, has since then assumed a neutral attitude in the conflict, with the result that the U N military effort in Korea has looked very much like an intervention by Western powers on Asian soil, without any real support or approval from Asia. The adoption of the Indian plan by the Assembly has changed all that, for it means that the compromise terms, the rejection of which by the Communist powers is causing the war to continue, are terms which have the full endorsement of the so-called 'bloc of Asian and Arab states', not merely of the nations actually taking part in the Korean war. As these proposals clearly went as far as it was possible to go in concession to the Chinese claims, without accepting the intolerable demand for forcible repatriation, and as the dispute over repatriation is the only issue now formally standing in the way of an armistice, it follows that the 'war aim' for which the armed struggle is now being waged is to obtain armistice terms which the non-Communist world considers reasonable.

On the other hand, the very fact that the Soviet Foreign Minister, by his absolutely uncompromising stand in the Assembly, not only rebuffed the extremely conciliatory moves of so influential a neutral as India, but also refrained from taking advantage of the initial American opposition to the Indian plan in order to isolate America in the Assembly, indicates that Russia attaches more importance to prolonging the war in Korea than to bringing about discord among the non-Communist powers by accepting a neutral proposal for its termination. And indeed, it can hardly be denied that from Moscow's angle of vision the Korean war, as long as it remains localized as it has up to now, is a very profitable investment which can be expected to go on paying good strategic dividends for months, if not for years. It costs Russia nothing but a supply of war material, for most of which China pays with mineral and other exports to Russia; keeps a disproportionately large part of the available forces of the Western democracies locked up in a remote peninsula of Asia at the end of excessively long lines of communication; keeps China in a proper relation of dependence on Russia; and produces continual friction and recrimination between America and her European allies. Why put an end to such an ideal state of affairs? But Russia could not compel the Chinese

to go on with the war if they did not also want it on their own account. From Peking's point of view, continuation of the war is worth while, because it provides all the advantages, without the risks, of a war 'emergency' for uniting the nation after a revolutionary upheaval, enables the regime to carry out an intensive build-up of its armed power without being embarrassed by civilian claims for priority, does no harm to China except for the casualties (which are there of less significance than they would be in any other country), and affords a fair prospect of ultimately obtaining victory by a prolonged war of attrition which the enemy will not have the patience to endure.

People on this side of the Iron Curtain have clung desperately, over the many months of hair-splitting truce talks, to the belief that the Chinese, if not their Russian backers, really want peace and that it is only a matter of striking a bargain over the terms of an armistice. But there is no reason why the present rulers of either Russia or China should want this war to stop, as long as it remains strictly confined to the Korean peninsula. There was indeed a moment in the summer of 1951 when the Chinese army in Korea was so badly disorganized, as a result of the rough handling it had received in the battles of the spring, that it was in danger of being crumpled up completely by an Allied counter-offensive. But it was then that Malik came to their rescue with an appeal for a truce; the Allies at once suspended active operations and allowed the truce talks to drag on month after month, while the Communists rebuilt their military strength and re-equipped their forces with new material from Russia. A very simple trick, but one which worked wonderfully well, thanks to the desire of the democracies for an end to the war and their belief that the other side wanted to end it too. Today there would be no prospect of decisive victory for an Allied land offensive in Korea except with large reinforcements of man-power and at the cost of very heavy casualties.

There remain the arms which have not been used – the arms in which the Allies are strongest and which are available to them without a major diversion of their man-power from other sectors of their world-wide defensive front. The Allies have sea-power, they have aircraft carriers, and they have land bases for strategic bombing of all the coastal provinces of China. If China were to be visited with only a very small part of the violence applied to Japan (exclusive of the atomic bombs) during the first half of 1945, the character of the Far Eastern war would be entirely transformed. There has, of course, been plenty of bombing and naval bombardment of North Korea, but the Chinese do not care what happens to North

Korea so long as it does not happen to them. If further pressure is to be applied to China to end the war on the basis of the armistice terms which have been approved by the United Nations, it is difficult to see how it can be done by any action limited to Korea; it can only be done by making the Chinese aware (as they are not yet aware) that they are waging war against a coalition of Great Powers and that war is not an affair in which one side has the right to choose when, where and how it will fight.

There are two objections commonly made against any use of the naval and air arms against China. One is that the history of the Japanese invasion of China shows that China is unconquerable and that it is vain to hope that its rulers could be induced to modify their policy by anything that hostile warships or aircraft could do. The analogy of the Japanese invasion, however, is not relevant; China may be unconquerable, but nobody is now proposing to conquer China. The only aim is to compel the Peking Government to stop demanding the forcible repatriation of prisoners of war as the price of an armistice. Any operations against China should be preceded by intensive radio propaganda explaining the Indian plan and making it clear that nothing but Peking's intransigence on this question prevents the cessation of hostilities.

The second and graver objection to direct action against China is the fear that Russia might intervene and thus bring about a new world war. But Britain and America took a greater risk of war when they resisted the blockade of Berlin, and Russia then stopped short of the irrevocable step. There would indeed be danger, especially with the high speeds of modern aircraft, in any operations approaching the Soviet frontier or a Soviet military base, and for this reason it would be expedient to exclude Manchuria from any air offensive against China. But there does not seem to be any reason why the Russians should be more concerned about the bombing of Tsingtao or Amoy than they are now about the bombing of Pyongyang or the Yalu power stations. It is impossible to prove that there is no risk at all in an extended Far Eastern strategy. But it has to be weighed against the greater risk which would be incurred by an ultimate acceptance of defeat in Korea. A world war came in 1939, not because the democracies had been bold in opposing aggression over the previous eight years, but because their policies had been timid and indecisive. Nothing would now be so likely to encourage Russia and China to courses of action leading to universal warfare as a humiliating fiasco in a collective operation which has the clear moral support of the entire non-Communist world.

RACIAL EQUALITY

John Strachey
Secretary of State for War, 1950–51

The purpose of this article is to suggest that the application of the principle of racial equality, in its widest sense, is the key to a successful world policy for Britain. In three separate spheres, in the Far East, in the Middle East and in the dependent parts of the Commonwealth, there is no hope of the maintenance or re-assertion of Britain's position except upon the basis of a real recognition, in practice, of the basic equality of status of human beings, irrespective of their colour, creed or race. Moreover, much larger changes, both in British policy and in the attitude of mind of the relevant sections of the British people, are still necessary to give effect to this principle than is usually supposed. We have made a start, but no more than a start in beginning to treat the peoples of Asia and Africa with whom we come into close contact as our equals. A prolonged revolution is today shaking the whole continent of Asia to its foundations. It is not too much to say that the first majority Labour Government saved Britain by freely recognizing the independence of the great British dependencies of Southern Asia – India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. But the situation which faces us today is different and more complex.

Let us attempt to see what would be involved, in the three spheres of the Middle East, the Far East and the dependent parts of the Commonwealth, if we really began to put the principle of racial equality into unvarying practice.

The main nations of the Middle East are not British dependencies, as were those of South and South-East Asia. But this complicates rather than eases the problem of our future relationship with them. In this area, Britain has so far sought to retain some at least of the military and economic predominance which she had long held. But such British military predominance is not really compatible with the independence of the nations of the Middle East, nor is it in fact necessary or even conducive to the successful conduct of the great enterprises, which, above all in the oil industry, are there carried on. These enterprises are now predominantly of a joint Anglo-American character. What is needed for their protection is a well considered defence scheme based upon an alliance between the local Powers, some of which, such as Turkey and Israel, are by no means

negligible militarily, and the Western countries. But the physical presence of large British forces in the area is an almost unsurmountable obstacle to the achievement of this alliance. It is an attempt to maintain the vestiges of Britain's old exclusive imperial position: it will fail, and will deserve to fail if it is obstinately persisted in.

The next Labour Government will have the task of disentangling the real needs of the area for security from aggression, from the now out of date British imperial pretentions with which they have become entangled. In this area, as a matter of fact, our American allies have adopted a more up-to-date and progressive policy than we have, and we should not hesitate to learn from them. For only when we in fact begin to treat the peoples of the Middle East as equals, in whose territory it is quite impossible to station our troops against their wishes, will things begin to go right with us in this part of the world. This is the real application, the test case, of the principle of racial equality in the Middle East. Individual Englishmen do not treat individual Arabs, on the whole, as inferiors. On the contrary, British officers and administrators have a romantic, 'T. E. Lawrence' regard for them. But when it comes to the relationship of the British Government with their Governments, we still attempt to use our armed forces as, in effect, resident garrisons for, in the last resort, imposing our will upon them. And then we wonder why they don't seem to like us, in spite of our romantic regard for them! The appearance of the new Egyptian Government gives us an opportunity for a radical revision of our whole Middle Eastern policy, on a basis of genuine racial equality. If we settle with Egypt on the Sudan and on the question of the Canal Zone we shall have taken the first critical step in this area – a step comparable to the granting of Indian independence in Southern Asia. The Middle East will gain immensely in security. The only thing which will be lost will be those vestiges of British military predominance and prestige referred to above. And the sooner we make up our minds to do without them the better. For the alternative is to continue indefinitely those complex, those positively Baroque, exercises by which the Foreign Office attempts to play off the conflicting interests of the area, in order to maintain British predominance. All that is as out of date as dancing a minuet round an oil derrick. Let us drop it.

The Far Eastern situation is dominated by the fact of the Chinese revolution. No Western Social Democrat can do anything but deplore the fact that that revolution has taken a Communist form. But one must face the fact that it has. British Labour is not called upon to pass judgement on the character of the present Chinese Government. But what we are called upon to do is make up our minds as to whether that Government is there to stay. It is impossible to comprehend how any one can suppose that the

present Chinese Government is not there to stay. After forty-five years of revolution, civil war, foreign invasions and chaos, China has at length been unified under a strong regime. That fact alone, and quite irrespective of whether or not it is from our point of view a good regime, ensures its stability. Even to attempt to overturn it would require a major war of intervention, and it would be far more likely to result in the triumphant consolidation of the Communist regime on a wave of patriotic fervour, than in its overturn.

The next Labour Government must take its stand squarely upon the last Labour Government's act of recognition of the present Chinese Government. This act is now seen as no diplomatic formality but as a vital expression of the British attitude towards the immense and continuing process of the Asian revolution. It is unfortunately in this field that we are bound to run the risk of serious disagreement with our American allies, unless, as we must all hope, American policy becomes more realistic.

Hitherto American policy in the Far East has been tragically mistaken. Starting from a position in which, since America was not a colonial power, she enjoyed the goodwill of the peoples of Asia to a far greater degree than did any European nation, the American Government has become entangled in policies which have made it easy for the Chinese Communists to represent it as the implacable enemy of Asian independence and popular aspirations. These disastrous American policies have followed from the exigencies of American domestic politics rather than from any objective study of the situation in Asia as it is. They have stemmed from a hatred of Communism so fanatical that the American Government has felt it necessary to express both in words and actions its violent hostility to the Chinese Communist Government, even after that Government had unmistakably become the National Government of the most numerous people in the world. These characteristics of America's Far Eastern policy concern us only in so far as they threaten to involve the allies of America, including Britain, in a general Far Eastern war with China. Unfortunately it cannot be doubted that they do in fact threaten so to do. Although America does not intend to attack China, she has as yet been unable to make up her mind even to attempt to make peace with her. In the emergencies of the second phase of the Korean war, there was acute danger of Chinese aggressiveness, combined with American refusal to face facts, producing a general Far Eastern war. Moreover, that danger persists and will persist until the Western powers, including America, recognize the elementary fact of the existence of a strong and stable Government over 500 million Chinese, seat that Government on the Security Council of the United Nations, disavow the Government of Chiang Kai-shek, and find some solution for the island of Formosa.

Nor will it be possible to slur over this difference of view with our American ally. Involvement in a general Far Eastern war would be in the fullest sense of the word suicidal for Britain. This is an example of the general attitude to the American alliance which we must adopt. We must do everything we can to maintain that alliance: but there might be penalties for blindly following our allies which we could not and must not pay. Fearful as might be the consequences for the world and ourselves of a serious breach in Anglo-American relations, one event at least would be more fatal still: the involvement of Britain in a hopeless and unnecessary war, which the British people did not believe to be justified, and in which no British Government could consequently induce them to fight. There is no doubt that a general war with China which began while the American Government maintained its present attitude in the Far East, would be regarded by the British people as a war of this unjustified character. Therefore any British Government which even pretended to our American allies that we could follow them into such a war would be merely deceiving them. It is far better, precisely for the sake of decent Anglo-American relations, to make such facts as these clear from the outset.

Moreover, much more is involved in the Far Eastern situation even than the recognition of, and the establishment of peaceful relations with, the present Chinese Government. Both Britain and the West as a whole must come to terms with the Asian revolution. Britain has done so, to her own immense benefit, in the case of the countries of Southern Asia. It is far more difficult to do so in the case of the countries of the Far East, because there the revolution is under Chinese leadership and has therefore taken on a Communist character. But the necessity remains as absolute in this case as in the other. For no one can suppose that the old semi-colonial status can be re-imposed either upon China or upon the Far East as a whole. A new relationship of equality must be established. In some countries, such as Malaya, Japan, Siam, there is still time to establish such relations with nationalist but non-Communist regimes. But when, as in China, and it may be surmised in the northern part of Indo-China also Communism has irrevocably become the form of the national movement then this fact, however unpalatable, must be recognized. Britain, France and the other old imperial nations must face this situation; and they may well have to make further far-reaching adjustments of policy to meet it. For a refusal to do so will result, not in the re-establishment of their old positions, but in the overrunning of the entire area by Communist forces.

The Labour Government of 1945–51 achieved the first basic stage of the transformation of the British Empire into a free Commonwealth of Nations. But that transformation is in many respects incomplete, and there will be no more urgent task before the next Labour Government than

to carry it forward. So here again the issue is in fact a question of the real acceptance, in practice and not merely in words, of the principle of racial equality. It is not until we really begin to behave to the peoples of the Far East in a way which makes them understand that we regard them as our equals, that we shall come to terms with them.

Finally, the principle of racial equality must find its most direct expression in the dependent parts of the British Commonwealth itself. In several important respects, the structure and character of the British Commonwealth must be transformed if it is to prosper, or even in the long run to survive.

Here the principle of racial equality must be asserted without compromise. Compromise is a permissible and indeed highly desirable course in nearly all political issues. But there are a very few issues which are of so special and peculiar a character that compromise cannot be applied to them. The principle of racial equality is one of them. What is necessary is the unequivocal assertion in practice, by the governing authorities in the British Commonwealth, of the principle that a citizen's liberties, democratic rights, and economic, social and educational opportunities, are not dependent upon the colour of his or her skin. This is a condition which must be fulfilled if there is to be any future for our unique association of nations and peoples. To suppose that the British Commonwealth, with its immense majority of Asian and African citizens, can endure if it is conducted on the basis of white racial supremacy, would be ludicrous if it were not tragic. The immense benefits which continued association can bring both to our Asian and African fellow citizens, and to ourselves, cannot possibly be achieved unless we demonstrate our freedom from race prejudice in the most scrupulous manner.

The assertion of this indispensable principle of racial equality will not, however, be easy. In the first place we know that in one part of the Commonwealth – South Africa – it is not merely sometimes disregarded, but is violently denied by the present Government. We cannot, of course, interfere in the affairs of this fully self-governing part of the Commonwealth, but what we must do is apply the principle of racial equality, without fear or favour, in all those parts of the Commonwealth for which we are responsible. There must be no more Seretse Khama incidents. We cannot ignore the fact that this may cause difficulties and differences, not only with an important section of South African opinion, but also – though to a lesser degree – with some sections of the European population in other parts of the Commonwealth. Such differences, and their possible consequences, are to be most sincerely deplored if they arise. But the consequences to the future of the Commonwealth of any weakening or equivocation in the application of the principle of racial equality, would be so

certainly fatal that possible differences with the white overseas communities must be faced unflinchingly.

The application of the principle of racial equality is of course not the only thing we must do in order to put our relations with the peoples of Asia and Africa on a sound basis. There is the whole question of the steady development of self-government in the dependent areas of the Commonwealth. And there is the whole immense question of the economic development of the underdeveloped continents by the provision of large amounts of capital from the industrialized countries. This article cannot take up either of these vitally important issues. But even in these spheres is not the underlying issue that of the principle of racial equality? Is not the key to success, in the one case in the sphere of political institutions, and in the other in the sphere of economic development, to be found in the application of the principle of racial equality?

Mr. Julian Amery, M.P., will reply to this article next month, and it is hoped to have further discussion of the subject in later issues.

BACKGROUND TO MAU MAU

Henry Swanzy

The author is editor of the journal of the Royal African Society, *African Affairs*.

Movements that combine 'politics' and 'religion' are no new thing in Africa, where the distinction in any case is unknown in the tribe. Even where the politics turn on resistance to the interloper, *sc.* the white man, the history of these movements goes back at least a hundred years, through John Buchan's Laputa (in *Prester John*) to the *locus classicus* in South African history, the girl Nongqase, who persuaded thousands of Xhosa in the 1850s that a great cloud would come out of a blood red sun and roll the white men into the sea, if only they would kill their cattle (which they did). In the *Maji Maji* revolt against the Germans in Tanganyika, in the revolt against the British in Nyasaland during the first war, in the case of the South African Israelites at Bulhoek in 1921, magic was always evoked by seers, and implicitly believed in. Bullets would melt, the sun would descend, planes would come with bombs from America, God would arrive at one o'clock in the afternoon. Otherwise, how could one possibly fight the superior strength of the strangers?

Nor were the movements always war-like. The only extended study known to me, by the Swedish missionary Bengt Sundkler (*Bantu Prophets in South Africa* 1948), lists over 1,000 separatist churches, essentially political, and equally essentially religious, whether of the big, heavy, *Ethiopian* type, run as a kind of superior insurance company, or of the thin, highly strung Zionist type, which believes in prophecy and baptism, and links its lessons with the tribal waters. Apart from the zealots of Bulhoek, mown down by South African aeroplanes, there is no account of resistance by the Castor Oil Dead Churches, although in at least one church the most famous prophet, the Zulu Shembe, ran his *ashram* as an *ilkhanda*, on the model of the old age-grade barracks of Chaka, near the high place Ekuphakameni, eighteen miles from Durban, where he died in 1935.

The cults have vastly increased in the last ten years, as has all belief in magic, both white and black, through the increase in social tensions. Such a movement is virtually inevitable, given the failure of the European regimes to introduce institutions around which the emotions of Africa may grow. It has been traced schematically by Bronislaw Malinowski, in his last work, *Dynamics of Culture Change*. Under the first column he lists *white*

influences, interests and intentions; under the second, *processes of culture contact and change*; under the third, *surviving forms of traditions*; under the fourth, the *reconstructed past*; under the fifth and last, *new forms of spontaneous African reintegration or reaction*. A layman might consider that the movement, so greatly increased by the war and the consequent European enfeeblement, both material and moral, is summed up best in those lines of Housman:

I a stranger and afraid
In a world I never made.

At any rate, so much have the cults increased that a *high* Catholic dignitary declared recently in private conversation, and not entirely by way of a joke, that the eventual heir of all the ages in Africa will be the Watch Tower.

This latter phenomenon, perhaps the most widely spread politico-religious movement at the present time, is linked, as are so many, with a source in America, in this case Judge Rutherford, the New York founder of *Jehovah's Witnesses*, whose English disciples are to be seen any week-end selling leaflets from cloth knapsacks on the drab side-walks of any English provincial town. They too, like the Africans, want to feel relevant, to kick against Authority and the great ones of this world. The main focus in Africa was originally the copper-belt in Northern Rhodesia, where the sect was banned just before the war. Needless to say it continued to win proselytes, moving along the railway into the Congo, where in due time it became the most vigorous of the secret societies, culminating in riots whose leaders are still in the Belgian detention camps set up for *rélegués* in distant forests. This *Kitawala* movement, whose adherents demonstrated with white vestments and crosses outside district *bomas*, was linked in an undefined way with *Kibangism*, whose founder, Simon Kibangu, died last year after thirty years of *rélégation*. It broke out again in 1944 in outlying villages, and was put down so severely that two Belgian officers were sent to prison for their excessive zeal. Despite this, three new sects were reported in the last year: *Munkukusa*, which has spread from French Africa, with preachers declaring that the European has stolen the *élan vitale* of Africa, *Nzambi xa Jonas*, and *Vanda*, all hierarchial and all banned. These movements are all either derived from Protestantism or spread among *déracinés*. There seem to be fewer movements of this nature in the Catholic world, perhaps because of the superior symbolism of Catholicism, its less active education, and its superior psychology, which does not run so often head-on against the main stumbling block of Protestant Africa, the plurality of wives. (It is said that the Catholic missionary goes to his work hating the African and learns to love him, while the love of the Protestant, with his

frequent furloughs, often turns rancid.) Nevertheless, several of the Congolese movements may have a Catholic origin, while the Spaniards in Rio Muni have an astonishing cult, *Mbueti*, which transfers the entire Christian myth into local terms, with *Ntie* (Adam), *Mienta* (Eve), rebel angels, paradise, Mary and Jesus.

The Spaniards also have a cult whose fetish is *Digol*, a name which appears in Europe as De Gaulle, no doubt the symbol, there, of liberation. And in fact the significant development of the last ten years, in the quickening phase of African *reintegration or reaction*, is the abandonment of Christian models, while to some extent preserving Christian modes. For example, in Nigeria there is the phenomenon of the National Church, which has a *tabernacle at Aba*. Here pastors read the Lesson from Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's political testament (which is written incidentally in chapter and verse) and they sing as the main hymn the poem he wrote on his fortieth birthday, *My Life has been a Joy to Me*. The most elaborate description of such an eclectic cult that has come to hand is a study of *Dini ya Msambwa*, by the Bishop of the Upper Nile in a recent *Uganda Journal*. This sect has developed in Western Kenya, where the tension is inevitably greatest, owing to the presence of white settlement. As always in a materialist civilization like our own, the prophets are generally treated as quite mad, and are, more often than not, locked up, as was Elijah Masinde, the founder of the *Dini ya Msambwa*, the cult of the spirits of the dead. Like nearly all similar churches in Africa, it was launched after its founder had fallen foul of the local mission over a plurality of wives. In this case it was the Friends Mission in Kitosh country around Mount Elgon, and the date was 1935. Nothing much happened before 1947. In that year, Elijah was greeted by his John the Baptist, one Donisio, an excommunicated Catholic, who recognized and hailed him as one seen with medals in a vision of Christ. (Elijah Masinde had won his medals in an inter-territorial soccer match against Uganda for the Gossage Cup in 1930.) The movement's main tenets are plural wives, the levirate (inheritance of a brother's wife), certain taboos, the wearing of beards and turbans with a cross on the *kanzu* (robe), and the expulsion of Europeans. In the following year they attempted to install regalia in the sacred Lake Saiyuni (Sion) on Mount Elgon, where they had baptized many neophytes, and there was a riot and firing. The year after that, the primitive Suk were stirred up by a disciple called Lucas Kipkech. Only last summer, police from Kenya and Uganda were combing the fastnesses of Elgon for members of the band.

The *Dini ya Msambwa* were banned in 1949 with other similar movements, the *Dini ya Jesu Cristo* and the *Dini wa Roho, Dreamer*. There followed a ban on the Kipsigis Central Association, which had set up a series of cells, the Kikuyu Central Association, and *Mau Mau*. This is the movement

about which so much pother is being made at the moment. Its main significance, within the total African picture, is that it represents a complete turning away from Europe, under the almost certain influence of a disciple of the same Bronislaw Malinowski, the Kikuyu Jomo Kenyatta. It was first reported the year he arrived in the colony, after some fifteen years of exile, and it corresponds almost word for word with the dedication of the book he published in 1938, *Facing Mount Kenya.*

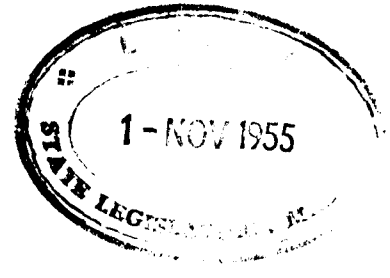
To Moigoi and Wamboi and all the dispossessed youth of Africa: for perpetuation of communion with ancestral spirits through the fight for African Freedom, and in the firm belief that the dead, the living, and the unborn will unite to rebuild the destroyed shrines.

By 1949 the Government was aware of a series of inchoate cells throughout Kipsigis and particularly Kikuyu country, both highly political tribes, which had formed associations, the Kikuyu as early as 1922 through the Minister Jesse Kariuki (later the first accused of Mau Mau) with a programme that included law courts and schools. From October 1950, and probably earlier, anyone who read the *East African Standard* with any attention would find references to Mau Mau almost every month. After a long record of resistance to cattle inoculation and soil erosion works, it came out into the open early last year in the South Nyeri district, burning the buildings and granaries of missionaries and settlers. Despite all that has been written about it and its oath, it is still not clear what the name is derived from, whether from an inversion of the Kikuyu *uma* (*get out*), or a gobbling sound, or *mau*, the Kikuyu stem for strength, or from some resemblance to the initials of African Union. For our purpose, it is the latest and best publicized of anti-European political-religious movements.

It may be useful to place these activities within a comprehensible world picture. In the first place, how do *Mau Mau* and the others link with the *deep rear* of the cold war? There seems no evidence so far of Russian intervention, beyond speculations about the famous staff of the Soviet Embassy at Addis Ababa, whose size has been many times magnified. It is true that two or three years ago some zealous Belgian security officers turned in a circumstantial account of Russian ships picking up witch-doctors off the Congo, for indoctrination in Moscow. What is far more important for us to realize is that the witch doctors and the Communists have one thing in common: they are both, as it were, using magic against the inhuman machinery of the industrialized West. They both represent the reaction of peasant peoples to the machine. That both their ideologies ultimately issue into something far worse than the levelling, suburban type of mind of the typical Western product is neither here nor there. If this is true, we have to reconsider more than certain aspects of security policy. Immediately,

there is the really deplorable ignorance of African facts, and the misunderstanding of such facts as we have, by people who have learned to despise the religious impulse, not finding it necessary in their own lives. The appeal to Africa made by Governments at home and abroad is always in the dry tones of income-tax inspectors. (Sir Philip Mitchell, the late Governor of Kenya, was one of the few who tried to escape this rule, but the habits of a lifetime were too much against him.) For purposes of government, the religious factor should play a far greater, indeed a preponderating rôle, not as an opiate of the people, but as their enlivener.

But this goes far beyond the colonial sphere, since the expatriate government is but the reflection of attitudes at home. The essential thing for a system to last is that it be organized around stable human emotions. That is not true of our civilization today, whose main drive is material, economic, the struggle for existence. Such a system is bound to fail, since it does not make allowances for the whole complex of human emotions, awe, the symbols of the world around and behind us, the family life. These are wide and unsettling vistas, but they derive directly from a survey, however short, of the African religious movements, whose latest and most savage, but certainly not the last example, is *Mau Mau.*



WHY WAS SLANSKY HANGED?

Richard Lowenthal

Bonn Correspondent of the *Observer*

In the Soviet sphere, show trials are the continuation of top-level discussions by more effective means. They are not the procedure by which an opposition within the inner councils of the Communist Party is defeated, but the recognized form in which the prevailing faction announces its final victory to the rank and file; they constitute an act of political *ex post* legislation, establishing which forms of political heresy must be considered criminal in the future. The political question raised by the gruesome comedy just enacted at Prague – as distinct from the human and philosophical problem – is therefore precisely this: Whose victory over whom has thus been announced, and what is the heresy now proscribed for all time?

Any attempt to answer the question in purely Czech terms is bound to fail, for the obvious reason that follow-up trials in Poland, Rumania and Eastern Germany have already been announced, and that some of the most important victims are long-standing members of the international Communist machine whose links with specifically Czech problems are somewhat casual. Nor would it be adequate to see the chief international significance of the trial in the proscription of Zionism, the State of Israel, and international Jewish organizations in general: this issue is clearly of some importance in Czechoslovakia, which was at one time the Russian-selected source of East European arms deliveries to Israel, and possibly in Rumania which permitted Jewish mass emigration until quite recently; but it has been deliberately played down in the otherwise extensive reporting of the trial in Poland, Hungary and Russia.

The real importance of the trial appears to be that it marks the transition from the extermination of potential 'Titoists', i.e. of would-be rebels against the subordination of the satellite States to Russia, to the liquidation of a faction of the international Communist machine, with the probable aim of isolating, compromising and finally liquidating the Russian backers of that faction.

The transition can be followed by studying the time-sequence of demotions and arrests, and comparing the personal record of the victims. By the end of 1949, three of the leaders of 'national-Communist' groups – Laszlo Rajk in Hungary, Kochi Dsodse in Albania, and Traicho Kostov in

Bulgaria – had been hanged; Wladyslaw Gomulka in Poland had been deposed and arrested. The one remaining group of this type, and possibly the most strongly entrenched one, was a clique of Slovak Communists, comprising several Ministers in the Slovak sub-government and the Party's outstanding intellectual leaders. The chiefs of this group – Husak, Novomesky, Okalis, etc. – have not yet been tried, but they were named during the Slansky trial and Novomesky appeared as a witness. The former Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Vlado Clementis, himself a Slovak and a man of known independence of outlook, had links with this group; Okalis was his brother-in-law. In the spring of 1950, Clementis was deposed, and by May the hold of the Slovak group on Government and Party had been broken in a bitter and open political struggle and its leaders arrested. Clementis's own arrest in February 1951 was the belated last act of what may be called the 'Titoist purge.'

Meanwhile, however, the first act of the new play had already started. In November 1950, the Brno regional secretary of the Party, Otto Sling-Schlesinger, was arrested, shortly followed by his friend Maria Svermova, the Assistant General Secretary of the Party. Sling, a medical doctor, had joined the Russian secret service during the Spanish civil war, when he worked in Paris and Spain as organizer of a medical aid committee which acted as a cover for Russian activities. He managed to reach Russia via France and Britain during the war, and was assigned to organize the medical services of the Czech Legion. That job, too, did not take him far from machine politics, for on his return he was selected by Slansky for a high Party post. Svermova, too, the widow of the Politburo member Jan Sverma, who was killed in the 1944 Slovak rising – a rising to which he and Slansky were sent from Russia – had spent the war years in the Soviet Union. We find the same Spanish or Russian background with all the other victims of winter 1950 and summer 1951: Colonel Pavel of the Security forces, formerly of the International Brigade and linked to the intelligence department of the Soviet Army; General Rejcin, Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of Military Intelligence, who made his entire military career in the Soviet Army and was appointed to his Prague post on the understanding that he would regularly report to the Russians on every detail of the Czech Army organization; Army personnel chief Kopold, a son-in-law of Svermova and equally Russian-trained. Finally there was Artur London-Gerard, who had not only worked outside Czechoslovakia, but outside the Czech Communist Party as a Comintern functionary since 1936: in Spain, in the French resistance and finally in Switzerland, from where he transmitted funds for the Communist post-war strikes in France – funds which, it is believed, were partly raised by some of the very same Czech trade deals with the West for which some

minor lights were now sentenced as 'saboteurs', and partly by the Rumanian Government's skill in tracing the hidden Swiss funds of Rumanian capitalists and blackmailing them into handing them over to Communist agents. (That operation may yet be 'revealed', in the forthcoming trial of Vasile Luca and Ana Pauker, as a factional device of these 'conspirators' for financing the deviationism of André Marty and Charles Tillon in France!) Only after the Communists seized power in Czechoslovakia, in February 1948, did London return as personnel chief of the Foreign Ministry – not in order to assist Clementis, as the Prague prosecution now maintains, but in order to keep an eye on him.

In contrast to the Slovak group, all the top people of this newly defeated faction are thus men without national roots and with many years of service in Russia's international machine. The prosecution obliquely recognized this fact by describing Slansky, Geminder and London as 'Trotskyites'. The case of Bedrich Geminder, whose obvious non-Czech origin and mysterious identity puzzled so many visitors, is the most characteristic: he was a Viennese with the real name of Fritz Glaubauf who had worked in the Communist Youth International and the Comintern since the early twenties; but up to the war his only connection with Czechoslovakia was that he was arrested there in 1936 during a visit made on behalf of the Comintern's West European Bureau, then in Copenhagen, and sentenced as a Russian spy! The Russians got him out before the Germans came in, and all through the war this 'Trotskyite' was sitting in the headquarters of the Comintern and its successor institute which coordinated Russian propaganda to occupied Europe, as one of the closest and most trusted assistants of Dimitrov and Manuilsky. As for Slansky himself, he joined the international Communist élite during his stay at the 'Lenin School' from 1930 to 1932, and spent the war years in Moscow as a member of the Czech Communist Politbureau; there he enjoyed close relations with the political department of the Soviet Army and its mouthpiece, the Soviet Information Bureau under Losovsky. Through them he was assigned in 1943 to prepare plans for the post-war expulsion of national minorities from Eastern and Central Europe; through them, he was also attached to the Ukrainian partisan headquarters and there trained for his role in the Slovak rising. His fall, like that of Luca and Ana Pauker in Rumania and of André Marty in France, is incomprehensible except as a step in the overthrow of some Russian faction with which they all were linked.

The defeated Russian and international faction to which Slansky belonged is now generally assumed to have been that of the 'Zhdanovites' – the followers of the late Andrej Zhdanov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party under Stalin and founder of the Cominform.

At the height of his power, in 1947, Zhdanov openly encouraged an aggressive policy in Europe, based on the assumption that the 'camp of the imperialists' was so severely shaken by the war and its aftermath that it could no longer summon the strength to resist. Inside Russia, the economic theory for this 'leftist' policy was developed by Vosnessensky, then still a member of the Politburo, in a book claiming that the combined potential of the 'Peoples Democracies' and Russia was already superior to the strength of the imperialist camp; the book was later withdrawn and Vosnessensky dropped from all visible functions without explanation. In Europe, Tito's Yugoslavia, then the most thoroughly dictatorial as well as the most aggressive of the 'People's Democracies', was upheld as a model to the others and made the original seat of the Cominform, and Zhdanov even backed the Yugoslav leaders in their criticism of the war and post-war policy of the French and Italian Communists as insufficiently revolutionary – a criticism which was eagerly echoed in France by André Marty. There is evidence that at the same time Slansky – the leading Czech delegate at the first Cominform conference – directed a closely similar criticism against the 'coalition politics' of Gottwald, and that the Prague coup of February 1948 was the fruit of a combination of Slansky's initiative and Russian pressure.

By that time, however, the decline of Zhdanovism had already begun: Stalin had turned against Tito and Dimitrov on the question of the Balkan federation, fearing that Belgrade was becoming too strong a rival centre of attraction to the satellites. The open conflict with Tito and the excommunication of the Yugoslav Party was quickly followed by the death of Zhdanov, by the removal of large numbers of his appointees inside Russia, and by the liquidation of 'potential Titos' in various satellite countries. The new victims of the present wave are, on this reading, Communist leaders who, without choosing the Titoist way of national independence, tried to continue on the road of 'Zhdanovite' leftism at a time when Soviet strategy was already changing.

Though the managers of the Prague trial have deliberately confused the issue by charging Slansky and his friends with sticking too long to a coalition with other parties – the policy in fact pursued by the triumphant Gottwald – an indirect confirmation of the 'leftist' origin of the group is afforded by the use of the term 'Trotskyite'. Moreover, the trial has yielded a few glimpses of the backstage reality which indicate the way in which two more questions may eventually be answered: the question of the historical origin of the 'Zhdanovite' group, and the question of those Russian protectors of the group who survived Zhdanov's death and delayed its liquidation for several years – the people who may be ultimately attained if the trials lead back into Russia itself.

In the first place, the trial has underlined the role played in the defeated faction by former members of Russia's international control group in the Spanish civil war. The official version is that ex-fighters of the International Brigades were demoralized during their subsequent internment in French camps and then hired by the secret services of the 'imperialists'; the truth is that the people in question were working already in Spain under the direction of the Red Army's intelligence department and the N K V D respectively, and owe their subsequent prominent role to this very fact. Now the task of this international team of political commissars must have been extremely distasteful to many of them, because one important part of it was the maintenance of the legal continuity of the Spanish Republic and the prevention of thoroughgoing revolutionary measures in the interest of Russian diplomacy, which was then still striving to gain the confidence of the Western powers. They consoled themselves with the hope that in a future major clash they would be free to pursue a revolutionary policy with Russian support; and some of them – including Tito, who had held a responsible post in the selection and transport of volunteers for Spain – seem to have had a later opportunity to discuss the lessons of Spain with Russian experts in partisan warfare. At any rate, both Tito's conduct of the partisan campaign in Yugoslavia and his criticism of the tactics pursued by the French Communists show evidence of a critical political and military study of the Spanish experience. Incidentally, it was in assisting the escape from France of some members of this 'Spanish aristocracy' of international Communism that the American agent Noel Field, then working in Switzerland in close contact with a group of Red Army intelligence agents, rendered his most signal service to the Soviet cause and acquired the personal contacts which have made him a central figure in the present chain of trials.

During the war, when some of the Communist leaders who had gone through this development tried to act on their conviction and to evolve revolutionary partisan tactics, they found – as Tito's published radio exchanges with the Russians show – that they were once again called upon to avoid revolutionary measures and to conduct resistance to the Germans in a framework of national unity. But they also found that with a little diplomacy and firmness they could defy these instructions without risking open disavowal by Russia. This was not only the experience of Tito, but up to a point also of Tillon in Southern France. Somebody in Russia must have protected them, and it is not unlikely that they may have enjoyed the support of the political spokesmen of the Red Army, on the grounds that at any rate they were fighting and tying down German forces. The political administration of the Army was at that time in the

hands of Shcherbakov, a rising and energetic Politburo member who died in 1944, and was more powerful than at any later or previous time since the liquidation of Marshal Tukhachevsky and his political chief, Gamarnik, in 1937. Under the pressure of war, the Army's political administration somewhat changed its function and became less of an instrument for supervising the officers and more of a spokesman of military requirements inside the Party hierarchy. One striking expression of this increased political influence was that the co-ordination of all foreign propaganda by the Soviet Information Bureau came under Shcherbakov's responsibility. Under him, the direct head of the Information Bureau was Losovsky, the direct wartime superior of Slansky and Ana Pauker.

The detailed organizational relations between the various parts of the Russian State machine involved in this development – the Army's political administration, the Army intelligence department, the foreign department of the Ministry of State Security, the remnants of the Comintern – are still impenetrable to the outsider. What seems clear is that somewhere in this thicket a group of key people, both Russian and non-Russian, gave deliberate support to the left wing of international Communism during the war and took part in the formation of the Zhdanovite conception after the war. It is in this circle, too, that the sources of the protection afforded to some leading international Zhdanovites for years after Zhdanov's death must be sought.

If the reports are true that for some time after Zhdanov's death Lavrentij Beria fought a stubborn rearguard action against the rising power of Malenkov, the ultimate protecting hand may have been that of Beria himself, now reluctantly withdrawn from one after the other of his former protégés. In the reconstructed Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Beria's position seems somewhat weakened by the small number of his subordinates who appear in the lists. What is certain is that Shcherbakov has never found a successor of equal political weight, and that both Losovsky and Manuilsky – the Russian chief of the Comintern during the Dimitrov period – have disappeared from public view since 1951 and have not been re-elected to the Central Committee. Considering the fate of their former subordinates, it would only be plain Soviet logic if all the vanished men of this period, including the mysterious Noel Field himself, would yet make their final bow to world history on the stage of a Russian monster trial. But that will not happen until the struggle for the succession in Russia has been decided with the same degree of finality as the struggle for the control of the outposts.

STEVENSON AND THE AMERICAN LIBERAL DILEMMA

Arthur Schlesinger Jr
Department of History, Harvard University

The author was one of Governor Stevenson's principal advisers during the recent Presidential campaign.

Rarely has any American politician made so profound an impression on so many people in so short a time as Adlai Stevenson. And – to paraphrase his own epigram about Senator Taft's losing the nomination but winning the nominee – never in American history has any presidential candidate succeeded so remarkably in losing the election and winning the electorate. Governor Stevenson not only lost the election; he even ran behind his party. But his stature has been in no way diminished by defeat. Only two men have polled more votes in the nation's history: Franklin Roosevelt in 1940 and Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. The more than 100,000 letters which poured into Springfield after the election – many of them from Republicans with a bad conscience – make clear the extent to which even those who voted against him want to look to him for national leadership in the years to come. His campaign achieved everything except victory.

The purpose of a presidential campaign is to display the character of the candidate. No one can act a role through all the agony and fatigue of a campaign, all the gruelling months of impossible hours, incessant speeches and implacable public appearances. The true lineaments are bound to slip through, no matter how skilled the advance men, how resourceful the public relations specialists, how ingenious the ghost-writers. Indeed, the secret is to design a campaign which will suit the style of the candidate and thus best release his strength and personality. You cannot superimpose a synthetic new style on an old personality; the attempt to do this, one sensed, caused the bad moments in the Eisenhower campaign. The General was only saved by the fact that nothing he did in three months of campaigning quite succeeded in defacing the image cherished for so many years by the American people.

Governor Stevenson's campaign was as much his own as any presidential campaign can ever be in this age of mass production, mass consumption and mass communications. He made the basic decisions, chose the key people and, to an astonishing degree, even wrote and rewrote his own

speeches. He could have done no other without constraining or distorting his personality – and this, he believed, would be the surest road to defeat. It was typical of Stevenson that he had intended from the start, if elected, to visit Korea and the Far East. It took no ghostwriter to give him the idea. But he would not have dreamed of publicizing the trip as providing hope for a solution. He would not cash in on people's anxieties. His Calvinistic attitude toward the lures and wiles of politics often perplexed and exasperated his staff; but, in the end, they came to feel that the integrity of his personality was his most powerful weapon.

Stevenson knew what he was like and recoiled from giving the public any false impressions. He refused to make promises when he did not really believe there was a good chance of delivery. He disliked catering to special groups by taking the required position on the issues that were dear to them. He flinched from the clichés of liberal oratory. He refused, above all, to excite false hopes about easy solutions – whether the hopes of businessmen seeking vast tax reductions, of Negroes seeking equal rights, or of the American people seeking a quick end to the tragic war in Korea. He did this all with a wit and a capacity for hard, clean political in-fighting which rescued the campaign from any hint of sanctimoniousness and priggishness. And the image of the man came through. No candidate for a long time has evoked such passion or commitment from his followers – or such respect from his opponents.

And yet he lost. In the first stunned moments after the election, many people agreed with Elmer Davis's gloomy remark that it might be many years before another man would run for President on the basis of talking sense. Cynical parodies of the famous phrases from the acceptance address were to be heard among Stevenson supporters: 'In 1956, let's talk nonsense to the American people', or 'Next time better we win the election than not mislead the people.' But, on more sober consideration, it seems hard to believe that he lost because of the nature of his campaign. The tides were running too deep against the Democrats for any candidate – even Adlai Stevenson – to reverse them. The 'time for a change' sentiment had swelled to a flood; and it had found persuasive embodiment in a number of issues – in corruption, in the handling of the problem of domestic Communism, above all in the endless stalemate of Korea. Nor could a man who, six months earlier, might have walked unnoticed and unidentified down the main street of almost any major city of the country, hope to overtake a man who for ten years had been a household hero.

Still, to speak of 'time for a change' and of the Eisenhower myth advances the analysis only a little. Why did the Roosevelt coalition break up in 1952? And what were the implications of its dissolution for the Democratic party and for American progressivism?

Essentially, the New Deal and the Fair Deal were the victims of success. They arose in response to bitter national needs; and they made the fatal mistake – in politics – of meeting those needs. As a consequence, their function began to disappear. Once the New Deal reforms had become so much a part of the landscape that even the Republicans would be hard put to dislodge them, it was increasingly difficult to treat them as live political issues. Yet the liberal leaders realized this all too rarely, and consequently expanded their energy in summoning the American people to ancient crusades, blowing the bugle for forgotten wars.

In detail after detail, the process of defeat through success becomes visible. The farm support programme made the farmer prosperous – and hence, in the end, conservative. The stock exchange and securities legislation created a tame and housebroken Wall Street. The banking legislation restored faith in bankers. The social security programme divested the city machines of the social function which had established them in the community – that of taking care of people, providing them with jobs and doctors and Christmas baskets. Above all, the years of prosperity and full employment, with the fantastic increase in personal savings, gave millions of people new economic and social status and enabled them to become respectable. As part of the process, they moved out of the cities into the suburbs, abandoned tenements for bungalows, bought automobiles, and became Republicans. The Republican party was not only the 'respectable' party; it also seemed to them the party of native American stock, as they knew the Democrats to be the party of the immigrants. As they left their immigrant past behind them in the crowded cities, so they tended to leave behind their Democratic registration. There were not just 'lace-curtain' Irish; there were also 'lace-curtain' Italians, 'lace-curtain' Jews, 'lace-curtain' East Europeans. The Democrats lost many more Catholic votes, I would suspect, from prosperity than from McCarthy. Having been enabled by Democratic administrations to live like Republicans, the new suburbanites ended up by voting like Republicans.

Across the country, in one crucial area after another, the revolt of the suburbs was the key to Democratic defeat. The tactics and techniques of the city machine had little effect in the Buick belt, or even in the Chevrolet belt; in too many cases, in addition, the city machines had grown too fat and complacent even to deliver the city votes. In many localities Volunteers for Stevenson and Americans for Democratic Action made valiant – and often successful – attempts to cope with the suburbs. But their activity was too impromptu, too disorganized, and too little respected by the professional politicians.

As Robert Tufts has pointed out, the Democratic party cannot hope to win again until it solves the problem of suburbia. And intimately

associated with this problem is that of the younger voter. Neither problem could be solved by reaffirming the programme or reiterating the issues which were vital in the thirties. Most people in the Stevenson camp – whether professionals or amateurs – were convinced that the most powerful Democratic issue was prosperity and depression. And, indeed, it was a powerful issue – for those who still had vivid memories of the depression. But a man who was twenty years old in 1932 was forty last November. And the first voters last November were born in 1931, were ten years old at Pearl Harbour and only fourteen years old when the war ended. For a whole new voting generation, the talk of depression was meaningless. They could hardly conceive a world without full employment, without social security, without price supports, without a strong labour movement; this was the furniture of their lives, as little subject in their minds to alteration as the post office system or the graduated income tax. For the new voting generation, 'Don't Let Them Take It Away' was an irrelevance. To say 'You never had it so good' to young men and women who never had it any other way seemed, in a sense, a betrayal of the American promise; they wanted to have it better. The talk about prosperity and depression meant homes and hunger and bitter memories to the old; to the young, it was campaign rhetoric. And so the young tended to turn to the party which held out glittering possibilities of tax reduction and the abolition of government controls, new wealth and new business opportunities. The theory speaks of a revolution devouring its children. But in this case the children devoured the revolution.

The picture has been much oversimplified, of course. Many suburbanites, many young men and women (perhaps most) voted for Stevenson. But the Democrats lost a margin of votes which they have been able to count on for twenty years. The old appeals failed. A liberal epoch had come to an end. The Roosevelt Revolution was now complete. We are all New Dealers to-day – even the new Republican Administration.

The irony of all this lies in the fact that the one American liberal who perceived this with startling clarity all the way along was the defeated candidate for President. From the start, Adlai Stevenson felt that the orthodox liberal dogmas had lost their force; that the battle-cries of yesteryear were the tired clichés of 1952. He said often in his earlier speeches that he did not believe in running against Herbert Hoover. As the campaign wore on, he yielded to the importunities of his staff and began to hark back with increasing frequency to the misery of the Great Depression. A measure of this was necessary and right, of course. But it was not the irresistible theme that most of us around Stevenson imagined it to be. In retrospect, he now seems everlastingly correct in his conviction that we had to have something fresher and better than this.

The New Deal represented a complex of policies designed to pull the American nation out of the collapse and demoralization of depression. It was addressed to the economic problem of a grinding deflation and to the social need of strengthening the countervailing power (to borrow J. K. Galbraith's useful phrase) of the farmers, workers and intellectuals as against the business community. The Fair Deal represented a gallant attempt to adapt the New Deal policies to the post-war climate. But the post-war economic threat was no longer deflation; it was inflation; and for this the remedies of Keynesianism could not be applied, both because of the overriding necessities of the cold war and because of the obsession of conservative Congressmen with tax reduction. And in the eyes of perhaps a majority of Americans (if not of this writer) the balance of power had been effectively redressed against the business community. The only fresh impulse of energy in the Fair Deal period came when the Taft-Hartley Act seemed to threaten the existence of the labour movement, and when President Truman's brave fight for civil rights brought a new political life to the minorities, especially to the Negroes.

Moreover, in its declining years the liberal Administration faced a new problem – the problem of political morals. Here and there, the Democratic party began to adopt the formula of the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana, which has retained power for nearly thirty years south of the border by an adroit combination of progressivism in programme and corruption in administration. The formula was domesticated and nationalized perhaps by Robert Hannegan. As Collector of Internal Revenue, Hannegan opened the gates to the corruption which would bear such dreadful fruit a few years later; yet he also, as a member of President Truman's Cabinet, fought hard and sincerely for progressive measures. In a similar way, the city machines suddenly became 'liberal' – a fact widely heralded as a new sense of civic responsibility, but in most cases only providing a more attractive cloak for the same old fraud and thievery. The classic example of the combination of progressivism and corruption was the city of New York under the mayoralty of William O'Dwyer. It was only proper that Mr O'Dwyer should have ended up as Ambassador to Mexico – and no surprise that he should have been such a success.

Governor Stevenson understood this state of affairs more clearly than anyone else. He saw that the liberal programme had bogged down in the ruts of old issues and old debates; and he knew that the integrity of liberal purposes was threatened by complaisance in face of corruption. It was his intention to refreshen the liberal philosophy and to cleanse the liberal performance. He wanted, above all, to unblock the log-jams which had so long prevented action in such fields as civil rights, labour relations and national security. He wanted to abolish the liberal banalities and move

beyond the liberal dogmas. He was more concerned with achieving concrete human results than with maintaining purity of doctrine. People sometimes asked whether he was a New Dealer. The question was as relevant as it would have been to ask Roosevelt in 1933 whether he was an apostle of Wilson's New Freedom. In the days of the New Deal, Stevenson was a New Dealer, as Roosevelt was a Wilsonian in the days of Wilson. But this was another and a different day. It was not only necessary in the new day to supply new answers; it was necessary to ask new questions. No one, of course, would have appreciated more than Wilson or Roosevelt that the programmes of one generation do not necessarily meet the problems of the next.

The possibilities of a new liberalism can be clearly shown in the case of Philadelphia. President Truman carried the city in 1948 by a margin of 7,000. Governor Stevenson carried it this time by almost 170,000. What happened in Philadelphia was that a new Democratic reform administration had come to power and shown the Democratic party to be clean, resourceful and vigorous. It had enlisted the enthusiasm and support of the young. It had made great strides in solving the problem of suburbia. Its success in 1952 made clear that the Democrats had not lost the talent for victory. As the Philadelphia story is repeated, it will signify the rejuvenation of the Democratic party from the roots up. And, as this rejuvenation takes place, it will give new strength and support to Stevenson in his awkward and precarious role as 'titular' leader of the party. For the 1952 election indicated that American progressivism cannot live any longer off the brilliance and fertility of the New Deal, and that the old ideas and energies are losing their force. Only the strength and vitality which will come from a willingness to respond directly to the imperatives of the 1950's can bring salvation and regeneration.

The American progressive movement is fortunate that at this moment its leader is the man who has best understood the liberal dilemma. The clichés of the right and of the left are largely irrelevant to our present needs. Because Stevenson understands the hard job of rethinking and reformulation which lies ahead, he represents perhaps the most creative force in American politics to-day; he is the voice of the post-Roosevelt epoch. For it is only as it expresses the possibilities of the future – and not as it revives the memories of the past – that progressivism can once again recover its central place in American life.

PROPAGANDA AND THE AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL

William J. Newman

The author, an assistant professor of government at Boston University, is now lecturing at Rennes.

Europeans can rest assured. America is not the barbaric Rome which Hollywood and the Communists had led us to believe. In the words of a new magazine* now inundating Europe, America too has 'poets and novelists, painters and musicians, thinkers and scholars, critics and architects who have gifts of the first order. . . .' This solemn discovery is being communicated to Europeans in four languages, with possibly more to follow, at a subsidized price, and in a format designed to catch the most jaundiced eye. Financed by the Ford Foundation which is dedicated to works of philanthropy as well as education (under which heading does this project come?), *Perspectives* is based on the proposition that culture in America is not sterile, but, on the contrary, very much alive and of value to the rest of the world – if it would only listen. With equal solemnity we salute this proud yet modest claim. Marshall Aid has gone, but its evangelical spirit moves on; Paul Hoffmann, late director of the European Co-operation Administration and now confidant of President-elect Eisenhower, is also head of the Ford Foundation. One may perhaps be excused if one is not quite so overawed as to accept the assurance of the editor that his magazine is 'free of propaganda. . . .'

In the fullness of her power America is not disposed to admit inferiority, even though she may not always claim superiority, in any sphere of life. If the symbol of the assembly line pleases as a token of her material strength, she must also insist on the possession of more subtle qualities. Cultural propaganda is an integral part of Great Power status, and a realization of one's country's responsibility for world freedom, as the phrase goes, infects even the intellectual with a consciousness of the need for assertion. It is not necessarily a crude assertion; but it is perceptible. At one and the same time the indigenous values and the world significance of American culture are insisted upon. Other nations, especially the British, have indulged in such test-matches of learning and art; there is no reason why America should not.

* *Perspectives*, number one, autumn, 1952; published quarterly by Hamish Hamilton, London, for Intercultural Publications Inc., New York. 2*s*. 6*d*.

Perspectives is composed of reprints of recent American writing on art, music, history and philosophy, as well as poetry and short stories. One cannot quarrel with the quality of these snippets of culture. Meyer Schapiro on Van Gogh, Arthur Berger on Copland, William Carlos Williams on Cortez, and Jacques Barzun on philosophy, as well as the poetry of Marianne Moore, indicate the wide sweep of the drag-net employed by the advisory editors – some fifty-two of the best names. It has range; it has intelligence, and it has a terrifying earnestness. *Perspectives* is informed throughout with high and noble purpose; it is all very much like a museum, and one must confess to the slight feeling of stuffiness which sometimes comes over one in a museum. Perhaps the greatest threat to Europe lies not in the military power of America or in the contagious quality of its materialism, but in the rather glassy-eyed seriousness of its intellectuals. The same devoted care that goes into the making of a Ford has been spent on this production. One wishes that some of the humour which persists in America, despite professors of writing, could have been included in this first issue. Perhaps that is a wayward thought. At any rate *Perspectives* has value – the value of any compendium.

This same dogged endeavour is evident in its stated purpose; 'appreciation of the arts can act as a solvent for ideological differences of opinion.' The intellectual here has been given the weighty task of acting as a kind of neutralizing agency which will level out political barriers while remaining above the battle. But is this not to misunderstand the intellectual's source of political influence? The intellectual in a free society is seldom a hired propagandist; but his role as a creator of social myths – the peak of propaganda perfection – is a crucial one. The notion that ideological differences can be resolved by avoiding the subject – which is politics – is indeed curious. It may or may not be true – one is inclined to doubt it – but more significantly it represents a far different attitude from that which the American intellectual held earlier, say under the New Deal. Such a concept in truth indicates some of the political difficulties of the American intellectual in his home environment to-day. The self-confident façade of *Perspectives* is misleading; it is all very well in front of the European, but self-confidence has hardly been the hallmark of the American intellectual since 1945. His position and political authority have ebbed as the myths he created for society and himself have disintegrated. The American intellectual, more than most, resents and dislikes propaganda; he is too wise and knows too much concerning its operation. Yet he is not unconcerned with its use. His claim for political prestige – or more plainly, political power – like that of any other section of the community must rest on his ability to evolve a vivid myth which will cause men to follow his leadership. To say that the manipulation of opinion is not the work of

those who seek new frontiers of thought is to give the intellectual too high a rank; what other social function does he have?

Despite their contempt for propaganda, American intellectuals have not been above such activities. The New Deal was perhaps their greatest opportunity for the making of political myths. With few exceptions they gave united support to the Roosevelt administrations, and by their pens and their eager tongues created the myth of Jeffersonian democracy reborn. The enemy was big business; the hero the worker: a simple equation which furnished material for righteous indignation. It was not the professional politicians or the paid propagandists who poured out wholesale the myths of the era. They were left far behind in the articulate, babbling enthusiasm of writers, painters and scholars for the discovery of eternal political truths. Perhaps the climax of this process came in Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s book, *The Age of Jackson*, where a smiling F.D.R. merges into the sour visage of a general now become an earlier spokesman of the urban masses and who could therefore claim to be the spiritual father of the New Deal. Could hero-worship do more? The philosophy of agrarian democracy was applied to a centralized bureaucracy, and the personal trauma of a James Farrell was seen to have immense social significance. Majority rule versus minority rights was the centre of prolonged philosophical controversies in which dignified constitutional lawyers thought they were reproducing the atmosphere of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Labour unions became the symbol of a new collectivism. Political emotionalism was restored to America; history and life were divided into two parts, the good and the bad, the spirit and the flesh.

Much sound and fury; not all of it without value, but much of it without content. But let no one say that the American intellectual is not an effective propagandist; he bemused a generation. He created an integrated, coherent, and consistent philosophy and vision of politics – an ideology. That it was the work of intellectuals does not make it any the less true to say that it was propaganda; nor does it tarnish the fact that it was through this means that the intellectual became a leader of his nation. Commitment to a cause was amply repaid by high political status. For once the American intellectual was not kicking against the traces, but was being followed by a team eager to believe in his slogans of encouragement. His political sickness to-day lies precisely in his inability to create myths with meaning for American society. *Perspectives* gives some clues to his political impotence, for it reveals some of the divisions and dilemmas in his thought which prevent him from developing new attitudes concerning new problems. The impact of elections and investigations is enough to scatter the best of thoughts; but the internal condition of his own ideas is the heart of the matter.

'Rice', a short story by Henry Steiner in this issue of *Perspectives*, tells of the tragedy of power. The fulfilment of his duty by an American soldier involves the killing of an old man, a Korean, who only desired to protect his property by hoarding his rice. Power becomes an abomination; right and wrong cease to have meaning, and death is the only reality. One can have only sympathy with this view, but it must be recognized that the intellectual's own tragedy lies in a sharpening of insight which weakens his political strength; for political strength, crude as it is, involves judgment, and belief in the judgment, not neutrality. The intellectual as a propagandist can be effective only if he breaks through this dilemma in such a way as, say, Hemingway did in an earlier period of blood. It is not that the intellectual has developed a new consciousness of the tragedy of power; it is rather that his emphasis has shifted away from its social usefulness. The Hemingway exaltation in power is replaced by a question mark.

Power is tolerable only when decently clothed in a myth. At one time the Wilsonian liberal tradition provided such a cloak for the realities of international relations, but it has long since disintegrated under the blows of modern dictatorship. So far the intellectual has not discovered a myth sufficient to take its place. N A T O's ends he will praise, but when he contemplates the means to which it obligates himself and his country he has spasms of nervous doubt. If one intellectual is feverishly in favour of world organization, another still has strong streaks of isolationism left in him. Neither is at home in the post-war world. He can neither praise nor condemn the use of power in international relations; he can only stare and wonder what next – which is just what his fellow citizens are doing, although with less beating of the breast. This dilemma has even reached the atomic scientists whose *Bulletin* carries the famous cover showing a clock at five minutes to midnight (or has it been moved up a little now?). Each time the scientists invent a new and more destructive bomb they accompany its birth with a yet more frenzied statement imploring that it not be used. One can only admire the earnestness of their endeavour in both fields. But the clock illustrates perhaps not so much the dilemma of society as their own. Presumably on the day they press the last great button the magazine will show the clock at midnight; this will at least satisfy their sense of drama and neatness. The social scientist, too, reflects this quandary. He describes political power as the reality of international life, and then weakly hopes for a reasonable compromise between nations who, as his analysis has just demonstrated, cannot reasonably compromise. The dilemmas of power are old ones and are not confined to the American intellectual; but until they are resolved in his mind he has little to say to society. A new Locke, perhaps, is needed to create the ideologies within which national power can work.

But where is the triumphant liberalism which has become the recognizable characteristic of the American intellectual? Professor Barzun's contribution to *Perspectives* would have us eschew its ideals for a more humdrum but equally useful pragmatism. When he sings a hymn to the practical man in 'America's Romance with Practicality', he tries to make it the new democratic virtue, but only succeeds in showing how far back the intellectual has been driven from his earlier ideals of what is right and proper. Democracy, he tells us, 'should fight expediently for the survival of its . . . convictions.' But what convictions? Is America to-day struggling for Professor Barzun's good-natured pragmatism or Senator MacCarthy's bad-tempered anti-Communism? If the world was composed of Barzuns there would be no need for myths; but surely he is not so modest as to believe that? America, he points out correctly, is no more practical than any other nation, but does not this lead to the recognition that, no less than any other nation, it has need for a set of beliefs? Liberalism was once that belief, but the crisis of to-day is not the crisis for which it was reared. Increasingly driven back upon its contradiction between individualism and *étatisme*, its slogans either irrelevant or dully repetitive, and its opponents greedily picking its bones, it has lost its hold as a picture of life as it is and should be. It is not only the facts of international life that confuse it. What has it to say about the sins of business when sin is providing such a high standard of living? President Truman's threat a few years back to nationalize the steel industry was the deadest of duds. Nor does a demand for the rights of labour have much meaning in a situation where the issue is the rights of the rest of the nation. A Fair Deal government, offspring of the New Deal, became a strike-breaking agency of unsurpassed power. Social security and minimum wage laws have become administrative problems on which there is such a large measure of agreement that they have ceased to be political issues.

At one time the intellectual could dig deep into liberalism and come up with a nugget which would strengthen the confidence of the New Deal in itself. No more. Those who cling to it do as the shipwrecked man does to a raft – desperately, but without much idea of where it will take him. Others have abandoned it with much rhetorical flourish. Still others have lost their clear vision and find it reduced to a golden mist of abstractions. When Mr Thornton Wilder talks of world literature in *Perspectives*, he speaks bravely, but says little. He announces the advent here and now of a world literature – this in a magazine dedicated to the culture of one nation – and thereby provides a common spectacle: the American intellectual torn between his native roots and his good-hearted but vague wish for world integration. New Deal liberalism was cloudy enough, but at least it did not have the phantasmagoria of world culture to contend with; it therefore gained much in concreteness. The disappearance of this concreteness has made the intellectual in America a worrisome creature whose pessimism is only thinly covered with a layer of optimism. Mr Faulkner's 'I Decline to Accept the End of Man', reprinted here, indicates his growing concern lest the end of man occur. Such writings are not manifestoes; they are confessions of doubt. Marx did not proclaim that he would not accept the end of the working class; he put his effort into describing the glory of its future.

One may justly suspect that part of this dilemma of liberalism can be attributed to the increasing fear in the minds of the intellectuals that even if Hiss and Lattimore were not the hellish fiends claimed by excited Senators there is still cause for some uneasiness. Was liberalism-cum-socialism, or whatever amalgam it was that brought about such actions, in its hey-day incompatible with commonsense ideas of caution and loyalty? The tragedy of folly is not the tragedy of treason; but it causes men to pause. Liberalism is not discredited in the United States, nor have intellectuals taken flight from it – except for the more delicate ones. But the present-day defensiveness of liberalism is in sorry contrast to its youthful and optimistic aggressiveness in the 1930's and 1940's.

The fact that the American intellectual is not re-living his historic role of political propagandist is one indication of the divisions within his own mind and of his weakened position in his own land. Will a Republican Administration be the occasion for a new growth? Or will he counter with twenty-year-old slogans? Perhaps after an interregnum he will return with redoubled force. But to-day the dilemmas in his thought reflect the inadequacy of his old myths when they are face to face with new problems; it is this which has robbed him of his ability to create the ideas which could give him leadership. This situation is not peculiar to the American intellectual; the corroding of the Socialist myth in Britain, and the frantic efforts of Mr Bevan to shore it up, reflect similar stresses and strains. But the position of the intellectual in America has been traditionally a more exposed one, and he need not expect to be left unmolested. *Time* magazine, in a vicious attack on intellectuals, can now openly refer to them as 'the eggheads'. Such is the measure of their degradation.

The causes lie deep in American society although the results are plain. Having lost his sureness of touch, the intellectual can only peck and scratch at what annoys him in government policy. Dogma and its propagation are the tools and necessities of leadership; and leadership falls to those who can make the myths which society, and groups within society, require. If the intellectual cannot assume this function, then other less congenial groups will.

THE FRENCH REVIEWS

Olivier Todd

Editors of French reviews are always dreaming of reviving, with their own particular monthly, the range and vivacity of the old *Nouvelle Revue Française*, without ever being quite aware that it would be impossible to find in 1953, within the same periodical, writers as different as Malraux, Aragon and Drieu la Rochelle. Editors have also become the willing victims of the critical inflation which has been a characteristic of the French literary scene ever since 1947. Curiously enough, the so-called avant-garde reviews have, in one way or another, become branches of the more or less official learned institutions. Most of the articles which are to be found in *Les Cahiers du Sud*, *La Table Ronde*, *Dieu Vivant*, and elsewhere, are not so unlike some of the lectures delivered at the Collège de France, the Sorbonne or the Institut Catholique. They are serious, deadly thorough, often pretentiously naive and almost never entertaining. Though this may seem strange and shocking to the sophisticated, if one wants to be entertained, one must turn to the more solemn and old-fashioned reviews like *Hommes et Mondes* or *Le Mercure de France*. Unfortunately (entertainment then turns out to be absolutely vacuous) the editors of these reviews are confidently and, one hopes, happily living in 1905. Even a weakness for anecdotes and nineteenth-century gossip will soon be exhausted: the memoirs of generals, Russian princesses and Academicians tend to resemble one another, just as an article on 'The Transcendence of Words' somehow resembles one on 'Space in Kafka'.

Only an occasional piece of polemic will relieve this splendid dullness. In that vein, the year's event is what has now come to be called *l'Affaire* Sartre-Camus. This quarrel which flared up in the middle of 1952 had been latent for some time. Technically, it started with the May issue of Sartre's review, *Les Temps Modernes*. Francis Jeanson, one of the most brilliant of the younger French essayists, had given an incisive and slightly aggressive analysis of *L'Homme Révolté*, Albert Camus's latest book. He attacked what seemed to him nihilism, sentimentalism, romanticism, and a negation of humanism. Whereupon Camus wrote a 'letter to the editor of *Les Temps Modernes*' which appeared in the August issue of this review together with a reply by Sartre and a kind of postscript by Jeanson. The

whole performance is passionately interesting and extraordinarily lively, from an intellectual as well as from a literary point of view.

Camus, who, with *L'Homme Révolté*, had got himself into all sorts of politico-literary squabbles, and had become excessively touchy, is still pompous in a Bossuet-like fashion, but not without humour. Jeanson, having pointed out that the Right-wing Press had on the whole acclaimed *L'Homme Révolté*, Camus replies that

> one does not decide on the truth of an idea by first investigating whether it proceeds from the Left or the Right, and even less by referring to what use the Right wing or the Left wing propose to make of it. If that were the case, Descartes would be a Stalinist and Péguy would give his blessing to M. Pinay.

Camus concludes this heroic truism with a platitude which he knows is bound to exasperate the non-Communist Left, of which Sartre and Jeanson are important representatives: 'In other words, if truth seemed to me to be on the Right wing, that is where I should be.'

Having asserted the purity of his intentions and his unwavering sincerity in front of foes and friends, Camus characterizes Jeanson's article in virulent terms. He claims that it is among other things

> 1. An indirect attempt to identify with the Right – even in my case – anything which is a criticism of Marxism.
> 2. An assertion, according to the method of authority, supporting itself by Marx and Hegel, that Idealism (with which you identify me, notwithstanding my book) is a reactionary philosophy. . . .'

and finally Camus asserts that Jeanson wishes to impose 'silence or derision on all the non-Marxist revolutionary traditions.' Camus is, of course, thinking of Bakunin and the Spanish C N T. Though he is particularly interested in the Anarchist movement, but certainly not known to be one of its leaders, and though Jeanson and Sartre believe in the inefficacy of Anarchism, but have never expressed either contempt or suspicion of the sincerity of Anarchists, Camus exclaims:

> I am beginning to be tired of seeing myself, and especially of seeing old militants who have never flinched from the struggles of their age, continually lectured on efficiency by censors who have faced *History only from* their armchairs.

Fighting on several fronts, trying to show that Jeanson has given a monstrous misinterpretation of his book, that all the *Temps Modernes*' staff, and many others, are wicked scholastic pseudo-Marxists, that only Albert Camus *can* be sincere, Camus has written what will probably appear as a most extraordinary document to literary historians in a few years. He has obviously overshot himself. As he says, he probably intended to criticize 'the attitude which makes an absolute of History . . .', but

instead of carrying on an intellectual argument, he is content with damning Sartre and all his works.

Hence perhaps the tone of Sartre's reply. Whereas Camus sometimes sounds like an emancipated student turning on one of his masters – though, of course, Camus has never been in any way a disciple of Sartre – Sartre is at first, if not quite fatherly, at least affectionate – some might say patronizing: 'Our friendship was not an easy one, but I shall regret it. . . . Friendship, too, becomes totalitarian.' Sartre does not try to defend Jeanson, but rather Camus's former self against what seems to have become a new childishly arrogant author: 'You have achieved your Thermidor.' Referring, with rhetorical melancholy, to the heroes of Camus's books, Sartre asks: 'Where is Meursault, Camus, where is Sisyphus? Where are they now, those Trotskyites at heart who preached permanent revolution? Murdered or exiled, probably.' And with a typical Sartrian shift, he adds: 'A violent and ceremonious dictatorship has settled inside you, supported by an abstract bureaucracy, and it presumes to impose the moral law. . . .' Sartre has not only been irritated by what he considers to be Camus's new martyr-like attitude. He is exasperated and amused by what he takes to be a slightly theatrical pity for the-poor-in-general. Camus talked about 'old militants who have never flinched from the struggles of their age.' Sartre will not let him get away with this ambiguous kind of statement:

> I don't believe that you can pretend to be the brother of the Bologna Communist unemployed worker or of the starving Indochinese journeyman fighting Bao Dai and the French colonialists. . . . You are a bourgeois like Jeanson and myself.

Sartre finds Camus's 'letter' not only sentimental and arrogant, but also intellectually messy. And, though he is prepared to admit that Camus is a better writer than Jeanson, he asserts quite firmly that Jeanson is the better *reasoner*, In fact he almost adopts a school-masterish tone when he bluntly says to Camus: 'What if your book only showed your philosophical incompetence? . . . What if your thoughts were vague and commonplace?' He considers that Camus has now refused to be within and to understand History, that he has substituted a terroristic position for an intelligent and purposeful one:

> Terror is an abstract violence. You became a terrorist, and violent, when History – which you rejected – rejected you: because you were only the abstraction of a revolutionary. . . . Your ethics first became a form of moralizing, to-day it is merely literature, to-morrow it may become immorality.

Sartre on the whole is extremely hard on Camus. There is no doubt that this is, if not so much the end of a friendship (one cannot help feeling

that, despite the ruthlessness of these banterings, mutual respect and perhaps even affection are not completely severed, and perhaps some change in the political situation will *have* to unite these two again) at least the apparent marks of a cleavage which separates the groups of the non-Communist Left in France.

What should be remembered of Sartre's part in the polemics is not so much his slashing remarks as his praise of the old Camus:

> To us, you were – and you may be again – the admirable conjunction of a person, an action and a literary achievement. In 1945 . . . the conflicts of an epoch were summarized in you and your ardour in living them made you go beyond them. You were a *person*, the most complex and the deepest, the last and the best in the line of Chateaubriand and the conscientious champion of a social creed. . . .'

Paradoxically enough one of the fairest and most admiring judgments on Camus is to be found in this article which already has the reputation of being a complete *éreintement*. And if, on the whole, Sartre wins the day, it is not merely because his arguments seem to be stronger, his tone less righteous, not only because Camus has now adopted a grandiloquent solitude and the appropriate key for voicing it, but because Sartre has remembered what Camus was and still is, in some ways, whereas Camus has tried to obliterate Sartre's presence completely from his own memory.

This controversy has rippled throughout the French Press. Reactions varied. The extreme Right-wing and anti-Semitic weekly *Rivarol* called this a game of *précieuses ridicules*. On the whole, Sartre's, as well as Camus's, intentions and statements have been deformed and misquoted. Typical, for instance, is Gonzague Truc's reaction; he magnificently concludes in the November issue of *Hommes et Mondes* that 'revolt does not pay, or pays badly.' M. Truc's capacity for writing on any problem is only equalled by his incapacity to understand it, but it is surprising to see that most commentators in this case have lowered themselves to the level of M. Truc. Almost alone in his effort to understand this quarrel as well as its background is Thierry Maulnier who, in the November issue of *La Table Ronde*, has given the first part of an article which may turn out to be very useful to those who want to elucidate these complex political and literary questions. Thierry Maulnier has also noticed the purely literary qualities of these discussions. Whatever one may think of the arguments used, and the insults hurled, Camus's letter and Sartre's answer deserve a place in the badly needed anthologies of polemical writing.

The uneasiness which seeped into the articles of most commentators probably proceeded not so much from what Sartre said about Camus as from an abstruse and storm-provoking article entitled 'Communists and Peace' which Sartre had published a little earlier – in the July issue of

Les Temps Modernes. This, as well as the general political line which he has affirmed more and more strongly ever since, considerably helped his commentators to misinterpret him. Though this may seem fantastic to British readers, Sartre, like many Frenchmen to-day, feels and asserts without abandoning any of his previous positions or disowning any of his works, that it is possible to *work* on the political level with the Communists. Sartre has clearly stated that for him to-day the fight for peace is more important than any disagreement. To him, it appears undeniable that recently more than ever the U S S R's policy 'has been a policy of peace . . . even if it has sometimes been a clumsy one.'

This attitude, which is not new as far as Sartre is concerned has, of course, been welcomed by the Party intellectuals. But though they advertise and advocate it, they are also bent on pointing out what still separates them from Sartre. Jean Kanapa, for instance, in *La Nouvelle Critique, revue du Marxisme militant* (September–October), lavishly explains that Sartre's attitude shows 'an attempt at understanding', but he promptly adds:

> I know there are plenty of things which separate me from Sartre and the people one imagines to be the ordinary public of *Les Temps Modernes:* an extraordinarily idealistic philosophy, a curious taste for the morbid aspects of life which capitalist decadence tends to force on us, subtleties of thought which I sometimes find impenetrable, an often irritating conceit in exercising the function of intellectual.

This ought to make it quite clear that the post-Liberation flirtation between Marxists and Existentialists have not been resumed. But if one remembers that Jean Kanapa wrote, a few years ago, a widely distributed and vicious pamphlet entitled *L'Existentialisme n'est pas un Humanisme* there is no doubt that, *objectively* at least, in their publications, for instance young Communist intellectuals are trying to understand what a non Communist Left-wing point of view may be. This effort is very noticeable if one reads through the issues of the Party reviews in the last three months, whether they be *Europe*, *La Pensée* or *La Nouvelle Critique*.

While all these philosophical gentlemen are agreeing and disagreeing among themselves and bringing under their political and literary banner more and more of the youth of France, some more detached writers have devoted themselves to compiling a very interesting and very bad special issue of the fossil *Nouvelle Revue Française* in honour of Alain, the great pre-war professional influencer of the young.

This compilation once more proves that a good symposium cannot be made only with pious intentions. If this issue sells too well, if it is bought by too many people in search of a nice short-cut to knowledge of Alain, it will harm rather than help his reputation. To someone who would know

about Alain only what this book (for that is what this special issue practically is) tells him, it would appear that Alain was a nice old gentleman called Emile Auguste Chartier, born in 1868, that he was a *normalien* and an *agrégé*, that he taught philosophy throughout his life in *lycées* and especially at the Lycée Henri IV, that he was constantly blubbering about some vague notion which he called 'happiness,' that he wrote fifty books, the most important ones being one on war and one on Balzac, and thousands of articles on various topics. This is surely inadequate. Of course, it may be argued that all these essays have been written for people who already knew Alain's work, but if that is the case they weaken the portrait of the *man* even if they leave that of the *writer* intact.

Alain was the most extraordinary French *teacher* (that is to say, that he was neither a well-adjusted talking text-book nor a simple corrector of mistakes) of the first half of the century. This reputation has been guaranteed by too many people to be false, but the pale anecdotes told here by ex-pupils are inadequate to support what is now a glorious legend.

Jean Mandrino, alone, comes near to what Alain seems to have been, in an impressionistic sketch:

> His inbred nobility, rigour, flexibility, quickness, the wonderful activity and cheerfulness of his mind, a conquering step, ease, freedom. Seriousness and irony. No frivolity. A rough peasant strain; a trickster too. Friendly, but not without stiffness. As speculative as a Greek, as assertive as a Roman. A friend of great books and great minds (closed to some: e.g. Dante, Dostoievsky). . . .

As a teacher of philosophy Alain appears to have had one point in common with Professor John Wisdom. He would arrive and write or ask a pupil to write a sentence on the blackboard and proceed, impromptu, from then onwards. Another similarity between him and the Cambridge lecturer was that in his classes novelists were quoted as often as philosophers. The resemblance, of course, stops there, for in fact Alain goes against much that is dear to English philosophical tradition. It is a pity that Mrs Margaret Storm-Jameson, who has contributed an article on Alain and England, has not tried to give the reasons why Alain is not appreciated on the other side of the Channel. She says that it is strange that Alain should not be better known in Great Britain, his philosophy being so near one of the best and oldest English traditions: 'a radicalism which believes with an almost mystical fervour in human equality but refuses to sacrifice freedom to it. . . .' She seems to say that the main reason why Alain is not popular in England is that he has suffered the fate of all great English radical thinkers 'who have always had a small audience'. Isn't that rather catering for the French who are always prepared to assert that the English are fantastically reactionary and philosophically

incompetent? Isn't Alain unknown in England because his style is so difficult to decipher; because, as a philosopher, he is too much of a Rationalist, in the strictly technical sense of the word; and because his literary criticism is too philosophical? Can the English be attracted by what Claude Mauriac calls 'a purposeful obscurity, spurning clearness'? *Clarum per obscurius* is indeed a nice motto, but it belongs to too many writers in France. Unwittingly, Alain has encouraged an obscurity, mainly proceeding from a mixture of philosophy and literature, which can and often has become a brilliant obscurantism.

On the whole, the most interesting and suggestive essay is that of Raymond Aron, the leading French Right-wing – or if one prefers R P F, i.e. Gaullist – theoretician, who shows how Alain tried to enter the psychology of politics, not with the mind of a lecturer, but with that of a citizen.

But the great man complex seems to have paralysed most of the contributors. Many of them talk about their 'last visit' to Alain's suburban villa at Le Vésinet as people used to talk about a visit to Ferney. Alain was not a Voltaire, there is no point in treating him as one. The interest of this special issue lies in its failure. It ends with a few unpublished excerpts none of which add anything of great importance to our knowledge of Alain, except perhaps one short sentence at the end of a fragment from a diary written on September 9th, 1950: '... if it is true that with me all ideas proceed from the heart. And it is true!'

The same can be said of the numerous unpublished and unknown texts which are to be found in the September issue of *La Table Ronde*, entirely devoted to Guillaume Apollinaire. Many of them may be useful to the authors of doctorates, but in that case the erudite apparatus is not sufficiently scholarly. After all, *La Table Ronde* has never pretended to be a learned review and one fears that its editors have yielded to a not infrequent temptation of their trade, that of supposing that any scribble by a well-known writer is of interest to the general public. But the mere mention of Apollinaire's name has one advantage – if it *is* an advantage: it takes one away from contemporary problems and the fierce *to-dayism* of other reviews. And if the unpublished poems by Apollinaire which are offered here, and of which the following stanza

Les rues ont ébloui le ciel de leurs lumières
Et l'esprit éternel n'est que par la matière
Et l'amour est humain et ne vit qu'en nos vies
L'amour est éternel qui meurt inassouvi.

is, alas, representative, do not provide great poetical shocks, they at least remind one of the incredible shortage of poetry in France to-day, nowhere more apparent than in its reviews.

BENEDETTO CROCE

Bernard Wall

Everything about Croce was on an enormous scale and this puts him a little outside our time. Few of his works have been translated into English. They are like the part of an iceberg that breaks the surface, mere hints at the expanse hidden under the water. Outside Italy everyone recognized that he was a 'Grand Old Man', but the younger generations knew little more about him than about, say, Einstein.

The first influence in Croce's life was the fact of his being a Neapolitan, and this he always and consciously remained through a lifetime that stretched from the Golden Age of European power – which included the Italian Risorgimento – to our own twilight. Now, the old Bourbon Kingdom of Southern Italy was in its last days the most gorgeously anomalous institution in Western Europe. But it had an identity of a thousand years' standing and a tradition as respectable as that of Portugal. Every aspect of Neapolitan history and art found its place in Croce's historical and critical writings, and even in philosophy he put all possible emphasis on Neapolitans – we only need to remember his writings on Giambattista Vico. Though Croce integrated his Naples into a general vision of the achievements of the Italian nation, and of French, German, Spanish and English culture and what not else, it was always a wrench for him to leave the noisy Parthenopean capital between the foothills of Vesuvius and the foreland of Posillipo. When Croce left Naples it was usually for reasons of public service – as when he became Minister of Public Instruction in the Giolitti Ministry after the first world war or, after the collapse of Fascism, when he became Minister without Portfolio in an early caretaker government. He was never away for long and he always returned to his house in Naples and his library with the air of returning to normal after a mere parenthesis. There he reigned; and others made pilgrimages to him as to Goethe in Weimar. Like Goethe, Croce remained clear in mind to the last. He must also have been a man superbly endowed physically for, as Valéry, quoting George Meredith, used to point out, it is not the mind that gives out in writers, but the stomach. He was wealthy and was spared from base material preoccupations as were his great aulic counterparts in Victorian England. And his witticisms, directed against the writers of indifferent books, as against the intellectual pretensions of Fascists or Communists, were repeated all over Italy.

It would not be easy to divide his achievement into parts and judge him separately as a philosopher, as a historian and sociologist, as a critic of literature and culture, and as a man of action. All his activities were aspects of one whole, and it is perhaps significant that though he wrote on the most varied subjects his style was always the same – uniform, flowing and impassable. *What is Living and What is Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel; Ariosto, Shakespeare, Corneille; The History of Italian Historiography; History as Thought and as Action; Æsthetics; Logic as the Science of Pure Concept* – I quote a few titles at random out of a list of over fifty volumes of the beautifully printed chrome yellow *Opere di Benedetto Croce* published by his friends and collaborators of the famous house of Laterza, of Naples and Bari. The original editions were separated by as much as forty or fifty years of time. Not only did the earliest Croce write like the latest Croce of the pamphlets after the War such as *Why we cannot refrain from calling ourselves Christians* (this wording is typical) – but throughout his whole life he was always adding notes and further reflections and postcripts to his earlier works, making disputed points clearer, refuting critics and so on. This work he carried on in his review, *La Critica*, and later, when that ceased after the last war, in his *Quaderni della Critica*.

I can think of no other life-work by a pure intellectual that leaves the reader with such an impression of unruffled continuity and organic growth. In one of his finest literary essays – the one on Ariosto – Croce devotes some pages to an analysis of the supreme spirit of tranquillity and harmony that pervades the *Orlando;* and one cannot help feeling that if Croce was able to write so singularly well upon this subject it was because he was also describing his own intimate experience of harmonious dedication. There are many stories about Croce's personal life to illustrate this. Only three years ago Riccardo Bacchelli who, so far as I know, is the only living Italian novelist Croce spoke at all well of, told me that he had recently run into Croce on a train and found the old man working on proofs that were spread out around him so as not to waste time while travelling. There are many stories about Croce's habits in Naples, of his daily constitutional from his house to a well-known bookshop, where, even when taking exercise, he could pore over volumes and perhaps add to his famous library.

Few Englishmen realize the enormous influence of Croce's philosophy in Italy because neo-Hegelianism is altogether out of fashion in most of Europe – it has not survived the clamour against 'The System' that, started by Kierkegaard, has flowered at last in the various forms of Existentialism; and the rival appeals of Bergson or the Neo-Thomists and other schools. But in Italy, Croce and his followers were supreme and other thinkers had little chance. There was no real 'dialogue' between the

Crociani and the Bergsonians, Existentialists and Thomists. The Fascists were never able to unseat Croce, and his famous Liberalism made him a public hero in the eyes of intelligent young men in the Universities who were, of course, anti-Fascist and were looking for a leader. It is strange to think that thirty years ago Bergson in Paris and Croce in Naples were each giving out their revelations without the slightest regard for one another. But alas, is not this almost the rule with the original philosophers? Perhaps we should draw conclusions about the disintegration of our Western culture from it, but if so they would not be the subject of this note.

Italian Neo-Hegelianism was far from an unmitigated blessing in the political sphere. True, Croce made it into a corner-stone of Liberalism in his own philosophy, but one is tempted to look at this as a *tour de force*, in view of Hegel's own position in the architectonics of totalitarianism in Europe which he owed to his idealization of the Prussian state, and to the unhappy destiny of Marxism. Indeed the other great Neo-Hegelian in Italy, Giovanni Gentile, who was for long Croce's closest associate, ejected the liberal content from the common philosophy and ended up as a spokesman of the Fascists. Gentile's interpretation was anything but unique. Ironically enough, Croce forged an abstract terminology which, used by minds less broad and able than his, became the bane of intellectual discussion in Italy and, as anyone who has attended congresses there can witness, it is regularly trotted out in support of half-baked ideas, whether Communist or Fascist. But the followers of great men are often bores.

Croce wrote so much and on so many subjects that he could hardly be expected to be equally inspired in all fields. Many of his literary judgments have both the strength and the limitations of the age in which they were conceived. His valuations of the great 'classical' writers – Dante, Ariosto or Goethe – will certainly live, for in these fields Croce inherited the solid judgment of his master and fellow Neapolitan, Francesco de Sanctis, the greatest Italian literary critic of the nineteenth century. But Croce's appreciation cooled off when he came to later poets and writers. He greatly admired Hugo, but he had little sympathy for Baudelaire, and he disliked nearly all Italian literature after Giosue Carducci. His sociological views, too, were somehow limited to the experience of his receptive years in an epoch very different from our own. History was the history of liberty moving onwards to ever new conquests; the incidence of setbacks and reactions could not alter the cheerful fact that the fundamental rule was progress. But Croce's conception of liberty, which by and large the Italian Liberal Party professes to-day, cannot make an appeal to the greater mass of opinion because it in no way includes the contemporary demand for increased economic equality.

Croce's political position did not change much in the three generations covered by his active intellectual life, but this only makes the alterations in his emphasis more interesting. During his early years 'clericalism', as exemplified in the then recently extinct Bourbon Kingdom, or in Austria or Tsarist Russia, seemed to him the greatest enemy of progress and freedom, and at times he was thrown into 'anti-clerical' positions which he moderated later when it became an obvious side-issue. But in his middle years the great 'clerical' régimes, with their old-fashioned inefficiency, had made way for the early essays in mass totalitarianism. During this second period Croce was the most distinguished of all anti-Fascists (so that it seemed natural, after the overthrow of Fascism, that he should be offered the role of Italy's Masaryk and be proposed as first President of the Republic – and natural, too, that the canny old philosopher should refuse). Croce's last years, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say, were plagued by Soviet Communism, and by disputes with members of the Italian Communist Party. Croce had been an invincible and crushing polemist in his time, but his arguments depended on catching out his opponent in some inaccuracy concerning objective facts or in plain logical contradiction: standards that first the Fascists and now the Communists shamelessly reject. It was impossible for a man of Croce's training to agree that the fact of his being 'a wealthy bourgeois' could be a clinching argument in a discussion concerning history or literature. In his last writings we can feel almost physically how baffled the old man was by a conception of truth that altered with the needs of the ideology. It was a disillusionment after the 'liberation' of 1945 to see that many people should show such real distaste for liberty – it almost challenged that basic optimism which Croce shared with the great liberal masters of the nineteenth century. Besides, it is difficult for an aged Olympian to interfere successfully in a street brawl.

SAINT-SIMONISM IN ENGLAND: II

Richard K. P. Pankhurst

The author is an economic historian whose work on 'William Thompson, pioneer socialist, feminist and co-operator' will be published shortly.

The stirring doctrines of the Saint-Simonians were not preached in any vacuum in early nineteenth-century England. The liveliest interest was aroused in both working-class and intellectual circles, where the Socialist teachings of Robert Owen, William Thompson and other advocates of co-operation and the rights of the labourer to the full produce of his toil had prepared the ground for what would otherwise have seemed completely exotic theories.

Thompson himself had been highly sympathetic to their ideas even before the arrival of the 'missionaries'. He had discussed Saint-Simonism in his public lectures, and on the title page of his *Practical Directions for the Speedy and Economical Establishment of Communities* he quoted from the Saint-Simonite *Producteur* the slogan of Saint-Simon that 'the age of gold (happiness), which a blind credulity has placed in times past, is before us'* – a phrase which we find a decade or so later in the mouth of the Chartist leader, Julian Harney.†

Thompson's close associate, Mrs. Anna Wheeler, was another of the earliest supporters of Saint-Simonism for she had been a member of a Saint-Simonite circle at Caen in 1818. This remarkable woman, a keen Socialist and an ardent propagandist for the emancipation of women, was

* Saint-Simon's approach to history is well summed up in his *Reorganization of European Society* of 1814 in which he writes: 'A time will undoubtedly come when all the nations of Europe will feel that questions of general interest should predominate over those that are merely national. The poverty with which society is now oppressed will diminish; the troubles with which peace is now menaced will disappear; wars will cease. The inspiration of poets has placed the golden age at the cradle of humanity, amid the ignorance and barbarity of early times; it were better to relegate the iron age to that period. The golden age of the human race is not behind, but before us, it lies in the perfection of society. Our fathers have not seen it, it is reserved for our children to behold it; it is for us to make ready the way. . . . Marching almost with closed eyes along a road we do not know, too often have we fancied ourselves neighbours of what is far away, and too often thought far distant what is close at hand.'

† *The Northern Star*, December 14th, 1841.

n good relations with Jeremy Bentham, Robert Owen, William Thompson, Charles Fourier and other prominent figures, both Radical and Socialist. She introduced the 'missionaries' to many English personalities among them the Rev. James Elimalet Smith, a religious social reformer, who, as he himself avers, 'became initiated by her into many of the mysteries of popular philosophy' to which he had 'been previously an utter stranger', but which were 'indispensable' to qualify him for his 'mission as a public writer'.* Elimalet Smith was so intrigued by the Saint-Simonite message that he translated the *New Christianity* into English.

The optimism of the 'missionaries' was intensified by the support they received from English friends and the immense response to certain of their doctrines from a mass movement already created by others who had accustomed the English workers to certain of the very ideas they were preaching. On January 26th, 1832, soon after their arrival in London, two of the 'missionaries', Duveyrier and the banker, Gustave d'Eichthal, wrote to Barthélemy Prosper Enfantine in Paris as follows:

> Dear Father,
>
> Since our arrival we have seen many friends. Those who lived in London and considered our mission inopportune are completely won over to the idea. No one amongst us now doubts that we are receiving strong sympathy in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Dublin, Glasgow and Edinburgh. The efforts of the Owenites, Benthamites, Unitarians and the founders of the Political Union have prepared the soil. In England there are no more antipathies either national or religious . . . the day is near when Ireland and England will unite with France under the peaceful standard of Saint-Simon . . .
>
> Father, our deep conviction, enforced by the advice of our friends, is that we must go straight to Manchester, the centre of the manufacturing populations of England, there to open a chapel and convoke a meeting at which we hope there will be a thousand people.†

A few days later the 'missionaries' expressed their confidence that they will not leave England 'without having done great things', they repeat their confident claim to be 'very well in with the popular parties', trade unionists, co-operators and others. 'The workers', they declare, 'are ready':

> To-day England has arrived at the eve of a revolution which resembles in no way the revolutions of the past: its people aspire to a new life. The worker wants an organization which is his very own, which now only lacks leaders. The tendency to the political organization of the worker is everywhere manifest because the industrial population has grown considerable. If France furnishes the first *priests* of the new faith it is because she has the greater sensibility – it is England which must furnish the first *people* of the new order. . . .
>
> The day when the English, prepared by the works of their economists and latterly by those of the Owenites, feel that the work of industrial transformation must at the same time be a political work, and that it must not only be English, but also French, European, Universal – that day the Saint-Simonians and the cause of the workers will have obtained a success from which we shall here feel the bountiful influence.*

* W. Anderson Smith, *'Shepherd' Smith, the Universalist*, pp. 90, 335–7.
† *Oeuvres de Saint Simon et d'Enfantin*, Vol. II, pp. 214–6.

The 'missionaries' meanwhile were busy in many directions. Prati and Fontana hired the Burton Lecture Rooms in Burton Crescent, London, and made them the centre of their propaganda. They held regular lectures which were always well attended. On one occasion Robert Owen and Prati discussed the similarity and difference between their schemes;† at another time the editors of London's 'unstamped' Radical newspapers were invited to attend a meeting to discuss a plan whereby their publication days should be changed to avoid unnecessary competition between them.‡ Saint-Simonite literature was circulated on a lavish scale; it was available at the Burton Rooms, and also from other London centres, among them the *Reformer* office, 378 Strand; Mr Brooks, 421 Oxford Street; and Fenwick de Porquet and Cooper, 11 Tavistock Street, Covent Garden.§ A school was opened at 36 Castle Street East where adults and boys and girls under twelve were instructed in Italian, French and German according to the Hamilton and Jacoto methods.‖

Duveyrier and d'Eichthal were at about this time invited by Robert Owen to a ball where they were introduced to Francum, the editor of the *Ballot*, who in turn put them in touch with a certain Colonel Johnson.¶ They were well received also by Grote and by a journalist, Groves.** Duveyrier sought audiences too with Mathuschewitz and the Ambassador of Holland.††

Saint-Simonism found its way fairly easily into early working-class and Socialist literature which accepted many of its tenets, while remaining somewhat sceptical of the more fantastic theories and behaviour of the Frenchmen. Saint-Simonite manifestos and letters from its 'missionaries', as well as extracts from the writings of Saint-Simon, appeared with considerable frequency in Robert Owen's *Crisis* and in the periodical *Man*.‡‡

* Henry-René d'Allemagne, *Les Saint-Simoniens*, pp. 155–6.
† W. Anderson Smith, *'Shepherd' Smith, the Universalist*, pp. 102, 355.
‡ *The Pioneer, or Trades' Union Magazine*, No. 20, January 18th, 1834.
§ *The 'Destructive' and Poor Man's Conservative*, No. 41, November 30th, 1833, p. 350.
‖ *The Poor Man's Guardian*, No. 150, April 1834, p. 1.
¶ Henry-René d'Allemagne, op. cit., p. 155.
** Ibid.
†† Ibid.
‡‡ *The 'Destructive' and Poor Man's Conservative*, p. 339.

Letters and articles from the pen of Prati appeared above the *nom de plume*, 'The Alpine philosopher'.*

Further testimony to the effect of their propaganda is afforded by the *Republican*, a Radical working-class newspaper, which attributed to the sect an important role in the history of the discussion on how it came about that the worker was 'not allowed to enjoy the full fruits of his labour', but was instead 'obliged to divide it with men who are no use to him whatever'; their influence had been significant too in teaching that the system whereby one class was 'fattening on the labour of another class ought to disappear from society'.† A more cynical though not too dissimilar picture is painted in the staid columns of the *Quarterly Review*, which remarks that 'in whatever part of Europe the Saint-Simonites may send their missionaries, they will find many who are prepared for the political part of their system, and who, for the sake of attaining that, will be contented to take, for better or for worse, the scheme of imposition which is connected with it. We may expect to have Saint-Simonism preached at the Southwark Rotunda. Some of the new weekly journals may not improbably slide into the doctrine by an easy transition, thinking it a likely means for obtaining notoriety and sale.'‡ Tennyson shared this view. He is found remarking that 'reform and St Simonism are, and will continue to be, the subjects of the highest interest'. 'The existence of the sects of St Simonites', he considers, 'is at once a proof of the immense mass of evil that is extant in the nineteenth century, and a focus which gathers all its rays.'§

The Saint-Simonite appeal, it must be emphasized, was by no means lost upon the educated classes. It is not fortuitous that it exerted a major influence on John Stuart Mill, Thomas Carlyle and Karl Marx. In his *Autobiography*, J. S. Mill observes that 'the writings by whom, more than by any others, a new mode of political thinking was brought home to me were those of the Saint Simonian School in France. In 1829 and 1830 I became acquainted with their writings. They were then only in the earlier stages of their speculations. They had not yet dressed out their philosophy as a religion, nor had they organized their scheme of Socialism. They were just beginning to question the legitimacy of hereditary property. I was by no means prepared to go with them even this length; but I was greatly struck with the connected view which they for the first time presented to me; and especially with their division of all history into organic periods

* W. Anderson Smith, *'Shepherd' Smith, the Universalist*, p. 130.
† *The Republican*, July 23rd, 1831, p. 2; July 30th, 1831, p. 3.
‡ *The Quarterly Review*, Vol. XLV (1831), pp. 407–50; Vol. XLVI, p. 582; Vol. XLVII, pp. 409–12.
§ Quoted by F. A. von Hayek in the 'Counter Revolution of Science', *Economica*, Vol. VIII (New Series), No. 31, p. 283n.

and critical periods.'* These doctrines, he continues, 'harmonized well' with his 'existing notions' to which they 'seemed to give a scientific shape'; from them he 'obtained a clearer conception than ever before of the peculiarities of an era of transition of opinion, and ceased to mistake the moral and intellectual characteristics of such an era for the normal attributes of humanity'.†

Their criticism of the common doctrines of Liberalism, he relates,

> seemed to me full of important truth; and it was partly by their writings that my eyes were opened to the very limited and temporary value of the old political economy, which assumes private property and inheritance as indefeasible facts, and freedom of production and exchange as the *dernier mot* of social improvement. The scheme gradually unfolded by the St Simonians, under which the labour and capital of society would be managed for the general account of the community . . . appeared to me a far superior description of socialism than Owen's, their aim seemed to me desirable and rational, however their means might be ineffacious; and though I neither believed in the practicability, nor in the beneficial operation of their social machinery, I felt that the proclamation of such an ideal of human society, could not but tend to give a beneficial direction to the efforts of others to bring society, as at present constituted, nearer to some ideal standard. I honoured them most of all for what they have been most cried down for – the boldness and freedom from prejudice with which they treated the subject of family, the most important of any, and needing more fundamental alterations than remain to be made in any other great social institution, but on which scarcely any reformer has the courage to touch; they had entitled themselves to the grateful remembrance of future generations.‡

It is little wonder that holding these views he should have gone out of his way to meet the two high priests of French Saint-Simonism, Bazard and Enfantin; he records that as long as the 'public teachings and proselytism' of the Saint-Simonians continued he 'read nearly everything they wrote'. He was on friendly terms with a certain Saint-Simonite by name Bontemps who came over to England from France.§ Mill also discussed the new philosophy with Duveyrier, Desprat, Lemire and Coole, urging that the propaganda of the 'missionaries' in England should aim at the educated rather than at the working classes.‖ On his advice a special *Address* was prepared by the 'missionaries', which was translated by Crellier, Mill himself making some corrections. At the same time he carried on a long correspondence with d'Eichthal in the course of which he remarks that the writings of the Saint-Simonians had helped him 'to

* John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography* (1824), p. 138.
† Ibid., p. 140.
‡ *Autobiography*, pp. 141–2.
§ F. A. von Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor* (1951), p. 37.
‖ Henry-René d'Allemagne, op. cit., p. 155.

straighten and generalize' his ideas on 'many important questions of political philosophy'.* They had also, he continues, done much to emphasize the importance of spiritual power, the need to suppress egoistic social interests, to give largeness of view to political thought and to cause people to reflect on the next stage of social organization.† He was 'inclined to think' that Saint-Simonite social organization 'under some modification or other' was 'likely to be the final and permanent condition of our race'.‡ If some of their views were perhaps a little far-fetched this was not a very serious failing, for in the study of society 'the great danger for humanity is not to see what is not but to neglect what is'.§

Thomas Carlyle, too, read most of the Saint-Simonite literature. In his *Sartor Resartus* he quotes with approval St Simon's 'strange aphorism' that 'the golden age, which a blind tradition has hitherto laid in the past, is not behind us but before us. It lies in the perfection of the social order'.‖ Carlyle became so much interested in such ideas that he prepared a translation of the *New Christianity* but he was unfortunately unable to find a publisher for it.¶ Nevertheless his enthusiasm was such that in a private letter he writes:

> To find myself in friendly relation towards men of intelligence and devout mind, with whom or with the like of whom alone is friendship and fellowship possible, cannot be other than gratifying. To see a little brotherhood of such men, strong in faith, uniting itself as a forlorn hope in a good fight, and heroically, with such weapons and tactics as it has, making front against the boundless armaments of evil – this is a spectacle full of significance, perhaps of pathetic beauty, for all good men.
>
> I may say, with great sincerity, that my respect for your Brethren and Chief, personally considered, has not diminished but increased on closer survey; that I discern in you men of clear intellectual insight, of decisive character, animated with a noble zeal which enlightens as well as inflames; men to whom in any case, all generous hearts must feel a certain brotherhood. Further, I say that your speculative opinions, political, moral, philosophical, for the most part carry their own evidence, and find hearty assent with me; often, indeed, I discern therein only a more decisive and systematic exposition of what I had already gathered elsewhere. Especially important I reckon your delineations of our actual No-Society, of the critical and the organic alteration in man's history; your strongly emphatic precept of our duty towards the poor, which, properly speaking, is but the old duty of Love, of mercy towards the weak, whether by want of pecuniary or other means; and has been and must be the basis of all social morality. Neither can it be

* John Stuart Mill, *Correspondence inédite avec Gustave d'Eichthal* (1898), p. 37.
† Ibid., pp. 25–30.
‡ Cf. also John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* (1926), pp. 212–3.
§ John Stuart Mill, *Correspondence inédite avec Gustave d'Eichthal*, p. 29.
‖ Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (1872), pp. 163–4.
¶ Emery Neff, *Carlyle* (1932), pp. 120–1.

> doubted that your motto and maxim, *to each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its works*, is the aim of all true social arrangements, which are the more perfect the nearer they approach thereto. In short, were the Saint Simonian doctrine stated as a mere scientific doctrine, or held out as the *Prophecy of an ultimate Perfection* towards which Society must more and more approximate – I would with few reservations subscribe to it, and heartily agree with you that it was the duty of all men, by whatever best means they had, to forward such a consummation . . .
>
> I find little or nothing to dissent from: the spirit at least meets my entire sympathy: the opinions are often such as I in my own dialect have already been accustomed to cherish and more or less clearly to enunciate.*

Carlyle's debt to the Saint-Simonians has already been exhaustively discussed in a number of works.† Professor Hayek sums up the general consensus of opinion by remarking that 'Carlyle's views on the philosophy of history, his exposition of the Laws of Progress in *Sartor Resartus*, his division of history into positive and negative periods, are all mainly of Saint-Simonian origin, and his interpretation of the French Revolution is penetrated with Saint-Simonian thought'.‡

Saint-Simon's relationship to Marx and Engels, like all questions of Marxiana, is a subject of deep controversy and a rich variety of conflicting interpretations has been developed. D. Ryazanoff argues that 'St Simon's influence was small, especially upon Marx'.§ On the other hand, Professor Hayek is of opinion that Marx was:

> directly affected by the early wave of Saint-Simonian enthusiasm when he was a boy of thirteen or fourteen. He himself told his friend, the Russian historian M. Kowalewski, how his paternal friend and later father-in-law, Baron Ludwig von Westphalen, had been infected by the general enthusiasm and had talked about the new ideas. The fact, often noted by German scholars, that many parts of Marx's doctrine, particularly the theory of the class struggle and certain aspects of his interpretation of history, bear a much closer resemblance to those of Saint-Simon than to those of Hegel, becomes even more interesting when we realize that the influence of Saint-Simon on Marx seems to have preceded that of Hegel.‖

Marx himself has little to say on the subject, although Engels pays to Saint-Simon some very warm tributes indeed. 'The exponents of German scientific Socialism', he writes, 'will never forget how much they owe to

* David Brooks Cofer, *Saint Simonism in the Radicalism of Thomas Carlyle* (1931), pp. 56–61.
† Cf. ibid.; also E. d'Eichthal, 'Carlyle et le Saint Simonisme' in *Revue Historique*, pp. 82–83.
‡ F. A. von Hayek, in *Economica*, Vol. VIII (New Series), No. 31, p. 283.
§ D. Ryazanoff in his notes to *The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (1930), p. 232.
‖ F. A. von Hayek in *Economica*, Vol. VIII (New Series), No. 31, pp. 289–90.

St Simon, Fourier and Owen. These three men, fantastic and utopian though their doctrines are, must be reckoned among the most fertile thinkers of any age. Men of prophetic genius, they foreshadowed much that we of later days are able to establish on a firm scientific foundation.'* Saint-Simon's 'breadth of view' and 'genius' contained in embryo 'all the ideas of later Socialists which are not strictly economic'.†

Saint-Simon's legacy to Socialist thought is immense. Mill in his *Principles of Political Economy* remarks that in 'the few years of its public promulgation' it 'sowed the seeds of nearly all the Socialist tendencies'.‡ 'Negatively at least', writes Roger Solteau, 'there is no Socialist thinker who is not his debtor, however much he may depart from his constructive proposals. Positively, his direct influence was of course limited to the collectivist school; and his true followers are Pecqueur, Blanc and Marx, as against Fourier and Proudhon. On the other hand, his frank advocacy of state control of economic affairs, and his violent attacks on Liberal individualism, caused much heart-searching among many non-Socialists, and made many nominal Liberals admit a measure of social control as the only alternative to an anarchical *laissez-faire*.'§

The full influence of Saint-Simonism is, however, difficult to estimate, owing to the fact that after its debacle many sought to dissociate themselves from what they came to regard as the 'contamination' of its influence. As Professor Hayek remarks, 'In its later years the school covered itself with ridicule by its pseudo-religious harlequinades and various escapades and follies; in consequence many men who had absorbed most of its social and philosophical teaching might well have been ashamed to admit their association with the cranks of Ménilmontant and the men who went to the East in search of the *femme libre*. It was only natural that people should come to treat their Saint-Simonian period as a youthful folly of which they did not want to boast. But that did not mean that the ideas they had absorbed did not continue to operate through them.'‖

The last phase of the history of the Saint-Simonians in England is not in outline greatly different from that of the sect in France, Belgium and Germany. After the first flush of excitement, wonder and enthusiasm had faded, it became evident that their attempt to establish a 'New Christianity' and a new hierarchy doomed them to ridicule and failure. Their dynamic views of the history of social evolution and their iconoclastic

* *The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels* (edited by D. Ryazanoff, explanatory notes), p. 231.
† Friedrich Engels, *Herr Eugen Duehring's Revolution in Science* (1935), p. 292.
‡ John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* (1926), p. 204.
§ Roger Solteau, *French Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (1931), p. 148.
‖ *Economica*, Vol. VIII (New Series), No. 31, p. 281.

theories of property, economics and marriage could be accepted by many who heard their message, but relatively few could take seriously a sect which conceived itself in religious terms and preached the inegalitarian view that a new hierarchy should be established which would 'class people according to their usefulness'. As Harriet Martineau observes, 'Amidst much that interested some of the best hearts and engaged some of the noblest minds of the time, there were doctrines and provisions that could not stand a close examination'.* The Frenchmen, moreover, were unable to accept deviation from their teachings and insisted that all should accept both their economic analyses and their theological ideas. A period of intense disillusion followed in which the messianic fervour of the movement disintegrated amid deep sadness and heart-searching. The movement found itself assailed by Conservatives on the right and Co-operators and Communists on the left – and to this criticism was added the bitter and remorseful remarks of the apostates who, like Elimalet Smith, the old translator of the *New Christianity*, sadly observed that the doctrines of Saint-Simon, though they had 'electrified the world with their vivid representations of universal order and harmony', were 'not adapted for taking root in the earth'.†

Some idea of the manner in which the admirers of the Saint-Simonians on the periphery of the movement reacted may be gathered from the memoirs of Albert Brisbane, an American social reformer who spent much of his life in Europe and investigated with painstaking thoroughness the principles and practice of most of the social innovators and scientific inventors of his time. Brisbane first met the sect in Paris. 'Its enthusiasm', he records, had been 'commensurate with its gigantic claims and with the interest which it inspired'.‡ Its leaders were 'truly devoted men, the character of their propaganda impressed deeply a great number of minds'; their attempt to elevate the condition of the labouring classes, he avers, 'struck a chord which vibrated through the souls of all generous men'. He had himself at first been filled with boundless admiration for the sect, but 'after carefully studying its doctrines and contemplating the absolute control exercised by its leaders' all his hope in the movement gave way to despair; he became 'antagonistic to the system as a whole'. In conversation with his friend Jules Lechevalier, one of the leaders of the sect, he exclaimed:

> Your object is noble, your principles are fundamentally true. A great revolution must take place; political and other fragmentary reform cannot alleviate the miseries of humanity. I agree with you that a new social order

* Harriet Martineau, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 74–5.
† Mary Hennell, *An Outline of the Various Social Systems* (1844), p. 179.
‡ Redelia Brisbane, *Albert Brisbane, a Mental Biography* (1893), pp. 151–2.

must be established. I caught a glimpse of this great idea in Turkey and Greece, and I returned to Paris to witness an effort towards its realization: but this religion you preach seems to me artificial, developed by the calculations of the human mind. Your principles of authority are repugnant to me; it does not seem natural to subordinate oneself to the judgement and will of individuals.

Filled with disquiet, he brooded over what appeared to him the fatal failings of the movement. Prolonged heart-searching led him into profound opposition to its religious and anti-democratic tendencies. He soon became intensely depressed, and found himself forced to leave Paris 'to escape its atmosphere of controversy and quarrel. The truth was I felt a deep sorrow at the antagonistic state into which I had got with men I liked and admired so much. I could not stand it.'

This disillusion is characteristic. Thomas Carlyle feels a similar reaction. He is filled with admiration for the 'logical sequence and coherence' of the Saint-Simonians, as well as for their 'precision, clear illustration and the emphasis of a noble zeal', but he finds it 'curious' that in their mind 'scientific insight' has 'transformed itself into religion'. He is filled with amazement and cannot understand:

in what sense not of exaggerated metaphor men of cultivated talent, strong powers of thought and far above superstitution and deception, can use these extraordinary words: *Dieu est revenu à la France en Saint-Simon, et la France annoncera au monde le Dieu nouveau.**

This religiosity seems to him 'a mighty chasm' in the Saint-Simonite system, 'the darkness' of which is 'quite void'. 'You call yourselves a Church', he protests, 'and founders of a new *Religion*, which Religion, permit me to confess, I have hitherto sought for in vain.'

John Stuart Mill also has second thoughts. Doubtless he is shocked to read the Saint-Simonian *Organisateur* proclaim:

We demand at this moment liberty of religious practice in order that a single religion can be more easily erected on the ruins of the religious past of humanity . . . the liberty of the press, because this is the indispensable condition for the subsequent creation of a legitimate direction of thought; the liberty of teaching in order that our doctrine can be more easily propagated and become one day the only one loved and followed by all; the destruction of the monopolies as a means of arriving at the definite organization of the industrial body.†

At first he is prepared to accept that 'the moral and intellectual ascendancy, once exercised by priests, must in time pass into the hands of philosophers, and will naturally do so when they become sufficiently unanimous, and in other respects worthy to possess it'. He 'looked forward through the present age of loud disputes but generally weak convictions to a future which shall unite the best qualities of the critical with the best qualities of the organic periods'. Yet he is unwilling to surrender the ideal of 'unchecked liberty of thought, unbounded freedom of individual action in modes not hurtful to others'; he cannot abandon 'convictions as to what is right and wrong, useful and pernicious, deeply engraven on the feelings by early education and general unanimity of sentiment'. Indeed he holds that such convictions are 'so firmly grounded in reason and in the true exigencies of life that they shall not, like all former and present creeds, religious, ethical and political, require to be periodically thrown off and replaced by others'.* To reject the heritage of liberalism is nausea to him; he is filled with doubts and soon comes to the conclusion that what the Saint-Simonians, and in particular their disciple Auguste Comte, countenanced is 'a practical system in which philosophers were to be organized into a kind of corporate hierarchy invested with almost the same spiritual supremacy once possessed by the Catholic Church'.† He declares that they have 'exaggerated' their 'line of thought', and that it is horrifying that they regarded their 'spiritual authority' as sufficient security for 'good government, the sole bulwark against practical oppression' and a means by which 'despotism in the State and despotism in the family would be rendered innocuous and beneficial'. Such ideas now seem to him no less than

the completest system of spiritual and temporal despotism which ever yet emanated from a human brain, unless that of Ignatius Loyola.‡

While the bourgeois protagonist of Liberty thus draws back in horror, the working-class advocates of Communism launch their assault on somewhat different grounds. *The Working Bee*, organ of the Manor Fen community, sums up the Communist and egalitarian criticism of the movement in 1840 when it declares:

Every Socialist will perceive that St Simon's theory confers advantages on those whom nature has rendered superior in talent and capacity to their fellows, whilst those who have been born inferior are subjected to disadvantages. Here is a principle of injustice which pervades the system.§

Similarly, Henry Hetherington's *The 'Destructive' and Poor Man's Conservative* expressed the views of most English workers when, drawing

* David Brooks Cofer, *Saint Simonism in the Radicalism of Thomas Carlyle*, pp. 55–6.
† *Organisateur*, Vol. II, pp. 202, 213, quoted in F. A. von Hayek in *Economica*, Vol VIII (New Series), No. 30, p. 148.

* Ibid., pp. 140–1.
† John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 179–80.
‡ Ibid.
§ *The Working Bee*, Vol. I, No. 11, August 15th, 1840, p. 81.

attention to the fact that the movement was being 'furiously attacked' by Whigs and Tories,* it gave vent to its own cutting criticism by assailing the cherished metaphysical basis of the Saint-Simonians:

> Their theories of women and property are, to say the least, crude and premature . . . Very little reflection would teach the followers of St Simon that a change in the *institution of property* must precede every other great change, and that to this alone they should therefore turn their thoughts, instead of distracting the public mind, as they do now, with new-fangled dogmas, which neither the public nor themselves are in a condition to appreciate, much less to turn to any practical account. Another circumstance we dislike in them is their associating their system with the name of religion, and still more the superadding to that system certain monarchical forms which give the whole a mixed air of Gothic barbarity and imposture. These are not times for imposing on men by religious effect.†

The Saint-Simonians, the newspaper continues, have degenerated from a progressive into a reactionary movement – they are aiming at a 'new feudalism'. Perhaps because of the monarchic, Catholic nature of France the movement has developed 'monarchic' principles couched in 'ceremonial'. There is no need to 'superimpose any new religious system' on their politico-economic projects; the idea of 'attempting to organize a party in England' furthermore is a mistake – it is better for would-be social reformers to work within the general body of the working-class movement.

By this time the Saint-Simonians as an organized movement were dead. Harriet Martineau declares with satisfaction:

> there may be wardrobes where the dress of the sect is laid by in lavender, and now and then wistfully looked at; there may be times when families and friends revert to the golden rule or when it will come into practice.‡

But, as one of the French historians of the movement once wrote, 'though the pod had withered out of all recognition, the seeds had been well and widely sown. The ghosts of the Saint-Simonians, if they dared, could remember with pride the phrase which their leader, Enfantin, uttered at his trial in Paris in 1832. '*You will not take a single step without setting your feet in the prints we have made.*'

* *The 'Destructive' and Poor Man's Conservative*, p. 336.
† Ibid., p. 339.
‡ Harriet Martineau, op. cit.

THE IMMORAL GODS

David Paul

It is difficult to decide whether to begin with Saint Augustine, with Marlowe or with Racine. It was the first who, in his search for a law to control his own emotional lawlessness, cried out against 'the immoral gods of the Greek and Roman theatre' – the theatre which excited the emotions simply, in his view, to exploit them, and whose only answer to emotional unrest was to present it with a ritual image of itself, in which it might temporarily exhaust its impulse and attain, at least, the satisfaction of exhaustion – or the Aristotelian catharsis. It was the second, Marlowe, who, more than any other great dramatic poet, set out deliberately to exploit to the full the moral irresponsibility of the theatre, to beguile and horrify the spectator with a view of the enormities of Tamburlaine, Faustus and the Jew of Malta. It was the third, Racine, who – brought up in the letter of a strict Augustinian creed, which he might try to escape but could never renounce – made a forlorn attempt to reconcile the immoral gods with his code of belief, by showing that they did not positively flout it, and even tried to go further and prove that they actively conduced to its support. His words of defence, ingenuously plausible, in the Preface to *Phèdre*, are sufficiently well known:

> Je n'ose encore assurer que cette pièce soit en effet la meilleure de mes tragédies. . . . Je n'en ai point fait où la vertu soit plus mise en jour que dans celle-ci; les moindres fautes y sont sévèrement punies; la seule pensée du crime y est regardée avec autant d'horreur que le crime même . . . et le vice y est peint partout avec des couleurs qui en font connaître et haïr la difformité.

But has anyone ever gone to a performance of *Phèdre* with any of the purposes implied? And if these were the real purposes for which it was written, would anyone be capable of reading it to-day? Racine's apology can be nicely balanced with Marlowe's prologue to *Tamburlaine:*

> View but his picture in this tragic glass
> And then applaud his fortunes as you please

or with the Machiavelli of the saucy prologue to *The Jew of Malta:*

> Albeit the world thinks Machiavel is dead
> Yet was his soul but flown beyond the alps,
> And, now the Guise is dead, is come from France
> To view this land and frolic with his friends. . . .

But whither am I bound? I come not, I,
To read a lecture here in Britain
But to present the tragedy of a Jew
Who smiles to see how full his bags are crammed,
Which money was not got without my means.
I crave but this – grace him as he deserves
And let him not be entertained the worse
Because he favours me.

No two forms of induction to a tragedy could be more remote in tone than these of Racine and Marlowe. They seem to illustrate a total difference of temperament. But the two men were dramatists, and when possessed by the spirit of their craft they were both subjugated to its requirements in similar ways. Marlowe's Barabas is a more than life-size portrait of a monster. But so too is Racine's Phèdre. If Barabas approaches the inhuman, Phèdre touches on the super-human, both in her kinship to divinity, and in the passion which is put upon her as a punishment from heaven. As monsters they are both (and this is a tragic essential) fully conscious of their monstrosity. When they speak of it, they do so in terms not so remote as a total difference of tone might seem to make them:

As for myself, I walk abroad o'nights
And kill sick people groaning under walls;
Sometimes I go about and poison wells. . . .
I filled the jails with bankrupts in a year
And with young orphans planted hospitals.

Objet infortuné des vengeances célestes
Je m'abhorre encore plus que tu ne me détestes.
Venge-toi, punis-moi d'un odieux amour,
Digne fils du héros qui t'a donné le jour.
Délivre l'univers d'un monstre qui t'irrite,
La veuve de Thésée ose aimer Hippolyte!

The tragic hero has to live in his own shadow, in the shadow cast by his own passions, even if he views it, as Barabas does, with a certain cynicism. It was no doubt the cynicism which prompted Marlowe to invoke the shade of Machiavelli as protector to his hero. Machiavelli's was a shadow that had struck cold across all Europe – and, in a sense, still does so. No one, perhaps, would have been more surprised at the nature of its effect than he himself. Ideally, if only ideally, he was no doubt as free from the pangs of subjective conscience as his patron, Cesare Borgia. Borgia, like most of his prototypes in Renaissance Italy, while admirably fitted by his actions for a central place in tragic drama, was at the same time quite disqualified for it by a total unawareness of their moral import. The tragic dimension is always subjective. A man like Cesare Borgia was incapable of living in his own shadow. Even when it was forced upon him by the consequences of his acts, he could not look at it in terms of his own responsibility – only in terms of his own mistakes.

It is this quality in the character of Renaissance Italy which fascinated and shocked the puritan imagination of Elizabethan England – the seemingly boundless capacity for self-assertion without any regard to the consequences, without any morally saving and materially dangerous sense of compunction. The Elizabethan dramatist witnessed the actions – from a suitably distant vantage-point in place and time – and with the help of his own imagination and moral heritage supplied the sense of pity, remorse and terror. Nothing would have surprised a sixteenth-century Italian more than to witness an Elizabethan tragedy based on events familiar to him – say, *The Duchess of Malfi* – in which the locality, characters and action are steeped in an emotional atmosphere so remote from his own that he would scarcely be able to recognize or understand the content of the play at all.

To appreciate this process of transmutation in the dramatist's mind one may take any one of a number of stories of sixteenth-century Italy and examine it with a view to the possibilities it might present to a Webster or a Middleton. Take, for example, the story which occurs, I believe, in Stendhal, of the provincial Italian lord who, having reason to suspect his wife's fidelity, lays a plot to surprise her with her lover. Having succeeded in doing so, he is so overwhelmed by rage when he confronts the pair that, after killing the lover with eighteen stab-wounds and biting his face until it is unrecognizable, he falls into a convulsion that prevents him from dealing with his wife. His rage is exhausted, but not his wish for vengeance. He temporizes, locks his wife in a tower, makes it be publicly understood that he is expecting an heir. After a delay of months a family council, at which his wife's relatives assert that womenfolk of theirs who dishonour themselves are usually put to death by their nearest of kin. Accordingly it is agreed that the woman's brother and uncle go to the tower where she is still kept prisoner, inform her of her sentence, give her time to say her prayers, and then suffocate her with a cushion. Stated in these terms, the story is nothing but a news-item of peculiar brutality, set back in history. But I think it is possible to see it as material for a tragedy of Webster's, with a central climax in Act III – the confrontation and murder – leading on, with characteristic awkwardness, to the death of the woman at the close. It is hard, on the other hand, to imagine it acceptably in the form of a novel because the whole story is of a violence which defies prosaic judgment. Only tragic poetry could redeem it, and carry it outside the sphere of every-day opinion, which can only condemn it.

But it seems to be the function of tragedy to enhance human action to a degree beyond moral judgment. Within the bounds of the play, opinion

becomes irrelevant, except as an expression of convention, like the persons who come to close the action: 'These heavy deeds with heavy heart relate.' Which leads me to the moral observations of Shakespeare, thickly strewn – with notable exceptions – over the early plays; and to the career, and fate, of Shakespeare the Aphorist. The Shakespearean tendency to aphorism, to the continual distillation of wise saws and instances, is one of the most completely accepted peculiarities of the Bard. That it is a peculiarity, at times amounting to an obsession, can be attested by comparison with his contemporaries. It is not present in Marlowe, whose corresponding idiosyncrasy is a bravura display of linguistic tags of learning – Latin, Greek, Spanish – together with bead-rolls of classic or barbaric names. In Webster, the moral observations are so deeply soaked in his dramatic atmosphere that, once they are separated from it, they tend to dry up. But in the thirty-six plays they have been consecrated, since the eighteenth century, as the Beauties of Shakespeare. From 'All the world's a stage' to 'Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back' – and stretching before and after – they are more familiar to everyone than the context in which they are set, precisely because they are so easily separable from it.

They are easily separable because they are dramatically irrelevant however naturally they may appear to arise from the situation. It seems to me that they mark a tendency which may even have constituted a conscious problem for the dramatist, and the evolution of their treatment through the plays may indicate its solution. I think the crisis of the development, like others, may be marked, if anywhere precisely, in *Hamlet*. It is well established that Shakespeare must have been reading Montaigne, at or some time before writing this play. Now there is a little of everything in the endless scope of Montaigne; notably, there is a good deal of Hamlet, and even more of Polonius. The writer of *Hamlet* may have been struck, even as we are, by the self-evident tedium in Montaigne, the long stretches of it, interspersed with the fascination of the totally unexpected. It seems as if Montaigne felt compelled to say everything that occurred to him, however obvious it might be. This fact may have precipitated, in Shakespeare the reader, a consciousness of a corresponding tendency in himself. Perhaps he was twitted by his contemporaries on the score of his wise saws. Perhaps he simply felt, as we all can feel, a revulsion against a part of himself, a habit that he knew too well. Perhaps above all he felt their increasing irrelevance to the tension of dramatic meaning, and in particular to the nameless tensions of *Hamlet;* and having done so, he precipitated them, isolated and ridiculed them in the character of Polonius.

Every creative writer, and above all the dramatist, has to attain a

degree of self-suspension in his work. In so far as the personality intrudes, its intrusions are usually damaging. To prevent such an intrusion, or rather to insulate it, whether deliberately or not, it seems to me that Shakespeare created a caricature of a part of himself in Polonius. Polonius is true to all the aphoristic tendencies of Shakespeare. He monopolizes and is monopolized by them, and displays them in a state of arrested development. His advice to Laertes:

> This above all, to thine own self be true
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man

is neither better nor worse than, is in fact of the closest kin to 'The quality of mercy is not strained' or

> All places that the eye of heaven visits
> Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
> Teach thy necessity to reason thus;
> There is no virtue like necessity!

But where the earlier examples, from *The Merchant of Venice* and *Richard II*, seem perfectly in place as a formal flourish on the action of the play, in the case of *Hamlet* they can only emphasize the tension of its meaning by their futility and irrelevance. Nevertheless, they represent one of the most deeply rooted habits of mind of the writer. And if at first sight it seems improbable that Polonius could in any sense be a piece of self-caricature, a ceremonial slaying of the self in effigy, compare him for a moment with Prospero. Of all the characters in all the plays Prospero is the one who is usually accepted more or less explicitly as a piece of self-identification. Perhaps the relationship between the two is one of positive to negative, but it has always seemed to me that Prospero bears an uncomfortable likeness, in more than one particular, to Polonius.

There may be many examples of creative writers, from one motive or another, sacrificing themselves in effigy, as a target for ridicule or disapproval within their works. There is the case of Flaubert, whose novels can be viewed as a series of renunciatory self-immolations. The example that occurs to me may seem remote from the case, but it has more than one kind of relevance. However far the novels of Jane Austen may seem from Shakespeare, she is the one other writer who disappears, as completely as possible, into her work. Through it we can guess at her character only by its limitations, scarcely more positively than that. So far as the figures in her novels are concerned there is no certain possibility of identification – except in one curious instance. It has always seemed to me that in *Mansfield Park*, Mary Crawford has too many pins of disapproval or dislike stuck into her. In the end one feels that she is not nearly so black

as her author wanted to paint her. The emphasis, the bias against her, is just a little too deliberately weighted. What can have been the motive? With the help of the Letters as evidence, I think one can reasonably guess that Mary Crawford was none other than the writer herself, an earlier and flightier self, whom the somewhat Methodistically inclined authoress of *Mansfield Park* had outgrown, had come to disapprove of. Mary's witticisms, her touches of coarseness, her jokes about husband-hunting, her twin preoccupations with handsome men and handsome fortunes, they are all there in the letters, unequivocally, if somewhat ironically flourished, as the personal property of the writer herself.

But if I introduce a mention of this novel into an unexpected context, it is also for another purpose, another kind of relevance. The play-acting episode in *Mansfield Park* illustrates in miniature, with ironic mastery and subtlety, the disastrous effects of the intrusion of the immoral gods of the theatre into the lives of an altogether too well-regulated household In the latter respect *Mansfield Park* is a summary, a succinct prophecy, of the domestic Victorian way of life. Such a world could have no room for the drama, except as a very doubtful and dangerous indulgence. Even the Beauties of Shakespeare, when read aloud by the too eloquent voice of Mr Crawford, could become a menace to the tranquil mind. In such a world, the drama was bound to sink to the lowest depths, for of all literary forms it is the least susceptible to the charms of respectability. Perhaps that is why Shaw was instinctively at odds with respectability, though his hostility was so much of a feint. In the end, or rather long before it, he became respectable himself – his St Joan is a figure who would alarm no one, whereas her original alarmed half of Europe – and as a consequence his work died, as the drama has died successive deaths from respectability or theatrical convention, during the past century, after fitful and sporadic attempts at life.

To return for a moment to the fate of Shakespeare the Aphorist. If he died the death in the person of Polonius, it was, in a way, because he was already dead and had been reincarnated in a very different form in the person of Hamlet. Hamlet's aphoristic tendency is as inveterate as his would-be father-in-law's, but it points in quite a different direction – points, in fact, into the unspeakable core of the dramatic struggle. Every phrase, though it seems to glance aside, helps to fuse into words the feeling generated by each step in the dramatic action. The soliloquies of Macbeth and Hamlet can be separated from their context – they too are among the Beauties – but they lose by the separation. So much so that it is possible to imagine someone familiar by quotation with nearly every word of either play, but otherwise totally ignorant of them, being startled indeed by the experience of a first performance. In the case of *King Lear*,

the action as a whole may be said to fuse into two opposite, irreconcilable, equally tremendous statements: 'Men must endure their going hence, even as their coming hither. Ripeness is all' and

> Like flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods,
> They kill us for their sport.

The 'meaning' of the play as a whole is defined by both statements, and neither. It transcends them both, and both are necessary to it. And what, in the end, is the meaning and purpose of this, and of all tragedy? Perhaps the immorality of the tragic gods resides simply in the fact that their purpose transcends the safety of fixed meanings. It is an invocation, irresponsible to any moral system, to the 'shadows that waken in the blood.' Œdipus, the tragic hero *par excellence*, still cannot fail to waken those shadows. The tragic purpose is, by invocation, to transfigure them. Perhaps this, if obscurely, can help to explain why poetic tragedy at its highest has only occurred once in a civilization, at a moment when a people was freed from the tyranny of a rigid system – as the Greeks from tabu, the Elizabethans from medievalism – and found itself launched into a full consciousness of the exhilaration, and the fear, of the uncharted spaces of being, a consciousness which must quickly, in the interests of safety and 'sanity', be restricted and confined; but not before the endless reverberations of the tragic echo have been invoked. What the echoes insist on cannot be carried further into explicit meaning, in spite of their insistence. Beyond them all is conjecture, or a full stop. As for the conjectures, they can best be framed in the words of Yeats, in one of the most luminous and least explicable poems of his old age:

> They know that Hamlet and Lear are gay;
> Gaiety transfiguring all that dread,
> All men have aimed at, found and lost;
> Black out; Heaven blazing into the head:
> Tragedy wrought to its uttermost.
> Though Hamlet rambles and Lear rages,
> And all the drop-scenes drop at once.
> Upon a hundred thousand stages,
> It cannot grow by an inch or an ounce.

THE FUTURE OF POETRY

Julian Symons

Author of *Charles Dickens* (1951), *Thomas Carlyle* (1952) and other writings. The following will appear in a forthcoming volume of essays called *Critical Occasions*.

> All art, even the highest, is influenced by the conditions of labour of the mass of mankind, and any pretensions which may be made for even the highest intellectual art to be independent of these general conditions are futile and vain; that is to say, that any art which professes to be founded on the special education or refinement of a limited body or class must of necessity be unreal and short-lived. ART IS MAN'S EXPRESSION OF HIS JOY IN LABOUR.
>
> William Morris: *Art Under Plutocracy*, 1883.

Several years ago Mr Edmund Wilson suggested, in an interesting essay called 'Is Verse a Dying Technique?', that there have been two traditions of verse in English, one musical and the other visual or verbal. Mr Wilson in his essay did not push the idea very far; but, enlarged and extended, it throws a good deal of light on the present poetic situation in which the poet's audience has narrowed so that he produces poetry, as Morris suggested in the quotation at the head of this page, 'founded on the special education or refinement of a limited body or class'. So limited, indeed, that the sales of new books of poetry to-day, with very few exceptions, reach no more than two or three hundred copies. Art in general, and in particular the arts of poetry and painting which give special opportunities for purely personal expression, have become much more a means of healing psychological frustration than of showing man's joy in labour. By discovering what has brought about this change in the attitudes of poets and audience we may learn something of what kind of poetry is likely to be written in the future.

Poetry began as incantation for primitive tribes, magical incantation to bring rain, to cure sickness, to celebrate the rites of birth or death. In essence this poetry was ritualistic. It consisted of a simple verbal pattern, with many repetitions and comparatively few variations of sound. This incantatory verse was accompanied by music – was in fact one with the music, so that words and sound were interdependent. For the Greeks music and poetry were still complementary; but not for the Romans. Mr Wilson offers an illuminating comparison:

> Compare a landscape in one of the choruses of Sophocles or Aristophanes with a landscape in Virgil or Horace: the Greeks are *singing* about the landscape; the Romans are fixing it for the eye of the mind.

The conception of poetry's kinship with music is valid only for a society in which poetry is spoken much more than it is read; in which traditional narratives are orally transmitted, with slight variations, from generation to generation; in which rhyme and repetition are highly important mnemonic devices. In this kind of society, verse is the natural medium for heroic and dramatic stories, and also for moral tales; generally the stories and tales have a musical accompaniment, and the story-teller is often himself a musician. Prose, which is by comparison difficult to memorize and has much less possibility of emphatic repetition and significant variation, is reserved for the use of scholars. Our poetic tradition was for a long time a musical one. Sometimes poems were actually composed with a musical setting, like the Elizabethan and Jacobean masques and lyrics; but where there was no actual musical background the poet wrote as a man conscious of its existence, using images designed to appeal to the ear rather than to the eye.

The history of English poetry can be understood most readily in terms of the developing industrial techniques which enormously enlarged the potential audience for poetry, and at the same time vulgarized it; and of the changes in social structure brought about by these industrial techniques. When printing and binding had advanced to the point at which people in large numbers began to *read* poetry, the social reason for its musical basis disappeared. There is a change in our poetic history, slow at first but gathering speed with the Industrial Revolution, from poetry composed for the ear to poetry composed for the eye, from images which have a primarily aural appeal to images which have a visual or verbal appeal.

Poets themselves became conscious of the change near the end of the nineteenth century, when they began to practise such purely visual devices as the dropping of the capital letter at the beginning of a verse line. Such a typographical trick would have had no meaning a century before, when poetry was still often read aloud; to-day many poets attach importance to it, believing that capitals are an unnecessary intrusion unless they are demanded by punctuation. There is still, however, no general realization of the fact that the form in which words appear on a page can alter the effect they produce upon our mind's eye. Take such a commonplace poetic phrase as 'the die is cast', so badly worn that read aloud it can hardly evoke an image of any kind. Put this phrase in a poem as

> the final words are spoken and
> the die is
> cast

and the pause as the eye moves from the end of one line to the 'cast' of

the next does create an image in the mind which can never come to the ear, of the die actually being thrown. That is a very simple instance of what a poet can do to appeal to our new way of seeing; much more complex visual devices are used by many poets from Gerard Manley Hopkins to E. E. Cummings.

It is also not generally realized that the eye can take in much more complex images, much more involved metaphors and similes, than those which please the ear; and those who have been habituated to reading poetry rather than hearing it find that they get little reward from listening to poetry composed wholly in the musical tradition. Their attention slides away from the surge of sound, they search in vain for an image or a phrase to bring them up with a visual or verbal shock. Compare typical passages about springtime by Swinburne, T. S. Eliot and W. H. Auden:

O tender time that love thinks long to see,
Sweet foot of spring that with her footfall sows
Late snowlike flowery leavings of the snows,
Be not too long irresolute to be;
O mother-month, where have they hidden thee?
Out of the pale time of the flowerless rose
I stretch my heart out toward the springtime lands,
I stretch my spirit forth to the fair hours,
The purplest of the prime;
I lean my soul down over them, with hands
Made wide to take the ghostly growths of flowers;
I send my love back to the lovely time.

(Swinburne.)

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.

(Eliot.)

It was Easter as I walked in the public gardens
Hearing the frogs exhaling from the pond,
Watching traffic of magnificent cloud
Moving without anxiety on open sky –
Season when lovers and writers find
An altering speech for altering things,
An emphasis on new names, on the arm
A fresh hand with fresh power.

(Auden.)

The effect of such verse as Swinburne's is something almost independent of meaning; there are no sharp or strong images, everything is merged in that Swinburnian permanent wave of sound. Much of Swinburne could easily be set to music, and many people provide their own music for his poetry – a kind of refined barrel organ grinds away in their heads while

they are reading his poems. There is no music, in a Swinburnian sense, in such lines as 'I walked in the public gardens/Hearing the frogs exhaling from the pond' or 'April is the cruellest month, breeding/Lilacs out of the dead land', but their impact on the printed page is far greater than the characteristic impact of Swinburne's verse. This is not an attempt to assess the comparative values of these extracts in absolute terms; the point is that the impact they make is different, that in Swinburne it is musical, in Eliot and Auden verbal and visual.

In Swinburne's time the musical tradition was dying, finding its true existence only in the rough Victorian street ballads. Such recordings of notable events often have a vigour lacking in the work of the professional poets of the day, because the anonymous ballad writers were still producing work for an uneducated audience which accepted poems passed round from hand to hand, or from mouth to mouth. The emotional requirements of that audience are now satisfied by such legendary figures as Jane or Superman; and it is because the audience no longer exists that poets to-day are not bards or Chaucerian tale-tellers.

That is what industrial development has done for poetry, or to poetry: it has changed the form of our appreciation, and changed it permanently as we count permanence. The accompanying changes in the structure of society have isolated the poet from his fellows, and have led him to write more and more in an esoteric language. It is possible to imagine a social system that might have given the poet another role: that would have allowed the creation of a poetry equal in wit, intelligence and passion to any in our history, which might still have been identified with majority hopes and aspirations. William Morris looked forward optimistically to a world where compulsory education meant cultural education, where production was for use and not for profit, where art and literature were organized as creative guilds and not as competitive industries appealing to the lowest common denominator of public taste: but we do not live in such a world. We live, instead, in a capitalist society whose monolithic tendency demands that the arts should be more and more closely integrated into its commercial structure. The technical achievements, through which books could be cheaply printed and bound, made possible a large audience of readers (as distinct from the large audience of listeners gained by our early poets); and this audience could be reached most easily through prose. To this extent at least, the remark that the novel is the bourgeois art form is true. In the nineteenth century the novel took over almost completely all the ground of romantic tale or didactic moralizing formerly occupied by the narrative poem and the 'story in verse'; such works as Patmore's *Angel in the House* and Browning's *The Ring and the Book* plainly belong to the fag-end of a tradition.

The novel replaced the poem in part because the looser and more flexible rhythms of prose offered less difficulty than the rhythms of poetry to semi-educated readers, and in part because the novel conformed much more easily than the narrative poem to such commercial requirements as issue of a work in monthly parts. (An instructive sociological study could be made of the effect such serial publication had on the work of many nineteenth century novelists.) The fissure in our culture visible at the beginning of the nineteenth century has widened by the end of it to a vast gap between 'highbrow' and 'popular' writers. The days of monthly-part publication are over. The novel has forgotten its casual beginnings and has turned, in the hands of at least some practitioners, to an art form consciously used. And poets, represented first by the pre-Raphaelites, then by the aesthetes of the 'nineties, and later by the youthful T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, are with an equal self-consciousness protesting against the conversion of cultural standards into commercial standards, the debasement of values by which 'the pianola replaces Sappho's barbitos'. These last poets and their followers are quite deliberately looking for a new language to replace the convention of 'natural speech' which was strong in the time of Wordsworth but had weakened by the end of the nineteenth century; and they have accepted as inevitable the idea that poetry is a fragment of minority culture.

During the past half century, poets of the Right and Left equally, Eliot, Yeats and Pound as much as Auden and Spender, have attacked the spurious cultural and emotional standards of our civilization. In making the attack they have denied themselves a majority audience, such as the artist has had in the past; in a fanatical, and at times priggish, concern with their own integrity as artists they have written for those sympathetic to their own way of thinking and feeling. Their poetry has become, more and more, a demonstration of the art of personal faith-healing; by asserting the value of their own isolated individual sensibilities the poets seek to ignore the gap between their own minority culture and the rest of the world.

An art based upon such foundations, William Morris believed, must be unreal and short-lived: and yet it seems certain that while there is no material change in our social structure poetry must continue to be written for the eye and not for the ear. Because of this the poet's audience must remain a narrow one; and all the well-meant efforts to 'introduce poetry to the people', by reading Shakespeare in public-houses or producing synthetically simple poetry programmes on the radio, are useless because they ignore the essential change that has taken place in poetic appreciation.

With the very recent development of cinema, radio and television as new artistic mediums it is at least possible that poetry, as an art of the individual, has fulfilled its function. Many subjects chosen by poets in the past will in the future be covered by other art-forms. Byron to-day would be more likely to write *Don Juan* as a satiric novel than as a poem; or, to take a reverse instance of the same process, it does not need a great effort of imagination to think of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as a satirical allegorical poem. No poet to-day is likely to attempt to write an epic, because he is aware that the film is a more appropriate medium for such a work, however much its creators have misused their opportunities. Such a dramatic poem as 'The Eve of St Agnes' would probably be written as a radio script. And our admiration for the brief personal lyrics of longing and regret that have become the main element of poetry in the past century may seem almost incomprehensible to the critics of another age.

Poetry is no less, but no more, than one of man's forms of artistic expression; and if it is less suitable than the film or the novel to the world in which our children may live, that is hardly a text for mourning. If poetry is ever again to be 'popular' it will surely be as an aspect of one or other of the collective mediums that are manifestly the art-forms of the future and that yet remain, as arts, in their infancy. Poetry might be a strengthening and stiffening influence in the cinema; it might be *used*, instead of merely spoken, in radio and television; it might have other uses in the theatre than to point a slightly sanctimonious Christian or Communist moral, as in the plays of Eliot or O'Casey. The only thing we can safely say about such poetry is that in its rhythms and its adaptation to specific purposes it will be unlike anything written to-day. (As primitive poetry was concerned with the need for rain or sun, and not with such abstractions as truth or beauty.) In the end it is the shape of society that orders the nature and forms of art; and the collective art of the future, finding its subjects not in the fate of the individual, but in the struggle and achievement of all mankind, will generate its characteristic art forms as the oyster produces its pearl.

A CHILD OF THE CENTURY

J. G. Weightman

Arrow in the Blue. Arthur Koestler, Collins-Hamish Hamilton, 18s.

Koestler's last work, *The Age of Longing*, was a curiously bad novel. It is a relief to find that his new book, the first volume of his autobiography, is both interesting and good. In *The Age of Longing* two or three neuroses were at work, and the reader had the embarrassed suspicion, so often inspired by modern novels, that the writer could surely not realize how transparently he was giving himself away. A neurosis may be helpful in getting a book written, but when the author's mother-fixation or his wooden leg stick out too obviously, the book is usually defective as a work of art. *The Age of Longing* bristled with things sticking out. In *Arrow in the Blue* the neuroses are under control. Writing in the first person, Koestler dockets them all, and reaches a more coherent kind of truth than when the warring fragments of his middle-aged personality expressed themselves through character. The genuine first person singular is not, as a rule, highly thought of by literary people, because they feel it does not dredge up such pregnant symbols as writing in the third person. This is probably true, but the rather thin and precarious awareness of the first person is preferable to jumbled symbols in the third.

Arrow in the Blue is, of course, another *Confession d'un Enfant du Siècle*. Indeed, Koestler can claim to be *the* child of the century. Everything about him is representative. To begin with, he is Jewish, and in a sense we have now all become Jews. The flimsiness of his personal background is characteristic of this shifting age. His paternal grandfather fled to Hungary from Russia during the Crimean War and neither revealed his name nor spoke about his past. His son, our Koestler's father, was a feckless enthusiast, married to a rather neurotic Viennese, who considered Budapest a place of exile. Such parents did not create an atmosphere of security. Arthur was an only child, and he suffered from the terrors and inhibitions that have been described by scores of middle-class novelists. At an early age he developed a sense of the mystery of eternity and space, and of the horror of the universe, as well as a sense of guilt, of not being able to do the right thing if he tried. At the same time, being more robust than some intellectuals, he understood, while still a child, that the only way to make life bearable was to lift himself out of the morass by his own boot-strings.

Hence a positive side to his character, a desire to act upon the world, alternating with the contemplative mood. He tells us that he has always swung between these two attitudes – rejection of society and the urge to political action – and this accounts for the dualism in his titles and in his books, a dualism most clearly visible in *The Yogi and The Commissar*. Nothing could be more typically 'Western' and twentieth-century than this rhythm of inflation and deflation, introversion and extraversion, drunkenness and sobriety, political hope and cosmic despair.

Into this general pattern are fitted other, more personal, miseries and uncertainties. Koestler has the indispensable inferiority complex, due in his case to shortness of stature. He is not, Glory be, homosexual (his only lapse from typicalness), but he has obviously had his share of sexual worries and has suffered much from being unloved by both sexes. He has run from woman to woman, he implies, in search of the perfect relationship, but either he has never found it or he cannot describe it, since there is no detailed portrait of any woman in this first volume. He has also moved from language to language; until the age of fourteen, he was bilingual in Hungarian and German, with a bias towards Hungarian; between fourteen and thirty-five he spoke and wrote mainly in German; and since the age of thirty-five, English has become his first language. He also had several occupations before settling down to be a writer. First he was a student of engineering, but virtually ran away from home before the end of the course; then he was a settler in Palestine, later a tramp who tried his hand unsuccessfully at a series of jobs and starved for days on end, then a political correspondent in the Middle East and in Paris, and finally, just before Hitler's rise to power, the highly paid science editor of the Ullstein group of papers in Berlin.

His knowledge of countries and social phenomena is correspondingly vast. He remembers the Bela Kun rising as a romantic upheaval in his childhood; the Vienna of his student days was a town of wine, women and duelling; he knows Palestine and the Middle East; he saw the seamy side of French politics and the treacherousness of German life when Hitler was coming to power; he flew through the Arctic Circle in the *Graf Zeppelin*, and his second volume will, no doubt, tell us about Russia, Spain, England and America. Add to all this that he was writing poems and stories in Hungarian in his teens, that he was discussing the meaning of life with suicidal Russians in Vienna at the age of twenty, that he was a disciple of the Zionist leader, Jabotinsky, shortly afterwards, and that up to the age of thirty-five he poured out articles in German on all imaginable subjects. He took to Freudianism and Marxism as soon as he discovered them, and all through this volume there are signs of a religious thirst for an answer to the riddle of life.

The book is, then, quite exceptionally rich and readable. It is such a compendium of twentieth-century characteristics that it will be read at one sitting by all those with a taste for the freshness of a really contemporary work. But, after reading it, we have to decide on what level it is successful and what conclusions can be drawn from this pilgrimage through the first half of the century.

The level is not, perhaps, a very high one. The book misses greatness, though we can expect it to be permanent. Koestler is, himself, so conscious of being a child of the age that he tends in places to make the design too symmetrical. He begins with the year of his birth and shows how many of the events of those twelve months foreshadowed the great changes through which he was to live. This savours of a journalistic trick, and the cleverness repeats itself in the description of each of the crises of his career. Also, his vivid narrative is broken up by patches of essay writing, not all of which are justifiable in the places where they occur; for instance, we are given a chapter on the sober usefulness of Parisian brothels, but this is neither very valuable in itself nor sufficiently linked to the story of Koestler's own development. He has an interesting passage on the dangers of *feuilleton* writing, as practised in Continental journalism, yet he has not quite cured himself of the habit. A more serious weakness is that the people in his life, while neatly sketched in, all appear rather remote and seen from the same distance; the most elaborately described is King Feisal, whom he saw only once. In an autobiography, one would have expected the emphasis to be on the Koestler story rather than on news interest. His system of values veers away at times from the personal to the ideological. Again this may be typical, and is certainly better than self-pity and sentimentality, but it means that the book is slightly coarse, and its coarseness is increased by the occasional vulgarity of the style; e.g.

> The longing to embrace the perfect cause turned me into a Casanova of Causes; the phantom chase after Helena followed the same pattern. The form of the rash changed, but the disease remained the same; a glandular condition called absolutitis.

He writes English far better than most Englishmen, but his thoughts and feelings are not perfectly melted into the language. His writing is smart, not deeply satisfying.

As for his conclusions, he is probably saving them up for a later instalment. However, he suggests two general principles. The first is that individual development consists in gradually discarding the protective crust of personality formed in childhood and youth. After another ten years' effort, he hopes to have shaken off all the hard flakes, and to stand naked and himself. The second is that, having run through the ideologies,

one arrives at a belief in God. A quotation from the Catholic, Claudel, appears on the title page:

> *I fled in vain; everywhere I found the Law;*

but Claudel would be furious to find himself later bracketed with Rousseau. Koestler appears to commit himself to nothing more than a Rousseauistic Deism. He quotes Rousseau on the Divine Principle: 'It is to our souls what our soul is to our body.' This again is our present-day religion, but Koestler, like most of us, believes in it much more faintly than Rousseau did. It is not in the centre of his book, but pinned in as an afterthought at the beginning and hinted at only in passing. The book, as a whole, is a wry commentary on the messiness and tragedy of life; the best-laid schemes go wrong, political and personal enthusiasms end in disillusion, a whole family is massacred by Hitlerism. Perhaps this sense of tragedy, slightly out of focus, accounts for the fact that the best-written and most memorable page in the book is a magnificent Chinese story, told by Koestler to illustrate the atmosphere among intellectuals in Germany when the Weimar Republic, while still appearing intact, was crumbling before Hitlerism. It is the story of the executioner Wang Lun:

> His ambition was to be able to behead a person with a stroke, so swift that, in accordance with the law of inertia, the victim's head would remain poised on his trunk, in the same manner as a plate remains undisturbed on the table if the tablecloth is pulled out with a sudden jerk.
>
> Wang Lun's great moment came in the seventy-eighth year of his life. On that memorable day he had to despatch sixteen clients from this world of shadows to their ancestors. He stood as usual at the foot of the scaffold, and eleven shaven heads had already rolled into the dust after his inimitable master-stroke. His triumph came with the twelfth man. When this man began to ascend the steps of the scaffold, Wang Lun's sword flashed with such lightning speed across his neck that the man's head remained where it had been before, and he continued to walk up the steps without knowing what had happened. When he reached the top of the scaffold, the man addressed Wang Lun as follows:
>
> 'O cruel Wang Lun, why do you prolong my agony of waiting when you dealt with the others with such merciful and amiable speed?'
>
> When he heard these words, Wang Lun knew that the work of his life had been accomplished. A serene smile appeared on his features; then he said with exquisite courtesy to the waiting man:
>
> 'Just kindly nod, please.'

This story makes us catch our breath, because we can give it a still wider application. Voltaire would have loved it, but not Rousseau.

BOOK NOTES

MAU MAU AND THE KIKUYU, by L.S.B. Leakey. (Methuen, pp. xi, 115, 7*s*. 6*d*.) This remarkable example of publishing enterprise contains two sections of unequal value. The analysis of the traditional life, land, marriage, initiation, religion, magic, is done with insight and clarity, as befits a 'white Kikuyu', the son of missionaries, an initiate into the tribal age-groups, now known as a foremost authority on East African archæology. The second half seems hastier, as though written for the occasion, with brief political notes on the situation since the coming of the European and some very general paragraphs on the present crisis, which Dr Leakey believes to have developed from a revolutionary movement forced to show its hand too soon. His handling of the crux of the matter, land and institutions, is quite masterly. In their expansion in the seventeenth century, the Agikuyu settled south across the Chania river in large estates, *githaka*, owned by family groups, with many *ahoi*, tenants, who followed the usual shifting cultivation, made more episodic by the need to hold a 'Maginot line' of fortified villages against raiding Masai. In 1902, these lands around Kiambu were deserted for the comprehensive reason of smallpox, rinderpest, drought and locusts. It was at this point that the first land cessions were made. . . . Subsequent history is shown as a Kikuyu attempt to get back the land, exacerbated by the destruction of the tribal equilibrium, and the good-natured ignorance and contempt of the new owners. It was not until 1929 that officialdom formally recognized the tribal system of councils, *kyama*, in the grades, *bururi* (district), *rugongo* (ridge), *mwaki* (fire-unit), *itura* (village). Dr Leakey recommends for the future: new land won through water-holes, greater security for the 'squatters', land-titles (*tidlydee*), proper wages and freehold in towns, instruction in birth control, a gradual abandonment of bride price, better character-training, 'real' Christianity, including an end to colour bar and differential pay, and more English instead of Kiswahili. There is only one caveat: Dr Leakey is not a modest man, and the frustration of defending the tribe against the philistine indifference of white Nairobi inevitably tells in his emotional attitude, most subtly in the extra clarity a compressed narrative must give to institutions. H. V. L. B.

THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE WAR, by George Kirk, with an introduction by Arnold Toynbee. Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs. (Oxford University Press, pp. 497, 42*s*.) 'Lo, all our pomp of yesterday,' reads the motto on the title page of this massive and well-documented volume in the series of Chatham House surveys covering the period 1939–46. And with this ironical evocation – doubly ironical since the words are Kipling's – the theme is set and the story unfolds to the now familiar accompaniment of learned variations on the subject of decline and fall, from Professor Toynbee's brief introduction to the author's last lingering reflections on the rise of the Soviet menace. We are spared nothing, except possibly the exhilaration of having the significance of the Axis defeat graphically brought home. Mr Kirk is too good a scholar to miss any event of importance, and his footnotes are crammed with references to governmental sources and press reports in every language. If there is a lacuna it is not of the factual kind. Successive chapters deal briefly and succinctly with the political background in 1939, the military ebb and flow until Alamein, Anglo-French relations, the Middle East Supply Centre (discussed by Mr Guy Hunter), the Egyptian, Syrian and Zionist bids for independence (so described by the author), the former Italian colonies, and France's troubles in North Africa. Little of any consequence is omitted, and the organization of the material is masterly. A particularly valuable chapter is devoted to the complex manœuvrings by governments and oil companies in and around the Arabian Peninsula.

It is, however, scarcely possible to judge so authoritative a publication on its technical merits alone. These are considerable; Mr Kirk's grasp of the interrelation of the manifold factors at work is probably unrivalled. Where he lays himself open to criticism is in mingling the roles of narrator and advocate. The almost unrelieved tedium of American scholarship has made most of us more tolerant of the Crocean principle that history is politics. But Crocean subjectivism has its own pitfalls. The historian with an axe to grind requires at least one or two other historians to keep watch on his conclusions. Mr Kirk emerges in this volume as a passionate defender of the settled policy of building on the alliance between Britain and Arab nationalism. Everything that interfered with this scheme, and

> the end helped to ruin it: French obstruction, Russian intrigue, nerican scepticism, Turkish obstinacy, above all Zionist intransigence, mes under the flail of his indignation. Sarcasm and invective are not ared. All this makes for lively reading, and does not notably interfere th the narrative, but it results in a curious distortion of perspective. ents of world-wide significance are judged in the light of their impact on the complicated mosaic of personal and political relations in some tty Middle Eastern capital. In the end one comes to feel that the whole uggle between the Western Powers, the Axis and the Soviet Union was

marginal to the ambitious scheme (or dream) of fashioning a stable alliance between British policy and pan-Arabism. This may have been how the insiders, or some of them, viewed the scene, but the historian, even if he shared their feelings at the time, ought to be able to stand back from the subject and dissect it impartially. In Mr Kirk's narrative the passions aroused during those stormy years still dictate the choice of emphasis. In view of the learned scorn he directs against relatively obscure propagandists, who at least did not lay claim to the title of historian, it is odd that he should devote so large a part of what is supposed to be an analytical survey to the purposes of political warfare.

G. L. ARNOLD.

THE DENTON WELCH JOURNALS. (Hamish Hamilton, 15*s*.) The diaries, unfortunately rather expurgated, of one of the most remarkable personalities to emerge in English writing during the last few years. These pages are, naturally, less finished than those of his other works. They contain a fair amount of insignificant material, overheard conversations, descriptions of people seen in the streets or on country rides, the menus of lunches, etc. Welch's version of the sort of things all writers jot down to ease their nagging consciences. The rest, like his novels and short stories, has the precise innocence and intelligence we would expect from a sensitive child who, just before adolescence, had been gifted with perfect speech. It is wise and pathetic, sexually indeterminate, yet at times more ruthless than a grown man can be, filled with a jackdaw-like interest in bright details, and untouched by general ideas, except those of mystery and death, which begin in childhood. A few reflections on writing show that Welch was more adult as an artist than as a man. Mr Jocelyn Brooke contributes an excellent introduction.

NEWMAN'S WAY. by Sean O'Faolain. (Longmans Green and Co., 25*s*.) Books on the rich peculiarities of the Victorians are turned out nowadays like plum puddings. This one, on the Newman family, is as good and as fruity as one expects. Mr O'Faolain puts Newman back into his family setting as one might put a swan back among the brood of ducks with which it was reared. But what does Mr O'Faolain really think about Newman? He expresses great admiration, yet Lytton Strachey's shadow falls across the book. We are not allowed to ignore the traces of snobbishness in the Cardinal and, curiously enough, the most attractive character in the volume is the beef-eating father of the whole sublime and ridiculous clutch.

PURITY OF DICTION IN ENGLISH VERSE, by Donald Davie. (Chatto and Windus, 14*s*.) A collection of essays by a specialist in English literature who is interested in the quality of poetry. His general argument is that eighteenth-century English verse is a great deal better than it is usually thought to be. He supports this thesis by admirable anaylses of the work of several poets, from Johnson to Charles Wesley, and by comparisons with the poetry of other periods.

THE LITTLE WORLD OF MAN, by J. B. Bamborough. (Longmans Green and Co., 20*s*.) A careful academic study of the psychological assumptions behind Shakespeare's characterization and Renaissance literature in general. These assumptions were not created afresh at the Renaissance, but are a continuation of mediæval thinking; therefore, we should look at Shakespeare's characters from that angle rather than from our own. This is, perhaps, being too academically thorough. If Shakespeare is worth reading, he is worth reading in our own way. But Mr Bamborough's book provides a useful corrective, and is a good example of scrupulous writing.

J. G. W.

MOZART IN SALZBURG, by Max Kenyon. (Putnam & Co. Ltd., pp. 222, 21*s*.) It is a pleasure to pick up a book as well produced as this one. An attractive dust-jacket is a foretaste of admirable type and illustrations. Nor does one's enjoyment stop here (as with some books). After a glance inside at a reproduction of the well-known portrait, one plunges at once into the current of Mr Kenyon's easy prose and is carried comfortably upon it (except for a snag or two in the shape of misplaced colloquialisms) to the end of 'A Chapter after the Last' and the Appendix. The historical 'Prelude' which includes the arrival of Leopold Mozart in Salzburg and the birth there of his son Wolfgang Amadeus (who with his sister 'Nannerol' were the only survivors of a family, at which infant mortality seems to have struck with a severity unusual even for the eighteenth century) leaves one a little dizzy from its *Presto*. But after this the book proceeds *allegro* with the life of the Mozart family. The Appendix is a new account of the famous kick with which Mozart was dismissed from the Archbishop's service. The kick was given by the son of the Archbishop's Chief Chamberlain, and Mr Kenyon concludes that it was a piece of horseplay between two young men who had grown up together, not the gratuitous insult which it has usually been declared. But it remains to the discredit of Archbishop Colleredo and his household. Enough that is unpleasant is known of this Prelate of Salzburg, an aspect of the man which does not fully appear from Mr Kenyon's account of the years during which Mozart was his Konzertmeister and Cathedral organist. Rather he appears as an ordinary autocract harassed by the Mozarts, father and son, who were certainly not gifted with tact.

The author, however, is concentrating upon the influences which made of the infant prodigy the mature, immortal musician; and rightly details, but does not enlarge upon, the characters of the people by whom Mozart was surrounded except as they affected him. In fact, one regrets that he has suppressed so much which he obviously knows. More topographical description of Salzburg would be welcome to those many, even Mozartians, who have never been to the city. Extension and exegesis of the short musical quotations (a little isolated) would help those with a general rather than a musical education, and the references to the composer's works simply by the Koechel catalogue number and short title are useless to the general reader without access to a musical library. However, the same objections will not be raised by the Mozart student, for whom the book admirably fills a gap in the literature on the composer's life. The idea of adding a 'Discography' for the gramophone lover is excellent.

H. A. F. CREWDSON.

VOYAGE TO WINDWARD: The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson, by J. C. Furnas. (Faber and Faber, 25s.) This should become the standard life of Stevenson, in spite of the author's stylistic eccentricities. R L S emerges as a brave figure, with his bad health and his tiresome friends. What a crew they were! Deplorably literary and psychologically infantile – a regular crèche of overeducated babies. Gosse, alternately purring and scratching; flag-flapping Henley, all smut and fake sensibility; exhausted, elegant Lang; and the Colvins, one a bore and the other a suburban Madame Sabatier. To this set was added a neurotic elderly wife. Stevenson escaped into his books: R L S killed him with overwork. It is astonishing how good so much of the writing is. One can glimpse beneath the perpetual adolescent another figure, morbid and cynical, the author of *The Ebb Tide*, *Weir of Hermiston*, and the too little read *Fables*. The paradoxes of his personality – the shadow of Calvin falling perpetually across the sun – have led to a continuous underrating of his powers. He was more than a writer of boy's books and more than a tricky stylist. He had an ethic. Without the incessant compulsion to get off thousands of words to his publisher, with more intelligent friends and a less trying wife, he might have become a great writer instead of a fascinating minor one. Except, of course, that great writers become great writers in any circumstances. Stevenson was one of the last, and not the least tragic, victims of the Victorian Compromise.

JOHN DAVENPORT.

CONTENTS FOR FEBRUARY 1953

Editorial

Racial Equality: a Reply: JULIAN AMERY, M.P.

The Commonwealth Conference and After

I. Towards Free Sterling: PAUL BAREAU

II. Barriers to Agreement: J. D. B. MILLER

E. H. Carr and 'The Economic Order': D. L. MUNBY

An Historian's Creed for our Time: HANS KOHN

The Spanish Reviews: GEORGE PENDLE

Syntax in Poetry and Music: DONALD DAVIE

A Pedant Finds Fault: JOHN WEIGHTMAN

Dylan Thomas: JOHN DAVENPORT

Book Notes

Volume CLIII, Number 912

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

BACK NUMBERS

We shall be pleased to hear from subscribers and readers who are able to supply any of the following back numbers:

1928:
APRIL
1948:
MAY
1951:
AUGUST, SEPTEMBER
1952:
OCTOBER

Offers should be sent to

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
AND AFTER LTD
6 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.2

Bellometti
LE PERROQUET

The restaurant
in the heart of
entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

Please supply { one year's / six months' } subscription to

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Name.....

Address.....

Annual subscription post free, 50/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $8.75
Six months' subscription ,, ,, 25/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $4.40

If unable to obtain from your newsagent, please post this form direct to the Publishers, 26 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

EDITORIAL

Will the coming in of the Eisenhower Administration mean the start of a new age in American history, in the same way that the advent of President Roosevelt began a new period? Just after Eisenhower's victory in November, people in England were speaking as if this would happen. Liberals said gloomily that a Republican government meant putting the clock back; or, if there was no attempt at restoring the political ideas of Mr Hoover's time, that the new policies to be followed would be no less reactionary in their consequences. Since then there has been a reconsideration. More cheerful expectations are now fashionable. This has happened chiefly because of further reflection about the nature of American government to-day.

The American political system is at once the most open and the most experimental in the world. Kites are flown ostentatiously before every important project. Those which are shot at are quickly hauled down. The concern of every Administration is to win the biennial elections for Congress and the next Presidential election. No more is one campaign ended than people begin to think of the next. It is administration by opportunism. In these conditions a government is never liable to diverge very far from the wishes of the electorate and unless these change radically over a short period, government by one party is not likely to be very different from that which preceded it, even though it was carried on by the rival party. Has there been any such great change in the public outlook which would make a Republican Administration, reflecting public opinion to-day, very different from the Democratic Administration which has reflected opinion during the past few years? Undoubtedly there has been some change: otherwise General Eisenhower would not have won. The mere fact of Republican victory will also have accelerated the process, for many people will have taken it as the signal that new ideas are becoming fashionable. But the important question is the extent of the change. This can certainly be much over-estimated. The relations between government and people symbolized by the term 'Rooseveltian' have become ingrained in the American mind as something normal. They are accepted by everybody except a few eccentrics. They are the

product of a twenty years' process. Younger Republicans think in Rooseveltian terms as naturally as do Democrats. When Mr Hoover fell there was a genuine minor revolution, even though a peaceful one. This was because the Republican Party of that time was archaic in practising the arts of government. Events since then have taught the Republican Party the facts of modern American political life. It showed that it had at last learned the facts when it nominated Eisenhower instead of Taft. It is not likely to challenge the expressed will of the American people, nor is it likely to follow any policies which result in economic suffering for any considerable body of voters. The vote of the unemployed threw Hoover out, and the Republican Party to-day is not likely to think any political dogma worth the price of mass unemployment and consequent loss of office. If any of its economic policies seem about to produce serious unemployment, they will quite certainly be reversed – even though the government does consist of 'eight millionaires and a plumber.'

Admittedly there may be a field of activity in which the continuity is less close; and that is the one which before all others is of interest to the outside world. It is foreign policy. Public opinion may be less effective in supervising the actions of government in foreign affairs than in domestic ones. But in foreign policy the Executive can sometimes effectively counter Congress, as Roosevelt himself did in the two years before Pearl Harbour. The quality and ideas of the President may thus come to be decisive. The American decision in June 1950 to intervene in Korea was Mr Truman's own act. Given the political situation at that time, it would have been quite possible for a President to have chosen to do otherwise. History was then made by Mr Truman's own judgment and decision.

Thus the new Administration may feel that foreign policy is a field in which it can make experiments. Mr Dulles is 'purging' the State Department. New men may mean new ideas. But if the Administration feels itself here less under popular control, it may find its initiative curtailed no less effectively in other ways. The control is by circumstances. For the past eighteen months, American policy has been in the clutch of circumstances. The courses open to it have been debated again and again. There was the great inquest after the fall of MacArthur. The China lobby and the adventurous have stated the case for full-scale action against China, but they have failed to convince. To the central body of moderate opinion, which prevails alike in Democratic and Republican Administrations, it remains clear that in Asian policy either

of the extreme courses open to America would bring disaster. America cannot afford to pour its limited Army into China. Neither can it evacuate Korea and give the Soviet bloc a huge access of prestige. So the stalemate, which is not checkmate, must probably continue until the circumstances themselves change. Similarly in Europe. The N A T O policy, the policy towards Germany and France, were not whims of Mr Acheson; they were policies dictated by the circumstances in Europe. Under the new Administration there may be a shift in emphasis, and if E D C falls through, Germany may be brought directly into N A T O. But might not that have happened under Mr Acheson if, after an abandonment of E D C, he had been still in office?

The changes are to be looked for in the details. Eisenhower's Administration may feel itself less impelled to express certain traditional themes of American interest, such as the wickedness of 'colonialism.' It may show itself less concerned about the problems of French North Africa, or, if it is compelled to concern itself with them because of military security, it may be less disposed to think that they can be solved by a French surrender. American relations with Britain are a peculiar mixture of friendliness and suspicion, rivalry and co-operation. This can hardly change. But, at least in the early stages, a new effort may be made to stress the friendly and co-operative side, and to play down the other.

It is always rash to speculate on the course which an American Administration will take. Who, studying Mr Roosevelt's election programme in 1932, could have foreseen what 'Rooseveltism' would mean? But if we are at the start of a new age in America it is because circumstances and public opinion are about to undergo a great change, and not because an Administration has come in with the intention of initiating a new era. Those who watch the barometer do not as yet report signs of any such metamorphosis. The Presidential election of 1952 may indeed be a less significant sign of change than the great purges in Russia and the Communist world. The instability is there, not in the Western world – with all its 'contradictions.'

There has been much speculation about the meaning of the new upheaval behind the Iron Curtain. Ever since the Prague trial last November it has been evident that a species of 'controlled anti-Semitism' was being brought into being, both for internal purposes and as a bait for the Arab world. But what is now happening in Moscow appears to bear out Dr Adenauer's suggestion, in his conversation with foreign correspondents last month, that the struggle for the succession has begun

and that Soviet foreign policy is feeling the effect of domestic convulsions. The more lurid features of the purge are incidental to the struggle over the orientation of Soviet policy in Europe and Asia. No one can say for certain whether the factional differences within the Kremlin hierarchy portend a decision to transfer the centre of the 'cold war' from Europe to the Far East, and to stand on the defensive along the Western glacis, while 'consolidating' the recently Sovietized territories. If such a shift were to coincide with the coming to power of a Republican Administration, both Russia and America may decide to seek a decision in Asia rather in Europe, for the Republicans are traditionally Asia-minded.

Such a development might not be unwelcome to many Europeans; it would certainly stimulate a rather hollow and short-lived sense of security. We may be sure that if the Russians temporarily withdraw in the West, it will be a case of 'reculer pour mieux sauter.' This aim is inherent in the East German 'purge' which is clearly designed to facilitate the integration of former Nazis. Rearmament may as yet proceed slowly behind the Elbe, though the tempo will pick up if and when the European defence agreements are ratified; but ideological preparation for a Russo-Prussian drive against the Federal Republic is already in full swing. The imminent destruction of all surviving Communists with Western ties is indicative of what is coming. The National-Bolshevist formula for Germany – alliance with Russia against the West – was worked out by Radek in 1919. It has never been abandoned, and it retains some attraction for Germans brought up in the nationalist tradition. Too much may have been made of the Nazi come-back in Western Germany, but the elements of a united Nazi-Communist assault on the Federal Republic exist on both sides of the Elbe. The Eisenhower Administration may well meet its heaviest test in its handling of German affairs. By tradition, the Republican Party is inclined to put more trust in Germany than British and French statesmanship has often thought wise. There are the makings of differences here, as well as in Asia. It is not the least valuable aspect of Mr Churchill's recent visit to Washington that he had an opportunity to lay these problems squarely before Mr Truman's successor.

RACIAL EQUALITY: A REPLY

Julian Amery
Conservative M.P. for Preston North

Mr John Strachey has written an article on 'Racial Equality'.* The title conjures up some of the most burning issues of our age – race relations in industry, in education and in the fighting services; the problems of land tenure in a multinational community; the respective advantages of communal or common roll elections; the control of immigration; and the rights and duties of the foreign investor. Mr Strachey leaves all these nettles ungrasped. Instead he treats us to a dissertation on Western policy in the Far and Middle East. His message here boils down to saying that the principle of racial equality requires that the U S should appease the Chinese Communists and that Britain should appease Middle Eastern nationalism. This is intellectual stucco. There is no necessary connection between the doctrine of racial equality and the appeasement of hostile movements. The two are only linked in Mr Strachey's mind by the doubtful inspiration of his own deep-seated defeatism.

Let us consider, first, the section of his article which is devoted to China and the Far East. No question of racial equality arises here. The last vestiges of Western privileges in China were surrendered to General Chiang Kai-shek's government before the outbreak of the civil war. The only foreigners who have special rights in China to-day are the Russians with their concessions at Port Arthur, Dairen and on the Manchurian railways. Mr Strachey makes no reference to this interesting development. But then his main concern, here, is not with racial equality. It is rather that Britain and the U S should recognize the finality of the Communist revolution in China.

'After 45 years of revolution, civil war, foreign invasion and chaos,' he writes, 'China has at length been unified under a strong régime.' Does the establishment of a Communist Government in China really mark the end of the Chinese revolution? Perhaps. Yet nations, like individuals, as Mr Strachey should know, sometimes recant Communism. It is quite possible that the new régime in China has come to stay. It is remarkable, however, that a man who has had to change his views as often as Mr

* *The Twentieth Century*, January 1953.

Strachey, should make such sweeping assertions about the deep-seated processes at work among the Chinese people. In any case, the apparent permanence of a régime is not in itself a reason for according it particularly benevolent treatment. General Franco has been unchallenged master of Spain for thirteen years, but Mr Strachey has hardly been among the most prominent protagonists of a rapprochement with the present Spanish régime.

Mr Strachey's main anxiety is that the United States should at once abandon its support of General Chiang Kai-shek, recognize the Communist Government and seat it on the Security Council. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that such steps were reasonable in themselves, we have to consider whether this is the proper time to take them. What is the present state of our, let alone America's, relations with Communist China? We have accorded full recognition to their Government and sought to accredit a diplomatic mission to it. They have declined to return the compliment. They have confiscated British interests without payment of compensation. They have imprisoned British businessmen and refused them access to their own consular representatives. In Korea, their armies and air forces are arrayed against our own and other United Nations forces. In Indo-China, they give aid and comfort to the Viet Minh insurrection against our French allies. It is questionable whether we should continue to maintain diplomatic relations with Peking in such circumstances. The only justification for so doing is that Britain recognized the new Chinese Government before the latter intervened in support of the aggressors in the Korean War. For the U S, however, to take the step of recognizing Communist China and bringing her on to the Security Council now, before peace is concluded in Korea, would be to encourage policies of aggression and expropriation all over the world. It would also be to deny that we are fighting in Korea on behalf of the United Nations and in defence of collective security. There may well come a time when relations between the Western world and Communist China can be put on a happier footing. But to grant the demands of Peking now, as Mr Strachey suggests, would not be to apply the principle of racial equality, but to return to the kowtow.

Mr Strachey fears that American policy towards China may lead to a general war in the Far East. He goes on to argue that such a war would be 'hopeless and unnecessary' and that it would be one 'which the British people did not believe to be justified and in which no British Government could induce them to fight.'

It is interesting to know that Mr Strachey can be as sweeping in his statements about the British people as he is about the Chinese. His remarks on the wars the British people will or will not fight must certainly

command attention, coming as they do from one who was recently Secretary of State for War. For my part, however, I believe it is presumptuous nonsense to dogmatize upon what the British people will do in unforeseeable circumstances. Much must depend upon who is the aggressor in any such conflict as Mr Strachey envisages; much upon the extent to which national or imperial interests are endangered; much upon the general state of international relations. All of us hope, of course, that no such conflict will take place. I believe, however, that if the Chinese were to attack our French allies in Indo-China in force, there would be no great political difficulty – though the material difficulties might prove insuperable – in sending British troops to take their place alongside those of France. We cannot, of course, give a blank cheque to our French or our American allies. But Mr Strachey will have done a grave disservice to his own countrymen and to the cause of peace if his article in any way encourages the leaders in Peking to believe that Britain will never, in any circumstances, take part in a war in the Far East.

One implication of Mr Strachey's argument is that U S policy in the Far East needs to be restrained, presumably by Britain and the Commonwealth. Considering the provocation to which they have been subjected, the U S have already shown considerable restraint of their own accord. President Truman's dismissal of General MacArthur is a case in point. Be this as it may, it is plainly of the greatest importance that Britain should be in a position to exercise her influence over the course of events in the Far East. This brings me to another main part of Mr Strachey's argument.

Britain can only exercise her influence effectively in the Far East, or indeed anywhere else in the world, if she can speak and act with the support of a united Commonwealth. Now the unity of the Commonwealth depends, among other things, upon the knowledge of its members that, both in peace and war, the United Kingdom will bring its power and influence to bear in their support. This is not always easy to arrange. The Almighty in his infinite wisdom saw fit to divide the Commonwealth into two main parts. In the West lie the United Kingdom, Canada, the West Indies and West Africa; in the East, New Zealand, Australia, Malaya, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, East Africa and South Africa, spread out in a great semi-circle round the Indian Ocean. Between these two parts of the Commonwealth lies the land bridge of the Middle East, over which run the most direct sea and air routes joining the different countries of the Commonwealth together.

These lines of communication are assured in peace, and at least defended in time of war, by a network of British land and air bases situated in different countries of the Middle East. Furthermore, these bases pro-

vide the possibility of forming armies which can be brought to bear in an emergency not only in the Middle East itself, but in Southern Europe and in the whole region of the Indian Ocean. Mr Strachey, however, now tells us that we should abandon these bases – in the name of racial equality.

Mr Strachey argues that to maintain bases in Middle Eastern countries against their wishes is not to treat them as equals. This is doubtful logic and of uncertain application. In Europe, of course, we find American and British troops established on the soil of other countries. Does this involve racial discrimination? Mr Strachey does not seem to think so, presumably because the Continental Governments have given their approval to the presence of foreign troops in their countries. Are we to conclude from this that our bases in Iraq are justifiable because the Iraqi Government agrees to their being continued, and that in Egypt they are unjustifiable because the Egyptian Government is opposed to them? The principle of equal rights for all states – however constituted – may or may not be valid. It can certainly not be identified with the principle of racial equality. What Mr Strachey is in fact saying is that the rights or pretensions of any of the successor states of the Ottoman Empire should be allowed to interrupt and choke the lifelines of the British Commonwealth. Reading his argument on all this, I was reminded of an anecdote about the signing of the treaty of Brest Litovsk. The Austrian representative on that occasion, a diplomat of the old school, kissed the hand of Klara Zetkin who had accompanied Trotsky to the conference. 'Drop it, old man,' she said to him. 'The times are too grave for such nonsense."

Mr Strachey writes, indeed, of the need for 'a well considered defence scheme' to safeguard the Middle East against attack from the Soviet Union. The danger from the north is very real; and it is essential that the free countries should join together to meet it in the Middle East as in Europe. The setting up of a Middle Eastern Defence Organization, however, is not in itself a substitute for the maintenance of Britain's special position in the Middle Eastern region. We have to guard against the Russian danger. But we shall still have to safeguard our imperial communications even if the Russian danger should pass. Once the Middle East position is abandoned, our communications with Malaya become precarious; contact with the Indian sub-continent will decline; and the safest way from Australia to Britain will lie, not through the Suez but the Panama Canal. How will you influence American policy in the Far East if that should happen, Mr Strachey?

In the last paragraph of his article, Mr Strachey at last turns to the African Continent. 'The principle of racial equality,' he writes, 'must be asserted without compromise.' An admirable sentiment. But how is it to

be made reality? Are we to suspend the Constitutions of the East and Central African colonies, close their Legislative Councils and use troops to break strike action by the white trade unions? It is doubtful whether Mr Strachey's principle can be applied, in the short run at least, by any other means. But on these and other related issues, Mr Strachey prefers to remain silent. I understand his silence: the problem is truly intractable. But unless you are prepared at least to face it, don't write articles on Racial Equality.

The problems of a multiracial community vary according to the nature and origins of the racial mixture. The British entered India as traders and allies of the different warring Indian factions. It was a long time before they became masters of the whole sub-continent. Even then, the tradition of racial harmony survived until the middle of the nineteenth century. English traders and officials married such Indian girls as the caste laws and Islam allowed, took them to Government House and were buried by their side. Then came the steamship and with it the white woman. From anxiety for the future of her children, or from fear of competing Indian beauty, she introduced a colour bar and brought the era of mixed marriages to an end. In so doing, she may have sealed the doom of the Raj. Things would have been easier if even one or two of the leaders of Congress had had a maiden aunt in Kent!

Another reason for the colour bar in India is worth recalling. The young British official or company employee was usually much poorer, and often less intellectually brilliant, than many of the Indians he had to govern. In those circumstances, and in that age, it became important to the maintenance of his authority that he should be preserved from too intimate contacts in the club or the home. In Africa, the problem from the first has been entirely different. It has been essentially economic and social. The barrier between black and white has been a class barrier. Save for a few tribal chiefs – in Uganda, for instance, and in Barotse – there was no native cultured class with which the invading whites might have associated. The early British settlers did, indeed, intermarry with different African tribes. But the well-to-do settler or business man of the later years of the nineteenth century could no more be expected to mix with his black workers in Africa than with his white ones at home.

So long as the economic gulf between black and white remained wide, the colour bar seemed natural enough, and exceptions to it were frequent. The problem became aggravated, however, by a double development. On the one hand, there grew up an African class seeking skilled employment. On the other, there appeared white skilled workers and small shopkeepers determined to prevent competition from the African with his lower standard of living. The colour bar has thus fallen at its sharpest

between the most advanced African, anxious to improve his lot, and the least developed European, anxious only to defend his present advantages.

The different colonial Powers have sought to solve this problem each after its own fashion. The Belgians, in the Congo, have taught the African skilled trades but have resolutely turned their backs on any question of self-government. The French, in predominantly Equatorial regions, have not been faced to any serious extent with the problem of European settlement. They have sought, however, to meet the natural desire of the African for political advance by giving their African colonies direct representation in the parliamentary institutions of France. The British solution has had, in some respects, the worst of both worlds. Our emphasis on the virtues of self-government has led to the extension of representative institutions at least to the European sections of the different colonial communities. This, by a natural process, has conferred influence on the European skilled workers and small shopkeepers who have been able, by virtue of their majority vote, to block the advance of the African in the economic scale. By a curious combination of circumstances, it is the European capitalists, in their search for cheaper labour, who are in favour of African progress, while the European trade unionists seek to hold the Africans back, so as to defend their own wage levels and standards.

The concept of self-government creates a further problem. So long as there is no question of a transfer of sovereignty, no one is much concerned by the appointment of a European or an African to a position of authority. As soon, however, as self-government is even under discussion, every appointment involves the surrender of a key position to this or that community. In these circumstances, the rivalry between Europeans, Asians and Africans becomes increasingly acute.

What is the solution to these problems? As I write these words a Comet is bearing me southward towards Johannesburg. In a few minutes we shall land at Beirut, our second stopping point. To try to give the answers now would be to rival the presumption of Mr Strachey.

THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE AND AFTER

I. TOWARDS FREE STERLING

Paul Bareau

Deputy City Editor, the *News Chronicle*

The Commonwealth economic conference, to which the highest Ministerial representatives were attracted, is not the first such meeting that should not be judged by its communiqué. Official communiqués tend to vary in inverse proportion to the importance of the discussions to which they refer, in the amount of information they divulge. This particular conference, concerned as it was with the most intimate details of future commercial and monetary policy, could only be officially reported at its close in the most guarded and general terms. When a group of Commonwealth Ministers discusses, as this one did, what it proposes to do in the realm of sterling exchange policy, how and when to make sterling convertible, and what form to give to this convertibility, whether to adhere to fixed rates of exchange or to let the pound go free, these are not matters that can be shouted from the house-tops. Enough embarrassment has already been caused by the indiscretions of the Australian Prime Minister in divulging that precise plans for the convertibility of sterling were, in fact, drawn up at the conference, their exact timing and application depending on such factors as the results of future discussions with Western Europe and the United States. Even this was giving the international trader and speculator a little more information than he should have and than is good for the future course of international trade and payments. In all the circumstances, some of the ponderous criticism aimed at the communiqué for not saying more precisely what took place during the conference, and the implied suggestion that the conference was a failure, must be regarded as naive.

This economic conference differed from others in the series of such meetings. In the first place, it was held in an atmosphere of comparative economic calm and convalescence. Since the end of the war, economic meetings of the Commonwealth family have all too often been called at moments of crisis. Since these financial crises have followed one another at fairly regular two-year intervals, the Finance Ministers of the Commonwealth have tended to meet on each occasion under the shadow of

pending doom - not exactly the best reminder of the benefits conferred by membership of this political club or its monetary counterpart, the sterling area. The meeting which preceded this last conference, that of January 1952, attended by Finance Ministers only, was perhaps the grimmest of the series. Sterling was then under such pressure that gold was bleeding away from our economic arteries at a rate which would have emptied them in little more than six months. Drastic steps had to be taken to defend what was left of the reserve by import cuts aimed not merely against the non-sterling world, but within the sterling area itself; Australia, for example, was in such deficit with all its trading partners, including Britain, that it was imperilling the balance of the whole group. The grim atmosphere in which this earlier conference was held none the less had its merits. It presented all concerned with the fact that if the sterling area was to be the chronic victim of a regular sequence of two-yearly financial crises, it was bound to disintegrate, and the pound itself was certain to lose its status as one of the great currencies of international trade. This revelation in its turn stimulated the courage to set in motion and sustain the harsh economic policies that were needed if solvency was to be restored. As Johnson used to say, 'It clears a man's mind wonderfully to know that he is to be hanged in a fortnight.'

The twelve months which were to intervene between this and the latest conference were months of retrenchment, of dearer money, of moderately successful attempts to disinflate. The result was an astonishing improvement in the economic position not only of Britain but the whole sterling area. The British balance of payments is again on an even keel, the gold and dollar reserve is increasing, the earlier restrictions on imports have been partially eased. It was in this atmosphere of greater calm that the Commonwealth Prime Ministers were able to meet and to make their longer-term plans for consolidating and extending the respite gained. In these plans, great emphasis was placed on problems of development. There is no doubt that if the sterling area is to achieve solvency in its relations with the dollar world on the basis of 'trade not aid,' it will have to increase the production of goods which can either earn more dollars, or save dollars by being substituted for material which must now be imported from the United States and Canada. Apart from this pure balance-of-payments consideration, the level of welfare of the Commonwealth, its economic stability, and therefore the chance of its survival as a homogenous political unit, depend very largely on raising productivity and incomes in the poorer parts of this vast area. It is right, therefore, that a high place should be given to various development projects, but the prominence given thereto in the communiqué was somewhat in the nature of window-dressing. No new projects were

hatched in the course of the conference. No existing project had its tempo accelerated. All that was done was to give a general blessing to the existing programmes for development, and to marshal these projects in some order of priority, giving the highest place to those which justified it on balance-of-payments considerations. No great claims can even be made for the parallel decision on the part of big City institutions, led by the Bank of England, to form a new company to finance Commonwealth development. It is not machinery that the Commonwealth needs in the great task of capital projects. Machinery is there in abundance, in the issuing houses and the specialized institutions of the City of London. What is lacking is an adequate supply of new savings and the provision by British industry of those machines, vehicles and other forms of capital goods which the Commonwealth needs, but which all too often of late it has been able to buy only in the dollar world. The new finance company will not add one iota to the flow of savings; it will in itself achieve none of the required adjustment of British industry from the production of consumer to that of capital goods. None the less, it will serve a useful purpose, if only by acting as a post-box, receiving all the projects of development conceived in the Commonwealth, sorting out the wheat from the chaff, and passing the more promising to the right quarters.

The conference communiqué also deals at some length with hopes for launching commodity stabilization schemes. These passages, too, may be regarded as makeweights. It is self-evident that the primary producing countries of the Commonwealth want assured markets and stable prices for their produce. Whether they will get them must depend mainly on the attitude of the United States. But whether they *should* get them is yet another matter. The pattern of world demand, whether for commodities or for manufactured goods, is ever changing. Long-term plans for stabilizing prices and providing guaranteed sale of commodities, can be obstacles to that elasticity which is the basic condition of economic health. The United States, as by far the largest buyer of commodities in the world, has certain responsibilities towards its customers and allies. When the American Government undertakes bulk-purchasing it should do so with reasonable restraint. When it approaches the limits of its requirements it should decelerate its purchases with equal restraint. In other words, it should not switch from bulk buying to bulk boycott, as has all too often been the case in recent years. But beyond enjoining this kind of moderation on governmental trade, and exhorting the United States to maintain a reasonable stability in its total national income, there is little that can with advantage be done in protecting the interests of primary producers. Those interests will not be best served by rigid

international agreements which fix prices and hamper the functioning of the market mechanism.

Perhaps the most startling passages of the communiqué were those dealing with trade policy. These reveal beyond all doubt that the doctrine of Empire free trade is now dead. The British Government went out of its way during the course of the discussions to raise the issue of Imperial preference, and to suggest that an approach be made to the other signatories of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade to secure a waiver on the existing restrictions which prevent the establishment of new preferences. This suggestion was turned down. The majority of the member countries represented at the conference felt that any such approach would not advance the agreed objective of restoring multilateral trade throughout the world. It may well be that the initiative of the British Government in raising this issue was tactical and not intended to secure its ostensible objective. There can be very few responsible Ministers who believe that the economic salvation of the Commonwealth can be sought and found within the Commonwealth itself. There was, however, a considerable volume of uninstructed opinion among Conservative back-benchers who still clung to the cosy illusions of an autarchic, insulated and wholly independent Commonwealth, free alike of the influence of the United States and of the Soviet bloc. Those illusions must lie shattered by now. The rest of the Commonwealth will have none of this approach. The club as a whole is unmistakeably committed to the cause of multilateral trade which means, utlimately, the cause of non-discrimination in international commerce. It is also the cause of maximum co-operation with the United States and Canada, whose commercial policies have always been hitched to non-discrimination.

The future policy for sterling was the most discussed subject of the conference, and that least commented on in the communiqué. A mere sentence dismisses it. 'An integral part of any effective multilateral system is the restoration of the convertibility of sterling, but it can only be reached by progressive stages.' Little more than this could be said in the circumstances. But it is clear from much that has happened since the conference that a plan was worked out in some detail, that the 'stages' referred to in the communiqué have been defined, and that the timing must depend on discussions with the countries of Western Europe, and above all with the United States. In assessing the character of this progress towards greater freedom for sterling, and ultimately towards convertibility, it should be borne in mind that important restrictions on convertibility will in any case persist. In the first place, convertibility will only apply, for some time at least, to sterling coming into the possession of firms and people residing outside the sterling area. There is no

hope of a sterling area resident being given the freedom to transfer his money abroad, to travel and spend as he likes, to export and leave the proceeds of his sales in a foreign currency. Some form of exchange control will probably be with us for many years. The concession of convertibility will be restricted at first to non-resident sterling balances and, moreover, to sterling proceeds from ordinary trading transactions. A Frenchman selling wine, or a Belgian selling flax to Britain will (if his own exchange control allows it, or if he can evade it) be allowed to convert his sterling income into dollars. But to a very large extent this form of convertibility already exists. Americans or Canadians who export goods for sterling can automatically convert their sterling into dollars on the official market. Any Dutchman holding sterling can, if he so wishes, convert it into dollars in the market for 'cheap' sterling, and can now do so at no more than a 3 per cent. discount under the official price. Technical convertibility, in that sense, means very little and threatens very few dangers.

The much more serious reservations which must be made regarding convertibility are on the score of the parallel question of import policy. 'Convertibility' of sterling, to an American or Canadian, means freedom to export his goods to a sterling country without having to go through the hoop of import licensing. True convertibility of sterling should mean freedom on the part of residents in the sterling area to import dollar goods. This kind of convertibility is unlikely to come in the near future. Scarcity of dollars will continue to make it necessary to restrict imports from the dollar world. And yet, if there is to be any advance towards convertibility it should go hand in hand with some easing of the restrictions on imports from dollar and other hard currency countries. To make the pound technically convertible, and then to restrict by import licensing and other devices the freedom with which sterling is, in fact, converted into dollars and other currencies, would be to make a mockery of convertibility. This was realized during the Commonwealth Conference, and what was said in the communiqué about the need to strive for a system of multilateral trade can be taken as a clear indication that there is no intention to prevaricate on this issue – giving the shadow without the substance of convertibility. At the same time it must be understood that with the prevailing shortage of dollars, whether in reserve or as current trading income, there can be no question of an immediate and complete removal of the obstacles that are maintained on dollar imports. All that can be promised is that the road in this direction will be travelled as rapidly as possible.

For such progress three conditions are needed. First, the domestic policies of Britain and other sterling countries must continue to resist the temptations of ease and inflation. Let us therefore expect no let-up

in Britain this year in the policy of scarce and dear money. Let there be no false hopes of an easy Budget studded with generous tax remissions. Secondly, there must be arrangements with Western Europe to travel the road to convertibility and multilateral trade together. In particular, these other countries must undertake not to shape their sterling trade, and restrict their sterling imports, so as to accumulate pounds for the sole purpose of converting them into dollars. These discussions are about to begin within the framework of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation. Thirdly, there must be arrangements with the United States. Assurances must be obtained that the Republican Administration will adhere to the 'trade not aid' formula. There must be some promise of stabilization credits to be used in case of need to underpin the newly convertible pound. This might be achieved through a general writing-up of the price of gold - though on present indications the new American Administration will not take kindly to this proposal. If these pre-conditions to convertibility can be secured, the administrative steps that will take sterling towards the objective should provide few difficulties. Among the more important will be the reopening of free markets for many commodities still in the grip of government trading - copper, grains, cotton futures, gold. If merchants in these reopened markets can buy and sell where they like, the sterling used for their transactions will, in fact, be convertible. Another step which the authorities are already taking is to mop up supplies of those various types of sterling which feed the markets for 'cheap' sterling. If sterling is to be convertible, there can be only one type of external sterling in current commercial use. Therefore, further arrangements may have to be made to tie up, or otherwise remove, some of the excessive sterling balances which, in the hands of overseas holders, provide a potential threat to sterling. Meanwhile, every opportunity should be seized to make sterling more widely used in international transactions.

There is no mistaking the direction or the general character of the road that will take the sterling area to real solvency, and the pound to convertibility. A great many doubts remain about the readiness of other countries concerned to play the role required of them. Perhaps greater doubts still prevail about the readiness of the sterling countries, and of Britain in particular, to accept the economic discipline involved. The year 1953 will reveal in which manner these doubts will be resolved. It will be a fateful choice, for it will decide whether the free world walks as one or whether it will remain divided by the dollar gap and all the discrimination in trade and payments and personal intercourse that goes with it.

THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE AND AFTER

II. BARRIERS TO AGREEMENT

J. D. B. Miller

Staff tutor at the University of Sydney, now studying in London

The communiqué of the Commonwealth conference, issued on December 11th, made a few things plain and left a number of others obscure. While stating that each Commonwealth country would try to check inflationary tendencies so as to reduce the demand for imports, it did not say how they would go about it. While pledging them to develop industries which would either earn or save dollars, and to discourage development of 'a less sound and permanent kind', it laid down no principle of deciding what forms of development were unsound and impermanent. It stressed the need for co-operation with Europe and the U S A, but did not indicate what burdens this co-operation would involve, and what inducements the Commonwealth countries would hold out to make co-operation acceptable to those other countries. Although the conference had discussed commodity prices, in which all the overseas realms and Britain are vitally interested, the communiqué said nothing more definite than that 'each commodity must be considered on its merits, in the light of the conditions prevailing at the time'.

These omissions from the communiqué reveal the conflict of interest which prevents the Commonwealth from functioning as an economic unit. Each country is anxious to raise its living standards, and to do so in its own way. In some instances there is competition between individual countries for capital or markets. But the main difference of interest lies between the United Kingdom on the one hand and the primary-producing territories on the other. A Commonwealth-wide commodity agreement is impossible because their interests lie in high prices, while the United Kingdom's lie in low prices. Agreement on a Commonwealth-wide development programme is impossible because the overseas realms have aims which differ from those which current opinion in the United Kingdom would wish them to have. The British view is that development should concentrate on food, fibre and mineral production, so that the sterling area may become less dependent upon dollar sources for these primary products, and markets may be provided for British manufactured

goods. An irrigation scheme is good; a proposal to manufacture motor cars is bad. Overseas, however, the situation looks different. The primary-producing countries want to maintain and expand their primary industries, which earn foreign currency for them, but they want to develop manufactures as well. Indeed, the growth of efficiency in farming or mining, in countries largely devoted to those primary industries, may itself create a demand for manufacturing industry. Efficiency means mechanization, and in the long run mechanization means fewer men on the farms and in the mines, and more to be employed in the cities: only manufactures can provide such employment, unless a totally new pattern of service industries is somehow devised. In any case, the overseas countries want manufactures because they know from bitter experience how sensitive primary industries are to world prices, and how rapid and widespread is the decline in income which they suffer when the world market is not clamouring for their food, fibres or minerals. From Sydney or Cape Town or Colombo, a local motor-car industry does not look the extravagance it seems from London. It becomes a means of diversifying economic activity, a stabilizing force in case of depression.

This difference of interest and viewpoint is not new in the history of the Commonwealth. For nearly a century the overseas territories, first as colonies and then as dominions, have sought to build up their economies in ways which suited themselves rather than Britain. They have sought sheltered markets for their primary products, and the right to plan their own development. What is new is the sudden decline in Britain's power to influence the younger countries against policies which conflict with British interests. In the 1920's and '30's, although Britain could no longer influence policy overseas to the same extent as in the nineteenth century, when the Indian economy could be turned upside down to suit Lancashire, it was still possible for the City of London to threaten a withdrawal of finance from Commonwealth governments unless they changed their internal policies. In the 1920's one Australian state government conducted a running fight with the City, which held that its land policies endangered British pastoral interests; in the depression of the early 1930's British financial opinion was a powerful influence upon the social and economic policies of Australian governments desperate for financial help; immediately before World War II, New Zealand was in a condition approaching economic siege, allegedly because it was not prepared to follow financial policies approved by the City. None of this can happen now. A country with a large investible surplus can give orders to its capital-hungry dependents; but a country on the knife-edge of a payments deficit, as Britain is to-day, cannot dictate to independent countries like those of the Commonwealth.

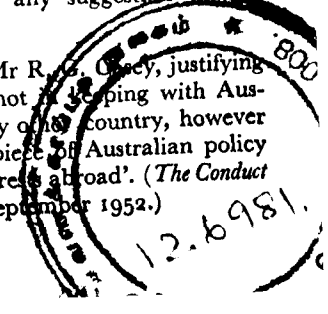
It is important to remember that the economic strength of the overseas countries has increased as Britain's has declined. Their national incomes, swollen by high receipts from primary products and by booming industrial development in the war and post-war years, have risen, and with them the demand for imports. Their economic growth coincides with an increase in political power and responsibility, and a determination to act as independent states on the world stage, which mark a real difference from the 1930's.* The combination of economic growth and enhanced political opportunity means that the overseas countries are in a better position, and of a more definite mind, to pursue independent economic policies than ever before. In most cases these policies aim at self-sufficiency or at least at insulation against the shocks of the world economy.

This autarkic tendency might well render the Commonwealth a nullity as an economic unit, if it were not for the fact that most members of the Commonwealth are also members of the sterling area, an association of countries which hold their currency reserves in sterling and present a common front to the dollar. It was the sterling area, rather than the Commonwealth, whose affairs were being discussed in London in November and December, despite the fact that not all its members were present (Eire being a notable exception) and that Canada, a dollar country, was. To call it a 'Commonwealth' conference was forgivable and perhaps unavoidable, but it was misleading. The communiqué makes sense only if it is read as a sterling area manifesto, with the inadequate gold and dollar reserve in the background. The absence of any reference to Canada is then explained, as are the other omissions referred to above. However, while the sterling area is a recognizable financial unit, which wants to make and save dollars, it has no other existence. When it leaves the banking ledger to take shape in terms of economic decisions and activities, it becomes a body with no economic cohesion, whose members have diverse aims and interests along with varying degrees of political attachment to the United Kingdom.

The point may be illustrated by reference to Mr Menzies's explanation on his return to Australia that

> we were not undertaking to control how any one of us should handle our internal problems of development. For example, any suggestion that

* Cf. the Australian Minister for External Affairs, Mr R. G. Casey, justifying Australia's separate diplomatic representation: 'It is not in keeping with Australia's position in the British Commonwealth that any other country, however intimately associated with her, should be the mouthpiece of Australian policy and views, and responsible for guarding Australian interests abroad'. (*The Conduct of Australian Foreign Policy*, in *Current Notes*, Canberra, September 1952.)



> Australian manufacturing is to be cut back or that the search for improving living standards is to be modified or abandoned, is quite untrue.*

Harried by Australian manufacturers who want import cuts retained, and by a Labour Party which connects as cause and effect the anti-inflationary policies of his government and the growth of unemployment, Mr Menzies may be taken as typical of the Commonwealth leader who agrees to common policies in London and finds, on his return home, that those policies, however vaguely and obliquely phrased, have been interpreted as an attack on the local standard of living. Indeed, investigation will show that the phrase 'standard of living' is used much more by politicians from overseas than by those from Britain. Especially in the Antipodes, it stands for an assumption that there is a basic standard which is not simply what the economy will yield but the criterion by which to judge all economic activities. If they support or raise the standard, they are good; if not, bad. This is still heterodoxy in Britain, but it has been orthodoxy in Australia and New Zealand for half a century, and it is the principle that animates the economic policies of the Asian members of the Commonwealth. It is in itself an epitome of the divergent economic courses which Britain and the Queen's other realms have taken. While Britain looks to delicate shifts in the terms of trade, coupled with greater productivity, to increase her prosperity, they seek autarkic arrangements which will safeguard an existing standard of life. More nearly self-sufficient in food and raw materials, trade is to them a means of obtaining extra wealth – not, as it is for Britain, the instrument of obtaining the *means* to wealth. The situation is the opposite of that which obtained in the eighteenth century: to-day the overseas territories are mercantilist, the United Kingdom more the exponent of flexibility in international trade. Each country has obtained the freedom to practise the degree of mercantilism that suits it, and this freedom it guards jealously.

But the special feature of the post-war period has been the insatiable hunger of the overseas members of the sterling area, along with the rest of the non-Communist world, for dollars. No independent member of the Commonwealth (except, of course, Canada) can count on earning enough dollars regularly to make it independent of the sterling area's dollar pool, replenished by the high earnings of the colonies. This is what keeps the independent realms in the sterling area, despite their divergent domestic policies, and provides the strongest basis for a common policy, if it is ever to be attained.

The United Kingdom and the overseas territories are thus likely to harmonize in economic policy only if both are fully seized of the seriousness of the gold and dollar position, and if they share responsibility for maintaining the reserves. At present that responsibility is Britain's alone: sterling is her currency, and she, as the banker, has formal responsibility if the reserves fall. The other sterling countries are not directly accountable for drawings which drain the pool to a dangerous level. Only when Commonwealth Finance or Prime Ministers meet is there any high-level discussion of sterling area policy; and thereafter each country is left to interpret policy in its own way. It is no wonder that interpretations differ amongst countries whose interests all lie in the direction of increased imports and which do not have to match dollar imports with dollar exports. So long as the frantic quest for dollars continues, along with this independence of interpretation, we may expect periodic sterling crises.

The remedy is either to share responsibility, by strengthening the central machinery of the sterling area, or to make each member-country responsible for living within its own dollar means. Both these suggestions have been put forward by Mr Hugh Gaitskell, who, as an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, knows the difficulty of managing the sterling area in its present form.* The former, which he favours, means running counter to all the Commonwealth trends of recent years, which have been away from binding commitments and permanent machinery; but it is none the worse for that. Even when we admit the elusive character of the Commonwealth, we cannot expect it to do things, to take action, unless its members sometimes enter into some formal commitments. If, as has been suggested here, all the members except Canada have a common interest in increasing the joint gold and dollar reserves, then the way is open to create some new institution which will enable the sterling area members to control the reserves jointly. A joint venture (which is what the sterling area is, after all) should be run by all the partners. They should make rules to govern their own conduct, and stick to them; if domestic pressures prevent them from doing so, then the way will be open for Mr Gaitskell's second suggestion.

This has the disadvantage, from the standpoint of the overseas realms, of leaving Britain with the dollar proceeds of the colonies to spend on herself and them, while each independent member has to fend for itself. Britain would be better off than she is now, provided she could retain control over the colonies' economies and prevent them from demanding the right to use their own dollars in their own interests. The scheme would certainly make each present member of the sterling area more frugal in the use of dollars. But from Britain's standpoint it would have the disadvantage of removing the one vital interest which the Common-

* *The Times*, December 29th, 1952.

* *New Statesman and Nation*, December 20th, 1952.

wealth countries have at present in common, and possibly weakening the whole Commonwealth relationship.

There are, then, three possibilities for the sterling area: a continuation of the present lopsided system of control, with its standing temptation to irresponsibility on the part of the overseas realms; a strengthening of joint control over sterling area policy, which would throw the onus more upon those realms, but might mean that their divergent domestic demands prevented them from following the policy they had worked out together; and a dispersal of responsibility for dollar spending, with the possibility that it might threaten what unity at present exists in the Commonwealth as a whole. None is particularly satisfactory; but neither is the situation which they are meant to cover. Their lack of hopefulness may have a salutary effect upon those who feel that in talking about 'the Commonwealth' we are discussing something as unified and purposive as 'the State.' In economic affairs the Commonwealth is as strong or as weak as the common interests of its members, each of which looks first to its own advantage.

Much the same can be said of the general political relationship between the United Kingdom and the overseas realms, although here one must be cautious of assuming too much. While one can fairly estimate the effects of Australian economic nationalism upon the Commonwealth connection, for example, one cannot be so definite about political nationalism. Economic nationalism demands clear-cut decisions from time to time, tariffs, import restrictions, exchange control; political nationalism is more a latent force, not so likely to be institutionalized unless continued frustration forces it. No independent realm, except perhaps South Africa, is now frustrated, but the changes in the Royal 'style' announced at the conclusion of the Commonwealth conference illustrate how tender of political nationalism the leaders of the Commonwealth remain.

In the field of foreign policy, however, there has been one recent event, the exclusion of Britain from the A N Z U S Pact, which shows that even the most 'British' of the overseas realms pursue their own interests rather than an overall 'Commonwealth' interest, and are prepared to see a new institution arise to challenge the primacy of the Commonwealth in their external relations. It is the desire for security that prompts Australia and New Zealand to seek aid from outside the Commonwealth. Both would be prepared to help Britain in any war that threatened Britain's survival; at the same time they doubt Britain's ability to help them in a war that threatened their survival, i.e. an Asian-Pacific war. Their experiences of 1941–2 are mainly responsible for this doubt. In the event, both countries would probably come to Britain's assistance in a war over Hong Kong, but only if they were assured of ultimate American

support; they are prepared to leave British interests *in the Pacific* for Britain to defend, although they reserve the right to come to her assistance if they wish. They are having it both ways; and their attitude is typical of Commonwealth feeling outside Britain, ambivalent in its desire to preserve the symbols and sentiments of the Commonwealth relationship, and its fear lest Commonwealth commitments should menace local standards of living or national security.

The Commonwealth visitor to Britain from overseas is often perturbed to find how little this essential ambivalence is understood. He quickly finds that the majority of British people are quite hazy about the distinctions between 'Commonwealth' and 'Empire' and 'sterling area'; that many expect his country to be 'loyal' to the United Kingdom as well as to its Queen; and that any attempts by his country to strengthen its independence are set down to sinister influences from elsewhere, usually from the U S A, rather than to indigenous developments and pressures. The common British practice of lumping both the independent realms and the colonies together as 'the Commonwealth' is symptomatic of the general disinclination to recognize the special position of the independent realms. Although they are acknowledged to be independent, they are widely expected to behave as if they were not.

It is difficult to know how far these muddled attitudes are reflected in the policies of British governments. If they are truly reflected, then there is little hope for a dynamic Commonwealth relationship. If, however, the characteristic ambivalence of the overseas countries is recognized, and attempts are made to discover those interests in economics and strategy which Britain shares with the overseas realms, there is hope for the Commonwealth as a going concern. Unique as an institution, the Commonwealth as a product of the peculiar historical circumstances of the last century, it will persist only so long as it provides the overseas countries with a combination of services and satisfactions unavailable to them elsewhere.

E. H. CARR AND 'THE ECONOMIC ORDER'

D. L. Munby

Department of Economics, King's College, Aberdeen

There is a sense in which the economic substratum is both more permanent and more slowly changing than the political and social order. Marshall gave 'Natura non facit saltum' as the motto of his *Principles of Economics*. Its obvious unsuitability as a summary of social developments in the twentieth century must not blind us to the truth of its insight as to the economic substratum itself. By this economic substratum we mean the subject-matter of modern economic science, whether theoretical or applied – roughly, one might say, the sphere where the application of choice to scarce means involves the possible use of money or quantitative measures. There is no need for precise definition, as it would probably be generally agreed that economists are engaged on the study of a fairly homogeneous subject, even though it may be difficult to define its frontiers in relation to other subjects with great precision. (Nor do we need here to relate our economic substratum to the Marxist categories.) Its permanence relatively to other social developments can be seen by comparing possible changes in organizational structure and administration, or in power relationships such as occur in revolutions, with the possibilities of increasing the capital available in a country, or the techniques of production. Negatively, this is not true – it is very easy to destroy inherited capital and stifle technique at its source by destroying the persons who possess the knowledge. But positively, not only are capital resources, technique and the level of skill in work slowly growing affairs, but there is also a permanence in the economic motives that actuate human beings, though they will manifest themselves in many different forms in different societies. Thus, in spite of political revolutions, economic changes, except when they reflect destruction of economic potential, will occur relatively slowly – which is not to deny that political revolutions or changes in other social spheres may make *some* difference to the speed of development, and in the long run (a matter of decades perhaps rather than years) will influence the course of economic development.

In general, society grows as influenced by four separate factors: the impact of personalities, the spread of ideas, the influence of group organization of all sorts, whether political, administrative, or social in a

wider sense; and finally the influence of the economic substratum, including also all the other background factors, such as population, geography, and so on. In a study of the development of a society we want to see the interaction of these elements. There was a time when history was concerned largely with the first and the second. The third crept into the work of historians with the growth of sociological self-consciousness, in which Marxism has played a leading role. But the development of the study of the fourth as an important element in history is a much more recent growth, though writers who in fact only concern themselves with the third are often thought to be studying it. Nor can it be said that Marxists, or those who assert that they have been inspired by Marx, have contributed much to this field. It is strange that so many of the standard works on the growth of trade unions and the working-class movement, such as the writings of Professor Cole and the Webbs, ignore the relationship between these movements and the economic background. Mr E. H. Carr, in his monumental study of Soviet institutions,* follows the same tradition within the same limitations, and we are here concerned to analyse some of the methodological problems (as they strike an economist) that arise in his second volume on *The Economic Order*. The commentator has no competence to judge the truthfulness of the general approach to Russian history, but the interested reader may perhaps be pardoned for his criticism if he finds certain insistent questions he is concerned to ask either ignored or answered with dogmatism, and without any of the evidence that is so brilliantly marshalled in relation to other problems.

Mr Carr is obviously mainly concerned with the genesis and development of institutions, in the grand Webb manner. The failure of the Webbs, in their last massive work on Soviet Russia, was to provide any convincing flesh to the bones they so carefully described. The critical reader was left at the end unaware of where power really lay and who manipulated the strings in whose interests. Mr Carr is keenly aware of the problem of power, and never fails to show where power really lies in the institutions he studies. His institutions are therefore living, developing institutions. Furthermore, he achieves a masterly synthesis of theory and practical policy. The way Leninist ideology developed under the stress of institutional development, the way organizational structure embodied ideological principles, all this fascinating interplay of ideas and political reality is convincingly portrayed. Though he eschews the personal approach almost beyond the point of diminishing returns, in fact his manner enables us to see the revolution through Lenin's eyes, and those of the leaders of the Communist Party as they came to grapple with the

* *The Bolshevik Revolution*. Macmillan. 21*s*.

urgent problems of administering the revolution and creating a new society. The criticisms we have to make must not be taken to diminish our admiration for his achievements in this field.

The question an economist naturally wants to ask, and in particular of the development of Soviet Russia, is what influence economic facts, as we have roughly defined them, had upon the development of the 'economic order'. Such a question is an obvious preliminary to the further question as to the suitability of the economic institutions of Soviet Russia, either for solving the problems of Russia, or of other countries. We can only judge the success or otherwise of Lenin's work if we have some idea of the answer to this question. And further, some of us may want to know how far any other series of developments was possible. To put the matter concretely: we know the ideological development of Leninism, and we know what institutions developed in Soviet Russia; these we have brilliantly portrayed by Mr Carr. But how far was the actual result in the economic order, as described by Mr Carr, influenced by the economic substratum? How far was it the result of a meeting of a comparatively rigid ideology with the stubborn facts – and did the ideology or the facts yield most? Mr Carr's almost consistent answer appears to be that the facts forced the particular development that occurred, and ideological changes were made to fit the framework of Marxism to the facts – (while of course the main framework was never altered, because that was not necessary). But our insistent doubt is whether in fact Lenin ever understood the economic substratum, and whether the economic revolution would not be better described as a blind clinging to economic dogmas in spite of the economic needs of the times, whether in fact the Communist Party did not needlessly destroy much of the existing economic order for failure to understand it. Lenin's pre-revolutionary writings show little understanding of economic facts, and it is precisely because we fear from the evidence the same failure to understand on Mr Carr's part that we must raise this question. Mr Carr's blind spot about such matters as the price mechanism and the workings of a money economy* enables him to show greater sympathy with and understanding of Leninism, and therefore he can show us how events developed in the eyes of the Bolsheviks. But was this viewpoint the only possible one, as Mr Carr implies? Is it not likely that Lenin failed often to see what was happening in Russia?

Mr Carr tells us in the introduction to the first volume that his ambition was 'to write the history not of the events of the revolution (these have already been chronicled by many hands), but of the political, social and economic order which emerged from it' (p. v). His study of the 1917–23

* Cf. his *Soviet Impact on the Western World*, pp. 40–2.

period 'purports to contain not an exhaustive record of the events of the period to which it relates, but an analysis of those events which moulded the main lines of further development' (pp. v–vi). He might therefore say that he had not attempted to answer our questions, because this did not fit in with his purpose. But this is surely to assume, without at any rate proving it to the reader, that these economic events so obviously did or did not 'mould the main lines of further development' as to require no independent treatment. It is nevertheless disturbing to find that in a volume of some 400 pages on *The Economic Order* for the period 1917–23, only some 83 odd deal with economic events, such as the course of production, prices, employment, government expenditure, and taxation.*

Admittedly we are assured in various places that the necessary statistics are not available, or are in the nature of guesses, for the crucial early period.† But even some well-informed guesses would have been useful. Furthermore, the most detailed descriptive material is often to be found in the chapter on War Communism, which begins on p. 146, so that it is only after we have dealt with 'The Impact of the Revolution' that we begin to learn something about what it was the revolution had an impact upon. This fits in with the course of the implied thesis of the work, but we would have been able to judge more coherently and objectively of the success of the Communist methods if we had started with some sort of background picture of the Russian economy before the war and on the eve of the revolution. Are Mr Carr's readers assumed to know all about this? If so, he is underestimating the wide potential appeal of his history.

Before embarking on some of the major issues that seem to arise from the period, we may dispose of some minor matters that can hardly be ignored. Unfortunately some of the *obiter dicta* that Mr Carr allows himself, which do not affect the main argument of the book at all, throw considerable doubt on his judgment in economic matters. For example: (1) 'At the end of the century the commanding role assumed by the banks

* References to what we call the economic substratum are to be found as follows:
Agriculture, pp. 46–8, 149, 156, 167–9, 283–7, 294.
Industry, pp. 13, 24, 72, 80–1, 85, 174–5, 191–6, 301–3, 306–7, 309–16, 378.
Labour, pp. 209, 218, 321–3.
Trade, pp. 118–9, 126, 231–2, 240–5, 337, 342.
Finance, pp. 139–43, 247–50, 256–60, 347, 349–50, 354–9.
Our choice of references is doubtless somewhat arbitrary, but it aims to exclude only references to organization and theory, which do not affect directly the economic substance. In some cases, there is only an odd reference on a page. In totalling them we have counted each page for one, thus over-estimating the references, and making some allowance for any narrowness of the scope of our selection.

† See pp. 149, 167, 191.

all over Europe, and especially in Germany, in the development of industry seemed to provide a brilliant practical confirmation of this hypothesis' (that the banks were 'the controlling lever' of the economy).* Is this Socialist thesis really borne out by the facts, except perhaps in Germany? (2) In reference to a Menshevik statement about 'a class of producers who develop or contract their economic activity in accordance with the principles of a market economy', Carr gratuitously adds the gloss 'i.e. a class of small capitalists'.† Is not this an attempt to induce an emotional reaction completely unwarranted by the facts? Mr Carr may define the word 'capitalist' in such a way, but thus to equate capitalism with a market economy is at the least a very odd categorization. Most people would surely associate capitalism to some extent with the employment of labour, or the use of large amounts of capital goods, or a concept of property rights in the means of production, or some combination of all these.‡ (3) On pp. 341–2, in describing the 'Nepmen', or private merchants, who came into prominence in the N E P period, to meet the marketing needs of State trusts, and to supply them with raw materials, he refers to 'the more ambitious and more successful grade of Nepmen, some of them once reputable – or not so reputable – businessmen emerging from the underworld where they had lived since the revolution', and a little later to the fact that 'their profits were doubtless large enough to enable them to resort to direct and indirect forms of corruption'. We are not given evidence as to the existence of corruption or the reputableness of their characters; we are not even given instances. The use of the word 'doubtless' seems to suggest that this is not a factual statement about Nepmen, but a general comment about businessmen; so at any rate is the implication. Is this worthy of a serious historian? (4) In reference to the financing of industry, that is to say, the control of borrowing and the allocation of outside money for the operations of nationalized firms, he writes: 'It can scarcely be doubted that this separation of finance from technical management was in principle a step towards a more efficient organization of industry'.§ In practice it may well be that by taking out of the hands of the production authority (Vesenkha) decisions about these matters and putting them into the hands of the 'relatively expert financiers of Narkomfin',‖ accounting procedures were improved. But that *in principle* the accounts of the nationalized industries should be entered in the national budget, and that all borrowing should be con-

* P. 132.
† Pp. 170–1.
‡ Carr seems to be following Bukharin in this, as quoted on p. 379, note 1.
§ P. 255.
‖ P. 254.

trolled by the Finance Ministry (Narkomfin) seems merely a recipe for bureaucracy and chaos. Imagine the National Coal Board having no possibility of raising credit from the banks, and having to borrow everything from the Treasury! And the Treasury having to deal with all the nationalized industries in the same way! (5) 'In restoring a market economy, N E P had restored the interdependence of the various elements of the economy on the familiar lines of the capitalist order. Direct State intervention to support heavy industry was contrary to the new principles.'* This seems to imply that there is only a choice between a completely uncontrolled capitalist economy and a completely socialist one. No doubt this was the belief of the Bolsheviks. But it hardly bears examination. Why should it be impossible to subsidize heavy industry in a largely uncontrolled market economy? There is no difficulty in the State using its weight in the market to distort the market structure of prices without destroying the market itself. The State could clearly have financed investment in the heavy industry on a larger scale than would have taken place under market forces. In the longer run there would have been the problem of selling the products of the new factories; but here again the State could have bought them for its long-term schemes of electrification, improved transport facilities, etc., and subsidized the use of these schemes if required (as in fact was done later in rather a different way under the Five Year Plans). All this would not have interfered with the free market exchange of food for the consumer goods that the peasants required, which was the essence of N E P.

Let us now take some of the major issues:

(1) 'It had become customary in Russia some time before the revolution' to distinguish three categories of peasants, the famous kulaks, middle peasants and poor peasants.† The question we want to know is how far this categorization of the Marxists fitted in with the economic facts of the situation, as it formed one of the important assumptions of Marxist policy. Mr Carr admits, as so often with these issues we are concerned with, that 'such a classification was necessarily vague, and statistics relating to it uncertain'.‡ But in his first discussion of agriculture under the revolution, where the distinction is used as a basis of analysis, the question is never raised as to its usefulness as a classification of economic groups.§ Only much later in the discussion on War Communism do we learn a few facts about the size of holdings, and that 'the smallholding worked by the labour of the peasant and his family, commonly owning

* P. 317.
† P. 160, cf. also p. 22.
‡ P. 160.¶
§ Pp. 28–55.

one horse (was) already typical in 1917', when only 9 per cent. of arable holdings were above 22 acres.* (What proportion of the land was comprised in this group?) This suggests fragmentation of holdings among the poor, rather than serious class divisions.

(2) In a number of places, Mr Carr makes general statements about economic possibilities, for which no evidence is given. As the argument as to the wisdom and necessity of policies followed by the Soviet Government often depends on these assertions, it is regrettable that the unspecialized reader is given no means of knowing what the evidence is for or against them. For example: '(To) raise the pitiably low productivity of Russian agriculture . . . could not be achieved without the introduction of modern machinery and modern techniques, which was in turn not possible on a basis of individual peasant holdings.'† Or again 'the adequate feeding of the towns was ultimately incompatible with a system of small-scale peasant agriculture',‡ and 'the arguments in favour (of large-scale agriculture), whether from the standpoint of theoretical socialism, or of practical efficiency, were irrefutable'.§ Is this issue so obvious on *a priori* grounds that no discussion is required? It may well be that Mr Carr is right both on general grounds, and in the particular circumstances of Russia. What is not helpful in a serious contribution to history is that such issues should be assumed without proof as *a priori* truths, or facts that the reader must take for granted in a situation about which he is given no evidence, or even a reference to sources in which he might be able to find it for himself.

(3) One major issue of the whole period from 1917 to 1923 was that of assuring the food supply of the towns, and providing incentives to the peasants to produce and sell to the towns. In order to understand this major problem, we must know how the system worked before 1917. What goods were provided from the towns to sell in exchange for food? How did the Government tax the peasants? How in fact did Russia manage to export grain on a considerable scale before 1914? Mr Carr gives us no light on these issues. We are confronted with a situation in which the peasants lack incentive to produce food, in which the towns can produce nothing they want, and it is all blamed on the disorganization of the war. In much of the discussion of this sort of issue, economic events occur rather like acts of God in Mr Carr's description of the situation. The Soviet Government has to act to put the disorder right. We are never faced with the possibility that the mechanism that pre-

* P. 168.
† P. 23.
‡ P. 156.
§ P. 157. See also p. 167, top.

sumably once worked could have been restored by the Government, or that perhaps it may have been partly responsible for destroying it. Neither Lenin nor Mr Carr seem to be aware that there was once such a mechanism, and the reader is left in the dark.

Thus it came about that the Communists found themselves involved in direct action to procure food for the towns: the descent of townsmen, with or without armed guards, into the villages to collect the surpluses that were supposed to be hoarded away; and it became a matter of policy to obtain the support of the poor or middle peasants in these levies.* In the early days, we are told, it was not due to 'shortage of goods' to offer to the peasant, but to 'a general disruption of regular commercial relations' that followed the revolution.† What we would like to know would be how it might have been possible to restore these relations. The State monopoly of the grain trade and the system of fixed prices established by the Provisional Government merely led to hoarding and indignation against the 'speculators'. The economic function of meeting demand and supply was met by the black marketeer, the 'bagman'. It is significant that Lenin later described him as 'a creature who instructs us extremely well in economics, quite independently of economic or political theory'.‡ Neither Lenin nor Mr Carr seem very clear what economic theory might have suggested should be done in such a situation in order to extract surpluses from peasants with the least trouble.§ Instead, the extremely clumsy

* Cf. pp. 119, 125, 149–50, 164–5.
† P. 118.
‡ P. 119, note 3. The whole problem of trade between town and country is dealt with on pp. 115–20, 123–5, 170–4, 227–35, 240–4, 281–2, 310.
§ One possible method of using the price mechanism so as to extract maximum surpluses from a peasant population is to allow a free market, but put indirect taxes on the goods that the country buys from the towns. The indirect taxes should be incentive taxes, i.e. regressive, so that the necessities of the peasants are fairly heavily taxed, but the more luxurious or unnecessary goods more lightly taxed. A government monopoly of foodstuffs is still possible, but instead of driving peasants into hoarding or black-marketing, the government should pay incentive prices. The only objection to the indirect tax system on a regressive basis is that it would favour the richer peasant. The Communists could have dealt with this by redistributing land and controlling employment of hired labour if it was a serious problem in the early stages. Would not some such method have been simpler than nearly wrecking the prospects of the revolution by antagonizing the peasants and starving the towns?

In contrast to this, we may compare the tax in kind of October 1918, which, it was admitted by Lenin, 'never entered into effect'; this was to take all surplus over the needs of the peasant and his family, and hence would have given the peasants no incentive to produce more than their own needs required (p. 249). Compare with this Lenin's draft thesis of 1921: 'To approve the principle of bringing the level of tax into relation with the effort of the cultivator in the sense

political methods of direct action appear as the only possible response to what was a most grave situation. The price to be paid, as we later learn, was the disintegration of the industrial labour force, as workers fled from the cities back to their peasant origins,* and the need to wage a civil war on two fronts, against the Whites and against at least the richer peasants.†

The whole period from the taking over of power to the beginning of N E P is an apt illustration of what Mr Carr calls 'the persistence and ingenuity of human beings in devising ways and means to exchange goods when this becomes necessary to their survival'.‡ The inefficiency that resulted from this, and therefore the limitation of the war effort and the lengthening of the war, is shown by the fact that, according to Mr Carr, 'on any hypothesis it seems clear that, throughout the period of war communism, the urban population either went hungry or met more than half its basic requirements of food through what was nominally illicit trading'.§ The results were a relapse from a money economy to pure barter, and all the inefficiencies associated with it,‖ and in the longer run the retreat into the New Economic Policy, with its wide concessions to market principles and its perhaps unnecessary favouring of the peasants at the expense of the proletariat, who were always the backbone of Soviet rule, both in theory and practice. How far would it have been possible to go ahead on the path later followed without such a wide retreat, if from the very start a more moderate policy had been followed? How far would some economic knowledge about the simple laws of demand and supply have helped Lenin to maintain power at less cost in human life, and with less antagonism from the peasants, and without the retreat into inequality and private trade that N E P meant?

(4) On the side of industry, we would like to know why it failed to produce the goods to supply to the countryside. We have seen that in the early period of the revolution it was not due to shortages of goods, but later during the Civil War 'industry was incapable of producing the

of lowering the percentage of tax in proportion to an increase of effort by the cultivator' (p. 281).

* Pp. 193–5.

† For the struggle against the peasants, see a Bolshevik description of N E P as a 'peasant Brest Litovsk', and Lenin's statement in 1921 that 'the chief question of the revolution now consists in the struggle against those two last classes' (i.e. small producers and small cultivators) (p. 278). Carr describes Soviet planning as 'an instrument in the struggle of the industrial proletariat against peasant predominance, of socialism against petty capitalism', and refers to Bukharin (pp. 378–9).

‡ P. 240.

§ P. 242.

‖ Pp. 240–4 and *passim* on the payment of wages in kind.

equivalent in manufactured goods to set the ordinary processes of exchange in motion'.* Why was this? The Coats cotton-thread factory in Petrograd was brought to a standstill in February 1918 as stocks accumulated, 'due to a breakdown in the distributive machinery through the failure of communications and transport'. 'The process of disintegration went on partly as a result of Bolshevik action, and partly in spite of Bolshevik attempts to check it.† Later on we hear of shortages of raw materials, resulting in closing of factories.‡ But there is little careful examination of the economic process. How far did the failure of the Bolsheviks to understand these processes result in unnecessary disintegration? In January 1918, Shlyapnikov could say at a trade union congress that 'the capitalist class renounced the organizing role in production assigned to it', and 'this was felt as a grievance against them', according to Mr Carr.§ Does not this hint at an extraordinary naivety about economic matters, such as we see elsewhere in Lenin's writings, and which may well have been the root cause of the failures of the Bolsheviks?

(5) Mr Carr gives us some revealing data about the inflation that eventually was only checked by N E P, and the deflationary forced sales of stocks by nationalized firms.‖ From discussions about the role of money, admittedly many of them under the forcing-house of War Communism, we learn much about the indecisions of Communist theory and practice on the subject of prices and money.¶ But we never clearly see how far it would have been possible to avoid budgetary chaos and the ever accelerating inflation, had more orthodox methods been used. Was this failure due to the belief of the Communists that by nationalizing the banking system all these problems had been finally solved?** Or had the system of government so disintegrated that no orderly collection of taxes was possible?†† Mr Carr suggests indeed that part of the trouble may have arisen from the fact that 'the currency question was not at first regarded by the Bolshevik leaders as a matter of major importance', and he fairly points out that experience of such catastrophic inflations was lacking.‡‡ Its catastrophic nature, even from the narrow viewpoint of the interests of the Communists in maintaining power, is seen in the fact that in 1920 the occupa-

* P. 151.

† P. 72.

‡ P. 179.

§ P. 91, note 3.

‖ Pp. 123–4, 140, 256–60, 311–15, 349–50, 357–9.

¶ Pp. 261–8, 273–4.

** See pp. 132–3, 246, 254–5, 360–2.

†† The Bolsheviks did not repudiate all the legislation of their predecessors in the tax sphere ; see p. 142.

‡‡ P. 140.

tion of printing notes employed upwards of 10,000 persons out of an industrial labour force of 1,500,000,* at a time when manufactured goods were being produced at the level of only about 13 per cent. of pre-war.† Poverty in the midst of plenty!

(6) One of the fundamental questions lying behind these queries is as to how far the Bolsheviks missed the opportunities of the first few months, before the Civil War broke out, because of their ignorance of economic realities. Could they not have consolidated their position and averted much future trouble without abandoning any major controls over the economic and political system, by a more selective use of their power, a method that was perhaps precluded by their failure of analysis? Mr Carr himself raises this issue in stating that

> the first eight months of the revolution had failed to effect the transition from the bourgeois to the socialist economic order. The main achievement hitherto had been to break the economic power of the feudal landowner and of the bourgeoisie rather than to lay the foundations of the economy of the future. . . . Lenin more than once went out of his way to emphasize the moderation of Soviet intentions at this time. Where more drastic measures had been applied, the fault lay elsewhere: 'the tactics adopted by the capitalist class forced us into a desperate struggle which compelled us to smash up the old relations to a far greater extent than we at first intended'.‡

Was this merely Lenin's alibi for his own failure to act decisively? He was indeed frequently most forthright about all this. 'There is much that can and must be learned from the capitalists.'§ 'We did not learn to trade in our prisons.'‖ And thus the lesson had to be learnt through N E P if no other way. So a conference of Communists in 1921 passed a resolution declaring it to be urgent 'starting from the existence of a market and taking account of its laws, to master it and, by means of systematic and carefully considered economic measures founded on an accurate appreciation of market processes, . . . to take control of the regulation of the market and of monetary circulation'.¶ Carr himself suggests that it was not the forces of private enterprise that sabotaged the revolution, for 'the vested interests of private enterprise . . . scarcely existed in Russia'. It was rather lack of skill: 'If, during the first world war, planning made no great progress in Russia, this was due to the lack of ability and initiative conspicuously displayed by the Russian public services rather than to the

* Pp. 259, 194.
† P. 195.
‡ P. 269.
§ P. 276.
‖ P. 332, note 2.
¶ P. 335.

unripeness of the economy for centralized direction.'* Did not the Communists rather deliberately waste the reserves of skill available because of their illusions about the revolution leading to the solution of all the problems of capitalism . . . until at last N E P forced them to bring back the experts on rather unfavourable terms?

This point has a somewhat wider significance than the opportunities that Lenin lost in 1917–8, if he did lose them. The claim of Leninist theory, as of Marxism, is that its correct analysis enables it to take account of events and master them. The ultimate success of Leninism in Russia might be accidental in that it was achieved in spite of a totally inadequate theory, and in spite of mistakes that could have been avoided. Faulty analysis in the economic sphere, or failure to understand the causes and effects of economic events, can lead to costly mistakes. Did not the Bolshevik Revolution make many such mistakes? A reading of Mr Carr's analysis of the economic order suggests as much, precisely because the material is laid before us in a manner that might be thought calculated to prove the opposite.

The reason for raising these queries, to which in most cases there is, we may hope, a good answer, is not to suggest that Mr Carr is wrong in his analysis of the development of the Russian Revolution; we have not the knowledge to do that; we might in fact prefer to believe that his interpretation was correct. But it is because his theses become so much less convincing since these questions are inadequately answered that we have to ask them. They are the sort of questions that an economist likes to ask of an economic historian, in order to have support or the reverse for his theories. They are in addition perhaps questions that the ordinary reader of Mr Carr's book may not ask. For a project that may become in some sense a standard work on the subject, and be of interest, as the two existing volumes undoubtedly are, to the intelligent layman, it is regrettable that the treatment of some issues is so dogmatic. The layman without economic knowledge, and with no speciality in Soviet studies, may take Mr Carr's *obiter dicta* as either the wisdom of economic science, or proved and accepted facts about the Russian situation. The latter may be the case for the issues to which the point applies, and it may be that Mr Carr has more in mind his colleagues in his own field who need no proof on these points. But at least outsiders would like references to sources where these sort of generalizations are to be found clearly expounded, and where sceptics could find convincing proof of them. Or is the awful truth that Mr Carr sees the world through the spectacles of his peculiar economic dogmas, and really is unable to see that these questions have to be answered?

* P. 364.

AN HISTORIAN'S CREED FOR OUR TIME

Hans Kohn

Professor of History at the City College of New York

The historian is a man who tries to find out what has happened in the course of time and to correlate the events into a meaningful sequence, within the limits of the available material on the one hand, and of his intelligence, imagination and ethical understanding on the other. Only by becoming correlated into the pattern of the on-rushing and all-inclusive course of time do events become history. Time and its irreversibility is a fundamental and tragic category of human life and of history, the source of all ultimate frustration. The escape from time and history into timelessness, into eternity, into the end of history, the *eschata*, the ultimate time, the final day and the final reckoning, is the basis of religious or secular utopian hopes for an end of this fundamental tragedy. These eschatological hopes are themselves an historical fact, but they are, except in their effects, not the concern of the historian. He is concerned with survival in the world of human contingency: past events, otherwise lost in the stream of time, are revived by him in the stream of human consciousness and enter into a relationship with our present life, either (in a disinterested way) by satisfying our playful curiosity or enriching our pure knowledge, or (in a utilitarian way) by broadening our understanding and guiding our actions.

Writing history, therefore, is not to regard events as isolated phenomena, but to put them into the context of time. In this sense everything can become the object of history: the doings of a man or a nation, the development of our planetary system or the working of any branch of human activity. Although, owing to the limitations of men and material, each historian deals only with a small segment of history – one period, one branch of art, one nation – he must do it in the spirit of dealing with universal history, of viewing his segment in the light of what preceded it and at the same time in the context of all other human societies and activities. In that sense, all writing of history, even of the most minute period or branch, should be part of universal history.

Historical consciousness in this sense is a rather recent phenomenon in the long development of the human species, and it distinguishes modern civilization from the whole realm of living nature. Prehistoric peoples,

aptly called in German *geschichtslose Völker*, peoples without history, live in the timelessness of natural time. Their stories begin with 'Once upon a time', which means 'It will always be so'. The ancient Hebrews perhaps present the first example of a people in its entirety strongly conscious of history: the past history of their tribe is to them vividly ever-present and continuous, and at the same time tribal history broadens into the context of universal history. Probably it is only at this stage of time-awareness that we meet a phenomenon, unknown to the rest of living nature: fear of death, and corresponding to it the promise of eternal life, of a new birth, of survival. But we should note that the message of comfort brought by Buddha is that of a death which will not be followed by new birth.

Historical consciousness came fully into its own in the nineteenth century. The revolutionary character of the period which started with the French Revolution, and the rapid changes brought about by ever-new discoveries and the unprecedented progress of technology, created a new consciousness of time as a dynamic and moving force. Through the law of evolution everything became subject to time, and thereby to history: religion, language, literature, art, institutions, science. . . . This new historical consciousness came upon men in such a sudden and overwhelming fashion that the Germans developed it into a philosophy of its own, a *Weltanschauung*, historicism, which, in spite of its great achievements, brought great dangers. It led with Hegel and his disciple, Marx, to a metaphysical view of history, whereby the historical process itself becomes a revelation of the divine – the divine is no longer the limit of everything historical, but becomes identical with history. Everything now seems historically necessary. Martin Heidegger in 1933 greeted the National-Socialist totalitarian state as historically inevitable, as *seinsgeschichtlich*, and stressed that the philospher, 'der Wissende', must therefore avoid moral indignation as inappropriate. Since then Heidegger has taken a similar attitude toward Communism.

The other danger, closely connected with the one pointed out, is what might be called the historization of metaphysics, whereby everything becomes relative, valid in itself. While the first attitude raises historical categories to absolutes, the second easily leads to nihilism, to the rejection of any absolute standards or values. Historicism in our own time has led to two other consequences, the abuse of the past (often in a misrepresented form) to justify present or future claims of nationalism; and the fascination of pre-history, enticing us to praise instinct and myth at the expense of reasonableness and common sense.

In spite of these inherent dangers, the new historical consciousness and the ensuing historiography have had beneficial effects. History, rightly studied, can sharpen man's critical insight into human relationships and

personality. It will make him more conscious of his limitations and therefore more humble, but also teach him to regard the future as an open future containing potentially new developments. True, the present is a product of the past; retrospectively the historian can show how the present grew out of the past. But the present is also always something new, and is itself pregnant with future developments. For though the historian can show retrospectively how the present came about, so that it almost appears as a necessary outcome, at no moment of the past could he have predicted the development tending towards the present.

Ranke's famous saying that it is the task of the historian to find out and to narrate 'how things really happened', '*wie es eigentlich gewesen*', can be basically accepted. The first task of the historian is to find out, by patient and painstaking research, the true facts of the past. In that sense, history is scholarly research and carries its reward, like all scientific endeavour, in itself, in the joy of discovering unknown facts, of finding new interpretations, of shedding light on obscure relationships. Yet no historian can know the whole past, not even the full story of one man, of one year, or even of one day. In the infinity of facts we are always forced to select, within the chance of surviving documentation and the limitations imposed by our intelligence and our intentions. We select according to our set of principles, which, like a searchlight, illumines, in the immensity of any past time, that part which seems to us relevant. Therefore, no work of history is ever finished, and there can be in the true sense of the word no definitive work of history. In that sense, history, which is in its findings and conclusions always approximative and tentative, ever to be verified by fresh discoveries and above all new experiences and insights, is a science and not an art, because art produces definitive creations which no new experience and no new discoveries can alter in their permanent validity.

Yet history – and in that it differs from the sciences – contains an essential element of the work of art and, therefore, great books by historians retain their permanent value – and not only for the historian of historiography – even if single facts or whole interpretations have been found to be erroneous. For history, though it does not serve society, serves man, beyond enriching his knowledge, by equipping him with a deeper understanding of himself, of his fellow men, and of the situations in which he and they are put. It can tell us as much about man and the human condition as the best novel or the great drama. Beyond that, it should give us a critical awareness of ourselves and of our own time by providing perspective through comparison and distinction. Persons, events and situations are always different and never the same: yet they are never entirely new or unique. That is the partial truth in the Greek view of history, which saw in it a morphology of human behaviour; or as Florus,

the disciple of Livy put it, 'ut qui res eius legunt, non unius populi, sed generis humani facta discant', so that those who read its story do not learn the facts about one people but about the whole human kind. This belief in the recurrent character of history, revived in our period by Danilevsky, Nietzsche and Spengler, has been opposed by the view which sees in history one continuous development. The Judaeo-Christian understanding of history as a meaningfully directed process of salvation was secularized in the eighteenth century into the conviction of history being an infinite progress from darkness to ever greater light, from the night of the past either to the bright day of the present, as in the optimistic Enlightenment, or to the even brighter day of the near future, as Marx, over-stressing the dark shadows in the picture of the present, later proclaimed.

The naive exaggerations of the men of the Enlightenment have been recently matched by the equally naive laments of some latter-day prophets. It is remarkable that our age of burning vitality and – in spite of its black spots – of manifold promise should give rise to this kind of mournful pessimism. It is fashionable to-day to speak of an unprecedented 'crisis'. Historical insight could have tempered the optimism of the eighteenth century; it can help to see to-day's crisis in perspective. The historian knows that throughout the longest period of history men have lived in critical times. Even in the apparently so quiet late Victorian age, around 1880, the feeling of a deep moral crisis is reflected in the novels and periodicals of the day: the conflict of religion and science, the rise of labour, the emancipation of women, troubled moral minds. Everything appeared uncertain, the foundations seemed to crumble and attitudes to change rapidly, and yet, retrospectively, it seems a period of blissful quiet. The unspeakable savagery exercised to-day by man against man in some places, and the frightening moral perversions, have been matched in preceding ages. What makes us speak to-day of a crisis is not its greater intensity compared with former centuries, but our greater consciousness of it, due to popular journalism and other factors, and above all, to our heightened moral sensitivity. We abhor to-day cruelty which other ages accepted without widespread protest.

But an historian is not only a scholar and, to a certain extent, an artist; he should also be an educator. In fact, most historians are primarily engaged in teaching – teaching not only their students, who are future historians and educators, but trying to instruct their fellow beings, for in a democratic age history has become the concern of everybody, and right history teaching may be fundamental to the moral and political wisdom of peoples. Historical perspective may help to reject equally the utopias of enthusiasm and the utopias of despair, neither regarding the present as bad nor expecting much from the future. Historians can teach others to look

on nations or classes not as isolated phenomena, but to see and to judge them in a universal context, in the light of our ethical tradition which continues to grow. People are always able and sometimes willing to learn from experience. Therefore, each generation re-writes history, not by adjusting facts to any alleged needs of the hour, but by changing its viewpoints, like an old man looking back on some period of his youth, about which he has achieved no greater factual knowledge, yet arrives at a different judgment as a result of his experience. Historians have responsibilities, not to nations or classes, to dogmas or creeds, but to truth and to humanity. Their training can make them understand the genesis of events and movements, and evaluate their relative worth and importance by comparison with similar attitudes in other peoples, climes and periods. That will make their approach more critical and more cautious, especially against their own emotional prejudices and group-interests. There is no sharp distinction possible between political historians and historians of ideas – ideas and politics are closely interlinked and interdependent. In writing history, this is equally true in the relationship of facts and values. History, whether as scholarship or as art or as teaching, represents the meeting, the interaction, the interrelationship of objective and subjective factors. The facts of the past present the objective material, the ethos and the personality of the historian present the subjective factor, without which the facts of the past, and the past itself, remain dead.

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

THE SPANISH REVIEWS

George Pendle

Five hundred years before Salvador de Madariaga, the Spaniards were already marvelling at the strangeness of the English. As early as the fifteenth century they were noting our odd behaviour and generalizing about our character. Señor Juan de Mata Carriazo has made a study of the Spanish chroniclers of the late Middle Ages, and, in particular, of their references to the English. Some of his findings have now been published in Madrid in the official *Revista de Estudios Políticos* (Vol. XLIV, No. 64) under the title *Inglaterra y los ingleses, vistos por un cronista castellano.*

De Mata Carriazo begins by quoting the following incident from the *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, by Fernando Pulgar. In 1486 an English nobleman, Lord Scales, Earl of Rivers, went to Spain on the Christian mission of helping the Spaniards to recover Granada from the Moors. Scales brought with him one hundred English bowmen and soldiers, who fought on foot and 'ventured into the most dangerous places.' Some of the English were killed, and the Earl himself was twice wounded, 'once in the mouth, knocking out two of his teeth.' After the defeat of the Moors, Queen Isabella sent to Lord 'Escalas' (as the Spaniards called him)

> very rich and great gifts, among them: two beds, adorned with drapery, and one of them with coverings of gold brocade; twelve horses; white linen; and tents; and other things of much value. King Ferdinand likewise went to visit him in his tent to console him for the wounds that he had received in the fighting, and especially for the two teeth that had been knocked out of his mouth. The King told him that he should be joyful, because he had lost by his valour teeth which he might have been deprived of by age or illness, and added that, considering how and where he had lost them, he had been made more handsome rather than deformed.

The Earl's reply, writes de Mata Carriazo, is one of the earliest examples of English humour to be found in Spanish literature.

> The Earl said that he gave thanks to God and the Virgin that he had been visited by the most powerful King in Christendom and stated that he had been graciously consoled by the King for the loss of his teeth. But there was (he continued) no great merit in losing two teeth in the service of Him who had given him all of them.

This article then refers to an earlier chronicle: *La Victorial*, by Gutierre Díez de Games, who raided the English coast in 1405. Díez de Games wrote with insight and sympathy of the English whom he encountered. They were (he recorded)

> very different from all other nations, and for many reasons. Firstly, because this is their nature, which comes to them from their forebears. Secondly, they live in a land that is well supplied with food and drink, and rich in metals. Furthermore, they are many, for the size of their country.... And, being surrounded by sea, they have no fear of any nation.

The English 'do not wish to be at peace with any nation. In peace time, things go badly for them, because they are so numerous that their land cannot contain them all.' England, France and Spain (wrote the chronicler) are three nations each of which has its own manner of remembering what it must do. 'The English remember beforehand: they are prudent. The French never remember until the event: they are proud and hasty. The Spaniards never remember until after the event: they are lazy and talkative.'

In this same issue of *Estudios Políticos* Señor Carlos Martínez de Campos looks upon the present-day international scene from the somewhat isolated, trans-Pyrenean view-point and, understandably in the circumstances, derives some satisfaction from the failure of the United Nations to agree among themselves and from the evidence that Americans and British habitually misunderstand one another's attitude to world affairs. He tells an amusing anecdote from Gibraltar. An American cruiser had arrived at Gibraltar ('nowadays British ships are not so numerous, and there is space for Americans'). Martínez de Campos went aboard to dine with the ship's officers, who were entertaining the leading British officials from Gibraltar and some ladies. He descended into the cruiser's illuminated interior – 'glistening walls,' 'marine oil paintings,' 'the portrait of an anonymous admiral and the picture of a ship belonging to the days when the U S A had no navy,' 'plenty of silver on the table, and a vase without flowers.' The meal began in silence

> now-a-days, to start a meal without a modest cocktail is like visiting a concert hall where there is no music. And when, in addition to not having tasted a dry Martini, the diners find nothing but large glasses of iced water in front of their respective places at table, everyone is ill at ease.

Eventually, however, everyone was talking, and the British and Americans were bitterly disagreeing. A distinguished Englishwoman was blaming the Americans for all the British housewife's present-day troubles, and the Americans, coming from different surroundings, did not understand her point of view. 'For me (says Martínez de Campos), this spectacle was strange and embarrassing, and I recognized that absolute incomprehension prevailed between the two great peoples inhabiting the opposite sides of the Atlantic.' And he concludes with the generalization: 'The English say *what they feel* and then, without a word, do what they want to do; while the Yanks say *what they want* bluntly, and even uncivilly.'

The brightest of Spain's cultural reviews is still the illustrated magazine *Clavileño*, published every two months in Madrid. Number 17 of *Clavileño* contains two interesting articles about the picturesque novelist and poet Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866–1936), concerning whom there are so many anecdotes. One of the best introductions to Valle-Inclán is in Gerald Brenan's *Literature of the Spanish People:*

> Some time in the middle 'nineties a young Galician called Ramon – his surname I forget – turned up in Madrid and took his seat among the young writers in the cafés. He was very fantastic to look at, with a long, black, goat-like beard and long waving hair – not unlike the portrait of Lytton Strachey in the Tate Gallery – but his conversation was even more fantastic than his appearance. Nothing could be gathered of his antecedents – for his stories about himself were too extravagant to be believed – except that he had spent some time in Mexico. 'I went there,' he said, 'because it is the only country in the world that has an X in it.' Prominent in his conversation were descriptions of love affairs of a marvellous kind of which he was the hero. 'A Galician type,' everyone said, much as we say 'A regular Irishman.'

Valle-Inclán's books resembled his conversation, full of latent power and fine phrases. He said that the tragic reality of Spanish life could only be conveyed by systematic deformation, 'because Spain is a grotesque deformation of European civilization.'

In *Clavileño*, Gaspar Gómez de la Serna examines in detail the work of this *eximio literato, pero extravagante ciudadano*, this 'eminent man of letters, but extravagant citizen', using as the key to the subject Valle-Inclán's own dictum:

> I believe that artistically or æsthetically there are three ways of seeing the world: kneeling, standing or from the air. When one looks from the kneeling position – and this is the oldest method in literature – the protagonists, the heroes, are superior to humanity, or, at least, to the narrator or poet. Thus Homer attributed to his heroes qualities which ordinary men never possess....There is a second method, which is to look upon the protagonists of fiction as though they were of our own nature, as though they were our brothers, ourselves....This, certainly, is the method that has been most successful. This is Shakespeare, all of Shakespeare....And there is a third method, which is to look upon the world from a higher plane and to consider the personalities in the plot as being inferior to the author, with a touch of irony....This method is very Spanish, and becomes clearly defined in Goya.

Valle-Inclán, in the two principal periods of his literary career, used the first and third of these three techniques: he wrote either kneeling, or from the air.

In the same issue of *Clavileño* Enrique Segura Covarsi discusses Ramón Valle-Inclan's fondness for one-armed beggars (Don Ramón himself had only one arm: the other he said he had lost as the result of a romantic duel, but no one really knows how the mutilation occurred), and for the blind, who appear so frequently in his novels. Valle-Inclán was fascinated by eyes. He seldom failed to describe the eyes of his characters: their position, their colour and their expression. For him, the eyes of people with sight (in contrast to those of the blind) symbolized all that was changeable, inconstant, ephemeral and fugitive in life: in their pupils the unity of the world was shattered into fragments. But the eyes of the blind – tragic in their quietude, 'wide-open eyes, motionless, like the eyes of a primitive god' – represented a unified conception of life: like the eyes of Greek gods carved in marble, they held eternity within the circle of their pupils.

Alan Ross has provided a definition of the ideal literary review in the following terms:

> By literary review I mean something with a decisive influence on the best contemporary creative and critical writing. A review, in this sense, brands its contributors; it gives them a watermark. It must seem to invent, not absorb; to diagnose, cut away, reject or renew, not simply appreciate. Unless its contents appear recognizably the product of a certain critical attitude – and this does not mean that they need be stereotyped – it may please the amateur but it will have no meaning.*

In Spain to-day – as in England – there are very few reviews which conform to that definition. The well-produced *Indice*, for example, is mainly occupied in keeping its readers up-to-date in literary and artistic matters. Books are reviewed, and prize-winners and distinguished visitors are interviewed. In *Indice* No. 57 André Maurois, visiting Madrid, is asked:

> 'What do you think of Spain to-day?'
> Maurois: 'I don't know. I've hardly been outside my hotel.'
> 'But the general surroundings, the atmosphere?'
> Maurois: 'I assure you that I've not been able to pay attention to anything.'
> 'What is your opinion of present-day France?'
> Maurois: 'France is always the same.'

Correo Literario and *Insula* likewise are topical and informative miscellanies, neither of them possessing a clearly-defined character or a recognizable critical policy.

* The *Observer*, October 19th, 1952.

Insula No. 82 is largely devoted to Pérez Galdós (1843–1920) who was born in the Canary Islands and became the great and prolific novelist of Madrid. Galdós had a somewhat wordy style, and therefore his work has been out of fashion for the past fifty years or so. Suddenly (as Gregorio Marañon explains in *Insula*) the recent success of one of the novels in an English translation has created a new vogue: in the book-shops of Madrid *La de Bringas* (which is the original title of *The Spendthrifts*) now carries an advertisement: 'The novel which has just been so extraordinarily successful in England and the U S A.'* We have rediscovered Galdós for Spain, almost simultaneously with our rediscovery of our own Anthony Trollope, with whom he had much in common.

Gregorio Marañon was a close friend of Galdós, and describes him as having been tall and burly, with small timid eyes, a man of few gestures, who spoke somewhat abruptly, dressed shabbily, and lived and behaved with the utmost simplicity. Admirers who called to see the novelist were disappointed. 'He is a man just like other men,' they complained. Marañon would then reply: 'Yes, he is a man like other men. But remember that the important thing about him is that, in spite of appearances, he is *not* like others.'

Insula sent a questionnaire to the principal younger Spanish authors asking them for their opinions of Pérez Galdós. Their replies (with one exception) are almost identical: in their adolescence, they found Galdós's novels heavy and too grandiloquent; to-day they admire his zest and technical ability in creating a vast, enclosed world of his own. As they grow older the modern writers begin to feel, perhaps, that they themselves lack the great man's power, and that therefore his achievement is all the more worthy of admiration.

I believe that the Spanish literary reviews would exercise a more marked and beneficial influence on contemporary poets and novelists if their editors adopted higher critical standards. At present they are inclined to distribute praise indiscriminately. All new books receive favourable notices. Writing seems to be done hastily. There is no sign of a strict editorial policy or discipline. It is possible that the rehabilitation of Pérez Galdós – that industrious professional of letters – may encourage the development of a more austere attitude to literary work.

* More recently, the publishers of *The Spendthrifts* have published *Torment* – an excellent translation of Galdós's *Tormento*, of which *La de Bringas* is in fact the sequel. *Torment* should be read before *The Spendthrifts*, although Messrs. Weidenfeld and Nicolson have published these two novels in the reverse order.

SYNTAX IN POETRY AND MUSIC

Donald Davie

Lecturer in English at Trinity College, Dublin and author of *Purity of Diction in English Verse*, recently published by Chatto & Windus.

When Susanne Langer's *Philosophy in a New Key* was published at Harvard in 1942 it attracted little attention. Nine years later Herbert Read thought this neglect comparable to the neglect of Kierkegaard's works when they first appeared.* No doubt the comparison is designedly provocative; but if it is extravagant, it is not ludicrous. For *Philosophy in a New Key* is indeed a remarkable book. It ranges through many fields of speculation and knowledge, and that, I suspect, is why it was neglected; only a committee could review it properly. But one need not be an expert in any of these fields to be astonished and delighted by its grand synoptic sweep and the vigour and lucidity of its style.

I make no pretensions here to consider it as a whole. I want to examine it from only one point of view, in the light of Mr Read's claim, 'For the first time we have a theory which accounts satisfactorily for all forms of art.' And, to narrow the matter still further, I seek to examine this from the standpoint of only one form of art, the art of poetry.

A glance at the index advises us that if Susanne Langer has accounted for poetry, along with the other muses, she has done so very succinctly. And when we turn to such comments as there are, what do we find in the conjuror's hat but that dowdy old rabbit, 'significant form'! We may well feel we can direct the author to I. A. Richards's *Principles* and be done with it.

But this would be a mistake. Mr Read has *not* been gulled, and this is *not* just another system of æsthetics compiled by the professional philosopher, one of those books that would be so admirable if only we could be sure that the author had ever enjoyed a poem, a sonata or a painting. Susanne Langer takes her Clive Bell with reservations; and in taking over his phrase she transforms it – chiefly because the analogy she proposes for poetry is not so much painting or ceramics, as music. As a result 'significant form' comes back into the arena of serious discussion. And so does another old tag that has faded and rubbed smooth, Walter Pater's pronouncement, 'All the arts aspire to the condition of music.' Both these must now be taken seriously; for what in Pater was cryptic, what in Bell was vague, becomes by this handling crisp and definite.

* Herbert Read. 'The Language of Symbols,' *World Review*, September 1951 pp. 33–36.

The force of the argument, as Mrs Langer presents it, is in her grasp of what it feels like to listen to music. This is an author who *has* enjoyed a sonata. She has enjoyed poems too, but it is the music we must start with. Because she can re-create the effect music has on the listener, we are prepared to go with her when she asks what music means, to him and to us.

What is the meaning of music? There is a passage in *The Waves* where Rhoda, having heard of the unexpected death of a friend, seeks consolation in a concert:

> Then, swollen but contained in slippery satin, the seagreen woman comes to our rescue. She sucks in her lips, assumes an air of intensity, inflates herself and hurls herself precisely at the right moment, as if she saw an apple and her voice was the arrow into the note, 'Ah!'
>
> An axe has split a tree to the core; the core is warm; sound quivers within the bark. 'Ah!' cried a woman to her lover, leaning from her window in Venice. 'Ah, ah!' she cried, and again she cries 'Ah!' She has provided us with a cry. But only a cry. And what is a cry? Then the beetle-shaped men come with their violins; wait; count; nod; down come their bows. And there is ripple and laughter like the dance of olive trees and their myriad-tongued grey leaves when a seafarer, biting a twig between his lips where the many-backed steep hills come down, leaps on shore.
>
> 'Like' and 'like' and 'like' – but what is the thing that lies beneath the semblance of the thing? Now that lightning has gashed the tree and the flowering branch has fallen and Percival, by his death, has made me this gift, let me see the thing. There is a square; there is an oblong. The players take the square and place it upon the oblong. They place it very accurately; they make a perfect dwelling-place. Very little is left outside. The structure is now visible; what is inchoate is here stated; we are not so various or so mean; we have made oblongs and stood them upon squares. This is our triumph; this is our consolation.*

This conveys admirably the paradox of musical effect, which is, on the one hand, oppressively emotional (blurted out, a cry, or a moan), on the other hand, as rigorously dry and abstract as Euclid. What is the link between these two elements? – a link, not in time, though Mrs Woolf presents them in sequence, but in the total impression of any musical work? The link, clearly, is some sort of articulation, when the fiddles begin to weave in and out; not quite the articulation of narrative, though it may evoke narratives as fanciful similes, but more like the articulation of a painting, although it takes place in time, with first one thing then another, as a painting does not.

* *The Waves* (new edition 1946), pp. 115, 116.

Such is Mrs Langer's account of the effect of music. The crudest idea of musical meaning is that any piece of music expresses an emotion – this is a joyful piece, this one is sad; this is a cry of joy, this is a moan of pain. But the same piece may be joyful to one person, sorrowful to another. At the other extreme, the purist cries that music is shape, pattern, which means nothing but itself; but this is belied by the universal experience that music *does* stir the emotions, *is* tinged with feeling, does speak to us as to active and suffering persons. A true account of musical effect must include both these elements; and Mrs Langer does so by saying that '*what music can actually reflect is only the morphology of feeling*', not this feeling or that (though this one and that one swim up for an instant now here, now there), but feeling in itself, its structure. And as Mrs Langer says, a joyful and a sorrowful feeling may have the same morphology. Its burden is, as she says, 'in very naive phrase, a knowledge of "how feelings go".' And it is there, in the 'going', – in presenting how feelings are built up, how they branch and fork and coalesce – that we find the articulating back and forth that is music's life:

> Articulation is its life, but not assertion; expressiveness, not expression. The actual function of meaning, which calls for permanent contents, is not fulfilled; for the *assignment* of one rather than another possible meaning to each form is never explicitly made.

In saying this, Mrs Langer uses 'meaning' in a specially restricted sense. She certainly does not want to dismiss music as meaningless. This labour of articulation is meaning enough, she thinks, and rational meaning too; for the whole brunt of her argument is directed against thinkers like Russell, Carnap and Wittgenstein, for whom the arts are welcome enough so long as they remain in the world of the emotive, outside the pale of reason. This is the point of her chapters on semantics, on folk-lore and ritual. For 'the new key' of her title is the idea of symbol – this is the key that is to open new philosophical doors; and the arts, she argues, use symbols no more than language does, and no less rationally, though in a non-discursive, a 'presentational' way.

This is the thorniest part of the book, though still absorbing and still beautifully lucid. For present purposes, we need only realize that for Mrs Langer language is a discursive symbolism, where music is a presentational symbolism; and that poetry, as an art, in this resembles music more than it resembles the language of speech or of prose.

This she explains as follows:

> though the *material* of poetry is verbal, its import is not the literal assertion made in the words, but *the way the assertion is made*, and this involves the sound, the tempo, the aura of associations of the words, the long or short sequences of ideas, the wealth or poverty of transient imagery that contains them, the sudden arrest of fantasy by pure fact, or of familiar fact by sudden fantasy, the suspense of literal meaning by a sustained ambiguity resolved in a long-awaited key-word, and the unifying, all-embracing artifice of rhythm. (The tension which music achieves through dissonance, and the reorientation in each new resolution to harmony, find their equivalents in the suspensions and periodic decisions of propositional sense in poetry. Literal sense, not euphony, is the 'harmonic structure' of poetry; word-melody in literature is more akin to tone-colour in music.)*

The first thing to say of this is that Mrs Langer knows what it is like to read and enjoy a poem, just as she knows what it is like to hear and enjoy a sonata. Her account is true to the features of experience. As a result, she avoids the traps set for the poet who does not know music 'from the inside', for the musician who does not know poetry from the inside, and for the æsthetician who too frequently knows neither.

When poets say that poetry is or ought to be like music, they often turn out to have only a naive idea of what music is. They take such musical freaks as the imitations of cuckoo-calls, or clocks, or peals of bells, as if they were central to music's nature; and so build up a theory of poetry around the equally freakish poetical device of onomatopœia. Or else they take music to be 'a cry' ('But only a cry? And what is a cry?'), and when they say that poetry is or ought to be like music, they mean by that that the only genuine poem is the lyric, and that a poem is 'lyrical', other things being equal, when it displays a profusion of vocatives and a punctuation consisting of exclamation marks, dashes, and rows of dots. (This is the sort of thing we find, not only in late-Victorian Conservatives, but in an aggressive modernist like William Carlos Williams.) Very frequently nowadays the two ideas, of poetry as cry and poetry as onomatopœia, come together, as in *Finnegan's Wake*, where the language is onomatopœic on the one hand, on the other the metaphorical crying language of Vico's *Age of Giants*. So they come together for W. R. Rodgers.† And Hopkins's theory of 'inscape', and Rilke's doctrine, that things utter themselves through us, can be used in a similar way, to make of poetry an onomatopœic cry. At the other extreme comes *la poésie pure*, with its poems like Edith Sitwell's early pieces, that are sheer constructs of euphony, supposedly as drained of all emotive reference as (on this purist view) music is.

What distinguishes Mrs Langer's from all these other accounts of the poetry-music relationship, is her insistence on music as pre-eminently articulation. In her view a poem is like a piece of music in that it articulates itself; and in thus establishing internal relations, establishes also

* *Philosophy in a New Key*, pp. 260, 261.

† W. R. Rodgers. 'Speak and Span.' *The New Statesman and Nation*, December 15th, 1951.

relations of feeling, building up the structure, the morphology of feeling, and telling us 'what it feels like to feel'. In other words, the central act of poetry as of music, is the creation of syntax, of meaningful arrangement. And hence (this seems to me the most salutary implication) the unit of poetry is not the 'passage', not (thank God) the 'image', but *the poem*.

Of course, the syntax we speak of here is not the syntax of prose, that is a part of formal grammar. It cannot be, on this showing; because that syntax is discursive, moving from point to point, always forward on the momentum of its verb, whereas the poem, like other works of art, is non-discursive, and moves in every direction at once, as a painting does. It is only on the first reading that we move forward from first to last; on the second and all subsequent readings we see the poem more truly as an articulation over an area, not a process in time. Hence there is no need for the poet to preserve even *the forms* of prose-syntax; and as a result we must not suppose, whenever we find a poet who dislocates prose-syntax, that we have to deal with the poetry of the blurted-out ejaculation, the cry. The dislocated syntax of Ezra Pound in the 'Cantos' may look like the dislocated syntax of William Carlos Williams, but in fact, of course, the Cantos are, or are meant to be, articulated most closely. They are articulated, however, by a syntax that is musical not linguistic, by 'the unifying all-embracing artifice of rhythm', understood in its widest sense, to mean not only the rhythm that rides through tempo and metre in the verse-paragraph, but also the rhythmical recurrence of ideas, hinted at in one Canto, picked up in another much later, suspended for many more, and so on.* The Cantos indeed fit Mrs Langer's account very well.

But there are poets whose poetry 'aspires to the condition of music', who nevertheless preserve the forms of linguistic syntax, as Pound does not. And it is these poets that are provided for in Mrs Langer's parenthesis. It is their poetry, not Pound's, of which one may say that 'the tension which music achieves through dissonance, and the reorientation in each new resolution to harmony, find their equivalents in the suspensions and periodic decisions of propositional sense in poetry'. Perhaps the clearest example of a poet of this sort is Valéry; I happened to read Elizabeth Sewell's *Valéry* at about the same time as Mrs Langer's book, and the poet's view of poetry chimed in so well with the philosopher's that one would think the latter had written with this poet, of all others, in mind. Valéry saw very clearly that music is not a cry, but above all an articulation:

> The pythoness could not dictate a poem. Only a line – that is to say a unit – and then another. This goddess of the continuum is incapable of continuity.†

* See Hugh Kenner. *The Poetry of Ezra Pound*, pp. 112–115, 274–285.
† Quoted by Elizabeth Sewell. *Paul Valéry: the Mind in the Mirror*, p. 28.

And *La Jeune Parque* was first envisaged as 'an operatic recitative, à la Gluck: 30 or 40 lines in one long phrase almost; and for contralto voice'.*

But it is time to unravel the implications of Mrs Langer's persuasive formulation. And they are clear enough. In her view, the poet suspends the propositional sense through a long verse-period, not because the sense has to be qualified before it can be completed, but so as to achieve 'the tension which music achieves through dissonance'; and he decides the sense, bringing the period to a close, not because he is now prepared to commit himself to an assertion, but just to find an equivalent for music's 'reorientation in each new resolution to harmony'. The whole play of literal meaning, in fact, is a Swedish drill, in which nothing is being lifted, transported, or set down, though the muscles tense, knot and relax as if it were. This is what Mrs Langer means by saying that 'Literal sense . . . is the "harmonic structure" of poetry.'

Mallarmé writes, in *Prose pour Des Esseintes*, a sentence which wreathes its way through several stanzas, and in and out of several tenses, which could not live together in that order in any sentence of prose. This is an affront to all prosaic usage. Yet the grammar and syntax here is nearer to the prosaic than is the formally flawless grammar and syntax of the poet envisaged by Mrs Langer. For at least Mallarmé's verb designates an action in past, present, or future time, not an undifferentiated thrust, an illusion of momentum, or a sense of relief.

Milton can be taken on Mrs Langer's terms, where Mallarmé cannot:

> It is only in the period that the wave-length of Milton's verse is to be found: it is his ability to give a perfect and unique pattern to every paragraph, such that the full beauty of the line is found in its context, and his ability to work in larger musical units than any other poet – that is to me the most conclusive evidence of Milton's supreme mastery. The peculiar feeling, almost a physical sensation of a breathless leap, communicated by Milton's long periods, and by his alone, is impossible to procure from rhymed verse.†

So long as Milton does not 'justify God's ways to man', but only, quite precisely, 'goes through the motions', we can read him as if he were Valéry, and Mr Eliot can admire him.

It is plain that Mrs Langer's sort of poetry, where it retains forms of prosaic syntax, uses in fact a pseudo-syntax. And to that extent the things it says are still, in the time-honoured phrase, pseudo-statements. Mrs Langer insists that they are not 'pseudo-' in the way that I. A. Richards supposed; they are not irrational and crudely emotive like a strangled cry,

* Quoted in *The Times Literary Supplement*, August 22nd, 1952. Review of *Lettres a Quelques-Uns*.
† T. S. Eliot. *Milton*. The British Academy Lecture.

the hoot of an owl, or the howl of a wolf. The statements of poetry, in her account, are like the statements of music, rational and meaningful as the hub or nest of articulations. But to the common reader the statements of poetry, even on this showing, are still 'pseudo', though in a different way. They are pseudo-statements in that they do not mean what they say; the poet will not stand by them, nor take his stand upon them. 'The actual function of meaning, which calls for permanent contents, is not fulfilled; for the *assignment* of one rather than another possible meaning to each form is never explicitly made.'

It remains for me to say only that in my view this theory of poetry accounts for certain kinds of poem, and for certain 'statements' in every kind of poem; but not for all such statements. There is a real danger, when a book is written so well as this, that its view of poetry may become a new orthodoxy. If that were to happen (and perhaps it has happened already) the consequence would be as disastrous, I think, for the future development of English poetry as for any attempt to see English poetry of the past for what it is. It seems to me that all genuine poets make poetic statements which they believe to be true, on which they will take their stand, which they want to have taken at their face-value; and that when they do so, they use a true authentic syntax. Moreover, Mrs Langer's writing gives me a pleasure which seems to me poetic, but if I take poetry on her terms there is no way of explaining what I mean by that. Poetry, surely, is an 'impure' art; it is just its impurity that gives it most of its peculiar virtue and force. All attempts to refine it into the purity of music are as harmful to it as the continual endeavour to coarsen it into exhortation and communiqué.

A PEDANT FINDS FAULT

J. G. Weightman

A famous English poet recently published a complete translation of Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*.* He writes in his preface:

> I have been reading Baudelaire since I was fifteen, carried him in my haversack through two wars, and loved him longer and more deeply than any other poet. . . . I am translating Baudelaire because he lived my life . . . with similar sins, remorses, ostracisms and poverty, and the same desperate hope of reconciliation and pardon.

The perfect conditions for translation seem, therefore, to have been achieved. The translator is himself a poet, he has been reading French for forty years at least, and he feels as closely linked to Baudelaire as Baudelaire did to Poe, or Henry Miller does to Rimbaud. The book must be the result of years of effort, and the translator cannot be entirely displeased with it, since it has appeared in print. Yet, apart from a few admirable fragments, it is without the qualities for which Baudelaire is read in French. Nor does it seem to me to have much coherent poetic quality in English. What, then, is it? An exercise in a kind of linguistic limbo? In case I am judging it too harshly, I should like to analyse one of Baudelaire's sonnets with its English rendering; if I am wrong, someone may be good enough to put me right. The academic exercise called *explication littéraire* is so precise as to expose the critic more than the work criticized. In any case, the two poets I am dealing with are covered by Baudelaire's own statement, in his *Salon de* 1845; 'Nous ne croyons pas, nous, qu'on, puisse compromettre le génie en l'expliquant.'

The sonnet I have chosen is *La Mort des Amants*. It is not the best translation in the book, nor the worst. It is only fair to begin by quoting the best, which is, I should say, *Sépulture*. This is a minor example of the 'black' poems. The translator seems more at ease with them than with the highest flights of Baudelaire's poetry. This is, however, the only one which is not seriously weakened by translation;

> If on a night obscure and deep,
> Some decent Christian out of ruth
> Buries behind some garbage heap
> The vaunted body of your youth:

* *Poems of Baudelaire*. Roy Campbell (The Harvill Press, 21s.).

There, when the chaster stars have set
And the moon her hammock slung
Will the spider weave his net
And the adder hatch her young.

Your cursèd head beneath the ground
Will hear through all the seasons then,
The dismal cries of wolves resound.

Old half-starved witches raising spooks,
The antics of obscene old men,
And black conspiracies of crooks.

This is a remarkably successful rendering of

Si par une nuit lourde et sombre
Un bon chrétien, par charité,
Derrière quelque vieux décombre
Enterre votre corps vanté,

A l'heure où les chastes étoiles
Ferment leurs yeux appesantis,
L'araignée y fera ses toiles,
Et la vipère ses petits;

Vous entendrez toute l'année
Sur votre tête condamnée
Les cris lamentables des loups

Et des sorcières faméliques,
Les ébats des vieillards lubriques
Et les complots des noirs filous.

Unfortunately, although the best, perhaps, of the translations, this is fa
from being one of Baudelaire's best poems. The lines follow each othe
rather mechanically, the horror seems synthetic, and the translator ca
introduce an image of his own – a very English one – without upsettin
the economy of the whole. As poetry about a grave, it is well below *T*
fair Fidele's grassy tomb or even *Where Claribel low lieth*. There are man
inferior poems in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, the feeblest of all being, I think, *La Pip*
about which Proust was unaccountably enthusiastic. This, incidentally
illustrates the great uncertainty of poetic taste. Even when we are pas
sionately fond of poetry, we disagree more easily about it than abou
prose, and our opinions about particular poems vary from day to day
Mr T. S. Eliot has said that poets themselves can never be sure that the
have written anything of value and, according to Valéry, poetry is alway
'essentiellement niable'. I am reasonably sure, however, that *La Mort d*
Amants is one of the great poems on which Baudelaire's reputation rest
Can we feel that it is a great poem from the English rendering?

We shall have beds round which light scents are wafted,
Divans which are as deep and wide as tombs;
Strange flowers that under brighter skies were grafted
Will scent our shelves with rare exotic blooms.

When, burning to the last their mortal ardour,
Our torch-like hearts their bannered flames unroll,
Their double lights will kindle all the harder
Within the deep twinned mirror of our soul.

One evening made of mystic rose and blue,
I will exchange a lightning-flash with you,
Like a long sob that bids a last adieu.

Later, the Angel, opening the door
Faithful and happy, will at last renew
Dulled mirrors, and the flames that leap no more.

This certainly has a convincing rhythm, which is more than can be said of some translations of poetry, and it contains at least two vigorous, memorable lines:

When, burning to the last their mortal ardour,
Our torch-like hearts their bannered flames unroll.

However, before referring to the French, we can find flaws in it. Width is hardly a characteristic of tombs. Exotic blooms, grown in a tropical climate, would be the natural products of those happy regions; they would not be 'grafted', an unpleasant, grating word, which is present, we suspect, only because of the rhyme. 'Rare exotic' verges on pleonasm. 'Kindle' is rather surprising; the verb normally means 'to set alight' or 'to begin to burn'; why, then, should it be qualified by 'all the harder', especially as we have already been told that the torches are burning out? Why is the mirror of the soul termed 'deep'? It cannot be deeper than the heart. It is not clear, either, why the lovers should have two hearts, but only one soul. The torches having burned out in the second quatrain, lightning occurs in the first tercet. This introduces a new image, and a rather inappropriate one, because a sob, particularly a long one, cannot be over in a flash. Finally, one can 'renew' flames, but not dulled mirrors.

If we now read the French, we see that it has none of these weaknesses:

Nous aurons des lits pleins d'odeurs légères,
Des divans profonds comme des tombeaux,
Et d'étranges fleurs sur des étagères,
Ecloses pour nous sous des cieux plus beaux.

Usant à l'envi leurs chaleurs dernières,
Nos deux cœurs seront deux vastes flambeaux,
Qui réfléchiront leurs doubles lumières
Dans nos deux esprits, ces miroirs jumeaux.

Un soir fait de rose et de bleu mystique,
Nous échangerons un éclair unique,
Comme un long sanglot tout chargé d'adieux;

Et plus tard un Ange, entr'ouvrant les portes,
Viendra ranimer, fidèle et joyeux,
Les miroirs ternis et les flammes mortes.

This is an obscure poem. I realized, when I first began comparing it with the translation, that I had liked it for years without ever wondering consciously what it meant. But its obscurities are harmonious, and they are not on the surface, as in the translation. Baudelaire's tombs are not 'wide', his flowers are not 'grafted' and are no more than 'strange'; his torches are not 'kindled', and so on. The middle of the sonnet is quite clear; the burning hearts of the lovers are reflected in their *minds*, that is, their emotions are reflected and intensified by their understanding. There is no 'lightning-flash'; the 'éclair' is the last supreme flaring-up of the torches, so that the tercet carries on the image of the second quatrain and brings it to a climax.* 'Eclair' has both the physical sense of light and the metaphorical one of understanding. The sonnet is perfectly constructed; in reading it, the voice gradually rises to 'un éclair unique', situated about three-quarters of the way through (so often the peak point in good composition), and then falls away on the next line. There is a slight pause, followed by an aftermath of emotion in a different key.

Not only has the central image and the general pattern of the poem been falsified in translation, many incidental beauties have disappeared as well. Baudelaire does not waft his scents *around* the beds; they are *in* the beds. He is, I take it, referring to the freshness of clean linen, scented, at most, by the lavender in the linen cupboard – a much less decadent idea than the addition of external perfumes. Although he is the poet of smells, having introduced smell once, he does not drag it in again, as the translator does, in connection with flowers. Baudelaire simply places the flowers around the lovers as symbols of strangeness, distant sunshine and happiness.

Des divans profonds comme des tombeaux

seems to be a reminiscence† of Banville's line,

Des divans profonds à nous anéantir

but Baudelaire has replaced the last three words by 'comme des tom-

* It is worth noting for those interested in the writing of poetry, that Baudelaire did not hit on this perfect arrangement at once. The 1851 version has *un sanglot unique* and *Et comme un éclair*. See the *Notes et Variantes* of the Crépet edition, 1930.
† See Jean Pommier: *Dans les Chemins de Baudelaire*, 1945, p. 186.

beaux', no doubt for the sake of the springiness of the nasals, *an*, *on*, *om*. This, too, disappears in English.

Our torch-like hearts their bannered flames unroll

is a brave line, but 'bannered' suggests either that a wind is blowing, or that the torches themselves are moving. Baudelaire's torches are standing still, indoors, and are burning upwards with a calm, ecstatic radiance. The English poetic effect is, therefore, out of place.

I will exchange a lightning-flash with you

in addition to being ridiculous, divides the lovers into 'I' and 'you', whereas Baudelaire keeps them combined all through as 'nous'. A sob 'that bids a last adieu' is more of a gulp than the long, echoing 'sanglot tout chargé d'adieux'.

The translation of the last tercet raises the question of the meaning of the poem as a whole. 'Un Ange' has become '*the* Angel'. This seems to suggest some particular Angel, such as the Angel of Death, and indeed, the only commentary on this point I have found – that by Robert-Benoit Chérix * – says confidently:

> Poème intimiste qui semble le prolongement, et même l'aboutissement de *L'Invitation au Voyage*. Là, dans cette élégie, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, luxe, calme et volupté . . . jusqu'au moment unique, tout chargé d'adieux, qui est le *sanglot* du trépas. Mais l'Ange de la mort – magie exquise et inopinée du dénouement – entr'ouvre les portes sur une immortalité *fidèle* et *joyeuse*.

I do not see on what grounds Monsieur Chérix transfers *fidèle et joyeux* to immortality from the Angel, nor does the poem suggest that the doors are opened on to immortality; their opening causes a change of atmosphere, but the Angel comes in through them. However, I agree with the beginning of Monsieur Chérix's statement; the first eleven lines describe ideal love, as Baudelaire often hoped it might be. The expression of it here is much more spiritualized than in some of his other poems (the English version does not render the curious airiness of the French) but the movement is clearly erotic, rising to the climax, a moment of delight, mystic awareness, understanding and sadness. This moment is also Death, or a death, according to the very common analogy. Baudelaire may mean to suggest that the lovers, by their supreme union in this ideal setting, escape from the bondage of time into eternity.†. If so, the Angel cannot

* *Commentaire des Fleurs du Mal*, Genève, 1949.
† Professor J. M. Cocking, with whom I have discussed the sonnet, points out that, like much post-Romantic and Symbolist literature, it shows a mingling and exploitation of Christian and occult conceptions.
It is also noteworthy that in the second part of *La Chambre Double* which might

be the Angel of Death, who would have rather announced death to them, but some Angel with whom they continue to have a relationship in eternity. This is indicated by 'plus tard', which appears twice in the translation, the second time wrongly, as 'at last'. As I see it, the Angel slips in, after a pause, to revive the *miroirs jumeaux* and the *vastes flambeaux*, so that the cycle can begin again, just as a faithful and cheerful servant comes into a room at dusk to put a log on the fire and so bring to life again the mirrors on the walls, which have gone dull through the fading of daylight and the dying down of the flames.* It should be remembered that for many Frenchmen, dusk is the most amorous time of day. I do not think it is excessive to read these double meanings into 'Ange', 'miroirs' and 'flammes'; they fit in with what we know of Baudelaire. The implication surely is that in this ideal state, the experience of love, although wonderfully and piercingly sad, will not be followed by a feeling of guilt (Baudelaire's usual attitude), but will be indefinitely renewed, because the lovers are ministered to by a divine figure. If this is admitted, my next suggestion is that the figure is female (the masculine 'un ange' is habitually applied to women), and that she is a combination of 'la servante au grand cœur' and Baudelaire's mother.† The richness of the sonnet comes, therefore, from a fusion of adult love, with its intellectual and mystical overtones, and the cosiness and security of childhood, marked by filial and possibly sensual, love for the protective female. Having arrived at this conclusion, I am rather startled, because I see that a poem I have been blindly fond of for so long is based on what may be a dubious linking of emotions. Yet it is difficult to believe that the linking is reprehensible since good poetry, which is obviously therapeutic, is never morbid in itself, although it can arise from a morbid attitude. This is too complex a question to discuss here. Suffice it to say that in dealing with Baudelaire, I work on the assumption that when the poetry continues to seem good after repeated readings (which is not, alas, as often as one would wish), the attitude is sound. At its best, Baudelaire's poetry contradicts a good deal of his conscious philosophy. For instance, *La Mort de Amants* is far better than the first part of the corresponding prose poem, *La Chambre Double*, where his conscious decadence appears. In expression, *La Mort*

be called the anti-poem of *La Mort des Amants*, the hero falls back into time; 'Oh oui! le Temps a reparu . . . hideux vieillard.'

* The 1851 version has 'fidèle et *soigneux*' which emphasized the servant aspect more clearly but less lyrically.

† For the connection between mother and servant see Letter to Poulet Malassis, *Correspondance Générale*, 1948, Vol. 3, p. 96; 'Qu'est-ce que l'enfant aime passionnément dans sa mère, dans sa bonne . . . la caresse et la volupté sensuelle.'

des Amants is well-nigh perfect, and like all good sonnets, it ends well. After the swelling confidence of the second-last line,

Viendra ranimer, fidèle et joyeux,

it closes on a muted note, with what is perhaps the most beautiful line of all.

Les miroirs ternis et les flammes mortes.

Here again, the English rendering fails us. The definite article, though necessary to the sense, is missing from 'dulled mirrors', and the English vowel and consonant sequence is without the simple finality of the French.

Our conclusion must be, then, that no reader could guess the meaning and value of Baudelaire's sonnet from this translation and that, as an English poem, it is not very good in itself. It is a fair sample of the average quality of the volume, which, however much we respect it as a labour of love, is a very inadequate reflection of Baudelaire. Translators are, fortunately, indomitable so that our criticism will not discourage others from trying their hand at this sonnet, or at Baudelaire's other great poems. Someone may manage some day to square the poetic circle. To achieve perfection, future translators need not improve quite as much on this version as its author has improved on previous attempts. To see how comparatively good this defective rendering is, one has only to compare it with that by Arthur Symons. Symons is, accidentally perhaps, a shade nearer the central meaning, but he decks out his version, like a Christmas tree, with several gaudy words – *suns*, *wine*, *languor*, *mad*, *malign*, *Circe*, *spells*, *shame* and *hells* – which may have been suggested by some of Baudelaire's poorer poems, but happen to be absent from this good one. Here is the Symons translation:

We shall have beds filled with strange scents odorous
And deep divans like graves where the suns shine,
And strange flowers that are more savourous
Than these under the skies that shine like wine.

Vying with each other in their last heats languorous,
Our hearts shall be two vast torches, mad, malign,
Which shall reflect their lights luxurious
In our twin spirits, mirrors of the Divine.

On a night made of rose and blue after our fashion
We shall exchange a unique flash wherein our passion
Shall sob like Circe's snared by her strange spells:

Then shall an angel shadowing our shames
Revive after their descent into their hells
The mirror tarnished and the deathlike flames.

DYLAN THOMAS

John Davenport

Chatterton, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Rimbaud never saw their collected poems published. Dylan Thomas is thirty-eight – old for a mathematician, old for a romantic poet. This book deserves to be judged on the highest level, for if he were never to write another line there is enough here to justify his place in the canon of English poetry, Welsh though he be, and a servant of Hermes rather than of Apollo.

Dylan Thomas was born in 1914 and published his first book twenty years later. The present volume* contains *Eighteen Poems* (1934), *Twenty-five Poems* (1936), the poems from *The Map of Love* (1939), and *Deaths and Entrances* (1946). Six poems written since 1946 have not hitherto appeared in book form, and the *Author's Prologue* is new. The only poem omitted is *Paper and Sticks* from *Deaths and Entrances*. Collected *Works* would have had to include the surrealistic prose stories from *The Map of Love*, the autobiographical *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*, and the splendid fragment of a play, *Llareggub*, published last year in *Botteghe Oscure*: but all the poetry is here, and the poetry's the thing.

What have the critics to say? The pæans of praise have been virtually unqualified, although the anonymous author of the remarkable article in *The Times Literary Supplement* expressed surprise at the inclusion of *Twenty-five Poems* in the collected volume. The same writer, after pointing out that several of Mr Thomas's finest poems draw on his memories of the exaltations and terrors of being a boy, goes on to say that to describe him as an autobiographical poet is no more completely adequate than to describe him as essentially a romantic poet. The preface to this volume provides a more useful clue: 'These poems, with all their crudities, doubts and confusions, are written for the love of Man and in praise of God.' The critic suggests that the explanation of his ability to be the centre of his own poems without ever seeming ridiculous is that he is essentially a religious poet. 'He is not a poet of doctrine, but a poet who celebrates whatever God has made . . . his faculty of wonder has never dried up.' This is profoundly true. The key to Mr Thomas's poetry is his acceptance of all living things. There is nothing Buddhistically calm about this

* *Dylan Thomas Collected Poems* 1934–52 (J. M. Dent, 12*s.* 6*d.*)

acceptance – his love of love is only equalled by his hatred of cruelty; nor does he advocate a calm acquiescence, as is seen in the recent villanelle to his Father beginning 'Do not go gentle into that good night,' with its balancing line 'Rage, rage against the dying of the light.'

Mr Stephen Spender, in a penetrating essay, has said that Dylan Thomas represents a romantic revolt against the classicist tendency which has crystallized around the theological views of Eliot and Auden, 'a tendency for poetry to become a kind of intensely imagined portrayal of ideas which exist beyond or outside the poetry.' The romantic tendency, says Mr Spender, is to regard poetry as a self-sufficient kingdom of poetic ideas, owing no allegiance to any other system of thought, in which words become sensations and sensations words. The world, in fact, of a modern Keats; a life of sensations without opinions and thoughts. 'The romantic characteristic of Dylan Thomas is that his poems contain the minimum material which can be translated into prose.' Mr Spender goes on to speak of the 'sensuous word-choosing faculty of (Dylan Thomas's) imagination which cares more for the feel of words than for their intellectual meanings. A powerful emotion . . . suggests . . . an image or succession of images, and it is these which he puts down, without bringing forward into consciousness the ideas which are associated with such images. He suppresses the intellectual links between a chain of images, because they are non-sensuous.' This could scarcely be better said. It is interesting that the remarks might almost as well be applied to a very different poet – Mallarmé: but, as Mr Spender points out, Dylan Thomas is nothing so sophisticated, literary, and (in the purely æsthetic sense) 'decadent' as a 'pure poet'.

His rhetorical urge can of course be traced to his Welsh origin. His father – a distinguished teacher of English – and his mother come from farming families long settled in Carmarthenshire, Welsh-speaking. Mr Thomas himself does not speak Welsh, but he 'thinks Welsh'. His poetry is bardic. To trace its origins is not easy. His immediate poetic ancestry might be said to include Hopkins, Ezra Pound and the later Yeats. James Joyce could equally be claimed as an influence. But the later plays of Shakespeare, the Milton of the Nativity Ode, the early Wordsworth might as well be invoked, for he is in the main stream of English poetry. It is fashionable to compare him with Keats: it would be more profitable to consider his debt to the translators of the Old Testament. Mr G. S. Fraser has written of his background of Bible Christianity, a 'rich ambiguous religiosity' where 'everything is mortal and everything is sacred'. One might add, where everything is miraculous, as in the world of Picasso – 'it is a miracle that we do not melt in the bath like the soap.'

Mr Cyril Connolly has called him a descendant of Rimbaud; but while

Rimbaudism is, as it were, in the poetic air, there is no direct influence, as Dylan Thomas has never read him; nor indeed any other French poet. He has as much – or more – in common with Thomas Hardy, with his 'five and country senses'. Mr Connolly has also said that his 'bardic inspiration' derives from an intact Blake and Traherne-like vision of childhood, which is very true. His poems of childhood, like *Fern Hill*, are remarkable for their fresh, dazzling, joyous clarity.

Dylan Thomas's themes are the eternal ones of life and death, and some of his most remarkable poems have been those inspired by 'occasions'. One has only to think of *A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London*, which has in justice been called the most memorable poem of the Second World War, with the haunting final verse:

> Deep with the first dead lies London's daughter,
> Robed in the long friends,
> The grains beyond age, the dark veins of her mother,
> Secret by the unmourning water
> Of the riding Thames.
> After the first death, there is no other.

Mr Thomas has frequently been charged with obscurity. He has written of his poetic intentions in *Deaths and Entrances:*

> In my craft or sullen art
> Exercised in the still night
> When only the moon rages
> And the lovers lie abed
> With all their griefs in their arms,
> I labour by singing light
> Not for ambition or bread
> Or the strut and trade of charms
> On the ivory stages
> But for the common wages
> Of their most secret heart.
>
> Not for the proud man apart
> From the raging moon I write
> On these spindrift pages
> Not for the towering dead
> With their nightingales and psalms
> But for the lovers, their arms
> Round the griefs of the ages,
> Who pay no praise or wages
> Nor heed my craft or art.

This is a comparatively recent poem, and shows the increased simplicity of texture that characterizes his later work. Some critics – William Empson, for instance – do not find in this increased simplicity a merit;

something is lacking, they feel, which was forcefully present in the more complex early work. 'Obscurity' in Dylan Thomas's work is of two kinds. The simpler kind, which is not really obscure at all, can be dissipated by a knowledge of the primary material which provides the images for a poem. *Sir John's Hill*, and *The White Giant's Thigh*, for example, are places in Carmarthenshire. The titles have no esoteric significance. The more difficult kind is due to verbal complexity, which only yields its secret after many readings. The syntax is often arbitrary and there are many puns of a seventeenth century character – 'all-hollowed', for instance, and 'ship-racked gospel'. *Eighteen Poems* were often obscure in this way, though one of them quickly became famous – '*The force that through the green fuse drives the flower/Drives my green age.*' *Twenty-five Poems* were difficult to the point occasionally of incomprehensibility, with their complex of Old and New Testament mythology and sexual symbolism. Yet even here, when the intellectual meaning is obscure, the verse is so rich sensually and emotionally that one is convinced by its sheer verbal magic, the magic of a master-rhetorician. In passing, it may be said that the rhetoric magnifies but does not distort; it never goes ballooning out of sight and sense, like so much of Victor Hugo, for instance.

A dilution was apparent in his third volume, which made him known to a wider public; and the publication the following year (1940) of the *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* made him the best-known writer of his generation. His poetry since that date has become increasingly simple, though never for an instant banal. This increased simplicity may be regarded either as a failure of pure poetic intensity or as the result of an increasingly masterly technique. The tightly-packed early poems were particularly fascinating for practising poets, especially for those who enjoyed the ambiguities of the metaphysical school. For such readers the transparency of the later poems shows a drying-up of inspiration. It is impossible to subscribe to this view. Admittedly, Mr Thomas has only published six poems in six years, but he has never been a fluent writer. His work is too meticulous for that. Also, despite the elaboration of structure he is essentially a lyrical writer, and it is not to be expected that an early lyrical intensity should be indefinitely maintained. On the other hand, the splendour of the occasional poems, of which the first was *After the Funeral*, and the Wordsworthian brightness of the childhood poems show an advance in communication. It is impossible to regret the Gothic elaboration of the first forty-three poems, stunning though they are, when one contemplates *Fern Hill*, *In Country Sleep*, and the other recent poems – *Poem on His Birthday* and *In the White Giant's Thigh*, *Lament*, and *Do not go gentle*. There is no more beautiful modern English poem than his celebration of his thirtieth birthday, *Poem in October*, from its beginning 'It was

my thirtieth year to heaven', through the parables of sunlight and the legends of the green chapels and the twice told tales of infancy, to the last piercing verse:

> And there could I marvel my birthday
> Away but the weather turned around. And the true
> Joy of the long dead child sang burning
> In the sun
> It was my thirtieth
> Year to heaven stood there then in the summer noon
> Though the town below lay leaved with October blood.
> O may my heart's truth
> Still be sung
> On this high hill in a year's turning.

This is not a nostalgic harking back to childhood, but a recreation of it. In spite of the emotional quality of the lines they are entirely free from sentimentality. To comment on their technical skill is superfluous. There is no more serious artist working in English. In his high house at Laugharne, looking over Carmarthen Bay towards the Gower Peninsula, may he long continue to weave his spells and breathe his incantations, Wales in his arms.

BOOK NOTES

DER EUROPÄISCHE KOMMUNISMUS, by Franz Borkenau. (Munich, Leo Lehnen Verlag, 1952.) Dr Borkenau is the author of two admirable works published shortly before the war – *The Communist International*, which dealt with the Comintern up to the end of the 1920's, and *Spanish Cockpit*, a brilliant study, part diary and part analysis, of the political and social aspects of the first year of the Spanish civil war. As a former active member of the German Communist Party and official of the Comintern, he was able to draw on wide personal experience, as well as on a mass of written material. His new book is not a revised edition of his first, but a completely new work, which takes the history of the Communist movement, in Europe only, from 1934 to 1950.

It is a long book, closely packed with chronological fact. It will be very useful as a work of reference to students of Communist activity and of international affairs in general. It would be still more useful if it were not marred by a number of factual inaccuracies, which put parts of the account slightly out of focus. The most valuable sections are those which deal with Spain and France. The Spanish chapter covers much of the same ground as his earlier book, but is supplemented by material relating to the later stages of the civil war, and it is revalued in the light of other subsequent events. His treatment of France makes great use – which the author handsomely acknowledges – of the recent publications of M. Rossi. The sections on Italy and on the East European satellites are rather thin. Much space is devoted to the Balkan resistance movements, and it is here that the factual errors are most numerous, and could most easily have been avoided by consulting persons or sources that are accessible. But despite these defects, the sections on the Balkans contain brilliant passages. For example, his account on pp. 325–32 of the attitude of the Yugoslav Communists to the war during the first six months of 1941 is much the best treatment of this very confusing subject that I have yet seen anywhere. Later, in discussing the origins of the Cominform-Tito breach, he rightly stresses the fact that from 1941 to 1948 Tito was always more hostile to the Western Powers than was the official foreign policy of the Soviet Union. The relevance of this point to the breach has not been appreciated by Western writers, even by the excellent Harvard publication of Mr Ulam, with which Dr Borkenau does not seem to be acquainted.

Though he takes his facts from well-known sources, the author's views

are very much his own. He looks at the Communist movement from within, not from without. This has advantages and defects. All his emphasis is on the intentions and methods, cleverness or mistakes, of the Communists. The impact of Communism on external forces and social environments, and the reciprocal influence of these factors on the Communists themselves, receive too little attention. Two special features of the Communist mentality have clung to Dr Borkenau, though many years have passed since he severed his connection with the Party: the obsession with conspiracy and the determination to explain everything in logical and coherent terms. He is right to insist that Communist parties are devoting great attention to espionage and infiltration: whether such methods are, or can be, very effective, is another question. He is right in saying that infiltration took place in various Allied military and political organizations during the war: how much effect this had is once more another question. The great decisions were made by the supreme leaders of the Allied Powers, and the decisive factors were military. The great mistakes were due to long-standing prejudice and ignorance, not to the wiles of Alger Hiss or other unknown agents of Moscow. Again, Dr Borkenau may well be right that the Comintern continued to exist after its 'dissolution' in 1943, but one may doubt whether this is of much importance. That all Communist parties are led by cadres unreservedly devoted to Moscow, is clear: whether, somewhere in the central machine in Moscow that plans policy, there is an office filled with foreign Communists who consider themselves the Comintern, hardly matters very much.

Two examples of the search for a system may suffice. Mr C. M. Woodhouse, the most authoritative published source on the Greek revolt of 1944, notes that there is no evidence that it was ordered from Moscow. Dr Borkenau has no more evidence than Mr Woodhouse, but he asserts that Moscow *must* have ordered it. During the liberation of France in 1944 there were Communist insurrections, with violence and murders, especially in the south-west, though the leaders of the French party proclaimed the policy of patriotic unity. Here, too, there is no evidence that the insurrections were ordered from Moscow. Dr Borkenau, however, considers that they, together with the Greek affair, show that a conflict was raging in Moscow between the extremists, led by Zhdanov, who wished to push revolution ahead at the risk of armed conflict with the West before the war with Hitler was done, and the moderates, who had Stalin's support. He may be right, but there is no hard evidence to support it. The events in Greece and France can be adequately explained by local conditions. Dr Borkenau seems to me in both cases to underestimate on the one hand the exalted revolutionary atmosphere at the liberation, and on the other hand the importance to all the Allied leaders – in Moscow as well as in Washington – of winning the war. These are, of course, matters not of fact but of interpretation. The book remains an important contribution to an important subject.

H. SETON-WATSON.

RUMOURS OF WAR. By A. J. P. Taylor. (Hamish Hamilton, pp. 262, 15*s*.)

'In England there are no schools of history; there are only individual historians.' So runs the opening line of the first among the three dozen essays collected in this volume. Mr Taylor does himself scant justice. He is emphatically neither a Conservative nor a Marxist, he does not believe in history with a Purpose (*vide* his comments on Professor Butterfield), and he has no use for Professor Toynbee. In short, he is a Radical, his admiration for Sir Lewis Namier notwithstanding. He dislikes *Realpolitik*, again notwithstanding some appreciative references to Bismarck, and believes Gladstone to have been a more practical, as well as a more moral, statesman than Disraeli. What is this but Radicalism? The acid test is whether one believes that the rules of private morality can and should be made the criterion of public conduct. Mr Taylor emphatically does believe that statesmen are free to follow or disregard the dictates of conscience, and that on the whole they will be well advised to behave decently. This implies a view of world history which has been that of the dominant school in Britain for at least a century.

These essays are terse, witty, scholarly and often brilliant. They have been criticized for certain journalistic excrescences; it is impossible to produce book reviews for weekly papers without occasionally becoming slapdash or superficial, but on the whole this fault does not obtrude. In addition to the shorter pieces, there are two lengthy technical studies, on Fashoda, and on British policy in Morocco 1886–1902. These, since they cannot be described as flippant, have been condemned as dull. They are in fact minor *tours de force* of diplomatic exegesis, and the reader not interested in the subject can easily skip them. They could have been spared, but only at the cost of presenting Mr Taylor to the uninstructed as a purveyor of entertainment. As it is, they combine with the essays on Bismarck and on the Crimea ('The War That Would Not Boil') to underline his technical mastery.

Mr Taylor's limitations appear most clearly in his brief note on Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. He follows the fashion in wildly overestimating Tocqueville as a thinker, coupling him with Marx and quoting him as an authority on the modern age. Tocqueville's real importance as a critic of French institutions escapes him. He then proceeds to pull him to

pieces. Tocqueville was a Whig – it is odd that Mr Taylor has not noticed it – and feared democracy, especially French democracy which in his time was still Jacobinical, as was inevitable in a country with an illiterate peasantry and a powerful Catholic Church. He is severely rebuked on this account by Mr Taylor, who proceeds to demonstrate that there are no 'masses', only individuals. After this display of ingenious sophistry one is thankful that he has left the task of studying Marx to Professor Butterfield, who as a Conservative is less hampered by Benthamite orthodoxy. For Bentham (according to Marx 'among philosophers what Martin Tupper is among poets: both could only have been manufactured in England') is quite clearly Mr Taylor's guide in these matters.

In exchange for these occasional absurdities we get a shower of amusing epigrams:

> The pioneer must be ahead of his fellows, but not out of sight; otherwise he goes mad, or they do – probably both. Blake wrote in much the same style as Nietzsche and with much the same drift; but this never provoked Gladstone, nor even Neville Chamberlain, to set himself alight in the cellars of 10 Downing Street.

If this does not exactly prove the point Mr Taylor is trying to make, it does at any rate indicate a point worth making.

> Though Bismarck lacked humbug, he did not lack principles. Only they were not liberal principles. They were principles founded in distrust of human nature, principles of doubt and restraint. When men dislike Bismarck for his realism, what they really dislike is reality.

This needed saying, though it flatly contradicts what Mr Taylor says a few pages earlier about *Realpolitik* and the practical superiority of Gladstonian and Wilsonian idealism. No matter, both subjects provide him with a chance to throw off some telling epigrams. There are also a few notable quotations. 'Truth, like everything else, should be economized', by C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, is among the less familiar.

G. L. ARNOLD.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE BALTIC STATES, by J. A. Swettenham (Hollis and Carter, 15*s*.) Books about the Baltic States and the fate of their peoples since 1939 are few; and Mr J. A. Swettenham's is welcome accordingly. The author went to Germany, after demobilization in 1946, as a member of the Displaced Persons Division of the Control Commission, and his survey is composed largely from information supplied to him by the Baltic refugees whom he administered, and whom he learnt to admire as

'gallant people who left their homelands to face an unknown future because of their love of freedom'. In the external relations of the Baltic States between 1917 and 1940 – which Mr Swettenham tells largely through the texts of official documents – the outstanding fact is the cynicism and duplicity of Soviet and German policy alike. Not only did the Soviet Government, almost from its earliest days, recognize the independence of the Baltic States, but it repeatedly signed treaties of non-aggression binding it to settle peacefully any problems that might arise between the several contracting parties. That some kind of protective action became necessary when the German threat drew to a point in 1939 may be acknowledged; but means could have been found of dealing with this which did not involve the permanent destruction of Baltic independence by the Russians. The actual sequence involved not only the absorption of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union in 1940, but the peculiarly disgusting hypocrisy of government changes at bayonet point and faked 'elections' which accompanied it.

The next step was Sovietization – of which one of the most important aspects was mass killings and deportations, whereas the Balts whom the Germans rounded up for labour in the war-time Reich were at least enabled to find free homes elsewhere after the Allied victory. Mr Swettenham unfortunately does not deal with events under the second Soviet occupation – about which, indeed, our knowledge is fragmentary, though what we do know shows that a grim fate has befallen the Baltic peoples; and his book lacks an account of the complex and often stormy internal history of the Baltic Republics between the wars.

JULES MENKEN.

THE BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION OF 1951, by D. E. Butler (Macmillan, 21*s*.) Mr Butler's book, the third in the series of general election studies sponsored by Nuffield College, easily maintains the high standard of execution and dispassionate comment established by his predecessors. The technical analysis of the results do not to-day provide much interest, for past elections, like last week's weather reports, make dull reading. It is rather the light shed obliquely on democratic practices that attract attention. 'Complete candour and integrity', says Mr Butler, are not yet recognized as electoral assets. 'Voters are moved with half-truths and wishful thoughts.' Not that his attitude is censorious, or his tone pessimistic. For though the complexity of the issues discussed – or avoided – during the campaign is growing faster than the knowledge or understanding of the elector, no one has yet devised a less unsatisfactory way of choosing a government. Complacency would be at least as far off the mark.

The section on the election in Northern Ireland is a gem in its own setting, with its not so faint evocation of other times and places crystallized in the slogan, 'Vote early and vote often.'

JANE DEGRAS.

THE SHORTER CAMBRIDGE MEDIEVAL HISTORY. C. W. Previté-Orton (The Cambridge University Press. Two volumes. 55*s*.) This book is a much-shortened version of the *Cambridge Medieval History*, produced by the late Professor Previté-Orton at the invitation of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press. Nobody could have been better qualified for such an undertaking than Previté-Orton. He was one of the original editors of the *Cambridge Medieval History* and his knowledge of medieval history was vast: in some of his own writings he had, moreover, shown an unusual talent for semi-popular exposition. And if the eight massive volumes of the original History really had to be compressed into 1,200 pages, it must be admitted that he has in fact made a very creditable job of it. This remains true even though he was not always able to carry out his intention of amending the original History in the light of later research (for instance, in his treatment of the Humiliati of twelfth-century Lombardy and similar groups, which takes no account of Professor Grundmann's revolutionary findings, published as long ago as 1935). And it remains true even if the reader, especially when straying along the less beaten tracks of medieval history, Scandinavian and Eastern, from time to time finds himself gasping beneath prolonged and chilly deluges of names and dates.

But if the job has been done as well as could reasonably be expected it may still be doubted whether it was worth doing at all. There is, after all, no lack of reputable one- or two-volume introductions to medieval history. Save for its illustrations – which do include some most interesting examples of medieval art – this new history has little of value to offer which is not offered by a number of others. It does indeed offer a more detailed political history than most, but for this the general reader – for whom the work is clearly intended – is unlikely to feel grateful. The *Cambridge Medieval History* itself erred at times through the excessive length and detail of its political narratives, but this was largely counterbalanced by the admirable chapters on economic and social history by Pirenne, Power and Clapham, and by other chapters, some of them of great merit, on the cultural life of the Middle Ages: on medieval religion, superstition, codes of behaviour, learning, literature and art. In the process of compression these contributions have fared badly indeed; though none of them has been wholly neglected the general orientation of the book remains uninfluenced by them. As a result, this Shorter History has a

curiously old-fashioned air. To those – and nowadays they probably make up most of the potential readers of such a work – who are less interested in the minutiæ of dynastic struggles than in the ways in which men made their living, the relations in which they stood to one another, their beliefs about the universe and their techniques for expressing them, this will prove – for all its conscientiousness – a frustrating book.

NORMAN COHN.

THE ENGLISH UTOPIA. By A. L. Morton. (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1952, 18*s*.) In man's imagination, there have been two kinds of earthly Paradise. First, there is Arcadia, El Dorado – the land of plenty and an idyllic climate – which only has to be found, to be enjoyed. Secondly, there is Utopia, the New Atlantis, which has to be *created* by those who would enjoy it: the social reformer's blue-print for the ideal commonwealth. Often, of course, the utopian author, to add conviction to his picture of the perfect State, pretends that it already exists, 'somewhere'.

Man's conception of Arcadia – the earthly Paradise across the seas – has changed hardly at all, throughout the ages. On the other hand, the ideal commonwealths described by our reformers, century after century, reveal the influence of the social and economic circumstances in which their creators lived and dreamed. This relationship between changing reality and the successive Utopias of English literature is, precisely, Mr Morton's theme. It so happens that the most fascinating item in this book – the complete text, in modern English, of the early fourteenth-century poem, *The Land of Cockaygne* – does not belong, strictly speaking, to utopian literature: Cockaygne was a natural Arcadia, rather than a Utopia; but no reader of *The English Utopia* would desire its omission from the volume.

Out to sea, far west of Spain,
Lies the land men call Cokaygne.
No land that under heaven is,
For wealth and goodness comes near this. . . .
In Cokaygne we drink and eat
Freely without care or sweat. . . .

There is many a sweet sight,
All is day, there is no night,
There no quarrelling nor strife,
There no death, but endless life. . . .

There are rivers broad and fine
Of oil, milk, honey and of wine;
Water serveth there no thing

But for sight and for washing.
Many fruits grow in that place
For all delight and sweet solace. . . .

Yet this wonder add to it –
That geese fly roasted on the spit,
As God's my witness, to that spot,
Crying out, 'Geese, all hot, all hot!' . . .

Mr Morton, after summarizing and interpreting the long succession of English Utopias, reaches modern times and the decision that utopian literature is at an end. He explains that in the past the majority of utopian blue-prints (even when, as was so often the case, they provided for a Communistic way of life) were produced by imaginative and hopeful members of an advancing 'bourgeoisie'; but today the bourgeois 'cannot contemplate the future with anything but despair'. In the words of Nicholas Berdyaeff (quoted, appropriately, by Aldous Huxley by way of preface to *Brave New World*): 'Perhaps a new age is beginning in which the intellectuals and the cultured class will dream of methods of *avoiding* Utopia and of returning to a society that is not utopian, that is less "perfect" and more free.' We can agree with Mr Morton that Huxley's *Ape and Essence* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are, in fact, 'anti-utopias', and that if 'the working-class and their allies' create a real Utopia on earth, there will be no need for them to write utopian fantasies on paper; but our sense of humour will not allow us to accept, without just a suspicion of a smile, his suggestion that by means of the Stalin Plans for irrigation and afforestation the dry areas of the Soviet Union are being transformed in truth into a Land of Cockaygne.

GEORGE PENDLE.

THE SHORES OF LIGHT, by Edmund Wilson. (W. H. Allen, 25*s*.) Mr Edmund Wilson is the most accomplished critic writing regularly in English. He has the energy almost of a Sainte-Beuve. Widely and deeply read in many literatures, he has a remarkable power of focusing his knowledge on the immediate object. He has a great expository gift. Unfortunately one of the penalties of weekly or even monthly journalism is that it is unlikely that the subject under discussion is worth writing about at all. Sainte-Beuve solved this problem by re-creating the past. It is to Mr. Wilson's credit that he tackles the present, but in this literary chronicle of the twenties and thirties one often feels that the apparatus is being unworthily used. One does not need a hydraulic hammer to tack down a carpet, and many of the subjects of these criticisms are simply not worth the trouble of writing about.

Mr Wilson says that this book was originally planned as a companion volume to his *Classics and Commercials*, a literary chronicle of the forties, but that it turned into something rather different – 'a kind of panorama of the books and the ideas, the movements and the literary life, of a period that was very much livelier and had a much more exciting development than the war-darkened years of the forties.' It is puzzling that so much of it should be so dull; or, rather, so trivial. In the end one begins to wonder whether even the good writers are as important as one thought. Was Scott Fitzgerald a genius, after all? Isn't a lot of Hart Crane absolute nonsense? American critics are inclined to be solemn about American writers. Mr Wilson is less characteristic than most. One has to remember that some of these pieces were written as many as thirty years ago. For all his scholarliness, he was a young man with other young men, the contemporary of Scott Fitzgerald and John Peale Bishop at Princeton. He would not write now: 'Who can read *Les Fleurs du Mal*, *À Rebours*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* or *Swinburne's Poems and Ballads* with the enthusiasm of their contemporaries?' Baudelaire is greater to-day than ever. Nor could he have written then the delightful personal pieces, recently composed, on Christian Gauss, the Scott Fitzgeralds at home, and Edna St Vincent Millay, which would alone make this volume worth reading.

Mr Wilson has matured and mellowed. These three essays are beautifully composed. The whole collection is well worth reading for its record of a developing mind and for its picture of the culture of 'a recklessly unspecialized era, when minds and imaginations were exploring in all directions.' An era when Mr Wilson found time to write a modern classic, *Axel's Castle*. What gives weight to his most casual pronouncements is that they come from a man capable of the sustained intellectual effort of a book like *To the Finland Station*. We gladly forgive Mr Wilson his occasional tendency towards Johnsonian pontification. Incidentally, a delicious parody of Johnson is one of the plums of this collection. It is pleasant to think that it was written by the first critic to measure the talent of the young Ernest Hemingway. Mr Wilson is nothing if not various. It would be unnatural if he were not a trifle vain of his accomplishments.

JOHN DAVENPORT.

THE LAST DAYS OF SHELLEY AND BYRON. Being the complete text of Trelawney's *Recollections*, edited, with additions from contemporary sources, by J. E. Morpurgo. (The Folio Society, 17*s*. 6*d*. net.) 'If we could

but make Trelawney wash his hands and speak the truth, we might make a gentleman of him.' This Byron, in Greece, is reputed to have said more than once of his new and flamboyant friend. Certainly, Trelawney's *Recollections of a Younger Son* owe as much to an ebullient imagination as to an unflagging memory. Is the same to be said of his next, and most important book, *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron*, published more than three decades after the events it sets out to describe? Derived 'partly from notes taken and letters written at the time the events occurred, and partly from memory', the *Recollections* have an air of variegated authenticity through which emerges, nevertheless, a real and unmistakable sense of contact with the personalities it describes. It remains an indispensable contribution to the study of these interlinked lives and events and is by no means superseded by the *Records of Shelley, Byron and the Author* which, twenty years later and half a century after the deaths at Spezzia and Missolonghi, sought to amend and embroider the outline of the original text.

This new and handsomely produced edition of the *Recollections* is edited by Mr Morpurgo, who has already introduced to a wider reading public Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*. Leaving Trelawney's 1858 text uncut and unaltered, Mr Morpurgo has sought to correct errors, fill in gaps, and refresh the reader's memory, by the judicious interpolation of comments and references from other contemporary sources. These interpolations have not in themselves the value of novelty: but set in its context, each facet throws an additional light on the central drama. The value of Trelawney's text is thereby enhanced; as is, most conveniently, the enlightenment of the general reader.

Edward Trelawney knew Shelley and Byron for a few brief months only, and at the end of their lives; but he survived all Shelley's friends and acquaintances to live on into a world whose rising young stars bore the names Oscar Wilde, Joseph Conrad, George Bernard Shaw ; and the present writer has had the pleasure of taking tea with a lady who, introduced in her youth to the aged Trelawney, could claim to have clasped in her own the hand which once plucked Shelley's heart from the flames.

BETTY MILLER.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN. Edited by Donald Mitchell and Hans Keller. (Rockliff, 30*s*.) There is a sub-title 'a Commentary on his work from a group of specialists'. This is exact enough, and most of the commentary is valuable. Thus Boyd Neel on the Frank Bridge Variations Op II, and Peter Pears on the songs, both elucidate and illustrate. There are, however, too many specialists, and Britten's unfinished corpus is carved into so many

First 1953 titles

Francis Young-husband

Explorer and Mystic

George Seaver

A discerning and illuminating biography of a man who achieved eminence in many callings. Soldier, explorer, geographer, naturalist, administrator, diplomatist, religious philosopher and mystic, Sir Francis is the ideal subject for the biographer of "Edward Wilson of the Antarctic." Maps and illustrations. 25s. net.

The Marriage At Ferrara

Simon Harcourt-Smith

A study of Lucrezia Borgia and her family which is a stimulating defence of that celebrated lady. The author disassociates her from the murderous activities of the rest of her family and presents her as a woman of fashion in the sense we know it today. Illustrated 21s. net.

Feb. 16

JOHN MURRAY

A Government Publication

HONG KONG

BY

HAROLD INGRAMS

The first volume in a new series, to be published under the collective title of *Corona Library*, aimed at providing popular, authoritative accounts of British dependencies. The author covers all aspects of the social and economic affairs of the Colony, the work and characteristics of its people and shows how Western influence has affected their lives and habits.

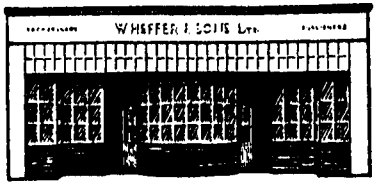
Fully illustrated with 40 plates and 10 maps

Price 27s. 6d. By post 28s. 2d.

H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE

P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1, and Sale Offices in London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff, Bristol, and Belfast, or through any bookseller.

HEFFER'S



A CAMBRIDGE BOOKSHOP THAT IS KNOWN IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD

W. HEFFER & SONS LTD

Petty Cury, Cambridge

fragments that one work alone is divided into three, 'one bit each to you, Arthur Oldham, to you, Erwin Stein, and as for this third piece of Peter Grimes, I will do it myself', says Hans Keller, only not in those words, for his own writing is never unguarded. Now it is hardly possible that Mr Stein and Mr Oldham should not duplicate each other, and the editors confess in a characteristic Preface, which makes us sympathize with their publisher, that a time came when they felt unable to do any more smoothing out. Those of the contributors who are very special specialists produce the Germano-Americano unreadable and quasi-scientific sort of musical writing. But those a little aloof from the Britten Cult, Imogen Holst, Desmond Shawe-Taylor and Lennox Berkeley, are more agreeable than their Editors' two longest sections, which are the least helpful and the most stinging to 'the understanding of the millions who admire Britten superficially'. Long and essentially frivolous comparisons between Britten and Mozart (yes, Mozart), angry little thrusting arguments, of which most readers will know neither beginning nor end, and a general elevation of Britten to the rank of The Great, detract from the real value of this book and have the opposite effects as propaganda to those which the devoted, zealous, pugnacious and rather silly Editors had in mind.

FREDERICK MANNY.

11 IRONMONGER LANE, by Donovan Dawe. (Hutchinson. 10*s.* 6*d.*). Mr Donovan Dawe's sub-title, 'the story of a site in the City of London,' partly explains the scope of his book, but can scarcely suggest the full interest of his material. The book deals not only with the written records but with pre-scriptive ones of a far earlier period. Although, inevitably, there is a long gap between the two, the evidence of the Roman remains, fully explained and weighed by Mr Adrian Oswald, leaves us with the knowledge that almost 2,000 years ago this site was occupied and, as is suggested by the mosaic pavement, still partly surviving, by inhabitants of a settled and substantial way of life.

With the twelfth century, the historian takes over. Mr Dawes is to be congratulated not only on the amount of skilled research he has put into the book, but also, perhaps, on his luck in the diversity of his discoveries. After the occupancy of the site by Hagin the Jew in the thirteenth century, it came into direct contact with the Court, when it was allocated as the Wardrobe first of the Earl of Cornwall and then of the young Black Prince (in 1342) when the half-century of its real greatness began. Later, though it went through a period of decay, it was covered with 'divers fair houses' until destroyed by the Great Fire. Rebuilt, it became the home of prosperous City merchants, tobacconist, linen-draper, grocer, all

The
Whitefriars Press
Limited

Printers of
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

FINE ART · **COLOUR** · BOOK
AND GENERAL PRINTERS

WORKS
TONBRIDGE KENT

HEAD OFFICE
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY
WC1

men of substance, taking their part in local government. And so, through a time of twilight as an unsuccessful hotel in the nineteenth century, to reach its present status as offices known as Selborne House – the reason for the name, dating only from 1898, is not clear – and still to show the ancient front of the house built by Thomas Fletcher nearly two hundred years ago.

All these changes, told with much authentic detail, conjure up so many different pictures of the City through the centuries that the value of a book of this type is clear. The narrower confines of a family chronicle seldom show such different aspects of English domestic history, English trade, and, in fact, of the English middle class. The present volume and other recent publications of the same genre – one might mention *Skilbecks, Drysalters*, 1950, or *No. 3 St. James's Street*, 1951 – are welcome indications of a recognition of the importance of work of this kind, and emphasize the value of the records not only of a site but of a firm or business, such as are, even to-day, too often destroyed.

D. L. POWELL.

The Editor of
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
cannot undertake to return unaccepted mss. unless accompanied by a stamped

CONTENTS FOR MARCH 1953

LIBRARY, STATE LEGISLATURE
31 MAR 1953
MADRAS

Editorial 163

The Cold War: G. L. ARNOLD 165

Stalin's Testament: RICHARD LOWENTHAL 180

Eastern Europe and the German Problem: H. SETON-WATSON 195

Middle Eastern Battleground: MARK ALEXANDER 203

Professor Toynbee and the West: G. F. HUDSON 210

The Eternal Triangle in Soviet Literature: H. M. HAYWARD 219

Littérature Engagée Again: J. G. WEIGHTMAN 226

Book Notes 235

Volume CLIII, Number 913

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

Bellometti

LE PERROQUET

The restaurant in the heart of entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

THE REVIEW OF POLITICS
NOTRE DAME, INDIANA, USA

Waldemar Gurian—Editor
Thomas T. McAvoy, C.S.C. } Managing Editors
Francis J. O'Malley

Published quarterly by the University of Notre Dame. Subscription price $4.00 per year USA, $4.40 foreign.

Recent Publications of the University of Notre Dame Press:

Mario Einaudi and Francois Goguel:
Christian Democracy in Italy and France
An analysis of the achievements, organizations and problems of the Christian Democratic Parties in Italy and France. $4.00

Waldemar Gurian:
Bolshevism, an Introduction to Soviet Communism
"It is excellent and certainly fills a great need. It should be widely read and used." — Clyde Kluckhohn, Director, Harvard University Russian Research Center. $3.25

M. A. Fitzsimons:
The Foreign Policy of the British Labour Government: 1945-51. $3.25

Please supply { one year's / six months' } subscription to

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Name.....

Address.....

Annual subscription post free, 50/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $8.75.
Six months' subscription „ „ 25/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $4.40.

If unable to obtain from your newsagent, please post this form direc to the Publishers, 26 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

EDITORIAL

THE precedent set in previous issues of THE TWENTIETH CENTURY is once again being followed in the current number which presents a selection of articles designed to throw light on the current world situation. Following earlier attempts to deal more or less systematically with European unification (September 1952), and with the present state of affairs in the Soviet Union (November 1952), we have on this occasion chosen a somewhat broader field, namely the Cold War as a whole. This by now familiar term comprises not merely the operation of the world balance of political forces, but the underlying gravitational pull of East and West, and it is this subterranean reality with which an analytical survey such as this must chiefly be concerned. The political flux has its own rules which should not be neglected and which are only too often obscured by vague and grandiloquent talk about world historical trends. There is no fatality which ordains the march of history, but just because events are man-made they call for an analysis of human motives. A purely formal study of 'power relationships,' such as is now the fashion in the United States and elsewhere, is as sterile as its opposite, the neglect of political reality in favour of amiable talk about underlying human and cultural essences which are assumed to be everywhere the same, though in fact we are being taught every day how tough and resilient conflicting traditions are, and how difficult it is to differentiate even in the literary sphere between national and international elements of a pattern. The present world conflict would not be what it is if it did not involve a clash between opposite ways of life in which 'ideas' and 'interests' are alike transcended.

It follows that the politics of the Cold War are not politics in the ordinary sense of the word – not, that is to say, a limited activity within an ordered framework. Under totalitarianism the whole of life is permeated with features stemming in the last resort from the determination of the ruling minority to keep society fluid and prevent it from settling down. That is why an analysis of literature and philosophy in a totalitarian society cannot ignore their political implications. Conversely, our own public life is now shot through with ideological concepts and clichés which have their roots in this struggle. The peculiarities of Soviet literature or of Stalinist pseudo-philosophy are as relevant to the issue as is the heated public debate over the propriety or otherwise of treating Marshal Tito as a national hero, forgetting that he is also a Communist. Where is the line to be drawn? If the Cold War is primarily a crusade against the Soviet form of totalitarianism, all sorts of semi-respectable allies – including the

dictators of Fascist Spain and Communist Yugoslavia – may indeed be reluctantly welcomed; but in that case what becomes of the beautiful simplicity with which American and British writers only a few years ago were accustomed to present the issue? The diplomat may take refuge in Mr George Kennan's dictum that the Second World War was from start to finish a defensive struggle so far as Western society was concerned, and that given the need to choose between German or Russian domination on the Continent, it was folly to expect the settlement of 1945 to usher in a peaceful and liberal age. But though this explains why the West needs dictatorial allies to defend its own free institutions, it does not tell us whether these institutions have a chance to spread, or whether they must remain confined to a few economically favoured regions of the world. And in any event there remains the task of coping with the totalitarians in our own midst, and disentangling the grain of sense in their observations from the thickening layers of hypocrisy and imbecility with which reliance upon the Soviet model has gradually encrusted them.

Some aspects, though by no means all, of this many-sided struggle for self-preservation and self-assertion on a darkening scene are presented in the current issue. No attempt has been made to cover the entire field, but the selection is, we hope, sufficiently catholic to take in the main subjects: East-West relations, the division of Europe, the future of the backward countries, the 'new man' in Soviet society, and his shadowy counterpart in the West. There is at any rate no artificial distinction here between material and spiritual 'factors,' none of the now fashionable talk about 'cultural values' which irresistibly conjures up an image of a kind of literary stock exchange. The totalitarian disease would not have become so widespread and virulent had it not been for an obscure feeling that a society which goes in for this kind of talk stands in need of a new integration. Where the totalitarians have – fortunately for us – gone wrong is in placing their hopes on a hypostatized being, the new divinity of History which has recently shown signs of letting them down. They would have done well to consider Marx's words:

> History does nothing, possesses no enormous wealth, fights no battles. It is rather man, the real, living man, who does everything, possesses, fights. It is not 'History,' as if she were a person apart, who uses men as means to work out her purposes, but history itself is nothing but the activity of men pursuing their purposes.

How odd that this warning should have been ignored by men who persist in calling themselves Marxists; to say nothing of M. Sartre and others of his kind who in their anxiety to join what they suppose to be the winning side stifle their remaining moral and intellectual scruples. Since they have deified History, it is perhaps no more than just that the goddess should be showing them the cold shoulder. But we have better reasons than that for our own choice. Some of them are set out in this issue.

THE COLD WAR

G. L. Arnold

Throughout the greater part of the world, the chief political issue today is Communist or non-Communist direction of revolutionary movements having for their aim a radical break with the pre-industrial past, similar to that which Western Europe and North America effected in the course of their history, and which Eastern Europe has been trying to effect, with varying success, during the past century. In this struggle, ideas and values derived from Western experience are utilized, altered, inverted, and turned against their originators, so that we have the spectacle of Russians and Chinese conducting their anti-Western campaigns under the banner of Marxian Socialism; Indian orators quoting Gladstone and the Webbs; Arab nationalists employing the vocabulary of the French Revolution to justify secession from France; and Latin American demagogues appealing to Jefferson and Lincoln in support of the latest propaganda drive against the United States. The West's intellectual hegemony asserts itself most strikingly in the way in which it is being assailed. There is a reason for this: the revolutionaries are themselves continuing Europe's historic work of reconstructing traditional society. Consciously at any rate, they are trying to impose Western technology, Western organization, even some aspects of Western thought, on people still living under primitive conditions. But confronted as they are with traditional, stagnant societies, impoverished peasantries, corrupt bureaucracies, petrified cultures, they easily fall prey to the Stalinist myth of the October Revolution which promises a short-cut through this tangle of obstacles. Democracy seems to offer no comparable method of refashioning society, while dictatorship holds no terrors for 'professional revolutionaries' of the intelligentsia, cut off from the masses by thick layers of ignorance, indifference and cultural backwardness. Thus the movement, from being revolutionary, becomes dictatorial and finally totalitarian. And under present circumstances this usually means joining the Soviet camp.

The remote control of these movements is the political aspect of what has come to be known as the cold war. The United States and the Soviet Union being the two principal centres of power from which such control can be directed, the struggle frequently assumes the character of an ordinary conflict over spheres of interest. Yet the ideologies and the

techniques of revolution are involved at every step. What gives the Soviet Union a headstart in the race is the myth of the October Revolution, allied to, and in part veiling, the reality of a new imperialism. Within the vast totalitarian orbit, serious political conflicts are clearly concerned not with material stakes, but with control over party organization and party ideology. It is through this mechanism that rival centres of power are established, collide with each other, and are 'liquidated'. But a similar process is at work in the border regions between the two worlds. Where political expansion takes place through the control exercised by one totalitarian organization over another, the defence likewise assumes a 'total' character. The distinction between foreign and domestic policies tends in these circumstances to disappear. We seem to be back in the age of religious wars.

At the political level, which concerns us here, the conflict takes the familiar form of rivalry between two groups of powers. Having organized itself in the Atlantic community, the Western world does not need the shadowy authority of the United Nations to preserve its unity against centrifugal forces. U N O is an arena where the spokesmen of both sides meet to exchange verbal blows, in the hope of impressing the remaining neutrals. The true 'world organization' of the West is not U N O, but N A T O. The nations affiliated to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or having cordial relations with it, share common interests and 'ideals' because they are committed to a common way of life. Within this orbit, political experiments are possible, ranging from full federation to loose Commonwealth ties. N A T O is capable of development, though it could also degenerate into a mere assemblage of military staffs and bureaucratic committees, or into an instrument of the Pax Americana. U N O is incapable of development; its function, apart from the organization of a few technical services, is to provide a clearing-house for the settlement of minor differences. If the Soviet bloc were to leave U N O, its supra-national character might enable it in time to become a bridge between Western and Eastern countries, and an agency for drawing backward regions into the world economy, without impinging too obviously on their political status as sovereign entities. This was the original concept underlying the United Nations Charter, but Soviet obstruction has rendered it academic. The Soviet Government obstructs the working of U N O, as it obstructs the work of any institution it cannot control. The reason it cannot control U N O is not lack of military power, but technical and political backwardness. It cannot compete on equal terms with the West, and it does not choose to have its despotic system of planning exposed to the light of day. Rather than face publicity and democratic control, it is willing to wreck the United Nations.

Notwithstanding its political and technical backwardness, and the low level of its intellectual culture – by Marxist standards or any others – the Soviet régime is able to exploit the historic cleavage between Western and Eastern societies, which corresponds and runs parallel to the conflict of interest between industrial and agricultural countries. It is able to do this because it is itself the offspring of a revolution resulting from the impact of Western ideas and techniques upon a society closer in some respects to the East than to Europe. The breakdown of 1917 resulted from an abortive attempt to modernize traditional Russian society on Western lines, and the régime to which it gave rise combines modern techniques with the political methods of the great Oriental despotisms of the past. This outcome was not foreseen. In 1917 and for some time afterwards, the collapse of the Russian state could be regarded either as the opening phase of a socialist world revolution – it was so regarded by the Bolshevik leaders and by Communists in the West – or as a belated 'bourgeois' revolution confined to Eastern Europe. In fact, it turned out to be the starting-point of an entirely novel chain of events leading to the establishment of a totalitarian empire. In the historical perspective, the Russian revolution of 1917 is the successor, and the East European counterpart, of the French revolution of 1789; much as the American revolution of 1776 was a belated consequence of the Puritan Commonwealth of 1648–60. But the Stalinist régime, as it now exists, has no counterpart and no predecessor, though superficial analogies can be, and have been, drawn with the imperialism to which the French revolution gave birth. It is an entirely new political and social formation, combining Eastern and Western features in an unprecedented manner, and it is capable of indefinite expansion into regions impervious to Western penetration. It is not a European formation, as the St Petersburg régime on the whole was: it deliberately attempts to build up a Eurasian synthesis, and it persecutes the adherents of Europeanism even within the privileged Communist Party. It hopes to overawe and incorporate Europe, after having revolutionized – and to some extent Europeanized – its own Asian hinterland; but it does not intend to amalgamate with Europe. It regards Europe as a mere adjunct in the expected trial of strength with America.

The appearance of a Eurasian empire in the place of the Russian state – which was a member of the European family, though a late-comer and in some respects not a full member – has changed the world balance of forces in the West's disfavour, and this change has been aggravated by the direction which the Chinese revolution has taken under Communist leadership. The cold war, a technique for altering the balance of power without overt recourse to military means, is the outcome of a fundamental stalemate which has not been broken by the Korean conflict, and which

cannot be broken by limited military campaigns, or even by unlimited ones, unless there is a corresponding alteration in the basic relationship between Asia and the West. But this relationship in turn depends on the West's ability or inability to direct the technological and social changes which the impact of industrialism has let loose. Russia profits from the present state of international anarchy because it enables her to intervene between the Western centres of industrial civilization and the world's agrarian hinterland, which is also Western Europe's and North America's Asian, African and Latin-American hinterland. This cleavage is due to what Leninist-Stalinist doctrine terms the 'uneven development' of the world economy, and it results in a social and political pattern not amenable to the traditional liberal remedies of multilateral trade and peaceful competition among sovereign national entities. European predominance in the nineteenth century made possible a fleeting and precarious balance between advanced and backward countries, a balance maintained by uncontrolled migration and capital investment, and guaranteed in the last resort by the Pax Britannica. When the Bolsheviks after 1917 spoke of the capitalist system, they had in mind not some textbook abstraction, but this historically conditioned nexus of international relationships, of which Britain happened to be the centre. That international free trade, the gold standard, European control of primary producing areas in Asia and Africa ('imperialism'), and British naval and financial hegemony, were in some sort linked together and formed a coherent pattern, was perhaps more clearly understood in Moscow than elsewhere. The successive shocks sustained by this system in the 1914–18 war, in the world economic crisis of 1930–33, and in the war of 1939–45 (when it finally collapsed), gave rise in each case to utopian expectations of imminent world-wide social and political breakdown. But though the Kremlin consistently overrated the chances of revolution, and underestimated the West's capacity to reorganize itself under American leadership, it did perceive more clearly than its opponents the opportunities offered to a consistently anti-Western policy in Asia. Lenin had told his followers to look to agrarian revolution in China and India as a stimulus to proletarian revolution in America and Europe, on the grounds that Western capitalism maintained itself (and the high living standard of the 'aristocracy of labour') only at the expense of the primary producing countries. His economics were crude, but they fitted the exigencies of Soviet foreign policy, as well as the anti-Western prejudices which the Bolsheviks had inherited from the Narodniks, and the latter from the Slavophiles. In consequence, the anti-Western policy he laid down was continued and accentuated by the Stalinist régime, long after most of the genuine innovations introduced by the revolution had been 'liquidated'.

Despite its ideological overtones – Stalinism is very much in the Slavophile tradition of aggressive hostility to everything Western and European – this line of approach did lay bare a basic weakness in the international system of economic and political relationships of which Russia had after 1917 ceased to be a member. The economic nexus depended upon the free flow of capital and technical skill from highly developed to relatively primitive areas, which in consequence tended to fall under the political control of the great industrial centres, i.e. the leading Western nations. The resulting inter-imperialist rivalries might be thought to have in part provoked the catastrophe of 1914, and could in any case be used to mobilize working-class opposition in the West, as well as nationalist movements in the dependent territories. Thus Comintern strategy took shape, under Soviet direction, in a manner agreeable to Russian interests as well as to Bolshevik preconceptions. There never was any basic conflict between 'world revolution' and 'socialism in one country', for both expressed a fundamental determination to upset the existing pattern of international relationships. When the Kremlin denounced Western imperialism it thereby justified its policy of repudiating Tsarist debts and confiscating foreign holdings. When it identified colonialism with Western penetration in Africa and Asia – thus anticipating Professor Toynbee by at least a generation – it established an oblique defence of the Tsarist achievement in colonizing Siberia and Central Asia: an accomplishment it had no intention of surrendering. That the landlocked Russian Empire had been unable to practise overseas colonization, though it expanded overland until it reached the Pacific, was an excellent reason for condemning all Western expansion as criminal. These naive prejudices were rationalized by Lenin, who shared the Great Russian view of Western history, into a doctrinaire system which the Stalinists continue to employ, though they no longer feel bound by its logic. It is the theoretical foundation of Soviet propaganda in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and even Latin-America. What has rendered it intellectually respectable to Western socialists is its emphasis on the previously neglected role played by European capital in hindering the economic and political development of backward countries. Soviet theorists do not feel bound to state in public that *some* form of imperialism is the inevitable consequence of 'uneven development', though the entire policy of their Government is based on this realization. They are content to note that since foreign capital stimulates economic development, and at the same time restricts the modus operandi of the local bourgeoisie, the latter is driven into opposition and becomes an ally of the nationalist movement, though an uncertain one; and they conclude that in these conditions a 'united front' policy is practicable. That this policy is now consciously directed

towards the replacement of Western control by Soviet imperialism, need not be proclaimed from the house-tops.

In principle, therefore, the Soviet Union and the West are competitors in a common task; and since there now exist two rival centres of power, there is no inherent reason why some backward countries should not be drawn to the quasi-revolutionary imperialism of Moscow. The trouble, from the Soviet viewpoint, is that the attractiveness of this solution has diminished *pari passu* with the improvement of its material chances of realization. Soviet prestige was high among anti-colonial rebels in the decade following the revolution, but at that time the programme was flawed by Russia's military and economic weakness. Moscow might denounce imperialism as exploitation, but the primary producers needed machinery and manufactures, and were dependent upon markets in the industrialized countries. Dissatisfaction with the terms of trade, or with Western political control, might stimulate nationalism, but could hardly induce a suicidal impulse to break away from the world market. This conflict of motivations underlay the Chinese nationalist revolution of the mid-twenties which ended with a sharp defeat for the Chinese Communist Party and the Comintern. Only after the Soviet Union had emerged as a world power rivalling the United States was it possible for Communist parties to take over the direction of national-revolutionary movements; and by that time the glory of the October rising had been tarnished by the Stalinist despotism. The pretence that the Soviet Union is not an imperialist power can hardly be maintained any longer, and Western spokesmen, having recovered some of their self-confidence, are now habituated to denouncing the enemy in the classic accents of democratic liberalism. To that extent the characteristic nineteenth century relationship between the Russian Empire and the liberal West has latterly been restored.

Yet on the whole the West remains on the defensive, and it is relevant to enquire into the reasons. Some of them are obvious: two world wars have discredited the notion that competing imperialisms can safely be entrusted with the task of 'opening up' the world market and spreading the benefits of a civilization which has itself given rise to the monstrosities of European Fascism. On the economic side, the primary producers were all but ruined by the world crisis of the early 1930's which resulted from an industrial slump in the United States, and they have no guarantee that the disaster will not be repeated. There is also the memory of colonialism. These reminiscences, however, do not wholly account for the strength of anti-Western sentiment in regions freed from foreign control, such as India, or never subjected to it. The 'anti-imperialist' campaign is running full blast in countries whose long-term interests clearly point towards closer association with the United States and Western Europe. This is

puzzling and disappointing to American liberals and British socialists, recently encouraged by the achievements of the Roosevelt régime, and by the British Labour Government's successful Indian settlement, to hope for better relations. 'Imperialism' has been solemnly buried; why then should Soviet and Communist propaganda make so much headway? It was not perhaps sufficiently considered that the liquidation of imperial control by itself was no great benefit to the countries concerned, all suffering from the consequences of 'uneven development' and crying out for massive capital investment, as well as for radical internal changes. Nationalism had won a great victory; it was now confronted with the fact that backward areas can develop their wealth only if advanced countries are willing to export surplus capital. But foreign investment on a large scale, whether public or private, means some degree of foreign control, however camouflaged. Under the old liberal-imperialist scheme of things, the whole process went forward more or less spontaneously, capital following the lure of profits, markets and raw material sources, and political control by the imperial metropolis establishing itself in its wake. The breakdown of this integration meant that a new mechanism had to be devised to enable capital to cross national frontiers. Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan, Point Four, were efforts in this direction. But partly because their scale was inadequate, partly because they were not backed by popular movements able to compete with the Stalinist integration of imperialism and revolution, they never really touched the imagination of those key groups in the recipient countries whose co-operation was and remains essential. What little is being done along these lines by the United States in Latin-America and India, or by European countries in their remaining African and Asian dependencies, cannot stem the Communist drive which has behind it not merely the resources of a Great Power, but a world-wide totalitarian movement cemented by revolutionary myths. That this movement is in part propelled by its own 'internal contradictions' – including the contradiction between a revolutionary ideology and despotic practices – does not lessen its immediate power to penetrate into the vacuum left by the collapse of the liberal system. It is part of the irony of the situation that the mechanism of imperial control via popular revolution is better understood in Moscow than in the capitals of the 'imperialist' world.

The cold war must be viewed against this background. In form a conflict between two groups of powers, it really concerns the political control of those regions which the 'uneven development' of the world economy has placed in a position of inferiority towards the great metropolitan centres. It therefore fits the 'anti-imperialist' strategy which the Soviet Government has gradually elaborated. Success or failure must in

the long run depend on the West's ability to replace the old imperialism by a system broadly fulfilling the same economic functions, but better able to satisfy national and social aspirations. Modernization, a mere by-product of the old system, must be placed in the fore-front and consciously expedited where the pace is too slow. This can be done by giving political support to non-Communist (and non-Fascist) movements dedicated to progressive policies. Conflicts between economic and social priorities must be settled with a view to facilitating progress as a whole, rather than securing short-term economic advantages to foreign investors and local property owners. Such changes may have to be imposed on unwilling governments, even though overt control is avoided. It is a mistake to think that non-intervention can be practised in a situation in which the ruling oligarchies of newly emancipated countries will tend to shelter behind national myths to obstruct change. Modernization demands not only an efficient administrative apparatus – usually lacking – but a revolutionary drive at the top. Socialist and New Deal writers, in their anxiety to avoid the pitfalls of imperialism, are rather apt to shirk this issue:

> As soon as the other industrial metropolises have been got going, it is indispensable that they and the United States together should turn to the far vaster business of pouring capital into the relatively undeveloped parts of the world – into, essentially, Asia, Africa and South America. That is the real and gigantic job that has got to be done. . . . (John Strachey, *New Fabian Essays*, p. 207).

> The old method of exporting capital on private account, with all its fatal imperialist consequences, neither should, nor for that matter can be revived. What then can be put in its place? *Only a publicly controlled and directed export of capital.* Examples of this are afforded by the American foreign aid programmes. (*Ibid.*, p. 210.)

That, of course, was written before a Republican Administration had come into office in Washington. Assuming, however, that the broad lines of the original Point Four programme will remain unaltered, the question of political control needs to be answered. If experience is any guide, semi-dependent countries will develop anti-foreign and nationalist movements *pari passu* with the influx of capital, while sovereign states will waste foreign assistance on arms and other unproductive purposes. In such circumstances it may not be possible to avoid the 'fatal imperialist consequences' of imposing political control, visible or otherwise. Imperialism, in the broad sense of the term, is a necessary concomitant of 'uneven development'. No one realizes this better than the 'anti-imperialists' in the Kremlin.

Given a reasonably progressive and efficient government in the recipient country, the influx of publicly owned capital raises the further problem of turning the state into an organ of modernization and 'revolution from above'. It is not easy to see how this can be done unless dictatorial means are adopted. Public funds, in the nature of the case, cannot be placed at the disposal of private investors, even if their existence could be taken for granted. In fact, of course, 'private enterprise' is almost totally lacking in backward countries. What goes under this name is a caricature of the genuine article, from the encouragement of which only the Communists can profit. Even under relatively favourable conditions the main investment sectors will have to be under state control for a long time to come, if only because basic industries and services have to be created which cannot for many years be expected to show a profit. The flow of private capital from the United States and other Western countries is in any case unlikely to be substantial, for why should entrepreneurs risk almost certain loss and confiscation abroad when high and secure profits are possible at home? Any illusions the new American Administration and its supporters may have on this score are certain to be short-lived. There is little danger of the old imperialism coming back. The problem is how to lure capital from its hiding-place, and in all probability it will be solved only at the taxpayer's expense.

In the economic sphere there is then no choice: publicly controlled capital (if any can be found) will be directed to areas where the investment programme is under the control of the public authorities. The difficulty begins when these comforting abstractions have to be translated into definite social and political terms. It then appears that public authorities of this kind are either colonial administrations, of the type established, e.g. by Britain in the Sudan – very efficient and relatively immune to local pressures, but remote from the inhabitants and subject to nationalist attack – or home-grown dictatorships. There really is no alternative: the kind of parliamentary oligarchy which has established itself here and there, in the wake of Western influence, is useless for the purpose, whatever its other merits. It is usually corrupt, but even if it were not the task would be beyond it. Oligarchies are unable to control a social revolution, not because they are 'selfish', but because they are not centralized, and consequently cannot master the state apparatus on whose effectiveness everything depends.

This problem has been obscured by the menace of totalitarianism: a particular form of dictatorship, and not the only one possible. Essentially it is a question of centralizing the authority of the state by making the executive independent of sectional pressure-groups of which there are always a number. This process is inevitable in a period of rapid social change, if authority is not to disappear altogether. The modernization of a hitherto backward country sets up stresses which reinforce the need for a strong central government, and this is particularly true if industrialization

is accompanied by agrarian reform, as it must be if the whole process is to be genuine and not a sham. But in the last resort the reinforcement of governmental authority is necessitated by the weakness of the middle class and the low level of private savings. What the local bourgeoisie cannot or will not do must be done, *tant bien que mal*, by the bureaucracy. Above all, the state must impose collective savings far beyond the limit of what individuals would be likely to save privately, if left to their own devices. Where average incomes are so low that voluntary savings are inadequate to finance the necessary investments, the saving has to be done by the government. Land reform and the progressive recasting of income tax – the favourite panaceas of modern liberalism – are irrelevant to this particular problem, for although in the long run they tend to improve living standards and consequently encourage saving, their immediate effect is to stimulate consumption, just when the need for the expansion of capital equipment calls for an increase in savings. The redistribution of income, therefore, must be accompanied by collective saving imposed from above. If this is generally true of countries trying to modernize their economy, it is doubly true of primitive countries under urgent pressure to add to their stock of private and public capital – plant and equipment, roads, railways, public utilities, etc. This question cannot, however, be isolated from the reform of the social structure, for it is only by withdrawing surplus labour from sub-marginal land and employing it in industry that a net addition can be effected to the community's total output, and such a policy calls for action of a kind which the entrepreneurial class is generally unable to take. Backward countries are typically plagued by the overcrowding of badly farmed, sub-marginal land by an expanding number of impoverished peasant farmers, working with antiquated tools on fragmented holdings, in debt to moneylenders and other pests, and unable either to increase the yield of their land or to find employment in urban industry. The economic case for the industrialization of such areas rests upon the existence of concealed rural unemployment and upon the wide discrepancy between agricultural and industrial productivity. While there are legitimate differences of opinion as to the respective roles of public and private capital in such a situation, it is clearly absurd to propose that development must stand still until an entrepreneurial class has been formed which can direct the process. Where that class does not exist, or is plainly inadequate for the task, the state must step in, and in this age it generally will step in, even if it means outraging the susceptibilities of orthodox bankers and economists.

The politics and economics of revolutionary régimes of this kind are readily comprehensible without recourse to Communist myths and without doing violence to the facts: poverty and backwardness, whether

reinforced by colonialism or not, result in a situation in which only the state, by centralizing all the available means of production, can speed up the process of modernization. Whenever the need for capital investment becomes urgent, while private entrepreneurial activity is lacking, there will be a tendency to rely on the state for a whole range of activities which under different circumstances are left to private initiative. It is this kind of situation which typically gives rise to the synthesis of revolutionary nationalism with some form of socialism, or at least state intervention in the economic sphere. Whether the state merely underwrites private risks, whether it extends its investment activity to the private sector (as until recently it did in Turkey), or whether it undertakes the total reorganization of society – in every case there will be an initial concentration of authority on the political level, and consequently a struggle between various factions of the revolutionary movement to obtain control; the victorious faction will then proceed to organize society in its own image, but its rivals will be no less determined to utilize the state for this purpose. This assumption by the state of the entrepreneurial function, whether on totalitariarian lines or not, is common to all genuinely modern attempts to hasten the industrialization of backward areas. The revolutionary régime derives its justification from it, and at the same time owes to it whatever inspiration it brings to the people under its control. It is the belief that only state action can shake society out of its rut which impels revolutionaries to seek power. It is consequently the weakness, and not, as Lenin has it, the predominance of the national bourgeoisie which finds expression in the phenomenon of revolutionary nationalism. If the entrepreneurs were able to direct the process of modernization on 'classical' lines there would clearly be no need for national dictatorships, national organizations of capital and labour, state parties, state-controlled youth movements, and the other paraphernalia of modern dictatorial politics. Régimes of this kind need not be fully totalitarian, but they can hardly fail to be revolutionary and centralist. Whether they are Stalinist, Titoist, Socialist, Kemalist, Fascist or Peronist depends on which faction of the revolutionary movement manages to seize power during the period which precedes the centralization of activity by, through and under the state. But whatever the political régime, centralization is bound under these circumstances to become both the prime goal and the chief instrument of revolution.

The conviction that centralization of economic activity under state direction is 'progressive', i.e., represents the *sine qua non* of rapid modernization, is the common bond linking all factions of the national-revolutionary movement. But for this common conviction there would be no common 'anti-imperialist' platform, no united front, no Trojan Horse, and no

chance for the Communists to gain control of the movement. All disputes within a revolutionary movement of this kind are at bottom differences about the degree and form of centralization requisite for the task of building a modern nation. All political conflicts among the various factions go back to disagreements over the kind of state best suited to this purpose. Discussion always centres upon such questions as the scope left to private enterprise, the use made of the traditional governing classes (assuming they are not to be 'liquidated'), the role of labour, etc. Generally speaking, the faction which can secure the adherence of organized labour and the largest possible number of people in the managerial stratum will tend to come out on top. If it can persuade itself and others that its activities have something to do with 'building socialism', so much the better for its morale. Thus modernization will favour the extension of state control, even under conditions where power still lies with the entrepreneurs and allied groups. All the more will this be the case where a genuine revolution has taken place and the former ruling classes have been displaced. The mechanics of this process apply impartially to Latin-American dictatorships of the Peronist variety, Kemalism in the Middle East, and Titoism in Yugoslavia, and there is a sense in which the early stage of Mussolini's dictatorship in Italy belongs to the same pattern. That the Soviet Union should threaten to become the main beneficiary of what is really a world-wide phenomenon quite unrelated to Communist aims, must be regarded as one of the by-products of the cold war. In the 1930's and early 1940's, Fascism held greater attraction for these movements than did Stalinism. Yet the prestige accruing to the Soviet Union from its military victory over Germany and the progress of industrialization in Russia, does not wholly account for the change that has taken place. There is an element peculiar to Stalinism which favours a synthesis with national and colonial revolution. Unlike Fascism, with which otherwise it has so much in common, the Stalinist régime is able to exploit a revolutionary mystique. Moreover, its techniques are consciously directed towards a thorough transformation of society by what is best called a revolution from above. It was so described by Stalin, and for once there is no reason to dissent, though the element of 'mass support from below' is, of course, vastly exaggerated in all official accounts of the great upheaval which accompanied the first Five Year Plan.* The point is that every

* Cf. *Short History of the CPSU(B)*, 1938, especially p. 279: 'The distinguishing feature of this revolution is that it was accomplished *from above*, on the initiative of the state, and directly supported *from below* by the millions of peasants who were fighting to throw off kulak bondage . . .' (Italics in the original). The reference is to the 'second revolution' of 1929/33 which turned Russia upside down even more thoroughly than the first did.

Communist party now has before it the image of a successful revolution imposed by force upon 'the masses' *after* the capture of power. It is not too much to say that this conception, and the technique for realizing it, represent the central arcanum of Stalinism.

The nature of this challenge is frequently masked by the very real threat represented by Soviet military expansion. Essentially it rests upon the illusion of a revolutionary short-cut imposed from above, by the state. From the Communist viewpoint, this terrifying vision has the character of an immense discovery: there is no need to accept things as they are! A means lies at hand to revolutionize society as thoroughly as it was to have been revolutionized, according to the original formula, by a victorious popular uprising. Total revolution is still possible, but it must be imposed from above! The managed revolution is the great discovery of Stalinism, its shibboleth, the sign by which the initiated recognize one another. It justifies all the horrors of the interim period, for at its conclusion there lies the promised land – or so the worshippers are led to believe. This is the challenge the West has to meet, and it is as well to recognize that it is an extremely formidable one.

* * * * *

Viewed against the background of the 'managed revolution', the cold war resolves itself into a struggle to determine the character of the society about to emerge from the impact of modern technology upon countries hitherto outside the historical mainstream. Until fairly recently Russia was herself in this category, and her despotic methods of forced industrialization clearly make a strong appeal to the revolutionary intelligentsia of countries similarly situated. This is an aspect of the cultural lag dividing the West from the remainder of the world, a lag which the Soviet régime is both helping to fill and trying to exploit. Thus, in the last resort the cold war – like the series of wars and upheavals in Eastern Europe during the past generation – arises

> from the impact of the West on the East, the conflict between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries which exist side by side in Eastern Europe. This phenomenon is by no means confined to Eastern Europe. It is found in different forms in Asia, the Middle East and South America, and is beginning to appear in Africa.
>
> (H. Seton-Watson, *The East European Revolution*, p. 385.)

Rural poverty, population pressure, the failure of the traditional governing class, and the presence of a nucleus of politically conscious workers in industry, do not of themselves give rise to a revolutionary situation. The 'subjective factor', whose absence in Western Europe after 1918 the Comintern theorists found so hard to explain, is represented by the intel-

ligentsia; to be precise, by that part of it which refuses to accept things as they are, and turns to political action:

> The Iron Guard in Rumania, the early Wafd in Egypt, the early Kuomintang in China, the first Communist movements in the Balkans, all have in common the frustration of the intellectual who has savoured the delights of the twentieth century and knows that his people is living in the sixteenth. All were movements for both national and social revolution.
>
> In a sense, Russian Bolshevism is only a special case of this general phenomenon. . . . Lenin was the heir not only of Marx but of the Russian revolutionary intellectuals. He was fighting not only a class war against Russia's rulers, but a war for the national liberation and the modernization of Russia. The revolutionary leader of a country whose industrial wealth largely belonged to French, British, German and Belgian capitalists felt a special sympathy for the national revolutionary movements of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. Under the rule of the Georgian Stalin this element in Soviet policy, and so in world Communist doctrine, became still more prominent.
>
> (*Ibid.*, pp. 386–7.)

This is an illuminating statement of the problem, though it does not allow sufficient weight to the characteristic Great Russian element in Leninism: there were, after all, other currents at work among the revolutionary intelligentsia before 1917. Bolshevik anti-Westernism, like the Bolshevik concept of an élite party, as against the Marxist concept of class as the chief historical determinant, goes back to the Narodniks, who themselves gave a socialist coloration to Slavophile superstitions about Russia's historical role. Even so, the issue between the Westernizers and the totalitarians was not definitely settled by the revolution of 1917. It was the great 'purge' of 1936–8 which finally destroyed the last remaining hope of a more democratic development by physically 'liquidating' the old intelligentsia, inside and outside the Communist Party, and demoralizing the remainder. Stalin is not merely a Georgian; he is also the successor of some earlier rulers of Russia. And his revolutionary despotism is no mere intensification of Lenin's rule, just as the 'second revolution' of 1929/33 was more than a continuation of the first.

In assessing the prospects of a similar development in Asia and the Middle East, one must guard against the temptation to idealize the revolutionary intelligentsia of those countries. It seems to have little in common with the Russian intellectuals under the Imperial régime who in their great majority were genuine libertarians. Stalinism in its present form appears to make a strong appeal to the educated minority of more backward countries. This may be an aspect of the cultural lag already referred to, or it may be due to the even greater violence of the Western impact in recent decades, and the need to react against the consequent

cultural dislocation. Liberalism unsettles traditional society. Stalinism thereupon undertakes to settle its unrest, at a price which even intellectuals may not consider excessive. Revolutionary despotism is in the Eastern and Islamic tradition; democracy emphatically is not. If this assessment is correct it seems to dispose of the belief, currently fashionable among American liberals, that land reform and democracy are all that is needed to make the United States popular in Asia and the Middle East. Apart from the fact that the kind of land reform apt to be sponsored by an American Administration wedded to 'free enterprise' is unlikely to do the peasant majority much good, there is reason to doubt whether the intelligentsia can make the necessary adaptation without going through a revolutionary phase. Dissolving cultures give rise to a powerful demand for a new integration which must be 'total' if it is to fill the social and spiritual vacuum. Liberalism is an acceptable way of life for the plural society of the West, where religious wars came to an end centuries ago. It does not answer the needs of societies in transition from medievalism to modern conditions.

These, of course, are generalities which do not answer the question how totalitarian régimes arise in the first place. Quite clearly they get their original foothold through the *mechanism* of revolution under conditions where democracy is *not* possible or has proved a failure. The typical instrument of rule *in such cases* is the organization of professional revolutionaries. The intelligentsia as such does not make the revolution; it makes it only in so far as it gives rise to a disciplined political organization. A grouping of this kind is never simply the expression of class interest. It arises from an interpenetration of sectional movements at the point where their circumscribed beliefs and volitions are reflected, condensed and synthesized in the theoretical concept of a new group standing outside all sectional conflicts: the nucleus of professional revolutionaries. The intelligentsia, as the only *non*-specialized stratum in society, is the obvious reservoir and recruiting ground of such nuclei, but they do not represent *its* group mentality *any more* than that of any other sectional interest. They represent no one but themselves.

(*To be continued*)



STALIN'S TESTAMENT

Richard Lowenthal
Bonn Correspondent of *The Observer*

To the Western student of history the abiding mystery of the Soviet revolution is that it is still going on. It is not simply that the régime brought about by the revolution has in some form retained power over the old Russian Empire; it is not even that this régime is still capable of achieving outward expansion, of transplanting its main features to new countries by a mixture of physical force and ideological conversion; it is that after thirty-five years it has neither decayed nor frozen into a rigid pattern, but has retained the revolutionary impulse towards internal as well as external change. Even its crises and purges, with all their horrors, are not like the crises and conflicts of other régimes; they are part of a continuing revolutionary process. Bolshevism seems to have discovered the secret of making the revolution permanent.

Nothing like this has ever happened before in the manifold revolutionary history of modern Europe. Here we have come to look for the familiar pattern of the revolutionary cycle: a revolution, whatever the original utopian slogans and beliefs of some of its leaders, keeps gathering momentum up to the point where the immediate aims of the main classes concerned are satisfied. After that, these classes want to settle down and enjoy the fruits of victory; the revolutionary alliance of 'the people' decays, and the radical leaders lose power. If a régime of stabilization cannot be produced from the ranks of the revolutionaries, a counter-revolution may intervene for a time, but it will prove unable genuinely to restore the pre-revolutionary state of affairs and, if it tries to do so, will be overthrown in its turn. At the end of the cycle a balance will have been achieved on the new basis, stable enough to serve as a starting point for further development.

The idea of permanent revolution is, of course, not new. It was thrown out by Marx in 1848–50, when he hoped that the European bourgeois-democratic revolution of that year, having once set the working class of the most highly developed countries in motion, would give rise to a proletarian revolution as its second phase. It was taken up by Leon Trotsky during the Russian revolution of 1905, and adopted implicitly by Lenin during the First World War and immediately afterwards, when he counted

on the Bolshevik seizure of power in backward Russia to kindle the flame of mass risings in the advanced industrial countries shaken by the war. Even after that hope had failed, Trotsky remained convinced that the Soviet régime was bound to suffer bureaucratic degeneration unless its isolation was overcome by revolutionary victories elsewhere, and he again tried to apply his formula at the height of the Chinese revolution of 1926–7. Yet all these prophecies were refuted again and again by events, partly owing to the non-revolutionary nature of the working-class movements in the advanced industrial countries, and partly owing to the profound desire of the peasant masses in less developed countries to be left alone when they had won a victory rather than be jogged on to further revolutionary efforts.

The architect of the real permanent revolution with which we are confronted to-day is not Trotsky, but Stalin. Nor is its permanence due to its alleged proletarian character, as the official apologists of the Soviet régime would have us believe; they still claim that the Russian revolution is different from all others because it has not merely replaced one form of exploitation by another but abolished exploitation altogether. The truth that the workers and peasants of Russia are ruled and brutally exploited by a new bureaucratic caste under the direction of the Communist Party has long been plain for all to see. Yet it is this very régime which, so far from being satisfied and conservative, has become the agent of a permanent revolution, though it is conducting it in the only manner in which permanent revolution can be forced upon human beings – from above.

For an understanding of the motivating forces of Soviet policy and of world Communism today, the most important question to ask is how such a permanent revolution from above is possible. What is the inspiration behind it, who are its leaders, what are the means by which they keep the process going, and what are the 'internal contradictions' of such a system – the internal conflicts and strains which it creates? I believe we can find some clues to an answer by studying Stalin's latest theoretical pronouncement – the pamphlet on 'Economic Problems of Socialism in the U S S R', published on the eve of the 19th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party last October.

* * * * * *

In outward form, Stalin's pamphlet is unsystematic. Its main part consists of his authoritative replies to a number of questions raised in a discussion on the draft for a new official Soviet textbook of political economy; added to this are rejoinders to a few participants in the discussion who had written to him again, as the original replies did not resolve all their doubts. In the West, attention was naturally at first concentrated on those

passages which seemed to have a direct bearing on Soviet foreign policy and on the political decisions of the Party Congress on the eve of which they were published; most critics tended to dismiss the more theoretical passages as scholastic exercizes without political importance. Yet the manner in which the pamphlet is being translated into all languages and made the central subject of political education for Communist parties throughout the world should be sufficient proof that there is more to it than a collection of *ad hoc* statements – that despite its unsystematic form the pamphlet conveys a systematic conception of major importance. In fact, the ageing head of the Soviet State has attempted a feat comparable to Lenin's famous pamphlet on agricultural co-operatives in 1922 – a document which, after the end of the civil war and the wave of European post-war revolutions and at the beginning of the New Economic Policy, outlined the manner in which even an isolated Russia might one day, with the help of a strengthened industry, avoid a capitalist development of agriculture and transform the countryside in a socialist direction. Years later, in the discussions on the building of 'socialism in one country', and later still during the forced collectivization campaign, this pamphlet was quoted and misquoted on all sides as Lenin's political testament – as the road of development for Soviet socialism he had mapped out in advance. It is still so quoted in Stalin's latest work.

In a similar way, Stalin has deliberately sought to map out the 'perspective' for capitalism, socialism and communism for a generation ahead. In fact, his *Economic Problems of Socialism in the U S S R* deals with three main themes. One is the 'general crisis of capitalism', including the shrinking of the capitalist world market thanks to the formation of a separate 'socialist world market', and the inevitability of war among capitalist states; then there is a guide to the next stage in the development from 'socialism' to 'communism', explicitedly claimed as valid not only for the Soviet Union, but apt to teach the lessons of its experience to Communists everywhere, and more immediately to those in the European 'People's Democracies' and in China; and finally we have a methodical explanation why the further stages of socialist transformation still pose social and political as distinct from purely technical and organizational problems – in other words, why the guidance of a Marxist party continues to be necessary for the economic bureaucracy. This is the long-term programme of the permanent revolution from above. It deserves to be regarded as Stalin's political testament.

For our purpose we need not discuss Stalin's analysis of the 'general crisis of capitalism' in detail, except to note his conviction that owing to the shrinking of the capitalist world market the trade cycle is now taking place 'on a narrowing basis', which apparently means with a downward

trend. As each of the rival capitalist states tries to obtain the largest possible slice of the diminishing cake, war remains inevitable; and as (anti-Soviet propaganda notwithstanding) none of the capitalist governments feel really threatened by Soviet aggression, while all know that a war against the Soviet Union is the most deadly risk for their system, the inevitable war is likely once again to take the form of conflict between capitalist states. Stalin does not, of course, proclaim as certain that the Soviet Union will remain immune – such a statement would run counter to the need for justifying its military effort. But he relies on it sufficiently to outline a programme of peaceful long-term development within the Soviet sphere, flexible enough to be at any moment extended to any new country on the Soviet periphery in which the 'general crisis of capitalism' should allow a Communist party to seize power without risk of war.

What we are chiefly concerned with here is Stalin's doctrine of the various steps in the development from socialism to communism. 'Socialism' is defined by him as an economic system in which private production has been eliminated by the nationalization of industry and the collectivization of agriculture, but in which commodity exchange continues as the main link between the nationalized and the collectivized sectors of the economy. In such a system, of which the Soviet Union in its present state is given as the chief example, the workers and the collectivized peasants still constitute different classes, but their interests are supposed to be harmonious and no longer antagonistic. Reward is still according to performance, not yet according to need, as it would be in the higher stages of communism.

According to Stalin, the task of Communists everywhere is to exploit every opportunity for seizing power in any country where key industries are sufficiently advanced to permit their nationalization, as a first stage in laying the foundations of socialism. The next stage should be to foster the concentration of small and medium units in agriculture by means of co-operatives and collective farms, and to develop industry in such a way that it can give maximum aid in this process by the mechanization of agriculture. Finally, Communists should accept the need for market relations with the countryside and develop state and co-operative trade so as to keep this exchange under public control.

While the 'fundamental economic law' of contemporary capitalism is, according to Stalin, 'the securing of capitalist maximum profit by the exploitation, ruin and increasing misery of the majority of the home population, the enslavement and systematic plundering of other nations, particularly in backward countries, and finally by wars and the militarization of the economy', the fundamental law of a socialist economy as defined above is 'the securing of maximum satisfaction of the constantly growing material and cultural wants of society as a whole by the uninter-

rupted growth and perfection of socialist production on the basis of the highest technique.'

The 'securing of the uninterrupted growth of total social production' is also given by Stalin as the first condition for the transition from 'socialism' to 'communism' – with the rider that priority must be given to the increase in the production of means of production. But there are two further conditions to be fulfilled before transition to communism can be achieved: first, the property of the collective farms must, by gradual stages, be 'raised to the level of nationalized property,' i.e. they must lost the right to dispose of their own produce; and the exchange of industrial and agricultural consumer goods must pass under the control of a single central organ of social distribution. Secondly, the cultural level of the working population must be raised – by reduction of the working day to six and later five hours, by universal polytechnic education, by improved housing and at least doubling of the real wage – to a point where all people can take an active part in social affairs and where none are tied for their whole lifetime to one particular occupation. Only when these conditions have been fulfilled will the essential, i.e. social, distinctions between town and country, and between physical and mental labour, disappear; only then will labour become a pleasure instead of a burden, and distribution according to needs will become possible.

* * * * * *

In appearance this is nothing but the classical Marxian scheme of socialism and communism (as contained, for instance, in Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*), enriched by some of the experiences of the Soviet Union. In fact, the Marxian concepts have been given a revealing twist to suit the needs of Soviet society. A critical analysis of this twist may start conveniently from Stalin's 'fundamental economic laws' of socialism and capitalism.

Both these laws in their Stalinist formulation contain what may be termed an operative and a propagandist part. The propagandist part is concerned with what Stalin wants his readers to believe about the social effect of either system – misery, exploitation and war in the case of capitalism, maximum satisfaction of growing material and cultural wants in the case of socialism. The operative part, on the other hand, contains what Stalin himself believes to be the difference in the economic motivation and mechanism of the two systems: the one is governed by the hunt for maximum profit, the other is geared to the uninterrupted growth of production on the basis of the highest technique. That this is the contrast that really matters to him is underlined by the illustration he gives to prove the practical value of his 'law' for capitalism: it explains, he says,

why capitalism is sometimes technically progressive and sometimes reactionary, according to the profit situation, while socialism goes continuously ahead with technical progress and the strengthening of the productive equipment of the nation.

Now the *capacity* to increase and improve production continuously is, of course, a merit claimed by all socialists for their system. But with Stalin the capacity turns into a *compulsion* to accumulate – an 'objective law independent of the will of human beings', as he says earlier on in his definition of economic laws – that bears a striking resemblance to the laws formulated by Marx, not for socialism but for capitalism in its period of growth. To Marx, the essence of socialism consisted in permitting society to use its means of production consciously and deliberately according to its needs; with Stalin, maximum satisfaction is claimed as an effect of the uninterrupted growth of production, and indeed alleged to be its ultimate purpose, but nowhere in the whole pamphlet is there the slightest indication of how this purpose is to be achieved in a society which constantly gives priority to the production of capital goods. Nor is this an artificial problem of doctrine: Stalin's operative formula about the uninterrupted growth of production and priority for the production of equipment corresponds to Soviet practice, while his propagandist formula about the satisfaction of needs as its ultimate purpose does not. Anything else would indeed be surprising in a planned society in which the absence of a democratic representation of interests makes it impossible for the consumers to impress their wishes on the planning bureaucracy.

The preference for accumulation over consumption, for the extension of society's mechanical equipment over the present satisfaction of the needs of its members, is the red thread running through Stalin's pamphlet. He is satisfied, for instance, that the law of value still regulates the exchange of consumer goods, for this facilitates cost accounting for commodities which enter the worker's cost of living and thus his wage – hence it encourages economy. But he also considers it important that the law of value should *not* regulate the distribution of productive resources among the various branches of production, for then light industry, whose consumer goods are in high demand, would increase at the expense of the industries producing society's productive equipment, which are often run at a deficit but must go on all the same. The Soviet economy, then, according to Stalin's own analysis, is not a socialist economy with continuous full employment of resources and free social decision on the share of the national income to be consumed and the share to be saved at any given moment; it is an economy of continuous, automatic, maximum accumulation, justified by the fiction that today's sacrifices will benefit tomorrow's consumers, but insisting that the guiding principles which impose these

sacrifices today shall prevail tomorrow as well. It is, in fact, about as socialist as was the economy that built the pyramids.

* * * * * *

Let us now see how this distortion of the economic process, this continuous twist in favour of maximum accumulation, affects the other conditions for 'the transition to communism'. With the shortening of the working day and the improvement of housing and real wages to a level where everybody has the leisure for an active interest in social affairs the answer is simple: they are postponed to an indefinite future, and so is, by this token, the transition to communism itself. But it is different with the condition concerning the ending of kolkhoz property which has an immediate practical meaning as the next stage in the permanent revolution from above.

We are here approaching one of the few significant issues on which Stalin appears directly to contradict himself in the course of the pamphlet. In his original reply to the general discussion, dispatched on February 1st, 1952, he merely outlines the future disappearance of commodity exchange between town and country, and the transfer of the collective farms' right to dispose of their own product to some central organ of society as a distant prospect, but underlines that today as in Lenin's time thirty years ago, commodity exchange is still the only link with the towns acceptable to the peasants; he explicitly denies that this limited form of production for the market, carried on under Soviet-socialist conditions, could lead to a restoration of capitalism; and he argues that this type of commodity circulation can only be overcome once agricultural production is considerably more concentrated than now. In his rejoinder to L. D. Yaroshenko, dated May 22nd, 1952, he warns that it would be 'unforgivable blindness' not to see that kolkhoz property and commodity circulation, while still useful now and in the near future, are already beginning to hamper the development of Soviet productive forces by creating obstacles to the complete control of agriculture by State planning. And in his last rejoinder, addressed to A. V. Sanina and V. G. Venzher and dated September 28th, 1952, he quotes Engels to prove that 'commodity circulation must lead to a rebirth of capitalism', and demands immediate, though gradual, measures for replacing the market relations between State industry and collective farms by organized direct barter: the 'transformation contracts' already existing between collective farms producing such raw materials as cotton, sugar beet, etc., and the factories using them are to be generalized for all types of agriculture at a pace at which industry is able to furnish the products needed in exchange. Evidently the liquidation of the collective farmers' limited freedom to dispose of their own produce, which

was a distant dream in February, has become a matter of some urgency by September. Evidently, too, what has changed in so short a time are not the 'objective conditions for the transition to communism', such as the degree of concentration in agriculture – though the drive to merge collective farms into larger units, which resulted in an increase of the average size by 2·5 to 3 times in recent years, may now be seen in the light of a preparation for this new transformation. Finally, it is absurd to maintain that the remnants of a market between town and country are hampering the development of Soviet productive forces; on the contrary, it is certain that the Soviet economy would develop with infinitely less waste and bureaucratic friction, and therefore more rapidly, if the market were allowed to operate with less administrative interference. From the point of view of Stalin's own theory of the transition to communism, let alone from the viewpoint of classical Marxist theory, the sudden urgency of stopping the collective farmer's access to the market and imposing on them the additional control of 'transformation contracts' is incomprehensible.

It can, however, easily be understood in connection with the distorted pattern of uninterrupted maximum accumulation. Just as the first wave of forced industralization in the Soviet Union, the first five-year plan, led to the 'second revolution' in agriculture: forced collectivization – not simply because this would have had to be achieved some time on the road to socialism according to Lenin, but because the reluctant peasants had to be forced to bear their share of the sacrifice of industrialization there and then at whatever cost – so the present extension of the capacity of the heavy and armament industries once again requires a new tightening of the screw by which the peasants are held down. And just as then the operation, Leninist theory notwithstanding, did not wait until enough agricultural machinery was available to make collectivization attractive, but was carried out by violence, famine and mass deportations, so it is improbable now that the new stage of the permanent revolution will proceed only at the pace at which enough industrial consumer goods can be furnished to induce the peasants to conclude contracts 'voluntarily'. Then as now, the pace is determined not by the theoretical pattern of voluntary long-term evolution towards socialism or communism, but by the practical needs of a régime which maintains its power by maximum accumulation and armaments – needs which, because of the intensity of the sacrifices involved, can only be imposed by repeated forcible transformations of the social structure.

* * * * * *

The permanence of the revolution, then, seems to arise from the effort

of a group in control of State power to distort the evolution of society into a pattern which is unnatural but not impossible. It is unnatural in the sense that without the constant application of force from above society would not evolve in that direction; it is not impossible in the sense that it does not simply run counter to the technical and organizational data which impose certain common features on all major societies of our time, to the state of the 'productive forces' and hence the requirements of physical survival in the modern world. That it is 'not impossible', or, more positively, that it is one of the possible variants of social organization in the twentieth century, saves it from failure; that it is unnatural serves to provide ever new justification for the totalitarian power that called it into being.

This distorted pattern of social evolution is inspired by a distorted version of the Marxist theory of social evolution. The Marxist theory of society is *causal*; it seeks to explain the process of history as a result of the interaction between the productive forces and the social relations that men enter in the process of production, causing the different social classes to struggle for or against historic changes. The Bolshevik distortion of this theory, represented in its latest version by Stalin's pamphlet, is *final* or teleological; it justifies the conquest of power by a small minority, the extermination of whole social groups, the imposition of permanent sacrifices on whole nations, as serving a foreknown end of the historical process.

The distortion was made possible by a peculiar feature of Marxian thought: the idea that a correct understanding of history is dependent on the historian's identifying himself with the proletariat – the class that was to end all exploitation and to usher in the classless society. With Hegel, the Hero still acted without understanding his own rôle in history, while the Philosopher understood the action of others after the event. With Marx it became a condition of true philosophy to play the hero at least in one's own imagination, and a condition of effective action to understand one's place in history philosophically. Marx did not, indeed, foresee what effect his intoxicating notion – that man might knowingly serve the purpose of history – would have if transferred to a soil in which neither the traditions of Western scepticism nor those of personal and political freedom had any deep roots. That step was taken by Lenin – the first leader to interpret Marxism consistently in the 'final' sense, as a philosophy of the historical task, and the founder of a party of professional revolutionaries, conceived both as an instrument for the conquest of power and as embodying the true historical class-consciousness of the proletariat in its own right, independent of its actual following. With all that, his conception of the task itself was still Marxist in content. But when the conquest of power succeeded in Russia and failed in the West, the 'historical task' was bound

to be sooner or later adapted to the purpose of justifying the retention of power. That adaptation has been Stalin's historical achievement, and its results confront us today. The permanent revolution from above is the bastard child of Western hybrid and Eastern despotism.

* * * * * *

The new and unique means for keeping the new and unique process of permanent revolution going is totalitarian state power – the power of the state that has successfully perverted the techniques of democracy for its own ends, that wields a monopoly of organization and propaganda not only in order to prevent opposition, but in order to force all strata of society to co-operate actively in its designs. Its purpose is to maintain and continuously to strengthen and perfect this power, which thrives on uprooting its subjects, flourishes when it can turn them into state slaves, and draws strength from the very artificiality of a social structure which would collapse in sudden chaos if it were not maintained by force. Its justifying ideology is the perverted form of Marxism which represents the despot in the Kremlin as the spirit of history incarnate, and the ruthless extension of totalitarian rule as the necessary road to the classless society of Communism. But who are its agents?

At first sight one is tempted to identify them with the privileged upper crust of Soviet society, the economic bureaucrats or 'managers', including, of course, the corresponding groups in the armed forces, the police and administration. There can be no doubt that they are all profiting from a régime which abhors 'egalitarianism', keeps the workers and peasants quiet in well-disciplined mass organizations and concentrates all political initiative at the top; no doubt also that they are profiting even more directly from the high rate of accumulation. But can they be really interested in the permanence of revolutionary upheaval, with its accompanying changes of policy, purges and personal insecurity? Can they be interested in the régime's highly ideological, and therefore highly wasteful, manner of conducting economic business by means of detailed administrative orders, impossible targets and fraudulent (and correspondingly risky) claims to have met them? Must they not, on the contrary, be increasingly filled with a profound conservative longing for security and stability, a desire to be at last allowed to settle down in the seats of power which is the exact equivalent of the corresponding desires of the workers and peasants, and indeed of the whole tortured society? Are they not, just because they have gained something worth defending but are insecure in its possession, the potential leaders of a change of régime that might end the revolution – a 'Thermidor' or a 'Bonapartist' coup?

In a sense, that of course was Trotsky's interpretation of the rôle of the

new Soviet bureaucracy: He saw them as determined to end the revolution and regarded Stalin's victory over himself as their victory. But though the revolution in Trotsky's sense has long ended, the revolution in Stalin's sense is still going on – because Stalin is no more the representative of the bureaucracy than Ivan the Terrible or Peter the Great were representatives of the landed nobility. Like them, he is using the bureaucrats to serve the régime, but maintains them all in personal insecurity. And, unlike them, he has a specific instrument which is the only true agent of the permanent revolution from above – the Party.

The top personnel of the various branches of state administration consists, of course, of Party members; but while each branch of the bureaucracy inevitably tends to develop its particular outlook and interest as a social group, the Party – where rank does not necessarily correspond to administrative rank – is not tied to any such particular group. In the new shape in which it first emerged from the purges of the 'thirties, as a State Party largely emancipated from its former pretence of being primarily a proletarian class force, it is both indissolubly linked to the bureaucracy and a conscious counter-weight against all conservative tendencies of the latter – the repository of the Stalinist doctrine on the tasks of the revolution. It may even be claimed that the fitting of the Party for this rôle of independent animator of the bureaucracy, of bearer of the permanent revolution from above, has been the chief result of those purges, with their double edge against the remnants of all the 'left' opposition groups on the one hand and the 'Bonapartist' tendencies represented by military leaders like Tukhachevsky on the other.

It is obvious that the Second World War, with its inevitable exaltation of the rôle of the military as patriotic leaders, and the subsequent close contacts between millions of Russians and the outside world, must have created new difficulties for the Party in controlling opinion in general and subordinating the bureaucracy in particular. The failure of Zhdanov's experiment in post-war expansion by means of the Cominform – a failure symbolized by the name of Tito – for which the Party is held responsible, can hardly have helped its prestige, and the same goes for the failure of Khrushtshev's experiment in trying to combine the fusion of collective farms to larger units with the creation of town-like agricultural settlements to replace the villages. The belated calling of a Party Congress after thirteen years must therefore partly be seen as an occasion for justifying the rôle of the Party against arguments which reflect the bureaucrat's universal conviction that everything would run more smoothly and simply but for the politician.

One of the most interesting features of Stalin's pamphlet, along with its insistence on unlimited accumulation and on the need gradually to do

away with collective farm property, is therefore his continuous polemic against the bureaucratic outlook on economic and social problems. This takes two main forms: on the one hand Stalin attacks the idea, represented allegedly by Yaroshenko, that a socialist society no longer has genuine social problems – that the 'relations of production' are no longer a potentially independent hampering factor – and that the transition to communism is therefore merely a matter of the most rational organization of the productive forces. On the other hand the very opening section of the pamphlet contains an attack, later repeated again and again, upon those who think that the Soviet state can 'abolish' or 'modify' old economic laws and 'create' new ones at will, and lays down the principle that Soviet society, too, has objective economic laws which one must study in order to harness the social forces to desirable ends by means of a correct policy. It is clear that both errors are closely connected, and that both represent the outlook of the administrative planner as distinct from that of the policy-making Communist.

Against Yaroshenko, Stalin gives the example of the relations between state industry and collective farmers, arguing that the very relation of commodity exchange which has helped the development of Soviet society hitherto is gradually becoming an obstacle to the further development of the productive forces. In other words, uninterrupted growth of production is not a purely technical problem – it requires from time to time another step in the process of permanent revolution. It is at this point, too, that Stalin enumerates the pre-conditions for a transition to communism, underlining that they are far from attained as yet, and that if they came about they would mean a basic change in social relations and not merely quantitative progress. In making this clear, he wipes out years of official Soviet propaganda, which he now evidently considers to have fostered dangerous illusions about the standard of living attainable in the near future.

Against the 'subjectivist' view of economic laws, Stalin explains that the Soviet régime has indeed brought new economic laws into operation, but not by 'creating' or decreeing them, but by creating the 'objective' economic and social conditions under which these laws operate. For instance, by nationalizing industry and collectivizing agriculture, the Soviet state has created a socialist economy governed by socialist laws, including at this stage still the law of value for the exchange of consumer goods. But it could not have abolished that law while agriculture was still dominated by small and medium producers.

From both arguments it seems to follow that the mere administrator is always in danger of thinking either that arbitrary changes are possible by decree, or that all social problems will be solved by mere technical

achievement without major upheavals.* The trained Communist, however, understands that major social changes are necessary from time to time, but can only be carried out when the objective conditions are there. This is the justification for the Party's monopoly of policy-making decisions as against the bureaucracy.

* * * * * *

Even more than the pamphlet itself, the holding of the first Party Congress after thirteen years showed that the Party felt the need to reassert its rôle against the conservative tendencies of the bureaucracy. The central importance of that problem has been further underlined by the outstanding visible result of the Congress – the reconstruction of the leading Party organs under the new statute.

Previously the highest policy-making organ had been the Politbureau, while the Secretariat merely controlled the machine – a vital position in times of open conflict, but without direct influence on the day-to-day conduct of government in ordinary times. The Politbureau in turn was almost identical with the effective inner Cabinet, consisting of Stalin as Premier and his council of Deputy Minister-Presidents. In that highest deliberating body, each member had in fact held responsibility for a major sector of government activity, with Malenkov as first secretary of the Party representing the Party machine, so to speak, as one sector beside the others.

Since the abolition of the Politbureau and the creation of a Party Presidium of twenty-five members and eleven candidates, which is too large to deliberate effectively, there is now not one highest political body, but two – the inner Cabinet on one side and the enlarged Party Secretariat on the other. For, just because the Politbureau has disappeared, the Secretariat is bound to acquire a more pronouncedly policy-making character. This means that a governmental body on one side is now balanced by a purely Party body on the other; the two only meet in the Presidium. But it also means that effective balancing now depends on the only two people who belong to both inner circles – Stalin and Malenkov.

There can be no doubt that the need to rearrange the 'division of powers' among the Soviet leaders reflects the strength of the tension

* Administrative 'subjectivism' of this type has in the meantime also been blamed by Party spokesmen as the basic deviation of the former chief planner A. N. Vosnessensky, who disappeared from all functions in 1949, and of the economists following him. The errors of a fallen Politbureau member which resulted in his support of an adventurous foreign policy – it was Vosnessensky who asserted that the combined war potential of the Soviet Union and the 'People's Democracies' was already superior to that of the West – are thus posthumously ascribed to a bureaucratic ideology.

between the Party machine and other sections of the State machine. But it also seems likely that the publication of Stalin's pamphlet, the calling of the Party Congress itself and the particular solution found there for the reorganization were intended to revive and strengthen the independent initiative of the Party – to ensure, in fact, that the power of the Party as bearer of the permanent revolution will continue also after Stalin's death. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that, while most of the members of the Secretariat hold no posts in the government, Ponomarenko is Minister for Agricultural Deliveries – the post most immediately concerned in the next revolutionary step outlined by Stalin.

* * * * * *

This article is not specifically concerned with the 'purges' now taking place in Russia. Yet if the foregoing analysis is right, it is bound to throw some light on this mystery of mysteries as well. Apart from the important, but to this writer impenetrable, tangle of personal rivalries, alliances and hatreds, three major groups of policy and power issues seem to be involved in the crisis: the need to find a realistic foreign policy to take the place of the adventurous expansion of the Zhdanov period and of the subsequent fumbling; the growth of Great Russian nationalism and the consequent tendency to strengthen central control, both towards the satellites and inside Russia, and to eliminate both local 'nationalists' and Jewish 'cosmopolitans'; and the Party's fight to reassert its initiative and to carry through the next stage of the internal revolution, both against peasant resistance and against conservative tendencies in the State machine.

The third element has been analysed here on the basis of Stalin's pamphlet. The first – the foreign policy issue – is also reflected there in the famous, and at the time so surprising, passage about the inevitability of war among capitalist states. The second issue, that of Great Russian centralism, is merely hinted at in the emphasis on the strengthening of a separate 'socialist world market' under Soviet leadership, and implied in the laying down of the stages of Russian Sovietization as a model for all Communists everywhere (at least in all countries with a prevalence of small and medium property in agriculture, i.e., according to Stalin, all with the possible exception of Britain!); but Stalin's main contribution to this issue, as his personal secretary Poskrebyshev has just pointed out in *Pravda*, is contained in his last theoretical publication before the present one – that on linguistics – and has played an important part in reinforcing the Russian nationalist trend.

No attempt can here be made to indicate how these issues are intertwined in the present grouping of forces among the Soviet leaders, except to warn against a misunderstanding: it should *not* be assumed that those

who are the most ardent supporters of the next stage of internal revolution at home are necessarily in favour of revolutionary expansion abroad at the same time, and vice versa. The victory of Bonaparte meant the end of the revolutionary process inside France, but it opened a period of successful conquest and a long struggle for the rôle of the leading power; and the idea of war as a desirable alternative to permanent Jacobin rule may well occur to leaders of peasant armies elsewhere. The last great move in Russia's internal revolution before the one now foreshadowed by Stalin – the fusion of collective farms into larger units – got under way just after the period of Zhdanovite expansion had ended, and it seems indeed likely that at the present stage of Soviet development the choice is not between continued revolution or stabilization, but merely between revolution at home or abroad.

One of the governing factors in this rhythm is the problem of 'cadres'. It is the A B C of Leninism that the growth of any Communist party is governed by the number of people trained in its doctrine and capable of developing their own initiative in carrying out the Party's general policy. This applies all the more where the growth of the territory under Communist rule is concerned, and still more narrowly at a moment when the Russians are inclined to trust only Russian-trained Communists, and preferably only Russians.

The present tightening of control in the satellite states, and above all the gigantic effort of effectively permeating China, may indeed absorb so many cadres that not only further expansion, but even the reviving of Party initiative inside the Soviet Union, becomes difficult. The purge on the lower levels, where Communists are constantly accused of succumbing to the corrupting influences of their local environment, as well as the symptoms of a still undecided struggle in the accusations bandied about in and around the Kremlin itself, certainly show the difficulties which the self-feeding revolution is at last encountering – difficulties which, for the reasons indicated, may be intensified at the centre the more definitely the road to further outward expansion appears blocked. But they also show the horrible momentum the process has acquired in the course of more than three decades.

EASTERN EUROPE AND THE GERMAN PROBLEM

Hugh Seton-Watson

Professor of Russian History, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

Public opinion in the West does not yet understand what the conquest of Eastern Europe by Stalinist imperialism means. In Britain and France some people are vaguely sorry for the poor Poles and Czechs and the rest of them, others close their minds to disagreeable thoughts. Across the Atlantic, denunciations of the satellite régimes are frequent and sonorous: distance and security encourage eloquence, and there are ex-Slav immigrant votes to be won. But the present state of Eastern Europe is not primarily a subject for moral indignation. Stalin's conquest of these lands is certainly wicked. But it is more than that: it is a deadly threat to the rest of Europe. By it he has increased his man-power by half in quantity, and more than half in quality. He has acquired a hundred million new subjects, most of whom possess a much higher level of skill and efficiency than the Soviet Union's inhabitants, and the population of the East European countries is increasing much more rapidly than that of most nations of the West. The industrial resources of this region are considerable, and Stalinist methods of exploitation of labour are raising output at an impressive rate. The political régimes and economies are still weak, but should they maintain themselves for many years, Moscow will have overwhelming power to crush the West. In the interest of their own survival, the Western nations cannot allow these régimes to consolidate themselves.

From these facts the most desperately logical would conclude that the only remedy is a preventive war by the West against the Stalinist empire. There is evidence that the peoples of Eastern Europe hope for a crusade to liberate them by arms. That they should cherish this hope is not, as many Westerners seem to think, a proof of wickedness. No universal moral law lays down that, as Senor de Madariaga recently wrote, the high standard of living in Western Europe should be maintained by a high standard of dying in Eastern Europe. Roumanians or Poles may well feel that nothing could be worse than their present fate. There is no reason why they should much worry about what would happen to Paris or Rome or London in an atomic war. It is of course equally understandable that the inhabitants of those cities should care more about them than about the Roumanians or

Poles. The real question is whether a crusade of liberation would achieve its object. Clearly, British or French people, who do not want war, want the answer to this question to be negative. In the age of mass demagogy in which we live, in which the first rule of political thinking is the imputation of base motives to others, those who do not want war will be accused by those who do of cowardice and of slavery to comfort. But serious consideration of the facts suggests the answer that a crusade would not bring liberation. That war would cause terrible suffering to the people of Western Europe and Britain is obvious. That it would end in the defeat of Stalin is also obvious. But the point to be stressed here is that it would destroy the peoples it was intended to liberate. Not only would their lands be bombed and fought through: they themselves would be destroyed by tens of millions. The deportations of the Balts and the annihilation of the Chechen republic in the Caucasus show the methods that the Soviet rulers would use. Western-contaminated Poles or Hungarians would need more drastic treatment than Caucasian Moslems. It has always been a principle of the Soviet security service that it is better for a hundred innocent to perish than for one guilty person to escape. Mass deportation during wartime disorganization of transport and supplies could only mean mass starvation. East Europeans may to-day feel that their fate could not be worse than it is: it does not follow that they are right. The worst fate that can overtake a nation is extermination. As long as a nation exists, however oppressed, there can be hope for its future: extinction is definitive.

If both acceptance of the present situation and a preventive war are ruled out, then the only possible policy is to remain strong and watchful, ready to make use of every new development that can be turned to advantage. To the impatient seeker after 'global' remedies and miraculous 'solutions', this looks dull. But non-warlike watchfulness is not the same as apathy; the difference between them is the difference between realism and defeatism. The current debate about 'liberation' and 'containment' is unreal. The West cannot be secure until the nations of Eastern Europe are free from Stalinist imperialism. But all that Western policy has been able to do hitherto is to 'contain' Stalinist aggression and to build up its own strength. This is what the 'containment policy' has been. Whether the policy could have been more efficiently conducted is of course a matter of opinion. That President Eisenhower and Mr Dulles should talk of liberation is perfectly justifiable. The alarming feature of the presidential campaign was that Mr Dulles appeared to think that liberation could be quickly secured by means radically different from those used by the Truman Administration. In fact, no magic trick can produce liberation out of a hat. At the present stage, assuming that war is not forced on the West by Stalinist aggression, it is possible only to watch and exploit the

weaknesses and strains within the Stalinist empire (of which there are many), to understand the weaknesses on the Western side of the line, and to remedy these, or at least to prevent their getting worse. First among these weaknesses is the German problem.

* * * * * *

When Germans think of Eastern Europe they think of two things – reunification of the western and eastern zones of Germany and recovery of the territories beyond the Oder and Neisse and the Bohemian mountains. Fear of German revenge is a powerful weapon in the hands of the Communist exploiters of the Polish and Czech peoples. Memories of the horrors of Nazi rule in the Ukraine and western Russia are an equally powerful weapon in the hands of the Moscow Government. Soviet propaganda does its best to persuade the Russian and Ukrainian peoples that America is supporting German revisionism, and indeed that the Americans simply are Nazis in a new form. It is important that the American Government should neither do nor say anything to help this Soviet propaganda. At the same time is is important for America – and indeed for the West as a whole – to win German support.

Much German ingenuity is spent on schemes for reunifying their country. Some hope to purchase unity by neutrality. Others plan to use Western help in order to make Moscow disgorge the eastern zone, and then to obtain bits of Poland and Czechoslovakia by joining the Soviet Union against the West. It is worth examining the realities which lie behind such speculations.

German democrats hope that reunion will take place on democratic terms. They would refuse a settlement which placed a reunified Germany under Communist control. They argue, however, that it is in the best interest of the Soviet Government to accept a reunified Germany in which democratic liberty, as understood in the West, would prevail; in which, that is, the terror régime of Pieck and the S E D would disappear. They believe they have something valuable to offer to Moscow in exchange for unity and independence – neutrality in the Cold War. United Germany, it is argued, must have a small army of her own for her own defence. But there is a wide margin between this minimum and the maximum that Germany could raise if she had to. There is also a wide margin between neutrality and membership in the Atlantic Pact. This margin is what a united independent Germany can offer the Soviet Government in return for unity and independence. By accepting this bargain, Moscow would win the goodwill of the German people and protect the Soviet Union from any danger of attack from Western Europe.

This project is of course, very attractive to Germans, but one may

doubt whether it is attractive to Moscow. To-day Moscow holds Eastern Germany, holds 18 million Germans and the economic resources of their land. It is suggested that the Soviet leaders should give up these advantages in return for a promise of goodwill and friendship. They have of course had some past experience of German promises. But even if they were prepared to forget this they would still not accept such a bargain. In the thirty years' history of the Soviet Union there have been cases of retreat under pressure, and cases of bargains with independent Powers, but there has been no case of the surrender of a satellite in exchange for goodwill. To Western minds it may well seem that in the long run it would pay Moscow to be generous. But all Soviet history, and especially the history of the years 1945–52, shows that this is not how Kremlin minds work.

In all public statements, the Soviet Government has insisted on two points – that an All-German Government should be formed before free elections are held, and that the Western Powers should recognize the Oder–Neisse line as final. The All-German Government would clearly contain a large representation of the East German puppet régime, for the Soviet leaders will accept no arrangement that does not place in the hands of their agents several of the key positions in the State machine. They know, of course, that West German politicians and public opinion have learnt something from the experience of Eastern Europe. They would therefore make efforts to camouflage their action. Their aim would be to produce not a ready-made 'Popular Democratic' régime but one which they could confidently hope to convert into a satellite within a few years. The model, in fact, would be something like the Czechoslovak Government of 1945, from which in due course there emerged the Gottwald régime of February 1948.

The reason for the Soviet desire to make the Western Powers finally and formally guarantee the Oder–Neisse line is also obvious: the odium would be equally shared between the Powers. Moreover, if the process of gradual Sovietization went well, a point might be reached when, in order finally to turn the scales in favour of the German Gottwald, in order to turn united Germany from a three-quarter satellite into a full-blooded 'Popular Democracy', an offer of part of the Oder–Neisse territories, or of the Sudetenland, would prove decisive. At such a moment Moscow might well make the offer.

Thus the Soviet proposals are not compatible with the proposals of the German neutralists. The gulf between the maximum terms acceptable to West German democrats and the minimum terms that can be offered at present by the Soviet Government is too wide. It may perhaps be argued that the Western Powers would have been wise to discuss Soviet proposals for an All-German Government, simply in order that the incompatibility might be demonstrated. But it must be admitted that the arguments against wasting valuable time on hair-splitting with Vyshinski are also strong.

* * * * * *

It is often argued that the Soviet Government may, even under present conditions, outbid the Western Powers with the Germans by offering them part or all of the Oder–Neisse territories or of the Sudetenland. In order to forestall this threat, the argument goes, the Western Powers should promise the Germans that part or all of these lands will be restored to them. This argument deserves careful consideration.

This is clearly not a matter of minor frontier rectifications: they would achieve nothing and would not be worth the trouble. If there is to be a transfer it will be of a large part of the territory annexed by Poland, or of the Czechoslovak territory from which the Germans were expelled. A transfer of territory on this scale would seriously damage Moscow's interests in the short term, for these territories contain very valuable economic resources. The Sudetenland and Silesia are great industrial centres, and their production has been enormously increased by the sweat and toil of Polish and Czech workers since 1945. Ruins have been rebuilt, old plants have been extended, and new industries have been created where none were before. The agricultural provinces to the north are less valuable, but even they are considerable assets. The Polish peasants have not spared efforts to rehabilitate the lands devastated eight years ago. There is still some sparsely inhabited and poorly cultivated land, but it is steadily diminishing. Poland's western territories are also the region in which most is being done to Sovietize agriculture, through both State farms and collective farms. This increases their importance, not only to the Polish Communists but also to Moscow. If these lands are to be transferred, the populations must of course be shifted again, for there is no point in transferring Poles and Czechs to German sovereignty. The Germans do not want Slav subjects, and Moscow has no wish that the Slavs should have German masters. But another migration of peoples would reduce to a shambles the industrial and agricultural economies rebuilt by such a painful struggle during the past eight years. The economic resources of these regions are of great and direct importance to the whole war economy of the Stalinist empire. In order to be willing to sacrifice them, Stalin would have to be quite sure that he was gaining more than he gave up. Yet to transfer these territories to the satellite East German régime would gain Moscow nothing at all. The people of Western Germany know enough about the 'democratic republic' of Pieck and Ulbricht. These gentlemen in possession of Stettin or Breslau would be no more attractive than they are without. At most it could be hoped by the Russians that the West

German following of the K P D and the lunatic fringe of pro-Soviet ex-Nazis and ex-militarists would slightly increase. The overwhelming majority of West German opinion would be unimpressed.

To transfer these territories to an independent united Germany, if such existed, might gain Moscow strong support. But such a Germany does not at present exist, and the essence of the argument above is that Moscow will never take the risk of allowing it to come into existence. To transfer these territories to a united vassal Germany, ruled by Pieck and Ulbricht, might be a good bargain for Moscow, and it has been argued above that this may well be the ultimate aim of Soviet policy. But as neither the leaders of West German opinion nor the Governments of the Western Powers are likely to allow a united vassal Germany to be created, this too remains purely hypothetical.

From the above it follows that it is not at present to Moscow's interest to revise the Oder–Neisse or the Sudeten frontier. If this is so, there is no need for the Western Powers to make any promises to the Germans. The threat, which such promises would be designed to forestall, is unreal. They would not win any substantial body of German support that cannot be won without it; they would help Moscow's agents in Warsaw and Prague to rally the Polish and Czech peoples behind Stalin. In fact this is the only thing the Western Powers could do to make these nations support their present rulers. Germans of all shades of opinion will of course – from their point of view very understandably – continue to assure the Americans and other Western Governments that the German people must be promised its old territories if it is to be persuaded to throw in its lot with the West. But the truth is that the West Germans must go with the West and must contribute, in one way or another, to their own defence, not out of love for the West or in return for a territorial bribe, but because their country is exposed to the permanent menace of Stalinist imperialism. Their arguments are very understandable, but they are bluff and should be seen for what they are.

No less unconvincing is the suggestion that the Western Powers should definitely guarantee the Oder–Neisse line in order to please the Poles. The essence of the present position is that the Western Powers are bound by their consent in 1945 to the transfer of substantial German lands to Poland, but they never formally committed themselves to the Oder–Neisse line as the permanent German-Polish frontier. If the Polish people believed that the Western Powers intend to deprive them of all that they received in 1945: of the one thing that they have gained in all their sufferings, of the wealth that they have created by long years of devoted toil, then indeed they would turn against the West. The element of uncertainty that at present exists in relation to their western frontier ought not to make them

enemies of the West, or supporters of the Quisling régime that exploits their labour.

It is sometimes suggested that the Western Powers, while promising the Germans the Oder–Neisse territories, should encourage the Poles to compensate themselves by the recovery of their former eastern provinces now annexed to the Soviet Union. In short, Yalta in reverse. This would win no Polish support. Some Poles feel strongly that the eastern provinces should be returned to them as of right, others do not much care, but none wish to purchase the eastern lands by the surrender of the western. But of the effect on the Ukrainians and White Russians, who formed a majority of the population in these areas even before 1939, there can be no doubt; it is the one thing that would rally these nations behind Stalin's régime.

* * * * * *

It is therefore likely that, unless Stalin launches a war of aggression, the division of Germany and the division of Europe will continue for a considerable time. In the Oder–Neisse territory the Polish position will grow stronger as industry develops and as the population continues to increase. This extremely fertile nation will have little difficulty in filling such sparsely covered spaces as still remain. The economies and social structures of Western and Eastern Germany will increasingly diverge from each other. The burden of the refugees on the West German economy will continue to be heavy. Jobs are being found for most of the refugees, and indeed the trends of industry and of population in Germany are likely to lead to problems of labour shortage rather than of surplus labour power. But it is obvious that the mass expulsions have distorted the German economy and made it more vulnerable to any external economic blows than it was in the 1920s. This makes it the more necessary that all the Western nations should help Germany to solve its economic problems, even at material cost to themselves. It is also obvious that partition will be a source of irritation to all Germans, and of opportunity to demagogues. This is an unpleasant prospect. It must seem intolerable to all across the Atlantic who seek for miraculous global short-cuts to universal peace. It is still more intolerable for the German nation, which has to live divided and menaced. It is small consolation to Germans to reflect that the Polish nation survived 120 years of a partition for which two German monarchs and a Russian Tsar were responsible, and never lost its sense of national unity. It is slightly more comforting for German expellees living in Western Germany to know that they are far freer and more prosperous than the Poles and Czechs who drove them from their homes.

The truth is that the division of Germany is part of the division of Europe. The Germans, who plunged Europe into the catastrophe of 1939–

45, are suffering as a nation the mutilation which, as a result of Hitler's career of nihilism, afflicts Europe as a whole. This nation, whose intellectuals have talked so much, for so long, and with so little effect, of Europe, and whose politicians have for so many generations proved themselves such bad Europeans, has at least the chance to learn, from its own bitter experience, the importance of European solidarity.

If it is unlikely that the present division of Germany and of Europe will be quickly ended, it is still more unlikely that it will be permanent. The contradictions of Stalinist imperialism are many and profound, both in its European colonies and in the metropolitan territory. Soviet policy will be affected by changes in the world balance of power - for example, by the reappearance of Japan as a major factor. Cracks will appear in the Stalinist monoliths in Eastern Europe, and it is important that Western policy should be watchful and ready to exploit them. There need be no doctrinaire priorities: if the first rift should appear in Eastern Germany, then full use should be made of it. There is no *a priori* reason why East Germany should or should not be free before other satellites. But Germany's eastern frontier can be finally settled only by agreement between a free Government of united Germany and a free Government of Poland. Equally, the future of Lvov can be decided only between representatives of the Polish and Ukrainian nations.

The scope for Western action is not large, though it might in certain circumstances be decisive. With great respect, one may doubt whether there are any wonder-weapons of psychological warfare or subversion that can bring the walls of Prague or Warsaw tumbling down. Ill-advised incitement to the peoples of Eastern Europe to revolt against their oppressors can do nothing but harm. Propagandists who encourage these peoples to believe that Western armies are on the point of liberating them will earn some quick cheap popularity, but will do their listeners a poor service. But to refuse unjustified hopes does not mean to refuse all hope, and a policy of waiting is not a policy of surrender. Only to a small extent can Western policy create its own opportunities; it can make sure that it does not miss those which events offer.

MIDDLE EASTERN BATTLEGROUND

Mark Alexander

If the Cold War goes on, the Middle East must be expected to become one of its most important battle-fields. Most countries there have military alliances neither with the West nor the East; there have been frequent and extreme changes of governments, and the situation is far from being stable. Moscow's chances of enhancing its prestige in this part of the world would therefore appear better than in Europe. Persia remains the principal danger zone, but the difference between Persia and the Arab countries is one of degree, not of principle.

Direct Soviet activity in most Middle Eastern countries is restricted and for the most part ineffective. The Soviet Legations in Cairo, Beirut and elsewhere until recently published propaganda material which, however, had a limited circulation and made no impression on public opinion. (Most of these publications were discontinued during 1951–52.) The same is true of Soviet broadcasts, which are generally considered tedious even by the least sophisticated listeners outside the Soviet Union. Those responsible for propaganda to the Arab countries appear to believe that listeners in Egypt or Jordan can be interested in Kirgiz and Uzbek industrial development, in Turkmen songs and in the translation of Kazakh poems praising the great Stalin. This is a mistake, to put it mildly. Nor are the young Soviet attachés in the Middle Eastern capitals distinguished by political acumen. Most of them seem to have little understanding of political developments outside Russia, and all are mortally afraid of taking any important step on their own. Reports on the dangerous activities of legions of Soviet super-agents should be discounted.

Russia prefers the indirect approach, particularly in the Middle East. The prevailing conditions favour its tactics and lend fuel to the disruptive activities of both the Communist parties and the right-wing extremists, whether in opposition or in government. But there are exceptions, notably Turkey and Israel.

The early beginnings of Communist activity in Turkey and Palestine are astonishingly similar; both parties were established in 1919, both ceased to exist in 1921 and re-emerged as sizable political factors only after a decade. There were comparatively many Communists in the defeated Turkey of 1919: some had come from Russian prison camps, while

others, ex-officers and workers, had joined the movement in Germany. Splits and divisions soon emerged: there was an official Communist party recognized by the Comintern and a rival group (known as the 'Green Apple') which developed into a nationalist-Communist party, the first of its kind, thirty years before Tito. The official group was pronouncedly anti-national, and it may have been its anti-war activities at the time of the Greco-Turkish War that brought about its early downfall. On his return from a Communist congress at Baku in 1920, its leader, Muhammed Subhi, together with practically all the members of the then 'Politburo' of the party, were attacked and drowned by an angry mob in the harbour of Trebizond. This, incidentally, did not deter the Kremlin from signing a pact of friendship and non-aggression with Kemal a few weeks later. During the 'twenties and early 'thirties Moscow discouraged Communist activities in Turkey because it preferred good relations with the Turkish Government to the doubtful good which Communist activities could bring. Only at a later period, when relations had become markedly cooler, was there a new upsurge in Communist activity. The new movement, however, was dealt a fatal blow by the Russians' aggressive overconfidence during and after the Second Word War, culminating in the demand (voiced semi-officially by two Soviet professors) that parts of Turkey should be ceded to the Soviet Union. This happened early in 1945, and since then Communism has become, not altogether unreasonably, tantamount to high treason. Subsequently Moscow realized how much its prestige had been impaired by the blunders committed in 1945, and territorial claims were discouraged. But apparently it was also decided that no major effort should be made to win over the Turks by propaganda or other means, because Russian imperialist designs could not be disguised in the long run, and in view of the 'traditional enmity' between Russia and Turkey no serious effort was indeed made to win friends among the Turks. There is of course one good Turk, as there is one good American (Paul Robeson): the poet Nasim Hikmet, who received the Stalin peace prize in 1952. In 1933 he had been described by *Inprekorr*, the Comintern weekly, as a petty-bourgeois police provocateur. His promotion in a sense is only logical: if all the Communist leaders of that early period were spies and traitors, their then antagonists must now be rewarded.

So far as there has been any Soviet propaganda for Turkish consumption, it is apt to make enemies rather than friends. The story of the Turkish brigade in Korea can serve as an example: Soviet propaganda claimed at first that all the Turks had been killed, after having been used to cover the American retreat in 1950. Later the Moscow radio argued that some of the men had indeed remained alive, but only because they had ignominiously fled from the field of battle. It seems obvious that this line of propaganda, even if it had been honest (which it was not), was not likely to evoke a friendly response in Turkey, yet Moscow's only ambition appeared to be to antagonize all those Turks who were not yet anti-Soviet. The fact is that the Kremlin does not care for Turkish goodwill. Turkish Communist groups established in Bulgaria appear more interested in espionage than in propaganda, and the success of the so-called 'Young Turkish Party' in Paris, which acts as a postal distribution agency for crypto-Communist leaflets, has likewise been inconspicuous.

At the same time it should be remembered that until very recently labour legislation was backward in Turkey: workers lacked the right to strike, and in many cases even the right to organize. These and other social gains were made only during the last year or two. Nor should it be forgotten that the Turkish revolution of the early 'twenties lost most of its impetus during the 'thirties, and considerable new headway was made only after 1950. 'Objectively' there were, and to some extent there still are, the prerequisites for social unrest and its exploitation by Stalinist agents, and if the Russians nevertheless failed to make significant progress this is to be explained by two basic facts: Moscow did not bother to hide its aggressive imperialist designs concerning Turkey, as it did with regard to other countries; and secondly, the Kemalist revolution has succeeded in establishing a Republic which, though not a major Power, is an independent State and has made considerable social and cultural progress. The politically active minority, therefore, is relatively large, much larger than in the Arab countries, and it has consistently displayed a responsible attitude.

For similar reasons, Israel could not be considered fertile ground from the Communist point of view, even before the Prague and Moscow trials; while in recent weeks and months, since the launching of the anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli drive, most Stalinist positions there have become untenable. The Communist Party in Israel (MAKI) has lost all but its small core of militants, while the United Workers' Party (MAPAM), which previously had come to accept practically all Stalinist tenets, has split, a very large majority expressing its opposition to the anti-Jewish line of the Kremlin. It has been suggested that the Kremlin intentionally disregarded the interests of Israeli Communists and Jewish Communists elsewhere as part of a much larger move towards a Soviet-Arab (and perhaps Soviet-German) *rapprochement*. Soviet purges are not, however, motivated as a rule by outside factors and foreign political considerations. They may have repercussions abroad, but these tend to be unintentional and secondary. The Kremlin has certainly alienated Israel by its new policy, but it is doubtful whether the anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli drive will have any palpable effect on the Arabs – apart perhaps from an occasional vote

favourable to Russia in the United Nations. The reaction of the Arab press has been one of surprise rather than of relish. Arab intellectuals, notwithstanding their extreme anti-Western attitude, have on the whole shown no enthusiasm for a régime which takes refuge in such practises. There have been a number of exceptions, mainly in Syria and Iraq, but on the whole it can be said that the Soviet 'purge' has diminished rather than enhanced Communist prestige in the Arab countries, despite its pronounced anti-Jewish tenor.*

The cause of Communist setbacks in Turkey and Israel thus is to be found in Soviet national policy towards Turks and Jews, not in any lack of social unrest or other so-called 'objective' conditions in these two countries. Even if the economic situation in Turkey and Israel were better than it is (and the present austerity régime in Israel will continue for two or three years at least), a comparatively high standard of living alone is no sure safeguard against Communism, as has been shown in many other countries. Conditions of life in the Lebanese cities are easier than in Turkey; yet Communism in Beirut is strong and on the upgrade, though the Lebanese have not the slightest reason for complaint against the West: they have no 'foreign military bases' in their countries. But then the Lebanon lacks a progressive and efficient government, nor has it that elementary sense of national cohesion, of responsibility and citizenship which is typical of the majority of Turks or Israelis. The Turkish peasant expelled by the Bulgarians, the Jew from Eastern Europe or Persia, feels at home in his new country, while the Lebanese villager who leaves his birthplace for the splendours of Beirut is uprooted, and many of the younger generation wait only for the opportunity to emigrate to North or South America.

It is true that the situation in the Lebanon is particularly complicated in view of the multitude of religious and ethnic minorities – and the fact that there is no majority. The *esprit du clan* is so strong that all functions in the civil service have to be shared out according to a rigid key: the President of the State has to be a Christian (Maronite), the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, the Finance Minister a Greek Orthodox or Protestant, the Minister of War a Druze, etc., and this system applies down to the least important assignments. This spirit of internal dissension makes a revolution in the Lebanon unlikely; its leader would presumably have to be a Maronite and his deputy a Sunni Muslim, otherwise the rest of the country would not be co-operative. But the same spirit has paralysed the

* A survey of the Arab press in January/February 1953 showed that the 'purge' provoked distrust for two different reasons: (*a*) because it might cause a new influx of immigrants to Israel, and (*b*) because it might be the prelude to the persecution of other minorities, including the Muslims in Soviet Central Asia.

country's development: there is Maronite and Druze *esprit du clan* but almost no Lebanese patriotism.

Communism thrives on xenophobia, religious obscurantism and anti-Western chauvinism, but it has always failed when faced with a less pretentious but more deeply felt form of patriotism. The one big advantage the Russians have is that they are beyond the horizon, while the West is almost everywhere politically, economically and strategically involved. Yet even so Western propaganda could score heavily, in view of the new doctrine of Russian supremacy, as demonstrated not merely *vis-à-vis* the Turks and the Jews. After all, Moscow has Russified or Sovietized most of the important Arab and Persian writers and scientists, from Avicenna to our own days, while denying the cultural importance of the rest. It can be taken for certain that Arab public opinion, and especially the intelligentsia, would react sharply on learning this. Western propaganda instead keeps harping on the old theme of religious persecution of Islam, which though true is of little or no concern to the great majority of the cultural *élite* in the Arab world.

On the political level, military dictatorship has now emerged as the new form of government in the Arab countries: Army leaders have taken matters into their hands in Egypt and Syria, while in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon the Army rules from behind the scenes. This failure of parliamentary government is not surprising. There have been forty-eight governments in Iraq since 1921 (one every seven months) and thirty-two in Egypt (one for every ten months). It can be argued, of course, that this sort of thing also happens in Europe, but democracy in e.g. France has incomparably deeper roots and is hardly affected by parliamentary instability. The cause of its failure in the Arab countries is all too obvious. Unfortunately, military dictatorship has rarely been accompanied by a social reform movement, while everywhere it has given fresh impetus to a wave of xenophobia and extreme anti-Westernism. Conditions are least stable in Syria, where after a week's absence from Damascus the Dictator, Colonel Shishakli, recently had to return post haste to suppress a revolt; the escape of such leaders as Akram Hourani (his brother-in-law) and Michel Aflaq (leader of the 'Bath' party and a former leader of the Syrian Communists) shows that even people who were originally prepared to collaborate with him now oppose Shishakli, who has become completely isolated. (The State Party established by him has been an utter failure.) If conditions in Egypt are different, the reason is that the military *coup d'état* was accompanied by a genuine movement for social reform. But General Naguib and his fellow-officers seem to have been somewhat distracted from their original course. They too have paid more attention to foreign policy because success there seemed more rapidly attainable

than domestic progress, which must necessarily take years to show results.

One must remember, of course, that Naguib at first had to compete in demagogy with the existing political parties: the Wafd, the Muslim Brotherhood and, to a lesser degree, the Communists. (The alliance between the reactionary elements in the Wafd and the Communists, stressed by the Dictator in recent speeches, is no mere fabrication.) It remains to be seen whether he can return to his original plans of domestic reform. To some extent the members of his Junta are by now the prisoners of their own oratory, having promised to 'liberate' the Suez Canal Zone and the Sudan, and thereafter Palestine (cf. Naguib's speech at Gaza on January 22nd, 1953.) The régime's social reforms are not, however, inconsiderable, though this goes mainly for labour legislation in industry and preparations for land reform. By contrast, attempts to reduce prices (mainly of food) have failed, and the situation on the cotton market is not too good either, though this can hardly be attributed to the régime: it is mainly the result of Wafdist speculation and maladministration in 1950–51. It should be noted that the Government's attempts, even when not crowned by success, were received favourably by a population which fervently supports social change. This is reflected by developments within the Egyptian Communist Party: in September-October 1951, when General Naguib was mainly engaged in social reform, the Party practically ceased to exist and split into separate groups: the 'People's Democratic Party' headed by Fathi er Ramle, the 'Al Tahrir' (Liberation) movement headed by Youssef Hilmi, and others. These were not mere tactical manœuvres or 'fronts', but symptoms of a deep internal crisis. The Central Committee had ceased to exist at that time, and the Egyptian Communist Party was the only one not to be represented at, and not even to address a message of congratulation to the Soviet Party Congress in Moscow in October 1952. Later, however, in November and December, the Junta gave most of its time and energy to foreign political problems, in a manner not vastly different from that of the Wafd, and began to neglect domestic affairs, as a result of which the Communists recovered some of their support and again became active. The dissolution of their Party, together with that of all others, in January 1953 did not effect a great change in that respect, as they are used to working in semi-legality.

The military leadership in Iraq is less progressive than that in Egypt and last autumn promptly handed back the reins of government to the old gang of conservative politicians after a short period of emergency rule. The financial situation is much better than in Egypt, mainly owing to the recent oil agreement, but the Treasury's solvency has not so far improved popular well-being. As far as land tenure is concerned, Egypt, with its extreme contrasts between rich and poor, is a leveller's paradise even in comparison with the almost incredible polarization prevailing in Iraq. But in Egypt the government has at least begun to divide some of the largest estates, while the Iraqi Government continued until very recently to distribute more of the State domains to the biggest landowners. Since the West is still identified with the ruling clique, there is little reason to be surprised at the extreme anti-Western attitude of the opposition parties which boycotted the recent elections. Nor is it astonishing that 300 Communist 'militants' almost succeeded recently in overthrowing the Government. They may be able to do so in the near future, in the unlikely event that they receive instructions to that effect. In Iraq, as well as in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, Western representatives have not even tried to establish contact with the social reform movement, being in touch almost exclusively with the small and discredited ruling clique. The Communists, on the other hand, concentrate on winning over what they call the 'forces of tomorrow': not, be it noted, the industrial workers, but the intelligentsia, the lower middle class, politicians, students and a sprinkling of extremist Islamic leaders. The Cold War in the Middle East, or rather in the Arab countries, is a competition to win the support of the intelligentsia and the middle class. The West does not appear as yet to have entered this competition, and hence it seems premature to discuss the difficulties which would have to be surmounted in establishing and preserving such an alliance.

For the rest, the Western Powers had better rely on their own resources and on the few countries in the area which happen to be linked to Europe and America by their national self-interest. There may be good reasons for meeting nationalist demands halfway, but they are not the reasons one usually finds stated. It is, for example, naïve to suggest that the relinquishment of strategic bases in Arab countries will lead to better relations. The contrary is more likely to be the case, any sign of weakness acting as an infallible stimulus to further aggression: Arab psychology in this respect is quite different from Indian. This is not to say that there may not be sound reasons for, e.g., relinquishing British control over the Sudan and the Suez Canal; there clearly is no sense in hanging on to positions that can no longer be held. But it is childish to expect gratitude, let alone 'friendship', as the reward of surrender. Islam will always opt for the strong, and reserve its contemptuous hatred for those whom it suspects of weakness. There is no region of the world where 'appeasement' is more certain to fail. Let the Western Powers display some firmness and they will have no lack of allies.

PROFESSOR TOYNBEE AND THE WEST

G. F. Hudson

Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford

Since Bertrand Russell in 1948 gave the first Reith Lectures under the title 'Authority and the Individual', these broadcast lectures have become almost a national institution. They provide a platform for serious exposition of philosophical opinions to a public far wider than could be reached by writing a book, publishing articles in a learned journal or lecturing in a university. For the year which has just ended the Reith Lectures have been given by Professor Arnold Toynbee on 'The World and the West'* and the series has been delivered at a time when the principal nations of the West are deadlocked in a war with Communist China, when the Assembly of the United Nations has just adopted proposals for ending the war put forward by India, when the Middle East is in a (mainly anti-British) ferment, and when Africa is torn by new tensions arising from the opposite extremes of Malanism and Mau Mau. Certainly no subject of high discourse could be more relevant to questions of the hour than that of historical relations between the Western and non-Western forms of civilization, and no speaker could be more appropriate than Professor Toynbee, whose monumental work 'A Study of History' has been largely devoted to the tracing of such relations. His wide learning and bold speculative mind command the most serious attention for the general view of human history which he has expounded in these lectures. It may be doubted, however, whether his theory is one which adequately explains the phenomena of the contemporary world, and its premises require to be subjected to close critical analysis before it can be taken as a basis for far-reaching conclusions about current affairs.

There are two possible alternative conceptions of the history of civilization which may be called, respectively, the unilinear and the pluralist. In the former the evolution from Paleolithic to Proto-Atomic Man is regarded as a continuous stream of development common to mankind as a whole and passing everywhere through a series of stages *a b c d*. . . . Sections of mankind lag behind in earlier stages, but if they do so, they must in the long run either 'catch up' by hurrying through the stages they

* Oxford University Press, pp. 99, 7*s*. 6*d*.

have not yet reached, or else be replaced by peoples of more advanced culture. Such a view of world-history was naturally associated with the idea of progress as it came to be held by *philosophes* and liberal thinkers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Mid-Victorian Englishman, counting himself 'the heir of all the ages in the foremost ranks of time', felt that he stood on a steadily ascending escalator; he might take some interest in his own direct line of past history, but he could hardly be induced to pay serious attention to non-European forms of civilization which he regarded much as a successful businessman might view former rivals who had either gone bankrupt or remained back-street shopkeepers.

The Marxists also belonged to the same way of thinking, in spite of their dire predictions of social catastrophe. In contrast to the easy-going optimism of the bourgeois progressives, the Marxists saw an ever-sharpening class struggle which would explode in social revolution, but this likewise was an inevitable progress; the workers would necessarily win in the impending conflict, they would make their revolution in the countries that were economically the most advanced, and they would raise mankind to a higher level of productivity and culture. Marx and his followers did not take seriously the possibility either that the conflicts brought about by the contradictions of capitalism might involve the world in a reversion to primitive savagery, or that the proletarian victory might lead to a decline in what the Marxists themselves regarded as the essentials of civilization.

The First World War, however, brought a new sense of the fragility and insecurity of civilized society and called in question the reality of progress. Liberals might hail the new era of Wilsonian self-determination and the League of Nations, Marxists might extol the brave new world created by the Russian Bolsheviks, but there was a widespread feeling, naturally at its strongest in defeated Germany, that the lights had indeed gone out in Europe. The time was ripe for a challenge to the whole philosophy of progress, and the challenge was delivered in Spengler's *Decline of the West*. To the concept of continuous unilinear historical development Spengler opposed a pluralist doctrine; history for him was the record of many distinct civilizations * in various epochs of time and regions of the world, comparable to individual animal organisms, each with its own life-cycle of birth, growth, creative prime, old age and death. Each civilization had an essential quality that was unique, but all were equivalent in their corresponding phases, just as the stages of life of

* Spengler distinguishes between a 'culture' and a 'civilization', reserving the latter term for the final phase of a 'culture'. But in referring here to Spengler's theory, the more normal English usage is followed.

individuals in different generations – childhood, adolescence and so on – correspond in each case. It followed from this theory that, as each civilization had its own death as well as its own life, there could be no general progress of mankind, except in so far as the accumulated diversity enriched the experience of the contemplative historian standing outside the process as a detached observer.

The most significant part of Spengler's doctrine was his theory of cultural decline as applied to the West. According to Spengler, the final stage in the life-cycle of a civilization is an era of stability, but decreasing vitality, brought about by forcible political unification and institutional uniformity over the whole geographical area covered by the civilization. Having started with *Kleinstaaterei* and the maximum of local diversity and variety, the system only reaches its highest point of unity, order and stability when its culturally creative period is already over. The prime analogy for this concept is the history of the ancient world which attained its political unity in the Roman Empire only after Hellenism had virtually come to the end of its creative achievement in philosophy, science and the arts. Spengler inferred that Western civilization (which he considered to have been born in the period of confusion after the break-up of the Roman Empire) had in the twentieth century likewise passed the zenith of its creative power and reached the point at which nothing remained for it to do but proceed to the construction of an imperial world-state. It was vain, according to Spengler, for Western man to rebel against this destiny, for it was determined by inexorable laws of history, and an ageing civilization could no more renew its youth than an old man could win supremacy in the boxing ring.

The political implications of Spenglerism in the context of post-1918 Germany are only too obvious. Spengler rejected as utopian illusions the ideals of both Wilson and Lenin; at the same time he warned the Germans that there could be no going back to pre-Bismarckian German culture. The lesson to be learnt from the national catastrophe was not to renounce Bismarckian blood and iron, but to have more of it; Spengler hailed 'the return of the Caesars' and hinted that the Prussians could still be 'the Romans of the modern world'. His *amor fati* was not merely submission to a repellant necessity, but was mingled with an element of pleasure; it was sad to think that Western civilization could never again produce a Shakespeare or a Beethoven, but there was consolation for a German in the prospect of a German world-empire – especially after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. Spengler was not a racialist, but his intellectual influence was one of the factors that prepared the way for Hitler.

Historical pluralism, however, made its appeal not only to would-be Caesarian bidders for the salvage of an allegedly degenerate civilization,

but also to philosopher-historians who had quite different reasons for believing in its degeneracy. For certain thinkers whose outlook was shaped by a deeply religious temperament, and for whom the inner meaning of a culture lay in its religious faith, the West was in decline and was threatened with catastrophe, not because the democracies had been so unkind as to break the military power of the German Reich, but because for more than two centuries Western civilization had set aside its traditional religious inspiration and developed on secularist lines. As Professor Toynbee puts it in the fourth of his Reith Lectures:

> This great spiritual revolution overtook the Western world towards the close of the seventeenth century, when a hundred years' trial of waging savage and inconclusive civil wars under the colours of rival religious sects had at last disgusted the Western peoples, not only with wars of religion but with religion itself. The Western world reacted to this disillusioning, self-inflicted experience of the evils of religious fanaticism by withdrawing its treasure from religion and reinvesting it in technology; and it is this utilitarian technological excerpt from the Bible of our Western civilization, with the fanatical religious page torn out, that has run like wild-fire round the world during the past two and a half centuries, from the generation of Peter the Great to the generation of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

For anyone who accepts the *Weltanschauung* of Saint Augustine and places the real significance of human life in a 'City of God', it is, of course, quite logical to regard Western civilization as having fallen into a decline with the 'great spiritual revolution' of the seventeenth century. In comparison with the fatal defection from religious faith, only secondary importance can be attached, from this point of view, to the advance of science from the time of Descartes, to the vast increase in material productivity and control over natural forces since the first steam engines, to the development of parliamentary government, freedom of speech and political democracy since 1688, or to the more recent growth of policies of social welfare for extending the benefits of modern knowledge and material well-being from privileged minorities to the masses. It must be emphasized that a man of strong religious conviction is quite entitled to hold the belief that the last two and a half centuries, which have seen changes in human life more profound and far-reaching than any others since the invention of agriculture, have been on balance a regress rather than a progress, and he has two world wars, the gas-chambers of the S S and the murderous farces of Communist state trials to adduce in support of his argument. But it is also clear that anyone who holds such a view cannot be reckoned a wholehearted defender of those Western values which are not directly based on religion; he necessarily sees Western civilization in its present crisis not as a progressive way of life and thought

under heavy attack by malign destructive forces, but as a sinful society getting what it deserves.

Professor Toynbee regards Western civilization as fundamentally a creation of the Christian religion, but considers that during the last two and a half centuries it has been 'post-Christian'. It is during this last period, however, that it has spread over the whole world, either through colonization from Western Europe or through the adoption of Western technology by non-Western peoples. Professor Toynbee contrasts this recent spread of 'secularized' Western civilization with the earlier resistance of Eastern countries to the propagation of Christianity, and finds in it an illustration of a law of 'encounters' between civilizations:

> to the effect that a fragment of a culture, split off from the whole and radiated abroad by itself, is likely to meet with less resistance and therefore likely to travel faster and farther than the culture as a whole when this is radiated *en bloc*. Our Western technology, divorced from our Western Christianity, has been accepted not only in China and Japan, but also in Russia and in many other non-Western countries, where it was rejected so long as it was offered as part and parcel of a one and indivisible way of life, including Western Christianity as well.

But what exactly is the relation between Western technology and Christianity? This is not a question of approval or disapproval, but of historical judgment. If Western technology were a sort of emanation of the Christian faith, we should expect to find it developing just as much in Eastern Orthodox as in Western Catholic Europe, and more strongly in medieval than in modern times. In fact, however, its phenomenal growth in association with free scientific thinking has been characteristic of the 'post-Christian' period, and before its decisive forward movement in the seventeenth century its tradition goes back to the revival of classical Greek studies in the Italian Renaissance, with sporadic medieval forerunners, all in contact in one way or another with Greek origins. Modern science and technology indeed belong not to the Christian but to the Hellenic part of the inheritance of Western civilization. The most Christian part of our history was the medieval – the age of Peter the Hermit and Saint Bernard, of the Gothic cathedrals and the Scholastic philosophy of Dante and Aquinas. But from the period of the Renaissance Western Europe has developed along different lines, and although retaining a rich legacy from the medieval world, its civilization has been in essentials a renewal and continuation of the Hellenic. This basic fact is obscured in Professor Toynbee's historical scheme, as in Spengler's, by the concept of Western civilization as a unit quite distinct from the Greco-Roman. According to both Spengler and Toynbee, the Hellenic or Greco-Roman civilization completed its life-cycle and came to an end before

Western civilization was born. There is a relation of the later to the earlier system which Professor Toynbee calls 'affiliation', but this does not affect the basic separateness. On this view there is no fundamental break in European history between Charlemagne and the twentieth century, but there is a fundamental break somewhere between Augustus and Charlemagne. Moreover, there is a geographical displacement as well as a succession in time. For Professor Toynbee, Western civilization has belonged from the beginning to Northern Europe rather than to the Mediterranean; in one of his books he says that its homeland lies between Winchester and Cologne. This 'Gothic' bias represents the opposite pole of historical interpretation from the anti-medievalism of the school of Gibbon; both extremes involve a distortion, but the Gibbonian goes less wide of the mark for an understanding of the antecedents of the modern world.

If it is once admitted that modern science and technology belong not to the Christian, but to the Hellenic, tradition of our civilization, the problem of the separation of Western technology from Christianity does not arise. But another problem does arise – that of the separation of Western technology from the intellectual freedom and rationality which are the essence of the Hellenic tradition. For the scientific knowledge which through its application to production, transport, communications and warfare has transformed the material conditions of life all over the world is historically the product of a certain mental attitude – the 'methodic doubt' of Descartes, the refusal to accept any proposition merely on authority, whether scriptural, ecclesiastical or governmental, the claim to subject every doctrine to critical analysis and every hypothesis to the test of observation and experiment. Can, then, the technology which has been the outcome of this freethinking activity be separated from it and become an independant cultural factor developing on its own?

We may extend the question even further and ask whether Western technology can in the last resort flourish without political liberty also. Historically, Greek freedom of thought was closely linked with the citizen rights of city-republics, and a similar connection is found again in modern European history. It is hardly possible in the long run to combine an unrestricted critical activity of the mind in the field of natural science with an unquestioning acceptance of authority in everything that concerns human society and government. Either the mind in its study of nature is brought under the control of religious or ideological authority, or else the critical spirit invades the realm of politics. The essence of political democracy in fact is not the universal franchise (which can be a mere empty form, as in the 'elections' of totalitarian states), but freedom

of criticism, extending both to the institutions of society and to the particular policies, acts and statements of governments. It is true that there have been cases of patronage of free scientific thought by 'enlightened despots', and from this it may be inferred that there is no essential incompatibility between intellectual liberty and authoritarian government. But these exceptional conditions have been due, partly to a disjunction, and even conflict, between the spiritual and temporal authorities in society, and partly to unawareness on the part of rulers of the risks incurred in allowing men to think freely. After the French Revolution the defenders of monarchical absolutism were less disposed to tolerate *philosophes*, and Metternich was quite right, from his own point of view, when he said of both religious dogmas and principles of government that 'to discuss them is often dangerous and always useless'. In our time the ruling parties of totalitarian régimes are fully alive to the anti-despotic tendencies of uncontrolled critical thinking; they combine both ideological and political authority in complete fusion, and they set out to suppress any questioning either of their basic doctrine or of the particular versions of fact which they find it at any given moment convenient to propagate.

When he comes to consider whether Western technology can be successfully adopted by non-Western civilizations in detachment from its original context, Professor Toynbee is not entirely consistent. He speaks of 'the almost world-wide dissemination of a technological splinter flaked off from our Western civilization since the close of the seventeenth century'. On the other hand, he quotes examples showing that the adoption of Western technology by Eastern peoples has usually been followed by important social and political changes and that rulers who thought they could have a Western-style army and navy without affecting traditional ways of life have often got more than they bargained for. Thus we are told how Mehmed Ali of Egypt engaged European experts to run an arsenal without any idea of undermining Islam, but the Europeans insisted on starting a maternity hospital for their families, and Egyptian women then also began to frequent it, causing a breach in Moslem religious custom. Similarly, Sultan Abdul Hamid of Turkey did his best to suppress liberal opinions in his realm, but sent young army officers to Western Europe for military training, with the result that they became carriers of the forbidden thoughts. Industrialization brings even greater havoc, and Gandhi, though he became India's national leader signally failed to persuade his countrymen to retrace their steps to a pre-industrial economy. Western technology has indeed everywhere disrupted the traditional cultures of the East. The question of today is no longer whether they can be preserved intact, but whether their inevitable trans-

formation will reflect predominantly Western liberal or Marxist-Leninist influence.

Russian Communism has three great advantages for competing with the West in Asia. In contrast to the Moslem, Hindu and Confucian traditional cultures it is, as Professor Toynbee calls it, a 'Western heresy'; it is of the modern world, mechanized, industrial, even nominally democratic. At the same time it is completely authoritarian, and thus fulfils yearnings for a father-priest-king among peoples accustomed over millennia to religious direction and autocratic monarchy. Finally, by anti-imperialist propaganda it can exploit all the jealousies and resentments evoked by the era of Western power ascendancy and expansion. Nevertheless, in view of these advantages which Communism enjoys, what is remarkable in the recent history of Asia is not that Moscow has had so much success, but that it has had so little. Against the Communist victory in China must be set the liberal-democratic developments in Turkey, India and Japan. Though the danger of a Russo-Chinese conquest of Asia remains, the situation from a Western point of view provides no cause for despair. But what is of supreme importance in the contest of ideologies is that the liberal West should manifest faith in its own values. Faith in political liberty, in toleration and freedom of thought, in a critical, rational attitude towards life, cannot, of course, have the same quality of fanatical devotion which imbues the adherent of a totalitarian doctrine. Yet there is such a thing as faith in freedom itself which the finest minds of the West in modern times have always felt as having the force of religious belief; it needs again to be proclaimed as a gospel by those who accept it. To repudiate it is to abandon Western civilization – as so many restless spirits seeking short cuts to paradise have in fact done. The *trahison des clercs* is indeed the fundamental threat to the Western way of life; it has more of danger in it than any menace of mere military conquest. Our very freedom forbids that intellectual desertion should be countered by persecution, but this renders it all the more necessary that it should be fought with the weapons of the spirit by those who are not prepared to surrender the pass.

Unfortunately Professor Toynbee must be counted among the deserters. For him 'secularized' Western civilization is past praying for. Dwelling on his favourite theme, he writes:

> We Westerners were gratified when we saw the Japanese and Chinese, who had rejected our Western civilization in its religious version, accepting it in a secularized version in which technology instead of religion had been given the place of honour. . . . But we have lived to see this secular Western dispensation disappoint us in both countries. In Japan it bred a disastrous militarism; in China it bred a disastrous political corruption.

> . . . In offering the Chinese and Japanese a secularized version of our Western civilization, we have been offering them a stone instead of bread, while the Russians, in offering them Communism as well as technology, have been offering them bread of a sort – gritty, black bread if you like to call it so; but that is still an edible substance that contains in it some grain of nutriment for the spiritual life without which man cannot live.

Professor Toynbee apparently finds food for spiritual life in the fanaticism of Communist belief, even though it is godless, but none at all in Western ideals of a disinterested search for truth, political liberty and respect for human rights. He does not himself, however, like the 'gritty' flavour of Communism, so he seeks his own religion elsewhere. Rather surprisingly, in spite of his nostalgia for the Gothic past, he does not look forward to a revival of Christianity. His hopes are set on the future emergence of a new universal religion, which, by drawing on analogies from ancient history, he suggests is due to arrive shortly.

We might be consoled in our troubles by this prospect if we could feel sure that the new religion would really have a chance to do its work. But if we just sit around waiting for it, mankind may fall under totalitarian rule in the meantime, and it is difficult to see how the new religion could then ever get started. The Caesars of the post-liberal era would certainly not allow an insurgent faith to be propagated by glorious martyrdoms; all that, as George Orwell has explained in *Nineteen Eighty-four*, is now quite out of date. If Nero had had the resources of the M V D at his disposal, the early Christians would have been publicly confessing how in their vileness they had set fire to Rome on the instructions of the King of Parthia. In these days, it seems, a certain minimum of liberty is essential even for the spread of a new religion. So perhaps the unspiritual West can still prepare the way for the future Messiah simply by defending such poor principles as it has.

THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE IN SOVIET LITERATURE

H. M. Hayward

Department of Russian, University of Leeds

Apart from occasional historical novels the bulk of contemporary Soviet literature is concerned with topical themes. During the last few years there has been a vast output of novels, plays and poems on various 'cold war' subjects – the machinations of the 'Anglo-American imperialists' against the Soviet Union and the popular democracies, the struggle of colonial peoples against imperialist domination and, perhaps most of all, 'the fight for peace'. The picture given to the Soviet public in these works of the non-Soviet world is almost uniformly black. Gloom, terror and utter despair reign in the outer darkness. The only bright spot is the love of 'ordinary people' everywhere for the Soviet Union and their determination to thwart the foul designs of their capitalist bosses.

In sharp contrast to the literature on external themes, works on life within the Soviet Union seek to convey the impression of a confident and happy people successfully building Communism in more or less harmonious collaboration with the Party of Lenin and Stalin. All of this literature is, needless to say, characterized by the bland assumption that the interests of the Party and the people are identical and that there can be no conflict between the two. It is, furthermore, avowedly didactic in that it is not concerned with the objective description of society (this would be the unpardonable heresy of 'naturalism') but with the transformation of society and the re-education of men in accordance with the Communist conception of what they should be. In Soviet literature, therefore, man and human relations tend to be presented in a way which makes it difficult for a reader unacquainted with Soviet reality to distinguish what is objectively true, or at least plausible, from what is merely a projection of official desires and aspirations. One of the most striking features of the Stalinist doctrine is the apparent belief in the perfectibility of man and the unceasing attempt to create an ideal human being quite abstract in his perfection (as understood by the Party). The obstinate refusal of the ordinary Russians to conform to the ideal is a source of desperation to their rulers. Only in literature is it possible for the wish-dream to be fulfilled. The real cause of Zoshchenko's downfall was the fact that the

characters he portrayed showed all too clearly how far removed Soviet man is from the ideal at which the Party aims.

Writers are constantly being exhorted to show in their works what are described as 'the shoots of Communism'. One such 'shoot', cultivated with particular tenderness in Soviet literature, is the new altruistic attitude to work which is said to be gaining ground among Soviet people. The 'positive' figures in present-day Soviet literature are shown as working for the sheer joy of working, for the victory of Communism, for the sake of the Fatherland and out of boundless devotion to the Party and comrade Stalin, but never for self-advancement or financial gain. There can be little doubt, however, that this happens more frequently in literature than in real life, since the Soviet Government has not yet seen fit to modify the system of graded material incentives combined with draconic labour laws which are still, apparently, the most effective means of getting people to work. The following monologue from the play *Conscience* by Chapurin (1950) is typical of the unconvincing way in which the new attitude to labour is portrayed:

> . . . last winter our factory held a *Stakhanovite watch** in honour of the memory of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Some of our workers were resting in the rest-room belonging to the factory. It's about twelve versts from here. They heard about the watch and went to the director of the rest-home; let us go, they said, we will go and do this watch, and then we will come back and finish off our rest. But the director wouldn't hear of it. You can't and there's an end of it, he said. And to make certain he ordered that none of them should be issued with outer clothing during that day. Well, and what do you think our chaps did? They said they wanted to go out ski-ing – the whole rest-home. The director simply melted with joy – that's a different matter, he said . . . he gave them a physical culture instructor and sent them off with his blessing. He waited and waited, it was already growing dark, but there was no sign of the skiers. The poor fellow was quite upset – he thought they must have frozen to death. But it turned out they were working at the blast-furnaces . . . they had run away from the rest-home to the factory.

Although this kind of misrepresentation of the mentality and behaviour of Soviet people considerably reduces the value of Soviet literature as a source of information about Soviet society, it is nevertheless possible to gain some idea of the workings of the Soviet system by reading Soviet fiction. To a large extent this is due to the fact that in order to accomplish its task of 're-making' man, literature must obviously teach by negative as well as positive example, although the author must of course ensure that the positive shall triumph in the end. Side by side with the image of the selfless worker we find the worker who is intent on personal

* 'Stakhanovite watch' is the name given to extra shifts worked in factories on the occasion of the various anniversaries and holidays in the Soviet calendar.

gain or the 'slacker'. In all spheres of Soviet life, as we learn from the incessant lamentations of the Soviet press, there are still to be found persons imbued with 'bourgeois' ideas. In literature the image of such 'remnants of the past' has become as highly conventionalized as that of the positive hero and therefore equally unconvincing, but the regularity with which they occur suggests that they are a permanent source of anxiety to the régime. It is interesting that in much Soviet literature of recent years the plot of the novel or play is based on a conflict (this is the word used by Soviet literary critics) between the standardized negative and positive characters. With minor variations the conflict is nearly always the same, so that the dénouement of a Soviet novel or play is monotonously predictable after one has read the first few chapters – a fact which has been much criticized in the press of late. This standard plot may be presented schematically as follows:

The scene of the action is a factory or *kolkhoz*. The characters are, for the most part, representatives of the 'managerial' classes; ordinary workers and peasants only appear episodically, if at all. The chief character, Comrade X, is director of the factory or president of the *kolkhoz*, or is in some similar position of authority. Comrade X is generally a self-assertive, blustering and dictatorial person who rules his factory or *kolkhoz* with an iron hand. In many ways he is the Soviet counterpart of the Moscow merchant in Ostrovsky's plays, of which he is indeed the literary descendant. It is significant that he is frequently described by the word 'samodur' (a self-willed tyrannical person who behaves with extreme arbitrariness towards his employees and members of his family), which was first given currency in the Russian language by Ostrovsky. Apart from being a 'samodur', Comrade X usually has some other shortcoming which eventually leads to his downfall. It may be nepotism, a routine outlook, the suppression of criticism, complacency or something even more reprehensible, such as obsequiousness towards things foreign, or peculation. The opposite of the 'samodur' is the so-called 'liberal' who fails to maintain discipline among his subordinates, with the result that production targets are not fulfilled. However, whether he is a 'liberal' or a 'samodur', Comrade X will brook no interference with the way in which he runs his enterprise to which he characteristically refers as 'my' instead of the orthodox 'our'. In the early stages of the plot's development he seems to be as firmly entrenched in his position as any capitalist entrepreneur, but unfortunately he has a rival whom we may call Comrade Y. Comrade Y sees the defects of Comrade X and knows how to take advantage of them. Generally he is a younger man and always an insufferable prig. Whereas X's horizon is limited to his own factory or *kolkhoz* and his ambition reaches no further than the fulfilment of his own production target, Y thinks of the entire country and the fulfilment of the Five Year Plan as a

whole. He is, in fact, the model Soviet executive, seemingly devoid of personal ambition, who knows how to anticipate the Party's every wish. At the moment, however, he is unable to apply his statesmanlike qualities, since he occupies only a rather subordinate post, such as that of chief engineer, agronomist or foreman. X, of course, loathes him and does everything in his power to thwart and humiliate him and, if possible, to get rid of him altogether.

The struggle between X and Y is generally a fierce one. Each of them has his partisans and stooges, and each by various intrigues tries to oust the other. A characteristic 'socialist realist' touch is that members of the same family may find themselves in opposite camps. Comrade X's wife or daughter, for instance, may be a supporter of Comrade Y. In some cases, X and Y themselves are related. Literature thus plays an important part in the attempt to educate people in the idea that the interests of the Party must always take precedence over family ties. In literature, if not in life, a man's whole family may turn away from him because of some petty misdemeanour or 'defect'.

The dénouement to the 'conflict' between X and Y comes with the intervention of Comrade Z, who is the *deus ex machina* of Soviet fiction. Often he is secretary of the district or regional committee of the Party (*raikom* or *obkom*), or a member of the Party bureau of the enterprise in which the conflict is taking place. By some sort of magic he completely transforms X, who now ceases to roar like a lion and becomes quite lamb-like in his meekness. So complete is his metamorphosis that he hands over his job to his erstwhile enemy, the now triumphant Y, with scarcely a murmur. The final scene is one of universal reconciliation after X has humbly confessed his faults and given an undertaking to mend his ways in future. There are variations of the dénouement in which X is unmasked as a 'hostile element', but this has been comparatively rare in the last few years, except in some works dealing with more serious ideological deviations such as cosmopolitanism and bourgeois nationalism. Some authors also dispense with Comrade Z and allow their negative characters to be 're-made' (this is the technical term) under the pressure of public opinion.

An excellent example of the manner in which this eternal triangle works is to be found in the play *Kalinovaya Roshcha* ('Hazel Grove'), by A. Korneichuk, which was awarded a Stalin prize in 1950. 'Hazel Grove' is the name of a *kolkhoz* whose president, Ivan Romanyuk, is a 'liberal'. He has presided over the *kolkhoz* for nineteen years and now seems inclined to rest on his laurels. He has no desire to make his *kolkhoz* into a 'foremost' one, because that would mean raising the labour norms of his workers. His philosophy, which he defends vigorously against his opponents, is summed up in the sentence: 'there are no heroes without backward

people'. His chief opponent is an ex-sailor, Vetrovoi, whom he has sacked from his post as vice-president of the *kolkhoz* and relegated to a minor position as head of a brigade of fishermen. In dismissing Vetrovoi, Romanyuk had the support of the majority of the *kolkhozniks*, as Vetrovoi himself explains in the following passage:

> When I returned from the war I was appointed to the administration (of the *kolkhoz*) and elected vice-president. I worked out a plan to make a decisive change in the *kolkhoz*, to raise labour discipline and to increase production norms so that . . . all the brigades should be foremost and the brigadiers real commanders, so that the president of the *kolkhoz* should be the captain of a cruiser and not of a flotilla of wooden skiffs, because you cannot row to Communism with oars. I started a battle with the president, but *the majority did not support me.*

He goes on to say that his defeat came about because

> I didn't prepare anyone, I didn't consult the *aktiv* (the Party organization of the *kolkhoz*); I thought that I could do it all by myself and that if I read out my plan at the meeting, everybody would vote for it, but it misfired. That was my first mistake. My second mistake was that I became heated at the meeting and said: If you do not accept my plan, then remove me from the post of vice-president! Romanyuk seized on this and appointed me head of the fishing brigade.

The speciousness of this explanation is evident, but the author would be guilty of the grave offence of 'distorting Soviet reality' if he gave the real reason for Vetrovoi's dismissal. It is one thing to portray an individual 'slacker' as a contemptible exception in the community, but to suggest that the majority of workers in a factory or *kolkhoz* might not like the idea of doing more work for the same wages would be a gross contravention of all the rules of 'socialist realism'. This is certainly not what Stalin meant by urging Soviet authors to 'write the truth'.

The inevitable climax to the conflict between Romanyuk and Vetrovoi comes when the latter succeeds in calling a general meeting of the *kolkhoz* members, in the presence of the secretary of the local Party committee. We do not learn what actually happens at this meeting. Instead of showing how the conflict is resolved, the author introduces a comic interlude which has nothing to do with the main theme of the play. All we see is that when Romanyuk emerges from the meeting he is no longer president of the *kolkhoz* and a completely changed man. In a conversation with Batura, a writer staying in the *kolkhoz*, he explains that he is handing over to Vetrovoi and going off to work as an ordinary labourer in a neighbouring *kolkhoz* which previously, much to his irritation, Vetrovoi had held up to him as a model from which he should take an example. The following dialogue between him and Batura gives some idea of what happened at the meeting:

ROMANYUK: My phase has ended and a new one has begun. There is a law which we were told about in the political education circle. At the time I could not understand it at all, but now, although I cannot remember what it is called, I can feel it acting on myself very well. It's a word which means . . . when everything changes. . . .

BATURA: Evolution?

ROMANYUK: No, not that. Well, for example, in our *kolkhoz* the majority thought that everything was all right, they were all satisfied. Only the foremost people (meaning Vetrovoi and his supporters) said that this was not so. Nobody noticed how the majority went over to the side of the foremost people, and at the meeting there was an explosion. Comrade Stalin often mentions this law.

BATURA: The law of the dialectic?

ROMANYUK: That's it. Such a dialectic happened to us that the whole of my administration went to the devil. Ugh, it's a powerful one, is this law!

This passage gives a remarkably vivid idea of the confused way in which Russians understand the philosophy which governs their lives. If a member of the ruling class, such as Romanyuk, is supposed to be having difficulty in understanding the dialectic – except at the moment when he falls victim to it – one can imagine how incomprehensible it must be to the 'broad masses'. Probably no régime in history has succeeded to such an extent as the Soviet régime in isolating itself from the people by such an impenetrable fog of claptrap. A curious result of thirty years' intensive political education is that the speech of the semi-literate Soviet masses abounds with words, often pronounced in a malapropized form, such as idealism, materialism, formalism, cosmopolitanism, etc. Apart from the fact that they are, roughly speaking, 'good' or 'bad', the vast majority of ordinary people have little idea of what they really mean, or rather of what the Party means by them.

The situation described in 'Hazel Grove' and, *mutatis mutandis*, in a great many other works of post-war Soviet literature, reveals the basic mechanism of Soviet society, which is the 'dialectic'. It is, however, an artificial dialectic. Y replaces X, not at the wish of the majority, but owing to the intervention of outside forces represented by Comrade Z. The literary presentation of the eternal triangle corresponds to reality only superficially, since the real inner thoughts and motives of the people affected by it are not and cannot be revealed. The obvious artistic weakness of the literary scheme – its failure to convince the reader that X is really 're-made' – is conditioned by a corresponding weakness in the triangle as it operates in life. Whereas in literature the Romanyuks leave the stage completely reconciled to humiliation and demotion, in real life there can be no question of reconciliation. In life, as well as in literature, lions

may *appear* to be metamorphosed into lambs, but in nine cases out of ten the metamorphosis is more apparent than real. Bitter experience has taught Soviet people that resistance to the Stalinist 'dialectic' is not only futile, but suicidal. Hence the extraordinary spectacle of scholars and writers denouncing their life's work, with praise to Stalin on their lips. To regard such sudden conversions as sincere would be to do a grave injustice to the majority of those concerned.

The artificial dialectic is both the strength and the weakness of the Soviet system. By this means the Party keeps society in a constant state of flux and this prevents the formation of stable classes which might eventually threaten its supremacy. This is particularly important in the administrative and economic apparatus, where resentment against Party interference is undoubtedly strong. The weakness of the system, as the Party realizes only too well, is the fact that it creates in vast numbers those 'hidden enemies' of the régime whose presence necessitates recurrent purges. By forcing people to adopt a mask, the Soviet régime has absolutely no means of distinguishing loyal citizens from disloyal ones. It is for this reason that every purge affects the guilty and the innocent indiscriminately. The Party knows that the 'law of the dialectic', on which its power depends, creates an immense potential 'fifth column', and that no amount of propaganda, by literature or any other means, can reconcile people to its operation. On the contrary, this propaganda has probably had the opposite effect from that intended, in that it has shown people how to mask themselves when the situation requires it. In fact, the literary scheme is so patently false that it has lost what little 'educative' value it may ever have had. This no doubt explains why writers are now being told that they do not necessarily have to 're-make' their 'negative' characters, and that they should concentrate more on educating their readers in 'vigilance'. Judging by some recent pronouncements, it looks as though literature is going to become little more than a handmaiden of the security services. In *Kommunist* of December 1952 we read, for example, that

> . . . false people, fearing the just anger of the Soviet people, cunningly mask themselves, trying to hide their base nature and low aspirations. Soviet satire must teach people to identify the old, to recognize bearers of disease and vice (sic), under whatever mask they may conceal themselves and however much they may boast of past services.

It seems also that the embellishment of reality characteristic of post-war Soviet literature has outlived its usefulness. It is now being frankly admitted that writers gloss over the negative features of life. They are now being urged to devote more attention to the seamy side of Soviet conditions, but at the same time they must be careful to avoid 'slander'. It remains to be seen how successfully they will cope with their new task.

LITTÉRATURE ENGAGÉE AGAIN

J. G. Weightman

Another blow has just been struck on behalf of *littérature engagée;* a muffled blow, however, very unlike the resounding wallop delivered by Jean-Paul Sartre in 1948 or the pugnacity of the English 'thirties. *Literature for an Age of Science,** by Professor Hyman Levy and Miss Helen Spalding, is a bloodless book, written without indignation, vigour or humour. Only once in 250 pages does a smile dimple the faces of its serious authors; it occurs on page 23:

> The nineteenth century, like all earlier partially civilized epochs, had its tabus; sex, for example, a branch of human experience we had with us even in the nineteenth century.

For the rest, they pursue an even tenor of drabness, speaking about 'impassioned imagination' in the style of a company report; or should we say of a *doklad*, for we are reminded more than once of the bleak, unliterary wastes of the *Literaturnaya Gazeta?* Professor Levy contributes not infrequently to Communist periodicals. That this book is written from a political point of view is clear; the whole thesis is political and there are references to the inarticulate masses and to 'the fading relics of a bygone colonial administration'. Yet no political party is mentioned – a curious fact which recalls the behaviour of my regretted English Communist friends, who would often adopt a conspiratorial attitude in broad daylight. Professor Levy and Miss Spalding cannot fear persecution; they both enjoy academic immunity. Why then, if they are Communists, do they advance to the middle of the market-place to bury their heads ostrichwise, and display only their neo-Marxist feathers? By so doing they defeat their own purpose, for the average unsuspecting reader will take their veiled attacks on American witch-hunting for normal Socialist criticism of Russian dictatorship. In any case, they seem to do their best to discourage any reader by inflicting on him such penitential remarks as:

> It is through the written word that the writer makes contact with the reader.

When they allow themselves the luxury of a metaphor, they hamstring it before it has had time to get moving:

* Methuen 15s.

> Life leaps forward on limbs of experience, but words which, like a trigger, may suddenly release a burst of energy, a cloud of thoughts, or a welling of emotion, may also fail through sheer inadequacy. It is when we make the effort to communicate this leaping experience to others, when we seek to fuse it with their special experience, that the weakness of language begins to show.

Certainly Professor Levy's and Miss Spalding's words do not easily communicate to us their 'leaping experience', and it is strange that two people with so little zest for language should bother about literature at all. Yet, although they have none of the copious brilliance that Sartre displayed in *Qu'est-ce que la Littérature?*, we must admit that, like him, they are partly in the right. Their thesis and many of their incidental remarks deserve more attention than their book is likely to get.

Their main argument, slightly disguised by their title, is the same as Sartre's. It is the sound contention that everything in a given society is interdependent. Literature is a function of society, so that there is always an intelligible relationship between a society and the kind of literature it produces. This has been obscured in the immediate past by analytical thought and the intense cultivation of individualism. Sartre argues that analysis and individualism are bourgeois characteristics and that the isolation of writers as devotees of Art for Art's sake or *poètes maudits*, or even as would-be impartial 'realists', is a symptom of social unhealthiness. Language itself binds us all together; a linguist would say (although neither Sartre nor Levy/Spalding use the image) that all speakers of a given language are being fed more or less by the same blood-stream. Therefore, if a writer looks upon himself as an outcast, as a misunderstood genius or as an exquisite sensibility living above the common herd, he has simply worked himself into the paradoxical situation of being at loggerheads with his material and his audience. Sartre has some particularly impressive pages on the various concealed forms that irresponsibility can take. Both Sartre and Levy/Spalding give us a rapid sketch of their respective literary histories from this point of view, showing how far various writers were conscious or unconscious of the social relationships which conditioned their work. They both conclude that the writer, having once realized his indissoluble links with the whole of the society in which he lives, should see himself as the consciousness of that society and reveal it to itself in all its aspects, so that it can evolve harmoniously from one stage to the next. A perfect society, says Sartre, would be in a permanent state of revolution and literature would be its *pure negativity*. Levy and Spalding do not use these philosophical terms, but they write:

> No higher purpose could be found for the writer and the critic than to lead the common man to a full grasp of the historical meaning of these

values (truth, the power of imagination, social justice) and their potentialities for the future.

All this had already been said before 1948; the pink poets tried to live up to it in the 'thirties, and the idea of harnessing literature to social change goes back at least as far as the French writers of the eighteenth century, in whom, of course, it was a bourgeois not a proletarian impulse. But before discussing the pros and cons once again perhaps we should deal first with the idea that Levy and Spalding ostensibly put in the forefront of their book. This is an age of science, they say; therefore literature, to be up to date, should approach society as consciously and as thoroughly as science grapples with the physical universe. It is scandalous that literature should still be so sporadic, fragmentary and unpredictable. The weakness of such statements can, I think, be easily proved and is, in fact, immediately obvious to anyone who is interested in literature as such. Although science and literature are both functions of language, they are very different, and there is not necessarily any parallel at all between them. The scientist is still dealing, for the most part, with objective phenomena * which can be reproduced at will. The proof of his knowledge is that, if such and such steps are taken, *such and such causes will result*. Caprice enters into science, of course, with regard to the future; no one knows in what field or from what brain the next fertile suggestion is going to spring. But the *present* of science can be almost perfectly organized, because its past achievements are cumulative and can be transferred, entire, from one brain to another.† A scientist who is intelligent enough to understand Newton can benefit from all of Newton's discoveries; that is, he can stand on Newton's shoulders and use the power that Newton has given him. In literature there is no such simple accumulation and transfer of power. Shakespeare, if we read him properly, enriches us, but we cannot stand on his shoulders and use his genius in the present (although Shaw, in one of his prefaces, claimed to be able to do so). Each writer who reads Shakespeare can, according to his ability, benefit by what Shakespeare achieved at his stage of the language and in his state of society; but this does not mean that he re-does what Shakespeare did in the same way as a scientist can use Newton's discoveries. In fact, he may be precluded from doing some particular thing, *because* Shakespeare has already done it.

Any discovery made by a scientist feeds the mainstream of science and is a permanent human achievement. A writer's productions are much less

* For the last few years it has been maintained that this is not so, that the observer is part of the phenomenon observed; but it is true enough for the purposes of this argument.

† This may be less true than it used to be. Some branches of science now seem so complex that one wonders if any but very exceptional minds can grasp them.

assimilable and far more fragile; they will be understood in innumerable different ways according to the temperaments of his various readers, and a time will come when his language will be immediately comprehensible to only a few people or to no one at all. And since the past achievements of literature do not add together in the same way as the past achievements of science, it follows that the *present* of literature is also different. If scientific education has been proceeding normally, no generation can, from the scientific point of view, fall behind the previous one; it will at least maintain the level of knowledge already reached. But in literature, ups and downs are the rule. Each fresh crop is a haphazard affair, and always will be until the scientists learn how to breed geniuses at will. This is not to say that literary education and exhortation are entirely useless; on the contrary, they are very necessary, but they are not infallible. Professor Levy, finding a tongue-tied poet drinking himself to death in his ivory tower, would say to him: 'Look to the scientist, thou sluggard', and once in a while the rebuke might work. The poet might examine life again, with less self-pity, and discover a subject to write about. On the other hand, he might not. Given the clash between his unused talent and the surrounding situation, or given the conflicts within his own mind, there may be nothing for him to do but *drink himself to death*.

This is probably happening rather more often in the Soviet Union than in the decadent West. What Professor Levy implies, of course, is that, rather than drink, the poet should compose an epic on the psychological stresses within the Milk Marketing Board during the transition from a mixed economy to complete collectivization. Again, it might be done. Mr John Betjeman has written several very good poems on subjects which, at first sight, seem no more inspiring than the Milk Marketing Board. But if he did not exist, there would be no one else to compose them. A Milk Marketing Board can be formed almost at will, and so can a team of competent, if not inventive, scientists, but if Mr Betjeman were not there, we could not invent him. In any case, I doubt whether Professor Levy approves of his poetry. If Mr Betjeman wrote the required epic, the milk, while remaining poetic, might tend to curdle as it became more collectivized, which would never do, because, as we shall see later, Professor Levy would want to dictate not only the subject but also the manner in which it should be treated. However, the point I wish to make for the moment is that the writer, unlike the scientist, is not born into a world already partially mapped out and with its unsolved problems waiting, more or less defined, for the next onslaught. He is born into a mess, which consists of an evolving social situation, studded with surviving literary masterpieces that he can crib from, to some extent, but not appropriate. Having looked around him and assimilated a language and some shreds of past literature,

he has to find for himself, by means of words, images, rhythms, composition, etc., some sort of relationship with that mess. The mess is less confused during some epochs than during others, but in any age the writer has to work out his own salvation and hope that it will be to some extent valid for his readers. 'The novel', according to Levy/Spalding (p. 133), 'is like a piece of experimental science'. Not at all. The scientist who makes the atomic bomb explode, or finds a cure for leprosy, knows that he was working on a definite problem and has solved it. The writer cannot proceed scientifically because he has no means of proving to himself that he has found the right subject or treated it in the right way. He can only trust his own judgment, the uncertain satisfaction he gets from his books, and the treacherous applause or criticism of his friends and readers.

Professor Levy and Miss Spalding, like Sartre, are sure, however, that they know what the writer's subject should be; and this brings us back to their main argument. The writer should not be the unconscious victim or exponent of his class situation or his personal predicament. He should comprehend his society and civilization as a whole. Once he does this, his attention will naturally focus on those points where injustice is still rife or where heroic action is in progress; he will write about them and so assist the evolutionary or dialectical process. Literature, in fact, should be the oil which lubricates the wheels of social change. Sartre, going much further than Levy/Spalding, carries 'historicism' to the point of reversing completely the old idea that the writer works for posterity. To-day's books are written for to-day, he says; they are like some kinds of fruit, which lose their flavour if not consumed on the spot. He might have said that their function is not essentially different from that of newspapers.

Such a rapid summing-up makes this point of view seem ridiculous. Indeed, it is ridiculous in its final implications. Yet Levy/Spalding and Sartre have grasped one aspect of an important truth, and Sartre in particular, as he lays about him in French literature, exposes a number of shams and misapprehensions. It is true, as he states, that for generations French writers have expressed disgust with bourgeois values, while for the most part living, consciously or unconsciously, in careful conformity with them. Many of them would have been better writers had they had a more honest grasp of social relationships. Flaubert would certainly have been improved as a man and a thinker if he had had more political generosity, though in view of the existence of *Madame Bovary* Sartre is perhaps ungracious in asking that Flaubert should have been any other than he was. Levy/Spalding are less happy in their criticism of English literature, because their attack is mainly directed against Jane Austen, Elizabeth Bowen and Virginia Woolf. It is certainly ungracious to ask these ladies to have a wider social consciousness. They manage very well within the framework

that the accident of birth provided them with. It is a waste of time to point out that Jane Austen, for instance, knew nothing of social stresses outside her *milieu*; one could no more expect her to deal with another *milieu* than one could expect a miner's wife to write a novel about life at Court. It is sufficient that Jane Austen's novels should be good enough to have a meaning for a miner's wife with a taste for literature. There is class-consciousness in Elizabeth Bowen, Virginia Woolf and T. S. Eliot (the other writer attacked by Levy/Spalding) and it does limit their range, but not to any great extent. In any case, they are genuinely upper middle class and cannot be blamed for taking their upper middle-class life seriously; they are taking life seriously and it happens that they live it in the upper middle classes.

Levy/Spalding tend to assume, like most left-wingers, particularly of working-class origin (being one of these myself, I can make the remark), that the upper classes are less real than the working classes; just as Conservatives, particularly of upper-class origin, tend to assume that other people only exist in a 'quaint' way, or in the light in which they see them as workers or servants. Levy/Spalding imply that there should be no upper-class literature. But as long as the upper classes exist, they surely have a right to compose works about themselves; in so far as these works are good of their kind, the rest of the community should be thankful to have them. What would the Bolshoi Theatre do without Tchaikovsky and Pushkin? Levy/Spalding would have been wiser to analyse the real weaknesses of upper-class literature, or to criticize aggressive snobbishness such as expresses itself in Eliot's *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture*, or in Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, or in several bad minor writers of talent, the most remarkable of whom is, perhaps, Angela Thirkell. I have just read with fascination a volume by her called *Growing Up*, and am astonished to find what a clear example of *littérature engagée* it is; *engagée*, however, in the opposite direction to Sartre and Levy/Spalding. It was written during the War and is a kind of Stalin Prize Novel in reverse, intended to help the English upper classes to weather the strain. The heroine, Lady Waring, is a neo-aristocratic Stakhanovite, worn out by her duties as a Red Cross official and lady of the manor; instead of saboteurs and wreckers, we have Captain Hooper, the *déclassé*, who wounds the sensibilities of the upper-class characters by being neither one of them nor a member of the properly behaved lower classes. Since this is an English novel, and gentleness is part of the English tradition, he is more kindly dealt with than are saboteurs in Soviet novels; it is even admitted that he may be doing his share to win the war. But the validity of his existence is denied; he is felt to be an inexplicable blemish in a nicely codified world of class distinctions, just as a cosmopolitan, in a Russian novel, is a freak, spoiling the

monolithic purity of the Soviet ethos. Mrs Thirkell and Mme Vera Panova, a Stalin Prize-woman of whose works I have read a description, are obviously birds of a feather.

We cannot expect Levy/Spalding to demonstrate the weaknesses of Stalin Prize Novels. They could, however, have given an analysis of the many English writers who, instead of telling the artistic truth about the part of society in which they live, fall into snobbishness or bad temper, and therefore confuse the issue instead of clarifying it. The temptation to do this is very great nowadays because class boundaries have become so uncertain that it is increasingly difficult for a writer to know within what framework he is operating. We have upper-class snobs and lower-class snobs and, in between, upper-class people who write sentimental pieces about the working classes, and lower-class people who are maudlin about the upper classes. Other writers are so determined not to be socially conscious that they cease to exist at all. A vigorous critic with a sound Marxist approach could shed a lot of light on this situation. Unlike Levy/Spalding, he would not devote most of his time to heaping old-fashioned reproaches on upper-middle-class writers who have, on the whole, done their duty. He would reserve his main attack for the millions of well-educated people from the working classes who remain passive consumers of culture instead of participants in it. To talk pityingly about the 'inarticulate masses' of England is not quite, but almost, sentimental nonsense; if our masses are inarticulate it is because they or their representatives do not bother to put pen to paper. They have not yet evolved anything corresponding to the sense of general social responsibility that has become instinctive in the better section of the upper classes. Sartre, compared to Levy/Spalding, has one great virtue: he does not simply nag at others for being bourgeois and reactionary; he feels responsible for France and the world, here and now, and we must give him credit for this sense of responsibility, although we may think that he misapplies it.

Yet even if these confusions were cleared up, we should not be guaranteed a literary Renaissance. *Littérature Engagée* is a sound doctrine only up to a point. The truth it contains is that a writer, whether he likes it or not, is a member of society and that, if he gets his social values mixed, particularly to-day, his writing will suffer. The mistake is to proclaim that it is the writer's chief business to put his shoulder to the social wheel. Both Sartre and Levy/Spalding affirm (but Sartre, fortunately, does not always conform in practice to his own doctrine) that literature exists to express a given state of affairs, so that this state of affairs can be surpassed. This, I suppose, is a Hegelian idea or a corruption of Hegel. It transfers to the literary plane what Pope said about life in general:

Man never is, but always to be blest.

How can a writer as intelligent as Sartre accept such a distorted view? Literature exists, on the contrary, to express a given state of affairs artistically, so that it can be saved from the general flux. Sometimes, of course, the mere description of a situation causes it to be changed, because awareness breeds a sense of guilt. But the writer's business, as a writer, is not to change things, whatever his political opinions may be. His business is to see things as they are, for him, at a given moment (and this vision may, of course, include the desire for social change). The acceptance of the idea that society evolves should not lead to a false conception of time and evil. Where Sartre and Levy/Spalding go wrong is in supposing, like many left-wing writers, that a social evil, once surmounted, ceases to exist. *Littérature Engagée* as Sartre proclaims it, and the Communist doctrine miscalled Socialist Realism, which is what Levy/Spalding are trying to foist off on us without even telling us its name, are the same thing and are based on too simple an idea of progress. Progress is seen as the process of gradually mopping up past evil. Now it is true that an evil, once cured, has disappeared in the sense that it is no longer visible; but in so far as it was recorded and is remembered it still remains. No amount of good can make up for past evil, because the present does not abolish the past. The present is simply the bit of time that we are engaged upon. In a sense, the past goes on existing, however much we have altered things; an event which has happened once has happened for all time. Children are no longer exploited as factory hands or as chimney sweeps, but this does not lessen the tragedy of those who were so exploited in the nineteenth century; it merely means that their particular tragedy is less accessible to us who are living in the twentieth century.

Sartre's sense of responsibility for the present is so great that he looks upon the past (at least in this book) only as a series of events leading up to the present, and he is so dissatisfied with the present that he wants to hurry on to the future as soon as possible. It is most exceptional to find this attitude, characteristic of the man of action, combined with great literary ability; the writer's normal instinct is to look at what is in front of him, as if it represented not only itself but also the past and the future (as indeed it does) and to combine its elements in a form which is æsthetically satisfying. He may then go out and vote for the party which is going to change what he has just described, or he may write a pamphlet to help with the electioneering, but both these activities are different from his function as a writer of literature. The only link between the three acts is that, in each, the writer shows his sensitivity to suffering. The great weakness of left-wing literature is that it confuses the writer's attitude to evil with the politician's. The politician's business is to remove evil where he can. The writer's business, or part of it at least, is to describe evil where he sees it.

These are, I fear, very trite remarks. The only excuse for making them is that there is a germ of truth in *Littérature Engagée* which needs to be incorporated into the usual anti-progressive or non-progressive attitude of the artist. And any book that encourages reflection on the social aspect of literature is worth reading in England to-day, because we are still living on the aftermath of an upper-class literature. There are a few signs of the emergence of a literature corresponding to the general sensibility of the country, as it expresses itself in the newspapers and magazines and on the wireless. I do not mean, of course, that such a literature would be straightforwardly suburban or working-class, or that it would be documentary or exhortatory. We *cannot know what it will be until, if ever, it is written.* But at least the writers who might be tempted to produce it can be assured that they need be neither crusaders nor reactionaries. It is a good thing if the writer can be as socially conscious as possible, but he can only write his work by falling back on his individual temperament. His sensibility is, in the last resort, the only measure of what is happening. In Eastern Europe, as we know only too well, the germ of truth in Socialist Realism has proliferated into a vast untruth, because the writer is *not* allowed to have his separate conscience or to be the conscience of society. Under pain of silence, he has to tell the partial truths or the lies which will be acceptable to the politicians. The tragedy of this situation is not so much the badness of the books produced. A gelded literature cannot, of course, be very healthy, even when the geldings themselves look as robust and as self-satisfied as Fadeyev and Panova. However, as far as one can tell, the output is fairly innocuous, although comically unrealistic. The sad thing is that the truth of the situation may be lost for all time.

It would seem that the doctrine of *engagement littéraire*, indicating, as it does, an uncertain attitude towards the problem of evil, is also now seriously bedevilling the career of Jean-Paul Sartre. In 1948 he was still saying that he wanted literature to be literary, and in *La Nausée*, *Huis Clos* and *Les Mains Sales* he has produced three impressive works in which evil is dealt with in a literary way. Yet he is now so keen to have an immediate political influence that, if reports are correct, he recently prevented the performance of *Les Mains Sales* in Vienna because it coincided with the Congress of the 'Partisans of Peace'. It is rather as if God (whom Sartre is fond of insulting, while declaring that He does not exist) decided to soft-pedal one or more of the Ten Commandments, in order to collaborate with murderers and thieves. It is a pity that a doctrine which is partially sound should confuse a man with so great a talent and so generous a nature.

BOOK NOTES

JOURNEY FOR OUR TIME: THE JOURNALS OF THE MARQUIS DE CUSTINE. Edited and translated by Phyllis Penn Kohler, with an Introduction by Lieut-General Walter Bedell Smith. (Published by Arthur Barker Ltd., London, pp. 240, 16*s*.) This is the second translation of, or rather from, Custine's work to appear in English since the book's original publication in 1843, more than a century ago. The first, entitled *The Empire of the Czar*, appeared in three volumes almost simultaneously with the four-volume French original, which bore the title *La Russie en* 1839. It was an abridged version; Mrs Kohler's can scarcely be called more than a selection of excerpts, and even General Smith's enthusiastic preface does not quite recompense one for the extremely drastic editing of the original. Apparently both the General and the translator discovered Custine after the war, when General Smith, as U S Ambassador to Moscow (1946–49), found his patience sorely tried by the Kremlin's characteristic mixture of suspicion, obtuseness and malevolence. Custine – some copies were still available, second-hand, in Moscow bookshops – was a revelation to him, and after his return to America he arranged to have some chapters translated and edited by a former member of his Embassy staff. The result is the present volume, which is certainly readable enough but does not altogether convey the flavour of the original.

Custine's celebrated travel book made a considerable impression in its day, and deservedly so. He saw a good deal during his short stay of only three months, and since he mixed at Court and in society he was privileged to note a number of things which, then as now, were carefully concealed from ordinary visitors. He did not know the language, but all educated Russians in those days conversed in French, and he was given some startling information by Frenchmen long resident in Russia. (One of them described to him how the Petersburg police suppressed all reports of murders it could not solve and secretly sent the bodies of the victims to the local mortuary, while officially informing the anxious relatives that no news had been received. Then as now, the papers carried no crime reports.) He was extremely assiduous in taking notes and making contacts. In other respects, too, he had much in common with Tocqueville, who a few years before had travelled in America. Both were facile generalizers who could make a meagre quantity of fact go a long way, and both had

set out on their respective journeys with a political purpose: Tocqueville to discover the secret of democracy, Custine to find arguments against representative government. Neither brought home what he wanted. Tocqueville never managed to throw off his conviction that democracy would be ruinous to France; Custine, an avowed Royalist and anti-parliamentarian, returned profoundly shaken and convinced that anything, even liberalism, was to be preferred to the despotism he had found in Russia. His alarming description of the Tsarist régime, and the topicality of some of his remarks, are of course the main reason why his book has become popular in America (and, according to General Smith, why the Russian translation made in 1930 is now almost unobtainable in Moscow).

The picture drawn by Custine is indeed a remarkable one, though one has to remember that a great deal had changed in Russia between the time when he wrote and the eve of the revolution of 1917, or even that of 1905. When he visited Petersburg and Moscow in 1839, the government was still completely despotic, in theory as well as in practice, and Nicholas I took the first opportunity he could find to assure the Marquis that he did not intend to make the smallest concession to constitutionalism. But what really shook Custine, who after all was himself not very fond of representative government, was not the theory of despotism but its practice. The omnipotence of the police frightened him; its cruelty appalled him. The condition of the serfs made him tremble for the future of the country – he constantly refers to the certainty of a terrible upheaval – and their passive acceptance of physical maltreatment and wholesale banishment to Siberia caused him to declare that Russia had more in common with Asia than with Europe. But he was at his most perceptive in sensing the dislike of the educated upper class for the foreigners whom they were so anxious to imitate. All the educated Russians, he concluded, were aping Europe and at the same time hated it and only waited for the day when they could show their resentment. The thought gave him sleepless nights. He was already in a state of terror lest the police seize his notes, which were full of critical comments on Russian institutions, and decide to have him quietly murdered (he was convinced that they were capable of it). When on top of his anxieties, his fatigues – the roads were very bad – and the appalling impression produced upon him by a visit to the Schluesselburg prison fortress, he made the acquaintance of educated middle-class Russian officials and sensed their secret hostility, he gave vent to sombre prophecy:

> They hate us, as any imitator hates his model; their scrutinizing looks are searching for faults which they want to find in us. When I discovered this trend of mind, I was by no means inclined towards indulgence. I was thinking that perhaps the people who are to decide the future of Russia will come from this level of society. The middle class is new-born in this Empire, and God alone knows the influence it will have on the destiny of Russia . . . and of the world.

G. L. ARNOLD.

THE ATTACK and other papers, by R. H. Tawney. (Allen and Unwin, pp. 192, 16*s*.) 'Tawney's unwritten works remain, with Namier's, the lost masterpieces of the twentieth century.' Mr A. J. P. Taylor's well-known witticism is in danger of obscuring the fact that one or two masterpieces did get written in the end. *Equality* is probably the best known, since it provided the Labour movement with the nearest equivalent to a coherent philosophy. The present collection is admittedly more trifling. It includes, however, two illuminating essays on the Webbs and that little gem of political analysis, *The Choice before the Labour Party* (written in 1934, but still worth pondering). Some notes on China, published in the *Manchester Guardian* in March 1931, are of special interest at the moment, since they suggest that the Kuomintang régime even then had feet of clay, as well as a head moulded from the same material. The two concluding essays expound the author's personal philosophy of Christian Socialism. Since some people in the Labour Party seem recently to have begun worrying about an ethical foundation, it seems apposite to remind them that there is at least one which has been in existence for a long time. Even the unbeliever can get more out of Professor Tawney's philosophy of life than out of the rather anodyne conclusions recently put forward in the *Socialist Union* pamphlet.

These essays do, however, illustrate a problem which neither Professor Tawney nor his model pupil, Sir Stafford Cripps, ever quite put into plain words: what happens if there is no consensus about the nature of the good society? Liberals used to talk as though 'we', i.e. all 'reasonable people', were agreed on fundamentals. Professor Tawney is aware that this is not so, but he assumes somehow that Socialists at least are so agreed. On the other hand, he knows that the Labour Party is far from being genuinely Socialist:

> The Labour Party can be either a political agent, pressing in Parliament the claims of different groups of wage-earners; or it can be an instrument for the establishment of a Socialist Commonwealth, which alone, on its own principles, would meet those claims effectively, but would not meet them at once. What it cannot be is both at the same time in the same manner. It ought to tell its supporters that obvious truth.

'It ought to', but it doesn't; not even Cripps did, although he came close to it. His successors, whatever faction they may belong to, seem determined to say nothing that might upset the voters. Yet this state of

affairs cannot go on for very long, and this for reasons which are admirably stated in these essays.

One turns with some melancholy from this slim volume to Mr Kingsley Martin's 'biographical memoir' (pp. 281, Gollancz, 21*s.*) of Harold Laski, perhaps the most fertile and loquacious propagandist any political movement has ever possessed, a devoted and justly popular teacher and the author of innumerable tracts which, alas! one would gladly trade, one and all, for some of Tawney's 'unwritten masterpieces'. Mr Martin has done his best for 'Harold', as he persists in calling him, and in the process drawn a very engaging portrait of an exceptionally gifted young man who somehow never quite grew up. Laski *ran away from home* at eighteen to marry a woman eight years his senior, wrote editorials for the *Daily Herald* before he was twenty-one, and by the age of twenty-five had become a lecturer at Harvard and *something of a celebrity*. The reverse side of this precocious brilliance was a fundamental lack of depth which showed up in his later work: a fact admitted by Mr Martin. It is an odd commentary on Laski's effect upon his contemporaries that this biographical sketch shows him to have been both more amiable and less intelligent than most people thought. He was intensely devoted to the Labour movement and literally worked himself to death on its behalf. As for the quality of *his mind*, it is enough to say that he succeeded in creating a public which takes the *New Statesman* seriously as a vehicle of advanced thought. The devoted readers of that periodical are Harold Laski's true legacy to posterity, for he was a great deal more successful in winning friends and influencing people (especially students) than in clarifying political theory. Mr Martin, who cannot be expected to see the humorous side of the matter, has written a candid but fundamentally uncritical memoir of his old friend and political mentor which will, one hopes, be widely read for the good things it contains: *chief among them* a polite letter from Mr Churchill to Laski in *1942*, explaining why it was not practicable at that moment to introduce Socialism.

G. L. A.

THE MISSING DIPLOMATS. By Cyril Connolly, with an Introduction by Peter Quennell (The Queen Anne Press. 5*s.*). Who would have expected Mr Connolly to get involved in the Cold War? Yet here he is, writing about Burgess and Maclean. The *New Statesman* reviewer, in an admirable phrase, suggested that this book was delicious literary soup made from fresh bones. Not having read the original *Sunday Times* articles, I looked forward to a wicked treat. But I confess to being disappointed. The first dish, served by Mr Quennell, is warm and thick enough, but it is a portrait of Mr Connolly and has nothing to do with the diplomats. Its richness

is a double offence against tact; when Mr Connolly serves his own soup, this seems by contrast lukewarm and thin; at the same time, we question the appropriateness of prefacing an unfavourable account of two men, whose fate is unknown, by a eulogy (however justifiable in another context) of a third, who has no connection with them except that he was a casual acquaintance of theirs and has chosen to write about them. Has refinement of taste not led back, as sometimes happens, to vulgarity?

Considered separately, Mr Quennell's Introduction is an accomplished piece of *belles lettres*. Mr Connolly is a good subject, whether others write about him or he writes about himself. Here, writing about others, he lacks conviction. His 'variations', as he calls them, fall between various stools. They are not first-class gossip because, after telling us that Maclean and Burgess were drunkards and schizophrenics, he makes a show of dignified reticence. As a political or psychological study, they are commonplace. As a sociological study, they are indeterminate. One assumes that Mr Connolly agreed to write about Burgess and Maclean because they represented in an extreme form the uneasiness characteristic of the fringe of society in which Mr Connolly lives. But what the subtle truth about that malady is and how Burgess, Maclean and Mr Connolly himself were affected by it, the reader is not really made to feel. Mr Connolly has not dealt with the matter on the literary plane, where he would have been at home and where his indiscretions, more boldly stated, would have been purified by art. His booklet has too many conscious graces to be merely journalism; yet it is not so much a piece of literature as a document about all three men, written in an uncertain tone by one of them, who has not yet evolved a coherent attitude to the subject. As an example of uncertainty of tone, take the following sentence:

> I remember, at the beginning of the war, mentioning to one of our most famous diplomatic representatives that I knew Donald and receiving a glance of incredulity. Satisfied of my claim, he explained that Maclean was a white hope, a 'puer aureus' of the Service, whose attainments and responsibilities were well beyond his years.

Judging by the context, this is not written with tongue in cheek. Yet does it not read like some vapid book of memoirs (even down to the pompous 'satisfied of') that Mr Connolly would parody so well? *The Missing Diplomats* is a symptom of something, but of what?

J. G. W.

Professor Seton-Watson's book THE DECLINE OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA (Methuen and Co. Ltd., 32*s.* 6*d.*) shows what a rewarding task it can be to re-tell the story of a period about which a fair amount of literature has been produced already. Without a knowledge of Russian home and foreign

policy in the sixty years stretching from the Crimean War to the First World War, present developments in Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe cannot be properly understood.

Professor Seton-Watson rightly stresses that the history of Russia is not the history of the 'Russian forty-four per cent' of the Czarist Empire. He takes into account the political, cultural, social and economic development of Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Finns and other peoples. The reader cannot help drawing certain parallels between the policy of the Czars and the attitude of the Soviet Government towards these nationalities. Czarist policy at its worst often equals Soviet policy at its best, and what fifty years ago was looked upon as brutal persecution appears retrospectively almost as a mild liberal rule. Professor Seton-Watson mentions a law imposed in 1908 on what was then the Grand Duchy of Finland. It put Russian subjects on an equal footing with Finns. By our present standards this law does not seem an outrageous one. Nevertheless, it provoked an outcry of indignation in Finland since it abolished the privileged position which the country had enjoyed for more than a hundred years. The centre of the protest movement was Viborg, the Finnish city nearest to the Russian border. Today, thanks to 'Soviet nationalities policy', there is no longer any Finnish population in Viborg which could protest against acts of violence committed by the Moscow Government or by the Leningrad Provincial Council now exercizing jurisdiction over the city. The attitude towards the Jews also lends itself to an interesting comparison. The Czarist Government practised a policy of discrimination towards the Jewish people and tried to keep it as long as possible within the ill-famed 'Pale of Settlement'. At the same time, however, there was 'a noteworthy development of Jewish literature and learning' which must be contrasted with the total elimination of Jewish culture which we have witnessed in the Soviet Union.

The value of Professor Seton-Watson's solid and well-written textbook does not only lie in what one might call its scholarly topicality, but also in its lucid approach to the eternal problem of Russia. In dealing with a period which saw a mighty upsurge of both liberal and revolutionary movements, Professor Seton-Watson demonstrates how superficial it is to speak of 'Russia' and 'Europe' in terms of absolute contradictions. The Russia of the Czars was more 'Western' than was Italy under Mussolini, or than Spain and Portugal are today. Russia is certainly not European in the same sense as Scandinavia and Britain, but it is by no means less European than many parts of the Balkans. There is no unbridgeable gulf between Russia and Europe, and we are justified in hoping that Russia, under a different regime, may find her way back to co-operation with other Western and European nations.

W. J. K.

CONTENTS FOR APRIL 1953

Editorial 243

Marshal Tito: A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT 246

The Cold War II: G. L. ARNOLD 249

Bridgeheads Across the Rubicon: J. H. HUIZINGA 269

The French Reviews: BERNARD WALL 276

The Magus of the North: NORMAN COHN 283

Herbert Read's Romanticism: DONALD DAVIE 295

Syringa, Iv'ry Pure: DAVID PAUL 302

Book Notes 309

Volume CLIII, Number 914

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

Hutchinson's

Just Out :

BRITAIN IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN — **W. F. Monk**

Describes the growth of British interests in the western basin of the Mediterranean from the seventeenth century to the present day.
Two end-paper maps. *8s. 6d. net*

THE ROMANTIC POETS — **Graham Hough**

A short study of the major romantic poets which concentrates on the specific treatment of key poems, seen in their historical context. *8s. 6d. net*

Ready May :

THE MAKING OF THE MIDDLE AGES — **R. W. Southern**

Gives a picture of the main personalities and the influences which moulded the history of Europe during the formation period in the history of Western civilization from about 970 to 1215 A.D.
Senior Series. *L. demy.* *Five half tones.* *25s. net*

University Library

Friendly Societies in the West Indies
by A. F. and D. Wells

Report on a survey to assess the potential value of friendly societies in raising the standard of living in the West Indies.
(Colonial Research Publications No. 15)
7s. 6d. (7s. 8d.)

The Administration of Justice and the Urban African
by A. L. Epstein, LL.B.

A study of Urban Native Courts in Northern Rhodesia.
(Colonial Research Study No. 7)
7s. 6d. (7s. 10d.)

Prices in brackets include postage

H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE
P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1, and Sale Offices in London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff, Bristol, and Belfast, or through any bookseller.

Bellometti

LE PERROQUET

The restaurant in the heart of entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

EDITORIAL

IS the world about to move from the Stalin Era into the Eisenhower Era? Predictions of this kind have lately been made by one or two responsible American public figures. Before dismissing them as pardonably naïve expressions of national pride, it may be well to consider what is implied by such suggestions. If the past decade can suitably be styled the Stalin Era – the preceding one would correspondingly have to be termed the Age of Hitler – the reason clearly does not lie in any of those alleged traits of personal superiority over other autocrats which Communists (but no one else) profess to have discovered in the life story of Stalin. It lies rather in the collective achievement of Soviet society during and after the Second World War, and in the material relationship between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world. It is only by altering this relationship, and in particular the military balance, that the Eisenhower Administration could achieve the kind of distinction which its public orators have already bestowed upon it in advance. To say this is not to express scepticism as to the feasibility of such an enterprise. Given the necessary will, and some progress in political maturation among the Washington bureaucracy and its political overseers, the thing can be done, and done without plunging the entire world into war. Whether it will be done, does not, however, depend uniquely upon the good intentions of those who are now in control of America's and the West's destiny.

In the meantime we have still to estimate the significance of Stalin's disappearance from the scene he has for so long dominated by dint of a peculiar combination of statecraft, brutality, and the will to make 'the revolution' permanent. Some of the attendant problems were considered in the March issue of the TWENTIETH CENTURY; there is no need here to elaborate on them. Suffice it to say that no one has yet discovered among Stalin's past associates and present successors the kind of man who seems likely to provide the régime with another personal integration. This may be due to our ignorance of the men concerned; it is at least conceivable that there is lurking in the wings someone more impressive than Malenkov, more inspiring than Molotov, and less subject to sudden liquidation than

Zhukov. All one can say is that if such a protagonist exists, he is not visible at the moment. For the time being the Soviet Union is governed by a committee whose elected, or self-appointed, chairman is both the least prepossessing and the most vulnerable member of the ruling group. Unlike his immediate associates, M. Malenkov is not in direct control of some powerful specialized 'apparatus' with a strong vested interest in keeping its supreme chief where he is. To say that he represents the Party, as against the State bureaucracy, the Secret Police, or the Army, is merely to phrase the problem differently, for the role of the Party in the post-Stalinist era is precisely the point at issue. Stalin's unique position rested on his ability to represent and symbolize both the function of the Party within the State, and the authority of the State itself. His nominal successor is at best the supreme representative of the Party managers, and quite possibly no more than the quasi-neutral chairman in a secret duel between bureaucratic and military factions. What is quite certain is that he lacks the *charisma* of the revolutionary leader, or the war leader – two archetypal figures among whom the remnants of Stalin's authority must ultimately be distributed. The elevation of the aged Marshal Voroshilov to the post of State President is clear evidence that this insufficiency is actually felt and experienced within the Kremlin itself, as it must certainly be experienced by the Russian people.

This is not to say that the régime has suddenly become unstable, merely that its authority has shrunk, both *vis-à-vis* its own people and the world at large, including in all probability the rival Communist empire governed from Peking. A change of this kind offers patent opportunities to the specialists in political warfare, provided they are able to control their own impatience and do not take emigré fantasies too seriously. A régime as powerful and monolithic as the Soviet dictatorship can weather even the shock of Stalin's disappearance without too great a loss of moral authority at home. It is not obliged to plunge immediately into foreign adventures, which would indeed be doubly perilous to its internal cohesion since the Army would be the chief immediate beneficiary. On the other hand, there seems to be no adequate reason why its attitude towards the outside world should change in any essential. This attitude is partly the outcome of historical circumstances, partly the reflex of Great Power rivalries, and very largely due to the 'permanence' of the revolution and the attendant mental distortions which are superficially camouflaged by a pseudo-rationalist doctrine. For a genuine change in international relationships

to become possible, the 'permanent revolution from above', and the Party régime which controls it, would have to disappear.

This would still leave the Soviet Union immensely powerful and potentially dangerous, but it would remove the element of irrationality which at present distorts and poisons its relations with the rest of the world. Paradoxically, Russia would be less of a menace under a military dictatorship than under 'civilian' rule; at any rate her policies would become rational and therewith limited, whereas at present they are neither. The Cold War strategists and psychological warriors employed by the various Western Governments might with advantage enquire how a transition to naked 'Bonapartism', instead of the present camouflaged variety, can be successfully promoted without war. That another world war would speed such a development need not be doubted, but the price seems excessive. These are the real problems of the post-Stalinist era. To discuss them in a spirit of realism is to render a better service than either to spread panic or to encourage a short-sighted optimism. We may be able to avoid total war in this generation, but the 'change of heart' which Mr Eden recently asked the United Nations to regard as a serious possibility will have to manifest itself in something more than the settlement of a few border conflicts between the two worlds. Stalinism, even without Stalin, remains a force which in its inmost essence is not compatible with a peaceful world development.

MARSHAL TITO

A Special Correspondent

There are two crucial questions about Tito, to which all others are subsidiary: a naïve one – is he really a Communist? – and a complex one – how far is he on our side? The two questions are intimately related, and the first is not merely theoretical; for if Tito is really a Communist, he cannot be on our side at all, except as a temporary expedient. This is to use terminology in Stalin's sense, of course; but there is really no alternative, unless we are to have to find a new name for what Stalin called Communism. It is not, however, merely an idle question to ask whether Tito is a Communist in Stalin's sense, because for a long time Tito continued to insist that he was a pure Stalinist even after his breach with the Cominform, and even after Stalin had himself begun to denounce him as a deviationist. Moreover, Stalin himself had been inconsistent over the point which lies at the kernel of the first question. At the end he believed – and no doubt he always did, though he did not always say so – that a Communist state cannot indefinitely co-exist with a capitalist outer world. In asking whether Tito is really a Communist we are necessarily asking among other things whether Tito also believes this.

On the evidence of Mr Dedijer's book,* he does not. This can only be an interim answer, because if Tito is really a Communist in Stalin's sense, this book will sooner or later have to be re-written from start to finish, and the present edition will no doubt be suppressed. But for the present the answer is that Tito is a national Communist: that is to say, from Moscow's point of view, Tito is a contradiction in terms for which Communists have invented the name Titoist; and from our point of view, an old-fashioned romantic idealist, which is probably why Mr Churchill finds him so attractive. Tito is indeed so reactionary as to be an economic nationalist, and Mr Dedijer makes it clear that this fact more than any other lay at the bottom of the quarrel with Stalin. It is true that Tito had grounds for misgiving about Stalin even before 1944–45, when the liberation first allowed economic issues to arise: during the partisan struggle, for instance, when Tito waited in vain for supplies from Russia, and depended on Churchill rather than Stalin for moral support and encouragement of his efforts. But these were the natural rubs of Resistance, and have no more permanent significance than, say, the disgust and disappointment of

* Tito Speaks, by Vladimir Dedijer. (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 21s.)

British-sponsored guerillas in Greece with the inadequacies and misconceptions of their support from British headquarters abroad. Tito's break with Stalin did not begin with the thirty-seven consecutive nights spent on the hillside of Mount Durmitor, waiting for the Soviet air-drops that never came. It began with the conflict between Tito's ambition to develop Yugoslavia's economic resources for Yugoslavia's own benefit, and Stalin's determination to subordinate the Yugoslav economy to the needs of the Soviet Empire. This conflict, though fought out in different ways, was fundamentally the same as that between Greece's post-1949 governments and the American administrators of economic aid, who sought to fit Greece's economy by gentler methods into an integrated economy of Western Europe. But fortunately for the West, the U.S.A. produced no Stalin and Greece produced no Tito.

The parallel can hardly have failed to strike Tito. Having successfully resisted the economic domination of the Soviet Union, he is obviously not going to subordinate himself readily to that of the West. The answer to the second of the initial questions is therefore that he has not exchanged one commitment for another, but detached himself from his former commitment in order to remain uncommitted. In this respect his neutrality is unique in the modern world, for he is still equally free to join either side when it suits him to do so. There is no other neutral power of which the same could be said under its existing régime; for the rest are either neutral in the sense that nothing except the use of overwhelming force would make them join either side in any circumstances; or they are neutral in the sense that, although they hold definite and well-known views about which of the rival camps is preferable, they would rather not enter into an open alliance or any other commitment. Persia is an example of the first kind of neutrality, Switzerland of the second; but Yugoslavia is an example of neither. Tito, it may reasonably be surmised, would fight equally readily against either camp, according to the dictates of national need, in whatever circumstances war might break out. His problem is fascinating not in the sense that it is a new one, but that it is an old one revived in a new world. This is what European power politics used to be like in the days before supra-national integration tied the rest of us indissolubly together.

There is, in fact, a refreshingly old-world atmosphere about the whole of Mr Dedijer's book. Tito himself emerges as an old-fashioned Balkan dictator, wiser and more benevolent than all his predecessors, of course, just as all his predecessors were wiser and more benevolent than all their predecessors. Even the present line-up of the Balkan states is a replica of what it was in the bad old days of imperialist aggression, twelve years ago. Then, as now, Yugoslavia was surrounded by the same hostile powers: Italy, enemy-occupied Austria, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria; then, as

now, Yugoslavia's government pondered uneasily on the degree of reliance to be placed on engagements with Greece and Turkey. Mr Dedijer's account of the order of battle in 1941, on pp. 131–2, might almost be reproduced *verbatim* to-day, with the substitution of Russia for Germany and Stalin for Hitler. And, as this suggests, Stalin himself is exposed in this book as in some ways the most old-fashioned figure of all. So far from being the inscrutable magician, the imperturbable master-mind, the far-seeing genius we had been led for so long to fear, he emerges from his encounters with Tito and his henchmen as a very ordinary tyrant of the traditional kind, neither right nor wrong on average more often than any other practitioner of power politics.

What is most interesting, and most convincing, in Mr Dedijer's presumably authentic account, is to see Stalin floundering out of his depth in the intricacies of the modern world. He was so ill at ease with twentieth-century concepts that he was not sure whether Tito's crime was to pursue a federation of the Balkans, or not to pursue it fast enough; and at a lower level, he seemed genuinely ignorant about such mundane matters as the composition of Benelux and the religions of Albania. Here was no twentieth-century statesman, but a misplaced survival from a past age. Behind the clap-trap of the Cominform, we can now see the outlines of our adversary and guess why such pains have been taken to bamboozle us: not because Stalin was a new species but because he was out of date, a political coelacanth fished from the depths of the past. This did not make him less dangerous to us, but it is at least a relief to see clearly his true size and shape behind the padding, the mask and the veils. Readers may take their choice in answering the questions raised by Tito's apologia for his own conduct, but no one can fail to be grateful to him for his exposure of his former master.

The reader who may well have cause to be the most grateful of all is perhaps Stalin's successor, whose name occurs barely half a dozen times in Tito's book, and who is scarcely attacked by him at all. We dare not assume that Malenkov will not have studied *Tito Speaks* as carefully as any political student in the West, and drawn his own conclusions. One lesson he could hardly fail to draw is that he must personally forge a new relationship with Mao Tse-tung; and that not only to prevent Mao going the way of Tito, but also to adjust Soviet policy to the hard reality of the shift in the balance of power within the Soviet *bloc* since 1949. Many fascinating possibilities are opened up by the elimination of Stalin. We cannot afford to exclude from among them the anxious speculation that Yugoslavia may gravitate back into the Soviet orbit.

THE COLD WAR

G. L. Arnold

II

The rise of Bolshevism is significant, because it is the classic case of a revolutionary élite of 'professionals' becoming the core of a political party which proved capable of overthrowing the Russian state. This could not have been done by a sectional class organization, however broadly based. A movement of that character, whether liberal, socialist or agrarian, would have been amenable to class, i.e. sectional interests and pressures which every revolutionary régime must for a time override and ignore. It could only be done by an organization which was already potentially totalitarian. Because the hard core of the Bolshevik Party was 'classless' and composed of 'professionals', it was able to lead the revolution, and for the same reason it was able subsequently to establish the first great totalitarian system in modern history. The latent totalitarianism of the intelligentsia, of which we hear so much today, must be related to this phenomenon of revolutionary professionalism. The 'professional' need not be an intellectual in the usual meaning of the term; he can belong to any social stratum; he can be an army officer. Professional soldiers, too, are in a sense classless and consequently able to sponsor revolutionary measures which cut across established relationships. Such action will be motivated by concern not for 'the revolution', but for the state or the public good. It is nonetheless an expression of a particular revolutionary current in society. What sets it off from others is the congruence of sectional and general interests. That, after all, is the secret of every successful revolution.

It is, however, the totalitarian political party which comes closest to being the ideal instrument of 'the revolution', i.e. of the intelligentsia's break with the past and its attempt to found a modern state. A party of this kind embraces a much wider field than a mere officers' junta and can act over a larger and more complex area. An army is a specialist body; a political party is potentially all-embracing, i.e. totalitarian – *but only on condition that its origins are free from the taint of class interest.* It is this fact which gives a key role to the intelligentsia, the only non-specialized body in society. The organization of professional revolutionaries, which on the morrow of its victory transforms itself into the nucleus of a new ruling class, is potentially totalitarian because it is independent of the established

class interests. It can organize the whole of society because it is not organically linked to any part of it. That is its professionalism, and the secret of its power and attraction. Were it organically part of any major class – as the Communist party claims to be the 'vanguard' of the working class, and as the Fascist party is mistakenly supposed to represent the bourgeoisie – it could never become genuinely totalitarian. It could not, that is to say, become a state party. For the state to become totalitarian, the party that captures it must have originated from a nucleus of revolutionaries with control over all organizations reflecting ordinary economic and social interests, from trade unions to chambers of commerce. That is why the party must be built from the top downwards, and the membership excluded from real decisions. A nucleus of this kind is highly fissionable material, and the eventual explosion can be devastating, as the 'October Revolution' has shown. Building the nucleus and controlling the explosion is a professional job, but the professionals must be revolutionaries with a genuine belief in the importance of their cause. In principle this formula can be applied by any group sufficiently close-knit and fanatical to spend the requisite number of years in the wilderness before descending on the promised land. In practice success depends upon factors over which the revolutionaries usually have little control. The ability to understand and manipulate these factors is the mark of the political leader, but experience in these matters can to some extent be institutionalized. By now there exists a tried and tested technique which modern totalitarians of different kinds know how to practise. Yet the end still reacts upon the means; only if the end is total revolution will the movement be genuinely totalitarian, and only a movement of this kind can penetrate into all classes of society and take control of whatever national and social unrest may be going on at the time.

The totalitarian state party is a twentieth century phenomenon, and the problem of working out a suitable ideology for it has nowhere been completely solved. The identification of society with the state, attempted under Fascism, ignored the reality of class conflict and exalted nationalism to such a pitch that a rational foreign policy became impossible. The collapse of the various Fascist experiments further showed that a party drawn from the sweepings of the gutter cannot be amalgamated with the apparatus of the modern state, or made to serve the technical and economic purposes of a complex industrial society. These are trite considerations, but they were ignored by conservative admirers of Hitler and Mussolini, although in the case of Italian Fascism there was originally some excuse for believing that the régime might be able to cope with certain questions left unsolved by its predecessor. The problem posed by Stalinism is more significant because it arose from a genuine revolution whose original

democratic tendencies were not completely aborted by the Bolshevik *coup d'état* of November 1917. If there is a sense in which Lenin paved the way for Stalin, it is also true that the latter could establish his authority only at the cost of destroying Lenin's party and massacring its leadership. The rise of Stalinism reflects the transformation of the Bolshevik 'vanguard' into a modern totalitarian state party which has increasingly come to resemble its Fascist rivals. Yet there remain some significant differences. State parties drawn from the Left have the advantage of being able to build on traditional socialist loyalties; they also retain some rudiments of a rational outlook absent in Fascism which enables them to amalgamate with the bureaucracy and to become the instruments of managerialism. On the other hand, the problem of ridding themselves of their original democratic ideology is not an easy one. From the current Soviet viewpoint, even the Communist parties of Eastern Europe are still barnacled by remnants of their past and in urgent need to transform themselves into fully-fledged state parties before they can be judged genuinely trustworthy, i.e. Stalinist. Hence the recurrent purges and the constant intensification of terrorism. The state party cannot tolerate a breach in its monopoly; genuine autonomy on the part of subsidiary organizations would be fatal to its purpose, which is not to represent 'interests' but to remould society. This is true even of state party régimes such as Kemalism and Titoism whose objectives are, broadly speaking, progressive and in harmony with the interests of the majority. They may liberalize themselves when their basic aims have been achieved, as has been done in Turkey and may yet come to pass in Yugoslavia; but they cannot very well abdicate earlier without in effect committing suicide and betraying the hopes of their supporters. *A fortiori* will this be the case where the aims of the régime are either basically irrational, as under Fascism, or, as in the Soviet Union, self-contradictory in that they demand both the forced industrialization of society and the maintenance of a despotism based on slave labour.

Stalinism is so strange and monstrous a phenomenon because it represents both a throwback to the past and an attempt to speed up the pace of development. Its characteristic monstrosities, however, are those of any Eastern despotism, while its technological aims are ultra-modern. Thus it attracts and repels at the same time, holding out hopes of revolution and then partly disappointing them. As a state party régime it functions just so long as the state is needed to modernize backward societies; as a totalitarianism it is potentially capable of limitless expansion, since it travesties and perverts the aims of the socialist labour movement as well as those of agrarian nationalism. By the same token its march can be halted only if socialism and nationalism refuse to make any further

compact with it. That is why the cold war is fundamentally a struggle for the allegiance of national and social movements – including large sections of the labour movement in France and Italy – which for one reason or another have seceded from the body politic. And that is why it cannot be won unless democratic Socialists in countries still primarily agrarian find ways of convincing the peasant majority that fundamental changes are in its interest. Given such an agreement, the changes can be carried out democratically – though hardly in parliamentary forms suited to the West.

That the state party régime can, under favourable circumstances, count on the support of the intelligentsia, or at least a large fraction of it, has been repeatedly shown in recent decades. This may be ascribed to the peculiar situation in which the educated minority finds itself in a disintegrating society, whether pre-capitalist or not ; or one may regard it with Schumpeter as an expression of the intelligentsia's hostility to the bourgeois environment.* But these facts of social psychology do not quite explain the peculiar relationship of the professional class, or its revolutionary spearhead, to the totalitarian movement on the eve of the seizure of power. The point, usually overlooked by historians of revolution, is that the intelligentsia is in a sense the counterpart of the bureaucracy. The latter consists of functionaries whose activities to some extent transcend sectional class and group interests – otherwise the state would not be able to function at all. Their consciousness, that is to say, takes shape at the point of intersection of group conflicts. The same is true of the intelligentsia, in particular that part of it which eventually joins the revolutionary movement, and *a fortiori* of the 'professionals'. Thus the social function of the state bureaucracy corresponds to that of the revolutionary élite: both specialize, as it were, in general activities, and their peculiar *Weltanschauung* rests on the interrelation of sectional needs and viewpoints, and on the need to synthesize them. Both groups are in consequence able to merge, after the revolution has taken place, in the totalitarian state party which continues the stabilizing activity of the one, and the revolutionary aims of the other. The frequency of 'purges' does not altogether conceal the fact that the underlying aim is to bring about an amalgamation of, in Lenin's terminology, 'the state and the revolution,' i.e. the old bureaucracy and its former opponents. It is one of those historical surprises against which modern dialecticians are insufficiently armed that the Leninist attempt to do away with the state should have resulted, not in the expected flowering of democracy, but in the rise of totalitarianism.

* * * * *

As the nature of the Soviet challenge is gradually coming to be better

* Cf. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, p. 145 and *passim*.

understood, a tendency arises to seek a counter-irritant in the form of non-Communist dictatorships with progressive social aims. The trouble with this solution is that in nine cases out of ten it becomes an excuse for shirking the real issue.

Dictatorship can be a necessary short-cut to the 'revolution from above'; it can also be a façade imposed on a rotting framework. The difference depends on the personnel of the régime, which in turn depends on the aims it is supposed to serve. Ever since Cromwell, and in particular since the French revolution, a temporary dictatorship of the 'Left' has had its defenders even among democrats. It is, however, dangerous to ignore the ambiguous use to which this solution can be put. Most dictatorships are ineffective. The Kemalist régime in pre-war Turkey, and the Titoist one in present-day Yugoslavia, are exceptions to the general rule, and their effectiveness was and is largely bound up with their quasi-totalitarian character. The Kemalist revolution owed its impetus to the break with Islam – hitherto a unique phenomenon – and it was carried through by a revolutionary junta which for many years tolerated no rival. Marshal Tito's dictatorship would collapse if it were not propped up by the Yugoslav Communist Party, and heretical Communist movements do not grow on trees. The Yugoslav miracle was an uncovenanted piece of luck for which Western policy-makers have not ceased to apologize, as though it were something to be ashamed of. They are unfortunately not likely to suffer a succession of such embarrassments. With a Republican Administration ensconced in Washington, it is far more probable that the West will continue to be deluged with offers of support from conservative generals, Peronist demagogues, and elderly bed-ridden intriguers in the distinguished succession of Doctors Mossadegh and Syngman Rhee. This is a misfortune, for there is reason to doubt whether a dictatorship not backed by a quasi-revolutionary mass movement can nowadays function effectively at all.*

* The acuteness of this problem varies. It is clearly most pronounced in countries which on the one hand lack a native tradition of efficient government, and on the other have encountered 'Western imperialism' only in the disintegrating form of foreign trading and financial influence on the local oligarchy. Imperialism is most progressive where it is the expression of genuinely modern, i.e., industrial, capitalism. It is retrograde where it merely serves the interests of trade, for in the latter case it does not revolutionize production, does not stimulate the growth of a genuinely modern economy, and consequently does nothing to promote the emergence of a modern middle-class intelligentsia. Japan's successful industrialization in the late nineteenth century is sometimes quoted as an instance of a non-revolutionary solution of this problem which remains potentially applicable to other Eastern countries, but the Japanese case is clearly unique. No other country struggling with the same set of problems has the feudal structure which enabled Japan to make the transition to capitalism under

The cause must probably be sought in the growing complexity of modern society which makes the task of co-ordination impossibly difficult for an old-fashioned régime of the military or bureaucratic kind. This problem is accentuated if the régime tries to bring about genuine changes – and if it does not it is doomed anyhow. Revolutionary mass movements, with their organized youth sections, women's sections, and so forth, are indispensable to a central government which is trying to reach down into deeper strata of the population in order to mobilize popular support for a policy of modernization and reform. It follows that non-totalitarian dictatorships will tend to be socially conservative, while revolutionary régimes will develop totalitarian tendencies. Since social revolution and totalitarianism are alike distasteful to Western opinion, preference is likely to be given to 'respectable' dictators who refrain from tampering with established property rights, and who do not indulge in the modern practice of setting up as charismatic popular leaders. There is no doubt that régimes of this kind are easier to get on with; unfortunately they are also more likely to be swept away by the next wave of unrest.

The totalitarian state party, i.e. the centrally controlled mass organization enjoying a monopoly of legal activity, is in fact a concomitant of that process of dictatorial centralization and 'revolution from above' whose social roots have already been described. It is arguable that under favourable conditions this final consequence of the 'revolution from above' can be avoided and some measure of political liberty retained. But it may be as well to recognize that in some countries whose allegiance is important to the West, conditions in this respect are not favourable and will not become favourable for a long time. Aside from the need to mobilize mass support for the régime during a period of rapid social change and considerable economic pressure, there is the problem of building up an efficient civil service in countries notoriously backward in this respect. If this is not done under a Western protectorate – the industrialization of Morocco would scarcely be possible at its present rapid rate but for the presence of the French – it must be done by a home-grown régime so constituted as to place a premium on efficiency and reduce corruption to a minimum. In this respect there is perhaps not much to choose between an oligarchy and an old-fashioned military dictatorship of the traditional kind, i.e. one without a centralized political mass movement to support it. But there is a very decided difference between all

oligarchical leadership. A good many American 'liberals' are still unaware that the weakness or absence of genuine 'feudalism' in the Middle and Far East is at the bottom of most of the social and political problems plaguing United States policy in these regions. Leadership, whatever its character, must come from the top and must translate itself into the direction of massive capital investment.

such régimes and a genuinely modern, streamlined totalitarian party state in which the individual functionary is kept under a close double check by his official superiors in the party hierarchy, as well as in the bureaucracy. This question is of immense importance in countries where poverty, individualism and an archaic family system militate against the creation of an effective civil service. A revolutionary party which does not shrink from challenging deep-rooted traditions (such as the individual's primary allegiance to his family clan), and which keeps a close check on the daily activities of all its members, has the power to break the vicious circle of poverty, bribery and inefficiency characteristic of such situations. It may be very disagreeable, but the fact is that such parties start with a considerable advantage where circumstances favour a 'revolution from above' and a dictatorial régime to suit it. For under more liberal conditions the individual is less likely to establish that complete identification of personal and political aims which is the essence of totalitarianism.

The success of the Chinese Communists can serve as an illustration in this matter: starting as they did from scratch, they were unhampered by dependence on influential pressure groups, able to insulate their organization from the 'masses' whom they claimed to represent, unconcerned with the distribution of loaves and fishes, and in short able to built up a totalitarian party devoted wholly to the conquest of power; whereas the Kuomintang may be said to have failed owing to its reliance upon landowners and merchants, with vested interests in the *status quo*. Thus 'bourgeois' nationalism in its fall dragged the bourgeoisie with it. And yet that class has survived in China, for the Communist régime, being genuinely totalitarian, can manipulate *all* classes of society and make them do its bidding.* If revolutionary totalitarianism is able to override all class and group interests – including even the interest the peasant has in his land – it also furnishes the dynamic for a régime which can identify itself with every section of society, if it so chooses. Thus Chinese Communism at one time migrated to the centres of agrarian unrest, and has now returned to the cities where it was born. Thus, too, the régime has won the allegiance of a section of the intelligentsia (which after all started the whole national movement half a century ago) and is able to make use even of the 'national bourgeoisie'. It is, of course, strong among the industrial workers, but not because it 'represents' them. It represents no one and nothing but itself.

* Cf. George E. Taylor in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, September 1951. Professor Taylor doubts the genuineness of the CCP's nationalism, but lays due stress on its conformity to the very Chinese tradition of rule by a privileged bureaucracy. 'The Chinese Communist Party . . . is the ghost of the Middle Kingdom, sitting crowned on the grave thereof.'

The appeal of such a streamlined model to revolutionaries in countries ready for a social transformation is necessarily strong, even where Russian influence as such is remote and feeble. This explains the curious contortions of a movement such as the Bolivian M N R whose idcology is a good deal closer to European Fascism (of the early, pre-Hitler, variety) than to Stalinism. And it also explains why intellectuals and army officers in countries as widely separated from each other, and from Moscow, as Brazil and Pakistan should be liable to the infection. A revolutionary scheme which allots to the élite so important a role is certain to find a welcome where majority rule has never been securely established and for obvious reasons cannot for some time be made to square with social reality. With a slight twist, the party line can be turned into an esoteric doctrine stressing the omnipotence of the state if controlled by a revolutionary organization. The Stalinist amalgam of revolution and despotism thus attracts both the demagogue and the believer in 'strong government'. There is, of course, in all this an element of self-deception. The privileged Soviet élite, whose status appears so enviable to impoverished Middle Eastern or Latin American intellectuals and civil servants, is hag-ridden with fears and repressions unknown elsewhere. But this dark side of the moon is invisible to people living in a pre-revolutionary society, where an efficient totalitarianism can hardly be imagined. All they see is the promise of rapid transformation, coupled with power for themselves. That the state can be used to turn society upside down and inside out, was from the Bolshevik standpoint an empirical discovery made in blundering fashion after 1917, and still half-concealed from Lenin and the other leaders of the October Revolution. For the power-hungry intelligentsia of Asia and Latin America, it is something like a revelation.

* * * * *

Benevolent dictatorship continues nonetheless to have its supporters among advanced liberals and socialists anxious for a short-cut to reform. Both among New Dealers, now temporarily out of office, and in quarters closer to the 'extreme centre' of modern liberalism, there is a tendency to seek a panacea in land reform decreed by military dictators. This ignores the lesson of the inter-war years, when fairly radical measures of agrarian redistribution in Eastern Europe failed for lack of social policies discriminating in favour of the poorer peasants, as well as from shortage of capital and technical skill.* Further left, emphasis is placed on welfare economics, and particularly on the need to stimulate food production in backward areas by means of gigantic transfers of capital under 'Point Four', in order to break the vicious circle of poverty, malnutrition, technical backwardness and low productivity. These suggestions are sound so

* Cf. H. Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe between the Wars*, Ch. IV and *passim*.

far as they go, but they seem to underrate the time factor and the difficulty of revolutionizing archaic peasant economies by the application of outside technical aid and advice. It may well be that a comparatively small investment of capital and skill could yield disproportionate results, provided the peasants were willing to co-operate, and the local administration were capable of giving the necessary stimulus. But this is to beg the question. Capable administrations simply do not exist under such circumstances, unless they are provided by foreigners, in which case they become the target for nationalist attacks. There is also the likelihood that any increase in output will be swallowed up by an even more rapid growth of population, unless economic change is accompanied by cultural revolution. This particular problem usually settles itself in the long run, but runs of that length concern the historian of cultural epochs rather than the political scientist. In Eastern Europe, which went through some such process between the wars, the ruling classes reacted by intensified chauvinism and national parochialism. There is every sign that their example is being imitated by the new Middle Eastern and South East Asian régimes, including some at present reputed 'progressive'. Welfare economics (which result in falling death rates and rapid population growth, in advance of any significant rise in output) are no answer to the problems of these regions, or of the yet more backward colonial areas which are only now beginning to experience these peculiarly modern stresses.

This subject has a special relevance for Britain, in view of the political strength of the labour movement and the generally philanthropic outlook of its spokesmen.* Having come into existence long after the major issues of Britain's own industrial revolution had been solved, in one way or another, on non-socialist lines, the Labour Party is not well equipped to understand the problems of a disintegrating agrarian society – the kind of situation from which Leninism-Stalinism developed and which it exists to deal with. This uncertainty manifests itself whenever British authority comes into conflict with colonial or nationalist movements, whether archaizing or revolutionary. It is customary to point to the Indian settlement of 1947 as proof of Labour's political maturity; but that settlement after all consisted in a transfer of power and responsibility to others. On present evidence, British Socialism is still in search of a *mystique* applicable to formerly colonial areas. West Africa today perhaps represents the nearest thing to a solution, and there has been some successful experiment-

* Cf. Mr Aneurin Bevan, *In Place of Fear*, p. 135. 'The answer to social upheaval is social amelioration.' One has heard similar sapient observations from Mr Walter Reuther and other moguls of American radical democracy. There is nothing specifically socialist about them. They are in fact a hangover from the 'bourgeois' radicalism of the last century.

ing in the Sudan. But for all the justifiable satisfaction over Gezira and the Volta River scheme, there are few signs as yet that a synthesis of socialism and imperialism is in sight. The dominant outlook of the Labour Party remains obstinately insular, parochial and utilitarian – more Methodist than Marxist, as Mr Morgan Phillips proudly observed on some occasion. It is not a mentality well suited to the demands of the twentieth century.

For an example of what is liable to happen when this amiable insular 'consumer socialism' is confronted with an external challenge, one may turn to the Persian debacle of 1951. The problem posed by the sudden eruption of Persian nationalism was clearly one for which neither John Wesley nor the Webbs had prescribed a solution. It was not on that account an entirely hopeless one, but it did call for something more than a combination of routine diplomacy and democratic speech-making. The Conservative reaction was on familiar lines: force was to be employed, and when that expedient failed or was not tried (largely because the dissolution of the Indian Empire had left a vacuum whose significance was not immediately appreciated) Conservative spokesmen fell back on their peculiar brand of historical fatalism, best exemplified perhaps by Sir Reader Bullard's diagnosis of the situation as a remote consequence of the battle of Poitiers, in A.D. 732 (cf. *The Listener*, November 20, 1952). For Mr Morrison, in his capacity as Foreign Secretary, the problem was of course the practical one of impressing Dr Mossadegh by a show of resolution, without actually running the risk of getting involved in a clash, and without surrendering the electoral trump of denouncing the Opposition for its alleged war-mongering. But there was also an element of genuine uncertainty over Britain's moral standing which affected both the Government and its opponents. Was the British position as strong as the Foreign Office tried to make it appear? The Persians had a genuine grievance against the Anglo-Iranian Company, and against the British Treasury which for years had appropriated the lion's share of the profits. They could also claim with some plausibility that the agreement of 1933, under which they bound themselves to refrain from measures of expropriation, had been signed under duress. But all this would not have unsettled the resolution, such as it was, of the British Cabinet and its supporters, had it not been for the use made by the Persians of the argument that they were merely 'nationalizing' their own property. The dismay caused by this ingenious bit of sophistry was instructive because it showed what happens when the traditional integration breaks down in one of those countries which are now the principal buffer zone between the two worlds. Under 'normal' conditions (which are fast ceasing to be normal, or even to exist at all) nationalist governments customarily combine their claim to

sovereign independence and legislative omnicompetence with due regard for foreign investments and written agreements, even to the point of solemnly undertaking not to appropriate capital owned by foreigners. In strict logic there is a paradox involved, since absolute sovereignty – the foundation myth of every national-democratic régime – must clearly be paramount and cannot be abrogated by treaty: a principle the Persians conveniently remembered when they had decided to 'nationalize'. For practical purposes, however, the arrangement usually works. Jacobin logic has its teeth drawn by the historical providence which ordains that nationalist régimes shall normally be anchored, on their social side, in propertied interests of the land-owning or bourgeois kind. The silent pressure of this entirely unofficial and unconstitutional state of affairs acts as an automatic safeguard against a literal application of the principle that the sovereign legislature may do as it pleases. The sanctity of contracts and the doctrine of *volonté générale* can in fact be brought into harmony, as the French revolution showed, on condition that both principles are professed by the same group of people. It is when this arrangement – known to Liberals as 'civilization', and to Marxists as 'bourgeois society' – breaks down that trouble begins.

A breakdown of this kind occurred in Persia. Its mechanism was obvious, and the Kremlin must have drawn some satisfaction from the opportunity to sponsor an anti-Western movement fed by a national-democratic mythology which no Marxist takes seriously. For the British Government and its supporters the situation was less simple. Aside from all the practical arguments against forcible intervention – arguments which, whatever their merit, would probably have prevailed anyhow – there was now an uncertainty over Britain's moral case. In democratic logic the Persians were entitled to confiscate foreign property, if they cared to ruin themselves and damage others. But was democratic logic applicable to a country which had not been genuinely sovereign for centuries and whose legislature was notoriously oligarchical and corrupt? There were those who came close to denying it (cf. *The Economist*, May 5, 1951), but their arguments did not amount to much more than a passionate lament over the failure of Persian nationalism to live up to earlier European models. But why should Persians be expected to practise the virtues associated (in literature anyhow) with the *Risorgimento?* If anything is to be learned from this debacle it is the folly of applying West European standards to countries now struggling to escape from the heritage of the past.

* * * * *

This challenge of Soviet imperialism has in recent years called forth a variety of reactions ranging from plain defeatism to short-lived reliance

on the military factor. Among the defeatists one must include those historians of culture who are obsessed with the Decline of the West, and in search of solutions transcending the political sphere. These can only be long-term ones, and the attention given to them carries an implication that there is little hope of salvaging Western democratic society as such. It is doubtless to the credit of modern historians that it has become possible to take a dispassionate view of the culture to which we belong, but the present crisis is not going to be surmounted under the leadership of people who are fundamentally out of sympathy with the aims of an evolving democratic society. This society is becoming less and less like the Europe of the Middle Ages, and historians who regard the thirteenth century as the high-water mark of Western culture are bound to take an excessively gloomy view of our present prospects. It is in these quarters that Communism is taken seriously as a quasi-religion, and much anxious thought is given to the possibility that Asia and Africa may yet escape the contamination by adopting Roman Catholicism (and Rome's doctrines on birth control?). The fact that Communism is spreading much faster in Roman Catholic areas than Catholicism does in Asia, appears to have escaped notice. On present evidence there seems no reason to believe that the international situation would be more manageable if China and Japan had been converted by Jesuit missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – a suggestion which startled some hearers of Dr Toynbee's recent series of Reith Lectures.

Such investigations as have been made into the subject suggest that the social conservatism of some predominantly Catholic areas in Western Europe – notably Western France, Northern Spain, Austria, and Ireland – is a function of a certain kind of peasant ownership. The Catholic way of life, which combines a minimum of security with a profound pessimism as regards the possibility and desirability of change, has its attractions for conservatives; but it clearly requires specific social and economic preconditions for its functioning. In their absence, Catholicism is very far from being a bulwark of order – witness the stormy political history of Italy, the Iberian peninsula, and Latin America. Since the uncertain element in the cold war is not the industrial working class of highly developed countries, but the rural and semi-rural proletariat of societies in the earlier stages of industrialization, the importance allotted to the religious factor on *political* grounds is difficult to understand.

As he looks beyond the Mediterranean, towards the border regions between the Soviet empire and the West, the historian's gaze inevitably comes to rest upon the ancient and petrified totalitarianism of Islam. Inevitably, too, the dignified stagnation of Islamic society appeals to conservative instincts in the beholder. Cannot this archaic structure be

reinforced with bits of concrete – treaties, air bases, arms, etc. – so as to become another defensive 'bulwark'? This policy is now over a generation old. Its net achievement is a situation in which quite small 'cadres' of Communists are potentially strong enough to upset all the established governments of the region – not, of course, under their own flag but by spearheading national-revolutionary movements. The exception is Turkey, where Islam was dis-established in the 1920's, with the result that the Republic is today the only genuinely Westernized portion of the former Ottoman Empire (leaving Israel aside as not belonging to the Middle East proper). In the remainder of the area, pan-Islamism is crumbling, while pan-Arabism provides an excellent cover for rival Fascist and Stalinist cliques, and an instrument for blackmailing the Western powers. The region has for long been the favourite playground of politically minded Orientalists, historians anxious for a role in the cold war, and people who prefer horse-drawn vehicles to motor traffic. Various eminent members of this school were at one time or another associated with the abortive inter-war project of constructing a kind of Anglo-Arab Caliphate from the debris of the Ottoman Empire, while others, slightly more up-to-date, busied themselves with schemes for fashioning a lasting alliance between British foreign policy and pan-Arabism. The miscarriage of these curious experiments, and the post-war decline of British influence in the Middle East, have brought about a malaise which finds expression in gloomy Spenglerian prognostications and in persistent nagging at the Americans, the French, the Turks and the Israelis: all of them unhampered by memories of personal and collective failure in building dream-castles in the Arabian desert, and consequently apt to take a somewhat more robust view of Western prospects. It is in these circles that discreet support is given to every utopian or reactionary scheme for driving the French from North Africa, pushing Turkey into a confederation with the creaking Islamic states of the Middle East, or removing that persistent thorn in the flesh, Israel. For why should these relative newcomers presume to interfere with the Decline of the West? The erudite despair of the school is flavoured with a liberal dose of malevolence towards successful competitors.

It is indeed undeniable that the impact of the West upon Islamic society creates a special problem. Islam is a totalitarianism which safeguards the culture of a society economically stagnant for so long that it cannot adapt peacefully or gradually to modern conditions. At the ideological level, where this failure to adapt enters the consciousness of the participants, it translates itself into a conflict between two sets of motives: an inflexible resolve to keep things as they are, and a furious determination to break with the past at all cost. Both attitudes are clearly patho-

logical; at least they would be so described in relation to an individual. In social terms they portend the kind of cycle of rebellion and stagnation which Spain has undergone since the early nineteenth century. Unlike Spain, though, the Middle East, apart from its Mediterranean fringe, could be incorporated in the Soviet orbit at small cost to its inhabitants. The peasants obviously could not be worse off than they are, and the professional class might find satisfaction in running the revolution. The price demanded of it is not high: there is no intelligible sense in which countries like Persia or Iraq can be described as 'nations'. What is more, there is no necessary link between nationalism and social conservatism, let alone between nationalism and affection for the 'free world'. One must be an American Senator to believe that there is. Nationalism can be conservative, liberal, democratic or totalitarian, depending on the circumstances. It can be Communist or Fascist. Tito is a nationalist and so is Franco. The question whether Mao Tse-tung is primarily a nationalist 'or' a Communist belongs to the realm of scholasticism: he is both one and the other, and the Chinese Communist Party is more nationalist in some respects than the Kuomintang, with its roots in the Westernizing business class, ever was. There is no inherent reason why nationalism and Stalinism should not form a stable amalgam in the Islamic Middle East, as they have done in China and may yet do in India. The reason they have not done so in Turkey is that Turkish nationalism has shaped itself upon a different model, owing to the success of the Kemalist revolution in modernizing the country, i.e. promoting its rupture with the decaying medieval tradition: the very process which Islamic conservatism seeks to impede elsewhere. Turkey is today a nation because the people have learned to identify themselves with the state, and they have been able to do so because the state has reorganized their lives. What is by courtesy described as 'the state' in other countries formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire has no real existence, and in consequence there is nothing for the national consciousness to lay hold of.

* * * * *

It is one of the many oddities of the contemporary situation that this topic is still for the most part discussed in terms of Lenin's doctrine of nationalism, which the Stalinists no longer take seriously, though the Soviet Government maintains it for internal consumption – chiefly as a weapon against the latent separatism of non-Russian nationalities. In its pure form, Leninism involves a distinction between the 'natural' emotion of patriotism and the allegedly 'bourgeois' concept of sovereign nationality which is supposed to reflect the impact of capitalism and the creation of an internal market, thus giving rise to the phenomenon of the nation-state – though why the state should be co-extensive with language and

nationality is by no means clear. The doctrine obviously ignores the existence of the cultural community, with its roots in the countryside, and the dependence of the rural population on symbols related to the land: the essence of patriotism. It therefore attributes to the bourgeoisie emotions which are in fact held by the peasants, and fails to explain why the submerged rural populations of Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America have made their political debut in national dress. Following Lenin, Western writers and policy-makers – influenced perhaps by scraps of Communist theory acquired during their student days – have persistently misinterpreted national movements as expressions of bourgeois class interest, with results which now and then have been serious. The notion that 'bourgeois nationalism' can be played off against 'international Communism' does not become less mistaken because it was held by Lenin. Though hag-ridden by this inadequate and now outmoded doctrine, the Stalinists have gradually worked themselves free of their ideological strait-jacket and found a way to synthesize peasant aspirations and national sentiments (really two sides of the same medal), as their opponents have not. Hence Vietminh; and hence the Chinese revolution.

What happens in essentials is that as the self-contained village community breaks down under the impact of modern technology, communications, taxation, conscription and radio, the peasant forms a mental image of a country-wide peasant community which, for him, is the nation. If this process is speeded by agrarian upheaval, and the mental contours rendered sharper and clearer by foreign control – a more palpable object of dislike than the traditional rulers within one's own community – a revolutionary situation may arise which an active minority can exploit to impose its own leadership. If this minority consists of Communists, the Communist party will dominate the nationalist movement, and Western observers will wonder how such a thing could happen, and how it squares with either 'true' Communism or 'true' nationalism (which by definition is 'bourgeois'). This shows the inconvenience of being guided by Leninist textbooks. As against such naïve complaints it is sufficient to note that modern Stalinist doctrine describes national and social 'liberation from imperialism' as a task to be carried out by the Communist party – itself no longer defined by its status within the international labour movement, but by its fidelity to the Soviet Union and the 'teachings of Stalin'. These teachings, it is true, are still for scholastic purposes related to a wider corpus of doctrines suggesting that nationalism as such is doomed to disappear with the bourgeois epoch; but that is all. Orthodox Leninism (now proscribed in Russia as a counter-revolutionary heresy and branded as the invention of the arch-fiend Trotsky) is certainly no longer a guide

in the political field where Communist direction of national-revolutionary movements is concerned.

It has often been remarked by writers dealing with the evolution of East European politics in the past century that national problems tended to become intractable where they coincided with social alignments*; although even then the situation might have remained stable but for population pressure and the resultant overcrowding on the land. What has not been sufficiently stressed is the impossibility of emancipating the peasants without bringing about both a democratic and a national awakening. It is no accident that the peasant parties founded in Eastern Europe after 1918 were among the stoutest upholders of democracy. Majority rule was clearly in their interest: a point to which we shall have to return. But equally they often gave their backing to nationalist movements started by the urban middle-class. These were usually remote from peasant interests, but nonetheless found much rural support. Western liberal and socialist intellectuals have devoted little attention to this link between nationalism and peasant emancipation: possibly because they do not greatly care for either. The fact is that the political awakening of the countryside tends to stimulate the nationalism of the intelligentsia, and vice versa. An explanation of this phenomenon is unfortunately bound to take the circular form of stating that nationalism is the costume in which the peasantry appears on the political stage. This is not to deny that other forms of nationalism are possible, down to the frenzied evocation of the past in modern Fascism. Such movements, however, are derivative. In so far as they go beyond literary romanticism they must obviously have some connection with the traditional folkways of a society not yet cut off from its rural past. It is of course a truism that in one way or another all political movements within a settled society draw upon the fund of traditions stored away in the collective consciousness, and the deeper they dig the closer they necessarily come to the rural sources of technology, society and culture. But only an agrarian upheaval brings the peasants on the political stage, and only they can decide what the national consciousness is to contain in the next stage of development. Those who lead the revolution – usually town-bred intellectuals – can secure their immediate aims only by harmonizing them with the aspirations of the peasant majority, i.e. by aligning themselves with national

* Cf. Doreen Warriner, *Economics of Peasant Farming* (1939): '. . . the social and economic gulf was far deeper between Magyar nobles and the Slovak, Roumanian, Croat and Ruthene peasants than between Austrian and Czech, because the Hungarian Constitution excluded the peasantry, whether Magyar or Slav, from political rights. In the Old Monarchy the land question and the national question were one.' (p. 16).

tradition. The classic case is the French revolution, which happened to come off because the Jacobins were prepared to go through with drastic changes favouring the peasantry, and which promptly acquired a 'national' character, complete with war against France's neighbours. There was nothing in the original psychology of Jacobinism – a conventional offshoot of the Enlightenment – to presage the patriotic and democratic rage of 1793. It was a concomitant of popular revolution which brought the 'plebeians' on the stage. Similar developments occurred in Russia after 1917, and in China a generation later; and in each case the 'national' consciousness took a new form.

These phenomena can of course be contrasted with the well-known fact of rural conservatism. The very circumstance that the peasantry is the repository of society's oldest traditions makes it such an irresistible force once it is set in motion. Its archaic cast of mind becomes an asset to revolutionaries intent on giving a national character to the movement, but it also acts as a brake on the further development of the revolution. Since society has a past as well as a future, this interplay of conflicting tendencies at the height of a revolutionary crisis is hardly surprising. Ultimately it makes possible the reaction which is an essential part of every revolution, though it usually takes the leaders by surprise. The latter are normally by origin and upbringing somewhat remote from the peasant roots of national tradition. These roots reach back into archaic levels of folklore, behaviour and consciousness which are irksome and frequently repellent. Yet a completely urbanized society is conceivable only on the supposition that all links with the past are broken off – an evident absurdity, since a community of this kind would no longer constitute even the nucleus of a nation *in posse*. Resistance to tendencies promoting such a development forms the core of what is sane and healthy in conservatism.

In our present context we may note that in backward, i.e. agrarian – the terms are interchangeable – countries, national movements are an aspect of the countryside's political awakening. The recognition of this fact is Soviet Communism's peculiar contribution to modern sociology, anticipated and helped along by half a century of Slavophile and Populist carping at the industrial West. The discovery certainly owes nothing to Stalin's own essay on the national question (1913) which merely translates into cruder language Lenin's mistaken attribution of bourgeois class characteristics to all forms of nationalism. Like most discoveries it was made by accident: as Soviet and Comintern policy after 1917 collided with the West, it gradually became clear that its best chance lay with the exploitation of 'anti-imperialist' movements in Asia and elsewhere, and that these movements were linked with peasant unrest.

Doctrinal evolution proceeded slowly and haltingly, but has now reached the point where the 'October Revolution' is made to symbolize the racial awakening of Asia and much else besides. Underlying all there is the dim recognition that the peasant masses can be roused by national slogans because nationalism *is* one of their ways of asserting their class interest. This fact is obvious enough where the towns are the seat of an alien government or an alien ruling nationality, as was the case e.g. in nineteenth-century Ireland and in most East European countries before 1919, or even later. In these circumstances the traditional conflict between town and country becomes the vehicle of national animosities which can lead to the collapse of multi-national empires such as Austria-Hungary. The peculiar achievement of Communism consists in extrapolating this historic conflict on a world scale, in the revolt of the vast peasant hinterland against the industrial West. Hence the appeal of 'anti-imperialism,' which is a social as well as a national slogan.

And yet Lenin, who armed his followers for this struggle, now raging all over the globe, unwittingly bared the Achilles heel of Communism when he pointed out that the peasantry is vitally interested in the growth of democracy. For only majority rule and political freedom can safeguard its long-term interests. With that blunt realism which is the distinguishing mark of his thought, the Bolshevik leader in 1905 told his followers – then still Social-Democrats and not yet Communists – that after the revolution against the Tsar (the 'democratic revolution') they would find themselves confronted with the problem of the peasant majority and its vested interest in democracy:

> . . . the peasantry will inevitably become a bulwark of the revolution and the republic, for only a completely victorious revolution can give the peasantry *everything* in the sphere of agrarian reforms – *everything* that the peasants desire, of which they dream and of which they truly stand in need . . . in order to emerge from the mire of semi-serfdom, from the gloom of oppression and servitude, in order to improve their living conditions as much as it is possible to improve them under the system of commodity production.
>
> Moreover, the peasantry is drawn to the revolution not only by the prospect of radical agrarian reform but by its general and permanent interests. Even in the struggle with the proletariat the peasantry stands in need of democracy, for only a democratic system is capable of giving exact expression to its interests and of ensuring its predominance as the mass, the majority. The more enlightened the peasantry becomes . . . the more consistently and determinedly will it favour a thoroughgoing democratic revolution, for . . . it has nothing to fear from the supremacy of the people, but, on the contrary, can only gain by it.
>
> (Lenin, *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy*. Cf. Selected Works, English edition, vol. 1, p. 414.)

'Only a democratic system' is capable of safeguarding the peasantry's interests: one may easily guess what would happen to a Soviet writer who made inopportune use of this devastating remark. But Westerners need not suffer similar inhibitions. Even if Lenin had not spelled it out for them, they should by now be aware of the conflict between Communist policies and peasant aims. In 1905 it was still possible for the future leader of the revolution to remark in all candour that the peasants needed to defend themselves not only against the Tsar but also against 'the proletariat', i.e. the revolutionary movement he himself represented. After 1917 such candour became inopportune; today it has disappeared altogether, at least in public. This need not disturb democratic Socialists, since they have no wish to impose a totalitarian dictatorship upon the peasant majority in agrarian countries. Their problem is to win the latter's consent to changes that are in its interest: something the Communists have never even tried. In supporting their efforts to erect a genuine 'bulwark against Communism', the West can take heart from the fact that in working for democracy they are also serving the interests of the peasants, i.e. doing in fact what the Stalinists merely pretend to be doing. Political freedom is no luxury, to be reserved for a few favoured Western countries; it is just as essential to the submerged peoples of the East, for it is only through the democratic process that they can safeguard their material aims. From which it follows that revolutionary dictatorships should never be regarded as anything but brief interregnums making possible a radical break with the past. As such they may be necessary evils; if they pretend to be more they become totalitarian and wholly to be opposed.

Armed with such criteria for distinguishing true revolutions from false ones, the West may yet hope to win over a majority of Eastern revolutionaries to its cause. It must, however, be acknowledged that there is no easy remedy for a situation due in large part to the decentralized character of our world. If Western society were as streamlined, efficient and self-conscious as the Stalinists imagine it to be, the problem would never have arisen. Unfortunately it is not, and there is no immediate prospect of its becoming so. It may be years before the United States can be brought to under-write the necessary combination of economic planning and social revolution, and it is plainly impossible for the other Western countries to proceed very far without American backing. As matters stand, the drift towards the Balkanization of economically interdependent areas, such as North Africa, may be expected to continue, while a counter-movement is paradoxically asserting itself in Western Europe. In theory, socialism could bridge the gap between economic necessity and political freedom. But socialism is hampered by archaic prejudices (Methodist rather than

Marxist) and by the incurable sentimentality of a democratic electorate (to say nothing of its 'propensity to consume' and unwillingness to invest). Meanwhile, Moscow runs away with the national-revolutionary movement and advertises its brand of despotic planning to power-hungry intellectuals who care little for democracy and much for some means to drag society out of its stagnation. The least that can be done in this situation is to recognize it for what it is. At bottom, it is a question of controlling and directing the revolution which is now lifting the bulk of mankind to a new technological level. The West's opponent and rival in this process is the Soviet Union – both as a power and as the centre of the world-wide Communist movement, whose leaders believe they have mastered the technique of the 'revolution from above' by means of the totalitarian state party and its instruments of terror and propaganda. These men have long shed their earlier utopian expectation of free popular support for the transformation they have in mind. Yet it would be wholly mistaken to suppose that they are insincere in claiming to represent the vanguard of the 'proletarian revolution'. This assertion forms part of the ideology of that totalitarian élite whose untrammelled future rule is prefigured by the Communist Party's organizational structure. Like every myth it has real power to move human beings to act. It therefore deserves to be taken seriously, and even to be treated with respect, in so far as it represents a conviction for which men are prepared to surrender their lives. But it ought not to be believed. The greatest mistake the West can make is to think of the Communist issue in terms of class, and to pit against a wholly mythical 'proletarian' movement the resources of the traditional state and its governing groups, where the real issue lies between libertarian revolutionaries and others who can envisage the transformation of society only in terms of the Soviet experience since 1917. Revolution there must be – failing direct and effective Western control – for no movement, however libertarian its ultimate aims, will renounce the hope of using the concentrated power of the state to end the dreadful poverty and squalor in which the bulk of mankind still lives at the present day. In the struggle to prevent the enemy from gaining control of the entire process, the West cannot succeed if it does not match his resolution.

Concluded

BRIDGEHEADS ACROSS THE RUBICON

J. H. Huizinga

London Correspondent *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*

It is now nearly three years ago that M. Schuman first introduced what Mr Eden then called 'that hideous word supra-national' into the discussion of Europe's future. Since then the term has become common currency. But still opinions seem to vary widely as to what it really means. According to M. Monnet, speaking at Luxembourg last September on the occasion of the inauguration of the European Coal and Steel Community, the new European institutions fathered by M. Schuman 'are supra-national or – don't let's be afraid of the word – federal'. Thus, too, the French Professor of Law, Bernard Lavergne, except that he considers them even more 'hideously supra-national' than that: 'in so far as the Schuman plan is put into practice, it will result in the setting up not of a simple federation but of a super-state.' As against this the Labour Party's international expert, Mr Denis Healey, speaking at Strasbourg in May of last year, is of the opinion that 'the Schuman plan retains only the faintest traces of a supra-national authority and the E D C is scarcely better in this respect'. Five months later another British Strasbourgeois, Mr Gordon Walker, while not going quite so far as Mr Healey, likewise found comfort in the thought that 'the new organizations seem much more inter-governmental in structure and practice than was intended by some a year or two ago...it may well be that these new bodies will prove to become still more inter-governmental in form as they get into actual operation'.

Who is right? And how does it come about that different people view the same institutions in such a very different light? To find the answer one must go back some two years, to the time when the French first sprang their two successive surprises on an astonished and incredulous world. If one re-reads their respective announcements introducing the Schuman and Pleven plans, one finds that all the emphasis is on the positive measures proposed, the creation of a High Authority to control the coal and steel industries, and of a European Army run by a European Ministry of Defence. But one will look in vain for any explicit reference to the negative measures, that is to say, the renunciation of national freedom of action which must obviously precede the creation of a supra-

national organism for joint action. As a result, public interest and discussion has tended to concentrate, not on these acts of national abdication from which all else follows, but rather on the novel and complicated machinery for joint action that became indispensable the moment the Six (France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg) had decided to renounce the right to act on their own.

It is a curious fact, for instance, that in the parliamentary debates on the E D C which took place in Paris, Bonn, Brussels and The Hague early last year, one does not come across a single mention of the crucial Article 106 forbidding the production, import or export of arms without prior authorization from the multi-national defence commissariat. Yet it is the negative clauses such as this that really matter. For it is in the moment of renouncing the means and the right of independent action that you really cross the Rubicon separating optional from compulsory co-operation or – which is much the same thing – intra-governmental from federal methods. The question of the machinery to be set up for joint action is largely of technical interest. For no matter what sort of machinery you devise, no matter how imperfect it may be and how many monkey-wrenches, in the form of veto rights and unanimity rules, you may throw into it, the result will be much the same: you will still remain compelled to act together, in the interests of the community as a whole, on pain of not acting at all.

And that is what many people in this country seem to have overlooked. They see that the original French proposals have been considerably watered down, in the sense that some of the most important decisions in the New Europe will not, after all, be left to a majority vote of the High Authority, but have instead been reserved for a Council of Ministers, which in these cases will abide by the unanimity rule just as in the O E E C. And that apparently leads them to the conclusion that the Europe of the Six has not turned out to be quite so horribly supra-national as they feared at one time, but is really far more like the Europe of their own dreams, where everyone remains safe in the possession of his national right of veto. Witness, for instance, Lord Layton's statement at Strasbourg last September that there was 'no sharp distinction' between these two Europes. They do not seem to grasp that even if there were to be no High Authority of any sort, and all decisions had to be taken by a unanimous Council of Ministers, there would still remain a world of difference between the Europe of the Six and the Europe of the Eighteen. For what really distinguishes the former from the latter is not its machinery and procedure for achieving joint action, but the prior renunciation of the right to independent action by which the Six have imposed upon themselves that ineluctable compulsion to act together which is lacking

in the Europe of the Eighteen. It is the absence of this compulsion, not the unanimity rule, which accounts for the very limited degree of co-operation in intra-governmental bodies like the O E E C, where everybody has reserved the right to operate on his own whenever it suits him, with the result that the pace of co-operation will always be that of the slowest, or rather that of the most independent. In such bodies the veto can be, and indeed is often, used in such a way as to frustrate joint action. Not so in the Europe of the Six. Knowing that the spirit is willing while the flesh is weak, the Six have deliberately put themselves in a position where they have no choice – short of treaty violation – but to implement their co-operative good intentions. They have burned the bridges behind them, and that is what matters and what the British refuse to do.

Certainly the Six have retained a limited veto. But what use is a veto when you have renounced the very right of independent action which it is the whole purpose of the veto to reserve? What use is the veto even in the purely intra-governmental company of N A T O, where history rather than a formal act of renunciation has destroyed the bridges back to independent action? In both these communities that sovereignty which the veto is supposed to safeguard is no better than a fiction, in the smaller because its members have formally renounced the right to act as they please, in the larger because they have lost the power to do so. In both cases the veto can no longer serve as a means of escape from the discipline and sacrifices required for joint action, nor as a weapon of obstruction, but only as a means of preventing the tyranny of the majority and of assuring that the decisions on joint action – for action, of course, there must be – shall be the result of a compromise taking all interests into account. Doubtless this necessity of obtaining unanimous agreement before there can be action will often make for dangerous delays. Provided, however, that the compulsion to act together is there, the unanimity rule has the compensating advantage that it puts far less strain on the cohesion of the community than the procedure of majority decisions. That is a luxury which only solidly established and deeply rooted communities can permit themselves. If such a precarious structure as the New Europe of the Six were suddenly to avail itself of it, the additional stresses and strains imposed upon its cohesion might well prove out of all proportion to the gains in efficiency and speed of action.

It should be clear, then, that the frontier separating the new order from the old, the supra-national or federal Europe from the intra-governmental one, compulsory co-operation from optional co-operation, runs not between those who abide by majority decisions or set up High Authorities and those who do not, but between those who have renounced or lost the means of independent action, and those who have not done

so. And it is because the Six have established two large bridgeheads across this Rubicon that M. Monnet and Professor Lavergne must be deemed right, and Mr Healey and Mr Gordon Walker wrong.

In this connection one other point needs to be made. If so many people seem to have missed the real significance of what has been happening in Europe, this is possibly because in the case of E D C they have been led astray by M. Pleven's *original insistence* on the importance of physical integration of the European forces. At the time his plan was first thrown open to public discussion, all the talk was about the mixing up of the different national armies. When it subsequently appeared that the scrambled eggs prepared by the chefs of the New Europe contained far bigger national lumps than anticipated, many seem to have come to the conclusion that this new supra-national dish had turned out a failure. But does it really matter whether there are lumps in it or not? True, the larger these lumps the easier it will be for the chefs to fish them out again and to use them against one another, as the next best thing to rotten eggs. In other words, the smaller the degree of physical integration, the greater the temptation to secession, the easier it will be to undo the act of abdication whereby the Six gave up – subject to parliamentary ratification – their national forces. But true as that may be, it cannot in any way alter the revolutionary character of that act itself, nor the supra-national or federal character of the community which – though so far only on paper – has resulted from it. Suppose the Americans should reorganize the composition of their armed forces on a regional basis by grouping them in Southern and Northern divisions. Such a measure would doubtless increase the risk of a second Civil War. But pending such a calamity, the American Federation would remain just as much of a Federation as before. The historical event by which the Thirteen Colonies gave up their newly won sovereignties, in order to find in unity the strength to maintain their independence from Britain, would in no way be undone by a physical disintegration of the American Army. In the same way, the absence of far-reaching physical integration in the European Army does not detract in any way from the historical significance of the similar action by which the Six, now little better than American satellites, ultimately hope to regain at least some part of their independence.

* * * * *

In the light of the foregoing it should now be clear that the Little Europ is essentially different from the Big Europe, and as such will not fit any where near as easily into the wider framework as many in this countr would like to believe. Because both profess to be striving for a 'mor perfect union' the view has been widely propagated that there is n

quarrel between them about the aim, but only about the road to be followed in reaching the common goal. Even now, leading statesmen still regularly paint this appealing picture of a happy and united European family travelling at the same speed, though along different roads, to the same destination.

> The approach to unity [Mr Eden said in Strasbourg last September], is not by one way only.... It is not necessary, nor would it be right, that we should all make the same choice at the same time between the various ways in which unity can be achieved. We need not necessarily all agree, for example, as to whether the federal or the functional approach would suit us better, whether government co-operation or that of individuals is the more profitable.... Diversity in character, diversity in the methods of association, these are the hallmarks of a natural and healthy unity of a Continent such as ours.*

In actual fact, of course, things are by no means so cozy in the European family as Mr Eden pretends. For, as he doubtless knows full well, the real difference between the Six and the rest of the company is not that they have chosen different roads, but simply that the former want to 'go places', and quickly too (though of late the French seem to have had second thoughts) while the latter don't. That is to say, the real dispute is not about means at all but about ends. It is only because the Six want far-reaching permanent co-operation that they have chosen the only road that can lead them to this goal, which obviously begins with the renunciation of the right *not* to co-operate. And it is because the rest of the company do not want anything near the same degree of co-operation, or rather because they do not think it worth the price, that they stick to the intra-governmental road. To suggest that these two roads both lead to the goal of European union is really no better than to pretend that you can make just as good an omelette without breaking eggs as by the more orthodox procedure. This strange doctrine quite naturally commends itself primarily to those who cannot bear to face the fact that in the historical process of unscrambling Britain's imperial omelette this rich dish has for most – though admittedly not all – practical purposes ceased to exist. And it is doubtless partly because they insist on making themselves believe that they have gone Columbus one better by putting the eggs back in their sovereign shells and yet keeping the omelette, that they put their faith in a reverse miracle to produce a European omelette.

This is not to say, of course, that nothing of value has been achieved outside the narrow circle of the Six. Far from it. If Europe still lives and

* The Continental optimist might view this unexpected 'ours' as a promising Freudian *lapsus linguæ* indicating that Mr Eden's subconscious has already realized that his country forms part of the Continent.

if the Six have been able to embark on their adventure, it is largely because of what has been done by the company of Eighteen who have looked after Europe's economic interests in O E E C and its offspring the E P U, and the company of Fourteen who look after its security in N A T O. More than that, one could maintain that these two companies have developed a community spirit which is altogether novel and which the Six, one of whose new communities still exists only on paper, may find it difficult to emulate, torn as they are by traditional suspicions and rivalries. It is, after all, quite something that in both O E E C and N A T O there should have grown up a sort of common law giving to members the right to 'pry into one another's affairs', as one high-ranking official of O E E C has expressed it, and obliging them to account to one another for their actions in the important field covered by these two organizations. But this should not blind one to the fact that there remains an essential difference between the Six and the rest of the company, and that it is only the former who can truly be said to be making the New Europe. What the Eighteen of O E E C are doing with their, by no means unsuccessful efforts at liberating intra-European trade and payments is, after all, not so much integrating Europe as *re*integrating it, undoing the *dis*integration which it has suffered since 1939 and thus restoring, as far as possible, the *status quo ante*. It may be true that in the process of doing so, as well as in the military co-operation of N A T O, where Europe is inevitably being subordinated rather than integrated, a new sense of interdependence is developing. And that is doubtless all to the good. But it does not alter the fact that the spirit and the aims guiding the Six on the one hand, and the Fourteen or the Eighteen on the other, are as different as chalk from cheese.

The N A T O and O E E C members co-operate reluctantly because the facts of life compel them to do so, because co-operation is the least of two evils. They chafe under its restraints, are always longingly looking back to a past when they were free, and forward to a future in which they might regain that freedom. Their organizations were not designed to create a new order, but only to cope with the new order that the facts have created. They deal with problems as they arise, limiting their co-operation, and the innovations which it entails, to the inevitable minimum, trying to retain as much as possible of the existing framework of society, hoping against hope that one day they will be able to make their 'dash for freedom'. In short, their habitus of mind is essentially conservative. As against that, the co-operation of the Six is not enforced but *willed* co-operation. It is enforced only in the sense that they have deliberately imposed the compulsion to co-operate on themselves by the act of will they performed when burning the bridges back to independent action or

non-cooperation. Their organizations are not the result of immediate and irresistible pressure of facts, but of a creative imagination that is no longer satisfied with the existing framework of society. Their policies do not follow on the facts, they are not just reflex actions, automatic responses to the dictates of history; they try to anticipate them, to make history rather than undergo it, to create a new order themselves. In short, their habitus is essentially revolutionary. Paraphrasing Renan's famous definition of a nation, one could sum it up by saying that in the historical progress towards larger groupings, the Six have reached the stage of '*vouloir* faire des grandes choses ensemble', while the company of the Eighteen or the Fourteen have not yet got beyond the reluctant recognition of '*devoir* faire des choses ensemble'. And between these two attitudes there is a world of difference.

Now it may well be that in striking out for the brave new world of their dreams, the back-room revolutionaries of the Six – whose motives are, of course, by no means so unmixed as suggested in the foregoing – may prove to have overreached themselves. In fact, it is conceivable that their epitaph will read 'They tried too much too soon'. In that case, all those who have accused them of lack of realism will doubtless exult in their vindication. But, as M. Spaak has said at Strasbourg, there are two sorts of realism:

> there is the conservative realism in whose name men have struggled against universal franchise and the eight-hour day, against nationalization and social security. But there is also another realism, the realism of the bold, in whose name Mr Churchill called upon all of us when he offered 'nothing but blood, sweat, toil and tears'.

It is in this latter spirit that the Six have embarked on their adventure, a spirit which was admirably expressed by M. Edgar Faure when he defended the E D C in the French Parliament early last year:

> We must find new forms for our security. That is certainly difficult. What is easy is to wait and see and to do nothing, to refuse to make a mental effort and, as has happened before, to sit back waiting for tyranny, defeat and disaster. But is there then really some law of nature which lays down that the creative imagination shall only be put to evil purposes? We have seen tyrants who dreamed the craziest dreams, inventing the most ludicrous theories whose absurdity would have made us burst out laughing if we had not suffered their consequences. Those people had the right to use their imagination. And yet we, we are told that we are not entitled to use our creative imagination in a good cause, to construct something new and, for the sake of the security and the ordinary daily life of mankind, to make some of that mental effort which those monsters showed themselves capable of in order to kill, to tyrannize and to enslave!

THE FRENCH REVIEWS

Bernard Wall

The British reader of the French reviews is certain to have one immediate reaction – that of pleasure and even amazement at their multiplicity and variety, at the verve and vigour with which every kind of contemporary problem is argued out, and at the remarkable intellectual acumen with which the works of contemporary writers, artists and musicians are evaluated in the extensive space devoted in nearly every periodical to critical writing. Nor is the vision of these reviews restricted to the rich fields of France. Great Britain, America, Italy, Germany, Spain are all carefully scrutinized for literary manifestations in a way that reviews in no other country can hope to rival. The whole world is ransacked for texts. The January-February issue of *Les Temps Modernes*, for instance, leads off with a translation of the diary of one of the most talented young Italian novelists, Cesare Pavese, who committed suicide three years ago, his life darkened by an unhappy love affair and, possibly, by difficulties with the Italian Communist Party of which he had once been an ardent supporter; next, more from the past, we are given memoirs of Klaus Mann's childhood and the emigration of the Mann family from a cultivated and bourgeois milieu in Germany that was the very antithesis of Pavese's Piedmont; next, the continuation of a piece by Albert Memmi, a young Jew in North Africa, concerned this time with the German occupation.

It is not a perfect collocation of articles, one could think of better – there is too much of that immediate past about which emotions in France are so signally living, a past that has not matured and reached the interior perspective that literature really demands. The writing of lived experience is all very well, but how quickly we tire of a description of the Ego in difficulties; Egos are too alike and nowadays horror is so common that somehow the changes from one horror to another seem monotonous like scene-shifting in the Grand Guignol. But I mentioned these examples not for their perfection, but to show the standard of interest in affairs outside France. And there are plenty of other instances. Looking over the shelf of reviews, I see that the December issue of *Critique*, besides articles about Mallarmé, Samuel Beckett, Homer and Duns Scotus, reviews English

books on Moslem culture (*L'Islam vu de l'Angleterre*), and English and Soviet books on climatic conditions. And who but the French could produce a periodical such as *France-Asie* which appears in Saigon, in one of the world's famous trouble areas? Its December number contains a series of short stories translated from Vietnamese, Pemsian, Kashmiri (if such are the right names for these languages), Hindustani, Chinese, Japanese and Siamese. The leading articles, by Jules Monchanin and Georges Toussaint, are concerned with 'la crise de l'espérance' and the problems of matter. Who reads such a review? Orientalists in Paris, or French civil servants in Vietnam? The thought of British civil servants in the tropics digesting an article about Jaspers and Jung over their sundown whisky is deliciously comic. The French still remain the supreme intellectual people of the world.

So much for the credit side. Though staggered by the intellectual virtuosity of innumerable critics and at times tempted to console ourselves by saying that there is a trick somewhere and, like conjuring, it would all be perfectly easy once one had learnt how it is done, there is no denying the substantiality of the higher standard. But this, on reflection, is limited to certain fields which, though essential, are not everything. An English writer can live his whole life without ever touching on thorny problems of metaphysics and ethics: indeed he may well avoid such questions so studiously that to the French he has an air of hypocrisy, and though he himself thinks he is very straightforward, almost a 'plain blunt man', across the Channel his sensibility is thought to be abnormally complicated by Machiavellian intentions and Chinese irony. The French writers, except certain old-fashioned ones (André Siegfried comes to mind), are more starkly exploratory of *la condition humaine*, far more frankly ready to put down on paper the conclusions they have reached about God and the purpose of life, or lack of it. And I need scarcely mention their famous frankness about sex – witness the large number of articles on the subject of homosexuality.

As against all these advantages enumerated in the foregoing paragraphs, there are, as is only to be expected, corresponding weaknesses. Of these by far the most striking is in the field of politics.

Nowadays what the intelligent Englishman demands first and foremost in any discussion on politics is reliable facts. He likes to feel that every statement about 'what actually happened' has been sifted and checked by people who have expert knowledge and whose emotions are not so involved that they are tempted to distort their accounts. He likes the statistics to be accurate and up to date, and if there is any doubt about them he likes a question-mark to be put in brackets after them. Inaccurate statements about facts and 'phony' statistics tend to bore him. Hence he

has daily newspapers, weeklies and monthly reviews which, though they may not soar, are reliable as the word goes in this respect.

In France this is not so. Odd though it may seem, France, a nation in the fore-front of world civilization, has not a single daily newspaper that provides a systematic and reliable account of public events. This is echoed in the political discussions carried on in France, above all by men of letters. Such discussions give one the impression of a splendid superstructure without proper foundations, or of listening to an advocate whose speech is so brilliant and so intellectual that one hardly dares to interrupt with a timid: 'Excuse me, but you are basing your argument on something that doesn't seem to have happened?' One's voice sounds so banal.

One is not merely dealing with the well-known difference between the *forma mentis* of the French-speaking and the English-speaking people – I put it this way because the American tradition, like the English, is of the pedestrian kind. Though we need to bear in mind the difference of approach that in France emphasizes the theory, the intellectual construction, the ideology, as against the practical accommodation and the famous empiricism of England, this is not the whole story. The difference of approach seems to have been accentuated by the very different experience of the last war in France and in England. In the 'thirties, English men of letters became excited about politics in a way comparable to the French. They wrote books and pamphlets which made no pretence of studying new areas of knowledge but merely contained their authors' personal interpretations of the world events of which they read in the newspapers: the Abyssinian War, General Franco, Hitler, Marxism – one has only to think of titles of books such as *The Necessity of Communism* and *The Necessity of Anarchism*, and of authors such as John Middleton Murry and Sir Herbert Read, to be taken back to the stirring days of protest meetings, manifestoes signed by groups of intellectuals, and interruptions of friendships.

Now men of letters in France today live in an atmosphere resembling that of England in the 'thirties. When M. François Mauriac and a number of French Catholics protested against alleged French atrocities in Morocco, one was reminded of the bitter arguments about whether or not the Italian volunteers outnumbered the members of the International Brigade in Spain, and whether the Russians were really helping the Republicans or merely inciting Stalinists to liquidate Trotskyists. The published accounts of what happened in Morocco were extremely contradictory, and though one may be prepared to allow that M. Mauriac was right, the fact that he writes distinguished novels for which he has been awarded the Nobel Prize does not give him special qualifications for telling us exactly what happens in Africa. Though making no attempt to judge, we would not be surprised

if moral feelings and the passions they arouse were not more developed in a writer like M. Mauriac than an enthusiasm for statistics.

Why has this habit of polemical writing died out in England and survived in France? One can think of obvious reasons. Many men of letters in England who wrote 'I think' books in the 'thirties, found themselves for some six years of war incarcerated in Government departments and special branches of the Army in which they were forced to sift evidence from morning to night – killing work which even now causes their hearts to heave when they are confronted with unreliable statements about facts, such as used to increase their work so heavily during the war. As a result, England is well stocked with at least amateur specialists who scrutinize information carefully and no longer write 'I think' books based on ordinary newspaper reading. In France, the experience was the opposite. In some ways, men of letters, though they may not realize it, were better off. They ran greater danger, if they chose to 'resist', but they had more excitement and there were many opportunities for flowing imagination. And they were able to preserve (and get away with) a cavalier attitude to facts, if such was their bent. Moreover, the perpetual pressure of the Communist propaganda machine operating through the vast Communist organization, and the quarrels over collaboration and resistance, have accentuated the divisions between groups which in France always tended to run to extremes. Add to this that information about political facts is generally slipshod and inaccurate, and nearly always tainted with propaganda in accord with the political views of the informant, and one can begin to sketch in the picture of the weak side of the French reviews.

Mauriac, whom I have already mentioned, may have his limitations as a polemist but these no longer seem serious when we turn to *Temps Modernes* and the writers associated with Sartre. With Sartre the theoretical superstructure is a veritable *tour de force*. The state of the foundations is shocking. One turns back to the October-November (1952) number of *Temps Modernes*. The article given second pride of place is an excellent example of what I mean. It is entitled 'La Guerre de Hitler n'aurait pas eu lieu . . .' and is by a writer of the name of E. N. Dzelepy. The purpose of this writer is suggested in the first paragraph:

> According to the mythology of the Second World War – it has survived many 'revelations' and the flood of official documents poured into the dossiers of the main guilty men – it was Stalin who gave Hitler 'permission to open the most formidable dam of blood in human history' (the quotation is from François Mauriac). But what does history tell us? What is the responsibility of the others, notably England, who led the political game between the two wars?

The answer of History, through its spokesman, M. Dzelepy, cannot be given in any detail in this number of the TWENTIETH CENTURY. His main point, that the British Government was bent on selling out the Poles and protracted the negotiations with Hitler, and obliged the Poles to do likewise, with this intent, and was only circumvented in the end by the Poles themselves, is impressively documented with footnotes referring to the German White Book, the British Blue Book, the Polish White Book, Sir Nevile Henderson and others, 'malgré l'épuration obligatoire à laquelle sont soumises d'ordinaire ce genre de publications.' The author, with admirable industry, selects the details that serve his proofs. Many readers will recognize the kind of thing we are dealing with. What is grave is that M. Sartre apparently does not, that he genuinely means this kind of 'histoire' when he talks about History.

The same issue of *Temps Modernes* contains an extract from M. Sartre's own serial pamphlet 'Les Communistes et la Paix'. It appears to be extremely well written: 'I note, like everyone else,' writes Sartre, 'the discouragement of the masses; but I am not yet convinced that the policy of the Communist Party is responsible for it. . . . A healthy proletariat . . . which disavowed the Communist Party and forthwith founded a new party (you know, the genuinely French Communist Party so often alluded to which would be distinguished from the (existing) Parti Communiste Français by its independence and which would manifest its national character by resurrecting genuine internationalism) – if it existed we would have to take its claims into account; who but it could decide? . . . But as you are perfectly well aware, the working class is collapsing, it is measuring its powerlessness and is now running the risk of handing over its millions of men defencelessly to the pile hammers of the bourgeoisie; you know that in the months to come, everything will be done to increase loneliness and resignation, and the distance between men . . . to reduce the proletariat to the condition of an archipelago . . . I predict that if they lose confidence in the Communist Party they will abandon all politics, they will throw over their class; the whole world will be bourgeois. If you hope for their recovery, then only the Communist Party can help them to achieve it; if they rediscover their unity it will be to gather around the Communist Party; their combativeness will consist in obeying its orders. . . . I cannot help finding those people ignoble who look to the despair of the workers to bring about the discomfiture of the Communists.'

If I do not analyse all Sartre's views on the Communist Party and peace, it is not because he is concerned with events in French political life about which there are many opinions, but also because it is extremely hard to make any comment at all. The whole argument is dominated by the theory of dialectical materialism, and unless one is prepared to argue in those terms there is little common ground. It is like those international meetings to establish a *dialogue* between men of all different opinions in which the Communist speaker says his ideological piece, there is then a polite silence, after which people turn to other matters. Marxism as an ideology has never made much headway in this country, and in this form it is hardly likely to do so. People are bored with theory, and if they are prepared to discuss Communism they will want to discuss verifiable facts about Russia and China which are hard to come by – and *Temps Modernes* is anything but helpful in that very vital respect. To a non-Marxist it *sounds* as though M. Sartre (if his appeal is meant to be valid outside France as well as inside) is asking us to support the Communist cause, and thereby propagate its version of the facts, because the majority of French workmen believe that version to be true.

However much we emphasize the confused situation of literary polemics in France, we still fail to grasp how a philosopher who is a distinguished writer, at least on occasions, should have come to trap himself in such an impossible position. The experience in England inclines us to console ourselves by thinking that everything comes clean in the wash, that Sartre is bound to change again and that however theoretical one keeps the wood, the trees are bound to force themselves on one's attention in the long run. Sartre has at least the merit of appearing to be painfully honest and frank about his politics – whereas some French writers, one feels, are as inhibited about questions of Communism and the Resistance as their English cousins are about questions of sex.

It is only to be expected that a writer who attempts to balance on a razor edge, like Sartre, should be especially uneasy. The best recent comment on his uneasiness comes from M. Jean Grenier in a lucid and elegant series of notes in *La nouvelle N.R.F.* Says Grenier:

> Sartre writes to Camus: 'Alas, you have performed your Thermidor' (for, true enough, being a Thermidorian means disapproving of guillotining in perpetuity). But Sartre himself began as a Thermidorian when he let the Communists know that what they thought was idiotic, only to go on to say to them: 'Of course I am on your side.' From then on he could be as comfortable as Gide was in Russia, who was not at all reticent beforehand about his moral habits.

Grenier says elsewhere:

> It is all very well for him (Sartre) to qualify dialectical materialism as a myth; he is not prepared to free himself from it; more, he exalts it; he sees it as 'incontestably the only myth that answers to revolutionary requirements. . . .' Now he has just refuted it. True, Plato made use of myths but (whatever the truth of these) his aim was to prolong in his reader's imagination a perspective that eluded reason. The myth was not constructed

against reason, but to help it. . . . If it were only a matter of one myth among others! But no! It is 'inconstestably the only one'. Yet it would seem that the myths of the beginning of the 19th century – liberty, fraternity, love, peace and so on – were in better accord with revolutionary requirements. . . .

The fact is that the intellectual to-day no longer believes in the intelligence; the fact is that he is fascinated by action; the fact is that he counts on results only and is perfectly ready to value ideas in terms of Bedaux units. His favourite word is *efficacity*. Is it efficacious? Everything pales beside efficacity. . . . People are so afraid that thought may be inefficacious! That explains why a party that admits only of success has such prestige with intellectuals.

In the light of what has been said, it can scarcely be called surprising if some of the ablest of the young generation should show signs of turning away from ideological arguments and looking instead towards fresh, immediate, elemental experience. This new feeling seems to me to be crystallized in the poetry of René Char about whom we are certain to hear much more in the years to come. After listening to a wrangle about those abstractions, the 'proletariat' and the 'bourgeoisie', it is with relief that we hear a voice saying 'J'aime l'homme incertain de ses fins comme l'est en avril l'arbre fruitier.' Not that Char is an escapist or an ivory-tower man – the very reverse. As he himself wrote: 'Nous sommes ce jour plus près du sinistre que le tocsin lui-meme.' And it would be difficult to accuse a man who led a band of partisans in the Jura under the name of Capitaine Alexandre of not being *engagé*. As René Ménard says of Char in a recent issue of *Cahiers du Sud*: 'We are at the opposite pole to the tendencies manifest in this age, tendencies which are at loggerheads more about the means than the end which . . . remains the achievement of a sort of statistical happiness'. Char's poetry reminds one of a ship with all the sails stripped and streamlined to ride the storm – all 'isms' are jettisoned and language reduced to the austere minimum necessary for communication. It is thus, amongst other things, a breath of fresh air.

THE MAGUS OF THE NORTH

Norman Cohn

'Here we are in a century which is going to become more and more enlightened day by day until all earlier centuries will by comparison be nothing but darkness.'* Thus Pierre Bayle in 1684. Already then Rationalism was emerging as a major tradition of European thought, intellectuals were coming to regard the universe as a machine the workings of which would be more and more fully illumined by successive generations – as gravitation had just been illumined by Newton – until the last dark corner would be floodlit. It was also already assumed that practical mastery over nature would increase along with theoretical understanding. Bright vistas of knowledge and power stretched away into a future where already the contours of the Scientific Paradise could be faintly discerned. And as for man's own nature, that no longer seemed problematic either. It appeared certain that once such irrationalities as churches, absolute monarchies, and wars had been eliminated by the operation of Reason, men would be both good and happy, finding in an enlightened philosophy a sufficient guide to right living, and in the service of humanity their supreme fulfilment.† Since those days this rationalist outlook, though constantly modified and transformed, has so permeated life and thought in Western Europe and the United States that even to begin to consider its ramifications would be to embark on a history of modern civilization. And the positive contribution which it has made has of course been prodigious. If man's understanding of nature and control of natural forces have increased more in the past two-and-a-half centuries than in the previous two to five thousand centuries of his existence, if the values of free enquiry and of tolerance did for several generations, and over quite a large area of the world, receive a most unusual degree of recognition, that has been mainly due to (as it has largely contributed to) the persistence of a vigorous rationalist tradition. It is all the more striking that already very early in the history of Rationalism there were those who perceived and pointed out the catastrophic impoverishment which it was producing in human personality.

In the 1750's two writers, Jean-Jacques Rousseau in France and Johann

* Bayle, *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, number of April 1684, article xi.
† Cf. Shaftesbury, *A Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, 1708.

Georg Hamann in Germany, came to grips with this problem. Of these two critics of Rationalism, Hamann was incomparably the more whole-hearted and devastating. Whereas Rousseau was himself a child of the Enlightenment (though a rebellious one), Hamann was an irrationalist out of sheer inner necessity. Amongst his contemporaries he was alone of his kind; to find his like one would have to look a full generation later, to William Blake. This does not of course mean that Rationalism had no other critics in the mid-eighteenth century. From its very first appearance it had been challenged by all the Christian orthodoxies; but the issues involved in that argument, which is still continuing, were and are of a different nature. Though Hamann (like Blake) called and felt himself a Christian, his version of Lutheranism was almost as remote from any major Christian tradition, almost as much a personal eccentricity, as was Blake's gnosticism. He was at loggerheads with the Lutheran orthodoxy of his day and met with no understanding even among the Pietists from whom he sprang; nor if one excepts Kierkegaard (who admired him greatly) has it been amongst Lutherans as such that his influence has been felt. Hamann's critique of Rationalism is interesting not in so far as it represents a typically Lutheran, or indeed any typically Christian attitude, but in so far as it expresses an insight which was very much his own.

Of North and East German descent, Hamann was born in 1730 at Königsberg and spent almost all his life there. As a young man he came, like the whole of the German intelligentsia of that time, under the influence of the form of Rationalism then radiating from France. He started as an admirer of the *Encyclopédie*, a believer in progress, a popularizer of French economic theory, a publicist devoted to the interests of trade and the commercial class. But this was a brief phase. At the age of twenty-seven he was sent to London on a confidential business mission and this journey was the turning-point of his life. Having proved utterly incompetent in business and utterly naive in the conduct of his private life, he sank into a deep melancholy, from which he was rescued by a study of Luther's Bible. Quite suddenly he experienced a religious conversion: as he thought, to the faith of his forefathers, in reality to a private religion which he harmonized as best he might with some of Luther's teachings. This religion answered his deepest needs and stood him in excellent stead for the rest of his life. Inner tranquillity was not for Hamann, but with his conversion his personality, which had been amorphous, acquired shape and contour, became indeed one of the most sharply defined and imposing personalities of his day. An obscure and ill-paid excise officer in a remote province, he became a major figure in the intellectual life of Germany, 'the Magus of the North' who fascinated and dominated a whole generation of gifted men, Herder and the young Goethe among them. For now Hamann knew his vocation,

which was to warn against the ruinous effect which the mental habits associated with Rationalism can have on the emotional and imaginative powers of the human psyche.

With the enormous premium set on rational investigation, on analytical thought, on the orderly arrangement of clear ideas, on mastery through intelligence, a new and curiously cerebral personality-type had made its appearance and rapidly acquired great prestige. One has the impression that at that time men's conscious minds became more effectively dissociated from their unconscious than at any earlier period of European history. Certainly there were plenty of signs that some great psychic change was taking place. Very quickly intellectuals lost altogether that capacity for mythopœic thought in which hitherto Europe had been at one with Melanesia and Ancient Egypt. (But for the fact that religious symbolism no longer met with intuitive understanding, the rationalist onslaught on Christianity would have encountered far tougher resistance.) At the same time the capacity for spontaneous feeling was much impaired. Even sexual passion became cerebral. The sentimentality, the forcing of emotion which is characteristic of so much eighteenth-century literature was a substitute for an emotional wealth which was already lost. (How far emotional poverty could go we know from Laclos' *Liaisons dangéreuses*.) Even to experience immediately through the senses became ever harder: the colours and sounds and smell and feel of things, the changing world of earth and sky, could be perceived only tortuously, through the intermediary of thought.*

In the polemical pamphlets which over a quarter of a century (1759–84) he hurled at the Deists, the rationalistic Lutherans and the metaphysicians of his day, Hamann denounced this tyranny of abstract thought and affirmed the values of emotional and sensuous experience. The 'Socrates' whom he created as a symbol of himself is a religious teacher whose mission is to summon 'his fellow-citizens out of the labyrinths of their learned sophists to a truth that lies in hidden places, and to a secret wisdom, and from the idolatrous altars of their pious and worldly-wise priests to the service of an Unknown God.'† That Unknown God is above all passionate, 'Father of fiery spirits and breathing energies',‡ and passionate living is what is demanded of the believer: '*Optimus maximus* demands not headaches but pulsebeats'.§ Passion is the very heart of

* For a protest against this state of affairs see Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture*, 1719.

† II, 42. Unless otherwise stated references are to volume and page of Hamann's *Schriften*, ed. Roth and Wiener, Berlin, 1821–43. 8 parts.

‡ IV, 25.

§ *Johann Georg Hamanns Leben und Schriften*, ed. Gildemeister, Gotha, 1857–73, 6 vols: V, 197.

Hamann's version of Christianity: 'The Law and the Prophets are directed towards passion from the whole heart, from the whole soul, from all the energies – towards love.'* The love that Hamann has in mind is something vastly different from the sentimental tenderness of Pietism. It is an elemental force: 'The true disciples of love are children of thunder.'† – 'How shalt thou subdue the first-born emotion of the human soul to the yoke of circumcision? Canst thou play with it as with a bird? Or bind it with thy rules?'‡

Hamann set little store by analytical intelligence, so vastly esteemed by his rationalistic contemporaries. He detested Copernicus and Newton, and regarded the achievements and promises of scientific thinking as diabolic temptations. But any rebel against an orthodoxy, if he is wholehearted and means to be effective, must be one-sided and it would be quite mistaken to write Hamann off as no more than a bigoted obscurantist. Goethe wrote of him that his great principle was that everything a man undertook to perform, whether in word or deed, must, if it was to have any value, spring from all his energies together.§ What most intensely concerned Hamann was in fact what is nowadays called the integration of personality. With a clarity unique in his day he perceived that the whole of a man's living – his thinking and his feeling and even his bodily health – is profoundly influenced by the economy of the instincts. 'Thinking, feeling, digesting, all depend on the heart.'‖ – 'A heart without passions, without emotions, is a brain without concepts, without marrow,'¶ – 'The *pudenda* of our nature are so exactly connected with the chambers of the heart and brain that a strict abstraction of so natural a bond is impossible.'**

Hamann was deeply persuaded of the wisdom of the body. In the impulses and needs of the bodily life he found 'emissaries sent to us from a distant land',†† 'our sole foretaste of Heaven'. Abstract and generalizing thought on the other hand he regarded as a late-developed function of human personality and something which was itself a by-product of the instinctive life. What most offended him was the tendency of this minor power to claim some kind of autonomy, to usurp even some kind of hegemony, within the psyche. Such a tendency had long been observable within the context of traditional Catholic scholasticism and Hamann

* Ibid, V, 7.
† III, 73 (ed. Roth).
‡ II, 198.
§ *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Book XII.
‖ III, 382.
¶ I, 494.
** VII, 142.
†† I, 101.

detected and disliked it there; but he was convinced (rightly) that within the context of the new Rationalism it would for the first time produce a widespread psychic disorder. 'To oppose distinctions to emotions is to set the sand as boundary to the sea:'* and he was sure that that way lay not indeed madness but an incalculable loss of spiritual vitality. In a passage as remarkable for its imagery as for its insight he contrasted the psychic dissociation which is the fruit of a narrow Rationalism with the psychic integration which was his ideal of human living: 'If sensuous experience and intelligence, as the two branches of human cognition, spring from one common root, so that objects are given by the one but thought by the other; to what purpose then so outrageous, unauthorized, wanton a sundering of that which Nature has joined together? Will not both branches wither and die through this dichotomy and cleavage of their common root? . . .Oh for the gesture of a Demosthenes and the triune energy of his eloquence, or for that mimic art which is yet to come . . . and I would open the eyes of the reader that maybe he should see – hosts of perceptions climbing up into the fortress of pure reason, and hosts of ideas climbing down into the deep abyss of the most concrete *sensuousness*, *on* a ladder such as no sleeper can see in dream – and the round-dance of these Mahanaim or two Hosts of the Understanding – the secret and distressing chronicle of their copulation. . . .'†

Hamann believed that it is only by accepting one's self in its entirety, with all its animality and earthiness, its inconsistency and irrationality, its limited experience and understanding, that one can win access to its vast emotional riches. Such an acceptance he regarded as indispensable for any flowering of the personality and for any genuine relationship with other human beings. That is what he had in mind when he wrote: 'Self-knowledge is our wisdom, self-love our virtue.'‡ – 'Self-knowledge and self-love are the true yardstick for our love and knowledge of others.'§ In this he can be seen as a precursor of psychoanalytic therapy and he himself undoubtedly achieved some sort of self-analysis, incomplete of course but deep. It was intimate experience that enabled him to write: 'Self-knowledge is the hardest and highest, the easiest and most nauseating natural history, philosophy and poetry.'‖

In Hamann's own eyes his message was a religious one: he was expounding the Christian life as he understood it. Luther had championed the

* VII, 297.
† VII, 10 sq. (from Hamann's pamphlet against Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason: Metakritik über den Purismum der reinen Vernunft*, 1784).
‡ I, 131.
§ V, 279.
‖ Letter to Kant, July 27th, 1759.

faith of St Paul against the moralizing of St James. Luther had taught that salvation must be reached through faith alone; that works are barren save as they flow from faith; that a man must renounce every claim to merit and set all his hope in the mercy of God. This teaching had been neglected by the orthodox Lutheran communities, which were influenced by Calvinism, but the Pietists had kept some awareness of it. To Hamann it was of overwhelming importance and he interpreted it in his own way. When he experienced his conversion he felt himself drawn to the religion of Luther precisely because it was 'so well adapted to our needs, weaknesses and shortcomings that it changes all these into benefactions and things of beauty'.* His own religion had no place at all for puritanism, perfectionism or respectability. Always he insisted that 'all the graces of polite behaviour do not imply the love of virtue, and still less does the love of virtue imply the second birth of the new creature'.† The newborn creature was one who knew that 'one must abandon oneself trustfully to the current of the passions, when God is with us and we are sheltered in Him'.‡ To read into such pronouncements a crude antinomianism would be to distort Hamann's meaning. Hamann had indeed a bugbear which he called morality, but it was the normative and intellectualized morality of Rationalism that he had in mind. His intention was to encourage people to be fully themselves. He wished each man to live according to his own nature, careless of outward appearances, ignoring all rules, accepting his idiosyncrasies, accepting also his creative powers. 'I love every kind of originality, be it never so enormous, and the more so the better.'§ – 'What an ill-mannered morality it is, to condemn the passions and set their daughter (Reason) to rule them. The passions must indeed have been through school if the soft arm of Reason is to control them. Use your passions as you use your limbs, and if Nature has made you long-handed or many-fingered, let people laugh at her and not at you; those who mock you are more ridiculous and reprehensible than you with your longer hand or your six fingers.'‖ Spontaneous, individual, passionate living was for Hamann a sign of Grace. It was in this sense that he understood Luther's doctrine of the Freedom of a Christian.

It was when applied to the problems of poetic creation that Hamann's insight gave the most startling results. One of the symptoms of the emotional and imaginative impoverishment which accompanied the Enlightenment was that there was no longer any understanding of poetry. If one

* I, 223.
† III, 254.
‡ III, 185.
§ VI, 215–216.
‖ I, 515–516.

excepts the English Augustans (but then England never experienced anything like the full rigours of the Enlightenment), the first half of the eighteenth century was an age without poetry. In France it was generally assumed that the function of poetry was the same as that of prose: logical argument. In so far as poetry drew on the imagination it was simply a form of lying.* In so far as it did not, it might as well be prose: thus Houdar de la Motte suggested that poetry should be translated into prose and himself translated much of Racine.† 'The more perfect reason becomes', wrote one critic, 'the more men will prefer judgment to imagination and the less taste therefore they will have for the poets. It is said that the first writers were poets. I can well believe it; they could hardly have been anything else. The last writers will be philosophers.'‡ Meanwhile, if poetry there must be, let it at least be produced in accordance with the rules laid down by Aristotle and Horace (as it was thought) and now codified by modern critics. Based on reason, these rules must obviously possess absolute validity; by observing them one would therefore automatically rival Homer. Such was the attitude which prevailed in France and spread to Germany, so that we find Gottsched in the 1730's struggling to redeem his country from barbarism by dint of poring over Aristotle's *Poetics* and French neo-classical tragedies.

Though there were always those who understood the nature of poetry better than this – Dubos for instance in France, Bodmer in Germany – it was a wholly new note that sounded in the tremendous utterance of Hamann:

'Poetry is the mother-tongue of the human race; as gardening is older than ploughing; painting, than writing; song, than declamation; parables, than conclusions; barter, than commerce. A deeper sleep was the sleep of our forefathers, and their movement a whirling dance. Seven days in the silence of meditation or wonder they sat – then opened their mouths – for winged sayings.

'Senses and passions talk and understand nothing but images. Of images consists the whole treasure of human knowledge and happiness. The first eruption of the Creation and the first impression of its historian; the first appearing and the first enjoyment of Nature are united in the word: Let there be light! Therewith begins the feeling for the presence of things. . . .

'Speak, that I may see you! – This wish was fulfilled by the Creation, which is a speaking by the creature to the creature; for one day says it to

* Cf. Jean Le Clerc in 1699, quoted by P. Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne* (1680–1715), Paris, 1935, p. 357.
† Ibid., p. 355.
‡ Abbé Trublet, *Essai sur divers sujets de littérature et de morale*, 1735, quoted by Hazard, op. cit., p. 356.

the next, and one night tells it to the other. Their message runs through every zone even to the end of the world, and in every dialect is their voice heard. – But let the fault be where it will (within us or outside us): in Nature nothing is left for our use save fragmentary verse and *disjecta membra poëtæ*. To collect these is the task of the scholar; to interpret them, that of the philosopher; to imitate them – or, bolder still! – to set them right, is the task allotted to the poet.

'To talk is to translate – from an angel-tongue into a tongue of men, that is, thoughts into words, things into names, images into signs. . . .'*

Hamann believed that God spoke to men through visible and tangible things, that the whole Creation was a divine utterance. But the understanding for the cosmic language had been lost, the communication had become an agonizing riddle. Who could interpret? – Like Nietzsche more than a century later, Hamann projected on to the screen of the future 'the newest edition of the human soul:'† a new type of man, the poet of the future, whom he called the Genius. The Genius would translate the divine hieroglyphs. He would be able to do this because, alone among modern men, he would possess the powers which belonged to the first men. No reasoner, no thinker, he would experience vividly and directly through his senses, would feel spontaneously, live in his passions; and this would enable him to transpose the enigmatic text of the cosmos into the language of poetry:

'Nature works through senses and passions. If a man mutilate her tools, with what shall he feel? Are crippled muscles also eager to move? . . . Oh for a Muse like the fire of a goldsmith. . . . She will dare to purify the natural use of the senses from the unnatural use of abstractions, by which our ideas of things are mutilated even as the name of the Creator is suppressed and blasphemed. . . . Behold, the Great and Little Masores of worldly knowledge have poured over the text of Nature like a flood! . . . Only passion gives to abstractions and hypotheses hands, feet, wings, to images and signs spirit, life and tongue. – Where are swifter conclusions? – Where is the rolling thunder of eloquence made, and its companion – the monosyllabic lightning-flash?'‡

Hamann knew that poetic power is absolutely involuntary, in no way to be attained by effort. All a man could do was, by daring to feel, by avoiding abstract thought, to keep his soul open for those sudden bursts of poetic inspiration – 'storm-winds which one hears blowing although one

* II, 280 sq. (the beginning of *Aesthetica in Nuce: Eine Rhapsodie in Kabbalistischer Prosa*, 1762).
† Ibid.
‡ II, 283–284.

cannot see them save by their effects'* – which, when they came, were pure gifts of God, divine mercies. 'The ignorance of Socrates was feeling . . . he could afford to be ignorant; he had a genius on whose science he could rely, whom he loved and feared as his god, whose peace meant more to him than all the reason of the Egyptians and Greeks, whose voice he believed, and through whose wind the empty understanding of a Socrates, no less than the womb of a pure Virgin, can become fruitful.'† Constantly, in reading Hamann, one is taken aback by his insights into what are still the impenetrable mysteries of artistic creativeness. For one thing, he guessed what latter-day psychology has amply confirmed: the intimate connection between artistic creativeness and sexuality. Beneath the arid intellectualism and the prim moralizing of a rationalist culture he diagnosed an atrophy or aberration of the sexual instinct.‡ The Genius, he insisted, would be virile and his power to create 'masterpieces that live, divine works of his hands',§ would spring from that. 'My coarse imagination', he wrote to Herder, 'has never been able to conceive of a creative spirit without genitals.'‖ But above all he perceived that in the actual making of a poem it is in the unconscious depths of the instinctive life that the essential work is done: 'The perfection of the plans, the strength of their execution, the conception and birth of new ideas and new expressions, the labour and rest of the sage, the consolation and disgust they bring him, lie hidden from our senses in the fruitful womb of the passions.'¶

Hamann knew well enough how much hard work and conscious artistry normally go into the making of a poem. The Creator had laboured in making the world, and man must labour in creating his little worlds of the imagination: 'Creation is no work of vanity, but of humility. . . . To a great Genius six words are such an anguish that he needs six days to utter them, and must rest on the seventh.'** Just as there was more to Hamann's ideal of human living than mere obscurantism and mere antinomianism, so he would never have suggested that poetry can be made merely by abandoning conscious control and handing over to the unconscious mind. He would not, for instance, have valued the Surrealist experiments in automatic writing. For him the greatest of all poetry was the poetry of the Bible; and in Goethe's great lyric *Prometheus*, which he came to know a couple of years before his death, he saw an approximation to his ideal for

* Letter to J. F. Reichardt, January 2nd, 1778.
† II, 92.
‡ e.g. II, 408–409, on the self-castration of the *beaux esprits*. Cf. II, 197, 405.
§ II, 406.
‖ *Neue Hamanniana*, ed. H. Weber, München, 1905, p. 126.
¶ II, 288.
** I, 512.

the new poetry. What he maintained was not that thought has no part to play in poetic creation but that, if poetic imagination is not to wither away, thought must be constantly fertilized by instinctive energies, given warmth and colour by the life of the senses. Self-knowledge, that acceptance by the civilized, reasoning, conscious mind of the primitive, passionate and largely unconscious depths of the personality, was in Hamann's eyes the source of poetry as it was the source of Christian living: 'Self-knowledge is and remains the secret of true authorship. It is the deep well of truth that lies in the heart and the spirit, rises from there into the heights and then pours down like a grateful stream through mouth and quill, beneficent, without noise or flooding.'

Hamann's achievements as a writer, a handler of words, were very considerable. There are images, phrases, sentences of his which for intensity and concentration of meaning can compare with anything in Blake: which is saying a great deal. But above all he was a great precursor: of the *Sturm und Drang* movement in German literature and through that of the whole nineteenth-century cult of the poet-genius; of Kierkegaard and Existentialism; of depth psychology and psychoanalytic therapy. Was he also, as has been suggested by reputable critics, a precursor of that crude romanticism which played so large a part in the popular propaganda of National-Socialism? The suggestion is not so fatuous that it can be dismissed out of hand. On the contrary, it is perhaps only when one has considered it seriously that one can fully appreciate Hamann's stature.

As we have seen, the whole of Hamann's life and work was a protest against the dominant rationalistic and 'progressive' philosophy of his day. He urged men to seek their blessedness not in a future of ever-increasing material well-being, scientific understanding, mastery over nature, rationality, civilization, but in a return to a simpler and more primitive, more irrational and emotional way of life. A century-and-a-half later the National-Socialist movement owed some of its success to the fact that it too invited the German people to return to a simpler and more primitive, more irrational and emotional way of life. And amongst the many doctrinaires of irrationalism who, intentionally or accidentally, contributed to the triumph of National-Socialism there were some who invoked Hamann as their prophet (as they invoked the young Goethe, and Hölderlin, and of course Nietzsche). All this however does not make Hamann a precursor of National-Socialism: it only means that the problem which preoccupied him has not been solved. And it is indeed the case that, although Rationalism in the form known to the eighteenth century is with the snows of yesteryear, the rationalization of life has proceeded apace, ever since. The psychic impoverishment which first showed itself amongst the intelligentsia of the Enlightenment has now, in our urbanized, mechanized, industrialized civilization, come to affect millions. For them too it is becoming ever harder to live directly through the senses, to experience strongly and spontaneously, to retain the age-old understanding of poetry, symbolism and myth. In the process of mastering Nature, men are losing contact with the unconscious sources of feeling and imagination within themselves. Though it is true that for various reasons the loss has been felt more acutely by the Germans than by other peoples, there are plenty of signs that a curiously dissociated psyche is becoming typical of Western man.

The anxieties, the sense of emptiness and dissatisfaction which accompany this condition drive people to escape from it as best they may. In the Germany of the 1930's there were certainly many who turned to National-Socialism not (or not only) out of economic desperation or hard-headed opportunism but because it seemed to offer that experience of strong emotion, that sense of being really alive, which they could not derive from their own impoverished personalities. But that promise was altogether deceptive. Even apart from the appalling sufferings which it inflicted on its victims, National-Socialism could help its adherents only to a grotesque parody of cure. In that synthetic religion of irrationalism and primitivism, manufactured by politicians who knew very well what it meant to command the greatest concentration of heavy industry and the most advanced technology in Europe, there was nothing that could possibly have led to a genuine enrichment of human living. Its adherents merely exchanged the emptiness of their isolated existences for the factitious exaltations of mass paranoia. In 1945 all the gigantic protective imagos which Germans had been encouraged to project, collapsed and dissolved; and the moment this happened it was revealed – as anyone who watched the process will recall – that the individual believers had undergone no real psychic transformation at all. The emotional vacuum was still there, and bigger than ever.

In the very earliest days of our rationalistic civilization Hamann divined what deep discontents the rationalization of life would bring. In our own day these discontents found expression in that prodigious mass flight from reason and civilization which for twelve years amazed and horrified the world – and which may not have been the last of its kind. Hamann can be seen as an advocate of such a flight only by those who ignore the quality of his inner experience: its richness and genuineness and originality. That this could easily happen Hamann himself realized very clearly. 'My printed works', he wrote to a friend not long before his death, 'consist of a bare text, for the understanding of which the notes are lacking . . . and a dumb mimicry was the whole game of my authorship.'* To

* Letter to Jacobi, April 3rd, 1786.

read back into the irrationalism of Hamann the irrationalism that flourished in and around National-Socialism is to reduce to mere catchwords what were in reality expressions of a profound transformation of personality – a transformation reaching deep into the unconscious and lived through with singular integrity. It can be freely admitted that insights such as his are not to be won save from the depths of one's own experience; Hamann had in fact to fight all his life against powerful neurotic tendencies in himself and knew well enough 'the frontier skirmishes of genius with madness'.* But what matters is that he battled his way through them to an incomplete but most creditable victory. One who knew him well described him as 'a man of iron character, with the warmest of hearts, and one whom a boundless and fantastic imagination made into a really wonderful mixture of childlike simplicity and the most passionate impetuosity'.† This may remind one, yet again, of William Blake; but of Joseph Goebbels or Alfred Rosenberg, or for that matter of Ludwig Klages or Stefan George – no.

'The Descent into Hell which is self-knowledge'‡ – that painful path down which Hamann travelled in his own life and down which, a forgotten psychopomp, he still points – leads in fact not into the world of the Nuremberg rallies and of Auschwitz but directly away from it. At the heart of Hamann's teaching is his insistence that the civilized human being must learn to accept and assimilate his inheritance of instinctive power. For an ever larger number of Western men and women this is a formidable undertaking. In the integrity with which he faced up both to its difficulty and to its necessity lies perhaps Hamann's chief claim to greatness.

* II, 92.
† J. G. Scheffner, *Mein Leben*, Leipzig, 1823, p. 206.
‡ II, 198.

HERBERT READ'S ROMANTICISM

Donald Davie

Lecturer in English at Trinity College, Dublin, and author of *Purity of Diction in English Verse*.

On page 83 of his new book,* Sir Herbert Read quotes a passage from the *Notebooks of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (p. 249):

> Poetry is speech framed for contemplation of the mind by the way of hearing or speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest over and above its interest of meaning. Some matter or meaning is essential to it but only as an element necessary to support and employ the shape which is contemplated for its own sake.

This (it is only a part of what Sir Herbert reproduces) is interesting for several reasons; not least, alas, as an example of very unattractive prose. This view of 'matter or meaning' in poetry, as a necessary element only to the extent that it supports and employs 'the shape which is contemplated for its own sake', is the same view as that to be found in Suzanne Langer's *Philosophy in a New Key*.† Mrs. Langer expresses it by saying that 'Literal sense . . . is the "harmonic structure" of poetry'. This means in the end that the statements made in poetry are all 'pseudo-statements' (though not in I. A. Richards's sense), because the syntax in which they are framed is a pseudo-syntax, in which, for instance, the verbs do not mean what they seem to say, but only come in, where needed, to resolve a kinæsthetic tension or provide an illusion of movement or thrust.

Sir Herbert, who is an admirer of Mrs Langer's work and appeals to her authority here, takes over this view of poetry and in the light of it reviews the course of English poetry since the Romantic Revival. It is not clear whether his survey is meant to be exhaustive; but it is kindest to assume that it is not, since there is in the whole book no reference to Emily Brontë, and one only, in passing, to Thomas Hardy, though there are five distressing pages (87–92), in which the poetic pretensions of Arnold, Patmore and Bridges are summarily dismissed. One cannot be certain whether Sir Herbert is dismissing these poets out of the world of poetry altogether, or only out of Romantic poetry. Indeed, it seems to

* Herbert Read. *The True Voice of Feeling*. Studies in English Romantic Poetry. Faber and Faber, 25s.
† See 'Syntax in Poetry and Music,' *The Twentieth Century* (February, 1953).

amount to the same thing, to judge from the few cursory and contemptuous references to 'classicism'. In the Introduction, indeed, we learn that classicism is an 'alternative and defensible attitude in literature, and in life'; but elsewhere we read of 'a formidable false tradition – the tradition of Dryden and Pope, erected to pontifical magnitude by Dr Johnson'. And, for the most part, we might be back with some late-Victorian critic, assuming that romanticism is 'the real thing', that English poetry found itself in 1798, and that great or good poets of earlier ages (not Pope however, nor Dryden) were all Romantics without knowing it.

The hall-marks of Romanticism, as Sir Herbert Read understands it, are 'organic form' and 'the cult of sincerity', and the tradition guided by these two principles is traced from Coleridge through Wordsworth, Keats and Hopkins, with a digression on Whitman and Lawrence, and so, through T. E. Hulme, to Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Sir Herbert finds it rather difficult, sometimes, to thread all these names on to his one string. Thus Pound, who is not usually taken for an ungenerous or spiteful person, has gone out of his way to deny that he was influenced by Hulme so greatly as Sir Herbert has to suppose; and there are a couple of pages where this has to be explained away. Hulme himself very firmly aligned himself in opposition to Romanticism; a point Sir Herbert does not consider. And there is a radical disagreement between Coleridge and Hulme about the nature of poetic language, for Coleridge believed that 'the best part of human language . . . is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts', and this is quite incompatible with 'imagism' as Hulme understood it; this, which Sir Herbert acknowledges as a crux, he resolves by calling in Cassirer and Suzanne Langer to Hulme's defence, and then roundly asserting that Coleridge is wrong.

Greater difficulties arise from Sir Herbert's identification of 'organic form' with 'free verse'. He thinks of 'form' in poetry as, in the first place, metrical form; this is unusual nowadays and welcome, for it is high time our prosody was rehabilitated. (Modern criticism has grown vaguer about 'movement', the more precise it has become about language.) On the other hand, other aspects of poetic form, such as diction, tend to be forgotten or to get only casual treatment. Sir Herbert considers diction in the light of two principles: first, the hard-and-fast rule, derived from Hulme, that concrete images are always and everywhere a good thing, all other words in poetry being lumped together and condemned as 'abstractions' (cf. the comments on a passage from Patmore on page 91); and second, the rule that the diction of a poet should be distinctively personal, owing as little as possible to the practice of earlier masters (cf. the essay on Keats, where the first *Hyperion* is condemned as Miltonic, but *The Fall of Hyperion* is preferred even to the *Odes*, because in the

latter the diction owes much to Shakespeare, to Chatterton and to *Lycidas*). As a result, Sir Herbert discusses the diction of *The Fall of Hyperion* without saying anything of such barbarous eccentricities as 'Soft-mitigated by divinest lids' – a constant and conspicuous feature of Keatsian diction, which must surely be accounted for.

At no point does Sir Herbert offer a definition of 'free verse', and perhaps it is just as well, for by leaving the term indefinite he can stretch it to include not only the sprung rhythm of Hopkins, the quantitative verse of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* and the three-or-four-stress accentual line of *The Cocktail Party*, but also (mirabile dictu) Wordsworthian blank-verse. Sir Herbert thinks that blank-verse is regular only when he can find five firm stresses for each line, in a tumti-tum iambic pattern. Because the stresses in Wordsworth's lines range from three to six, he concludes that the metre is so irregular it can be called 'free'; but of course there is an even wider variety in Milton, and five-stress tumti-tum lines would be unreadable. He says that 'we may allow the lines a regularity of syllabic content. But that is about all the regularity they possess'. What more does he want? It is the regular syllabic content (ten syllables, in special cases nine or eleven) that makes the metre what it is. And this regularity is nothing arbitrary, mechanical, or external, for as a result of it the metre does what Pound says, 'magnetizes certain rhythms'. If blank-verse were what Sir Herbert claims ('My contention is that blank-verse is virtually free verse . . .'), there would have been no need for Pound to spend so much time getting rid of it as a stereotype in the minds of his readers – 'To break the pentameter that was the first heave . . .'. Far from rehabilitating our prosody, Sir Herbert Read disintegrates it still further, and stands forth as telling evidence how far the prosodical traditions have been lost.

I think that not one of the poets he examines would agree with him in what he says of their metres. Thus he has to admit that 'Generally speaking (and this differentiates his theory and practice from later "free verse") Hopkins insists on the need for a repetition of the form and figure in poetry'. Hulme goes on record (page 102) as saying, 'The kind of verse I advocate is not the same as *vers libre*'. Wordsworth's view of metre does not fit the book, and has to be controverted with Coleridge's assistance. And Coleridge himself cannot be allowed to get away with his assertion that 'the metre of Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular'. Oddly enough, the only one of these poets (if we exclude Eliot) who explicitly claims to write 'free verse' is Lawrence; and his claim is disallowed!

Sir Herbert Read has to find 'free verse' in each of his chosen masters, because he believes as follows:—

> The form of a work of art is inherent in the emotional situation of the

> artist; it proceeds from his apprehension of that situation (a situation that may involve either external objective phenomena or internal states of mind) and is the creation of a formal equivalence (i.e., a symbol) for that situation. It resists or rejects all attempts to fit the situation to a ready-made formula of expression, believing that to impose such a generalized shape on a unique emotion or intuition results in insincerity of feeling and artificiality of form.

Because he believes this, Sir Herbert has to reject all the conventional metres because they are 'ready-made formulæ' or 'generalized shapes'. Syntactical structures, such as the grammarian's 'full sentence', are ready-made formulæ in the same way; and these must be rejected too, or, if the forms of syntax are retained, those forms must be empty phantoms, a pseudo-syntax, not a true one. So it comes about that the poetry which strives to be 'sincere' is necessarily a poetry that does not mean what it says. It does not mean what it says because it is trying for something else; it is trying to *be* what it says. Most people when they read 'There is a pleasure in the pathless woods', take this as a true statement of Byron's views about the relationship between one sort of pleasure and paths and woods. Not at all, say Sir Herbert and Mrs Langer; the only 'statement' that Byron proffers as true ('sincere') is the whole of the poem in which this line occurs, and the whole function of the line is to contribute a rhythm and two images ('paths' and 'woods') to the inclusive shape, the *Gestalt* of the whole work. The relationship set up here between 'pleasure' and 'pathless woods', a relationship of syntax, is not to be taken seriously; the only relationship between them that is to be taken in all seriousness is the relationship between them as parts of a massive whole. That this line by Byron has the form of a grammatical statement is, on this view, accidental, of no significance; as is the fact that, in its context, it is an iambic pentameter. Byron, we are invited to suppose, was simple enough to think that the statements of his poetry had to conform apparently, externally, to these two conventions, one grammatical, the other metrical; we (so the argument runs) know better.

As I have remarked, this view, at least as Sir Herbert Read puts it forward, is nothing new; it only carries to a logical conclusion views and prejudices that are the common property of any freshman – the assumption, for instance, that, in talking of literature, 'conventional' and 'artificial' are terms of dispraise, set over against the complimentary adjectives 'natural' (more fashionably, 'organic') and 'sincere'. If to be conventional is to be insincere, then to be sincere the poet must be both ungrammatical and metrically loose, for the forms of grammar, like the forms of traditional metre, are conventions. A very plain example is at the end of the last quotation – 'insincerity of feeling and artificiality of form'. For Sir Herbert, it is clear, the two things go together. Yet if poetry is an art, if poems are

artefacts, how can poetic forms be other than artificial? And if they are, why should this condemn them?

There is, it is true, one alternative. A thinker who believes like Sir Herbert Read that the conventional is insincere, can still save authentic syntax for poetry by arguing that syntactical forms are 'natural', not conventional. This was the strikingly original contribution of Ernest Fenollosa, who argued that the movement of the transitive sentence from subject through verb to object reproduced a natural law such as we see, for instance, in the movement of lightning from a cloud to the earth. In his chapter on Pound, Sir Herbert paraphrases this part of Fenollosa's argument, but he misses its significance as completely as Pound has done, and concentrates instead on the much less original part of Fenollosa's thought in which he comes nearest to T. E. Hulme, his insistence that the substance of poetic language is 'the concrete image, the *thing*.'

This affection for concretions, the conviction that in poetry words ought to take on the denseness and angularity of the things they stand for, is something that cuts across nearly all the alignments of schools and factions in modern criticism. 'Concreteness', 'particularity' are words of blessing in the critical vocabulary of our time. And it would be foolish to deny that this characteristically modern emphasis has helped to improve our poetry, making both poet and reader see images in their hard and dry uniqueness, cleaned of fuzziness. Nevertheless it may be that the doctrine has outlived its usefulness, for some poetry to-day is so crowded and cluttered with 'things' that the reader cannot see the wood for the trees. In any case, it is time to realize that the earlier theorists like Hulme and Fenollosa raised this doctrine on theoretical pillars which have since been knocked away. Sir Herbert Read reproduces, without comment, Fenollosa's argument:

> To represent intangible qualities, the unseen, the Chinese use the metaphorical process; that is, 'the use of material images to suggest immaterial relations'.

But Jespersen has proved that the metaphorical process is not like this; primitive races, far from reaching out to the unseen by analogy from the seen, apprehend in the first place whole experiences in which the seen and the unseen elements, the phenomenal and the numinous, are inextricably compounded. It is only at a later stage in the development of language that the speaker learns to distinguish the tangible from the intangible, and to see a gap between them, across which the spark of metaphor may leap. The spiritual world is not built up by metaphor from the tangible world; the original massive metaphorical compounds are later broken down – a truth first recognized, in a flash of splendid insight, two hundred years ago, by Vico, and scientifically traced in our

day by Jespersen. As F. C. Pollock has pointed out, this corresponds to the psychologist's insistence that the only concretion is the 'experience', so that these much-praised particularized images, these 'things', are not concretions at all, but strictly speaking themselves abstractions from experience. The enormous importance for poetic theory of Jespersen's linguistic discoveries was recognized years ago by Owen Barfield in his *Poetic Diction*, a work which got hardly more attention when it was reprinted last year, than it did on its first appearance.

The upshot is that poets and critics have to overhaul thoroughly their use of the terms 'concretion' and 'abstraction', and their conviction, which they get from Hulme, that the imagination deals only in concretions. When they do so, Coleridge stands to gain. For Coleridge, as Sir Herbert Read admits, was suspicious of thinking in images, and declared 'it is this power of abstraction that chiefly distinguishes the human understanding from that of the higher animals – and in the different degrees in which this power is developed, the superiority of man over man mainly consists'. Faced at this point with the necessity to choose between Coleridge and Hulme, Sir Herbert Read plumps for Hulme and declares, 'There can be no reconciliation of the opposed modes of expression indicated by the terms "abstraction" and "imagination"; and the only possibility of a philosophical or metaphysical *poetry* is a transformation of abstractions into concrete images'. I think there is more to be said on Coleridge's side of this question than Sir Herbert allows for. Indeed, he himself seems to allow it elsewhere, as when he writes, 'The whole tendency of Shelley, on the contrary, is towards a clarification and abstraction of thought – away from the personal and the particular towards the general and the universal'. Yet this, that damns Patmore, is not (it seems) to damn Shelley.

This essay on Shelley comes in Part Two which is headed 'Essays Ancillary to the Main Theme', and contains four substantial pieces, none of them entirely new: 'Coleridge as Critic', 'Wordsworth's Philosophical Faith', 'In Defence of Shelley', and 'Byron'. This part of the book is rather more convincing than the so-called 'Main Theme', and the relation of Part Two to Part One, though defined as 'ancillary', is in fact by no means clear. It is best, I think, to consider each of these longer essays as a self-contained, independent investigation. The most successful is the wide-ranging and closely argued 'Coleridge as Critic'. The most ambitious and eloquent is 'In Defence of Shelley'. Here Mr Eliot comes under fire:—

> . . . we must come to the conclusion that Mr Eliot's objection to Shelley's poetry is irrelevant prejudice . . .; and such, I would suggest, is the kind of poetic approach of all who believe, with Mr Eliot, that 'literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint'.

One may agree whole-heartedly with this, as with the larger proposition that Shelley has had shabby treatment from recent generations of readers, and yet feel nothing but dismay that, in illustrating an alternative method and making a better case for Shelley, Sir Herbert Read should have to make a wide detour into psychological theory:—

> the only kind of criticism which is basic, and therefore complementary not only to technical exegesis but also to ethical, theological, philosophical and every other kind of ideological criticism, is ontogenetic criticism, by which I mean criticism which traces the origins of the work of art in the psychology of the individual and in the economic structure of society.

This begs one very simple question. For what Sir Herbert calls 'technical exegesis', that is, examination of poetry in its own terms of diction, structure, and metre, is the one thing that he never gives us. Part Two of this book seems better than Part One, because in Part Two he makes hardly any gestures in this direction, while in Part One he does, and in doing so reveals how inadequate are his own notions of metre and diction. If Mr Eliot in his later criticism departs too rapidly from poetry, as an arrangement of words, into questions of ethical and theological bearing, so does Sir Herbert, though in other directions, towards idealist metaphysics and psychological speculation. When he attempts 'technical exegesis' he shows up badly; he is far happier philosophizing and psychologizing about poetry. And this is, no doubt, a legitimate activity; but we should not deceive ourselves, as Sir Herbert does, into thinking that it is literary criticism. He says that such speculation is 'complementary' to technical exegesis: but in his own practice it is a substitute for such exegesis.

What distinguishes this work, as it distinguishes everything that Sir Herbert Read produces, is the generosity of the feeling and the purity of the intention. Moreover, his taste is on the whole reliable, and of course there are to be found valuable insights thrown out by the way (on Pound's early poems, for instance, and on Byron) which I have not had a chance to remark upon. All the same, the book as a whole strikes one as very disappointing; it is likely to be influential, and its influence will be bad, for it uses poetry only as a point of departure for excursions into metaphysics and ethics. That good poetry has a metaphysical and ethical bearing, I should be the last to deny; but what this bearing is can only be determined by looking at the poetry itself closely and patiently. A rapid glance over the page, the apprehension of a general effect, is insufficient basis for such superstructures of speculation as are here erected. Too often, Sir Herbert Read's essays are built on the shifting sand of general impressions.

'SYRINGA, IV'RY PURE'

David Paul

She was, by her own account, 'a tall woman'; perhaps not so much tall as erect and slight. The portraits agree in suggesting the grace and neatness, the nice balance of a Tanagra figurine – 'like a beautiful statue' Cassandra says of her in her last illness – and perhaps there was a hint of a Greek quality in the small head, the large dark eyes. There is something permanently and rightly disconcerting about her appearance, as compared with one's conception of what it ought to be. One might expect a face of transparent refinement, the clearest of light grey eyes, the features rather chiselled to the bone. On the contrary, the face is round, if not quite plump, the features small and concentrated. It is a face which might look all eyes, and often it probably did; eyes innocently inscrutable and merry, eyes essentially alarming to any sense, particularly any male sense of vanity. One can see them suddenly and widely lifted, to raise an unaccountable, irritable blush in the face they looked at. The complexion was 'brown', and in latter years she is plaintive, after an illness, about her colour having passed through all shades, including black; but ideally it may have been like that of one of her least-known heroines:

> 'Her skin was very brown but clear, smooth and glowing, which with a lively eye, a sweet smile, and an open countenance, gave beauty to attract, and expression to improve that beauty on acquaintance.'

The two Austen girls were unquestionably pretty, and within their own circle distinguished – with a something starched about Cassandra, something of the unmarried widow, after her youthful engagement and the death of her fiancé. As they progressed, unwed and apparently unperturbed through their twenties, they seem to have developed an untouchable quality, slightly irksome to themselves as well as being a little estranging to acquaintances, though not to friends. Jane, in 1801 at the age of twenty-six, decides to think better of a certain Mrs Chamberlayne because 'she remembers us in Gloucestershire, when we were very charming young women'. Charming, one feels sure, and perhaps a little frightening too. In order to parry the look of loneliness which convention inevitably conferred on the spinster, no doubt their manner had to become

* *Jane Austen's Letters.* Collected and edited by R. W. Chapman, Oxford University Press, 42*s*.

more and more self-contained. Impossible quite to avoid a certain rigidity. Cassandra, having lost the first object of her devotion, became the most devoted of sisters, an infinitely precious, and yet at times a slightly trying boon. As for Jane, there was an occasional proposal to be laughed at and kept a secret, perhaps once something more serious to be kept more secret still. Beneath the steady monotone of the letters to Cassandra, between 1798 and 1811, there is a note, not of irritation or boredom, but of a careful suppression, a holding in check of both feelings. Much as she loved Cassandra, the letters are curiously un-intimate. Jane never puts herself into her letters; she puts into them all the minutiæ of daily existence, but not herself, not her real feelings. Compare them for a moment with those of Jane Welsh Carlyle (a sister in temperament) and see how the later Jane flings herself for release, for escape, for salvation almost, into letter after letter.

Jane Austen was acutely aware of her position in her world. Free from the visionary myopia of the Brontës, she saw her lot as it would be seen by a casual or critical eye, with wonderful detachment. From what little is said one can legitimately guess at how much more was felt. How deeply it may have been resented, how galling it may have been at moments in the sense of its inescapable, petty continuity, is another matter. There is a distinct strain of stoicism in the long letters that cover the barren years. From any outward view it was a poor life, a frustrated one. But for a woman who could, in imagination, make the utmost demands on the intelligence, wit and integrity of her acquaintance, for a woman who had been a writer of genius and the highest of spirits at the age of sixteen, Jane Austen was a singularly undemanding person. What were the spoken or unspoken thoughts of her admirable, successful and intelligent brothers on her score? 'Dear Jane. Poor Jane. An old maid now. I wonder what became of that novel she sent to a publisher's a few years ago? Wasn't it to appear some time?' To suppose as much is not to make wild assumptions. Life was perhaps more of a disappointment, one's position more a thing to be pitied, as seen from the outside than from within. Both views were considered and philosophically assessed with a clear eye.

To be well-connected but poor – she refused to play a game of speculation twice in a social evening because, she told Cassandra, she could not possibly afford the extra three shillings – to be faced by the all too obvious prospect of a lonely and impoverished middle and old age was certainly not as picturesque or as tragic a lot as that of the Brontës. To a woman of spirit it may have been more subtly trying – though certainly Jane would have preferred to be surrounded by the amenities of Bath or London, such as they were, or by a village of dirty or clean roads, than to be surrounded by the moors. Nevertheless she would perfectly have under-

stood the temperament and position of the Brontës – Marianne Dashwood is evidence enough of her knowledge of emotional violence – while remaining perfectly incomprehensible – and negligible – to them.

No letters were ever written with less thought of posterity than these. We can imagine the writer's astonishment at the undreamt-of scrutiny, the thousands of eyes which have now scanned them and, almost invariably, found them wanting. Certainly they are not satisfactory letters from the point of view either of literary merit or – and how could they be? – of a necessarily insatiable curiosity. They tell so much, and all of it is so little – and that at least would be eminently satisfactory to the writer. They retail all the littleness of daily life and withhold as much else as they reasonably and possibly could. That she should have a passion for her own reserve, even when writing to her sister, is an essential if disconcerting part of her fineness of character. And however irksome the daily lot may have been, she was not one to fly out at it. She was perfectly aware of such satisfaction as the small contentments could give, and for the letter-writer they were a continual refuge:

> Our Garden is putting in order, by a Man who bears a remarkably good character, has a very fine complexion & asks something less than the first. The shrubs which border the gravel walk he says are only sweetbriar & roses, & the latter of an indifferent sort; we mean to get a few of a better kind therefore, & at my own particular desire he procures us some Syringas. I could not do without a Syringa, for the sake of Cowper's Line. – We talk also of a Laburnam. – The Border under the Terrace Wall, is clearing away to receive Currants and Gooseberry bushes, & a spot is found very proper for raspberries. – The alterations and improvements within doors too advance very properly, & the offices will be made very convenient indeed. – Our Dressing-Table is constructing on the spot, out of a large Kitchen Table, belonging to the House, for doing which we have the permission of Mr Husket Lord Lansdown's Painter, – domestic Painter I shd call him, for he lives in the Castle. – Domestic Chaplains have given way to this more necessary office, & I suppose whenever the walls want no touching up, he is employed about my Lady's face.

> The chicken are all alive and fit for the table, but we save them for something grand. Some of the flower seeds are coming up very well, but your mignonette makes a wretched appearance. Miss Benn has been equally unlucky as to hers. She had seed from four different people, and none of it comes up. Our young piony at the foot of the fir-tree has just blown and looks very handsom. and the whole of the shrubbery border will soon be very gay with pinks and sweet-williams, in addition to the columbines already in bloom. The syringas, too, are coming out. We are likely to have a great crop of Orleans plumbs, but not many greengages on the standard scarcely any, three or four dozen, perhaps, against the wall.

In the dearth of much else it becomes important to know of the preference for syringas, and for 'Cowper's Line':

> Laburnam, rich
> In streaming gold, syringa, iv'ry pure

just as it becomes important to know that she and her sister-in-law are regaling themselves on 'Tomatas' every day; or to imagine, and realize if possible, some of the innumerable but often elusive details of appearance:

> Mr Hall was very punctual yesterday, and curled me out at a great rate. I thought it looked hideous, and longed for a snug cap instead, but my companions silenced me by their admiration. I had only a bit of velvet round my head. I did not catch cold however. The weather is all in my favour. I have had no pain in my face since I left you.

But beyond the monotonous fascination of all the minutiæ, how much can coherently be read of the character and life of the woman and the writer? When the details are peered at through a magnifying glass she can be accused of coarseness of feeling, a trait over which her tenderer admirers have often shaken their heads. But it can be argued that she was merely not sentimental. She had, too, something of the hardness, the callousness, of the excessively fastidious, a disposition she shares with other writers of a classic temperament – with Racine and La Rochefoucauld, for example. In her last years of life, an invalid, how understandable it is that she should be revolted (who would not be, to-day?) by the relentless, the killing fertility into which most of the married women of her family and acquaintance were compelled? 'Anna has not a chance of escape; her husband called here the other day, & said she was *pretty* well but not *equal* to so long a walk; she must come in her *Donkey Carriage*. – Poor Animal, she will be worn out before she is thirty. – I am very sorry for her. – Mrs Clement too is in that way again. I am quite tired of so many children. – Mrs Benn has a thirteenth.'

It is safer not to be too much tempted by the magnifying glass. One must draw back and consider what outline there may be, even if it consists largely of gaps and blurs. What light do the letters throw on the novels and the novels on the letters? Apart from the one or two comments which have been too often quoted to need mention, Jane Austen as a novelist was remarkably reticent about her views, still more so about her feelings. But the long silences are eloquent in themselves. One must remember from the beginning that she was a writer born, and that, reticent as she might be she must have felt all the impulses and anxieties which the need for fulfilment and the fact of frustration were bound to provoke. Fulfilment within the family circle was ample for the writer in her teens. It prompted that 'heroi-comical' novel, *Love and Freindship*, a masterpiece in its kind, even if it is alone in its kind. One might have imagined that the mature writer would have forgotten it, but there is a precise allusion to it in one of the later letters which remained unintelligible until the manuscript was

found. With the novels that followed, *First Impressions* and *Elinor and Marianne*, the writer had reached the need of a wider audience, and had arrived in an *impasse*.

Publication, it seemed, was impossible to attain. No doubt the efforts to attain it were few, unadvised, tentative, but their failure for the time – and it proved a long time – was decisive in its deterrent effects on the writer, and may have been trying indeed to her admirable self-control. There is no explicit hint of it in the letters, apart from an almost peevish exclamation that a certain friend shall not read *First Impressions* again. To have no way of reaching the impersonal public, and at the same time to be teased by the curiosity and criticism of one's personal friends, would be no less an ordeal for being a silent one. This state of affairs continued until 1803, when the manuscript of *Susan*, later to be *Northanger Abbey*, was sold to a publisher for £10, followed by advertisements in the press, and the promise of publication forthwith. It is astonishing to remember that *Susan* had been begun in 1798, and that the author herself later said that there had been many years between the commencement and completion of this, the slightest and least perfect of her six novels. *Emma*, the masterpiece, was to be written in a little over a year. The fact indicates a painful, uncertain and scrupulous apprenticeship, after the easy and brilliant beginnings. Already there was an infinity capacity for taking pains, and they were not pleasurable or even altogether successful pains.

There can be little doubt, I think, that *The Watsons* was begun in 1803 on the impetus of having completed and – it seemed – successfully disposed of *Susan*. It remains a brilliant fragment, of a world as complete in itself as that of the other novels, and as different from them as they are from each other. And how totally succinct – in spite of the basic uniformity of style and creative pattern – the world of each novel is in itself. To imagine Marianne Dashwood making an appearance at Hartfield, or Emma Woodhouse at Mansfield Park, is almost like imagining Lady Macbeth in Arden, or Rosalind on Timon's sea-shore. *The Watsons* would have been such another world, but it stops, after fifty pages, as suddenly as it begins. The most reasonable of writers cannot have abandoned it without reason, and there is nothing within the work to explain the silence. It seems to me that exterior discouragement is the only discoverable, and almost certainly the right reason. After some time it must have been clear that Messrs Crosby, having bought the manuscript of *Susan*, had no intention of using it. This was to be tantalized indeed. And the process lasted six years, until the writer plucked up courage to make an inquiry.

> I can only account for such an extraordinary circumstance by supposing the MS. by some carelessness to have been lost; and if that was the case, am willing to supply you with another copy if you are disposed to avail yourselves of it, & will engage for no farther delay when it comes into your hands.

A highly justifiable impatience was met with simple rudeness:—

> There was not any time stipulated for its publication, neither are we bound to publish it. . . . The MS. shall be yours for the same as we paid for it.
>
> No, indeed [she writes in 1811], I am never too busy to think of S. and S. I can no more forget it than a mother can forget her sucking child; and I am much obliged to you for your enquiries. . . . Mrs K. regrets in the most flattering manner that she must wait till May, but I have scarcely a hope of its being out in June.

But it was another six years before it was bought back. No doubt the rebuffs suffered by the Brontës in their attempts at publication are more to be pitied, against their background. The alternative, for Jane Austen, was not to be 'teacher in a school' or make the long journey to Belgium. But a plight which affects only one's personal and least communicable needs, which cannot be complained of, or even very well solicit the sympathy of a sister, may be the subtlest of all in its trial of the nerves and of the ability to continue in one's course. The long creative silence was one of discouragement. No wonder if the letters of the period to Cassandra are bright, but not happy letters. Their monotone just conceals impatience, a sense of aridity, a steady dwindling of feeling and of the capacity to respond. They are at once dispirited and considerate in tone. 'Poor Mrs Stent!' she writes in 1805, 'It has been her lot to be always in the way; but we must be merciful, for perhaps in time we may come to be Mrs Stents ourselves, unequal to anything and unwelcome to everybody.' Youth and high spirits, by the age of thirty, had reached a dreary enough prospect.

Perhaps it was desperation of a kind which prompted a fresh beginning, a complete re-writing of *Elinor and Marianne*, about 1809, as a last resource. If so, the artist very soon took charge. The result, *Sense and Sensibility*, is in a way the most consummately written, the most delicately considered, of all her works. Returning to it after so long, she approached it almost as a period piece. With its publication, her world was to be changed, so little and yet so decisively.

Excitement could not be concealed, though it is never dwelt on. The success of this first book was to prompt the steady activity of the next six years. With the first appearance of *Pride and Prejudice*, she writes: 'I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child from London.' Only Dr Chapman, the immensely erudite, patient and scrupulous editor of the Letters, can confirm me, but I suspect that this is the one occasion throughout their length of the use of the term 'darling'.

It is useless to imagine, but one must take account of the pleasures and the small, feverish anxieties of the years of activity. A list of opinions on the novels was compiled – mostly those of friends and acquaintances, and

throwing more light on the readers than on the works. There was always an impatience to know what would be thought of work in progress. There was the inevitable accession of undreamed-of – and disconcerting – admirers; – the Prince Regent, of all improbables surely the greatest, and according to a more recently discovered letter of 1813, one of the least to be desired. 'Poor Woman', she writes of the Princess of Wales's trial, 'I shall support her as long as I can, because she *is* a Woman, and because I hate her husband – but I can hardly forgive her for calling herself "attached and affectionate" to a Man whom she must detest.' There were the total misunderstandings of approval and admiration, the impossible requests. 'An historical romance', a Royal chaplain wrote to her in 1816, 'illustrative of the history of the august House of Coburg would just now be very interesting.' There was the fever of impatience when *Emma's* publication was delayed and no proofs were forthcoming: the continual anxiety in case a new work should fall below the standard of the others: and the naive but haunting fear of finding one's own story and one's own people 'all forestalled' in the work of another.

But underlying the gratifications, annoyances and rewards that went with a modest success, there was the dwelling satisfaction of the artist in a fulfilment which, after so many silent set-backs, must scarcely have been looked for. Much may have been lost because it did not come earlier; it has to be sufficient that it came at all, and brought so complete a realization of her gifts, a completeness which continues to reveal itself in the mind indefinitely. Her work stands to that of other novelists very much as the work of Vermeer stands in relation to that of the other Dutch painters of his century; inexhaustible in its capacity for renewing itself within the same narrow limits. In the letters one can just trace here and there hints of the beginnings of the process by which the common object or experience assumes its special meaning within a created unity; just as a vase or a fruit assumes its real meaning, comes into its own, as it were, inside a painting. As with all work in which the result seems incalculably perfect, the process must have been one of continuous, intensive and highly conscious calculation.

BOOK NOTES

THE ERA OF GOOD FEELING, by George Dangerfield. (Methuen and Co., 30*s*.) The history of America in the nineteenth century is most often presented as a thing apart in which a foundling pursues its own unique destiny in splendid solitude from the affairs of Western society. All nations claim uniqueness, but perhaps America's nineteenth century assurance that it was the Utopia where the weary of Europe could find a different life was taken more seriously even by Europeans than most. Was it that distance lent enchantment? Or was it the fantasy of American development with its continental aspirations? Whatever it was, American historians have done little to disabuse the outside world or indeed themselves. They have taken American hopes and European dreams at their face value; for them America has been in but not of the nineteenth century and whatever America has become since 1900, her formative frontier years have left the stamp of originality upon her. The frontier has vanished, but it has left its deposit in the American memory as a dispensation which sets it apart.

Mr Dangerfield has called in the old world to redress the new. The domestic affairs of the United States and its foreign policy are shown to be two sides of the same coin; America is put into its proper relationship to the great event of the nineteenth century, the *pax Britannica* of industry and liberalism – just like any other country. He traces the fortunes of Jeffersonian agrarianism as it becomes transformed into Jacksonianism during the administrations of Monroe and John Quincy Adams, but he does not see this resurgence of agrarianism as a movement powered solely by American energy. The liberal Toryism of Liverpool and Canning provided the opportunity for land expansion and the issues for tariff controversies. They saw 'a certain connection between the expansion of the United States and the growth of British industry'. It was the fate of Adams to be the fool of the drama, for he found himself defeated by both forces. Despite his protectionist, nationalist philosophy the network of British capitalism captured America; but the victory was not one of brute economic force, for Mr Dangerfield shows that its significance lay in its siren call to agrarianism. Persistently growing between 1814 and 1829 in opposition to the centralizing business ideals of the wealthy, the power politics of agrarianism included the bloody imperialism of the War of 1812 and the conquest of Florida – where in true imperialist style the natives were

literally blown sky-high by gunpowder – and an economic alliance i which the farmers' staples would be exchanged for British manufacture goods. The book has a wide sweep and a brilliant, though often pompous style. The complications of the diplomacy of the Monroe Doctrine, th curious reasonings of John Marshall's Supreme Court decisions, and th disasters of Adams's administration do not obscure the ground bass – th rise of an agrarian philosophy.

What was this agrarianism? The product of the effervescent mind o Jefferson, and the ebullient frontier, it is the quintessence of the unique ness which America claims. It smacks of the frontier way of life and of th new American man to be created from virgin forests. Mr Dangerfield defines the agrarian mind as one which 'liked to think of American society as a society of independent property-owners'. Jackson's philosophy, h says, 'did not carry him much beyond an attack on monopoly in th interest of the small businessman and the small property-owner'. On wishes that Mr Dangerfield had pushed his analysis of the interaction o America and Europe further by looking at these ideas from European shores. For agrarianism, frontier or no, was the same philosophy of th independent entrepreneur which Europe at this time was erecting int a soul-saving dogma. The agrarian programme was the American equiva lent of English radicalism, with its humanitarian and political reform designed to free the individual's acquisitive instincts. With its talk of self reliance, self-education and self-progress, what was this frontier ethos bu Samuel Smiles in deerskin? Mr Dangerfield calls Jefferson's teachings 'strange trans-atlantic version of the way of an English Whig'. He does no point out that Jackson's agrarianism was a trans-atlantic version of Ben thamite radicalism.

Nineteenth-century individualism, it might be claimed, finds its mos perfect expression in agrarianism, for while the accent has a twang th words are the same. Yet it had an appearance of ferocity which has caused many Americans to think of it as the saviour of their liberties. Mr Danger field describes its battle against business for which it has become famous but he allows the quarrel to obscure the similarity between the two forms of individualism. Brothers can quarrel, and the debtor-creditor struggle real though it was, was not one between two classes, as the author would have it, but one between two propertied groups. It is this struggle, and the philosophy of one party to it, which has provided the stuff of the American liberalism which stretches from Populism to the New Deal. There is a difference between the social system of European private enterprise and that of the American frontier farmer; the frontier was prolific with opportunity and hence the ideal of the independent property-owner spread through all the ranks of the nation. It is an important difference;

America is not Europe writ large. But neither is it the lost Atlantis. Agrarianism was peculiarly a nineteenth-century concept; the only thing distinctively American about it was its name. In this, as in so many of its developments, America participated in the history of its times. American isolationism is less a political fact than a state of mind in which it refuses to join the history of its own civilization. Ironically, this sense of uniqueness was itself a typical product of nineteenth-century Europe.

WILLIAM J. NEWMAN.

FACING MOUNT KENYA, by Jomo Kenyatta. (Secker and Warburg, pp. 339, illustrated, 18*s*.) This is, of course, a reprint from 1938 of one of the very few modern works on African anthropology to receive such an honour. It is also as revealing a programme of action as was the work of another great demagogue, who knew his people, *Mein Kampf*. The style is looser and more concrete than the usual dehydrated Cartesianism elaborated by the latest generation of anthropologists into a scholasticism that may be admirable, but is also unreadable. True, we have the usual apparatus of tribal origin and kinship system, land tenure, economic life, industry, education, initiation, sex life, marriage system, government, religion. But there is the subtle difference, the addition of faith, a greater emphasis on sex, religion, emotion, a continuous polemic against the cold science that would otherwise list this total expression of human life, with as little engagement as an entomologist listing lepidoptera, or an animal breeder cataloguing possible combinations of in-groups and out-groups.

It would be interesting to know the impact upon readers. Those who do not understand religion will probably treat it as unintelligible, but ask, why should not the Kikuyu be left to their social devices, clitoridectomy and the rest? Those who are interested in the kind of things that Kenyatta is interested in may read with a lively but shuddering dread:

In their prayer to Mwene-Nyaga they hold up their arms to the sky facing Mount Kenya; and in this position they recite their prayers, and in doing so they imitate the cries of wild beasts of prey, such as lion and leopard, and at the same time they tremble violently. The trembling, they say, is the sign of the Holy Ghost, Roho Motheru, *entering them.*

It is at least valuable that the British people should at last come up against what is really involved in trying to alter the bases of life in vast areas of the world, with the intellectual and moral armoury of the era of gas-and-water socialism and Bernard Shaw.

HENRY STANZY.

PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, by Roy Lewis and Angus Maude, M.P. (Phœnix House Ltd., London, pp. 258, 18*s*.) follows their earlier book *The*

British Middle Classes and is complementary to it. There is again a great array of fact and argument, presented in a lively and often provocative style with little pretence of objectivity. The authors surprisingly claim that this book is not a political essay – presumably on the assumption that Conservative politics is not politics but common sense.

The authors find themselves in a tragic position because history is against them. They discuss the development of the professions and their position in present society and they do not like what they see. As they believe firmly and deeply in a society of inequality and privilege, they dislike such terms as 'community', 'fair shares' and 'redistribution of income' and treat them sarcastically. From their angle, our society today is a sorry spectacle. The present, as symbolized by the Welfare State, is destructive of traditional values and the future may be darker still. 'That almost hereditary professional aristocracy which is a peculiarly British institution' is filled with 'uneasiness, if not actual fear'. Nostalgically, they turn to the past when professional practice was private and fair sharing was unknown outside the family circle. Today an octopus State is stretching its tentacles far beyond its legitimate sphere, employing, diluting, underpaying, overtaxing and generally regimenting the professions, whose standards of work are declining. That small measure of private professional practice which still survives in the Welfare State is the only barrier against a further lowering of standards.

In what world do these people live? Standards for whom? Millions of people are now getting better professional services, particularly in the field of health, and they are very conscious of it. Without State intervention there would be no money to maintain the hospitals and no nurses to staff the wards. Tens of thousands of gifted children would have less education. It is true that some hereditary privileges have gone by the board. There is now an influx into the professions of large numbers of grant and scholarship holders who would formerly not have aspired to professional careers. Do they share the authors' view that a professional man with a family cannot be expected to get along with £2,000 a year? That he may have to pay a rent of £400 to £500, club fees at the rate of thirty guineas or more and wine bills of £150 a year besides much else? In the authors' opinion, these seem to be the conditions for the maintenance of professional standards.

The truth is that far from being 'a voracious user and spoiler of professional talent', the State has ensured that there are now more professional men and women, that their traditional freedoms are painstakingly respected, that they have a say in the policy and the administration of the services they provide and that they have greater security and usually also better incomes than before. Professions, by their very nature, are averse to

social change and take time to adjust themselves to new conditions. The medical profession, for instance, opposed the National Health Insurance Act in 1911 and the National Health Service Act in 1946, although doctors benefited greatly from both these Acts. The professions today have a higher status and greater influence than in the past and they are well on the way now to adjust themselves to the Welfare State and the part they have to play in it. It may well be true that the professions are benefiting more from it than any other group of the population.

HILDE FITZGERALD.

AN ITALIAN VISIT, by C. Day Lewis. (Jonathan Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) Although this is said to be an unpoetic age, we have, in English, several living poets of genuine ability and perhaps greatness. With his new volume, Mr Day Lewis moves towards the front rank. In one respect, he even surpasses his contemporaries. *An Italian Visit* is perfectly composed; there is nothing fragmentary or untidy about it, no hint of free-wheeling. This impression of an even distribution of strength, of something cleanly and tenderly finished, is very rare in English writing, where we are used to a more fitful glowing of genius. It may be that Mr Day Lewis, having neither religious belief nor a philosophical system nor even a definite political attitude to sustain him, has to give himself a framework of pure form. His work is an agnostic's meditation on the complexities of his personality, on the confusion of civilization, on love and death. He is, in a sense, the plain, educated man writing poetry, could the plain man do so.

If it is not an impertinence to make the remark, his initial impetus seems to be less the urgent bubbling of inspiration than an earnest love of poetry. Therefore, in his mature voice we can hear echoes of many others. No doubt, Arthur Hugh Clough suggested something of the approach to Rome. Also, one section of Mr Day Lewis's book consists of imitations, the best being of Yeats, Auden and Dylan Thomas. They are as perfect as Valéry's imitations of Verlaine and Hérédia; only an outstanding talent can do serious pastiche of this kind. Elsewhere, he shows in snatches what an excellent student of other poets he has been; we find many reminiscences of Eliot, and in particular the Eliot-like antithesis,

> whether we fly to the ends of the earth
> Or take a week-end ticket to Clacton. . . .

a Henry Reed naughtiness,

> Myself, I have always travelled light – eyes, ears, nose, fingers
> And one thing more I carry;

D. H. Lawrence's syntax and symbols,

> When cypresses jetted like fountains of wine-warm air
> Bubbling with fire-flies, we going outside
> In the palpitating dark to admire them,
> One of the fireflies pinned itself to her hair.

This ability to make deliberate, rather than instinctive, use of other poets does not offend, because Mr Day Lewis's own technical skill and image-creating power are so great. True to the tradition of the 'thirties, through most of the poem his mood varies between the conversational or semi-prosaic, tinged with humour or cynicism, and an occasional fullness of lyrical feeling. In both tones, he can achieve perfection. What could be better, for instance, than his lines on Henry James in Rome,

> Lapping the cream of antiquity, purring over
> Each vista that stroked his senses, and in brief
> Rubbing himself against Rome like a great tabby,

or, in a different key, than,

> Mornings, I ask a cloudless sky; or if clouds there must be,
> Billowy suds that have scoured the sky bluer than cornflowers:
> Acacia and lemon-blossoms shall drench me, mimosa dust me,
> Violet and rose be banked along my sauntering hours.

Some critics have complained about the facetiousness in six of the seven parts. I do not think it out of date or out of place. It is still true that in any honest poem written below the incantatory level, the emotion has to be punctured from time to time by bathos; the bathos itself is, in fact, emotional, poetic. I see nothing wrong with the following lines, describing Rome,

> The place has had
> Over two thousands years of advance publicity
> For us, which clouds the taste and saps the judgment.

I am less sure of the value of the whole of Section VI, *Elegy before Death*, which is clearly meant to be the major part of the poem, and in which one nostalgic mood is maintained for about two hundred lines. Here I feel more than a suspicion of fine writing. The images sometimes drag, because the movement which is meant to carry them is not spontaneous enough. Occasionally, the lines are faintly embarrassing; for instance,

> 'Ah, you,' she whispers, 'are you still harping
> On mortal delusion? still the too much hoping,
> Who needs only plant an acorn to dream a dryad's kiss?'

This rather reminds one of Meredith's *Modern Love*, in which, however, the overwrought style is redeemed in some small degree by the roughness of tone, suggesting violent passion. In Mr Day Lewis's *Elegy*, there is almost always great felicity of expression, but it tends to become too

smooth – slightly self-conscious or self-congratulatory. The tremor of emotion is just not quite right in

> It is love's way
> To shine most through the slow dusk of adieu.
> Long may it glow within us, that timeless, halcyon halt
> On our rough journey back to clay.

What is the weakness? Sentimentality? Pompousness? I cannot say, but the lines, perfectly written as they are, do not thrill as they should. The vessel is a shade too grand for the feeling that has been poured into it. The lines sound as if they came from a prize poem of genius and not 'from a condemned heart', as the poet would have us believe. They take us back, beyond the 'thirties, to the Georgians.

For me, then, *An Italian Visit* fails at its climax. In its six other sections, it excites continuous satisfaction and admiration. The description of the flight and of Rome are, in the highest sense, accomplished. On second reading, I think I am most moved by the close of the Dylan Thomas imitation. I have not yet understood 'temple of fins' or 'doll of a lithe dead dolphin', but the passage as a whole seems to be a wonderful picture of the blighting of lyricism, like a shadow running over the sea:

> But the sea
> Ran dry between two bars of foam, and the fine folk
> In the temple of fins were flailed away
> And the weed fell flat and the mermilk curdled,
> And buoyant no more to bliss are the miles where alone I play
> My running games that the waves once aisled,
> With a doll of a lithe dead dolphin saddled,
> And cold as the back of spring is my tale of the applefroth isles.

J. G. WEIGHTMAN.

BOOKS IN GENERAL, by V. S. Pritchett. (Chatto and Windus, 12*s.* 6*d.*) It is unusual for a critic to be at once unassuming and brilliant. The combination of these two virtues makes Mr Pritchett's *New Statesman* articles, of which this book is a collection, perhaps the best criticism now being written in England. Also, strangely enough, the most genuinely English. Mr Pritchett has sufficient knowledge of foreign literatures to see the English as English, that is, with their comparative denseness, their eccentricity, their saving complexity; yet he appears entirely at home and at peace in England. He is not cross about anything. He does not yearn for the Continent. He adopts no attitude, except perhaps a slight puckishness. He does not long for principles. He does not wish to convince. He does not even try to explain books to us. He assumes that, like him, we have read them, and takes us inside his mind where, with affection and common-sense, he is provisionally tidying up his impressions.

All this would seem to make for relaxed and tepid criticism. But it is here that the brilliance comes in. As Mr Pritchett tidies up, epigrams flash and aphorisms twinkle. He is one of the few prose-writers who think naturally and continuously in fresh images. Sometimes, in a little spurt of extra vitality, he deliberately topples a metaphor over into the absurd, but only for his own amusement; there is no licking of chops or pausing for applause; another image is already sprouting. And he manages to be both kind and lucid. Consequently, every page is bright with penetrating remarks, perfectly expressed. I re-open the book at random; on Zola:

> The terrible temptation towards one more operatic scene, one more orgy of sexual symbolism, visits the labouring Naturalist; he has covered the families, the professions, the industries, the passions. Megalomania points to the cities; perhaps if he enlarges enough, the weary rationalist will find a meaning to life.

On Boswell:

> Boswell's detachment comes from naïveté and humility. He was continually surprised by himself.

On Henry James's *Notebooks*:

> They confirm that the word was totally his form of life, as if sentences rather than blood ran in his veins. Outside of words lay the unspeakable.

On Samuel Butler:

> . . . a peculiarly English type of Worthy; the man who sets out to make recalcitrance respectable, even demure.

Mr Pritchett has not yet tried to make a system out of his 'insights', as the Americans call them, although they seem to imply the existence of one, which could be made more explicit. Meanwhile, he is our greatest upholder of the dignity of literary journalism.

J. G. WEIGHTMAN.

POLITICAL TRACTS OF WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE AND SHELLEY, edited, with an introduction, by R. J. White. (C.U.P., 30*s*.) THE FRENCH LITTELTON, by Claudius Holyband (1609), with an introduction by M. St. Clare Byrne. (C.U.P., 18*s*.) Two volumes of reprints from the C.U.P. Both editors claim that the works in question have an interest for the general reader, as distinct from the student. This is hardly true at all in the case of the second volume, whose only appeal is the insipid quaintness of an out-of-date language primer. The first, however, brings usefully together the major political writings of the three Romantic poets, and the general reader, if he is used to making a rather arduous effort, can tackle them. But it is doubtful whether they can have more than a literary or historical interest for him, although this interest is

considerable. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, writing on politics, are impressive through their high seriousness, their faith in poetry and the poet's view, and the occasional fine images in which they express great platitudes. To some extent they define an ideal of civilization, without showing how it can be achieved. Their remarks are lyrical, amateur utterances, which do not impinge on our age, whose techniques of power and whose political stresses they could not foresee. 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world', – so runs Shelley's famous phrase, and Wordsworth and Coleridge echo this confidence. To us, it is little more than an expression of the Romantic poet's subjective view of the importance of his function. In the long run, the statement may be true; in the short run – over a generation or two – we now know that unpoetic legislators can obliterate the poets. Voices crying in the wilderness must now belong to a trades union and have jet-planes to defend them.

SCIENCE AND ÆSTHETIC JUDGMENT. A study in Taine's critical method, by Sholem J. Kahn. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 25*s*.) This book is not presented as a doctorate thesis but we can guess fairly confidently that it is one. It is a diligent exploration of a field, the investigation of which was not vitally important. Taine is probably no longer very much read in English; in his own country, he is thought of as a typical example of brilliant over-simplification, and he is still enjoyed by some people for the vigour and clarity of his style and opinions. Mr Kahn shows a proper enthusiasm and in his summing up errs, if anything, in the direction of eulogy. Surely it is not true to state, as he does, that 'Comparative studies cannot do without his (Taine's) categories of analysis – Race, Environment, Time and Master-Faculty.' If there is any truth in 'Race', and 'Master-Faculty', it is so uncertain as to be unusable. 'Environment' and 'Time' are sounder concepts and Taine must be given credit for using them in a stimulating way. But he did not invent them; they were first made popular by Montesquieu, and Taine's handling of them has been superseded by Marxism and Freudianism and the other sociologies and psychologies. A critical work on Taine, springing from a spontaneous interest in his mind, would have given a clearer account of what remains valid in his work, in spite of his exploded categories.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CRITIC, by F. O. Matthiessen. (New York: O.U.P., 30*s*. A posthumous collection of essays and reviews by the well-known American critic. The English reader will probably be hampered, as he was in the case of Edmund Wilson's *The Shores of Light*, by his almost complete ignorance of the minor American writers dealt with. A scrupulous personality, less brilliant and more inhibited than Edmund Wilson or Lionel Trilling, emerges from these pages, as from Matthiessen's other books.

PORTRAITS by Sir Joshua Reynolds. (Heinemann, 21s.) Another beautifully produced volume in the series now being brought out by the committee working on the Boswell papers. We have here Reynolds's views on Goldsmith, Garrick and Johnson and can, therefore, penetrate still further into the intimate life of the group.

J. G. WEIGHTMAN.

PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS BY ISAAC HUSIK. Edited by Melton C. Nahem and Leo Strauss. (Blackwell: Oxford, 1952. Price 35s., pp. 358.) The prefatory chapter by the editors serves a particularly valuable purpose in this volume of essays. Without it, these varied studies would not convey the unity of scholarship and purpose that underlay the lifework of Isaac Husik. Mellowness, tolerance and single-minded scholarship were the keynotes of Husik's life and work, and students of medieval Jewish philosophy, not to mention Aristotelians, already acquainted with his contributions will welcome under these covers this posthumous reprinting of some of the outstanding essays selected from his still larger additions to fields of learning of very wide range. His scholarly horizon spreads from ancient and modern aspects of Judaism to Aristotle and the philosophy of law expounded by the German jurists of our own time.

Starting life as a student in a Jewish theological seminary and destined for the rabbinate, he passed on to teaching, taking in his stride all the prizes and academic distinctions in the field of Hebrew, Latin, and Greek scholarship. His zest for the unity of knowledge produced a kind of addiction. But this addiction was not a desire to saturate his mind with the facts for exegesis but for the fuller understanding of those imperatives which the philosophic quest imposes upon its devotees. He saw that without a historical sense the understanding of philosophy was sterile, and without an examination of law, justice and jurisprudence the problems of ethics had no social reference. To reach these foundations he felt obliged to take up the study of law.

To Husik, Judaism was as much subject to historic necessities as any other human institution, and this led him towards a modernism which was informed by his rationalistic interpretation of Jewish philosophical apologetics. He was prone to by-pass mystical trends and doctrines, and to concentrate on those medieval Jewish philosophers who accepted Aristotle as the vehicle for interpreting Judaism in the light of the beacon of Greek philosophers. Maimonides was the dominant figure in this field influenced by the Arabic Mutakallamists; the lesser lights, but still luminaries, were Saadya and Bachya who in their turn were, with their Arab contemporaries, influenced by Neoplatonism. Amongst these essays Husik exhibits his profound knowledge of Aristotle, and in his study of Gersonides his

textual references in Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic disclose an almost pedantic devotion to controversial matters in textual criticism. There are times when his focus on fine textual points leaves the wider field obscure. Nevertheless the wide range of his knowledge and his power of historical orientation relieves him of the danger of sinking into the morass of sterile and finnicky research.

Husik's tolerance in weighing up rival views is very clearly shown in his critical analysis of the writing of such jurists as Stammler and Kelsen. These are important essays for our times when the meaning and the role of the State is momentous to political and ethical thought.

Dr Husik's outstanding contributions to philosophic studies were his illumination of the influence of Aristotle on the one hand, and the significance of medieval Jewish philosophy on the other. This period, to him, had no permanent value in so far as it did not and could not affect the further changes in Judaism. It was distinguished from St Thomas's contribution to Catholic thought because the latter had an official sanction based on the papal acceptance of the Angelic Doctor's authority. Jewish philosophy had no such sanction and was able to leave Judaism either tied to Talmudic sanctions or free to advance to modernism without losing its essential ethical universal foundations.

This volume is a worthy monument to a great scholar and it is a pity that the use of Hebrew and Arabic scripts has made the price almost prohibitive to private buyers.

EMANUEL MILLER.

Please supply { one year's / six months' } subscription to

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Name.....

Address.....

Annual subscription post free, 50/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $8.75.

Six months' subscription ,, ,, 25/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $4.40.

If unable to obtain from your newsagent, please post this form direct to the Publishers, 26 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

What Strange Powers Did The Ancients Possess?

EVERY important discovery relating to mind power, sound thinking and cause and effect, as applied to self-advancement, was known centuries ago, before the masses could read and write.

Much has been written about the wise men of old. A popular fallacy has it that their secrets of personal power and successful living were lost to the world. Knowledge of nature's laws, accumulated through the ages, is never lost. At times the great truths possessed by the sages were hidden from unscrupulous men in high places, but never destroyed.

Why Were Their Secrets Closely Guarded?

Only recently, as time is measured; not more than twenty generations ago, less than 1/100th of 1% of the earth's people were thought capable of receiving basic knowledge about the laws of life, for it is an elementary truism that knowledge is power and that power cannot be entrusted to the ignorant and the unworthy.

Wisdom is not readily attainable by the general public; nor recognized when right within reach. The average person absorbs a multitude of details about things, but goes through life without ever knowing where and how to acquire mastery of the fundamentals of the inner mind—that mysterious silent something which "whispers" to you from within.

Fundamental Laws of Nature

Your habits, accomplishments and weaknesses are the effects of causes. Your thoughts and actions are governed by fundamental laws. Example: The law of compensation is as fundamental as the laws of breathing, eating and sleeping. All fixed laws of nature are as fascinating to study as they are vital to understand for success in life.

You can learn to find and follow every basic law of life. You can begin at any time to discover a whole new world of interesting truths. You can start at once to awaken your inner powers of self-understanding and self-advancement. You can learn from one of the world's oldest institutions, first known in America in 1694. Enjoying the high regard of hundreds of leaders, thinkers and teachers, the order is known as the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. Its complete name is the "Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis," abbreviated by the initials "AMORC." The teachings of the Order are not sold, for it is not a commercial organization, nor is it a religious sect. It is a non-profit fraternity, a brotherhood in the true sense.

Not For General Distribution

Sincere men and women, in search of the truth—those who wish to fit in with the ways of the world—are invited to write for complimentary copy of the sealed booklet, "The Mastery of Life." It tells how to contact the librarian of the archives of AMORC for this rare knowledge. This booklet is not intended for general distribution; nor is it sent without request. It is therefore suggested that you write for your copy to: Scribe T.M.B.

The ROSICRUCIANS
(AMORC)
San Jose California

No. 356ss

CONTENTS FOR MAY 1953

Editorial	323
The Meaning of Malenkov: SEBASTIAN HAFFNER	326
Moscow's German Satellite: A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT	335
Idealism in African Politics: J. D. HARGREAVES	340
French North Africa: HENRY SWANZY	345
Hispanic Reviews: GEORGE PENDLE	351
The Hero as Politician: GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB	356
Chamberlain and Gladstone: BRUCE MILLER	362
The London Theatre: RICHARD FINDLATER	370
The Military Necessity: W. M. LANDERS	377
The Strategy of Victorian Poetry: JOHN WAIN	383
Book Notes	391
Correspondence	398

Volume CLIII, Number 915

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

Landlord and Peasant in Persia

by A. K. S. LAMBTON
42s. *net*

This book is an introduction to the subject with which it deals, and presents an interesting picture of the transition from a medieval to a modern society.

Holmes-Laski Letters

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MR JUSTICE HOLMES AND HAROLD J. LASKI, 1916-1935
84s. *net*
(*Published on behalf of the Harvard University Press*)

These letters, though invaluable for the lawyer, the historian, and the politician, are, first and foremost, a delight for the lover of good reading. They present many new aspects of two outstanding men, who illuminated everything of which they wrote.

The Middle East in the War

by GEORGE KIRK
42s. *net*

(*Published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*)

'. . . Mr Kirk has produced an account which, in its essentials, is unlikely to suffer from further revelations. . .'
Times Literary Supplement

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Bellometti
LE PERROQUET

The restaurant in the heart of entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

BACK NUMBERS

We shall be pleased to hear from subscribers and readers who are able to supply any of the following back numbers:

1928:
APRIL

1938:
JULY

1952:
OCTOBER

Offers should be sent to
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
AND AFTER LTD
26 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1

EDITORIAL

Mr Butler has produced one of the most remarkable Budgets since the war. To some it is an incentive Budget; to others a pre-election Budget; and to others again a rich man's Budget. He has managed to satisfy Tory back-benchers without enraging the T U C. And he has managed to give away something like £169 millions in tax reliefs only two weeks after his first Budget year had ended with the enormous deficit of £436 millions. But underneath these political reactions and apparent paradoxes run deeper implications. As he himself emphasized, this is one of the few post-war Budgets specifically designed 'to improve our competitive efficiency, to provide incentives for greater effort and to encourage private saving.' Although sixpence off the income tax will benefit millions of individuals, over a half of the concession goes to industry. Again, while the cuts in purchase tax will be well received in thousands of homes, they should help to revive the motor-car and radio industries. And more specifically the re-introduction of allowances on initial capital expenditure by companies, and the repeal of the excess profits levy from the beginning of next year, will enable industry to plan ahead much more confidently than it would otherwise have been able to do. Industry, in fact, is being given a stimulating shot in the arm. Why?

This immediately raises the interesting question of Government economic policy, not in the sense of whether one should rely on physical controls or on free market forces, but in the sense of basing financial policy on what lies ahead. For some months there have been signs that the Government was issuing licences for factory buildings much more freely, and that other controls on industrial capital expenditure were not being used so strictly. As far back as December, Government spokesmen were saying that materials for industrial expansion would be much more plentiful this year. The same theme occurred in the recent Economic Survey. Capacity in the metal and engineering industries, it was stated, would not be entirely taken up by the demand from home and abroad. Firms which twelve months ago were persuaded and cajoled into post-poning capital investment plans, might soon be able to go ahead with the installation of new machinery. The Chancellor has now taken the story a stage further. Physical resources, he pointed out, are waiting to be

used by industry. Labour is no longer so scarce. Raw materials, and particularly steel, are more plentiful. 'No manufacturer should now find difficulty or delay in getting a licence for productive work. The need is, however, so great and so urgent that I have come to the conclusion that further help must be given in the Budget.' In other words, the slackness which the Treasury fears may spread through the economy must be taken up quickly, by stimulating demand at home if need be and by doing nothing to raise industrial costs, so that export demand will not be choked off. Thus the food subsidies, apart from the small one on sugar, remain intact, in the hope that wage costs will be stabilized.

The Budget is thus intended to stimulate various sections of industry rather than to keep back inflationary pressure, hitherto the main purpose of post-war financial policy. It is, in fact, as one commentator put it, 'a Malenkov Budget.' It has been widely assumed that the Chancellor would have completed his preparations before the news from Moscow and Peking hit the world's commodity and stock markets, and it may seem surprising that the Budget seems especially designed to meet any slackness which may develop because of the peace overtures. But the relaxation in international tension has only emphasized economic trends which were there before. Commodity prices have fallen sharply, but they had been dropping steadily for some months previously. Share prices on Wall Street were already weak before the brief slump which greeted the news of a possible truce in Korea. Thus the Budget, which was clearly tailored to meet a situation in which world prices would move lower, in which industrial stocks might not change a great deal, and in which output might stagnate, is similarly the right one in a world of easing tension, of falling prices and of trimmed defence programmes. Are these, however, the conditions under which the Budget will exert its influence in the coming months? If the experts' guess is wrong about what lies ahead, if Moscow or Peking suddenly switch their policy, or if Mr Butler's tax concessions do not have the effect he expects of them, inflationary pressures might quickly raise their heads again and produce yet another payments crisis. The early period of the year, as we all know, is one of the most treacherous times in which to look ahead. The normal seasonal slump in the retail trade has in recent years been exaggerated by the public's pre-Budget shopping strike in the expectation of purchase tax changes. More than one Chancellor has found himself treating incipient slumps in April, only to find the economy in the grip of inflation within two or three months.

This is one of the risks the Chancellor is running this year. There are others. Since about 1941, largely under the influence of the late Lord Keynes, the Budget has been built on the principle that if in surveying the year ahead there appeared to be a deficiency of national savings then the Government would supply them through a surplus, and, vice versa, the Government would budget for a deficit if savings were likely to be excessive. But the Socialist Government, because of the high level of taxation it imposed, more or less ensured that private savings would always be deficient, and thus emphasized the need for a Budget surplus year after year. This year, however, the Chancellor has tried to cut that particular knot and to get away with a deficit of £440 millions, in the hope that his tax incentives will encourage both industry and individuals to do the saving formerly done by the Government. But will they? This is much the same thing as hoping that the general public will spend enough to revive trade in certain industries, but not too much to take away resources from the export markets. In either case Mr Butler is sailing close to the shore and running risks which many people feel he ought not to run at this stage. But if the Conservative Party believes, as it evidently does, that high taxation has been stifling private savings, it must clearly have faith that a reduction in taxation will revive savings. Moreover, what evidence we have, suggests that private savings (including those done by industry) were in fact rising towards the end of last year, and the Chancellor may not be too optimistic in expecting a tax tonic at least to maintain this trend.

In all these ways a Conservative Chancellor has broken away from the pattern established by the Labour Government, and it is not surprising that the Opposition should find itself on strange ground in criticizing it. The risks which Mr Butler is running are not hard to establish. But it is easy to forget the weapon which remains in his armoury in case the economy does threaten to run away in another inflationary spree. The effects of the new monetary policy can be exaggerated, but their psychological reactions on the City and industry should not be overlooked. The raising of the bank rate, and thus of interest rates, has an immediate effect. The Chancellor does not expect to have to employ this weapon, but if his estimates are belied by events it may prove to be a valuable asset.

THE MEANING OF MALENKOV

Sebastian Haffner
A member of the Editorial Staff of *The Observer*

I

Messrs Malenkov, Beria, Khrushchev and their colleagues in the new Soviet State and Party Government have all for years been prominent lieutenants of the late Stalin, and it is therefore natural to regard their rule as an unbroken continuation of the Stalin régime. On the other hand, they have, in the first six weeks after Stalin's death, made so many sharp and startling changes in Soviet home and foreign policies, and they have done this with such a show of purpose, that it is also possible to view their Government as a new régime, consciously different from Stalin's, which has to be judged anew, on its own merits and without prejudices carried over from the Stalin epoch. This, it is true, would imply that the men now in power formerly served Stalin with mental reservations: all the time thinking in terms different from his, keeping their own counsel, preparing their own policies, and waiting for Stalin's death to put these policies into effect.

There was certainly no outward sign of anything like this in Stalin's lifetime, and even now the idea has an element of the fantastic. But it fits the promptness, suddenness and incisiveness with which a whole series of apparently ready-made new measures were put into operation in Moscow as soon as Stalin's body had been laid away in the Kremlin mausoleum. There is nothing improvised about these new measures; they give the impression of having been well prepared in advance, and as they make their appearance day after day, they seem to fall into a coherent pattern, different from the one we have come to recognize as the basic pattern of Stalinism. Thus one has to admit the possibility that with the advent of Malenkov a new epoch may have opened in Soviet and Communist affairs, as different from the Stalin era as the latter was from the era of Lenin and Trotsky. For several reasons, this is not an easy mental operation to perform. The Stalin epoch has been so protracted – more than a quarter of a century – that we have in time come to equate Soviet Communism with Stalinism; it is now difficult for us to imagine any version of it other than the Stalinist one. Secondly, Stalinism itself has always had a somewhat Protean character; there have been constant changes of 'line', and it has become almost a conditioned reflex to regard

every change that occurs in Moscow under this aspect. Accordingly, various experts have reminded us in the past few weeks that the aims and strategy of Russian Communist policy are rigidly and unalterably fixed, while its tactics are infinitely flexible and variable; and have proceeded to conclude that any changes which the Malenkov Government is now making, however startling, can only be considered as changes of tactics in an unchanged framework of a strategy of world conquest.

This, however, begs the whole question. The doctrine of changeable tactics within an unchangeable strategy is derived exclusively from the case-material of the Stalin epoch. It can be unreservedly applied only if we take it for granted that the Malenkov Government is still simply the Stalin Government without Stalin. Is it? We do not know. But, on the face of it, it seems to be doing everything in its power to demonstrate that it is not. It may be foolhardy to give it 'the benefit of the doubt' without reserve. But it seems equally mistaken – and almost equally dangerous – to exclude all doubt on this point in advance. It is incumbent on us to widen our compass and to reconsider possibilities which, in the later part of Stalin's lifetime, we had, not unreasonably, discarded as unrealistic. Translated into more concrete terms, this will strike everybody as wishful thinking. This is exactly what it is. There is, in my opinion, nothing at all wrong with wishful thinking. It is as legitimate a branch of thinking as any other, provided the ubiquitous possibilities of error are kept in mind.

Political thinking is commonly stimulated either by wishes or by fears. The best results are achieved by thinking along both lines, and then striking a balance. It would seem that in our thinking about the Communist world we have lately erred in concentrating too exclusively on fearful thinking, and eschewing wishful thinking too austerely. If we had been a little less afraid of wishful thinking, we would, for instance, not have been caught entirely unprepared by the Tito-Stalin break, and we might have been able to turn it to better account more quickly. Nor would we have unnecessarily frightened ourselves by building up the wholly unrealistic bogy of a 'monolithic', frictionless, superhumanly efficient Communist world organization, where in reality we have to deal with a number of ill-assorted and ill-co-ordinated governments and parties trying desperately to chart their way through a maze of inner contradictions, unforeseen difficulties, responsibilities and dangers, with the help of outdated and misleading doctrines and a changing selection of quotations from Marx, Lenin, and Stalin.

On the face of it, Mr Malenkov's policy seems to aim at relaxation at home (large-scale amnesty, price reductions, stressing of the constitutional rights of Soviet citizens vis-à-vis the organs of the State) and peace abroad

(conciliatory attitude over Korea, new co-operativeness in U N, new courtesy in diplomatic relations, statements about 'businesslike relations with all countries', 'peace based on facts', and 'settlement of all outstanding disputes, including those with the United States, by peaceful means'). It is hardly necessary to say that nothing which has so far happened makes it certain that these aims can and will be attained, even if there should be an honest intention to attain them. There is a long way to go, and only a few first steps have been taken on the new road. Still, these steps, such as they are, lead in the reverse direction from previous Soviet policy. The question is: are they the beginning of the long way back to some kind of internal and international 'normalcy'? Or does Mr Malenkov only practise a policy of *reculer pour mieux sauter?*

The second possibility clearly cannot be ruled out at this stage. All that the new Government has so far done can quite plausibly be explained by the need for an undisturbed settling-down period, after which the old hostile policy might be resumed. Obviously, one would be foolish to let one's guard down at this stage, to assert dogmatically that Stalinism is dead and that Malenkov is a new kind of Communist – a conservative Communist, so to speak, who is prepared to count his blessings (and his responsibilities), call it a day, wind up the internal and international revolution, and settle down in the world as he finds it. But it is worth bearing in mind that he might conceivably be such a new kind of Communist. We should be unwise to close our minds entirely to this possibility, to assert dogmatically that Communism, or the policy of Communist Russia, cannot basically change, and to regard Stalinism as immortal. After all, a number of facts in the present world situation, and in the profit-and-loss account of revolutionary Communism since 1917, do very strongly suggest the advisability from the Soviet viewpoint of changing over from a dynamic policy to a static one, from permanent revolution to consolidation at home, and from continued cold war to settled peace abroad. If a given situation clearly and strongly suggests certain conclusions, one can usually rely on somebody or other picking them up and making them his own. And if a new Russian leader dramatically inaugurates policies which seem to conform to the suggestions inherent in the present situation, it becomes plausible to think that he may in fact have done so.

II

What are the objective facts in the existing situation which may thus tend to make Communism conservative? They are, it seems to me, two: first, the cold war has entered into what looks like an unbreakable stalemate. Secondly, the idea of world revolution, even in its modified Stalinist

version, has disclosed what looks like insoluble internal contradictions.

The cold war became stalemated – indeed, in a certain sense, it ended – about a year ago, in the first half of 1952. Significantly, at that time politicians and political commentators began to say that it might last fifty or a hundred years, which was another way of saying that it held out no prospect of change in the foreseeable future: that cold war measures – hostile acts short of full-scale war – had become futile and ineffective for both sides as far as one could see ahead. At the same time it had become quite clear that neither side was willing to take the plunge into full-scale war. In other words, the cold war had become a kind of cold peace.

In 1952 it was still possible to regard this as a temporary state of affairs, due to the momentary self-elimination of America from international affairs during her long Presidential election campaign and the subsequent period of lame-duck government. But during the first months of 1953 the stalemate deepened, and the initial fumbling of the new U S Administration for 'positive' and 'active' policies of 'liberation', which would yet avoid world war, only made it clearer that no such policies exist. Given the universal determination to avoid world war, it has now become impossible for either side to find any effective means of forcibly dislodging those régimes, or moving those frontiers, of which it disapproves, and President Eisenhower's speech of April 16 suggests that this is now realized in Washington as well as elsewhere. All that now remains of the cold war is the stale routine abuse maintained by the propaganda machines. This is frustrating for those people in the West (including the writer) who view the results of the Second World War with disappointment and distaste. But it must be at least as frustrating for the Russians, and the Communists outside the Russian orbit, who have tried so long and so hard to improve on these results, and who throughout the duration of the cold war were on the offensive. If we look to-day with a feeling of dumb despair at Eastern Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria – countries which we never came anywhere near liberating – with what feelings must our opponents look at all those rich prizes – France, Italy, Berlin, Greece, Turkey, not to speak of Yugoslavia – which were already virtually in their grasp and have now so irretrievably disappeared from their reach. If the mass exodus from Eastern Germany suggests that people behind the Iron Curtain have now instinctively given up hope of liberation, the decline of Communism in Western Europe shows that the Communists on our side of the fence are similarly despairing of revolution. The battle for Europe is over; and people are beginning to adjust themselves to the outcome. The battle is, by and large, over in Asia too. China on the one hand, Japan and Formosa on the other, have firmly fallen into their respective spheres; Korea remains divided along

the same line as before the war, and nobody any longer doubts the outcome in Malaya. Only the Indo-Chinese sore keeps running. In such circumstances it is almost inevitable that thoughts on both sides should turn to contemplation of peace; and since it is the Russians who took the initiative in starting the cold war, it is only natural that they should also take the initiative in ending it. They have another reason for taking such an initiative: while the division of the world in which the cold war has ended, and the actual demarcation lines of this division, are uncomfortable and cramping for both 'camps', they are more so for the Soviet side.

It has often been pointed out that the Russians, from their point of view, conquered the wrong half of Europe. Themselves in full process of industrialization, what they need is additional sources of capital, not additional under-developed territories; and the success of the Communist revolution in China has sharpened their problem. When Stalin in 1945–48 tried to retard the Chinese revolution, while fighting hard for control of Western Europe, he was not, from the Soviet point of view, acting unreasonably. In the outcome he gained the wrong success. His heirs cannot feel happy in contemplating the calls which Chinese development will make on their capital resources; nor can they feel sure of Soviet-Chinese harmony if these calls are refused. If the Western 'camp' has its dollar problem – which is a problem of marrying existing and sufficient capital resources with existing development needs – this is as nothing compared with the problem of the Soviet 'camp', which consists of making a pint of capital resources fill a gallon pot of development needs. A realistic and responsible Soviet statesman must therefore feel driven even more forcefully than his opposite numbers in the West to the idea of dissolving the 'camps' and restoring something like a settled system of world peace, world economy, and world trade. This would have the additional advantage that, by way of a number of large-scale bargains, some of the anomalies and irritants of the now confirmed and hardened 1945 settlement, such as the division of Germany and Korea, which always hold a danger of 'world war by accident', could be mended. But these bargains would be a by-product of such a settlement. Its core would be the dissolution of the 'camps', the restoration of normal multilateral diplomatic and commercial relations between the several Communist and the several non-Communist States, a return to traditional diplomacy without ideological complications, possibly even a marriage of Russian and Chinese development needs with American and British capital.

It is true that Stalin clung to his line to the last, confidently predicting that the capitalist 'camp' would break up, even go to war within itself,

while the Communist one would hold together. But this was really the same kind of whistling-in-the-dark as Mr Dulles's equally confident predictions of liberation by propaganda. The sober facts mocked the confident prediction. Stalin's younger and more alert colleagues may well have listened sceptically to the old man. But if these younger men, now Stalin's heirs, may have good reason to desire real peace as Russians – can they have such reasons as Communists? Does not Communism inexorably and unalterably demand world revolution – if not, as originally thought, through simultaneous risings of the oppressed and exploited workers of the leading capitalist countries, then at least through constant expansion and ultimate world conquest by the Soviet Union? Can one not dig out Stalin quotations in which he solemnly stated that the U S S R must in the end become the Union of Soviet Republics of the World, quite apart from Lenin's somewhat overworked reference to the inevitable 'frightful clashes' between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world? Can a Communist renounce this vision and remain a Communist? It goes without saying that as long as he does not renounce it – and with it the Communist International and the Iron Curtain – Communist Russia cannot have normal and businesslike relations with the West, the 'camps' cannot disappear, and real peace is impossible.

III

It is obvious that we are here at the crucial point. If the new rulers of Russia still see past and future world history through the spectacles of the pure faith, if they still really believe, in international as well as in economic affairs, in Marx as interpreted by Lenin as interpreted by Stalin, then indeed there is little hope of any basic change. But this is not to be taken for granted. The high priests of a faith are quite often more sceptical of its dogmas than humble believers, let alone ardent new converts; and, in more worldly matters, nobody is as impatient with the fundamentalist speech-day cant of a government or a club than the administrators who have to deal with the sober job of actually running it. Messrs. Malenkov, Beria and Khrushchev have had little part in the Bolshevik revolution, and none at all in the excited and enthusiastic period of conception and gestation which preceded it. To them, Marx and Lenin are, most likely, dim figures from history, and Stalin a venerable old fogy, viewed with the mixture of awe and pity which the smart and up-and-coming young everywhere reserve for a gnarled and ancient boss. To them, Communism cannot possibly mean what it meant to the people who were Communists before 1917. In practice, it may very likely mean two very different things: at home, the existing State machinery: complex, fascinating, dangerous to manipulate, but modern, efficient, and very probably, in

their eyes, superior to the different, even more complex and less demon
strably efficient State machineries of the democratic West; abroad,
curious and troublesome collection of ambitious, enthusiastic, servil
and quarrelsome cranks, who have to be shepherded along out
deference to some venerable revolutionary tradition, who have an occa
sional nuisance value in international dealings and are a handy recruiting
ground for the foreign operations of the intelligence departments and fo
puppet governments where these are needed, but who are altogether
more trouble than they are worth. Perhaps this is too imaginative
picture; perhaps it will take another generation's distance from the
enthusiasms of 1917 for this kind of impression to take full shape in the
minds of leading Russian statesmen. But even now certain simple truths
long evident to every intelligent student in the West (except Communists
and some ex-Communists) must occasionally have crossed the minds of
the younger leaders in Russia.

The first is that it can have been no coincidence that Communist
revolution occurred and succeeded only in Russia, Yugoslavia, and China,
and never came anywhere near success in any of the fully-developed
capitalist countries. The fact is that a fully developed big-corporation
capitalism, and a fully developed two-party democracy, are the very
worst breeding-ground for Communist revolution. They are historically
ahead of it. As Molotov's brother-in-law, a naturalized American citizen,
remarked the other day: 'My country (America) has progressed beyond
the point where that kind of thing is necessary'.

A second and complementary fact is that Communism has proved a
success in under-developed, despotically governed countries. For these
countries it has, in the twentieth century, provided exactly the service
which early *laissez-faire* capitalism in the nineteenth century provided for
the West: to enforce and make possible the necessary 'primitive' accumu-
lation of capital for industrialization. (It has done so at exactly the same
inevitable price of exploitation, hardship, social upheaval, social injustice
and sweated labour.) It has also, in the political sphere, provided a
modernized, more broadly based and more efficient equivalent of the
despotic forms of government to which these countries have always been
accustomed. It is a suggestive thought that the Communist countries of
to-day are, by and large, the successor States of the absolute Monarchies
of one hundred years ago: China, Russia, Prussia, and the Habsburg
Empire.

Together, these two facts make nonsense of the idea of Communist
world revolution. They make it obvious that Communist revolution has a
chance, and Communist government a role to play, in some countries
and not in others; and that to hope for (or fear) Communist revolution

everywhere is vain, as vain as to expect the whole world to accept the British or American constitutions and their underlying ideas. A third fact makes nonsense of the idea of Communist world revolution being followed by a universal Communist state. It is the fact that Russia, China, and the Eastern European Communist countries remain obstinately separate, with distinct and often conflicting interests, and that between two of them – Russia and Yugoslavia – there exists to-day mortal enmity and a rather more active cold war than between Russia and the West.

If these simple and inescapable facts are kept in mind, does there remain much incentive for an intelligent Russian leader of 1953 to sacrifice any Russian interest for the supposed interests of world Communism? Indeed, does there remain much reason for the assumption of our learned experts that world revolution or world conquest, and a world state, are and remain the basic unchangeable aims of Communism? Is it not possible to think that this basic and unchangeable aim may already have become something of a legend, and ceased to be an operative factor in the minds of those who now actually direct policy in Moscow?

Admittedly, we cannot be sure. Shifts and displacements of belief in the human mind, though they go on all the time and in all spheres, are slow-moving and erratic processes, and people are quite capable of contradicting themselves and suddenly acting on the strength of beliefs they have with one part of their minds already discarded. Stalin himself, in a sense, made the decisive breach with the idea of world revolution when he proclaimed Socialism in One Country. Nor was he, in all likelihood, merely talking when he produced this slogan with which to pole-axe Trotsky. His statement, now revived for quotation, that to export revolution is nonsense, was probably at the moment he made it as sincere as the other statement that it was the destiny of the U S S R to become the World Union of Soviet Republics. But he was too much of a practical politician, and also perhaps, in spite of all, too much a man of 1917, to be consistent. He wavered back to his original beliefs. At one point around 1945–47 he seemed to have made up his mind that though Communism could not conquer the world beyond for itself, Russia might well conquer the world for Communism – or was it rather, Communism for Russia? Even in his swan-song last October, he spoke with splendidly glib equivocation on this theme. It was, perhaps, in the perspective of history, the great theme of his life. Stalin – so history may one day judge – was the tool and embodiment of transition: transition from one opposite to another. His long rule may be seen as the bridge from the international and revolutionary epoch of Communism to its national and conservative one. Standing in a curious twilight, he appears all through as the last of the Bolsheviks; but, seen from another angle, also as the first of a new line

of new-style Tsars. Is it impossible that with his death the twilight period has ended, and the new Tsardom, having shed its last connexion with the old Bolshevism, come to reveal itself as a fully matured autochthonous Russian force? And would it not be in line with the historic rhythm of despotic government if an 'Iron Tsar' were followed by a more liberal one? In that case, Malenkov might prove to be Alexander II. to Stalin's Nicolas I – while the succession of Lenin, still uncertainly maintained by Stalin, might have ended.

At the moment these are no more than wishful thoughts. One can claim for them no stronger validity than for the fearful thoughts of those who regard Malenkov, or any other Communist ruler of Russia, as necessarily a linear disciple and successor of Lenin and Stalin. Both the wishful and the fearful assumptions rest on speculation. Neither can, for the time being, be more than a working hypothesis. We must be ready to discard either in the light of new facts as they emerge. For the moment, I do not see that the known facts warrant an attitude of dogmatic certainty on the part of any of us – even if it is a grim and manly attitude of certainty about the worst.

L
1 - NOV 1955
STATE LEGISLATURE, MADRAS

MOSCOW'S GERMAN SATELLITE

By a Special Correspondent

While the world watches the new men in the Kremlin, important changes are quietly taking place in Eastern Germany. Last summer economic policy took a turn which is bound to have the most far-reaching consequences. In July, at Soviet request, the Congress of the Socialist Unity (Communist) Party laid down three main tasks vital to the 'construction of Socialism': the strengthening of heavy industry; the creation of armed forces; and the elimination of the peasant element in the villages. This process is now being speeded up.

Since the war, Eastern Germany has had a chequered economic career. Until 1947 economic policy was determined principally by Soviet reparation claims. The dismantling of plants had priority over all considerations of economic reconstruction and political reorientation. In this way industrial capacity was reduced by almost one-half. During the two following years, some of the dismantled factories were rebuilt and reparations taken out of current production. This policy is still being pursued, but from 1949 onwards a systematic effort was made to change the structure of East Germany's industry, i.e. to strengthen public, at the expense of private, enterprise in industry and trade. At the same time the first attempts were made to gear East German to Soviet industry. Only in 1952, however, was it decided to incorporate Eastern Germany into the Soviet orbit. From being regarded as a political springboard into Western Europe, Eastern Germany was to become one of the military arsenals of the Soviet orbit. In these circumstances it is not surprising that information on economic trends and events in Eastern Germany has become scantier than it was in the past. However, as long as the 'curtain' does not go down for good, a formidable amount of economic information remains available. Apart from official statements, given in Soviet fashion as percentages of a base unit frequently unknown, a good deal of factual information on local conditions reaches West Berlin by various means. It is thus possible to draw up a balance sheet of economic success and failure.

Apart from the overriding power exercised by Soviet military government, all key positions in industry and trade have now been handed to organizations on whom the Russians rely. The share allotted to private

entrepreneurs has been reduced by approximately one-half in the course of the last four years, and their places have been taken in industry by public enterprises and Soviet Companies (S.A.G.), and in commerce by State shops (H.O. shops) and consumer co-operatives. The Russians, in fact, feel so certain of their control over industry that they have handed back to East German ownership and management 80 per cent of the 200 large plants which they had seized at the end of the war and turned into Soviet companies (S.A.G.). Among the factories still in Soviet hands, however, are such important industrial plants as those at Leuna (oil and nitrogen), Schkopau (rubber) and Wolfen (films). To eliminate all remaining regional autonomy, the old provincial administration was abolished in July 1952 and fourteen new administrative districts were created, responsible directly to the Central Government departments which, in turn, are in almost daily contact with their opposite numbers in Soviet headquarters at Karlshorst. The German agencies, in co-operation with the Soviet administration, have developed so tight a system of economic control that no large-scale evasion is possible. Moreover, they have to accept full responsibility for the execution of their plans.

All official statements are based on gross production and do not eliminate statistical double counting. They claim annual rates of increase in industrial production of 20 per cent and more. If, however, allowance is made for statistical falsification, the true annual increase in recent years is likely to have been of the order of 10 per cent per annum. This means that in 1952, for the first time since the war, East German industrial production probably surpassed the level of 1936, which is usually taken as a fairly normal pre-war standard. If it is remembered that after the war industrial capacity was reduced by almost 50 per cent, this is a formidable achievement, but present production is still 20 per cent lower than at the outbreak of war. Furthermore, if related to the present population, which is one-tenth larger than before the war, it is clear that the 1936 level has still not been fully reached.

Nor is this all. In recent years production has increased mainly in investment goods and basic materials. The output of pig-iron and steel, as well as of fuel and power, has not only reached, but has even surpassed, pre-war figures. By comparison, consumer goods lag behind badly. Thus, the familiar Soviet pattern of industrial production can be seen in Eastern Germany, as elsewhere in the Soviet orbit. Although total production of consumer goods should suffice to supply each inhabitant of Eastern Germany with about 80 per cent of his pre-war requirements, in fact some consumer goods are produced at half the pre-war level. Moreover, as much as 10 per cent of all industrial goods are likely to be taken out of the country on reparations account. In the seven years since the war, one

year's industrial production is estimated to have left the country in this way.

The Five-year Plan, formulated originally in the summer of 1950, visualizes an increase of gross industrial production of almost 100 per cent between 1951 and 1955. (The real increase will be very much less.) Under the impact of Western rearmament, certain upward revisions were decided upon in November 1951. The sections chiefly affected were those for iron ore, pig iron, cement and brown coal, which are to be produced in substantially increased quantities, at the expense of other industries producing agricultural machines, potash and consumer goods, such as textiles.

As East Germany's industry is geared to that of the Soviet *bloc*, her trade ties with the West have constantly become weaker. In the last five years East Germany's foreign trade has risen from DM 1,000 million in 1948 to almost DM 5,000 million in 1952 – through an expansion of trade with the East. At present, approximately 85 per cent of the total trade turnover is linked to the Soviet economic system. Annual trade agreements were replaced by long-term agreements after East Germany had signed a five-year agreement with the Soviet Union in September 1951. By now, all the Soviet satellite countries in Europe, as well as China and North Korea, are linked to Eastern Germany through bilateral trade arrangements.

Trade relations between East Germany and the Soviet Union are of a peculiar kind. While Russia, on the one hand, is anxious to act as arbiter in all trade transactions between her satellites and the world outside her orbit, she cannot afford to leave unused the processing capacities of her highly industrialized satellite neighbours. Thus Russian raw materials, such as coke, iron and non-ferrous metals, are sent to Eastern Germany for processing. In this way a growing integration is achieved of economies which in many respects are complementary. Although detailed evidence is withheld from the outside world, there can be little doubt that attempts at general economic planning are made through the offices of C.M.E.A. (Council for Mutual Economic Aid) in Moscow. At the same time, it must be recognized that the co-ordination and integration of diverse economies takes time and is, as yet, far from perfect. East German officials quote cases which show that various satellites are still permitted to compete with each other in the foreign markets of the West. All the time, however, Soviet representatives jealously watch the trade negotiations and transactions of the satellites, and they intervene when, in their view, Soviet interests are affected. The machinery of colonial exploitation is being developed, but perfection has still to be attained.

The existence, side by side, of impressive industrial achievements and failures, is an expression of the divided economy which has been developed

under Soviet auspices to a fine art. Production of basic materials and heavy equipment is fairly well developed, while consumer goods, and social services, are neglected. It would be wrong to assume that all consumers are affected by this policy to the same extent. In the first instance it is directed against the old possessing classes, i.e. industrial manufacturers, food producers, traders, and members of the professions. By a discriminating system of prices and taxes, allocation of raw materials and delivery of finished goods, financially independent people are ruined systematically. At times it may seem as if the Communist rulers wish to create a grey mass of people, but such a picture would be far from the reality. While the double-price system has succeeded in pauperizing the old middle classes, at the next stage on the way to the classless society a wage structure is introduced, more discriminating then anything early capitalism was able to design. Thus, a new aristocracy of efficient and highly-paid working men is being created, on which the new monolithic régime depends. Those workers who remain true to the tradition of labour solidarity become the enemies of the régime, and are demoted if not eliminated.

In July 1952 when the integration of Eastern Germany into the Soviet *bloc* was inaugurated side by side with a last frontal attack against the middle classes in town and country, a differentiation of wages and salaries was decreed which raised the wages of the so-called 'activists' to three times the level reached by good workers of average skill. At the same time, the total wage bill was fixed and laid down, factory by factory, in the annual plan. By this means, surplus earnings by the few are achieved at the expense of the many. A political wedge is being driven into the ranks of the workers by what is euphemistically called the collective wage agreement. Side by side with these goes the introduction of 'technically justified labour norms' (T.A.N.). The result of this policy is shown by the industrial sickness rate in 1952, which was 6·7 per cent of all insured, or at least twice as high as in Western countries.

As publication of price and wage indices ceased long ago, it is difficult to be precise about the present standard of living in Eastern Germany. A comparison of individual prices and wages shows, however, that the living standards of pensioners, and similar low-income groups, are of the same order as in Western Germany, while the higher income groups in Eastern Germany have to spend considerably more, which means that they have to work considerably harder than in Western Germany for the same standard of living. On an average, the wage in East marks buys between two-thirds and three-quarters of the same wage in West marks. This leaves out of account the difference in quality, which is so substantial that recently the chairman of the East German Planning Commission felt

obliged, in a public statement, to refer to the low level of his country's consumer goods. By an ingenious system of indirect taxes on the consumer goods of the masses, of payments by cheques and compulsory savings, the East German Government succeeds in draining off most of the vagrant purchasing power, and in keeping the circulation of money roughly in line with the flow of consumer goods which, on an average, amounts to approximately two-thirds of pre-war output. An economy geared to the maximum output of heavy equipment provides little more than a bare existence for its toiling masses, and a life of comfort for its small aristocracy of political leaders and industrial 'activists'.

Those who since Stalin's death have searched for signs of a change in East German policies have been disappointed. In an attempt to slow down the flight, from East Germany to West Berlin, of owners of small and medium-sized farms, Walter Ulbricht, the Secretary-General of the Communist Party, has denounced 'erroneous measures' on the part of the food-collecting agencies and 'unjust decisions' on the part of regional law courts. It would be a mistake to read into these accusations any change of heart. No evidence has become available so far of a reversal of former decisions. If anything, controls have been tightened. Collectivization has been continued and at the end of the first quarter of this year affected four per cent. of the land. As before, priority is given to heavy industries, and rearmament continues with unabated speed. During the last six months, military and para-military forces are estimated to have risen from 100,000 to almost 150,000 men. The political campaign against 'bourgeois saboteurs' has not been called off. Nor did the economic espionage, centred in the East German Institute of Economic Research, cease to operate until it was interrupted by a number of arrests in Western Germany early in April. Finally, the graduation of wages and salaries, which forms a vital part of Communist labour legislation, has remained in force. All this reflects hesitation as much as intransigence. Eastern Germany is the most controversial of Moscow's satellites, and the one most likely to be affected by changes of policy. Any hasty change in the position of this particular sector may well affect the whole edifice. It is for this reason, if for no other, that Eastern Germany deserves the fullest attention of those who wish to decipher Soviet political intentions.

IDEALISM IN AFRICAN POLITICS

J. D. Hargreaves
Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone

There could be a plausible interpretation of British colonial policy in terms of systematic hypocrisy; of constant generation of high ideals to supply theoretical justification for actions really grounded upon expediency, or more sordid motives. Certainly many observers have been infuriated by smug references to 'the ideals of the Commonwealth', as if the Commonwealth had been founded as a philanthropic organization. The British are particularly adept at believing their own motives to be as high as they would like them to be; but this quality is distinguished from hypocrisy by the efforts which they subsequently make to act up to the doctrines thus created. In imperial affairs they are simultaneously realists and idealists, capable of transmuting their principles to suit changing circumstances without thereby destroying their essential idealism.

Each major step in the development of the Commonwealth was made under pressure. The principles of 'freedom and voluntarism' came to be so widely applied in British relations with the 'settler' colonies during the middle years of the nineteenth century because they seemed to offer the best method of dealing with certain local problems, notably in Canada, without repeating the mistakes of 1776. Self-government was encouraged in these colonies because it was less dangerous, less expensive, more convenient; simultaneously, it came to be recognized as morally right. There was a 'marvellous absence of prejudice' on these subjects, so long as it seemed probable that British industry, advancing far ahead of all competitors, would be able to hold and expand its markets without calling for political reinforcement. But from about 1870, the emphasis changed to 'imperial consolidation'. The conception of the Empire as a unity of British peoples freely associated together began to take shape in the speeches of Disraeli, in the work of Milner and Chamberlain; later, in that of Campbell-Bannerman. The vision was spacious and its inspiration genuine; but the climate which produced it was one of increasing difficulty in Britain's relations, economic and political, with the European Powers. Milner, working for his 'group of sister-nations... indissolubly allied for a common purpose', and founded on a common heritage of 'race, language, civilization, tradition and ideals', was certainly wearing

the prophet's mantle; but his prophesies were intended to supply answers to the practical problems of statesmanship. They were never abstract exercises in political theory.

Objective conditions have similarly shaped British policy in the colonies unsuitable for European settlement. In 1865, a Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended that British policy in the West African settlements should 'encourage in the natives the exercise of those qualities which may render it possible for us more and more to transfer to them the administration of all the governments, with a view to our ultimate withdrawal...'. This consummation seemed more nearly practicable than is generally realized today. In 1872 the Governor of these settlements wrote:

> Whenever it can possibly be done I would strongly recommend dispensing with the services of Europeans on this Coast. Fortunately this can be done and to a much greater extent than is generally imagined. It is no disparagement to the other members of my Legislative Council to mention the fact that the two ablest members of that body are both pure negroes. The best scholar on the Coast, . . . is Mr Blyden, a pure negro. The most intelligent clergy of the Church of England in the various settlements are the native pastors. Among the most trustworthy clerks in the public service are the native officials.*

All this was true, and does credit to the enlightenment of Governor Hennessy; but his recommendation was not simply an application of the Rights of Man to Africa. His fundamental motive was a desire to curtail the sacrifice of British lives on these unhealthy and not over-productive shores. When the rivalry of France and Germany forced Britain, not without reluctance, to resume territorial expansion, and extend her influence over vast tribal communities in Africa and elsewhere, the idea of applying the principles of 'freedom and voluntarism' to Africans disappeared until after 1945. Instead, the policy of Indirect Rule was erected into a philosophy of empire. But this, too, began as an expedient; when the money and the men necessary to introduce European forms of administration were lacking, there was little alternative to an attempt to adapt the indigenous institutions to imperial purposes. Here and there, Governors began to realize that this system had positive merits of its own, but before Lugard had finally transformed Indirect Rule from an expedient to a philosophy, the Empire had seen such strange and tragic anomalies as the attempt of Governor Cardew to rule the Sierra Leone Protectorate through chiefs whom he secretly regarded as 'ignorant, superstitious and uncivilized' barbarians. The rudiments of policy came first, the principles later.

* Hennessy to Kimberley, December 31st, 1872.

A similarly practical conjunction of philanthropic imagination with self-interest has shaped Britain's attitude to the economic development of the colonies. It was in 1895, when German and American competition was growing increasingly menacing, that Chamberlain first suggested systematic public investment in the 'undeveloped estates'; it was in the tribulations of 1940 and 1945 that the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, followed by the establishment of the Colonial Development Corporation, transformed this conception into reality on a considerable scale. A genuine 'harmony of interests' underlies this policy; there is nothing necessarily sinister in promoting investment in the colonies for the dual purpose 'that the colonies may not only achieve a satisfactory standard of life for themselves, but also provide a flow of surplus foodstuffs and raw materials in exchange for further U.K. products'. But the terms in which these projects have been presented to the British public, assumed to be incorrigibly insular, have too often encouraged Africans to suspect that the altruism serves only to dress the self-interest in clothes suitable to an age vigilant against 'exploitation'; that margarine – or aluminium – for Britain is the major consideration, to which standards of life in Africa are subordinate, if not actually irrelevant.

Misgivings like these are partly responsible for the emphasis which nowadays is being placed once more on the political side of colonial policy. In 1947, the evident impossibility of relying on force to continue British rule in India led to the unprecedented admission of non-European nations to the Commonwealth. The West African colonies, transformed in character since 1872, but still free from the more serious problems of plural societies, are committed to similar lines of development. Can the old liberal-imperialist ideals adapt themselves to this metamorphosis of the Commonwealth? still more important, can they adapt themselves to the problems of the plural societies? For many of the *Round Table* school, the common heritage of language and tradition was essential. It is significant that after the Conference of 1926 and the Statute of Westminster seemed to have satisfied the need for a definition of Dominion status and for Imperial legislation, men like Lord Lothian and Mr Lionel Curtis began to turn their energies to consolidating relations with the other great English-speaking nation, outside the Commonwealth. In Africa and Asia the contemporaries of Milner regarded Indirect Rule or paternalist government as substitutes for European institutions; representative democracy would merely give power to half-educated townsmen – in Cromer's words, would 'enable a small minority of natives to misgovern their countrymen'.

This reluctance to accept certain principles now ascendent does not mean that the attitude of the old school of imperialists to Africans and

Asiatics is devoid of idealism. Their principle is that of trusteeship: the protection of 'the native' against oppression and wrong, the promotion of economic development and paternalist schemes of welfare (on scales generally admitted to be inadequate). The doubts about rapid political change, which echo the derision once directed against 'Exeter Hall', are not confined to reactionary negrophobes; they may amount to a well-reasoned denial of the primacy of political progress over social and economic development, or to a criticism of the political concepts being applied. Some of these sceptics may be surprisingly oblivious of the importance of past political struggles in the development of their own country, and of the part played in them by lawyers, merchants, trade unionists, and other despised townsmen; but they are right in holding it as somewhat insular and uncritical in reformers to assume that European political institutions are universally applicable. So far as they are simply calling for cautious and experimental attempts to find a new role in central government for the chiefs and for indigenous political traditions, they are not necessarily challenged by the nationalist movements themselves, which are emerging from undue dominance by an urban leadership.

But the countries with any hope of reducing their political problems to the timed application of academic exercises in constitution-making are few and fortunate. In West Africa, the new formula of partnership is being worked out, not without stresses and strains. It means at present, partnership between African communities moving rapidly to political independence, and European professional men who can both give and gain much during their temporary residence; ultimately, it should become a political partnership between members of the Commonwealth – a considerable demonstration of the flexibility of Imperial ideals. Even if the pessimists should prove right in prophesying a decline in the efficiency of the territories after independence, this would be widely accepted as a fair price for independence and national self-respect (at least among the townsmen who would probably feel any ill-effects most heavily). But in the African colonies suitable for white settlement, the terms of partnership are less easy to negotiate. The settlers, thinking of the contribution which, voluntarily or otherwise, they are making to the material welfare of their adopted homelands, claim the status of very senior partners indeed; their nightmare is the thought of life in an African state. Nationally conscious Africans find equally intolerable the prospect of continuing alien rule and 'exploitation'. When interests clash in this way, change of any sort excites dangerous suspicions on either side. The policy described as 'trusteeship' was originally an attempt by the Colonial Office to find a balance, not merely between insular and internationalist ideals, but between the interests of local groups terribly prone to be tempted to

extremism. In South Africa especially, British Governments have often been in the position of trying to preserve their ideals by continual temporizing, by struggles to 'manipulate the greed and lust of others'. Milner was experiencing a characteristic conflict of loyalties when he wrote in 1897:

> . . . I have to walk with extreme caution, for nothing is more certain than that if the Imperial Government *were to be seen taking a strong line* against the Company for the protection of the blacks, the whole of Dutch opinion in South Africa would swing round to the side of the Company, and the bulk of – not the whole of – British colonial opinion would go with it . . . you might indeed unite Dutch and English by protecting the black man, but you would unite them against yourself and your policy of protection . . . I want to preserve the Basuto and the Bechuana, for the present at least, from the tender mercies of the Bond and our friend Cecil J. Rhodes. But observe, that by doing so I am weakening my hand in the game of conciliating the colonists, Dutch and English. . . .

The policy of trusteeship has had more successes than failures in the past, but it is no longer adequate to the demands of literate Africans. Even the new conception of partnership is not always readily acceptable; as Professor Lewis has pointed out, in business serious suspicion would be attached to a trustee who used his position to establish himself as a senior partner. In South Africa itself, the problem of race relations is out of direct British control; but the question of the Protectorates, which was so perplexing Milner, is still leading sincere idealists in British Governments into policies of compromise and appeasement. In the matter of Central African federation, in the thorny problems of race relations in Kenya, doubts persist whether African interests really are paramount when policy is being formulated. These questions will be settled neither by force nor simple formulæ; the Mau Mau cannot be written off as the product of town-bred agitators, even if it was fostered by them.

The problem in these areas could be depicted as a dialectical encounter between the vision of a world-wide fellowship of enlightened Anglo-Saxon communities, and that of a brotherhood of peoples of all races. But this antithesis is the projected and idealized shadow of an intractable conflict of interests, in which both sides are often detected in much less attractive and dignified postures than in their theoretical manifestos. There is more to the contemporary situation than a debate between ideologies, and concentration on the shadows cannot alter reality. Yet spirit and matter, ideals and practice are not distinct, and never have been in British policy. The debate about principles is not irrelevant to the question of power, so long as the principles discussed do not get out of relation with reality.

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

Henry Swanzy

The author is editor of *African Affairs*, the journal of the Royal African Society

Like South Africa, which it resembles so closely in its present phase, North Africa is a key area for testing the flexibility, and therefore the endurability, of the West. In many ways the signs are ominous. The Latin North, like the Anglo-Dutch South, has as its base a barren, mountainous land with considerable mineral wealth and 20 million native peoples, technically backward, faced by a settler community of two millions with the peculiar tenacity and complexes of all frontier minorities. As in South Africa, the last forty years have seen an incredible advance in public amenities, especially in Morocco, where Casablanca has grown from a village to a town with a population not far off a million. This inrush of industrialism and *capitalism* in the fundamental sense has also led to the gradual proletarianization of the Berber tribesmen, of whom in Morocco alone 700,000 squat in the *bidonvilles*, the North African equivalent of the Union's shanty towns, while 60 per cent. of the rural population are estimated to be landless. These people are faced with the contempt of the rather below-average French *toubibs*. Already, the South African explosion against the Indians in Durban is matched by North African attacks on the 600,000 Jews, succeeded, as in the Union, by sporadic assaults on Europeans.

On the other hand, there are essential differences with the Union: the French colonization is proportionately less intensive, the local inhabitants proportionately more numerous and far less easy to influence than the Bantu tribes with their backward culture. Morocco is a Sultanate, the seat of an Empire that once dominated Spain. Tunis was not the most backward of Turkish pashaliks. These territories, with Algeria, form part of the historic Arabic west, the *Maghreb*, now possessing close links with Middle Eastern nationalism. Though pressure of population has increased (in Morocco, for example, from 3·4 million in 1921 to 8·6 in 1950), the production of food crops has not, unlike Egypt, been *absolutely* reduced since 1939; even so, an export surplus of 200,000 tons of wheat in 1938 had changed by 1949 into an import surplus of 60,000 tons. It is estimated that the three regions need 27·5 million quintals a year, while the record output in 1948 was only 24·5 million quintals. The only outlet for the

redundant *fellaheen* is Metropolitan France itself, which received 250,000 North Africans in the four years 1947–51 alone, despite the disguised barrier of a medical examination. Most of these came from Algeria, a French Department. More recently still it has been noted that these men, the itinerant bagmen of any tourist, are being joined by their wives and families, seeking to enjoy the higher social standards of Europe, a marvellous field in their ignorance and misery for the Communist agitator.

It is worth examining the various aspects of French policy in its attempt to convert North Africa into a productive area of the European economy. Naturally enough, a materialist culture like our own concentrates mainly on economic life, in terms of planning. For 1951, French investment in North Africa, principally State loans, was 52,800 million francs, of which 22,400 million went to Algeria, 14,900 to Morocco, and the remainder to Tunisia. In 1949, exports to France amounted to 127,521 million francs from Algeria, 103,321 million francs from Morocco, 40,298 million francs from Tunisia; imports from the Metropolis were rather less: 88,709 million francs, 53,516 million francs, and 27,237 million francs, respectively. Meanwhile, it is estimated that 3,000 French families a year emigrate to Morocco, the great boom zone. The immediate task of the planners is, however, to provide bread. Their most famous achievement is the system of barrages in the mountains which had brought irrigation to 250,000 hectares in Algeria by 1949. (The Moroccan programme is for 400,000 hectares.) There are also hopes of cultivating marginal land, although draining marshes, etc., is costly. Potentially the most important development is the cultivation of improved peasant farming, with the hope of bringing an increase of 4–5 quintals to every hectare. As yet the *secteurs d'amélioration* are very small, affecting perhaps 132,500 *fellaheen* in Algeria, and a mere 17,000 in Morocco (1948–49). The possibilities, however, can be gauged from the fact that the 100,000 full-time farmers in Algeria had only 12,762 tractors and less than 2,000 harvesters in 1948, while Morocco had only two small motorized co-operatives in the same year, when 1,000 small ploughs were distributed round Marrakesh. The development is further limited by the paucity of technicians, with only 7,200 receiving training in Algeria, despite workshops in the schools, and only 200 Moroccan technical students in France, out of a total of 1,250.

So far the development of industry has been very much delayed, for reasons that seem obvious from the nature of the country, the nature of the people, and the nature of the economy. Indeed, it still seems only to affect the immigrant communities, plus a small proportion of the landless. For example, only 260,000 wage earners at most are estimated to be in industry in Algeria, out of a population of eight million, and an equally small proportion in Morocoo, as compared with 800,000 petty craftsmen

in the cities, for whom a *comptoir artisanale* was set up after the war with a capital of 50 million francs. Industry at present, indeed, seems to consist of the usual colonial pattern: processing plants for dates, sardines, olive oil; mining in iron, coal, manganese, zinc, cobalt and phosphates, the richest deposit so far worked in the French territories; finally, finishing and assembly plants, for American and European goods, especially in Morocco. There are also hopes of petrol, with gushers found by Shell and Gulf Oil (and French interests) at Aumale, south of Algiers, and, possibly, in three regions of Tunis: Sahel, Kerkennah, and Djerada Island. Otherwise, industrial hopes are visionary. The Atlas mountains are occasionally described as Europe's Urals, and a steel plant like Magnitogorsk may eventually come from the anthracite of Djerada, the coal and coke of Kenadza-Sfaia, all in Eastern Morocco. There is talk of a tunnel under the mountains, seven and a half miles long, from Marrakesh to the cobalt mines at Ourzazate and on to Djerada. . . . There is something Napoleonic in the sweep of these plans that would settle 400,000 redundant Algerian families on state land, another 100,000 on sheep herding in the high ranges, another 50,000 on the olive estates around Oran, yet another 50,000 in industry, and possibly pioneers even in the black lands south of the Sahara, to be crossed, at last, by the Trans-Saharan railway.

In education a small beginning has been made to set up *Centres d'Instruction Nord Africaines* for a handful of the European élite to be trained in agronomy and the understanding of Moslem civilization. The principal theoretical animator of this policy, Robert Montagne, has also arranged lectures, e.g. on Moslem law, in Paris, by the Grand Cadi of Casablanca. Yet the social gulf is shown by the small number of mixed Franco-Moslem marriages in Algeria. In 1950, these numbered 184 for the whole country, mainly of Moslem women to Frenchmen (though these proportions were reversed for the 82 ceremonies reported from Algiers in 1949–51). In the mixed schools, attended by 142,000 in Morocco, the French administration is constrained to increase the proportion of Arabic studies. The plural society continues on its way, with separate charities, separate justice, separate ways of life. The earlier attempt to win over the hearts of the Moslems by religion was given up with the nineteenth-century failure of the White Fathers, whose leader, Cardinal Lavigerie, thereupon transferred his interest to Central Africa. Since then, the doctrine of assimilation has concentrated on the élite, with a secondary attempt to divide the native Berbers, who have never belonged to East or West, from the town Arabs, relics of the successful Islamic invasion 1,200 years ago. Thus several novels in Franch recently published, mainly in Southern France, are by Kabyles, usually schoolmasters, with titles like *Le Fils du Pauvre*, *La Colline Oubliée*, *La Grande Maison*. One author,

Lhaouissine Mtouggui, has been found to declare that the *Maghreb* was never Arab. Among the Arabs proper, the great French success was with Tahar Esafi, an intellectual who was a friend of Lyautey and now edits a magazine, *Islam-Occident*, published in Belgium. The French authorities, at least in Tunisia and Morocco, also seem to be abandoning their ban on the Arabic drama. Youssef Bey Wahby, the director of the Cairo theatre, toured the area in 1950 and was given the Moroccan order of *Ouissam Alaouite*. Inevitably, the hero of many of these plays is Saladin. Other expressions of a common outlook lie in sport, where North Africans, usually with mixed names like Patrick el Mabrouk or Alain Mimoune, excel in long-distance running. Another field is the Army, with its military clubs, hostels, Amitiés Africaines, the Dar el Askri (resembling the British Legion) scattered through North Africa. Too often, however, all these efforts live only in the world of symbolism, as when a statue of the great Algerian patriot, Abd el Kader, was erected at Cacheron in 1949, with speeches in French by a grandson, and in Arabic by a great-nephew of Marshal Bugeaud, the victor of Isly (1844).

Indeed, as the world now knows, neither long-term economic change nor short-term cultivation of individuals is sufficient in the present crisis to win over the North African masses to Europe and to France. The most that can be said of the present leaders of the revolt is that they are all European-educated, many with European wives. They are the usual forerunners, the 'bourgeois nationalists', divided, it may be by temperament, into extremists and moderates. The ideas and careers of the leaders, el Fassi of the Moroccan *Istiqlal* (Freedom), Habib Bourguiba of the Tunisian *Destour* (Justice), Ferhat Abbas of the Algerian *Union Démocratique du Manifeste*, are not very interesting. Or perhaps it is possible to say that they are very interesting indeed to us, since they represent a typically European form of nationalism with which it would be possible, in the immediate future, to do a deal. Their enemies maintain, however, that they would almost certainly fall, Kerensky fashion, at the hands of the anti-European movement, whether remotely Communist or immediately Moslem xenophobe, of whom the leading representative is Messali el Haj, now exiled from Tlemcen (the city of the medieval philosopher Ibn Khaldoun) to Niort in Central France. With so little impression apparently made on the masses by Europe, apart from the usual discrimination (from ration books to hospital beds) faithfully reported to the United Nations, the probability is that these critics are right.

Given the total situation it is perhaps worth considering future lines of policy, in the light of the wider interests of the European connection with Africa. In this, one may compare the different approaches of two other European countries: Britain and Spain. Of these, the former is the classic

adversary of French conceptions, and often of French interests, thus stimulating an unfortunate suspicion and hostility which gives rise to an immense ignorance, and is provoked by it. Yet at the moment, in the current negotiations with the Sultan and the Bey, the French are attempting to bring into existence a policy of limited reforms, not so far removed from British policy in other parts of Africa. For example, schools of administration have been started since the war in Morocco and Tunisia. In Morocco, with the typical two-tier structure of the present régime – advisory councils in two sections (mainly drawn from commercial circles), a small Moroccan traditional structure, the *Maghzen*, and power in effect confined to the Residency – there is a proposal to develop local councils, the village *djemaas*, with local powers. Five hundred of these are envisaged – and fifty have actually been founded by decree. Needless to say, this does not satisfy the politicians. In Tunisia the course of the *dialogue* is far more complicated, since it is a land far more developed, not suffering from anarchy when taken over in 1881, with a larger number of public men capable of working a modern state. Fundamentally, the struggle here turns on the clash with the small and efficient section of *colons* who do not want any mixed elections, even locally. The political demands of the nationalists, advancing from a Cabinet with advisory powers to greater Tunisian control of the Ministries, and latterly to an elected assembly, seem to justify their cynicism. The real trouble appears to be that such devolution is against the genius of the French political system, at home and abroad. It encourages the paradox which in 1949 led to the fall of M. Naegelen. This Socialist Governor-General of Algeria removed an official who refused to lock up the retainers of a certain grandee 'standing' for election to the Moslem college. He was in turn removed. On the other hand, the attitude of France has been developed by a close study of the Roman Empire, which fell owing to local particularisms. The French say, for example, that the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, in appearance a triumph of British methods, is in effect a form of national suicide, given that Europe wishes to remain in Africa. Nevertheless, it seems that the French in North Africa will have to accept a limited form of home rule, and hope, with the British, that the changed technical resources of the present era, notably in communications, will render nugatory the comparison with Rome. Otherwise all that remains is the present tension, with expedients like the Berber villagers of Morocco used to counter the Arabic townsfolk in 1951, when the Sultan was compelled by threat of action from El Glaoui, the Berber pasha of Marrakesh, to sign forty decrees he had so far held up.

The British diagnosis in Africa is, of course, very largely provisional. The Spanish goes much deeper, because it rests on a whole social way of life which allows a far greater 'partnership' of European and North

African. It is, in fact, the typical union of a pre-industrial society, bu tressed in this case by the memory of the common Spanish and Ara civilization of the Middle Ages. An even stronger cement comes by th quirk of time that unites the Catholic society of Spain and the Moslem society of Africa, both 'peoples of the book', in a common front against th blind alley of materialism, where technical changes slowly but surely sa the entire basis of a society. In French Africa it is the Spaniards aroun Oran who mingle most easily with the Berber and Arab population Conversely, the Moors played the greater part in the early stages General Franco's victory in Spain. The only trouble with this policy, whic would certainly not set up the tensions of industrialism, nor the lat neurosis of expected gratitude, is that it is, for good or ill, out of date eve in Spain itself.

So much for the various strands of Europe in North Africa (and in othe parts of Africa as well): the managerialism of Italy, the political devol tion of Britain, the social and religious assimilation of Spain. It is clea that none of them are adequate by themselves, although it is possible per haps to imagine an amalgam. Another thing seems clear also: North Afric is strategically vital to Europe. Historically, the Europeans have as good right to be there as the Arabs who destroyed the basis of prosperity wit the inrush of the Beni Hilal in the early middle ages. There is certainl no evidence that semi-independent states there would be any more stabl than their peers further east. Already there are signs of change in th closed circle of Moslem culture. Morocco has a compulsory registratio for births and deaths, the judiciary is separated from the executive, Cad are grouped in grades. With the rush to the towns, the impersonal societ is set on foot beyond hope of return. Already the first clinic to be run b a Moslem has been started in Morocco. There still seems a possibility tha Europe may, in the words of Albert Camus, conquer the *Maghreb* for th second time.

HISPANIC REVIEWS

(Periodicals from Spain and Latin America)

George Pendle

Recent Spanish writing lays much stress on the assertion that Spanish rule in the Americas was not so brutal as Spain's enemies declared it to be. For example, although the Church had great difficulty in persuading the Indians of Mexico to adopt monogamy and the Christian form of marriage, the Empress Isabel in 1536 specifically forbade the Archbishop in that country to submit erring Indians to the Inquisition. They were 'too new in the Faith, a lazy people, lacking substance', so they were to be treated leniently.

In the Madrid two-monthly *Revista de Estudios Políticos* No. 66, C. Pérez-Bustamante quotes contemporary documents describing how in Mexico, in the early decades of the sixteenth century, an Indian would come to discuss his matrimonial affairs. 'The Indian would arrive bringing with him a whole flock of wives and children, like sheep.' Then the missionaries would have to discover which of the women was – or was to be – the man's legitimate wife, and when that complex problem had been solved the rejected women would have to be placated and provision would have to be made for them and their children. Moreover,

> for many years the Christian practice of marriage was rendered particularly difficult by the action of the chief Indians, who would steal all the women in the neighbourhood, so that when an ordinary Indian wished to get married, he could hardly find the means of doing so.

Of course many abuses were committed by the Spaniards; but it was not maltreatment of the indigenous races that undermined the Empire. The authorities in Madrid erred more seriously in dealing with their own people across the seas: they failed to make allowances for the powerful influence of the New World on the character of the Spaniards who settled there. Spaniards who went to live beyond the Andes, or amidst the subtropical river system of the Paraguay and Paraná, acquired a new outlook. An anecdote recorded by Pedro Henríquez-Ureña illustrates this point:

> From a letter of Saint Theresa, dated 1576, we learn that when her brother Lorenzo de Cepeda returned to Spain from Quito, with great wealth, after thirty-four years of absence, he let himself be called *Don*, as he was wont to do in America. Since the Cepeda family belonged to the

> gentry, not the nobility, this act of Lorenzo was a matter of much gossip in the provincial society of Avila, and the Saint herself was grieved . . . *

The leaders of the revolutionary movements which early in the nineteenth century disrupted the Empire were not Indians, but were mostly *Criollos* – sons of Spanish parents. Even today Spaniards cannot quite accept the fact that the Spanish-speaking peoples of Latin America do not look upon Spain as their motherland. Several of the reviews published in Madrid have a special section devoted to the so-called Hispanic World, wherein the articles are evidently by writers who take it for granted that the culture of Latin America is an integral part of general Hispanic culture. These writers under-estimate or ignore the non-Hispanic elements which are of such vital importance in Latin America – for instance, they take no account of the Indian population, nor of the swarms of Italians who have so greatly influenced the culture and economy of a large country such as Argentina. In the Madrid monthly *Arbor*, No. 85, José María Souvirón – a Spanish professor at the university of Santiago de Chile – finds comfort in persuading himself that the Spanish-speaking republics are daily becoming more conscious of their kinship with Spain and turning with ever-increasing affection towards the Peninsula. Professor Souvirón claims that 'Spain has now become fashionable', French cultural influence having declined and British interest in Latin America seeming to be less today than for decades. Souvirón admits that the Hispanic spirit – 'Hispanidad' – is not yet sufficiently robust to prevent the influx of North American ideas, and that it cannot yet compete effectively with Communism; but he is fairly confident that the time will come when Spanish-speaking nations on both sides of the Atlantic will be joined in a brotherhood which will be essentially Hispanic in character. When that day dawns, Spaniards and Latin Americans will recognise that the bitterly-fought wars of independence were mere 'family squabbles'.

The most serious defect in all propaganda for Hispanidad, is that no one ever explains what the word means. Professor Souvirón merely assures his readers that in the disintegrating, doubting and hopeless modern world, Hispanidad alone represents 'certainty, eternal values, hope and continuity'. The only certainty about Souvirón's outlook is that it is Roman Catholic. In any case the professor is too optimistic in his belief in a Spanish renaissance in the New World. All the most vigorous political movements in Latin America to-day are nationalist and Left-wing. President Perón flirted for a while with General Franco, but the courtship was brief: at heart, the Argentines despise the Spaniards. (It is said that

* Pedro Henríquez-Ureña, *Literary Currents in Hispanic America*, Harvard University Press, 1949, p. 35.

the late Señora Perón once addressed a proud Spanish Ambassador with the disrespectful exclamation *'Ché gallego!'* – traditionally the poorest immigrants into Argentina were peasants from Galicia, *gallegos* – and the diplomat thereupon returned indignantly to Madrid.) In most of the Andean and Central American countries, where there is a high percentage of Indian blood, the new political parties are not only anti-capitalist and anti-*latifundista*, but pro-Indian and, therefore, by implication, against white domination and indifferent to the merits of the Spanish heritage. Even among the many Spanish republican refugees now living in Latin America, there will be little enthusiasm for Professor Souvirón's brand of Hispanidad, for they abhor the Catholic Church.

It is becoming increasingly evident, indeed, that the 'fashion' in Latin America today is neither Spain nor Hispanidad, but Peronismo. National revolutionary movements have arisen in most of the Latin American republics, and as they grow in maturity we can recognize certain characteristics which are common to all of them. In each case they derive their most vital support from the urban and rural working-class, whose interests were neglected by the old-fashioned Liberal rulers. Secondly, the new politicians resent U S recommendations that democracy on the U S model is Latin America's most urgent requirement. Thirdly, they genuinely fear the U S A's economic and military expansion southwards. It is remarkable that even in little Uruguay – one of the hemisphere's most democratic nations – the negotiating of a bi-lateral military aid pact with the U S A recently provoked fierce opposition and mass meetings of protest. The editor of the Montevideo weekly *Marcha* (issue No. 648) complained that this treaty – and similar treaties signed by half-a-dozen other Latin American republics with the U S A – was merely an item in Washington's programme of self-defence. 'These treaties', he wrote, 'are bi-lateral in appearance; but in reality they are *uni*-bilateral.' In that same periodical (nos. 648 and 649) S. Niszt criticized in the most violent terms the latest book about Latin America by the former Colombian Minister of Education, Germán Arciniegas, who now lives in the U S A where he occupies a chair at Columbia University.* Niszt argued:

> Arciniegas is a Liberal. He favours a form of Western democracy which is identical with that which prevails in the U S A. *Therefore* he is unfit to judge correctly the development of the countries that lie to the South of the Río Grande. . . . Like many others of his generation he is unaware of the profound revolution that has been occurring in politics, economics and philosophy, and in the structure of society. . . . Those who try to judge the complex world of Latin America by the old Liberal standards, understand nothing. Those whose touchstone is still the sanctity of contracts, the

* Arciniegas's book was recently published in England under the title *The State of Latin America* (Cassell, 21*s*.).

liberty of the Press, or the inviolability of the Constitution, will never understand anything.

In the *Revista de Estudios Polítticos*, No. 66, F. Murillo Ferrol traces the evolution of Western democracy from the Liberal or 'representative' period to the present phase, which he defines as 'direct democracy'. 'A democratic State today,' he says scornfully, 'is a collectivist State, without beggars or wealthy persons, without hunger or luxury, without anxiety for tomorrow; but a State wherein, by the elimination of insecurity, poetry and hope have been suppressed also.' A State, in short, that differs very greatly from the Spain of General Franco! Murillo Ferrol observes that the change in the nature of democracy has come about because the centre of gravity in the State has moved from the constitutional machine to the people themselves.

> The new democracy does not rest on the abstract will of the people, obtained by a rational analysis in accordance with certain general principles. It rests now directly on the concrete will of the people, formed by the demands of the unemployed workman, the peasant who can only sell his crops at a loss, and the official whose household budget is unbalanced by the birth of another child.

Just as all Argentines, no matter what their class or party may be, are united in denouncing the British occupation of the Falkland Islands, so are all Spaniards agreed that the British should be expelled from Gibraltar. A recent strike in Gibraltar by Spanish workers who resented their classification by the British as 'third class labour', has suggested to *Revista* – an illustrated weekly published in Barcelona – that *all* the thousands of Spaniards employed in Gibraltar ought now to refuse to continue working there, and that the Spanish Government ought to give them employment within the frontiers of Spain. In this way the British would find the occupation 'too costly'. If (says *Revista*) Spaniards are not prepared even to take peaceful action of this kind to recover Gibraltar, then they should cease talking about it.

To this same issue of *Revista* (No. 46) Luys Santa Marina has contributed a charming sketch entitled

FRUCTUOSO'S MEETING WITH LIGHT-HEARTED ENGLAND

One day, Fructuoso, a municipal official, was at work in the spacious and ornate town hall of a Mediterranean city-port. His writing was disturbed by an unusual hubbub of merriment in the *plaza*; so he went to the open window, looked down into the square and saw a big man surrounded by a crowd of noisy children who were fighting for the coins that the stranger threw into the air. In front of the town hall! What a scandal! Fructuoso, furious, abandoned 'his interminable papers', dashed downstairs, 'and forced his way through the sea of children'. He found himself face to face with a huge sailor from a Glasgow ship which was at that time in port

loading minerals for Newcastle. It was evident that the happy giant of a seaman has just completed 'a long rosary of taverns'. He was now singing the old songs of his native land, illustrating them with gay dancing and footwork. Fructuoso, very conscious of his own authority, placed himself in front of the sailor and announced in sonorous tones:

'You are causing a public disturbance!'

The seaman, not understanding – 'his Spanish was the abbreviated Spanish of ship and quay' – gaped at Fructuoso and then asked in English:

'*What's the matter?*'

Even more enraged, the Spaniard on tip-toe shouted

'Speak Christian! I repeat, you are disturbing the peace!'

The reply was loud laughter and more pennies in the air. Fructuoso continued gesticulating. Then the seaman asked ungrammatically:

'*Quién ser usted?*'

The official's moustaches bristled, and half in passion, half solemn he said:

'I am a functionary of the Most Excellent Town Council.'

'Well, as far as I am concerned,' replied the sailor, 'there's no difference between you and *carabinero* Ambrosio.'

Fructuoso placed his hand on the sailor's arm but was shaken off with the exclamation

'*Gates of hell!*'

The anger didn't last. A moment later the sailor was dancing again and singing, accompanied by his ever-growing audience of children. Fructuoso tried to obtain the assistance of Tranquilino Cantelas, the head of the local police; but Tranquilino said that he had no wish to arrest a foreigner, who, if gaoled, would soon be taken away from under his nose by a Vice-Consul.

Thus they could do nothing but follow the sailor at a distance to see where he would end. All the road to the port, it was singing and dancing. With his big hands the sailor lifted a thin little boy on to his shoulders – a little boy fairer and with bluer eyes than himself – and continued on his way. The child clutched the giant's hair and beat his chest with naked heels, shouting

'Gee-up, horse! Gee-up, Gee-up!'

And so they arrived at the ship amidst laughter and talk. The sailor lowered the boy gently from his shoulders, gave him two smacking kisses on his cheeks and, after a careful search through his pockets, handed him his last three pennies – 'Three of those pennies,' says Luys Santa Marina, 'that have a portrait of Queen Victoria, and a matron in a helmet, holding a trident.'

THE HERO AS POLITICIAN

Gertrude Himmelfarb
Biographer and Literary Critic

Carlyle's hero appeared in many incarnations – as god, king, prophet, priest, even as philosopher, poet and man of letters; the one form he did not allow to him was that of politician. The mission of the hero was to reveal the 'divine idea of the world', a vocation to which the politician, as Carlyle saw him, did not aspire. Later generations contemplated with satisfaction their emancipation from Carlyle's heroes, and took pleasure in first humiliating and then discarding them. But hardly had men rid themselves of these heroes before another was insinuated into their midst, and he was the one Carlyle had not admitted: the hero as politician. To Carlyle this would have been a classic instance of straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel. For the politician has all the moral disabilities of the others with none of their virtues. Pretending to no eternal ideas or divine truths, he revels in the profane. Yet it is his genius to assume at will the mask of king, poet or philosopher as it pleases him, and he has even been known to appear to some in the likeness of a god.

Only this extraordinary facility for disguise, combined with an obscurity or ambiguity of character, can account for the high esteem Edmund Burke has enjoyed among so many thoughtful men of different persuasions, and the veneration he has inspired among Whigs and Tories (Macaulay judged him the greatest man since Milton, and Disraeli spoke of his 'divine effusions'), ardent Socialists (to Harold Laski he was England's greatest political thinker), and devout and learned Thomists. While Catholics revere Burke as a pious defender of the natural and divine order, secularists praise him for his boldly empirical attitude to politics; Liberals derive from him a philosophy of political pluralism intended to prevent state control and tyranny, and Conservatives take comfort in his theory of the organic state and his pæans to authority. It is no wonder that his speeches are used as texts in rhetoric for students, for what they lack in logical rigour they must make up in persuasiveness. Goldsmith once said that Burke in conversation was like a serpent winding around his subject – and, it might be added, he cared as little as the serpent where he attacked or how; the important thing was that the attack succeeded. It was

left for his commentators to decide what were his purpose and motives, and what were mere devices of strategy and tactics.

For every citation which a Catholic might adduce to demonstrate Burke's submission to a universal natural law of reason and justice, there are two quotations in Morley's biography, and half a dozen in the works of Burke himself, conclusively establishing his contempt for theories of natural law and absolute values. It is not only the metaphysicians of the French Revolution, but all metaphysicians, who fall victim to his facile pen:

> Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the Principle of Evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil.

There are a host of similar harangues against philosophers and theorists who would confound questions of practical politics with abstract principles of morality and metaphysical distinctions of right, of which Burke said that he hated 'the very sound of them'. The characteristic words in his vocabulary, providing a refrain for every speech he delivered and every pamphlet he composed, were: convenience, expedience, prudence and accommodation; everything else he jeered at as the 'delusive plausibilities of moral politicians'.

Philosophy was hateful because, however well-intentioned its practitioners, the very discipline of thinking – to say nothing of philosophical thinking, the examination of first causes and ultimate reasons – was by its nature dangerous. To Burke, prejudice and superstition were infinitely preferable to reason, for what reason tends to uproot, prejudice and superstition keep fast: 'Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit, and not a series of unconnected acts; through just prejudice his duty becomes a part of his nature.' Civil society could not subsist long if all men were philosophers. Subordination, not independence, was necessary for the human mind. Burke had more in common with Rousseau than either would have liked to think. Both looked upon science and philosophy in general, and the Enlightenment in particular, as the great peril to society, and Burke should have been the first to agree with Rousseau that 'the development of enlightenment and vice always takes place in the same ratio, not in the individuals, but in the people.' The difference between Rousseau and Burke, contrary to the general impression fostered by Burke himself, was not in method but in ends; where Rousseau was solicitous of a future democratic state, Burke was interested only in making impregnable the existing aristocratic one.

Like another uncongenial predecessor, Hobbes, with whom he would have been quick to deny any affinity, Burke could have said that he and fear were born, as twins, together. But while Hobbes boasted of the relationship publicly and made the most of it, exalting fear, the fear of war and disorder, to the highest position in his philosophical system, Burke permitted it to enjoy only an illegitimate existence in the shady recesses of his mind, from which it emerged now and then, sometimes defiantly, sometimes quietly, almost without his knowledge. Thus he pleaded that England submit to the demands of America, not because America had right or law or liberty on its side, but because the discontent in the Colonies threatened the order and government of England and the rest of the Empire; for 'whether liberty be advantageous or not, . . . none will dispute that peace is a blessing'. On the other hand, it was the duty of Britain to engage in a crusade against France to extirpate the ideas and principles of a revolution which threatened to create a 'universal ferment', a 'decomposition of society'. This fear of disorder pursued Burke so far as to convince him that liberty could be acceptable, as long as it was 'liberty with order'. Tell me, he requested, what provisions have been made for government, public force, armies, the revenue, property, peace and order, civil and social manners, and I will judge whether the new liberty of France is a good or an evil. (Somewhere in this enumeration appear morality and religion but these, like manners, are only euphemisms for order.) The British Constitution, which he cherished so dearly that he could not bring himself to entertain the most modest proposal for reform of the suffrage or of representation of the boroughs, fixed the order of society as well and as permanently as human arrangements could be fixed, and to tamper with them would open the floodgates to chaos. When it was proposed to substitute triennial Parliaments for the traditional septennial ones, he warned that the change would have the following ill effects: it would make the Members of Parliament shamelessly, shockingly corrupt and would bankrupt those with fortunes; it would make the electorate infinitely more venal and the whole body of the people, within and outside of the electorate, lawless, idle and debauched; in short, it 'would utterly destroy the sobriety, the industry, the integrity, the simplicity of all the people, and undermine, I am much afraid, the deepest and best-laid foundations of the commonwealth'.

If Burke's rhetoric sometimes obscures the straight line of his thought, it often helps trace that line. Single words – liberty, justice, people – shift too rapidly in the eloquent flow of his speech, but his metaphors exhibit a remarkable consistency of tone and subject. The vision is one of impending danger, as when he describes the prudent politician, devoted

to the security and peace of his government, who scans the political sky to discover the hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and who quickly guides his vessel into the nearest harbour. The Constitution is pictured as standing 'on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it', so that when men seek to correct a leaning to one side, they risk upsetting it on the other. And when the Constitution is not precariously poised on high, it is an island surrounded by raging seas.

Where Hobbes feared everyone indiscriminately, on the theory that all men were driven by the same sense of insecurity and insatiable lust for power, Burke, like Machiavelli, feared only those who were deprived of effective governing power, and who, presumably, would risk everything to get at the sources of power. Compared with Burke, Hobbes was an exemplary democrat: he assigned to all men the same instincts, distrusted all for the same reasons, and thought of civil society as profiting all men equally. However faulty his schemes for promoting the general welfare, however unpersuasive or distasteful his theory of absolute sovereignty, Hobbes did at least have a conception of the general welfare which genuinely comprised all men. Burke, more practical, more conventional and less visionary than Hobbes, had a more modest sense of his task. If happiness and security were not the lot of all, he thought it only proper that they be enjoyed by at least the privileged few. It would not help the lower classes, it might even work to their disadvantage, to upset the traditional order of society. In place of the confusing, illogical and irresponsible doctrine of the rights of man, Burke urged that men reconcile themselves to the realities of social existence, to the fact that government has authority only by virtue of prescription and presumption – the prescription of ancient conventions and sanctions, and the presumption that what exists must and should exist. Philosophy and speculation are at best supererogatory, at worst pernicious. 'That which might be wrong in the beginning', Burke wrote, 'is consecrated by time and becomes lawful I had rather remain in ignorance and superstition than be enlightened and purified out of the first principles of law and natural justice.' It was for this reason, too, that he was partial to religion, even religion tinctured with superstition, for 'religion is the basis of civil society' and 'superstition is the religion of feeble minds'. This also partly explains his benevolent feeling for Catholicism, 'the most effectual barrier' against Jacobinism. Any established religion, however, served his purpose, for all the European religions were 'prescriptive religions'; 'they have all stood long enough to make prescription and its chain of legitimate prejudices their main stay'.

Prescription and presumption were, of course, admirably suited to the interests of the aristocracy, and it is strange to find so many commentator

of Burke soberly defending the thesis that Burke, the employee of the most aristocratic faction of the Whig party, stood for some sort of popular government. Burke himself made no serious pretence to speak for the people. He was proud that his was the most aristocratic party in England, 'connected with the solid, permanent, long-possessed property of the country'. And he realized, better perhaps than modern readers who delicately refrain from vulgar imputations of economic motives, that the essence of aristocracy was property, and the genius of the system of prescription, as of inheritance, was that it 'leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires'. 'The means of acquisition are prior in time and in arrangement' to government, he argued, and acquisition is secure only when the people are ' tractable and obedient', when the authority of the magistrate and the law are unquestioned, and when those who have failed in the struggle for acquisition are not tempted to rebel against their 'natural subordination'. 'They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavour, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice'. At the start of the French Revolution, Burke calculates the number of landed proprietors in France at 70,000, and remarks: 'I am sure that if half that number of the same description were taken out of this country, it would leave hardly anything that I should call the people of England'. Elsewhere, in a more generous temper, he estimates that those who, 'in any political view', could be called the people amounted to 400,000 in England and Wales (of a population of eight or nine million). Burke's was not even the normal conservatism of the eighteenth-century Whig. The majority of the Whig party, feeling secure in its power, could complacently suggest minor reforms in the franchise, but Burke was consumed by a fear bordering on hysteria, and the most innocent proposal for liberalizing the state evoked images of mass expropriation and murder. If there were to be any constitutional changes, he pleaded, they ought to be in the direction of reducing, rather than increasing, the number of voters.

There has been a curious levelling of academic controversy in recent years. Political philosophers have borrowed from each other so liberally that there are only differences of emphasis rather than of categories to distinguish them. They no longer quarrel about the merits of political pluralism; they only compete for the honour of having originated it. The old arguments about the organic versus the atomistic state have peacefully given way to the idea of a corporative society. The utilitarian theory of self-interest has been discovered to be not inconsistent with a theory of social purpose and value. The concept of the tyranny of the majority is as

respectable as the concept of democracy, and found to be not uncongenial to it. Secularists have been impressed with the urgency of faith, and religious thinkers tend to be, if anything, too receptive to the efficiency gospel of the technocrats. The virtues of tradition, history and constitutions, the fact of the complexity of human nature and social arrangements, the notion of the uses and abuses of power, and of the extent and limit of intelligence, are commonplace in all philosophical parties. Machiavelli and Hobbes no longer excite apprehension, or Rousseau derision; Marx and Augustine are associated in a single eschatalogical tradition, and people are no longer born to be either Platonists or Aristotelians. A bland tolerance characterizes most academic inquiries in political philosophy – an atmosphere particularly favourable to the enhancement of Burke's reputation.

It is easy enough for the political pluralist to forget that Burke entertained the heretical idea of the state as 'a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection'. The moralist can ignore Burke's idealization of the past and his identification of what is with what ought to be. The hard-headed realist manages to gloss over Burke's fanciful flight of rhetoric in describing the captivating beauty and innocence of Marie Antoinette and the charms of an age of chivalry. When Liberals finally came to admit that Conservatism might be a store-house of political wisdom, they settled upon Burke as the arbiter of politics and morality. But the insights of Conservatism might have been more readily found in a Metternich, who did not delude himself into believing that his aristocracy was the natural, eternal ruler of the universe; or a Tocqueville, for whom the march of democracy was a necessary, if fatal, event in history; or a Burckhardt, who boldly announced that salvation lay not in a tenacious grasp upon property, but in the rejection of a vulgarized, mass-minded, materialistic and industrial society; or an Acton, who set absolute morality against history, democracy and even religion; or a Carlyle, who searched for the soul of the world's history in the souls of great men.

CHAMBERLAIN AND GLADSTONE

Bruce Miller
Staff Tutor at the University of Sydney, now studying in London

> Ireland, Ireland! that cloud in the west, that coming storm, the minister of God's retribution upon cruel and inveterate and but half-atoned injustice!—(GLADSTONE to his wife, October 1845.)
>
> I do not care for the leadership of a party which should prove itself so fickle and so careless of national interests as to sacrifice the unity of the Empire to the precipitate impatience of an old man careless of the future in which he can have no part – and to an uninstructed instinct that will not take the trouble to exercise judgment and criticism.
>
> (CHAMBERLAIN to Dilke, May 1886.)

The Irish ghost is laid at last. On All Fools' Day 1953, it was announced in *The Times* that the Birmingham Unionist Association would in future be known as the Birmingham Conservative and Unionist Association, and would fight elections as the Conservative Association. The cause for which Birmingham's greatest politician risked his career is dead, and we can look back with detachment at an issue that tormented British politics for over a quarter of a century. It is thus appropriate that Chamberlain's apologia for his break with the Liberals in 1886 should be published,* impeccably edited by Mr C. H. D. Howard, who clearly knows the story inside-out. It does not deal solely with Ireland (there are references to Egypt, the County Franchise of 1884, and other notable aspects of the work of the Gladstone Ministry between 1880 and 1885) but its main concern is to show, in Chamberlain's words, the 'unexampled duplicity, concealment and even actual falsehood on the part of the G.O.M.', in formulating his Home Rule plan of 1886.

Before considering whether Chamberlain proves his charge, it may be as well to recall the circumstances. The Liberal Government's term expired in June 1885, after five years of quarrelling between its Whig members, especially the Peers, and its Radical wing represented by Chamberlain and Dilke. Gladstone as Prime Minister had tried to maintain the balance, finding himself allied in sentiment with the Whigs, but in policy often with the Radicals. He had been remarkably successful in holding the Cabinet together over the Gordon debacle and the difficult business of extending the franchise; and it was clear to all – especially the

* Joseph Chamberlain, *A Political Memoir*, edited by C. H. D. Howard, Batchworth Press, 21s.

Radicals – that only he could keep the Liberal Party united. If he went, and was succeeded by Lord Hartington, the leader of the Whigs, the Party would break asunder. Now and then the Radicals were prepared to contemplate this possibility with equanimity, but on the whole they preferred to see Gladstone holding the reins. He would retire fairly soon, and then the future would lie with them, even if it meant the loss of the Whigs. They had the great mass of the Liberal rank and file behind them, disciplined through the organization of the 'caucus'; and together they formed a strong combination. Chamberlain was the 'wild man' of Radical politics, the idol of the rank and file. Dilke was the less glamorous figure, a good administrator and popular in the Commons, regarded by both Gladstone and Chamberlain as a future leader of the Party.* If home issues were to be those which counted in politics, the two felt confident that they knew the demands of the enfranchised democracy and could meet them. This was the position in July 1885, when the first blow was struck at the Radical partnership by Dilke's implication in a divorce action. Thereafter he was of only minor importance. The second blow came when Gladstone made it clear that the future issue in the Liberal Party would not be free education and 'three acres and a cow', but control of Ireland.

Ireland was not a new issue. Throughout the Gladstone Government's term of office there had been arguments about coercion, and Chamberlain and Dilke had usually been the anti-coercionists. Chamberlain had taken the lead in attempting to find a solution to Irish discontent, and had brought forward a plan for local government which his energetic advocacy had brought before both Parnell and the Cabinet. Parnell had not agreed to it in the form that Chamberlain submitted, although the intermediary, O'Shea, made Chamberlain believe that he had.† In any case, in May 1885 the Whig members of the Cabinet rejected Chamberlain's plan, Gladstone's comment being (according to Chamberlain), 'if God spares their lives for five years more they will be glad to accept something

* On July 23rd 1885, after he had been named in the courts, Dilke wrote in his diary: 'It is curious that only a week ago Chamberlain and I had agreed, at his wish and suggestion, that I should be the future leader, as being more popular in the House, though less in the country, than he was, and that only three days ago Mr Gladstone had expressed the same wish.' (Gwynn and Tuckwell, *Life of Dilke*, II, p. 167.)

† Chamberlain's mistaken notion that Parnell had at one stage agreed to Irish local government and later renounced this agreement, must have been important in his estimate of how significant the Irish issue would become, how steadfast Parnell would be. In October 1885 he wrote to Gladstone that 'Parnell has shown that he is not to be depended upon. He will not stick to any "minimum" . . .' (*Political Memoir*, p. 162).

infinitely stronger', or (according to Dilke) 'within six years, if it pleases God to spare their lives, they will be repenting in ashes'.* Ireland had thus seemed disposed of as a minor issue, and the way open, after the Government fell, for a straight conflict between Whigs and Radicals on home issues. But now the Tories took a hand, under the influence of their Lord-Lieutenant, Carnarvon, and their restless popular leader, Randolph Churchill. Churchill, sitting on a sofa next to Parnell, talked of relaxing coercion; Carnarvon met Parnell in an empty house in Grosvenor Square and spoke of a central legislature for Ireland; even Salisbury, the Tory Prime Minister, seemed interested. To Parnell it looked as if the Tories were cynically prepared to break with their past in order to gain Irish support in the House of Commons. The Liberals had been impotent even to impose Chamberlain's local government scheme; Parnell decided to give his support to the Conservatives in the general elections of November 1885. With the new franchise operating, the final figures for the House of Commons were 251 Conservatives, 333 Liberals and 85 Irish Nationalists. The fate of the existing Salisbury Government, and of any Liberal Government that might take its place, thus depended upon Irish support or hostility.

Something like this situation had been visualized by Gladstone in September, when he asked Chamberlain to consider what he would do,

> supposing Parnell to come back 80 to 90 strong, to keep them together, to bring forward a plan which shall contain in your opinion adequate securities for the Union of the Empire, and to press this plan under whatever name as having claims to precedence (claims which could hardly be denied even by opponents).

Chamberlain had replied that he did not suppose Parnell would bring forward any such scheme, but if he did Chamberlain 'would be bound to strain every nerve to assist the Government in dealing with it'. Soon after, he received another letter from Gladstone, on another subject, in which occurred the characteristic sentence:

> An instinct blindly impresses me with the likelihood that Ireland may shoulder aside everything else.

But in the meantime – and here we come to the principal source of Chamberlain's resentment against Gladstone – Henry Labouchère had written saying that Chamberlain 'should know what the little game of our revered G.O.M. has been'. According to Labouchère, Gladstone's son Herbert had been negotiating through him with the Irish to see what they wanted from a Liberal Government. Gladstone was 'disposed to grant the fullest home rule', but he wanted to know 'the Irish minimum'. These overtures, according to Chamberlain,

> went on continuously until the Conservatives were turned out and the new Government formed, and were carried on apparently behind the backs and without the knowledge of any of Mr Gladstone's colleagues: indeed it will be seen that Mr Gladstone went out of his way expressly to deny their existence in a subsequent letter.

Here Chamberlain's case rests. It is Gladstone's duplicity that irks him still * and forces him to write his political testament. We cannot regard the case as proved, however. Mr J. L. Hammond argues powerfully in his *Gladstone and the Irish Nation*, that there is no case to answer. He points to Gladstone's denial, in a letter to Mrs O'Shea (another intermediary in another part of the plot) that he had been in communication with Labouchère. Furthermore, the letters which Mr Hammond reprints show that Gladstone steadfastly refused to bid for Parnellite support, even when he was asked to bid, and even when he needed that support badly. He insisted that the Government of the day (Salisbury's) was the body to treat with Parnell, and, further, he went out of his way to tell the Conservatives, through Balfour, that he would co-operate with them if they brought forward a plan for Irish settlement. His suggestion was dismissed with scorn by the Conservative Cabinet, and forty years later Balfour still retained enough vitality to question Gladstone's sincerity.† But, unless we accept completely Chamberlain's view of Gladstone, as a full-scale artist in duplicity, there is no reason to doubt that Gladstone was in earnest in wanting the Irish issue settled through the same co-operation and compromise as had carried Catholic Emancipation and were after great bitterness, to carry Irish independence in the 1920's.

Chamberlain's charge is that Gladstone intrigued with the Irish behind his colleague's backs, carrying on the negotiations through his son so as to escape responsibility. It is one of the unsatisfactory things about this whole situation that so many people were carrying on negotiations through intermediaries, with ample scope for misrepresentation and misunderstanding. That there were communications between Herbert Gladstone and Labouchère, we know. But we do not know that they were exactly as Labouchère represented them to Chamberlain. Mr Howard points out (p. 166 n.) that Herbert Gladstone apparently refused to allow

* Garvin, *Life of Chamberlain*, I, p. 602.

* It certainly irked him at the time. A week before the famous 'Hawarden kite' was flown by Herbert Gladstone, Chamberlain had denounced Gladstone to Harcourt, saying he had seen letters of communication between Gladstone and the Irish; also, according to Harcourt's son, he said he had 'entirely given up his Irish policy of last summer.' (Gardiner, *Life of Harcourt*, I, p. 550).

† See Balfour, *Chapters of Autobiography*.

his letters to be published in Thorold's *Life* of Labouchère. Herbert's own explanation of his activities at this period * is that he was a Home Ruler much earlier than his father, and in his enthusiasm said and wrote things which were his own views but were interpreted as his father's.† Until we can see Herbert's letters to Labouchère we shall not know how far he committed himself and seemed to commit his father. Even then we shall not be sure whether the elder Gladstone was guilty of 'duplicity, concealment and falsehood'. As Mr Hammond's book shows, there is ample evidence that, after long brooding over the question, he had been coming independently to the decision that Ireland must have its own Parliament. This would have been disputed by Chamberlain, who regarded Gladstone's 'conversion' as simply a matter of political expediency.

In the absence of certainty about Gladstone's intentions, we may turn our attention to his accuser, and ask why Chamberlain reacted so violently against Gladstone's Home Rule plan when it did appear, and why, unlike Harcourt, who also reacted violently, he did not accept the plan and stay in the Liberal Party. It is always difficult to examine motives, and in Chamberlain's case they were clearly mixed. To start with, he was deeply hurt by Gladstone's conduct, and the antipathy between the two men, which had been growing for some time, was complete by the end of 1885.‡ As well, however, one may suggest that Chamberlain's fervent insistence on the 'unity of the Empire' was explicable in other terms than simple devotion to the patriotic ideal – although it must be remembered that he had already entered his Imperialist phase, which was not, as has sometimes been suggested, simply a development of his later Conservative period.§ The structure of politics at the end of 1885 was such as to disturb anyone in Chamberlain's position. The Whigs were as strong as ever in the Liberal Party; time would wear them down, but for the moment they could not be beaten. Dilke was still in Parliament, but would never again be the commanding figure of a few months before; if Chamberlain was to fight the Radical battle within the Liberal Party, he must fight it alone. On the other side, however, there were prospects of support. Lord

* Gladstone, *After Thirty Years*.

† The same difficulty had arisen over the extension of the franchise in 1884, when Herbert's speeches excited the displeasure of the Queen. See Ponsonby, *Henry Ponsonby*, p. 172.

‡ See Hammond, *Gladstone and the Irish Nation*, pp. 391–2 and 470 ff. for a perceptive contrast between Gladstone and Chamberlain and for interesting speculations about what might have happened if Gladstone had treated Chamberlain differently on the formation of his ministry in 1886.

§ The *Political Memoir* is particularly interesting for its Chamberlain memoranda on Egypt, and for a letter from Bright rebuking Chamberlain for using 'the stock arguments of the Jingo School' in 1883 (p. 80).

Randolph Churchill had been alternately friend and foe to Chamberlain, but they had a great deal in common. Lord Randolph's son puts it thus:

> In various ways Lord Randolph Churchill was the only prominent man in the Conservative ranks with whom Mr Chamberlain could easily deal. Lord Salisbury represented opposite ideas, and his antagonism had been so recent and marked that direct association was impossible. But Lord Randolph had been so roundly charged, both by his Conservative comrades and his regular opponents, with being 'a Radical in disguise', and was, in fact, so far advanced on so many questions, that Mr Chamberlain could consort with him without embarrassment or flagrant incongruity.

It may well be that even before Chamberlain made his break with Gladstone he was thinking of association with Churchill in a third or 'centre' party – a 'Unionist' party – of all those who wanted social reform and disliked Irish nationalism. He may have dreamed of a merger of the Liberal and Conservative 'caucuses' in which he and Churchill had been the dominant figures. He believed that 'the English working classes, for various reasons, are distinctly hostile to Home Rule',‡ and his annoyance with Gladstone, his impatience with the Whigs, and his Radical sense of urgency, may well have combined with his favourable view of Lord Randolph Churchill to make him believe that in breaking with Gladstone he would eventually emerge as the leader of the progressive social forces in England. His own attitude to Ireland had been so liberal as to incur the wrath of the Conservatives: as late as the 1885 elections, even Randolph Churchill had called Chamberlain's pet scheme for National Councils 'the dismemberment of the Empire'.§ It is hard to believe that Chamberlain could not have accommodated himself to Gladstone's scheme if he had wanted to. In due course he narrowed down his differences with Gladstone to one single point, the retention of Irish members at Westminster, and even this seems to have been something on which he had changed his mind once already.‖ He seems to have been determined

* Chamberlain told Dilke in 1884 that Churchill was enquiring whether the Birmingham Liberals would support him if he broke with the Conservatives and ran as an independent (*Life of Dilke*, II, p. 6). In October of the same year, however, the two men were ranged on opposite sides in the Aston riots.

† Churchill, *Lord Randolph Churchill* (1951 ed.), pp. 457–8.

‡ Chamberlain to Gladstone, December 1885.

§ Churchill, *op. cit.*, p. 772 (from Randolph Churchill's election address).

‖ The *Life of Harcourt* contains (II, p. 557) an account from the younger Harcourt's diary of a meeting at Devonshire House between Hartington, Harcourt, Chamberlain and Dilke on New Year's Day, 1886, to discuss their attitudes towards Gladstone's plans for Home Rule. It is stated that Chamberlain insisted on the *omission* of Irish members from the House of Commons if any separate legislature were to set up for Ireland. This meeting, although obviously important, is passed over in Chamberlain's *Political Memoir* with only the barest of mentions.

to make a permanent break with Gladstone and the Liberal Party as it existed in 1885.* If Chamberlain felt like this and acted accordingly, the result was disastrous. He could not keep the Radicals with him for long. Only in Birmingham did he retain popular supremacy. In Parliament, Dilke voted for the Home Rule Bill. Trevelyan, the fellow-Radical who had resigned with Chamberlain from Gladstone's 1886 Cabinet, went back next year after an electoral defeat. Chamberlain himself remained a Radical, as his testament shows. But the absence of a strong popular organization led him more and more into organized Conservatism, and the taunts and jeers of the men he had left, acting upon his own sensitive temperament and strong sense of rectitude, cut him off irretrievably. It is in this period of recrimination that he shows up best in his political testament. The exchange of letters between him and Morley reveals Morley's itchy bad-tempered lack of self-confidence and the more admirable self-sufficiency of Chamberlain.

In the end one is left with an overpowering sense of the contrast in character between Chamberlain and Gladstone. The letters between them, spread over almost the whole period with which the book deals, display the mystical elusiveness of the one and the matter-of-fact materialism of the other. They could agree on few things. When they did agree, it was usually because Gladstone had managed to clothe their disagreement in a web of fine distinctions and conjectures which enabled it, though disagreement still, to look like something else. Gladstone did not dissemble, but he had the power of turning black into white by gradual osmosis of the mind. Lord Acton said:†

> (I) cannot make up my mind whether he is not wholly unconscious when working himself up to a change of position. After watching him do it, I think that he is so. He lives completely in what for the moment he chooses to believe.

Herbert Gladstone, devoted to his father, put it more elegantly:‡

* In 1885 there seemed no likelihood that Gladstone would continue for long as party leader. He was always threatening to retire, and undoubtedly meant to do so. Part of the tragedy of the situation was that no one, including Chamberlain, knew that Gladstone had taken the Irish question so seriously and would insist on settling it before he retired. Any decision by Chamberlain to break with the party would thus not seem likely to prove so permanent as in fact it turned out to be: if Hartington became leader when Gladstone retired, Chamberlain could be reasonably sure that the Radicals would come over to him at the first crisis involving Radical policy. It was Gladstone's unexpected retention of the leadership that finally prevented this happening.

† Conversation with Dilke in 1885 (*Life of Dilke*, II, p. 62).

‡ Gladstone, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

> The passage of time, new information, development and organization of public opinion, fresh alignments, unexpected issues, took him forward in a reasoned inexorable sequence, so that to him, while there were modifications of the old and adaptations of the new position, there was, in working out and following the road to truth, no inconsistency.

Gladstone had an immense weight of tradition, belief and learning to rationalize before he could launch out on a Radical position. What makes him an extraordinary politician, a larger-than-life representation of the democratic leader of the twentieth century, faced with social change which demands compromise with his old beliefs and the adaptation of new ones, is that he managed to carry through his rationalization successfully and maintain his political skill at the same time. Against this delicacy of decision in a mind which brooded on Dante, Butler, Augustine and Homer in the time it could spare from politics, must be set the impatience of Chamberlain, thinking, said one of his colleagues in 1883, that 'the universe is only a replica of a provincial town'.* A 'reasoned inexorable sequence' of change was anathema to Chamberlain. He was all for quick decisions and stand-and-deliver methods; again and again during the Government of 1880–1885 he had used the threat of resignation to get his way. Often he had been successful; now, in fighting Home Rule, he staked everything on a stand-and-deliver, not only to the Liberal Party, but to the nation as a whole. He was the man in a hurry, not Gladstone. Disappointed, frustrated, hurt, he won the battle against Gladstone in 1886, but lost the war. Only the most ardent Unionist (if there are any left outside Ulster) would suggest now that Home Rule exacted at the gun's point in 1921 was preferable to Home Rule by consent in 1886. Today Gladstone sits smiling benevolently in Madame Tussaud's, the central figure in the group of notable British statesmen, while Chamberlain leans deferentially over his shoulder.

* Harcourt's comment (*Life of Harcourt*, I, p. 495).

THE LONDON THEATRE

Richard Findlater

The prosperous and picturesque sterility of the London stage has so far been unruffled by the advent of the new Elizabethan era, and even the most credulous of visiting Anglophiles may search in vain for signs of a renaissance of the drama in the capital's decaying shrines of show business. Critics decided thirty years ago that naturalism was dead; but the news has not reached most of our playhouses: indeed, naturalism may scarcely be said to have lived on the London stage, except in a polite West End disguise. Visionaries from abroad may be prepared to celebrate the era of Christopher Fry and his new Elizabethans, prodigies of eloquence and fertility: but Mr Fry is still laboriously planning a costume comedy for Dame Edith Evans (it has taken him over a year to conjure up fourteen pages) and none of his disciples has emerged from the honourable obscurity of the little theatres. Verse, meanwhile, is – like new literary talent – conspicuous by its absence in the West End; and for Shakespeare the alien Bardolater must journey to the suburbs, to see Mr Donald Wolfit at Hammersmith (there, too, is Mr Gielgud and a company of all the talents, which – such is the state of our theatre – it is uneconomic to exhibit in central London). The Coronation season in the London theatre, indeed, is incorrigibly like most other seasons – not least so in the absence of many leading actors; and in its provision of dramatic literature, old or new, it compares unfavourably with many other Coronations.

True, there is Terence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea*, a long-runner which is indisputably the author's best play to date; Roger Macdougall's comedy about peace, *Escapade*, is one of the better new British plays seen in London since the war; and there is a new version of *A Woman of No Importance*, a play originally written by Oscar Wilde, but since amended – for Coronation year – by Mr Paul Dehn. This is, so far, scarcely a prodigal display of dramatic literature, but other treats are on the way. *The Apple Cart* has been revived, with Noel Coward as King Magnus; Sir Laurence Olivier, who at first aspired to revive Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton*, now hopes to appear in a new Rattigan comedy, about the Coronation of George V; and we look forward to a long-delayed play about sin by Mr Graham Greene, *The Living Room*, which will bring back an excellent actor, Eric Portman, to the stage. Again, there is Mr Eliot, whose new

play, *The Confidential Clerk* – a comedy in iambic pentameters – will be staged at the Edinburgh Festival, but nobody knows when this will reach London. It is a sign of the times that no London playhouse could be found to stage a new work by our principal living dramatist, because no lessee can predict his business as much as six months ahead; and when this was announced, five New York theatres at once offered the play hospitality at any convenient date after the Festival ends.

Such names as these, however – coupled with those of such players as Sir Ralph Richardson and Miss Athene Seyler – are enough to provoke a constant hum of defensive self-approval among certain critics and managers. It may be pointed out, in excuse of the British theatre, that we are living in difficult times, and that in every country on both sides of the Iron Curtain there is a deficiency of significant new plays. It is also true that the British theatre, as an industry, is much more prosperous than that of France, Italy or the U.S.A., none of which countries has inherited the profitable traditions of annual pantomime: there are ten times as many professional all-the-year-round playhouses in this country as in these others, and it is estimated that about a million and a quarter people go to some kind of live theatrical entertainment every week (some 4 per cent of the film-going population). Again, it is indisputable that the theatre has always been in a bad way, and will probably continue to be so. As Mr Eric Bentley says, 'The theatre will always be in trouble because its success depends upon too rare a set of coincidences.' But these arguments cannot, it seems to me, obscure the fact that the London stage is not good enough and could be better, and that the organization of the British theatre industry leaves much to be desired. I, for one, am unimpressed by the claim that our theatre is the finest in the world, as many people like to suppose. It is a claim which seems irrelevant in a country where playhouses are still being converted into cinemas, audiences are still being lost to the film and television, and a large part of the population sees only third-rate theatre or none at all; where only some 3 per cent of the population in a city with 100,000 people will support a local repertory theatre, and where the State spends most of its shoe-string culture-budget on ballet and grand opera. The London stage in Coronation year, moreover, offers scant support to those obdurate Englishmen who still insist that the theatre ranks as the greatest art of a democratic society and who believe that it can meet the challenge of the machine entertainments with its own indestructible magic. As one writes, thirty-six theatres are open in central London, and twenty-eight of these are occupied by musicals, farces, comedies and revues; two are devoted, with State support, to ballet and opera; and the remaining six include the three plays I have already mentioned, by Rattigan, Macdougall, and Wilde-cum-Dehn. Is this a fair

proportion, in 'the finest theatre in the world'? It is, at any rate, representative, and one merit of the 1953 London season is that it should present the energetic collector from abroad with some typical theatrical specimens in a familiar showcase.

First, he may see a rich confusion of English acting styles, traditionally eclectic, and nowadays often lent a semblance of unity by the producer or the scenery. This is illustrated in the current production of *The Way of the World* at Hammersmith, a production of which any national theatre might be proud, where John Gielgud orchestrates a number of conflicting styles into an almost complete harmony. The Millamant of Pamela Brown, a highly mannered and highly accomplished actress, scarcely seems to belong to Congreve's world of 1700 – she brings a baleful Renaissance air to the premeditated caprices of a seductive bluestocking. The Witwoud of Paul Scofield, one of the whiter hopes of the English stage, seems more appropriately in period in its studied eccentricity, but he energizes the character with an almost excessive comic significance. The chilly strength of Eileen Herlie, as the villainous Mrs Marwood, is rooted in yet another convention, and Margaret Rutherford's Lady Wishfort is a splendid revision of farcical character. Among the other members of the company, which is notable for its all-round excellence, there are other assorted styles and techniques, yet all are combined by Mr Gielgud into a highly successful revival, a revival which incidentally demonstrates that Congreve's characters are much more than animated types, humours, or puppets for his wit. The producer's one failure is with his own performance, for Mr Gielgud's Mirabell is consistently underplayed throughout, a self-effacement which upsets the balance of the play. To some extent this is an occupational and temporary disorder: as Mr Gielgud confesses in a recent book, defending his practice of divided control, 'My own performance is at first necessarily tentative and lacking in concentrated sureness of attack, for my mind in the first few weeks is busy with details of lighting, movement and the performances of my fellow players.' But the muting of Mirabell also appears to be a deliberate subjugation of the first player of the English stage by the conscientious director who is his Doppelganger – another phenomenon which should interest the visitor from abroad.

Round the corner in Hammersmith is the exemplar of a very different histrionic genus, Mr Donald Wolfit, whose season at the King's Theatre has been triumphantly successful, at the box-office. Mr Wolfit's acting – as Œdipus, Lear or the Wandering Jew – is in a class of its own, and his productions have a historical interest, I think, because they light up for a sophisticated generation, accustomed to sumptuous and tasteful revivals, the vanished theatre of the old actor-managers. Here there is no uncertainty or self-effacement: Mr Wolfit is the starry centre, the prime cause,

and there's no nonsense about orchestration of styles or unification of design. His company is stronger than ever before, for it includes not only such veterans as Sir Lewis Casson but some promising young talents; yet it is none the less inadequate – by post-war standards – for the representation of a classic repertory. The experienced players, often miscast, appear to follow their own rash counsels, and the inexperienced players, who are in the majority, are sorely in need of production and guidance. The modern sceptic who believes that the producer is an expendable luxury in the modern theatre should visit the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, where he will see a great actor complacently ruining his own effects by monumental blunders in production: this season offers some remarkable examples of bad acting, scenery, music, grouping and direction, together with some of the most memorable performances of the age. Mr Wolfit has done good work for many years in keeping alive a Shakespearian repertory without the backing of rich managements or the State, and he has been obliged to run his company on a shoestring. Yet banality, rather than simplicity, has been the result of this austerity, and his freedom from the fashionable cliques has not immunized him from unfashionable faults. His own performances, however, are marked by a power and gusto unique in the contemporary theatre; for he is virtually the only representative of the old, pre-psychological tradition of broad, baroque histrionics; he can rant with the sublime assurance of a man unbothered by considerations of æsthetics, sociology, or psychiatry, the eternal barnstormer at large in a theatrical museum of his own contrivance.

At the other extreme from Mr Wolfit's extravagance is the performance of Sir Ralph Richardson in Mr R. C. Sherriff's new play, *The White Carnation*. It was in a Sherriff play that Sir Ralph made his last appearance on the London stage, and this new West End confection is little more than a vehicle for his own peculiar talents. In 1952 Sir Ralph acted at Stratford-on-Avon, where he was with conspicuous cruelty attacked by the press for conspicuous inadequacy. His Macbeth, in particular, was an extraordinary performance, for it flattened the splendid poetry into meaningless prose and diminished the tragic character into a befuddled bourgeois in fancy dress. Now Sir Ralph plays the hero of *The White Carnation*, John Greenwood, in much the same style that he played Macbeth and Prospero at Stratford. It is a manner which suits Sherriff better than Shakespeare, and its flat and toneless automatism is particularly appropriate to a ghost such as John Greenwood, who looks quite normal but who has no heart or pulse. But to me this recent phase of Richardson's acting style seems a negation of the theatre, a demonstration of understatement carried to the point of non-acting. For some years now, indeed, this actor seems to have been giving the same performance in the theatre, though his work in films

has won golden opinions from everyone.

Understatement is the occupational vice of the English actor; although fashions have changed since the war, the sedate school of quiet, gentlemanly playing is still in control. Visitors to London will have the opportunity of seeing one celebrated practitioner, Noel Coward, applying his manner and personality to a text not his own, as King Magnus in *The Apple Cart*; and Clive Brook, in *A Woman of no Importance*, shows how very nearly a rich experience of the theatre, a superficial elegance of bearing, and a magnetic stage personality can conceal the basic failure of this convention to meet the demands of a period comedy such as Wilde's – a failure always most noticeable in the incongruity of actor's voice and dramatist's language.

The Coronation season not only presents a variety of English acting, but a fairly representative mixture of English playmaking. Thus there are comedies indebted to the French (Paris is traditionally a source of the British drama) such as *Dear Charles* and *The Happy Marriage*, a vehicle for the actor-manager John Clements and his wife Kay Hammond, whose own conspicuously happy alliance has been revealed to millions through the medium of the B B C in 'We Beg to Differ'. (The influence of radio and television on the theatre is a notable post-war phenomenon: it explains the popularity of *London Laughs*, a 'revue' whose stars all made their reputations on the B B C.) There are, in the field of light entertainment, the 'nude shows' derived from the Folies Bergères and other landmarks of the Parisian tourist trade: an English 'Folies Bergères revue' such as *Paris to Piccadilly* is the high-class metropolitan equivalent of the ever-so-French revues which endlessly tour the lesser provincial theatres, but it usually surpasses its Parisian models. The new Casino show, *Three Cheers*, began its run without the nude tableaus which were a popular feature of its predecessors, as a mark of respect to the Coronation, but within two weeks the virtually naked girls were back again on their perches, in deference to the demands of the box-office. Another sign of Franco-British co-operation is *The Little Hut*, the Roussin comedy, suitably amended for the Lord Chamberlain, which has been an institution of Shaftesbury Avenue for the past three years. Such long runs are not uncommon in the post-war theatre: students of the London stage should visit *Seagulls over Sorrento* and *Reluctant Heroes*, two British comedies of service life in wartime now in their third year, which are the nearest thing to Ealing comedy in the West End. There is also Noel Coward's *Quadrille*, a poor play but a good vehicle for the brilliant acting of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne; and Peter Ustinov's very entertaining charade of parody and satire, *The Love of Three Colonels*: without the exuberant energy, wit and radiance of the author's own performance, for which it serves as a

gaily coloured frame, this diversion lacks dramatic unity.

The two British plays of any dramatic merit are in a class of their own; they deserve longer analysis than there is space for here. Terence Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea* is an admirable piece of theatre within the conventions of West End naturalism, which is almost something a great deal more: it is a good play marred by the banalities of the last act and the inexpungable staginess of the ultimate situations, and it provides opportunities for some excellent acting in the English style by Kenneth More, Roland Culver, Googie Withers, and her predecessors Celia Johnson and Peggy Ashcroft. Roger Macdougall's *Escapade* is a witty, lively comedy, in which the author has incorporated a series of sermons about peace: the result is not only good box-office, but also intermittently effective propaganda; yet it illustrates the need for the dramatist who has something to say to make his compromise with the proscenium stage and the entertainment industry. Mr Macdougall has stuffed his piece with some antique chestnuts, and rigged some of his situations with ostentatiously neat contrivance, but none the less *Escapade* is an enjoyable and intelligent play, whose very weaknesses demonstrate the weaknesses of the London stage. It is another sign of the times that this piece could be hailed by one critic, with some justification, as the finest English comedy since the war: an exception might be made for *The Lady's Not For Burning*.

One more feature of the Coronation season which deserves attention is the dominance of the American musical play, and the mediocrity of the old-fashioned English musical comedy (two very different *genres*). There are five musicals in the West End today, of which two are, quite distinctly, home-made – *Love From Judy* and *The Glorious Days* – and another Broadway success, *Guys and Dolls*, may be presented by Mr Emile Littler as his especial contribution to the Coronation year. Both *Love From Judy* (staged by Emile Littler) and *The Glorious Days* (staged by Tom Arnold) show how British managers meet the challenge of such current American shows as *Call Me Madam*, *South Pacific* and *Paint Your Wagon*. The method of Emile Littler is, as in his last musical *Zip Goes a Million*, to use an American setting: *Love From Judy* is based on the novel *Daddy Long Legs*, and the action takes place in the New Orleans of fifty years ago (period costume and nostalgic settings are a popular feature of English theatre today, whether in new plays or old, musical or 'straight' drama). The score is by an American composer, and transatlantic influences are evident in the chorus work and production, as well as in the laboriously Southern accents of the cast; but though *Love From Judy* has been a box-office success, and although its leading lady, Jean Carson, is a new and delightful British star, it fails to match up to its Broadway models. It lacks the speed, the precision, the dramatic interest; it lacks the integration of acting, singing,

dancing and plot; it lacks, above all, roots. The more traditional British method is illustrated in *The Glorious Days*, which, although not characteristic of English musicals in some other respects, is a vehicle for a star and a pretext for spectacle. Miss Anna Neagle is one of the most capital assets of the British film industry, a time-honoured heroine of the Odeon queue, but on the stage she seems merely an incarnation of the nice English miss, agelessly young, incorrigibly unaccomplished, resolutely genteel, but ever so nice and such a good trouper. *The Glorious Days* seems to me interesting notably as a museum of theatrical cliché and mediocrity, and as a parade of lost opportunities. A cavalcade of the English past in Coronation year should offer enormous scope, but this 'musical play' selects from the pageant of history only those characters who have been immortalized by Miss Neagle on the screen, and supplements them with a selection of old musical comedy successes presented by a prodigiously untalented company with determined nostalgia. The dancing, like the dialogue, has an appropriately antiquarian flavour.

The success of *The Glorious Days* prompts some reflections on the conservatism not only of British managers, but of the British public. But one significant cause of the present state of the theatre must be found in its economic organization, recently outlined in the Federation of Theatre Unions' report on *Theatre Ownership in Britain*: the tendency to monopoly described in this report may be an inevitable phase in the rationalization of a business, but it is a menace to the future of an art.

THE MILITARY NECESSITY*

W. M. Landers

Lecturer in French at King's College, London

This translation of Alfred de Vigny's *Servitude et grandeur militaires* will be read with sympathetic interest by any ex-soldier who at times may have felt that he too was at heart one of Nature's civilians. By inclination and family tradition Vigny seemed likely to make a first-class officer, yet he left the Army in 1827, after thirteen years' service, with only the rank of captain and a sense of grievance. He had grown up in the nostalgic atmosphere of 'battles long ago', was still at school as the Napoleonic epic reached its climax, and has recorded here the excitement of those tremendous times when schoolmasters read the *bulletins* of the Grand Army aloud in class and playgrounds echoed to the ringing of bells and the roll of drums. But he was to serve, not Napoleon, but another master, and at the age of seventeen found himself a member of the exclusive *Compagnies rouges*, escorting Louis XVIII on his retreat to the North during the Hundred Days. He lacked the perspicacity of Julien Sorel, failed to see that the Army's day was over, and after Waterloo obtained a transfer to the infantry. Vigny was soon to know the corrosive boredom of peace-time barrack life. He was serving in the Vincennes garrison in 1819, at the time of the explosion described in the second of these stories, and a few years later was kicking his heels in the Basses-Pyrenées as he waited for a chance to see active service in Spain. But his regiment remained in reserve on the wrong side of the mountains and he found solace, as usual, in writing. It is from this period that *Le Cor*, a resonant and swashbuckling poem on the death of Roland, remains to express the poet's boyish longing for mighty deeds of arms. He was destined to see even less of warfare than Stendhal's Fabrice, and perhaps this was all to the good. His physique was unsuited to the rigours of service in the field and he seems to have done rather badly in his chosen profession. But more than one absent-minded intellectual will read with compassion that wistful sentence, 'It was only much later that I realized my military career had been a long mistake and that I had forced† an essentially contemplative nature into a life of action.'

* Alfred de Vigny. Translated by Humphrey Hare (Cresset Press, 12*s.* 6*d.*)

† *porté* in the original.

This book is at once a personal confession and a defence of the soldier, written at a time when the professional army of the Restoration was generally unpopular. But it was also the author's purpose to provide a corrective for the contemporary *malaise*, by proposing a code of behaviour and a kind of lay 'religion' which would fill the vacuum left by more than a century of anti-religious teaching. The Romantics were obsessed with the idea of spiritual renewal, yet few of them, if any, came completely to terms with the Church, and Vigny in particular seems to have set his face from the outset against the Christian scheme of things. The *Poèmes* of 1822 already develop the theme that was to underlie his later thinking: the indifference of the Almighty to human suffering. It was in 1843, with *Le Mont des Oliviers*, or rather with the final verse added in 1862, that Vigny was to give the full measure of his religious pessimism, but well before that he seems to have looked to a purely human *élite* for the solution of humanity's problems and to have concentrated mainly on questions of a social and political character. The historical novel, *Cinq-Mars* (1826), argued that Richelieu, by crushing the French aristocracy, had destroyed the social stability of the country and prepared the Revolution of 1789. It was characteristic of Vigny that his rebel hero, Henri d'Effiat, should fail, as the angel Eloa, in the poem of that name, had failed. Vigny's conception of life was heroic and tragic, conditioned at once by the urge to fulfilment in thought and action and by the intimate awareness of personal defeat. His was a clear case of intellectual frustration, of a chronic inability to *choose*. He was unable to side whole-heartedly with any of the rival parties of his time; he distrusted the ambitions of political Catholicism, despised the outlook of the *bourgeois* Liberals and feared the new industrial working class. He was at least mentally aware of the fearful conditions in which the latter lived and worked, yet he could never accept the socialism of Fourier or Saint-Simon.

The Revolution of 1830 caught him unprepared, and he was soon in an agony of indecision. It was not merely that Vigny was torn, as Mr Humphrey Hare states in his Introduction, 'between his admirations and his loyalties, admiration for the people of Paris and inherited loyalty to the legitimate branch of the Bourbons'. His attitude was complicated to the point of incoherence. His diary expresses his resentment at having been passed over in the Army and afterwards, his desire to stay and protect his wife and mother, his sympathy for the 'people' and fear of the mob, and his ambiguous attitude to Charles X whose antiquated notions of kingship, he knew, had brought on revolution. At one moment he was 'preparing his old uniform' and at the next asking himself what he owed the Bourbons after thirteen years of unrequited service. When at last he heard that the King had decided to go, he washed his hands of 'the

Stuart breed' and all his former 'political superstitions'. He may have felt that he had come to a free decision, but in fact his mind had merely been made up for him.

The distress of this dilemma finds expression in *Stello*, a group of three stories linked by scraps of conversation between Stello, the poet, and the mysterious Docteur Noir. Both are symbolic, Stello standing for the heart and the Doctor for the mind, each representing, no doubt, a part of Vigny's divided personality and reminding us of that 'split' between intellect and sensibility in which Mr T. S. Eliot has diagnosed the moral sickness of our time. The opening dialogue turns on the problem of political action, of *engagement*: should the poet take part in the conflicts of the day? Stello feels that he should: the heart says 'Yes'. But the mind refuses, and the Doctor tells the story of three young poets, all of whom go under in their clash with the world of practical affairs. Gilbert, the minor French poet of the eighteenth century, dies abandoned under an absolute monarchy, the starving Chatterton takes his life under a constitutional régime, while André Chénier perishes under the republican guillotine, a victim of the jealousy of a fourth-rate poet, Robespierre. The lesson of this melancholy trilogy, in which the facts are adapted to suit the argument, as in *Cinq-Mars*, is expressed in the Doctor's 'prescription': the Poet is the voice of Truth, while all Power is founded on a lie. The poet must therefore turn from the temptations of the market-place to dedicate himself in solitude to his sacred, creative mission. He must abandon hope, since hope, 'the greatest of our follies', is part of the lie on which all Power is based. Life is an ugly reality and must be faced as such.

So much for the problem of political action. The moral and spiritual problem remained, and Vigny asks (I quote from Mr Hare's translation):

> Is anything sacred still?
> In the universal foundering of creeds, to what wreckage can brave hands still cleave? Apart from a passing love of comfort and of luxury nothing is visible on the surface of the deep. It would seem that selfishness has swamped everything; even those who, diving courageously, seek to save souls, find themselves on the point of being engulfed. The chiefs of the political parties today use Catholicism as their watchword and their banner; but what faith have they in its mysteries, what influence has its teaching upon their lives? Artists display it as some precious medallion and immerse themselves in its dogmas as in a source of poetic inspiration; but how many of them fall upon their knees in the church they embellish? Many philosophers embrace and plead its cause, like generous advocates on behalf of some poor and friendless client; they love to stamp their writings and their speeches with its colours and its forms, to decorate their books with its gothic gilding, and in everything they do they like spinning the clever web of their arguments about the Cross; but in their solitude the Cross is rarely to be found by their side. Soldiers fight and die with

> little thought of God. Our age knows that this is so, would wish it otherwise, and can do nothing. It broods about itself despondently, and is aware, as no other century has been, of the sorrows of an introspective age.

In other words, Vigny has no time either for the æsthetic Catholicism of Chateaubriand or for the watered-down spiritualism of Victor Cousin; for him, to use the term beloved of Senancour, Christianity is *désenchanté*; its magic has gone and what is lost can never be restored. Instead, he proposes, characteristically, a purely human 'cult' which he calls 'the religion of honour,' and this is the very essence of his book on military life.

Servitude et grandeur militaires stems from the didactic novel of the eighteenth century, but the urgency of Vigny's message produces a high-toned eloquence rising at times to poetic levels. Following his practice as a poet, he has built each of his three stories (like *Stello*, this is a trilogy) around the central armature of a general idea. In *Laurette, or The Red Seal*, a naval officer, sailing under sealed orders to Cayenne, strikes up a warm friendship with two political prisoners, a young Parisian writer and his wife, whom he is transporting into exile. The fatal letter with the Red Seal, when opened in mid-ocean, orders the captain to have the young man shot. The modernity of the theme is obvious, but Vigny has no solution for the problems raised at Nuremberg; for him there is now no question of disobedience in the army or navy and it is with the legislator that the final remedy lies:

> Is there never to be a law which in such circumstances can resolve the discord between Duty and Conscience? Is public opinion wrong when from generation to generation it absolves, indeed honours, the disobedience of the Viscount d'Orte, who, ordered to extend to Dax the Parisian St Bartholomew's Eve, replied to Charles IX:
>
> 'Sire, I have communicated Your Majesty's commands to your faithful inhabitants and troops; I have found none but good citizens and brave soldiers, and not a single butcher.'
>
> And if he was right to refuse to obey, how is it that we live under laws which make it reasonable to condemn to death those who refuse this same blind obedience? We admire free will and we destroy it; this absurdity cannot long endure. The time is bound to come when the circumstances in which discretion is permitted the soldier will have to be established, and down to what rank freedom of thought, of conscience, and of the sense of justice, may be exercised. . . . One day, this contradiction will have to be resolved.

Vigny had set out to show the fighting man as the unrecognized victim of his calling; his purpose was to demonstrate the problem, not to solve it.

An Evening at Vincennes presents the soldier again as a victim, this time of his Responsibility. An elderly quartermaster-sergeant, carrying out a final inspection of the ammunition in his charge, perishes when the

powder-magazine explodes. Vigny has unfortunately introduced a story-within-the-story in which the old soldier first relates the circumstances of his early marriage to a little Cinderella befriended by two good fairies, Marie-Antoinette and the Princesse de Lamballe. But the sugary sentiment of this diversion is redeemed by a description of the Vincennes fortress which swiftly evokes the strange feeling of serenity and sadness, of philosophic detachment and incurable *ennui* that hangs over Army camps in the long idle evenings of peace-time soldiering.

The third story, *The Malacca Cane*, is by far the most ambitious. It is a story of disenchantment, and the hero, Captain Renaud, is partly an idealized portrait of the author himself. Like Vigny he has previously handed in his papers, but unlike Vigny he has answered the call in the crisis of 1830. On a darkened boulevard, among broken street-lamps and shuttered houses, he tells the story of his life, of his boyhood hero-worship of Napoleon and his gradual realization of the Emperor's vanity, pettiness and underlying futility. He tells how this false enthusiasm gave way to a veneration for genuine greatness, for the total self-sacrifice and modest humanity of Admiral Collingwood, on whose flagship he is detained as a prisoner-of-war. He resists the temptation to escape, keeps faith as a prisoner on parole, only to be snubbed for his pains by the Emperor whom he later encounters in Paris. Vigny has tried not only to illustrate the principle of honour, but to disabuse the French of the Napoleonic myth, of the contemporary cult of the Man of Action. The story ends with a curiously modern 'debunking' of war itself. Ordered to take a Russian outpost, Renaud leads his men in the assault; in the darkness he strikes at a recumbent form, only to discover that he has killed a boy of fourteen under his father's eyes. The 'sophist', Joseph de Maistre, had written of war as 'divine' and of the earth as for ever crying out for blood; Vigny replies, with quiet dignity, that war is accursed of God and man and that 'the earth cries out for no more than the fresh water of its rivers and the pure dew of its clouds'. His own conclusion, that war has had its day, that 'scientific invention' will abolish it completely, and that 'the dazzling grandeur of conquerors is quenched, perhaps for ever', may sound appallingly naive, yet this pathetic profession of faith contributes to the sombre beauty of the final episode.

It would be foolish to pretend that Vigny's reputation, both as a poet and as a thinker, has not diminished, and he was certainly incapable of that 'coherent and complete system of philosophy' which schoolboys are still encouraged to find in his works.* His intellect worked spasmodically and many of his ideas seem to cancel one another out. His thinking was

* H. E. Berthon, *Nine French Poets*, Macmillan, 1934, p. 185. I hasten to add that this anthology is one of the very best of its kind.

vitiated, too, by timidity, by fear of the democratic movement, and this was to lead him in later years into a form of pragmatism bordering on hypocrisy. Like Balzac, he came to support Catholicism as a guarantee of 'order' while in private he devoted himself to a vaguely Platonic and contemplative cult which he called his 'atticism'. But in some respects he is far more 'modern' than any of his contemporaries; in particular, and in spite of his subsequent Ivory Tower detachment, he has something in common with Albert Camus, as the latter was reminded less than a year ago by Jean-Paul Sartre. It was Vigny, long before Camus, who expressed the pathos if not the 'absurdity' of the human situation, isolated, as both men see it, amid the hostility of Nature and 'le silence éternel de la Divinité'.*

Mr Hare's translation has plenty of power behind it but tends to bulldoze its way through the text with little regard for precision. The title chosen is clumsy and mis-translations are frequent. *Bardée de chiffres*, for example, applied to the *jeunesse* of the military academies, whose heads were crammed with figures, is translated by 'with letters stuck after their names' (p. 20); *cent-quatre-vingt-treize* by 'a hundred and twenty-three' (p. 29); *boulet* becomes 'musket-ball' and *terroir* 'enclave' (pp. 54, 64); the sentence 'Vous liriez Laplace toutes les nuits . . . que vous n'y trouveriez pas le remède à cela' turns into . . . 'you would find a remedy' (p. 69). *Exécuter les charges*, i.e. to carry out loading drill, is translated by 'to execute a charge' (p. 89), *donjon* by 'dungeon' (p. 110), and 'il avait voulu avoir le dernier', i.e. he had wanted to have the last word, by 'it was these last he had desired' (p. 155). The 'Northumberland' referred to on p. 177 is not a ship but Collingwood's native county, as should have been clear from the subsequent phrase, *en pleine terre*, translated as 'moored to the shore'.

There are a considerable number of minor slips. In places the translator falls back, quite needlessly, on rough approximations like 'syntax' for *tropes*, 'he died' for *il vient de mourir*, and 'Moscow' for *la Moscowa* (literally, the Moskva river, standing here for the battle of Borodino). Marie-Antoinette emerges, rather oddly, as 'the pink lady' (*la dame rose*). Mr Hare has corrected Vigny's mis-reading of Exodus xxxii, 27 (see p. 59), but has attributed the line *au demeurant le meilleur fils du monde* to Rabelais, who had it of Marot. There are very few misprints, but one of them ruins a vivid sentence: it was not the 'sergeant's book' but his *back* which Captain Renaud used as a desk in writing his order.

Mr Hare's Introduction is bright and lively, if occasionally gossipy, and contains a remarkable passage on the symbolism of military drill which Vigny would have read with enjoyment and approval.

* *Les Temps Modernes*, August 1952, p. 346.

THE STRATEGY OF VICTORIAN POETRY

John Wain

Most of the better poets of the twentieth century, so far, have found themselves addressing a very small public; indeed, many of them have given the impression of deliberately rejecting a large following, and this tendency has naturally given rise to a certain amount of grumbling. I remember one grumble which ran, 'A hundred years ago poetry was the most discussed of the arts in England. Now it is the least', or words to that effect; the implication being that the shrinking of the public for poetry was due to a simple failure on the part of the modern poets to make their work as readable as that of the Victorians. The opposite party have retorted by blaming the Victorians for being popular; apparently it was their very ability to speak to the average man of the time that revealed them as second-rate. Mr David Daiches, in *Poetry and the Modern World* (1940) was quite certain where the fault lay.

> The aim of Tennyson, as he saw it, was to come to terms with his age: he may not have achieved his aim completely or comfortably, but there can be little doubt that it *was* his aim, as it was Browning's. The optimism of Browning and the pessimism of Tennyson . . . are both products of this aim: the former tried to achieve it by breeziness and ruggedness, the latter by worry, morality, and (alternatively) choicely cadenced hysteria.

The age seems, at any rate, to have left them a fairly free hand if it was possible to come to terms with it by being either optimistic or pessimistic, either rugged or 'choicely cadenced'; but in any case the charge against these poets is that they sold out. It is wrong to agree too much with one's age and fatal if that age is the age of Victoria. Three years after Mr Daiches's book, Mr Cyril Connolly, in his essay '1843', confirmed the diagnosis:

> Tennyson, our greatest poet of the last hundred years, might have been one of the greatest poets of the world if he had listened to his instinct alone, if he had not permitted his reason to enforce the doctrines of the day, not felt it his duty to be a philospher-bard, a State-mouthpiece, rather than a wild and sensual voice of protest, a dying swan.

This being the dominant view, it was only to be expected that someone would sooner or later set out to prove that the mid-Victorian poets were not really in accord with their age at all; that they were in fact rebellious,

and deserve better treatment from their descendants on that account.* I myself, for reasons I shall give in a moment, take up a position a little to one side of either party, but let me try to do justice to Mr Johnson first.

His main thesis is as follows: Tennyson, Browning and Arnold were the first generation of English poets to find themselves faced with a reading public with whom they were completely out of sympathy. True, the earlier 'Romantics' had met with a good deal of opposition and neglect, but their answer had been mainly to scold the world for its attitude; certainly they had never been concerned to find ways and means of addressing a public who simply would not listen to anything they really wanted to say. These three poets, however, occupied a position midway between the storming Romantic poet and the modern poet who has simply resigned himself to being overlooked. Their audience was prepared to listen to poetry, but not unless it said what they wanted to hear. Their answer, according to Mr Johnson, was to develop a habit of writing in code.

> . . . from a desire to gain a wide audience for their work and hence to play an influential part in the life of their times, all three poets showed a willingness to make concessions to literary fashions with which they were fundamentally out of sympathy. Resolved, nevertheless, that conformity should involve as little artistic loss as possible, Tennyson, Browning and Arnold perfected remarkable techniques for sublimating their private insights without materially falsifying the original perceptions at the heart of their creative impulse.

The word 'sublimating' here could be a piece of scholarly wit, because 'sublimate' means 'Convert from solid state to vapour by heat and allow to solidify again', and certainly Mr Johnson could claim that these three poets do sometimes convert their solid grains of insight into 'vapour', the form most acceptable to their readers, in whose minds the vapour presumably hardened again, at some stage, into the durable materials of thought. But I suppose he meant it in the Oxford Dictionary's 'fig.' sense: 'refine, purify, idealize'. In short, what a medical student does with his energies when he puts them into cross-country running: making them respectable.

This is then demonstrated for each of the poets in turn. Tennyson, who comes first, is shown as having remained faithful throughout his life to his one chief preoccupation – a repudiation of the material in favour of the quasi-mystical life of the spirit. The characters in his major poems, as Mr Johnson shows, are usually either engaged in a formal quest for

* E. D. H. Johnson: *The Alien Vision of Victorian Poetry*. New Jersey: Princeton U.P. London: Cumberlege. 25*s*.

some more valid standard of truth than is normally apparent, or in an abnormal mental state which may be either prophetic fervour or out-and-out insanity. The prevailing taste of the twentieth century leads most people to prefer the poems of madness, from *Maud* to *Rizpah*, to the poems of quest such as the *Idylls of the King*; but Mr Johnson has little difficulty in showing that they are basically similar, and (what should recommend them even more) equally grounded in despair. Tennyson found the gulf between the unsatisfying world of appearances and the desirable but elusive world of truth a gulf that he could not bridge; this makes *The Passing of Arthur* as tragic as, say, *Lucretius* with its tale of derangement and suicide.

The Tennyson chapter I found convincing; the Browning one equally so, yet less interesting because, surely, it has always been fairly well-recognized that Browning took every opportunity to preach a doctine of 'vitalism' that often seems close to the ideas of a man like D. H. Lawrence, and breathes the same essentially religious spirit of reverence for the unknown forces within, along with the same hatred of anything stifling or deadening. Translated into Mr Johnson's rather prim prose, this reads,

> the intuitional basis for conduct in Browning's worldly dramas challenges those systems of social convention which warp the individual will to power or love or creativity.

This is very interestingly documented, and it is hardly Mr Johnson's fault if the result is not very new: a year after Browning's death Henry James referred to his 'modernness – by which we mean the all-touching, all-trying spirit of his work, permeated with accumulations and playing with knowledge', and, when his leading ideas are extracted, as with a forceps, and presented cut and dried, it is natural that the result is less vital than the actual poetry in which they occur. Where the sleight of hand came in, it seems, was chiefly in Browning's invariable policy of dramatization, which stopped his readers from taking his statements as personal utterances, and also splintered his message so that it was never quite clear in its general import. To give Mr Johnson his voice again,

> since he made his attacks piecemeal through anatomizing characters each of whom embodied but a single aspect of contemporary thought, he could be sure of enlisting on his side all those who did not share this particular foible, and so of forestalling unified opposition.

Passing on to Arnold, Mr Johnson gives us a painstaking documentation, by means of a commentary on the poems cemented with relevant passages from letters and from the Preface of 1853, of the thesis that he, too, tried to make available to a wide public the imaginative insights

which, ultimately, it could not or would not share. Arnold's critical sense was more highly developed than that of the other two, his vision of what contemporary society needed was more acute, and his dissatisfaction with the scholar-gipsy ideal of seclusion, and letting the whole thing slide, finally mounted to the pitch that made it impossible for him to write any more poetry. He lived on as the conscience of Victorian letters, pointing to the far-off ideal of a classic wholeness and health, and exhorting the age to turn and begin the journey afresh with an urgency that was born of the struggle he had undergone, and in which he had been defeated. 'Arnold's myths', says Mr Johnson, 'are really studies in alienation, where the protagonists suffer in all innocence for their superiority to the Time Spirit'.

The conclusion is, therefore, that we must read these three poets afresh, using a new method. Waving aside the surface meaning of their poems, we must search for the deep message of dissatisfaction that lies beneath.

But before we discuss this conclusion there are a few points about Mr Johnson's actual handling of his argument that one feels bound to go back and examine. First, there is the vagueness that seems to hang about the page whenever he ought to be telling us whether he thinks the poets did all this *deliberately*. When a critic tells us that a generation of poets made a habit of conveying ideas and attitudes that were distasteful to their age, and did so by wrapping them up in 'literary fashions with which they were fundamentally out of sympathy', the logic of the situation needs careful thinking out. Did they consciously say to themselves, 'I know this will be rejected, so I must find some way of putting it so that it won't be noticed?' Or was the process a quasi-unconscious one – that they felt the resistance of their times and that it drove them to writing in this particular way? It seems that Mr Johnson takes the process to have been a conscious one (they 'perfected remarkable techniques', which one can hardly do absent-mindedly), but it is a pity he uses so imprecise a word as 'sublimate' if he really means 'disguise'.

Actually, of course, the emphasis is against any such craftiness on the part of these poets. If they really went to work in this way as consciously and deliberately as Mr Johnson seems to think, it is odd that there is no evidence of the fact in their letters or recorded conversation; one never finds any of them writing to a friend, 'You, of course, will penetrate the disguise in which the anti-social message of my latest volume is wrapped'. Yet, if they were conscious of their duplicity, some such body of friends must have existed, for, otherwise, to whom was their real message addressed? Surely not to posterity, in the solitary figure of Mr Johnson. No, there are too many anecdotes of the following kind:

'Tennyson was engaged on his new poem *Maud*. Its origin and composition were, as he described them, singular. He had accidentally lighted upon a poem of his own which begins, 'O that 'twere possible', and which had long before been published in a selected volume got up by Lord Northampton for the aid of a sick clergyman. It had struck him, in consequence, I think, of a suggestion made by Sir John Simeon, that, to render the poem fully intelligible, a preceding one was necessary. He wrote it; the second poem too, required a predecessor; and thus the whole work was written, as it were, *backwards*'. – *Memoir*, 1897, cap. XVIII.

This is not, of course, conclusive, but it fits in better with the idea that Tennyson's work, with all its contradictory elements, grew naturally from his own perplexed mind, than with the rather Machiavellian picture of the deliberate double-talker. And surely the same is true of the others.

Again, if these poets used 'literary fashions with which they were fundamentally out of sympathy', they did so presumably because these fashions were popular; and who had made them popular? Altogether Mr Johnson is not sufficiently precise here. What I think he means – what I should mean myself if I said any such thing – is that they took over various elements from the novel and the drama and tried to fit them into poetry ; but it would have been as well to clear this up.

Finally, I cannot agree with the attempt to include Arnold in the argument. After all, when a man writes a comparatively small number of poems, most of which deal, overtly or otherwise, with the impossibility of writing poetry, and then stops and writes no more, it is hard to see where he fits in with the idea of a poetry that deliberately adopted a false voice in order to stay in existence.

Supposing, then, that we limit it to Tennyson and Browning, and make what sense we can of the points on which Mr Johnson is timid or vague, how far does this theory take us?

Briefly, your answer will depend on what you think the poet is trying to do. If you think his function is to make his work the mouthpiece for valuable and original ideas, you will naturally think the more highly of Tennyson and Browning for having spoken (one cannot say 'spoken *out*') against convention in their day. But if you think his function is to stick to his last and write poetry, then we are back where we started. Other tests will have to be applied.

The point, surely, is this: a poet is, pre-eminently, a man with a mission to protect language – and through it, imagination – from the ceaseless decay that eats into them. The gap between words and the objects and states to which they refer is always widening, and he is always trying to close it again. To this end he brings to bear an ever finer and fresher

re-creation of metaphor, an ever more delicate adjustment of sense to rhythm and sound, an ever more precise adjustment. Hence the major technical revolution that poetry seems to need about every forty years: whereas prose seems able to get along without much modification for a century or so at a time.

If Mr Johnson could show that as a result of holding the ideas he traces, Tennyson and Browning imparted more richness, grace or precision to their work, his book would effect a change in their reputations. As it is, the only new element he is able to show is a rather murky depth; a depth, moreover, of whose existence the poets themselves may, or may not, have been aware. Of course he *has* succeeded in rebutting one of the charges made against them – that their subject-matter is not interesting because it is timidly conventional. But with the most interesting subject-matter in the world, the case for these poets would still have to be argued.

I believe we should be nearer the truth if we put it like this. There is, obviously, *something* wrong with the poetry of both Tennyson and Browning; something was causing a leak, a fatal lowering of vital energy, so that neither of them really succeeding in fulfilling his early promise. And the explanation is nothing to do with their acceptance, or rejection, of Victorian ideas. It is that they had thrown away the poet's strongest weapon.

The first point to grasp is that the modern poet, in addressing a public of only a few hundred people, is in a frame of mind that would have seemed natural to Chaucer, Wyatt, Ben Jonson, Marvell or Pope. None of these men had in mind a mass public. In the seventeenth century it was not even necessary for your work to be printed before you became famous as a poet: manuscript copies would reach all the people you wanted to reach, even if it did mean progressive myopia for later editors. And the important feature of this small audience was that it was clearly visualized. The poet *knew* the people he was writing for; as the catalogues of proper names in Augustan poetry indicate, there was no doubt a certain snobbery about writing for the best people, but the corresponding gain in confidence was enormous. Whether or not the poet liked his readers (and Augustan poetry, which enjoyed the tidiest set-up of all, was largely satiric), he knew who they were. He was not shouting into a hole in the wall.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century, a number of factors – better communications, the easier diffusion of printed matter, the growth of northern centres of literary culture to rival London – brought into existence a greatly increased public for the poet, and a flood of formidable periodical criticism in which public opinion was guided and marshalled. Thus for the first time the English poet found himself with a chance of

addressing a public so large that its outlines were blurred. And patronage being now extinct, the only way to be successful as a poet was to get these people to buy one's books. But the trouble was that this larger audience could not be *known* – could not be physically felt as a presence. And after three or four decades of trying to address it, English poets gave it up and went back to the old system. Because the sacrifice was too great. The old poise was lost; the concentration and power of the poetic language was diluted, just as a man employs less picturesque language in a letter to a newspaper than in a letter to his wife.

Tennyson and Browning decided that there was no harm in aiming at the kind of general currency achieved by the prose writers of their day, and proceeded to take over the stock-in-trade of the novelists – narrative, 'human interest', the broad canvas, the social message. In so doing they threw away the poet's one advantage: the knowledge that anyone who bothers to listen at all is likely to be as interested in poetry as he is himself. Dickens and George Eliot succeeded better because, after all, an axe is better than a razor for chopping wood.

Being highly intelligent men, Tennyson and Browning knew this; and they tried to compensate by stressing the one advantage their poetry could still have over prose – its surface. Unhappy about the broad outlines of their work, they lavished all their art on its details. They became obsessed with 'form', and, be it said, great masters of it. Tennyson's cult of ear and eye needs no comment: Browning's attempt to write in a manner that suggests the terrific pressure of concentrated thought, breaking through the frail crust of literary convention, is an obvious contrivance. Actually he was obsessed with 'form' as much as Tennyson, and the energy he poured into the peripheral detail of his work shows a profound misgiving about its essence.

G. K. Chesterton saw this as a virtue in Browning. Commenting on the poet's 'intense love of the holes and corners of history', he wrote:

> When he wishes to describe a political ambition he selects that entirely unknown individual, King Victor of Sardinia. When he wishes to express the most perfect soul of music, he unearths some extraordinary persons called Abt Vogler and Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha. When he wishes to express the largest and sublimest scheme of morals and religion which his imagination can conceive, he does not put it into the mouth of any of the great spiritual leaders of mankind, but into the mouth of an obscure Jewish Rabbi of the name of Ben Ezra.

Yes, and who cares? This courting of the unusual and eccentric of Browning's was mere thumb-twiddling, just as Tennyson's over-anxious pruning away of consonants was thumb-twiddling. They knew that a mass audience would tolerate these things: the concentration and power of major poetry it would not tolerate.

The death of Arthur Hallam was a personal tragedy for Tennyson, as an artist as well as a human being. We can see why if we turn to Hallam's review of his poetry in *The Englishman's Magazine* in 1831. For in that article Hallam put his finger on the reason why poetry, any more than philosophy, can never appeal to a wide public unless it is diluted.

> Since this demand on the reader for activity, when he wants to peruse his author in a luxurious passiveness, is the very thing that moves his bile, it is obvious that those writers will always be popular who require the least degree of exertion. Hence, whatever is mixed up with art, and appears under its semblance, is always more favourably regarded than art free and unalloyed. Hence, half the fashionable poems in the world are mere rhetoric, and half the remainder are, perhaps, not liked by the generality for their substantial merits.

That judgment remains. And Hallam was more likely to be right than those who search among the paraphrasable content ('message' or 'meaning') of mid-Victorian poetry for the key to its fundamental lack of confidence.

BOOK NOTES

NATURAL RELIGION AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. The Gifford Lectures, 1951. First Series: Science and Religion. By Charles E. Raven (Cambridge University Press, 21*s*.) GOD AND THE UNCONSCIOUS, by Victor White, O.P. (The Harvill Press, 21*s*.) One of these books being by a liberal Protestant and the other by a Dominican, their theological standpoints naturally differ widely. The two books are nevertheless to some extent complementary to one another. Both authors are concerned to show that the widespread belief that modern science contradicts religion springs from a misunderstanding of the purport both of scientific discoveries and of Christian doctrine. Canon Raven's case is that there ought to be no such contradiction in the field of natural science, Father White's that there ought to be none in the field of depth-psychology. Both cases are argued not only with deep conviction but with real originality.

The originality of Canon Raven's approach is largely due to the fact that he is both theologian and biologist. He opens his argument by maintaining that a Christianity which is so impressed by the reality of the Fall that it regards the natural order as wholly corrupt, and therefore unworthy of study, is a distortion of the religion of Jesus. Christianity as interpreted by Canon Raven is in fact so remote from Christianity as interpreted by St Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Kierkegaard – and for that matter from the Christianity which appeals to the intellectual pessimism of our own day – as to be in effect a different religion. The very considerable poetic charm of the book is due above all to the loving and joyful wonder with which its author approaches the world of plants and animals. The whole book is indeed a demand that Christians should recognise that 'the segregation of religion from science is wholly incompatible with any real belief in an Incarnation.' In a series of most interesting studies he shows how the great revival and development of natural science in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries actually came about. Although the most famous names are Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, it was not in the field of astronomy, mathematics and physics that the era of modern science was initiated. The earliest, and in Canon Raven's view the most revolutionary, explorations were made in the fields of botany and zoology, anatomy and medicine. In the sixteenth century botanist Conrad Gesner of Zurich he sees more than in any other man the symbol of the transition

from the medieval to the modern attitude towards nature. In the labours of the Royal Society during its first great creative period, in the speculations of the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth, and in the researches of the naturalist John Ray, he traces a sustained effort at that organic interpretation of nature – 'plastic nature under God,' as Cudworth called it – which in our own time has been pursued by Bergson and which is here presented as still a most necessary and promising undertaking. Ray's rejection of the ancient and universal belief in spontaneous generation, incidentally, is shown as an event which in the history of science should rank with the abandonment of geocentric astronomy. All this amounts to a rewriting of the history of natural science in Europe. As Canon Raven points out, in the history of science as it is usually written the whole succession of biologists from Gesner to Ray is ignored. This lacuna has now been filled and that is an important service.

The rest of the book covers more familiar ground but here too the approach is made from an unfamiliar angle. The picture of the world of nature as a self-contained machine is shown to have sprung not directly from the work of Galileo, Newton, Boyle (who themselves accepted teleology), but from the prodigious development of industrial technology which was itself an indirect result of their work. The case with which in the nineteenth century a mechanistic philosophy overthrew the traditional religion of Western Europe can be understood only if one bears in mind the transformation of the circumstances of human life which seemed to supply pragmatic proof of its validity: 'With the development of the mechanical in life and thought there came first a deistic and then a virtually atheistic outlook.' And at the same time biology itself – not so much Darwin as his Continental followers – by seeming to explain the whole evolution of life in terms of the simple principle of natural selection, graded man himself as part of the universal machine. In the twentieth century, on the other hand, 'the old doctrine of a "closed universe" objectively measurable and shortly to be comprehended by mankind has passed into limbo.' In the field of biology as of physics, indeterminacy now appears to be inherent in the nature of things. While regarding evolution as a fact as securely established as any in the whole range of scientific knowledge, Canon Raven does not regard it as in any way incompatible with a teleological view of nature. This is a subject of which we may hope to hear more when the Second Series of the lectures is published next autumn. Already, however, it can be affirmed that by their novel presentation of one of the most important aspects of European thought, these Gifford Lectures will fascinate many, including those who do not share their author's religious outlook and to whom the major conflict between science and religion seems to lie in a different field.

Father White, who is both a Reader in Theology at Blackfriars, Oxford, and a Lecturer at the C. J. Jung Institute for Analytical Psychology, Zurich, has collected into a single volume a dozen papers, pamphlets, lectures and broadcasts which he has produced during the past twelve years. The resulting book represents probably the most serious attempt yet made to relate the findings of Jungian depth-psychology to the teachings of Roman Catholic theology. Jungian achievements in the field of religious psychology, of the comparative study of religions, and of the interpretation of symbolism and myth, are very great. Those remarkable publications, the *Eranos Jahrbücher*, show clearly enough what efficient tools the 'archetypes' can be in the hands of an expert on primitive or Classical or Oriental religion. Father White has certainly used the archetypes to good effect in his chapters on second-century Gnosticism and on the myth of the Dying God (that he should elaborate at such length the similarity of this myth to the story of the Crucifixion and the rites of Holy Week is typical of the frankness of his whole approach.) In other chapters – on Aristotle and Aquinas, for instance, and on Catholic doctrine concerning Satan and the devils – he is concerned to show that to a considerable extent the findings of modern depth-psychology have long formed part of the traditional wisdom of the Church. In all this there is much that will be read with sympathy and interest by the open-minded, whatever their own religious or irreligious views. Moreover, though Father White's attitude is usually anything but polemical, he can on occasion deliver some very neat raps on knuckles that are overdue for rapping. There is much shrewdness in his comment on Freudian metapsychology, that 'religion, art, culture, politics, morality are logically viewed as "displacements" of infantile sexuality and parental relationships – much as if a grown man were regarded as a "displacement" of an embryo.' And it is a real and pernicious confusion that he damns with the remark that 'the priest is no more a satisfactory substitute for an analyst than the analyst is a satisfactory substitute for the priest.'

And nevertheless there are those to whom this book will be disquieting in a way other than that intended by its author. It has often been suggested by Freudians that the Jungian preoccupation with the 'collective unconscious', with archetypes, and with the higher reaches of spirituality, masks a deep reluctance to face the 'unpleasant' and 'shocking' contents of the 'personal unconscious.' Since in the Freudian view mental health and ill-health depend above all on the relationship between these unconscious contents and the conscious mind, the accusation is intended to be a grave one. There are Jungians against whom it cannot justly be brought. But there are others against whom it can: and it is certainly disturbing to find so competent and well-informed a study

of Jungian psychology as this omitting all mention of the pre-Oedipal stages of psychic organization. It was on Freud's discoveries concerning these stages that modern depth-psychology (including Jung's) was originally built up; and there is every reason to believe with the Freudians that no depth-psychology, however teleological its approach, can forget them without a catastrophic loss of both scientific accuracy and of therapeutic efficacy.

It is true that Father White, like many Jungians, sees the cause of mental illness, rather, in the breakdown of religious belief. The most eloquent and striking parts of the book are those in which he argues that the archetypes must be accepted and lived out. If God and the demons are rejected, the archetypes corresponding to them become autonomous complexes 'which will either disturb our conscious attitudes and endeavours by introjection, or be projected on to our neighbours and our environment.' In his view it was this process which made possible the horrors of the German concentration camps:

> Could it be that gods and demons, heavens and hells, are ineradicable from the nooks and crannies of the human mind, and that if the human mind is deprived of its heaven above and its hell beneath, then it must make its heaven and corresponding hell on earth?

Though this is obviously not a matter on which issue can effectively be joined within the compass of a review, two fundamental objections may perhaps be raised. In the first place: at the height of the 'age of faith' human beings were driven to introjection (witness the orgies of self-flagellation both in the monasteries and amongst the laity) and to projection (witness the torture and massacre of Jews, the burnings of witches) just as they are to-day. In the second place: there have been at any rate classes (for instance the Confucian Mandarins) which existed and functioned for centuries without anything that could in the Jungian sense be called a religion and without giving any exceptional signs of neurosis. All this suggests that the widespread mental sickness of our time may result less from the lack of religious belief than from the persistence of certain unconscious tensions which have been peculiarly characteristic of the European psyche for at least a thousand years. The symbolic actions in which these tensions are apt to seek release have in the past been institutionalized and endowed with a religious sanction. That is no longer the case to-day; but it is at least doubtful whether in terms of human suffering this change implies as great an aggravation as Father White supposes. Such trains of thought lead far afield. But the great merit of Father White's book is precisely that it urges and indeed compels one to go far afield; and for that one must be wholly grateful.

NORMAN COHN.

When M. Jules Monnerot's SOCIOLOGIE DU COMMUNISME appeared in France two years ago, it immediately attracted a good deal of attention, not least because its author displayed an unusual familiarity with German metaphysics from Hegel to Heidegger. Some of the more technical passages have disappeared from the slightly abridged English translation which has now been brought out by Allen and Unwin (*Sociology of Communism*, pp. 336, 30*s*.), with the result that it reads more like a brilliant essay than a learned treatise on the subject. In some ways this is to be regretted. There are few competent students of Communist theory and Soviet policy who are also competent philosophers. M. Monnerot is both, and his work is unusual for the width of its argument, no less than for the incisiveness of its widely scattered aphorisms.

He sees the Russian Revolution and its offspring, Stalinism, as a new Islam, ranging itself not against a now defunct bourgeois society, but against Western history and culture as such. And while his respect for Marx as a theoretician saves him from the usual simplifications of argument, he is sufficiently at home in metaphysics to indicate where the Hegelian heritage interfered with Marx's ingrained empiricism and scepticism. It is to be regretted that the chapter dealing with Hegel's logic has disappeared from the translation – a concession to the lurking philistinism of the British public? Fortunately, a good deal is left, including an interesting essay in applied anthropology. The translators have done their work extremely well: M. Monnerot's French is famous for its opaqueness, and to have rendered it into limpid and fluent English is an accomplishment worth praise. This is an important book which has done much to shape French thinking on Soviet affairs. It is to be hoped that it will not be neglected in this country.

Little new light is thrown on a now familiar subject by Herr Sternberg, in *The End of a Revolution* (Gollancz, p. 191, 12*s*. 6*d*.). During the 'thirties, the Left Book Club used to turn out this sort of thing by the dozen, except that the political fashion was then slightly different. 'The most powerful myth in the modern world is Soviet Russia. It can be exploded. Sternberg explodes it', states the wrapper. Sternberg does nothing of the sort, but he does provide a useful summary of facts and arguments with which intelligent Socialists are now for the most part familiar. Priced at half a crown and sold as a pamphlet for the benefit of Labour Party supporters, this latest addition to Mr Gollancz's library of political thrillers could have served a useful purpose. As it is, it stands as a reminder that the Left Book Club era is over.

On the political Right, anti-Communism in those days largely took the form of more or less coherent diatribes against what was assumed to be Marxist philosophy. Some of the more erudite essays came from Roman

Catholic theologians, and the most successful of these ventures, F. J. Sheed's *Communism and Man*, first published in 1938, has now been re-issued in a modestly priced edition at 3*s.* 6*d.* (Sheed and Ward, pp. 204). It is an intelligent and painstaking effort to deal with some of the conundrums raised by Marxist theory, but it suffers from a kind of dogmatism which alarmingly resembles the Stalinist brand. The author knows all the answers, and has no hesitation in stating them, whether the subject is Hegel's philosophy, the purpose of life, or the social doctrine outlined in *Rerum Novarum*. Marx was wrong on all counts, and Leo XIII was right, and that is that. He is, however, to be congratulated on having realized that Marx was no materialist and cannot be held responsible for Engels's philosophical absurdities which are the foundation of Soviet Communist *Weltanschauung*. A new publication by the same author, *Society and Sanity* (Sheed and Ward, pp. 222, 10*s.* 6*d.*) elaborates the Roman Catholic view of society in more positive terms, without adding much to the argument, save for some superficial and jejune strictures on Darwin and Freud.

Mr A. C. MacIntyre, who lectures on the philosophy of religion at Manchester University, goes a good deal deeper into the matter in an interesting new study, *Marxism. An Interpretation* (SCM Press, pp. 122, 8*s.* 6*d.*). It is perhaps his Protestant-Existentialist bias which leads him to perceive the existence of a problem where Sheed only sees deplorable error. He has clearly been influenced by the work of the German Protestant theologian, Erich Thier, whose learned preface to the new German edition of Marx's *Nationaloekonomie und Philosophie* may be regarded as a step towards the Christianization of Marxism – if such an undertaking is possible. Mr MacIntyre, who believes it is, goes so far as to say: 'Marx inherits through Hegel a Christian interpretation of history in terms of conflict and reconciliation' (p. 87). What then is the source of trouble? 'The issue that is really evaded by Marxism here is that of the historical Jesus.' His conclusion logically is that ' the two most relevant books in the modern world are St Mark's Gospel and Marx's *National Economy and Philosophy*; but they must be read together'. This is a great improvement on the usual dogmatic nonsense about 'Marxist materialism', but the author weakens his case by identifying Marxism with Communism in its modern form. He seems to think that rejection of totalitarian Communism ought to make people drop Marx's philosophy of history, but this conclusion must seem unwarranted to Socialists who have taken their doctrine from the original source, and not from Lenin.

The Idea of Progress, by Professor M. Ginsberg (Methuen, pp. 80, 5*s.*), by contrast to all the works above mentioned, is in the best academic tradition. It gives an exact, lucid and dispassionate account of liberal, evolutionist, and Hegelian-Marxist theories of history since Condorcet, and concludes on a note of sober caution. 'Knowledge offers no apocalyptic visions, but it can do something to help man to make his own history before the end is reached.' Earlier we are told: 'The links between the ultimate premises (of ethics) and the rules derived from them have to be scrutinized and validated, and, above all, the relation between the ultimate or intrinsic ends and the conditions needed for their attainment have to be discovered and evaluated.' And who is to do all this validating and evaluating? Why, the Professor, of course, with the help of other professors! Shades of Marx! (and of Kierkegaard!).

G. L. ARNOLD.

SALISBURY, 1830–1903. By A. L. Kennedy (London, John Murray, 1953, 25*s.*) We speak of 'The Age of Peel' and 'The Age of Palmerston', but we do not speak of 'The Age of Salisbury'. Young Conservatives quote freely from Disraeli and occasionally from Burke, but they do not quote from Salisbury, although his very considerable writings contain less of the turgid and commonplace, and have more liveliness and lucidity, than those of any other nineteenth-century statesman. His work in the Foreign Office has attracted the attention of a few specialists, such as Dame Lillian Penson, but his career has not hitherto been examined on the scale and with the scholarship which Mr Kitson Clark has given to Peel's and Sir Charles Webster to Palmerston's. Salisbury has remained aloof, enigmatic, in the shadow; even though it might be the shadow of a throne.

On the whole, a man who interests his contemporaries interests posterity, and Salisbury did not interest his contemporaries as Peel and Disraeli and Gladstone did. For one reason, he did not try to. For another, he watched the movements of his day with a too obviously dispassionate gaze, whether it was the complacent utilitarianism of the 'fifties or the feverish imperialism of the 'nineties. He was too firmly a Christian to suit the secularists and materialists, but too much of a materialist to suit the ascetics and sentimentalists. Total peace would have seemed to him as improbable as total war would have seemed hideous. Shortly after the Fashoda episode he faced an audience which cheered references to the possibility of a British occupation of Syria or Crete, or the declaration of a protectorate over Egypt. He had the douche of cold water ready. 'It is quite clear,' he said, 'if some of my audience were at the head of affairs what would be done. But I am sorry to say that for the present I cannot rise to the height of their aspirations' (p. 294).

Here, perhaps, is the clue to the notable neglect of Salisbury by biographers. He put himself at the head of no great positive movement of

the nation; his own political aspirations were negative: to prevent things becoming worse, not to make them dramatically and permanently better. He played a major part in staying the disintegration of the United Kingdom; he did much to maintain international peace while keeping Britain prepared for a possible war; but he was aware, in his last years agonizingly aware, of a darkening and troubled future. Few statesmen, successful as success is counted, have carried so heavy a burden of pessimism and most of the evils which he dreaded: international war, class war, the secularization and vulgarization of life, have come about in the half-century since his death.

All this makes the task of a biographer very difficult. What Captain Kennedy has attempted is something between a personal sketch of Salisbury and a full-length academic narrative of his policies. The outcome is, and was no doubt meant to be, a book which will serve the general reader rather than the professional historian. The sources used for the account of foreign relations are almost exclusively those in English. On the side of domestic politics, a contribution of Salisbury's to *Oxford Essays* (1858) would have been worth examining and some of his most intimate reflections are printed in the biography of Gathorne Hardy, a valuable source which is not mentioned. Within fairly obvious limits, however, Captain Kennedy has performed his difficult task with care and with a considerable measure of success. The figure of Salisbury which emerges is a coherent one: we see both his massive simplicity and his lambent intelligence, his fundamental humility and his more superficial arrogance. It is utterly unlikely that Salisbury could be made into a popular hero and Captain Kennedy has made no attempt to do so. But he has written a sympathetic and judicious study which will well repay reading.

W. L. BURN.

CORRESPONDENCE

We have received the following letter, which we are publishing at the request of the author, with our contributor's reply.

To the Editor of THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

SIR, – I am highly alarmed that a Mr Weightman has written more than two-thirds of the criticism of my wretched version of Baudelaire that has appeared so far, and threatens to monopolize the reviewing of it throughout the U.K. As you give him more space (several pages) for his fanatical obsession with the book in question than any other paper, even the *New Statesman*, I am sending this S O S to you for publication.

Chiefly I complain of his falsifications and misinterpretations of what I say in my preface, and feel personally about Baudelaire. Of his crass incompetence as a literary critic I do not complain, but will merely indicate its most blatant manifestation (of many).

Any amateur critic or average reader of verse can distinguish between the chiselled patina of '*the work of a lifetime*' and the rough-cast surface resulting from four months of rapid emergency-work (however expert the work may be) performed in a desperate race with time for a livelihood. I stated quite clearly, in my preface, that it was only *after* the success of my San Juan translations (for which I received public awards of a silver picador's jacket in Madrid, and the Foyle Prize in London, about fifteen months ago) that I undertook a version of Baudelaire. I had fourteen samples of short poems in hand, translated previously. So far from being 'the work of a lifetime', such were my circumstances that almost the whole book was written in four or five months (from November 1951 to March 1952) along with all the other work I was doing on five other books, which either appeared last year or are due this season. (Not belonging to the green-corduroy federation, either in vice or politics, I have to work ten times faster, ten times more, and ten times better, to make ends meet, than if I did.) Even the stupidest as well as the cleverest critics have recognized and regretted the very obvious haste with which the book had to be done – (so as to get the money due on delivery). Mr Weightman was the only one fat-headed enough to see years and years of hard work in this book; and doubly fat-headed enough not to keep such nonsense under his hat. It's as easy to tell slowly-polished work from rapid work as it is, by the mere sound, to tell the deliberate firing and aiming of a man shooting for a silver shield at Bisley, from the irregular fire of a cornered outlaw fighting for his life as I was. Mr Weightman gratuitously exposes himself as failing the most elementary test in criticism, where any undergrad. could have put him wise. It literally tore my heart out to send the book up in an unpolished state. Yet he has the bouncing impertinence and cocksure conceit to make himself responsible for my private sentiments, in a sneering, familiar, oily and patronizing sort of way, when he says, 'he is obviously pleased with the book or he would not have published it.' Does he suggest that, until I satisfied my artistic conscience, I should have starved my family and self on the 18*s.* 6*d.* disability pension which, as a British sergeant, I receive for being permanently crippled with wounds incurred while making England snug and safe for the Weightmans of this world, and utterly impossible for free-born spirits like myself? If I were so pleased with the book, how could I have sent up already more than 100 alterations since publication, and be preparing as many more in the hope of a second impression, which should excel the first by as much as that excels other English translations. He agrees, in two of his reviews, with all the other critics that '*it is the best so far*' and that '*hardly anyone could do better*' (he doesn't mention who!) – but it costs him an agony of effort as if he were swallowing a pint of castor-oil mixed with his own bile to make that admission. Why, any dolt without any effort could have told him it was the '*best so far!*' And I assure him I wouldn't have undertaken it unless I had been sure of making it the 'best so far!' If, despite his fanatical monopolizing of the reviews, a second impression does manage to appear, it will be by so far 'the best so far' that it will shake him with a frenzy of dithering, impotent hate and rage, which he will no longer be able to conceal on the camouflage of oily and familiar impertinence. His crowning falsification (an intolerable impertinence for which I shall interview him in a spectacular manner, *personally*, the moment I

land in England) is where he pretends that I presume to stand on a sort of Baudelaire-Poe footing with the former. To perpetrate this base and creeping misrepresentation, he quotes a passage in which, to show my feeling for Baudelaire, I say that I have carried him in my haversack in two wars and that I have suffered similar poverty and weaknesses: Mr Weightman adroitly amputates the rest of the passage, in which I reverently and emphatically disclaim any kinship or similarity on the score of talent or ability, making use of Bocage's address to the great Camoes.

'. . . but mine's the crowning sorrow
To share your lot, but lack your towering gifts.'

To suppress this, and sneeringly to ascribe to me the converse attitude, is a low, oily trick, which, once pointed out, makes one curious as to Mr Weightman's motives and suspicious as to his antecedents. His bad faith is further borne out by the old Cairo carpet-seller's trick of disserting at great length (in *both* of the longest reviews! !) on the disinterestedness, justice, severity and honesty of his criticism. Surely such oily protestations would be unnecessary in the case of a disinterested and just critic! He would simply get on with the job and everybody would take it for granted that he was not trying to swindle anybody. It is an infallible sign that something is wrong when someone makes long, oily protestations about his honesty before it is suspected or impugned. That is what makes one look to one's pockets to see if one's watch and wallet are still there. I find that half my own sentiments for Baudelaire are missing, and have been substituted with 'kitch' articles of Mr Weightman's own manufacture. Who, then, in view of his oily protestations of honesty and good faith, will blame me if I cry with the outraged Dr Caius in the *Merry Wives*, 'Vot shall de honest man do in my closet? Dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet!' and if I add on my own, 'And vy do 'e come so many time and all de time in my closet?'

With which remarks, I will pull the chain.

Yours, etc.,
ROY CAMPBELL.

MADRID
March 1953

Mr Weightman writes:

'The point of my article (which Mr Campbell cannot have read properly, since he misquotes me twice) was that he seems to have misunderstood some of Baudelaire's poetry, although he is himself a poet and has been reading Baudelaire ardently for forty years. I said so politely because I know that translation is difficult: in any case, why be impolite? It will take more than abuse, or bluster, or even a punch on the nose, to convince me that I was wrong. Perhaps I shall be convinced by some of the 200 alterations in the second edition. But since we are all as hard up as Mr Campbell, I think that either he or his publisher owes us a free copy of the corrigenda.'

CONTENTS FOR JUNE 1953

Editorial 403

Loyal Thoughts of an Ex-Republican: J. G. WEIGHTMAN 406

The Renascence of Monarchy: SEBASTIAN HAFFNER 415

Crown Divisible: RT. HON. P. C. GORDON WALKER, M.P 425

Myth and Message in the New Testament:
THE REV. E. L. ALLEN, PH.D., D.D. 430

The Novel Art: DAVID PAUL 436

Rudyard Kipling and the Imperial Imagination:
MICHAEL EDWARDES 443

'Essential Gaudiness': The Poems of Wallace Stevens:
DONALD DAVIE 455

Theatre Royal: ROY WALKER 463

Graham Greene as Dramatist: RICHARD FINDLATER 471

Book Notes 474

Volume CLIII, Number 916

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
26 BLOOMSBURY WAY, LONDON, W.C.1

The Twentieth Century is represented overseas by:
INDIA: Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
CANADA: Longmans, Green & Co., Toronto
AUSTRALIA: British Commercial News Pty. Ltd., 473 Bourke Street, Melbourne
SOUTH AFRICA: M. Darling (Pty.) Ltd., Cape Town

Bellometti

LE PERROQUET

The restaurant
in the heart of
entertainment land

31
LEICESTER SQUARE
WHI 2996

HISTORY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

(Published in conjunction with Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd.)

The Control of Raw Materials

BY J. HURSTFIELD

This volume is designed as a study of raw materials policy during the Second World War.

The author reviews the pre-war scene and shows how changes in principle and policy became necessary at the outbreak, and during the various phases, of the War.

Price 35*s*. *By post* 36*s*.

H. M. STATIONERY OFFICE

P.O. Box 569, London, S.E.1, and Sale Offices in London, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff, Bristol, and Belfast, or through any bookseller.

Please supply { one year's / six months' } subscription to

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Name.....

Address.....

Annual subscription post free, 50/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $8.75

Six months' subscription „ „ 25/- ; U.S.A. & Canada $4.40

If unable to obtain from your newsagent, please post this form direct to the Publishers, 26 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

EDITORIAL

THIS Coronation month is a time to give thanks as well as a time to give testimony of our loyalty. And for nothing should we give thanks more readily than for the happiness which our expressions of loyalty bring us. As Coronation day has approached the Scrooges have been gradually overborne, and the people of this country, of the Commonwealth and indeed of much of the world are united in common rejoicing.

Part of our mind is surprised by this. We remember that we thought the Press was really overdoing it when they began Coronation pictures last year; we remember that as some of the decorations went up we thought they looked tawdry, or vulgar, or out of place. We thought, many of us, that there was something absurd in paying so much attention to a symbolic ceremony when the real world around us, the world of power politics, was undergoing such an extraordinary transformation.

But now as the sense of illogicality is swept away by an unextinguishable pleasure, we might ask ourselves whether our doubts and scruples were not less creditable to our understanding than our present simple and national rejoicing. Loyalty is a natural human emotion that is too rarely given its full and proper outlet.

For too long Western Man has curbed his emotions by his reason, and attempted to go through life with a stoic calm. A century and a half ago men who quarrelled in Parliament wept as they denounced a friendship; to-day an unreal camaraderie covers the unreal feuds. We have departed too far from the real springs of human conduct – the emotions – and tried to live on reason alone. It is as foolish as it would be to attempt to get a car in motion by simply grasping the steering wheel more tightly. Its failure is shown by the manner in which civilization has twice in a generation been almost wrecked by violent, uncontrollable and anti-rational bursts of passion.

We in Britain can feel thankful that we have never moved far from the simple verities about our patriotism. Devotion to our Sovereign is not an intellectual concept that it is easy to discuss, but it corresponds exactly to the basic human emotions on which families are built, and on which any living community must be built.

But Queen Elizabeth's parents and grandparents have been for us more than symbols; they have been ideals, as a head of a family should be an ideal for its members. It is easy to forget how much we owe to the actual personality of our Monarchs.

In a time of great and speedy changes, of catastrophe and ideological revolution, King George V was a steadfast rock of simple certainty to whom in private the Prime Ministers of his reign all turned for comfort and advice, and to whom in public a whole nation looked for reassurance that everything had not changed beyond recognition. King George V and Queen Mary were not merely symbols of national unity, they helped to create that unity.

King George VI came to the throne at a time when international morality was at a very low ebb. Between the totalitarian states there was a crude form of war without rules which was suddenly transformed into a diabolic partnership. Within these states it became the duty of children to spy on their parents and if necessary denounce them to death. For a time Britain was the ally of one totalitarianism and the mortal enemy of another; for many years Britain lived in the atmosphere of total war, and when that was ended it was succeeded by almost equally unpleasant conditions of extreme economic stress. Never in our country's history have we been subjected for so long to so intense a strain on our ordinary day-to-day morals.

The fact that British public life has remained so comparatively uncorrupt, and that British family life – which seemed so shaky a quarter of a century ago – has recovered so much of its healthy vigour, can be attributed to the strength of the national character. But few of us would deny that the 'national character' depends on the ideal set before us – in this case by King George VI and his Queen Elizabeth. These are uncovenanted mercies; the virtues of our Monarchs, rather than the merits of Monarchy. The quick commonsense of the Queen, and the shrewd modernity of the Duke of Edinburgh have already begun to help the nation in its formidable task of transforming itself to take a new place in a new world.

Britain can only survive as Great Britain if it is united in its ultimate objectives, and it is here that we have special reason to rejoice at our Monarchical tradition which gives us a unity within diversity. In other pages of this issue are diverse views on the place and functions of Monarchy, but there is no doubt of the unanimity with which the Crown is accepted as the symbol of the vital force of the nation.

This is no mere convention but an important political fact. The Crown

introduces into the state the sense of family, which is the basic human entity. A family asked to define its ultimate objective would be at a loss to answer; the immediate objectives of the individual members seem to be so different. Yet in the face of a threat or of misfortune a family instinctively recognizes its proper aims and necessary duties. So it is with the British nation; our sense of family unity is expressed by the symbol of the Crown, and our loyalty to each other is stimulated by the person of our young Queen.

At a time like this we realize that for us the Monarchy is not just an elaborate bit of stagecraft, but a necessary part of our political life. The political realist is inclined to write off the Crown as a symbol, and loyalty as a mass emotion. But symbols and emotions are in fact the ultimate realities of politics without which national life would slowly run down.

This thesis is easier to demonstrate in the context of the Commonwealth. The members of the Commonwealth value equally highly their independence as sovereign states, and their interdependence as members of a family of nations – an interdependence expressed in their loyalty to the Queen. Without that personalized loyalty the structure of the Commonwealth would almost certainly collapse under the strain of competing nationalisms. Yet the Crown did not create the interdependence of the members of the Commonwealth; that exists as one of the facts of the modern world. What the Crown has done, what two King Georges have done, is to remind the peoples of the Commonwealth that this brotherhood does exist between them. The symbol keeps the realization of interdependence fresh in people's minds, the Monarchs themselves have warmed the abstract thought into action. As a result the Commonwealth, with members of every race and creed, is by far the most advanced political entity in the world to-day. It would be hardly too much to say that the world must become like the Commonwealth or perish.

It is with this proud realization that Britain is leading the world that we should rejoice at this Coronation. And let us rejoice with our heads as well as our hearts, understanding that our emotions are as important as our reason in building a better world.

LOYAL THOUGHTS OF AN EX-REPUBLICAN

J. G. Weightman

It would be tactless to begin examining the pros and cons of marriage at a wedding-breakfast, and some people may think it equally out of place to discuss the institution of Monarchy on Coronation morning. But the inquiring mind has its rights, even when the bells are pealing and the crowds are cheering, and our loyalty would not be worth much if it were endangered by lucidity. The present attitude to the Monarchy is, to some extent, a new thing and needs defining, and it may not be entirely a good thing. At least so it seems to someone who is a fairly recent convert to Royalism.

It is still true, I think, that a great many people who vote Labour without having party membership, as well as the rank and file of the Labour Party, are not whole-heartedly Monarchist. Twenty-five years ago, when I was a boy in Northumberland, feeling was strongly Republican in the politically conscious working-class. I was brought up to sing 'The People's flag is deepest red' and that is naturally, even to-day, the tune which evokes an immediate and warm response. 'God Save the King' was looked upon as a Conservative anthem; (it did not occur to anyone that there might be Conservative Republicans) the Throne was a Conservative preserve and the Union Jack belonged to the Conservatives because they, and not the Labour Party, used it to drape the platform at their meetings. Perhaps this feeling was intense only among the more militant Socialists and perhaps, in this extreme form, it was already a little behind the times, but it certainly existed, and in those circles which supplied teachers, town and county-councillors and members of Parliament. It is no longer aggressive, because the edge has been taken off our social problems, but it seems to be still there in a more or less dormant state. In the absence of any statistics on the subject, and judging entirely by personal impression, I should say that the Northern half of England is less Royalist than the South, and that within the working-class and lower-middle class everywhere, the more educated and active people tend to be less Royalist than the others. This remark will doubtless offend a number of people, but I think it is true and needs to be made in the interests of the Royalist principle itself. Royalist feeling, where it is beginning to exist because of changed conditions, is a rather uncomfortable, not quite respectable, emotion in

many parts of the population. If, as seems likely, the Monarchy has a very important part to play in the near future, this uneasiness needs to be cleared up.

There is, of course, no immediate political issue. At the last great crisis, in 1939, the country proved to be quite coherent. This was partly due to the extravagant wrongness of the Germans and to the long build-up of excitement which convinced even most Left-Wing Pacifists that there was no other way out; there comes a point when, rather than yield any further, it seems preferable to stand behind a government one disapproves of and take the risk of blowing up civilization. Our solidarity was partly due, also, to the immediate entry of Labour leaders into the government. There is no example, I think, of a Labour leader who has remained openly Republican after achieving power. I do not imply that they all lightly abandon their principles; some of them, like Mr Attlee, are Monarchists through middle-class tradition; the others at once realize, if they have not done so before, the great political advantages of a Constitutional Monarchy, which may be linked emotionally with the Conservative Party (at least in the popular view) but is, in fact, as regards the machinery of government, just as useful to the Left Wing. The Labour Party first achieved prominence as His Majesty's Opposition, and from that it was an easy step to becoming His Majesty's Government. And as has often been pointed out during recent years, the British Constitutional Monarchy, by a series of happy adjustments, has become a far more valuable institution than a Presidency, because the Monarch is now a pure symbol,* whose function it is to represent the whole of the collectivity with which the politicians have to deal. As occasion requires, the Monarch acts as a concentrator or as a lightning conductor for popular emotion, because he is always there, and because his position can be understood intellectually and emotionally by each subject, according to that subject's lights. Having no political decisions to make, he sails serenely on above the errors and contradictions of those who call themselves his servants. Any Prime Minister is grateful for this, because the mistakes he makes when acting in the name of the Monarch are more easily forgotten; they are the misfortunes of someone who is the temporary representative of a principle which is above right and wrong. Therefore mistakes do not go on festering in England as much as they do in other countries where the President depends on a popular vote or on Parliamentary intrigue, and is, as a result, always tainted with politics and cannot act so efficiently as a concentrator, a lightning conductor or a neutralizer of past error. The Monarch sweetens all political operations in a way that the French President, for instance,

* It still seems possible, however, for the Monarch – according to his personality and experience – to exert some influence on the Cabinet, in private.

even when he is as well-liked as Monsieur Auriol, cannot emulate. The French President is, at best, a slightly glorified Speaker (although he has more real power than our Speaker or Monarch); in him, the Republic is, as it were, trying to pull itself up above politics by its own boot-strings. Our Constitutional Monarch, on the other hand, is a super-Speaker, or – to change the image slightly – a mystic First Civil Servant, chosen by the natural accident of birth, instead of by election or examination, and he can benefit from the poetry of Kingship. I think all the Labour leaders would agree about this. Just as many atheists cannot function without supposing at the centre of Creation a God who is a kind of positive absence, so a Republican leader, once in power, sees that it is easier to handle a community, and still more so to negotiate with a Commonwealth, if he can think of their centre of gravity as being outside the Cabinet and in the Monarchy. And a Republican who recognizes, and uses, the convenience of the Monarchy, is half-way to being a Monarchist. The gradation from Republicanism to Monarchism in the Labour Party probably corresponds to awareness of these facts, and goes from the bottom to the top. There remains, no doubt, a hard core of Republicans who see the advantages of Monarchy but reject it even so. They should not be accused too hastily of a crabbed class-consciousness or of a lack of lyricism. At its best, their attitude is a form of puritanism; they feel that to show very great respect to a person, even when that person is a symbol, is to be guilty of idolatry. They would approve of Valéry's admirable dictum; 'Ne soyez point ému devant un homme'; but, as Valéry himself knew, this is too austere a principle on which to live a life or organize a society.

However, Monarchists, half-Monarchists and Republicans, as well as those people who never seem to ask themselves questions, all rub along together, as if they were quite agreed. Why, then, discuss the Monarchy? Because the situation is changing.

Although the country is not entirely Royalist, there has been, during the last few years, a great increase in the interest centring on the Monarchy. Various reasons can be suggested for this. England having been considerably weakened by the war, it was natural to stress the Monarchy as a symbol of national continuity and of Commonwealth solidarity. Foreigners, particularly Frenchmen sometimes declare that this was done deliberately by the Labour Government because it could not solve the economic and social problems which confronted it. I think we can say that the tendency was more probably unconscious and common to Monarchists in all parties. At the same time, the Monarchy began to appear more precious, because three of the few remaining European kings lost their thrones in the post-war settlement, and a fourth had to abdicate

in favour of his son, who reigns with difficulty. The de-crowning of Europe, which began in 1870, is now almost complete, and the chances of restoration have never seemed more remote. The English Monarchy, therefore, attracts greater popular interest throughout the world than ever before. The Japanese Royal Family has no appeal outside Japan; the Dutch and Scandinavian Monarchies are locally effective, but not of world significance; the British Monarchy, the only one which retains great political value, is also the only one which now satisfies the almost universal fascination with the myth of kingship. The development of photography, the cinema, the wireless, television and the illustrated papers, make the last surviving, picturesque monarchy a familiar subject everywhere. A New York paper brought out four full pages of photographs on the death of Queen Mary. The French illustrated weeklies are crammed with pictures and articles. It is worth realizing that Great Britain is thought of by many foreigners as an impoverished country at the centre of a rather shaky Commonwealth and with three salient features; a certain amount of political sense, which may help her to transform her former Empire into a going concern of a different kind; the only great Monarchy; and the best jet engines. Of course, it is not the constitutional character of the Monarchy which pleases foreigners – I have heard Republican Frenchmen complain with some heat that the Queen has no power, not even the *droit de grâce* – it is the symbol of an extinct type of authority, the pageantry, the fairy-tale dresses and tiaras, the 'EereeshStetKotch', and so on; in short, all that has made the Monarchy such a boon to the news reels and television. For the first time in history, a whole nation, and indeed a considerable part of the population of the world, will see a crown being placed on the head of a Queen. The fact that over the last hundred years, and still more so, over the last twenty-five, the Crown has come to symbolize something very different from what it did before, is not clear in a great many minds. And the interplay of what we think about the Monarchy and of what the various Commonwealth countries think, complicated by the pressure of foreign opinion, which affects us though we may not be completely aware of it, creates a very curious situation.

The most paradoxical thing about the Monarchy is that it has attained its widest diffusion at a time when the original conception of kingship has entirely disappeared, and when the social framework which traditionally supported it is being finally dismantled. The King used to be the apex of a social pyramid; immediately below him were the leading aristocrats, whose ceremonial importance corresponded to the effective power they wielded. Looking abroad, the King saw other pyramids, headed by other sovereigns, whom he sometimes treated as enemies and sometimes called 'cousin' or 'brother'. The ghost of this situation still remained in

1914, when George V wrote a diplomatic letter to the Emperor of Russia, beginning 'Dear Nicky'. By the time of the funeral of George VI (perhaps the most tremendous funeral that has ever taken place, if we judge by man-hours of attention), there were hardly any properly crowned heads left among the mourners. More important still, whenever there is a Royal ceremony, the newspapers have to remind us who the chief participants are. Aristocracy now being almost as divorced from authority as kingship, those who are, by tradition, closest to the Monarch and represent personal service and the distribution of power, no longer have a continuous function in the country or the Commonwealth. In this respect, too, the change has been completed recently; the ghost of the old feudal system was still visible in 1914. By now, most of the old feudal leaders have become limited companies, and their baronial halls have been turned into museums; when occasion demands, they take off their directors' hats or their caretakers' overalls and put on ceremonial robes; but in their capacity as servants of the Monarch, they are, with all due respect, living museum pieces. They have little connection with the realities of the situation, in which the Monarch has become a pure symbol, standing at the same distance from the House of Lords as he does from Whitechapel or the Kikuyu. In other words, to all intents and purposes, we no longer have a Court, although the term is still used. We have a political symbol existing in isolation. The aristocracy no longer matters as an aristocracy, although it continues to predominate in those Royal ceremonies, which are still counted as personal; presentations, coronations, marriages and funerals. The fiction of the survival of the aristocracy has now been stretched to breaking point.*

Many people will probably agree about this; others will think that I am being tactless, that these things need not be said, that to point out how empty of substance many of the Coronation conventions have become is to take the bloom off the butterfly's wing. It is true that a rational approach often appears dampening. But it should be remembered that no one ever resorts to a rational approach until his uneasy emotions force him to do so. The fact is that much of the bloom has gone already of its own accord. Many of us laughed at the photographs of comical 'utility' Caps of State designed for impoverished marquesses, and if lords and ladies, dressed for the Coronation, become figures of fun, there is something wrong intellectually and emotionally, however much one enjoys a joke. The robes were not funny for the people who first wore them, centuries ago, as contemporary adornment, nor did they become funny

* See the symptomatic article by Lord Kilbracken, with the Gilbertian title, 'I Am Hiring My Robes'. (*Illustrated*, April 18th.)

as long as the aristocracy was real. What our intellects are now boggling at is not genuine tradition, but antiquarianism.

The intellect also boggles at the next point, which is the official relationship between the Crown and the Church of England. The Monarch is crowned by the Archbishop, yet at least half the population of England does not belong to the Established Church. By some mysterious process, the Monarch, when across the Border, is also head of the Church of Scotland, and for the first time the Moderator is to assist at the Coronation.* But the Labour Party, insofar as it is Christian, is largely Methodist. And the Monarch has millions of subjects who are not Christians at all, and the direct relationship with them has never been emphasized so much as it is at present. Are we to take it, then, that the crowning by the Archbishop transcends the mere link with the Church of England and represents a general recognition of subjection to the Divine, in whatever form the Divine is worshipped? If so, no one has made this clear. At the same time, we cannot fail to notice that religious belief is at a very low ebb in Great Britain. On any week-day, and perhaps even on Sundays, far more people drink the Queen's health than attend divine service; far more people read books and articles on the Royal Family than listen to, or read, sermons. As nineteenth-century religious fervour and religious questioning have faded away, interest in the Monarchy has increased to such an extent that murmurs of 'Shintoism!' can be heard. Certainly the eagerness with which the Coronation is followed does not arise from the fact that it is a Church of England ceremony. The opposite is true; the country and the world are momentarily fascinated with the Church of England because it is crowning the Queen. To put the fact brutally, as far as the body of popular emotion is concerned, the Monarch could dispense with the Archbishop (as Napoleon did with the Pope), but the Archbishop could hardly dispense with the Monarch. In the alliance of Throne and Altar both partners have been transformed, and one is, for the time being at least, much stronger as a symbol than the other.

* * * * * *

I have been trying to argue that the present situation is extremely complex and illogical. This is not much of a criticism, of course, because most situations are, and their illogicalities may give them a healthy elasticity. For instance, there may suddenly be a great Anglican revival, in which case the link with the Crown may become generally significant again. But some of the present discrepancies are disturbing.

We may be overstressing the picturesque, traditional and personal side

* The main organizer of the ceremonies is incidentally, a Catholic.

of the institution. We cannot help it becoming, to some extent, a tourist attraction like the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau or the Swiss mountains, but to think of it first and foremost as such, as some people now seem to be doing, is a sign of decadence. It may be objected that Christmas has been commercialized for a long time and that there is still a grain of Christian truth under the tons of Christmas presents. Christianity may have survived, but it has not been helped by commercialization. And it will be a sad thing if the Monarchy goes the way of the Mont St Michel. The Prime Minister is the only person who has spoken out against this tendency; he very rightly asked the public not to be present when the Queen returned from Africa, and more recently he deplored this age of 'gape and gloat'. The Press, on the contrary, abandoning all notions of restraint, releases floods of insipid indiscretion. We are almost back to the days when the King ate his meals in public, so that anyone could come and look at him. Or rather, we have an unhealthy, synthetic imitation of that simple relationship. It is one thing for a peasant to say 'thou' to a king in a pre-industrial community; it is another for a profit-making newspaper to print millions of copies of the intimate memoirs of former Royal servants, while all the persons mentioned are still alive. No criticism is implied here of the fact that Royal persons themselves occasionally write memoirs; they are human beings and have every right to express themselves with dignity, as they do. What is offensive is that other people should write so much and so badly about them. They have, of course, to be publicised as persons, and it is difficult to say where the line should be drawn, or who should draw it, but many people will agree that it needs to be drawn. The members of the Royal family are treated as film-stars; it is forgotten that, unlike film-stars, they did not choose to be subjected to such publicity.* Nor is this indiscriminate emotion good in itself. The B B C, as well as the Press, is partly to blame for fostering it. Although normally so dignified, announcers are often guilty, in making important Royal announcements, of using a hollow and at the same time fruity tone, savouring of pompous sensationalism. Some commentaries (the last Christmas round-up was a striking case) are marred by patches of bad poetic prose, which must embarrass the most convinced Royalist. If the Monarchy is healthy, it should inspire a proportion of good prose, and of good verse.

* Indeed, the strongest intellectual argument against the Monarchy is that it runs counter to the principle of choice, now universally accepted, at least in theory. We have seen what happens when the Monarch wishes to make an unorthodox marriage. What if he ceases to believe in Christianity, or begins to have political opinions? I remember hearing a New Zealander say that he disapproved of the Monarchy because he did not believe in slavery.

A more difficult question is the modification of the ceremonial side of the Monarchy to bring it into line with modern realities. Some slight changes have taken place, but only those that have been made absolutely necessary by circumstances. The Lords have had to ballot for their Coronation seats, for instance, because so many other people have to be represented in the Abbey. There has been no suggestion that the various countries of the Commonwealth should play a symbolic rôle in the ceremony itself. It is no easy matter to trim a thick growth of tradition; moreover, some of its very absurdities have charm. No one will object to the obstinacy of a few aristocrats who insist on trundling to the Abbey in their family coaches. There is also something strangely poetic in the fact that Buckingham Palace, standing within sight of Big Ben, and the occasional home of half a dozen members of the Royal Family, should contain a thousand clocks, which are looked after by one man who does nothing else. Only a great nation can allow itself the luxury of such Gothic peculiarities. And it is certain that the immense web of habit and prejudice governing the behaviour of the Royal family – the periodic migrations, the etiquette which obliges everyone to be present half an hour before the Queen arrives, the formulæ of address, and so on; all those features which the Republican dismisses as mumbo-jumbo – have, or have had, a natural virtue; they correspond, or have corresponded, to the rhythms and organization of society, and like Voltaire's God would have to be invented to some extent, if they did not exist already. We have seen the invention of Russian Communist mumbo-jumbo and can only say that it is less complex, less organic, and therefore less true and poetic than our own. French Republican mumbo-jumbo – the fact that the President's car is driven like a fire-engine at sixty miles an hour through cleared streets, the universal, jeering respect for the administrative hierarchy, the Academy, the constant speechifying – is also thinner and less effective. Americans are envious of the fact that our buildings and institutions are more than three hundred years old, and their thirst for the new is accompanied by an extreme emphasis on the antique. In fact, we can perhaps flatter ourselves that we have the best mumbo-jumbo, or – to translate this word into acceptable terms – a good national consciousness and a fairly sound tension between past, present and future. But it is by no means a perfect tension. For instance, part of the Royal rhythm is stuck in an aristocratic groove corresponding, not to the full sweep of English history, but merely to the England of the nineteenth century; the increasing middle-classes cannot identify themselves with it, and they are becoming too educated to be stupidly satisfied with its mere exotic appeal. Therefore, without removing the tiaras and the Sovereign's Escort, does not something need to be done to create a non-aristocratic setting for the

Monarchy and to prune away some of those encrustations of the past which have now lost all significance? If the M.C.C. can occasionally modify the rules of cricket, there is no reason why a Royal Commission should not attempt a compromise between tradition and modernization in the functioning of the Monarchy. Some streamlining will, in any case, have to be effected if the Queen is to be really Head of the Commonwealth; there will not be time for the elaborate English round which has existed up to the present. But even within Britain, the situation is too cluttered and is accepted too passively by those who approve of the Monarchy and rejected too passively by those who disapprove.

These may seem to be the remarks of a rather sour Monarchist. I certainly believe much more strongly in the political principle than in the connection with the Church or in some of the present picturesque frills. Whether the principle could, with advantage, be divorced from religion must be left to the believers to decide. That it could not be shorn of all its frills is clear; the frills are the means by which the principle is made concrete and manifest; they are the vehicle of emotion, the poetry of the institution. I am merely suggesting that many people could believe more fully in the principle, if the poetry were made rather more modern and astringent, as well as more discreet. Pageantry should not degenerate into the self-satisfied quaintness of a pageant, and the emotions we are supposed to feel should not embarrass the intellect. The Monarchy represents a fusion of intellect and emotion. True respect for it, and for the tradition of which it is part, consists in seeing and feeling it, as it is to-day.

THE RENASCENCE OF MONARCHY

Sebastian Haffner

I.

Viewed on an international scale, the institution of Monarchy has in the first half of the twentieth century suffered an eclipse without precedent in the whole known history of mankind. In 1910, when George V came to the throne in Britain, Monarchy still was, as it has been for some 5,000 years, the normal basis of statehood all over Europe and Asia. In the following forty years it all but disappeared from the continents of Europe and Asia. Empires and Kingdoms which in a history of one or more millenia had never known any but a monarchical form of State – China, India, Russia, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and their sub-kingdoms and principalities – became Republics almost overnight. It is one of the most spectacular political landslides known to history; and it is, to my knowledge, still wholly unstudied, unanalysed, and unexplained. What makes it more mysterious is the uncannily easy and resistless way in which all these ancient and awe-inspiring Monarchies vanished. When the British and French Monarchies had come under attack in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it had meant civil war which shook the two nations to their foundations; the British Monarchy, defeated after fierce resistance, had made its victorious comeback within a dozen years; the French one, restored and re-restored either in its original form or in new variants, had been fighting back for eighty years. In the twentieth century, the Emperors of China and Russia, Germany and Austria, and later the Kings of Spain and Italy, all disappeared from one day to the next, surrendering to the weakest show of discontent almost as if they had waited for a pretext to do so, and with hardly a hand raised in their defence; the events which unthroned them hardly deserved the name of revolution. The real revolutions and convulsions in their countries followed later, and some of them have not yet reached their term.

All this is extraordinary enough in itself, but it is doubly extraordinary if viewed as the background to the equally unstudied, unanalysed, and unexplained rise of the British Monarchy during the same short half-century. Whatever one may think of the status of the British Monarchy in late Victorian and Edwardian times – and nobody will question its stability, dignity, and popularity – it does not compare with its present immeasurable prestige and grip on the national imagination. It is doubtful

whether at any time in the last thousand years the British Monarchy has occupied such an enormous place in the thoughts and emotions of British citizens as at the present moment. The Britain of the early 'fifties is not simply loyally monarchist; it is monarchy-conscious to a degree which calls for some special explanation. As every editor of every popular newspaper or magazine knows, there is an unsatiable demand for every scrap of information regarding the functioning of the Monarchy and the life of the Royal family. In the every-day conversation of British families, Royalty nowadays occurs with a frequency probably shared only by their most intimate relations and friends. As for the great events in the annals of the British Monarchy, such as the death of King George VI last year and the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth now, they occupy the national interest to the almost complete exclusion of everything else. In February, 1952, it was for days practically forgotten that the country was in the throes of a severe economic crisis. At the moment it hardly catches people's attention that we are at the most dramatic turning-point of international affairs since the war. The absorption in the great monarchical rites eclipses everything.

It is a state of affairs which one may view with satisfaction or disquiet, with approval or disapproval. The one thing which one cannot rationally do is to deny it, ignore it, or shrug it away. And yet just that what the average intellectual observer is most inclined to do. To him the enormous and quite unexplained rise of the British Monarchy in recent decades and years is something of a puzzle, a difficulty, and an embarrassment. It does not fit into the accepted scheme of things. It does not lend itself to any obvious sociological, economic, or political explanations. It seems indeed to run counter to every other observable trend – the disappearance of Monarchy abroad, the secularization of British life in other fields, the growing egalitarianism of British society. So the natural first reaction is that of every student to every awkward fact which threatens to upset his theories and disturb his understanding: 'It cannot be true.' It must be due to a sustained newspaper stunt; or to some clever publicity policy on the part of the 'Palace'; or, at most, to some passing frivolous whim of the popular mind. But none of these defensive positions is really tenable. No newspaper has ever succeeded in creating, let alone sustaining, a general interest where it did not find it ready and waiting to be satisfied. As for the Court officials concerned with publicity, they have long and vainly been trying to calm rather than incite the popular appetite for news of Royalty. And as for the alleged frivolity of this appetite – which anyhow would detract nothing from its reality – can one really say that the mood of the hundreds of thousands who waited their turn in the February sleet of 1952 to pass by the bier of George VI was frivolous?

Every mass emotion has, of course, a frivolous fringe. But he would be a poor psychologist who failed to notice the deeply, solemnly, helplessly serious core of feeling in the British monarchist revival.

It is better then to drop our defences and admit that we are witnessing a genuine historic phenomenon – unexpected and unexplained within itself, and doubly so when viewed against its international background. Nor is it much good to withdraw to a second line of defence and to argue that though the phenomenon may be genuine, it is, from a political and historical point of view, irrelevant and insignificant. It is true that the British Monarchy is neutral in internal politics and inactive in diplomacy, and that anyone among the millions who line the procession route and cheer the Queen on June 2nd may be an ardent Socialist or Conservative, may favour cold war to the knife or accommodation with Russia, and may even hold outspoken views, in sharp conflict with those of his neighbour, about sterling convertibility and the desirability or otherwise of secondary preferences for the O.E.E.C. countries. It is, however, begging a whole host of questions to assert that matters like these make the whole or even the most significant part of contemporary British history. Indeed, it may be of the utmost importance for British history that people who profoundly disagree about all these important questions find themselves swept into the same place by the same emotions, shouting in unison: 'God save the Queen'. Moreover, is it quite true that the large sober affairs of State are quite unaffected by the sudden and profound revival of monarchist ardour? A sensitive Continental resident in Britain, deeply involved in the European Federalist movement, recently confided to the writer that he witnesses the nation-wide absorption in the Coronation preparations with feelings of helpless gloom and frustration. To him, the Coronation seemed a gigantic British Festival of isolation, a thunderous nation-wide re-assertion of British sovereignty, separateness, and exclusiveness. Whether one wholly agrees or not, there is a point here.

There is, however, also an opposite point to consider, and we would not have exhausted the whole depth of the paradox with which we are faced unless this, too, were taken into account. This is the extraordinary radiation which the new British Monarchism has had in other parts of the Western world – especially America, France, and Germany. In step with the gradual change of British feeling towards the Monarchy in the last fifty years – a change from feelings of decent respect for a time-honoured and colourful constitutional survival to a bewildered and increasingly enthusiastic surrender to a mysterious, unifying and vital force in national life – in step with this there has taken place a similarly imponderable change of feelings, and quickening of interest, abroad. As in Britain itself, the event which made the change unmistakable and

suddenly presented an astonished world with a new discovery about its own feelings was the death of King George VI; and (again as in Britain), the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth affirms and underlines the new state of things, excluding every suspicion that last year's reactions were due to an exceptional burst of purely human and personal emotion. Both these great British Royal events have taken hold of the public consciousness of America, France, and Germany – and maybe some other countries – with a force and penetration quite inexplicable in terms of mere curiosity and news interest. There is little left of the slightly ironic distance, the note of 'quaintness,' which dominated foreign interest in British Royal ceremonies fifty or even fifteen years ago. There is, instead, an absorbed participation which almost, momentarily, removes the barriers of statehood – as if these foreign countries were celebrating, with mourning or rejoicing, great events in their own ruling Houses, or as if the British Monarchy had become a common possession of the Western world at large. But all these countries are Republics, and two of them at least, America and France, have at ordinary times a conscious and reasoned pride in their Republicanism. Their illogical, but quite unquestioned, spontaneous succumbing to the unexplained magic of the British Crown is no doubt the crowning paradox in this symphony of paradoxes.

II.

Where have we to look for an explanation of all this? What explains the unquestioned survival of the British Monarchy at a time of the twilight of Monarchies elsewhere? What explains the extraordinary upsurge and renaissance of monarchical feeling in Britain in the last thirty or forty years and its infectious power abroad? And what future does the whole nexus of developments suggest for the monarchical institution in the world?

These questions are so rarely asked that any attempt to deal with them involves something of a pioneering effort, and any answer can only be very tentative. Moreover, each succeeding question takes us somewhat deeper into unexplored territory. However, let us see how far we can advance without losing firm ground from under our feet.

The survival of the British Monarchy during the great monarchical eclipse period of 1910–50 can plausibly and easily, if perhaps somewhat superficially, be explained by the very fact which had in the preceding century been regarded as the weakness of the British Monarchy: its constitutional limitations and its increasing separation from the business of Government. The British Monarchy, it might be said, escaped the political storm which swept away so many other Monarchies simply because it did not present a *front* to it. It reaped the reward of two

centuries' careful strategic retreat, where other Monarchies paid the penalty for too prolonged a stand in exposed political front-line positions. A Continental Monarch who made himself directly responsible for policy became vulnerable when that policy failed or incurred unpopularity; a British Monarch, when presiding over a mistaken or disfavoured policy, was sheltered by his constitutional position.

One might add that Britain was spared those major national disasters which in many foreign countries led to the overthrow of the Monarchy. The Romanovs, Hohenzollerns, Habsburgs, and Ottomans lost their thrones as the result of unfortunate wars, the Spanish Bourbons as the result of an unfortunate experiment with the patronage of dictatorship, the House of Savoy as a result of both. Britain, by contrast, lost no wars and toyed with no dictatorships. Whenever the British people wanted to reverse their political course, they could do so by throwing out a Government; they had no reason to remove the Monarchy, as had the people of Continental countries where the Monarchy used to be closely identified with the Government. Finally, British Monarchs had, quite apart from the constitutional limitations of their power, built up a habit of staying out of controversy and a tradition of personal discretion which Continental Emperors and Kings – especially some of the most brilliant among them – often notoriously lacked.

There is something in all this, but perhaps a little less than might appear. Obviously, the constitutional position of the British Monarchs was safer than that of most of their Continental cousins; obviously, the British were, in the critical years, lucky in the persons of their Kings. But too much can be made of the difference in constitutional status. All the Continental Monarchs had ceased to be purely autocratic rulers by the time of their overthrow, while the complete political neutrality of the British Crown, and its virtual self-elimination from all active Government, are of very recent date. Moreover, if a Continental Monarch became personally openly identified with a discredited policy or a national disaster, or made himself otherwise unacceptable in his high office, there was always an obvious possibility of changing the person of the Monarch (as indeed the British themselves once did in the recent past); there was no obvious need to abolish the institution of Monarchy as such. If, within the space of one generation, an institution which has endured for a thousand years or more, is simultaneously discarded almost all over Europe and Asia, it seems wrong to look for the true explanation in the particular circumstances of each single country; to blame a lost war here, a political blunder there, an unsatisfactory personal character of a reigning Monarch in a third place. The Monarchy, as an institution, had for centuries in each of the countries concerned survived many lost wars, many political

blunders, many imperfect incumbents. If suddenly it failed to survive such routine misfortunes in so many countries at the same time, it is natural to look for a deeper, more universal, and more exceptional reason.

We may be helped in discovering that reason if we look a little more closely at the rather extraordinary circumstances in which the eclipse of the Monarchy in Europe and Asia occurred. As already hinted at, in almost no case was there a real revolution, a strong and positive Republicanism challenging the Monarchical principle, and in almost no case was there much resistance on the part of the Monarchy or indeed a serious facing of the issues involved by anyone concerned. The whole action had, in almost all cases, a certain dreamlike inconsequential ease; it happened as it were in a fit of absence of mind, in the manner in which people (and peoples) act when their subconscious takes charge; and it happened in almost all cases with a ready acquiescence – one might almost say, connivance – on the part of the Monarchs themselves, an attitude which almost suggested that, in withdrawing, they were acting under the same unrealized subconscious impulse as those who were demanding their withdrawal. It was not so much that the Monarchy was attacked and overthrown as that it gave way or made room. And the thing to which it gave way was almost never a new strong, vital, and self-confident Republic, but nearly always a vacuum and an interim. The Chinese Republic of 1911, the Russian one of March, 1917, the Weimar Republic in Germany, the interim successor States of Habsburg, the Spanish Republic of 1931, were all embarrassed, jerry-built ad-hoc structures with a minimum of political expectation of life; they amounted to scarcely more than a political and constitutional marking of time in expectation of something unknown, formidable and apocalyptic. The withdrawal of the Monarchy, and the perfunctory establishment of these interim waiting-room States, appear in retrospect like a stripping of the scene for a series of desperate experiments, a subconscious anticipating and inviting of the enormous commotions that followed: the Kuomintang and Communist revolutions and civil war in China, the Bolshevik revolution, peasant war, and purges in Russia, Nazism in Germany, the Yugoslav and Spanish civil wars. As if in silent conspiracy with each other, Monarchs and peoples dismantled the established continuity, the mould of political existence, emptied the political stage, and made the nations concerned politically conscious of something new that was darkly felt approaching. What happened was an instinctive and wholly negative act of preparation through renunciation, at best a reefing of sails before an approaching storm.

Nor was this curious renunciation and shrinking action during the first fifty years of the twentieth century confined to the field of constitutional politics. It was part of a far wider process which in the same fifty years affected almost every field of spiritual and mental collective life; it went parallel with the silent withdrawal from religious belief – not (mark the parallel!) in favour of a new and different religion or even of a militant and convinced atheism or rationalism, but in favour of a non-commital agnosticism – and a hasty and almost panicky surrender of diplomacy in the conduct of international affairs, tonality in music, representationism and perspective in painting, rational communication in poetry, even for a short time in some countries, in the late 'teens and early 'twenties of the century, grammar in prose-writing. Altogether, it seems that the disappearance or eclipse of Monarchy of the twentieth century was one of the more striking manifestations of a general *withdrawal from affirmation:* A renunciation – temporary perhaps – of those magnificently arbitrary, fundamental acts of faith and choice on which depends the life of communities, States, and civilizations; a weakening, in the last resort, of mankind's spiritual potency.

We are all too near to the fatal process, which has affected so large a part of our own lives, not to understand the temptations and the reasoning behind it. The strongest and most honourable among these temptations and reasonings is a shrinking from arbitrariness. There is something arbitrary in the religious dogmas in which we were brought up, as there is something arbitrary in the canons of tonality, perspective, poetic communication, and even grammar. But without an affirmation of these arbitrary axioms – or other equivalent or even more arbitrary ones – there is no guide to action, no music, no art, no poetry, no language, indeed no life. As for the Monarchy, there is something undeniably arbitrary in the embodiment of a political community in a living person and family, which is the principle and basic idea behind the institution of Monarchy; other principles and symbols of integration are thinkable and have, here and there, been successfully realized in history: Theocracy, the Order, the Republic. Two observations, however, are pertinent. The first is that, compared with these viable alternatives, the Monarchy seems to be infinitely more natural, robust, and easy to work. This is suggested by the statistics of history – Monarchies are incomparably more widespread and long-lived in the annals of mankind than Republics, Priestly States, or States built round an Order like the Templars or the Teutonic Knights (or the Nazi and Communist Parties). It is also borne out by any cross-examination of our own political instincts: there is something natural, almost inevitable in the idea of Kingship, in the identification or symbolization of a State in a living person and family; it provides a natural and simple focus and continuity of political loyalties, where every other form of State has to make artificial and complicated arrangements. This is

not to say that Republics cannot have both dignity and vitality or the their symbolism cannot, in fortunate circumstances, rival that Monarchies in integrating power. But compared with Monarchies, Republics seem to be something of an acquired taste; to make and keep them viable seems to demand both a stronger initial impulse and a more sustained effort and achievement of conscious political virtue. The self-healing and restorative powers of Monarchies, their capacity of survivin weaknesses and imperfections, are clearly stronger than that of Republics they have the superiority of living organisms over even the finest piece of machinery.

The second observation is that the freedom of choice, which any given community can exert with regard to the form, symbol and instrument of its political and spiritual self-preservation, is limited by history and tradition. Just to tire of one's Monarchy, with which and in which one has had one's collective existence for a thousand years, does not enable one to create a viable Republic. The impulse which first brings a State into being must be a thoroughly positive one; and the thoughtless and flabby falling-back on some rough-and-ready secondhand Republican structure which in Europe and Asia generally followed the withdrawal from Monarchy in the last forty years, has in no case provided anything like the political home, the security and stability that some of the old fashioned, *positive* Republics, like Switzerland and perhaps America, share with the surviving Monarchies. It has simply opened the door to chaos disintegration, imposition of inhumanly arbitrary revolutionary order by brute force, and every apocalyptic visitation. The tired refusal of affirmation, to which the fall of the European and Asiatic monarchies in the years between 1910 and 1950 was due rather than to any positive Republican revolutionary impulse, was simply the prelude to a series of desperate revolutions of nihilism – a deadly failure of political vitality avenged by measureless and fruitless suffering.

III.

Seen in this perspective, it becomes suddenly wholly natural and understandable that the survival of the British Monarchy during the danger period – due to whatever combination of good luck, good sense conscious skill and discretion, and royal virtue on the part of those two model Kings, George V and George VI – should be followed by the almost feverish revival of monarchist emotion and enthusiasm which we witness to-day. It is simply the elation and burst of feeling which follows an escape from a great and deadly danger. It is possible in the homage and jubilation to detect the note of thanksgiving – thanksgiving for the preserved continuity, decency, and gentleness of British collective life

for the stability and security of a preserved political home, for the preserved freedom to experiment, change, and blunder in our politics without the risk of deadly penalties. 'Things fall apart, the centre will not hold.' The new British monarchical enthusiasm springs from the proud, humble, and astonished discovery that in this country, miraculously, the centre has held, and things are not falling apart. Even the frivolous side of the new popular monarchism, the naively intrusive interest in all the details of Royal family life, can be somehow understood as a touchingly wondering curiosity how it is that this family has managed, and is still managing, to hold the centre of things together for this country – not by any particular action but merely by being; by graciously and unself-consciously living a dedicated life of permanent symbolism and ritual; and yet not a wholly different and separate one from the ordinary life of an ordinary family. There is, in the last resort, nothing unhealthy in the popular interest in the details of this astonishing and sustained daily feat; indeed, one might feel that this interest, however tactless in some of its manifestations, amounts to something like a popular rediscovery of the high and rarefied idea of the sacrament – which is nothing but the fusion of the natural and commonplace with the supernatural and miraculous.

It is also easy now to understand the change in feelings towards the British Monarchy abroad and the curious radiation which the British Crown has begun to exert in foreign countries. There is obviously more here than a mere infection from British popular feelings, and more than a mere personal admiration for the qualities of the British Royal Family. There is something of the feeling with which the shipwrecked look at the beam of a lighthouse; or with which a childless or bereaved woman fondles the baby of her sister. Envy, nostalgia, reviving hope, vicarious participation in a life-giving political mystery, and perhaps a rehearsing of one's own powers of restoration – all this enters in. In more than one sense, the Coronation of the British Queen is to-day a world event. Possibly, the instinct is right which makes people, even outside these isles and the British Commonwealth, watch it to the exclusion of more demonstrably practical events in world affairs; possibly, the imponderable consequences which may flow from it will be even more history-making in the long run than those of a truce or a deadlock in Korea, an attack or retreat in Laos, or a meeting of Heads of Government to settle the cold war.

This writer, at least, finds it hard to believe that the British Monarchy will long remain in the truly splendid isolation of this moment in history, that the eclipse of the millennial monarchical institution elsewhere is final, and that the future of human political communities, and of national and

international life, lies with the world of initials – with the U N's, and N A T O 's, the O E E C's, E C E's, and E D C's, even the U S A's and U S S R's of our day. He inclines to think that the weight of 5,000 years is bound to prevail against the trend of the last fifty. In the political and constitutional field as in other departments of life man seems bound to re-establish himself, perhaps sooner rather than later, as the universal measure; the present trend to think of States and communities in terms of 'machinery', and to shape institutions, national or international, in the image of machines, seems likely to give way again to the perennial human need to fashion his environments and collective emanations in his own image. Perhaps, who knows, our own lifetime may see an increasing return to the natural shape of things, where nations find their embodiment in Kings and Queens, and the human family its assurance of coherence beyond all conflicts and stresses in the family relationships of international Royalty; where groups of nations pay homage to an Emperor or Empress, and local loyalties express themselves in honouring local princes. What else is Monarchy, in the last resort, but the political manifestation of humanism? To think of it as obsolete is, implicitly, to think of humanism as obsolete. It may be contended that Britain never did a greater service to mankind than by exposing this dull and deadly heresy in the glorious affirmation of her Monarchy amidst the nerveless defections of the last forty years. Once more it may be found that, in saving herself, she has saved others by her example.

CROWN DIVISIBLE

P. C. Gordon Walker
Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs 1950/1

The short span between the Accession of the Queen and her Coronation will stand out as a major landmark in the constitutional evolution of the Commonwealth. In those brief months the doctrine of the divisibility of the Crown was finally, formally and fully accepted throughout the Commonwealth. The long and almost metaphysical argument about whether the Crown was one and undivided or manifold and divisible was brought to an end. First at her accession and then in a number of Acts of Parliament passed before the coronation in all the Commonwealth countries that recognize her as Queen, Elizabeth II has been separately and distinctly declared Queen of each of her several Realms. Never before has this been done with such precision and formality; it could hardly be done with greater.

This is a constitutional revolution. The famous phrase of the Balfour Declaration is no longer valid. We can no longer say that the countries of the Commonwealth are 'united by a common allegiance to the Crown'. The Commonwealth now contains one Republic and may well before long contain others that by definition do not admit 'allegiance'. Further, even among the Commonwealth countries that owe allegiance, the essential epithet 'common' now requires a new gloss. The allegiance may still be called 'common' in the sense that each of the Queen's Realms recognizes the same Queen and that she plays the same constitutional rôle in each. But this is not 'common allegiance' in the sense intended in the Balfour Declaration. It is not common in the sense that it is everywhere of the same substance or that it everywhere expresses itself in the same forms. It is rather a set of distinct but parallel allegiances. Each of the Queen's Realms has asserted its particular and equal allegiance and has determined for itself the Royal Title that shall express this relationship on its own particular behalf. Rather than 'common allegiance' we should perhaps talk of 'equal allegiance'. Even then we would not be including in our definition the relationship of India either to the Commonwealth or to the Crown.

If we are to understand the Commonwealth we must realize the full extent of this constitutional readjustment; but we must realize too that in one aspect this revolution, like all fruitful revolutions, is but the recogni-

tion of changes that had already come about. The essential principle of the divisibility of the Crown – namely that the Queen acts in respect of each of her Realms only on the advice of her Ministers in that Realm – has long been accepted. The constitutional revolution consists not in the recognition of this principle as such, but in accepting it in such full degree that it is no longer compatible with other doctrines which were once held to be of equal validity. What is new is the abandonment of the attempt to maintain the doctrine of the indivisibility of the Crown.

It is extremely important to realize that the constitutional revolution consists in the acceptance of existing doctrine: for this means that the change has been long preparing. The process is inherent in the very nature of the Commonwealth and would thus have come about *even had there been no Commonwealth in Asia, even had India's membership as a Republic not been recognized.* By the time of the accession of Elizabeth II the Commonwealth would in any case have consisted of powerful nations who would have insisted on the full ceremonial recognition of their actual as well as theoretical equality with the United Kingdom. It would have consisted also of races who would have insisted upon equality with those of British stock in the Commonwealth. In Canada and South Africa the British comprise less than half the population. Although there would, without India, have been as yet no Republic in the Commonwealth, there would have been in South Africa a powerful element which proclaimed its desire to make its country a Republic within the Commonwealth. These are the forces that have brought about the constitutional revolution. They would by themselves have been sufficient to insist upon so great an emphasis upon autonomous equality that the development of the doctrine of the divisibility of the Crown would have driven the contrary doctrine out of the window. The emergence of the Commonwealth in Asia did not cause, but only emphasized, a constitutional change that was already inevitable.

This consideration is a partial answer to those who have been filled with alarm by the recent changes and see in them steps towards the dissolution of the Commonwealth. They are part and parcel of the very nature of the Commonwealth; from its inception they were inevitable sooner or later. This is however only a partial answer. It may be admitted that the changes were bound to come; that to resist them would break up the Commonwealth. But at the same time they may portend a gradual loosening of the bonds of a Commonwealth which would, in this case, be doomed by its nature to gradual but inevitable disintegration. That, in my view, is a wholly false conception of the Commonwealth. It implies in effect that the Commonwealth cannot survive without some form of imperial federation: that its natural state is one of political unity, and that

any departure from this state is a step towards its debility and disappearance. In fact the opposite is true: attempts to achieve unification lead to disunity; unity can only be achieved by a co-ordination of units. The Commonwealth can only be strong and united as a group of distinct units.

This is borne out by the evolution of the rôle of the Crown in the Commonwealth. Each step towards the acceptance of the divisibility of the Crown has been a step towards the acceptance of the full equality of races and nations within the Commonwealth. And with each such step the Commonwealth has come closer together and the Crown has become more firmly entrenched and more openly acknowledged as the unifying factor. The recent full acceptance of the divisibility of the Crown is the last step in this process which has been in train from the very beginning. It has strengthened the Crown both in its personal and its constitutional aspect. As regards the personal, the abandonment of the attempt to maintain a single, uniform concept of the Crown throughout the Commonwealth has set the Crown free to find its own level in the widely varying feelings, affections and respect of the peoples of the Commonwealth. This has in itself strengthened the unity of the Commonwealth; for the Crown means different things not only in different countries of the Commonwealth but also within one and the same country. The Crown has a different meaning in Australia and Ceylon: but it also has different meanings inside Canada and South Africa. 'La Reine' and 'The Queen' carry somewhat varyingly accented connotations in Canada; no single view of the Crown can unite monarchists and republicans in South Africa. To insist upon a single conception of the Crown, whether that of the Balfour Declaration or any other, can only drive apart the various elements in the Commonwealth. On the other hand, if the Crown means different things in different parts of the Commonwealth, it also means something everywhere, something real.

On the constitutional plane, only by full acceptance of the divisibility of the Crown can great independent nations, whether some are Republics or not, be fitted into the Commonwealth. It is no accident that Elizabeth II was not only the first sovereign to ascend the throne with a different title in each of her Realms, but also the first to ascend the Throne as Head of the Commonwealth. Alongside the varying proclamations of accession, each of which recognized her as Head of the Commonwealth, must be set Mr Nehru's letter to the Queen 'welcoming Your Majesty as the new Head of the Commonwealth'. If the divisibility of the Crown has never been so formally and unreservedly accepted, it is equally true that the rôle of the Crown as the unifying factor in the Commonwealth has never been so formally and unreservedly acknowledged.

The revolution in the rôle of the Crown will bring considerable prac-

tical developments and problems in its train. One inevitable consequence is that the United Kingdom must in a new way share the Queen with the rest of the Commonwealth. What has long been the theory must now translate itself into practice. Perhaps the Comet will give actuality to the doctrine of the divisibility of the Crown. The Queen will have to spend considerable periods outside the United Kingdom, which is but one of her Realms. It will become as natural that she should reside, say, in Canberra or Ottawa as at Balmoral or Windsor. It would be appropriate for the Queen during these absences to be represented by a Governor General (doubtless a senior member of the Royal family) in the United Kingdom, as she is now represented by a Governor General in her absence from her other Realms. When we have elections or political crises, these may sometimes have to be settled under a Governor General in the United Kingdom, as they have been in Canada and Australia. At the same time, thanks to modern communications, the Queen will be able to keep in much closer and more intimate touch with the internal affairs of all her Realms. Just as the Sovereign has been the continuing factor in British politics with a greater knowledge of affairs than any of her Ministers, so the Queen will become the continuing factor in the politics of her other Realms.

To discharge these new and arduous duties, the Queen would need to build her personal staff out of officials from every one of her Realms, and not only from the United Kingdom. In respect of each particular Realm, the Queen will of course act only on the advice of her Ministers in that Realm. But in respect of those of her acts that concern the whole Commonwealth, or a number of her Realms (in particular decisions about her movements within the Commonwealth), she can no longer, as in the past, be advised only by United Kingdom Ministers. In such matters she will have to give equal weight to all the advice she may receive and act in her own discretion upon it: or her various sets of Ministers will have to co-ordinate their advice before offering it.

Such changes as these will come about gradually. For a considerable period the Queen will no doubt continue to be in a special though diminishing sense, Queen of the United Kingdom. But before the end of her reign we can expect her to be, as none of her predecessors has been, the Queen of the Commonwealth.

Another development will doubtless be the evolution of new ceremonies appropriate to the visit of the Queen to a Republic that recognizes her Headship of the Commonwealth but not her territorial sovereignty. Perhaps the most delicate problems will arise over the religious aspects of the Crown. There is usually a close connexion between the Head of State and the prevailing religion or religions of a country. But the Queen is

Head of many States, yet herself of one religion. How far can a Christian sovereign be the Head of Realms that have widely differing prevailing religions? How far can a Christian, indeed an Anglican, Coronation Service be appropriate to a Queen who is Head of seven States and Head of the Commonwealth? Clearly, logic cannot be carried very far without debouching into absurdity. So impossible would it be to make changes which would satisfy everyone that it is better to leave things in the main as they are. Moreover the Crown represents the important principle of secularism in democracy, or rather of tolerance in a Commonwealth of democratic states containing many religions.

So difficult would it be to alter the Coronation Service to give full religious satisfaction to the Methodist or Catholic subjects of the Queen that it matters the less that changes cannot be made which would satisfy the religious views of her Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist subjects. Equally the Queen cannot change her religion when she travels. On the other hand, it would be proper for her to pay due respect to the religions of her Realms when she is present in them. Should she 'wear her crown' in each of her Realms in turn in the year or so after her Coronation, it would be fitting for the national religions to play some part in the attendant ceremonies. Similarly, the Queen should pay due respect at the great religious shrines in her various Realms.

Outcries in Britain about visits, say, to Buddhist temples at which the Queen removes her shoes would display a ludicrously insular attitude towards the wearer of many Crowns and the Head of a Commonwealth that contains practically all the religions of the world.

These and similar problems will have to be solved by good sense and without too much logic, as they are encountered. They will be but part of a great historical transformation of Monarchy. Already in the Commonwealth we have made the revolutionary adaptation of a medieval concept to the purposes of parliamentary democracy. In the new Elizabethan age, we must (if the Commonwealth is to survive and be strong) make a further unique adaptation of Monarchy to the purposes of a unique group of nations and peoples. Besides being the symbol of the sovereignty of the people, the Monarchy must increasingly become the symbol of the free allocation of sovereign states.

MYTH AND MESSAGE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

E. L. Allen

Head of the Department of Divinity, Kings College, Newcastle-on-Tyne

In the year 1941 Rudolf Bultmann published his essay on the 'demythologizing' of the New Testament as the task of theology. The ideas contained in it should have been familiar already to those acquainted with his earlier work, nevertheless the effect of the essay was immediate and sensational, and it has continued to be since then a storm-centre of controversy on the Continent. As such, it can be compared only to Barth's *Romans*, equally a product of world-war. It marked indeed the end of an epoch in which theology had been dominated by Barth; it opened new horizons and summoned to fresh tasks. It would be impossible here to survey the literature of the controversy, even if one could claim to have mastered it. Fortunately, however, what is of most importance has now been collected in the two volumes *Kerygma and Mythos*, and there may be some value in a judgment passed by a British onlooker to the debate. But first it will be necessary to outline the position taken up by Bultmann himself, and in so doing I follow Fritz Buri, one of those few, incidentally, for whom he does not go far enough.

We begin therefore with the difference between the world-picture of our day and that of the Bible. It is the difference we are accustomed to describe in other contexts as that between scientific and mythical thinking. The New Testament writers live in a three-storey universe, nature and history alike are open to sudden divine interventions, and human society is surrounded at every moment by invisible armies of angels and demons, rank upon rank. For modern man history is a sequence of purely human acts, nature a realm to be explored to its limits by scientific method, and man a responsible person with control of his own acts, not one who can be invaded at any time by supernatural forces or even beings. Adam and his sin disappear in the millenia required for human evolution, and the story of a divine being who descends to earth to make atonement is unacceptable once men have learned how awfully personal is guilt. Myth is the representation of divine actions as though they were observable events within the world. The language of the New Testament is mythical.

It is not possible to live in the twentieth century from Monday to Saturday and then revert to the first while in church on Sunday. At least, no

one can do this except at the sacrifice of intellectual honesty. This means that the traditional presentation of the Christian faith is no longer valid for our time. In other words, the enterprise of Biblical theology begun by Barth and Brunner and taken up so enthusiastically in all the churches has done its work. In so far as it enabled us to grasp more clearly what exactly it is the New Testament writers are concerned to say, it was of inestimable value. Its failure lay in its refusal to go beyond this. It contented itself so often with mere repristination of Biblical ideas in Biblical language, leaving to others to consider what these might mean for our own day. Barth was concerned that the preacher should offer not his own opinions but the Word of God. He did not ask what point of contact this Word could find in its hearers, he denied that there was any such point. Bultmann now asks how the preacher may make himself understood when he draws on a book in many respects so strange.

He finds the answer by asking what is the intention of the New Testament myths. They appear to be cosmological but in fact they are soteriological. And salvation is for man, deliverance from the predicament in which he finds himself in this world. That is to say, the myth has an existential and religious concern; it deals with what is relevant for me here and now. The New Testament writers at times offer us an existential interpretation of their myths. So the Last Judgment becomes for John a spiritual event in the present. The light of Christ shines among men; they sort themselves out and decide their own destiny as they come forward to welcome it or shrink from it because their deeds are evil. The Lord's return is no longer taken literally by John, as though He were expected to redescend from heaven at some future date. The Lord's return is accomplished by the Spirit's presence within the Church to guide and protect. Within the New Testament itself, therefore, the process of demythologizing goes on apace; Jewish apocalyptic and Gnosticism are set aside in favour of a message that has direct bearing on human life in the present, is existential, as we say nowadays.

All that Bultmann urges is that we should continue what Paul and John began. He calls for an existential interpretation of the New Testament, and he offers a first instalment of this. He enlists for his purpose the philosophy of Martin Heidegger as worked out in *Sein und Zeit*, of which only the first part has yet appeared. It is important to note just what Bultmann proposes. He does not go back to the attempt of the older liberalism to discriminate between the eternal and the temporal in the New Testament; its myths must be subjected to interpretation as a whole, not simply a selection made from them. Nor does he translate them into the language of timeless truths. Everything must become present, personal, and urgent. Sin, for example, is surrender to the immediate in mis-

trust of the eternal, self-centredness, and servitude to the past; forgiveness is release from this condition into freedom in God's future. The Resurrection of Christ is not a miracle in the past, to be established by the evidence for the empty tomb; it is the transformation of the self here and now by dying and rising again with Him.

By such an exegesis of the New Testament it should be possible, not to commend its message to the modern mind as though that were the final arbiter in things spiritual, but to challenge men to-day with it as the Word of God. For the gospel comes down the centuries as proclamation, the Word preached in the Church in virtue of which Christ is present to us to-day and is offered for our acceptance or rejection. The mythological form in which that gospel is presented gives such offence that men turn away and so are never confronted by the other and ineradicable offence that is in the Cross. Bultmann's aim is not to eviscerate the Christian message but to lay it upon the conscience of men as was never possible so long as it was bound up with a world-view they could not in honesty consider. And his existential interpretation is meant to make it crystal-clear that the concern of the Gospel is with what has become even for philosophy in our time the primary concern – the predicament of man in this world and the possibility of his deliverance from it.

This new turn in philosophy in our day indeed gives a fresh opportunity to the theologian and the preacher. The analysis of the human situation in Heidegger shows that an understanding of what we need is possible to the honest observer; what is lacking is a discernment of how that need can be met. Christ alone gives that. There is therefore no confusion here between the Gospel and a philosophical construction. Christianity is based on facts, on the life, teaching, and death of Jesus of Nazareth, and on the apostolic witness to His resurrection. There is an act of God in these to describe which we are constrained to use language that is akin to that of myth, yet not identical with it; perhaps the term 'analogy' would be preferable. Christianity is rooted in the paradox that in an obscure Jew of the first century the decisive deed of God for us men and our salvation was done, and that in a human institution called the Church with all its weakness, that deed is present and challenging in our day. What this means is best described, neither in myth nor as science, but in the new language philosophy puts at our disposal.

So much for Bultmann's own position. Let it be said at once that some of his severest critics have admitted that his main contention is sound, and that theology must henceforth address itself to the problem he has raised. There are, of course, captious critics who object to his use of the term 'myth' and suppose the whole problem settled by so defining it as to enable them to claim that there is nothing mythical in the New Testament. Others are quite unable to see that he does not attempt a repristination of the liberalism of Harnack and his contemporaries. Some would say that Bultmann repeats the error of those who surrender the faith to a secular philosophy, quite overlooking the fact that existentialism stems from Kierkegaard and owes not a little to the Christian tradition. The most serious objection is brought by those who would allow that the demythologizing of the New Testament is called for, but who would halt the process earlier than Bultmann does. I single out for consideration three points that emerge from the discussion so far as it has yet gone.

1. It is claimed that the language of myth is the only one that is adequate to the expression of religious truth, particularly in the case of Christianity with its central doctrine of the Word made flesh, and that therefore any distinction such as that which Bultmann seeks to establish between myth and message is out of place. To tamper with the first is to imperil the second. Myth and science are not to be opposed, as though one only lived till displaced and overthrown by the other; rather do the two types of thinking continue side by side. To this day, he who would stir the emotions and enlist the will, has recourse to image, symbol, and story. It will always be so. Therefore, some would say, we need to restore the New Testament myths to their former power, not interpret them away. Others are prepared to recognize an element in those myths that is time-conditioned and no longer valid; this we should set aside, while retaining that in the myth which is essential and not to be stated otherwise. Thus, we may question the empty tomb but hold to the faith that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

Perhaps Bultmann's intention here can be defended only by clarifying and safeguarding it as he himself has not done. It is quite true that myth is the indispensable language for the expression of religious insights when these are fresh and original; it does not follow that such language is indispensable when the task is to give new force to those insights in a generation to which they have grown strange. The New Testament with its rich imagery must remain as the classical expression of Christian faith. Bultmann proposes to interpret it, not to supersede it. And it must remain precisely as it is, with its revelation conditioned at every point by the forms under which men apprehended it in the first instance. But each generation must endeavour to grasp and to set forth that revelation in its own way by entering into and interpreting those forms. If therefore we are to distinguish between the story of the empty tomb and the Lord's Resurrection, that separation must not be made by us as something valid for all time; it must be made afresh by each generation as it reaches in its own way for the intention behind the myth.

It may be granted too that, in religion as in art, though perhaps to a

less extent, form and content are so closely related that to change the one is to affect profoundly the other. In other words, they are right who object that nothing can replace the New Testament myths, even by way of interpretation, that does not lose something of their substance in the process. The most faithful rendering of their message into the language of our day – and I would readily admit that a more faithful rendering than Bultmann's is possible – will be inadequate. At the same time, nothing more adequate is accessible to us. To repeat the New Testament language *simpliciter* to-day is equally to fail to convey the New Testament message, for the language in question is scarcely intelligible to us. We must accept the fact that all human utterance is inadequate to the expression of God's truth; if we are humble and sincere, we may trust that He will use it.

2. Most critics of Bultmann are agreed in charging him with subjectivity. He reduces the events of which the Christian story tells to processes within the consciousness of the individual. This is how they understand such expressions as 'change in the understanding of oneself', and they suspect him of rewriting the Resurrection story in the same way as something psychological. The event in time is sacrificed and what we are given instead is the transformation of a person's inner life; if the former has any value, it is merely that of a stimulus to make possible the latter. If therefore he does not reduce the Gospel to a set of timeless truths about human life, he reverts to pietism, for which attention is concentrated on the feelings of the individual. Indeed, does not Bultmann go back to Schleiermacher, who came dangerously near to reducing God Himself to what goes on in the 'pious self-consciousness'? The main effort of German theology under Barth has been to get beyond this subjectivism to the objectivity of the Word of God. Was this all a mistake?

There can be little doubt that Bultmann's original essay was insufficiently guarded in its language at this point. In his reply to criticisms, however, he has left us in no doubt where he stands. He accepts fully the givenness of what Christian faith receives, while he rightly insists that this givenness is not of the same order as the objectivity with which scientific knowledge operates. I study the properties of a substance and then, as a second stage, decide whether to use it for my purpose or not. But when a person enters my life with a love that surpasses all my expectations, there are not these two stages. I do not first objectively perceive that he loves me and then decide whether to accept or reject the offer. My apprehension of his love is in and through my attitude to it, whether that attitude be one of acceptance or rejection. What is offered is wholly independent of me, and the transformation it effects in me is no disproof of that independence but rather its most convincing proof. So God is apprehended as other than ourselves in so far as we become new selves through our meeting with him.

3. In this Bultmann shows himself to have a better understanding of faith than his opponents have. The relation between subject and object is quite different for faith from what it is for knowledge of the scientific type. This comes out further in their treatment of the Resurrection, one of the crucial points in the whole discussion. Karl Barth, for example, is emphatic that the Resurrection was a historical event, though he grants that it does not fit into the categories with which the historian operates. Bultmann has said that all that is accessible to the historian is the witness of the first disciples, and that the meaning of the Resurrection for ourselves is the apprehension by us here and now of the Cross as *the* saving event. This seems to many unsatisfactory, they want something objective as the basis on which faith may rest. In other words, they want precisely those two stages that are proper to scientific enquiry but strange to faith. The need for something more than a mere report on the part of a group of men who may have been self-deluded is obvious. But when we ask in what sense the Resurrection is historical, the critics give no clear answer.

No one who has taken part in the discussion has appealed to the extremely valuable treatment of the Resurrection by Otto, at least not to my knowledge. Otto's position seems to me to express what I hope is Bultmann's intention. For Otto, the Resurrection was not an event verifiable by any historical investigation; that would be to lift it out of the region of faith altogether. It was a revelation of the Lord to His disciples comparable only to such a revelation as came to Isaiah in the Temple; as in Isaiah's case, it was apprehended through forms supplied by the imagination, through visions, in other words. If now we ask on what grounds we hold that the visions were fraught with revelation and were not mere hallucinations, the answer can only be that there are no grounds for faith save faith itself. If we have met the Risen Christ for ourselves in and through the witness of the disciples, that is the only certainty we need. In the last resort, as Bultmann sees, he is fighting Luther's battle over again. For faith is not a deduction from evidence, it is commitment to God as His own all-sufficient evidence.

THE NOVEL ART

David Paul

This is an extract from a forthcoming study of the novel.

'A mirror dawdling down a lane', said Yeats of the novel, translating into his own terms a quotation of Stendhal's. As a definition it applies admirably, not to what the novel ideally is, or to what it has succeeded in being on certain ideal occasions, but to what it has always been in danger of becoming. To dawdle down a lane (which is always a dead end) reflecting surfaces as faithfully and as idly as possible, is what the novelist is reduced to doing when he can do nothing better. When every other impulse or purpose has died, that is the one which remains inherent in his craft, and which he must continue to fulfil if he continues at all; just as the painter, when every other meaning of his art is lost, must go on trying to paint a replica of whatever meets his eye. When the creative purpose is dead, a more or less approximate form of reproduction (which is none the better for being more or less) takes its place.

Like many aphorisms, this one illustrates an extreme, points to a logical ending of a tendency which in fact can never be reached. It hits – and scores off – one's idea of the modern novel at its worst. A perfect condemnation of a type, it will not quite fit any real example. A concise dismissal of everything that the modern novel tends to be, it is in its turn dismissed to irrelevance by the unpredictably various achievement of the great novels of the past. It has no more application to *War and Peace* than to *Moby Dick*, to *Crime and Punishment* than to *Lucien Leuwen*. It illustrates a basic method which can never be purely employed. It may apply to what a number of novelists have tried to do, and need not have done, just as Pascal's dictum on the vanity of painting may apply to a *trompe l'œil*. In short, since it mistakes a method for a purpose it can only apply where the same fatal mistake has been made by the craftsman.

But it does not leave us where we started. Having at least separated a method from a purpose, one can begin to wonder what the real purposes of fiction can be. Story-telling is presumably the oldest of the verbal arts. The novel – and perhaps, after all, its English name keeps a meaning in its derivation – is the newest. And yet the two are never separable, or rather, if the story is separable from the novel, the novel is never quite separable from the story. The story is the nucleus, the seed from which the novel emerges. But the development from one to the other, the difference

between the two, is easier to recognize than to define. The criterion is not one of length, but of treatment. The difference is a difference of purpose. *Adolphe* is unquestionably a novel, whatever else it may be besides. The longest of the stories in the Arabian Nights may well be longer than *Adolphe* but it remains a story. Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* is a corpus of legends wrought together into a unity and a work of art, but it is still a long way from the novel. Its occasional nearnesses, notably in the treatment of Guinevere, are scarcely more than accidental. Chaucer's *Troylus and Criseide*, although in verse, was written with a purpose much nearer to that of the novelist. It is one of the few poems that could arguably have been written in prose. Prose in Chaucer's time was still an unforged, an unwieldy instrument. It is remarkable that, living in his time, he should have attempted it as often as he did. Malory's book is steeped in the meaning of its epic, legendary and mystical background. Its characters – though they can often be defined as characters—are rarely more than the agents of that meaning. Chaucer's poem is primarily about a woman and three men, its story arises from their behaviour and their moral character. What one remembers most vividly after reading it are the precise and almost prosaic details, how Criseide, for instance, during a long argument with her uncle, picks up a gold-embroidered cushion to sit down on, or how, when the lovers exchange vows, Criseide took her brooch and 'stak it in his sherte'. The writer is concerned scarcely at all, as little as possible it seems, with the epic and legendary nature of the background against which his characters happen to be situated. Troy has become a place where it rains, and people sit looking out of windows. In order to become a part of the continuous and co-existent world of the novel, it has very nearly ceased to be Troy.

The fact that Chaucer, who had nearly all the gifts of the novelist and employed them with conscious cunning, preceded Malory, the last of the great romancers, by about a century, may help to illustrate a point which is only provable by wider consideration. Of all the great forms, that of the novel is the most capricious in its development, if development it can be called. It emerges, at long and irregular intervals, as an end-product, a by-product which cannot reproduce itself. Only within the last century and a half has it begun to reproduce itself; and the process of reproduction rapidly assumed, and goes on increasingly assuming, the proportions of an industry rather than an art. Before that it was only accidentally emergent, a fortuitous phenomenon, without any regular precedent or example. If one tries to think of it in terms of growth and orderly development, it is as well to remember that the most sophisticated and decadent of all novels, that of Petronius, was one of the earliest; the work of a brilliant, sociable yet solitary mind exercising itself, for purposes of mockery,

invention and evocation, on the unmanageably corrupt and chaotic world in which it had, very fully, lived.

So it seems as if the novel has had a long, haphazard past but no history in any coherent sense of the term. Yet it has to be considered, with epic and drama, as one of the three great literary forms. Of the three, it can be argued beyond reasonable contradiction that epic is the work of a race arriving at a consciousness of its racial unity; it forges a statement, in legendary terms, of its heroic coherence; once that coherence becomes a conscious and universally accepted fact, the epic can no longer exist in its real function and can only survive as an artificial form which can be made to fit, more or less badly, a content and meaning of a different kind. It can be argued with perhaps less reason, and more of a show of force, that the drama succeeds the epic in time as the expression of a newly matured racial and linguistic civilization; Greek, Spanish, French, English, each race endowed with dramatic genius has its golden age of drama. After that there is simply theatre; a theatre compounded of echoes, afterthoughts and experiments, all subserving the stage as a means of entertainment; or, where they attempt to use the stage as a means, simply failing, either immediately or ultimately, as theatre. It is impossible to allot any such period, any such plausible graph of rise, glory and decline to the development of the novel. The reason for this is as obvious as it is easy to forget. Epic and drama are public arts. In order to come into being, to exist as their real selves, they require public participation. There has never been, and reasonably there never will be, a great dramatist, any more than there could be a great writer of epic without an immediate and waiting audience for whom his work, however much of himself he puts into it, is specifically designed. Epic and drama are the active expression of the moral consciousness of a social and racial group. There must be a conscious continuity between author and audience. The novel is the work of a man in solitude writing for the solitary reader. The novelist may be addressing an audience he does not know and which may remain forever unspecified. The conditions of the creative solitude which inspires the novel are such that they can occur at almost any place or period; in prison, in Haworth Parsonage, in a palace of Imperial Rome or modern Venice, in the security of a nineteenth-century Russian estate. Little wonder that its occurrence and development should be so unpredictable as to require a sort of quantum theory of the mind in order to account for it.

Two of the greatest works of fiction (only one of them definable as a novel, for it has to be remembered that the collective term comprises more than that) were the work of prisoners, and it is illuminating to look for a moment at their motives and purposes side by side in time. In a way

they are complementary. Malory the prisoner, surrounded by a country at civil war, a man with no basic creative gift but with a tremendous celtic nostalgia for the magic and chivalry of the receding world of Arthurian legend, spent his term shoring together into a loose but lasting, an after all organic unity, all that he knew and could find of the various and conflicting elements of that legend. His *Morte D'Arthur* is a summary of and a farewell to a world of naïve and unquestioning idealism. The memory of that world, as an active force, was evidently to last longer in Spain. More than a century after Malory, Cervantes the prisoner, the ruined ex-soldier from one of the first of modern wars, was to construct a very different legend from the same sources, setting his crazed survivor from that world of chivalric idealism on a pilgrimage into the grotesque, disordered and unpredictable world of reality. *Don Quixote* is, among other things, the most tremendous parody ever written, and the element of parody continues to play an important part in the novel from Fielding to Joyce. It is also the most sustained and subtle conflict between irreconcilables, between immitigable idealism on the one hand, and all-pervading irony on the other. In this sense it is the great exemplar of the conflict which is to take place, in an endless variety of forms, in nearly every novel, a conflict in which idealism and irony remain the two essential and opposing moral elements. The ratio of their relationship can vary as much as the means employed to express them. They remain as incompatible as they are mutually necessary.

But before looking down the endless avenue of fiction to which these two elements provide the opposite sides, I think it may be best to choose, however capriciously, two or three great archetypes of the novel – and to justify the caprice, as far as may be, by separating the examples as widely as possible in time and space. The Odyssey, the Book of Job, and Don Quixote seem to me to be very much to the purpose. Whatever it may be in the original, the Odyssey is scarcely an epic in the normal sense of the term, and in translation it is best read as a novel, of which it contains all the elements in the highest degree. The reasons why Ulysses is both more and less than an epic hero are interesting and begin at once to show up the essentials of character in the novel. The epic hero is ideally no more than a concentrated bundle of motive forces of great intensity or purpose. As such, Achilles may be admirable. But the moment the irony of human, moral criticism is brought to bear on him as a character, he emerges as nothing more than a bully and a baby. Again, Virgil's epic hero, Æneas, as the instrument and agent of a national destiny does as well as Virgil could make him – though his heart was not in the matter; he was writing the Augustan rather than the Roman epic, for which it was in any case two or three hundred years too late. Judged as an individual, Æneas is

nothing but a shifty and sanctimonious prig, with divine authority con tinually at hand to provide a moral alibi, and a ubiquitous mother to ge him out of scrapes. The fault of the Æneid is scarcely Virgil's; it is simpl that the hero is presented at a stage of civilization which must judge hi as a man more readily than it can accept him for his ulterior function Æneas is a prototype of the artificial hero, the puppet who is motivate from without rather than from within.

Such objections cannot apply to Ulysses. Ulysses is a man in the firs place, though he has sacrificed as little as possible of the heroic status i order to become so. Like Everyman, he is out for himself, not to foun or guide a nation. He is, in the end, a solitary pitted against a hostile o riddling universe. His cunning, his curiosity and wisdom, his instinctiv sense of balance, of the degree of risk which can be taken, the degree o temptation which can be yielded to, within the margin of safety; his sens of home and fatherland – and of a whole world to be explored on the wa back to it – these are a sublimation of the Greek character as, ideally, i wished to see itself. But it is a sublimation which has survived the test of thoroughly inquisitive and critical irony.

To suggest the Book of Job as a prototype of the novel may seem to b stretching matters. But it is certainly not (what Shelley wanted to mak of it) a tragic drama. It is more than a tale, more than an allegory. Jo may be a personification of the just man, but above and beyond that he i an individual. We can begin to imagine his personal habits, his daily life Job was such and such a man, and the book is a study of his character (It has been termed a morality, but is there a novel of value to which th term cannot be applied? Even *Prancing Nigger* or *Decline and Fall* is morality.) With the Odyssey and Don Quixote, Job offers another prima version of the idealist-ironist conflict, one in which the opposing forces ar directly personified. Job is the ideal of human virtue, which remains huma throughout. Satan is the personification of the questioning, unbelievin irony which will test that virtue to the utmost. In the Odyssey, the idea is a compound of cunning, daring and determination which understand and masters all the irony of circumstance which gods and men an monsters choose to put in the way of its ultimately virtuous and humbl purpose – to get home. Don Quixote is a study of the total incompati bility of the two elements, and as such, both an expression of a nationa temperament and more than that. From the outset, the knight's inalter able idealism is beset by the intrusive irony of facts, and remains imper meable to them. It can only yield in disintegration and death.

Besides this conflict, what is of peculiar importance to the novel is tha these three protagonists are all *characters* in the fullest sense of the term both at rest, as it were, and in action. They show both the constants an

the variants of an individuality. The 'characters' of La Bruyere, or of Addison and the seventeenth-century writers of this form, are a static unity. They are portraits, they stay where they are. The epic hero was, as I have suggested, not so much a character as a concentration of human forces directed at certain action. Only the novel can completely fulfil the task of reconciling stasis and motion, of reconciling detectable motive with unpredictable act. I think the survival of epic motives in the adven ture story can only enforce this truth. The hero of the adventure story is a character only in the most rudimentary degree; if he transgresses that degree it is at the expense of the adventures. To instance a modern example, Captain Ahab in *Moby Dick* is pre-eminently an epic figure. He has only one motive, pursuit of and destruction of the whale. As a driving force he is acceptable; but the less, beyond a certain point, that he appears on the scene the better, because as a human being he remains impossible. His static attributes, his love of his wife and child, his gloomy silences at meals, are not enough to make up a character. Even a mono maniac must be a complex of habits, whims and inconsistencies. In Captain Ahab's case the supply of these is inadequate to induce belief in him as a daily human being. The daily human being is the essential starting-point of the novel. It must, in order to mean anything, proceed from there, as the modern novel has too often failed to do. It can proceed as quickly as possible. But a novel which started out, say, from the Ancient Mariner would have to tell us a little more about him than Coleridge does. There would be the necessity of a local habitation and a name as well, perhaps, as the question of what, if anything, he had for breakfast. Whatever the details might be, and the choice is infinite, the Ancient Mariner would have to incorporate more in the way of reality than a skinny hand, a glittering eye and a guilty conscience.

Perhaps a perfect instance of the contrast between the epic or dramatic figure and a figure on the same scale of significance in fiction can be found in Don Juan and Don Quixote. As an epic projection of the Spanish imagination, Juan is little more than a phallus, and a rapier, or both in one; a timeless and placeless possibility of terror and seduction by night – or day, for that matter. Don Quixote is forever situated in time and place, a complete individual, besides being a creative and critical summary of a temperament. Attempts have been made to incorporate Don Juan in a novel, but in order to become a character he ceases to be what he is, an absolute. His dramatic possibilities are greater and more immediate, because the dramatic hero is, after all, no more than a fount of speech for which character and situation are only the pretext. Every person in a drama is a form of eloquence. Shakespeare's *Richard II* is a fountain of lyric and tragic declamation arising out of circumstances which are no

more than summarily indicated. They are a pretext for what is poetry in the first place, the expression of an individual only in the second. The dramatic figure has not only to condense but to transcend himself in his own words. He is in a continual state of being and becoming through his speech. Hamlet is an agonized state of hesitation to become what he wants and does not want to be. We cannot tell where, as a character, he started from, except that we do not quite believe in that pompous, youthful letter to Ophelia. In his case the particular becomes general so instantaneously that we can scarcely trace the particular at all. The process tends to disappear in the eloquence. Eloquence may be the last and least attribute of a predominant character in fiction, for whatever he expresses that is more than himself, he must be himself in the first place. The novel cannot make the particular general with the instantaneous speed which is the essence of drama. In a way, it has to labour over particulars from the beginning to the end.

To consider fiction and drama side by side, even for a moment, is to be reminded that the great function of the novel is to carry dramatic principles into regions of the imagination which the stage can never reach or render. In doing so it makes us realize how narrow and apparently exhaustible the strictly theatrical limits are. The most dramatic, and even melodramatic of novels is surely *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. Its tensions, its oppositions of motive, its crescendo and climax are as scientifically devised as those of any play ever written. No other novel gives to quite the same degree the complete sensation of watching a drama being played out before the eyes. Yet it is a novel in letters, the least dramatic of forms, and it is so disposed and placed that a successful dramatization of its content and meaning is inconceivable. But it might well be claimed as a higher instance of dramatic and imaginative creation than any play of its time or since. As such it is only one instance, if a supreme one, of how dramatic principles have carried over into the novel to be applied to a whole range of experience which is otherwise intractable, or can only be treated inadequately. In a sense the dramatic imagination has not only spilled over from, but drained away from the stage into the novel. The great tragic novelists, whether one chooses to name Hardy or Melville, Tolstoy or Dostoievsky, have no equivalent in the drama since Tourneur or Webster.

RUDYARD KIPLING AND THE IMPERIAL IMAGINATION

Michael Edwardes

> Mary, Mother av Mercy, fwat the devil possist us to take an' kape this melancholious counthry? Answer me that, Sorr.
>
> Private Mulvaney in *With the Main Guard* from *Soldiers Three*.

Now that the British Empire in India is 'one with Nineveh and Tyre', the time is ripe for the setting of Kipling firmly into the social realities of his time. He is, as George Orwell has pointed out, the only literary interpreter of the British in India during the period that saw the first coalescence of the forces of imperial decline. As such he is source material of a primary nature.

The history of the Indian Empire has been read almost exclusively from the last writing on a palimpsest and this superficiality has allowed imperial apologists to deal with complex and irreconcilable factors in terms of one pure colour – red. A rewriting of history from the motives and manners revealed by the lower layers of the palimpsest is, naturally, beyond the scope of these notes but, as the title suggests, an attempt will be made to analyse the *idea* of Empire that has come to be associated with the name of Rudyard Kipling, and the reality (if any) behind it.

A serious interpretation of the mind of Kipling has never been satisfactorily attempted. The myth has become greater than the man, the associations of his name more didactic than his work. Always good for a sneer in so-called 'progressive' circles, little attention has been paid to what he actually wrote, for it is always easier to label a writer than it is to understand him. Kipling was not a fascist. His tyranny was not without soul. He was not a jingo, an unthinking sabre-rattler and irresponsible tub-thumper. He was morally insensitive, an old-fashioned imperialist. So old-fashioned, in fact, as to be out-of-date in his own time. And there, possibly, lies his real sin. He produced a romantic conception of Empire, at just the period when no one, not even the classes he so admired, was willing to fight any longer for such an idea.

The belief that Kipling sold-out cynically to reactionary statesmen, is not true. For here was a man who, unlike the paid hacks and pamphlet-

eers of the eighteenth century, really believed in what he was saying. Such a man is more of an embarrassment than an asset, particularly if he is as compelling a writer as Kipling.

What is the essential quality of Kipling's work? It is, undoubtedly, vulgarity. But not simply of style, for his work is carefully written and uncolloquial. It is the vulgarity of the 'know-all' that characterizes his writing. This 'knowingness', the pretence of the completely integrated personality, is the key to his political ideas and it is only from the recognition of this, that it is possible to understand them.

When Kipling was twenty-eight there appeared in a London newspaper the following lines:

> He knows the slang of Silver St, the horrors of Lahore
> And how the man-seal breasts the waves that buffet Labrador.
> He knows the fine gradation 'twixt the General and the sub,
> And the terms employed by Atkins when they fling him from a pub;
> He knows an Elka pony's points, the lepers drear abode,
> The seamy side of Simla, the flaring Mile End Road;
> He knows the Devil's tone to souls too pitiful to damn;
> He knows the taste of every regimental mess in 'cham';
> He knows enough to annotate the Bible verse by verse;
> And how to draw the shekels from the British public's purse.

The truth of the last line, at least, is borne out by the publishers in the latest edition (1949) of *Kim*. Four million copies of his books have been sold. Unlike 'left-progressives' we cannot dismiss Kipling as an empty myth, if only for his circulation statistics.*

Kipling's concept of Empire is immature. Except in the child-mind there is no such thing as the absolute Hero, the man that is all things to all men. He was unable to realize that his soldier-administrators carrying the 'white man's burden' and dominated by a sense of god-given mission, were merely puppets, dupes even, of merchant aggressiveness. Quiet men in the city of London, unromantic and hard-headed, those are the people that called the tune, but Kipling's world-view did not acknowledge the economic compulsions of imperialism. He saw the Empire as an outlet for action, where English blood was to be spilt unselfishly as part of an heroic pattern, which was, for some reason, inescapable. The *call of duty* is paramount in Kipling's world and without it he had no political faith. Though he could see, plainer than more rational thinkers, that British Rule in India had reached its apogee, he fought to instil into the young men of his time an imperial mystique that could not be sustained in the days of the railway, the electric telegraph and the 'yellow press'.

* It is unprofitable but interesting to consider how much envy might play in this attitude.

Kipling was no democrat. A believer in personal rule, he had a vicious hatred of legislators, the type of person castigated as Pagett, M P.

> And I laughed as I drove from the station but the mirth died out on my lips
> As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of their 'Eastern trips'.
> And the sneers of the travelled idiots who duly misgovern the land,
> And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one into my hand.*

And it is no incidental matter that his few years in India should coincide with the vice-royalty of the Marquis of Dufferin – with Dalhousie and Curzon the greatest of the Governors-General – if we consider such a position, which it obviously was, as one for the autocrat. Dufferin held the same views of divine mission and moral superiority which form part of the Kipling ethos. And he, too, was apparently unaware of the exploitive † nature of British Rule in India.

At a speech given on the Maidan, Calcutta, in celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, February 16th, 1887, Dufferin made clear his conception of Britain's imperial mission.

> Through the *mysterious decrees* of Providence, the British nation and its rulers have been called upon to undertake the supreme government of this mighty empire.

And again on receiving the Freedom of the City of London at the Mansion House on May 28th, 1889:

> I believe that the *moral ascendancy* exercised by Englishmen in the East is becoming more and more powerful.

It is, to say the least, odd that British historians class Dufferin's period of office as one of unusual liberalism.

What of Anglo-Indian (as it was then called) society in the last decades of the nineteenth century? Was it, as Francis Adams has it, 'duty and red-tape tempered by picnics and adultery', or was it a responsible collection of supermen who ruled with sympathy and mailed fist, sometimes dying of cholera but still carrying on the heroic mission ordained by divine providence?

* Or as Sir Henry Cunningham more pompously put it: 'The dangers of Parliamentary government of dependencies are great, and, in the hot air of a party fight, or the pressure of a party emergency, the interest of England in India and the claims of those who represent them are apt to become obscured. Such an episode (the "Mutiny") is a warning how easily the forms of popular Government may lend themselves to rash judgment, violent tone, unjust and ill-considered action, *and how seriously the aberrations of a popular assembly may embarrass the fulfilment of an imperial task*.' (My italics.) Earl Canning: *Rulers of India* Series, Oxford, 1891.

† This word has been so overworked that it seems to have lost any precise meaning it may have had. It is used here in the definition given by the Oxford English Dictionary.

The world of Anglo-India that Kipling chronicles in *Plain Tales from the Hills* and other stories, is one of fantastic superficiality. It indulges, and this is true of later times and other places, in refinements of precedence and protocol that would have earned the admiration of Saint-Simon at his stuffiest. A world turned in upon itself to a degree bordering on the abnormal, worshipping totems and cherishing taboos of almost incredible puerility.*

Kipling was aware of this. His principal characters in these stories are 'Civilians' – something to be laughed at. There are, for him, no genuine heroes out of uniform, and even then, few above the rank of lieutenant. It is the soldier-administrator, the man who holds all the portfolios and throws in District Magistrate as well, we must admire. His ideal was someone like General John Jacob who, when only a Major serving on the Upper Sind Frontier in 1848, was not only commander of all troops and, as such, responsible only to the Commander-in-Chief, but also the sole political agent, superintendent of police, chief magistrate, engineer and revenue officer.†

A military man holding all executive offices, both governmental and judicial, acting with a decisive ruthlessness, tempered with a father's love for erring children, that is an imperial hero. Such a hero could not survive the bloody shambles of the so-called Mutiny of 1857, and where it lingered on in out-of-the-way districts, its final coup-de-grace was the opening of the Red Sea Telegraph in 1870. Not only had authority, i.e. *unrestricted*

* '"On the other side of India" I hear that the feeling on points of etiquette is even more strict (than Bombay). The ladies carry their *burra-bibi-ship* into the steamers when they go to England. My informant travelled home with several from Calcutta, and they did not forget on board a ship, the relative rank they had held on shore. My friend endeavoured, in vain, to persuade them that, whatever their social importance might be in "the city of palaces", they would be but "small folk" in London.' Viscountess Falkland: *Chote-chote*, London, 1857. Lady Falkland was the wife of a Governor of Bombay (1848–53) and her journals are, considering her background and position, reasonably discerning. The last sentence in the passage quoted here is, of course, the clue to the whole fantasy of precedence.

† However, in practice, he was incompetent in every one of these posts, including later that of Commander-in-Chief. *The Views and Opinions of General John Jacob* published in Bombay in 1858 only demonstrates the astigmatism of his views and the puerility of his opinions. As Richard Burton says (in *Sind Revisited*, London, 1877): 'Accustomed to base the strongest views, the headstrongest opinions, upon a limited experience of facts, he was an imposing figure as long as he remained in obscurity.' In the second volume of the same book, Burton recounts tales of his obstinacy and the old testament play-acting which ended with his own death: 'At last his obstinacy killed him. When advised by his surgeon not to ride his final ride home, he asked, with a sneer, if the young man knew his constitution better than he did himself and he died examining a new rifle.'

authority, been taken over by the Central Government * but had also gone, even from there, via the telegraph cable, to its final resting-place at the office of the Secretary of State for India. And there it was at the mercy of any number of Pagetts, M P.

Kipling knew this, and knew at the same time, that the introduction of the pretence of Democracy, which had come with the interference of the Home Government in India Affairs, would only create a demand for the realities of democratic practice. He knew that the Legislative Councils Act of 1861 was a piece of eyewash to soothe the Pagetts and meant little in change of heart. He could not understand why, if the Act of 1870, after all the fine words and democratic phrases, not only confirmed but even expanded the autocratic rights of the Governor-General to over-rule his Council which had been embodied in the Acts of 1786 and 1793, there was any point in passing the Act at all. He saw the danger before most men, and wanted to return to the old days of personal rule and independent action.

Nothing is so dead as the imperfectly remembered past. Those turgid lines of Omar Khayyám about the moving finger of history, are commonplace but true. And yet we all profess nostalgia for 'the good old days' at one time or another. It was Kipling's mistake to attempt to project the past, a carefully selective past, into the political future.

In one of Kipling's works there appears in full colour, his ideal of the 'completely integrated personality'. This is in the novel *Kim*.† Kim himself is cast in an heroic mould. Nothing is outside the range of his peculiar knowledge. He is able, without diminishing his individuality, to move into and identify himself with the shrewd, sensual Mahbub Ali, with the monolithic State, maintained by intrigue, in the person of Colonel Creighton, and with contemplation, peace, the inward life, of the Lama. But he is never allowed to forget that he is a 'Sahib'. That the mission of the white man is (in theory) above personal ambition and desires. He is part of the Great Game, the Great Imperial Game whether he likes it or not. Of course, he likes it. How else could he be with all the pressure of historical determinism behind him? Part of the inescapable configuration of the imperial mission. Rubbish? Undoubtedly, but nevertheless he is the archetype of the 'hero' that had once, on a

* This statement is perhaps, by itself, misleading. The Governors of Bombay and Madras Presidencies still retained their right to communicate directly with the Secretary of State in London until well into the present century. Even such an autocrat as Curzon was unable to do anything about it. But in general the Supreme Government in Calcutta was – supreme.

† I have been reminded of this by Lionel Trilling's superficial but occasionally perceptive essay on Kipling which has been reprinted (1950) in *The Liberal Imagination*.

smaller scale, really existed. Kim and Strickland of the Police were th models for youth that Kipling constructed. But then, who wants t imitate a man ten feet tall? No one, apparently, at the end of the nine teenth century.

The 'Anglo-Indians' of Kipling's day and later, pretended to be giant but were not even capable of deceiving themselves. To be convinced o one's own stature is the first requisite of a successful colonial administrato Without a sense of indestructible superiority, it becomes merely a questio of hanging-on and keeping one's bags packed. The story ends as Edwar Thompson makes a character in one of his novels say:

> We neither govern nor misgovern. We're just hanging on, hoping that the Last Trump will sound 'Time' and save us from the bother of making a decision.

George Orwell in an incisive essay on Kipling published in *Horizon* i 1942 * gives primary importance to the 'Law' in the baggage of imperi heroes. Places are captured, the map is coloured red with the blood o obscurely altruistic soldiers and then the 'Law' takes over. The 'Law', seems, meant railways and telegraphs and the advantage of being rule by a white man. Kipling was fascinated by the mechanics of the la nineteenth century, the benefits of progress brought by the machin The 'Law', as he saw it, had little to do with legal impedimenta, perma ent settlements and complicated land acts, for with his surprising dicho tomy he was able to realize the errors of English judicial functions a applied in India. The story of *Tods' Amendment* shows how a Kipling her (significantly a child in touch with the people) was able to demonstra the fallacy, in terms of human beings, in the logic of the Law Membe Macaulay was not one of the Kipling pantheon.

Orwell in the same essay attempts an interpretation, in variance to th accepted one, of certain lines in Kipling's famous hymn 'Recessional which has always been assumed to refer to the 'natives' in India.

> If drunk with sight of power, we loose
> Wild tongues that have not thee in awe -
> Such boasting as the Gentiles use
> *Or lesser breeds without the law* -
> Lord God of hosts be with us yet
> Lest we forget - lest we forget.

Orwell decides that 'lesser breeds' refers to the Germans, men n *powerless* but *lawless*, and that the hymn itself far from being a paean patriotism is a reminder of what might happen if England should forg her 'responsibilities' and become, like Germany, civilized but witho Law.

* And in his *Critical Essays*, 1945.

The explanation is ingenious but unacceptable, and in fact is destroyed by Orwell himself in his next paragraph. Going on to assess Kipling's style, he maintains, rightly, that Kipling's language is Biblical (i.e. Jacobean). Precisely, and from that assumption it is simple to deduce a rather different use of the word 'without', that of *being outside of*, in this case, the Law.

The validity of this interpretation is supported by the hymn itself which is a projection of Kipling's imperial mythos – god-given mission, the inescapable determinism of the 'white man's burden'. Kipling, as has been said before, was not an *irresponsible* imperialist, he knew that one day there would be an accounting and was only mistaken in thinking that the auditor would be God instead of the Indian people.

Kipling's interpretation of the white man's role in the world was completely consistent. He believed that the only way to keep India was by a denial of democracy. It required personal rule, personal sacrifice, limitation of popular education, what might be called a ruthless paternalism, of being cruel to be kind. He maintained this in a period when such instruments of imperial rule were slowly being discarded. His hero had never existed in one flesh, it was a selective amalgam of what, to Kipling, were the good points of many men. His conception was a nostalgia for the dead days of the Company when to all intents and purposes a man in India did what he thought fit and then presented the Home authorities with a *fait accompli*. But the middle classes were no longer ready to sacrifice themselves on the altar of duty. The glamour of a distant land, of loot and luxury had faded with the steam ship. The shakers of Pagoda-trees, as dead as the Mughals. The world, becoming smaller, tarnished.

Kipling's enthusiasm for 'sacrifice' brought a bad taste into the mouth, for with that incredible honesty of his, he insisted on saying that *all* the sacrifice was not strictly necessary. That a lot of it was due to incompetent organization and generalship. His poem *Arithmetic on the Frontier* might be taken at first sight to be an account of selfless immolation, of painting the map with blood. It is, in reality, a bitter attack on the stupidity and carelessness of those small border campaigns that were a commonplace of the Frontier.

> A scrimmage in a Border Station –
> A canter down some dark defile –
> Two thousand pounds of education
> Drops to a ten rupee jezail –
> The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
> Shot like a rabbit in a ride.

Not altogether an appealing piece of propaganda for the imperial mission. As a recruiting sergeant, Kipling failed by being too honest. No

man was wanted on false pretences. The Empire would only survive when men sacrificed themselves *and were fully aware of what they were doing*. India was no place, he said, for time servers and democrats. He was wrong, for it was to be left to just those to wind up the adventure. The men of action had been and gone and the inheritors were indifferent to the estate.* Kipling was acutely conscious of this and showed the English the only way of saving the Empire from destruction. But even Lazarus died finally, for all his new lease of life. Kipling's solution would merely have delayed the interment.

> They unwound and flung from them with rage, as a rag that defiled them,
> The imperial gains of the age which their forefathers piled them.
> They ran panting in haste to lay waste and embitter for ever
> The well-springs of Wisdom and Strength which are Faith and Endeavour.
> They nosed out and digged up and dragged forth and exposed to derision
> All doctrine of purpose and worth and restraint and prevision.

Is it merely a coincidence that these lines were written in 1909, at the time of the so called Morley-Minto Reforms?

It should now be possible to make some sort of a rationale of Kipling's romantic conception of Empire.

Were the Indians unfit to rule themselves? To Kipling the question is irrelevant and can be answered only by a statement. It was the mission of the white man to rule and that was that. Progress, the Law, 'civilizing' power, were the 'boons' they brought and were exclusive to the race. The significance of this is important for it was the *only* reason for the English being in India. To Kipling there was no question of exploitation, or making everyone a Christian. It was simply a necessity imposed upon England by some organic determinism. All the other reasons put forward by his contemporaries to show the general inability of Indians to manage their own affairs, he laughed at.

> Lalun is a member of the most ancient profession in the world. Lilith was her great grand-mamma and that was before the days of Eve, as everyone knows. In the West, people say rude things about Lalun's profession, and write lectures about it and distribute the lectures to young persons in order that morality may be preserved. In the East where the profession is hereditary, descending from mother to daughter, nobody writes lectures or takes any notice; and that is a distinct proof of the inability of the East to manage its own affairs.

In the same story, *On the City Walls*, which appeared in 1895, Kipling assembles his case against the new tendencies in Indian Government.

* This is as good an example as can be found of Arnold Toynbee's conception of the degeneration of a creative minority into a dominant one. As Jawarhalal Nehru has put it (in *Glimpses of World History*): 'The British who had come as representatives of a dynamic society, were now the chief upholders of a static unchanging condition.'

He attacks the idea that the Indian can stand alone as pretty but pointless. He sees the Englishman effacing himself only to give credit to the Indian but taking the blame should anything go wrong.

He makes Khem Singh – the old 'Mutiny' general, brought back from exile in Burma – speak against the clemency policies of Canning.

> Sahib, speaking now of a matter which lay between Sabraon and the affair at the Kukas, it was ever a wonder to us that you stayed your hand at all, and that having stayed it, you did not make the land a prison.

The sublime indifference of this statement to historical reality is characteristic of Kipling's emotional and uncritical anger against those he thought to be enemies of the Empire.

With Khem Singh's next words he puts his point precisely.

> Now I hear from without that you do great honour to all men of our country and by your own hands are destroying the Terror of your Name which is your rock and defence. This is a foolish thing. Will oil and water mix?

Very well then, oil and water do not mix, what is the alternative? The one-man band? The dictator? In a polite and gentlemanly way, yes. Is there a model to emulate, something alive, to give point to Sergeant Kipling's recruiting speeches? There is.

> His powerful intellect saw a new India, fashioned to the last model of modern improvement. He carved it and its institutions *unflinchingly to the* desired pattern. He pulled down, he built up. He changed the squares of obsolete tradition for the rounds of civilized enlightenment. Nothing was proof against the indefatigable energy of this determined reformer. To trample down hostility with the red heel of war – to crush factious opposition – to carry beneficent civilization to scenes of anarchy, oppression and suffering – to proclaim order, and order's long train of blessings to communities shattered by war, devastated by rapine or convulsed by internecine strife – to give full swing to trade, locomotion and education, and set human intelligence free for triumphs redounding in advantages to humanity, discover new resources – to lop away with a firm unsparing hand such parts of the body politic as were incompatible with a regime of improvement or refused to lend themselves to its advance.*

This superman, if we are to believe our interpretation of Kipling, is without doubt, the Imperial Hero. And not then solely a product of a literary imagination, but an historical personage. It is a description of the character of Dalhousie.

Kaye and Malleson † place the blame for the 'Mutiny' of 1857 on Dalhousie's shoulders. They give five major motives for the outbreak, and

* *History of the Indian Mutiny*, Vol. V., p. 282.
† Sir H. S. Cunningham, *op. cit.*

though assigning them to 'native opinion' do not satisfactorily deny their validity.*

(1) The gross wrongs inflicted on the Nana Sahib.†
(2) Injustices to Kunwar Singh.
(3) Injustices to the Rani of Jhansi.
(4) The Seizure of Oudh.
(5) Fraudulent embezzlement of the sum lodged with Government of India by the Rao of Kirwi.

All but one of these were directly a consequence of Dalhousie's arbitrary policies.‡

There seems little necessity for further comment on the results of personal rule for it is only on these results that judgments are formed. But as an offset to the nauseating eulogy of this fantastic and irresponsible demagogue, it is good to quote from one of the few contemporaries of Dalhousie who saw the dangers of his policies.§

> The charge against Lord Dalhousie is, that he perverted our position altogether: that he destroyed our fair fame (!), annulled treaties at will, and placed the *de facto* paramount power, of which he was for eight years the executive head, in untenable and unintelligible relation towards the dependent sovereignties of the Empire. His policy, neither honestly protective, nor honestly hostile, was one destroying the confidence of our friends, justifying the distrust of our worst enemies, converting loyal submission into mere imbecility and what were once calumnies and what might have been called conspiracy, into legitimate reproaches and reasonable precautions. Lord Hastings and Lord Wellesley crushed or coerced our foes; Lord Dalhousie ruined our friends. He was, and always would have been the best and noblest of servants; he was the very worst and basest of rulers! ||

* This is understandable when it is remembered that Malleson who was responsible for the last three volumes of this work was the author of the anonymous *Mutiny of the Bengal Army*, published in 1857 and known as the 'red pamphlet', which categorically blamed Dalhousie's policy for the outbreak.

† Though in the matter of the Nana Sahib and the continuance of the pension of Baji Rao, it was not so much the wrongs inflicted, for there is, perhaps, a case for the cancellation of the pension, but the cavalier manner in which he was treated by Government.

‡ Malleson does not mention (in this place) the rascally affair of the crown jewels and family heirlooms of the Raja of Nagpur. As a contribution to the causes of the 'Mutiny' the sale of these effects in the public bazaar must take an important place. It is impossible (if any one should want to) to acquit Dalhousie from responsibility, if only by default.

§ Major Evans Bell of the Madras Staff Corps. It is advisable to note that Bell was a believer in an Imperial Federation of native principalities and against a United India under British administration.

|| Numerous attempts have been made to whitewash Dalhousie, the latest, and possibly most cursory, appearing in Sir George Dunbar's *India and the Passing of Empire*, London, 1951. Whatever the ultimate responsibility for the annexation of Oudh, he was the man who put it into effect and must, therefore, bear the onus.

Somewhat woolly in sentiment but a proven indictment. The sting, however, is in the last sentence. The archetype of the Hero would have made the best of servants! It is the final, annihilating blow.

Kipling based his ideas on the lives of a few men and was mistaken in concluding that they represented a system of government. These men, predominantly soldiers, were successful in a restricted field, for military governments are always 'successful' because they never last long enough for the damage to show. But on the larger, continental canvas, the behaviour is that of Dalhousie and the results can only be measured in terms of stupidity and suffering.

Empires are retained by vastly different methods than those used to acquire them. The East India Company maintained its ramshackle administration, not by superior military power or by having God in its knapsack. It was sustained by a deliberate system of territorial fragmentation sustained by subsidy and intrigue, and by the encouragement of rivalry between independent rulers. The classic process of *divide et imperare*. Such a policy was first abandoned by Dalhousie, by the withdrawal of subsidies, the cynical use of the 'doctrine of lapse', and direct annexation. It was the strong man who destroyed the balance and failed to create a new one. After the 'Mutiny' Kipling (some thirty years after) saw the expansion of communications as another part of the 'white man's burden'. Railways and telegraphs would consolidate British hegemony in India. Troops and food could be moved hundreds of miles in a few hours to places where rebellion or the famine that might lead to rebellion had broken out. But a tiny minority can only continue to rule a vast majority by encouraging disunity. Facility of communication is the first essential of successful opposition. And the railways, which were to be an instrument of control and continuance by creating a physical unity, prepared the way for political opposition. It was this unity that became the seed-bed of the Freedom Movement.

When this became apparent, it was necessary to encourage the growth of other fissiparous tendencies.

It is one of the major tragedies of our century that the agents chosen were those of communal and ethnic hatred, and that at freedom's door the very unity that had first made freedom possible should have been destroyed by the heresy of partition. Territorial fragmentation has returned.

Whatever administration flourished in India, it carried within the antagonisms that would inevitably have destroyed it. It would perhaps have been better if Kipling's ideas *had* been put into practice in India, for with another Dalhousie or two, freedom might have been quicker, though bloodier, than it was. But it is not only idle but unprofitable to speculate in historical romance, as Kipling amply demonstrates.

Kipling cannot be dismissed as a creator of fairy tales, for he had th child's immense awareness of actual events, with the occasional insight an uncritical prophet. He had no historical judgment. Like a child, to he only accepted the things that were acceptable with pleasure. A simpl lie had more merits than a complex truth. But without him it would b difficult for us to realize just what the Empire in India was like sevent years ago, and impossible for us to approach the contours of the imperi imagination.

> My name is R. Kipling, since I was a stripling
> My trade has been stippling in Indian ink;
> From Hong Kong to Peshawur, from Leeds to Etawah
> I've travelled for copy — and found it, I think.

Yes, he found his copy and though he failed to light a system of pra tical politics with it, he turned the results into a journalism of such geni that it approaches, if it does not occasionally pass over, the threshold literature.



'ESSENTIAL GAUDINESS': THE POEMS OF WALLACE STEVENS

Donald Davie

For nearly thirty years the Americans have been claiming, in Wallace Stevens, one of the great poets of our age. It seems inexcusable that the English reader has had to wait so long before he could judge this poet for himself. It is especially exasperating when one discovers that Stevens deserves nearly everything that his admirers have claimed for him. He is indeed a poet to be mentioned in the same breath as Eliot and Yeats and Pound. That is his place, and that is the company he must keep. We are called upon now not to assign a status but to define an excellence. And now, at last, generous selections from his work come at the same time from two different publishers.* What a pity one or other of them did not appear fifteen years ago.

The third poem in the Fortune Press selection, one of the most important works of Stevens's early period, is entitled *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle.* (The title is a silly one, like many of Stevens's titles.) The second stanza runs as follows:

> A red bird flies across the golden floor.
> It is a red bird that seeks out his choir
> Among the choirs of wind and wet and wing.
> A torrent will fall from him when he finds.
> Shall I uncrumple this much-crumpled thing?
> I am a man of fortune greeting heirs;
> For it has come that thus I greet the spring.
> These choirs of welcome choir for me farewell.
> No spring can follow past meridian.
> Yet you persist with anecdotal bliss
> To make believe a starry *connaissance.*

I think it was Yvor Winters who first drew attention to the felicities here. 'Much-crumpled,' for instance, gives us (1) a sensuous impression of the wet woods, (2) the difficulty of distinguishing the bird-song from its accompaniments of sounding rain and wind, (3) the staleness for the poet

* Wallace Stevens. *Selected Poems.* Faber and Faber, 12*s.* 6*d.* Wallace Stevens. *Selected Poems.* Chosen with a Foreword by Dennis Williamson. The Fortune Press, 12*s.* 6*d.*

of the hackneyed theme that the bird represents – 'Spring,' the topic handled so many times by so many poets before.

But now consider a stanza, later in the same poem:

> If sex were all, then every trembling hand
> Could make us squeak, like dolls, the wished-for words.
> But note the unconscionable treachery of fate,
> That makes us weep, laugh, grunt and groan, and shout
> Doleful heroics, pinching gestures forth
> From madness or delight, without regard
> To that first, foremost law. Anguishing hour!
> Last night, we sat beside a pool of pink,
> Clippered with lilies scudding the bright chromes,
> Keen to the point of starlight, while a frog
> Boomed from his very belly odious chords.

This is thoroughly late-Victorian, poor Browning or poor Meredith. Activity masquerades as agility; violence as energy; it is hectic and monotonous. Refusal to use abstractions brings about locutions neither abstract nor concrete, but fussy blunt gestures – 'pinching gestures forth . . .', 'to that first, foremost law'. And the point is that this stanza differs from the stanza about the red bird, only in degree. The stuff is the same, and in the later stanza it has worn threadbare, that's all.

In fact, *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle*, for all its precious title and a few jazzy superficialities ('connaissance'), is a strikingly old-fashioned poem. This is as true of the movement of thought, as of the versification. 'At forty,' the poet asks, 'is it time to grow "spiritual" or "platonic"?' To abjure the world of sense now that in so many ways (e.g. sex) that world is becoming easier to abjure, because it is less insistent and intoxicating?' He answers that this is not the case, because the imagination does not decay with the senses, but can create a world as 'real' as the actual world. The poet thinks in Keatsian terms throughout, and the movement of thought is Keatsian too. For instance, between stanzas viii and ix the thought turns upon itself and abdicates the path it had embarked upon, in just the fashion of – 'Forlorn! The very word is like a bell. . .' We can imagine the student's painstaking account: 'The poet's mood suddenly changes . . .' It hardly needs to be pointed out that one cannot read *The Waste Land* in this way, or *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*. When we try to understand *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle* or *Sunday Morning*, it is a question of 'Do you follow? Have you hold of the thread?' Eliot does not ask us to 'follow' in this way. The process of understanding *The Waste Land* is not a process of pursuit, but of harking back and forth. In short, Stevens's poem, like an ode by Keats, is still *discursive;* it moves from point to point, always forward from first to last. Lose the thread, and you may go back and look

or it. In *The Waste Land*, by contrast, it is only when the poem is grasped s a whole that each part of it falls into place.

The difference between *Sunday Morning* and *Le Monocle* on the one hand, *The Waste Land* and *Mauberley* on the other, can be put in another way. Except at certain key-points, like the image at the very end of *Le Monocle* 'That fluttering things have so distinct a shade'), the poetry and the neaning do not coincide. To get at the meaning, you have to go *behind* he poetry, whereas if you go behind Eliot's poetry you have gone behind he meaning too. Understanding *Le Monocle* is a matter of groping through a dazzle, or stripping off the caparisons, until you come, behind the rhetorical magnificence, at a structure of plain sense that is quite lean and skeletal. It is possible to write a prose paraphrase of the poem, without quoting from it more than once; it is not possible to do this with *The Waste Land* or *Mauberley* or Yeats's *Byzantium*. The gorgeousness, we cannot help but feel, was laid on afterwards, the flesh upon the skeleton, the clothes on top of that. So, if this verse at its best recalls the Keats of the Odes, it is not surprising that at its worst it sounds like some uninspired Victorian imitating the Keatsian manner :

> Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,
> Alone, shall come fulfilment to our dreams
> And our desires.

Stevens has written, of his poem *The Emperor of Ice Cream:*

> This wears a deliberately commonplace costume, and yet seems to me to contain something of the essential gaudiness of poetry; that is the reason why I like it. . . . I dislike niggling, and like letting myself go.

Once again, the echo is there. For this recalls nothing so much as the Keatsian tag about how poetry should 'surprise by a fine excess'. Stevens has insisted repeatedly that he is a 'Romantic' poet. This, together with what we find in the verse of *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle*, for instance, advises us of one way in which 'Romantic' may be understood. Stevens is a Romantic in the sense that Keats was a Romantic – his is to be a poetry of excess, among other things of rhetoric in excess of meaning, rhetoric for its own sake, for its 'essential gaudiness'.

Consider, for instance, this poet's thoroughly old-fashioned concern for the beautiful. It is surely plain that his poems are, or aspire to be, 'beautiful' in a quite straightforward way, winning and seductive. If we were pressed, presumably we should have to maintain that *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* is as 'beautiful' as Stevens's *Sunday Morning;* but in saying that of Pound's poem we need to use quotation marks, while in applying the word to Stevens's poem we can let it stand unqualified. Stevens, like Keats, is saying something and also 'being beautiful'; Pound and Eliot are saying

something as exactly as possible, and the beauty is in the exactness. The beauty of their poetry is in the relation of rhetoric to meaning; in Stevens the rhetoric aspires to be beautiful for its own sake. So Stevens's obscurity is of a kind familiar to readers of Keats; it derives from what he puts into the poem. Pound's and Eliot's obscurity derives from what they leave out.

Marius Bewley remarks,* of a poem called *Bantams in Pine Woods*, 'The rather brassy appeal of this poem exists at a more superficial level than its meaning which is extremely difficult to excerpt.' This is no more than I have argued for, in Stevens's poetry, the meaning and the 'appeal' are on different levels. The 'appeal' is the appeal of 'beauty' and it exists in the rhetoric; the meaning is somewhere else, behind or below. The question is, of course, whether this is typical of Stevens's procedure in general, or peculiar to this poem and a few others which are less than his best. I differ from Mr Bewley in finding this feature typical of all Stevens, even at his best. But then I am not so shocked by it as Mr Bewley is. 'Brassy' and 'superficial', taken together, show that the critic is rather contemptuous or afraid of this sort of 'appeal'. I am simply grateful for it. Marius Bewley, being more of a purist, has to draw attention to 'the ultimate failure of this poem', and to decide 'if the poem means what I think it does, the meaning fails to be realized in the body of the verse. It is disowned by the very images that proclaim it.' That 'the meaning fails to be realized in the body of the verse' is true; that 'it is disowned by the very images that proclaim it' is another matter, and not true at all. The images will serve, they serve splendidly, and proclaim loudly. They 'own' the meaning all right. All one feels is that they were not the only images, the inevitable choice, to proclaim this meaning: the poet chose these rather than others, and chose well – still, he chose; the images did not choose themselves.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the poetry of Stevens is its metrical conservatism. 'To break the pentameter,' said Pound, 'that was the first heave.' Stevens has never made the break; the greater part of his poetry is written in quite regular iambic pentameters. One can read critic after critic without finding this really striking feature even acknowledged. Yet there can be no adequate account of Stevens that does not take note of one of his most striking eccentricities – his extreme metrical conservatism in an age of revolutionary metrical experiment. If I am right in thinking that a Keatsian allegiance is the clue to Stevens, then his metres are accounted for – his conservatism in this department is part and parcel with his conservatism in structure and in rhetoric. It used to be said that Stevens's poetry could only be appreciated if one were familiar with the poetic experiments of French symbolism. But I do not think that Stevens

* Marius Bewley. *The Complex Fate.*

is 'post-symbolist' in this sense, as T. S. Eliot is. His novelty is all on the surface; he is really very conservative.

By 'Keatsian allegiance' I mean nothing so crass as Keatsian 'influence'; nor do I mean that, for Stevens, Keats is the poet of poets. I take him only as the most distinguished representative of the kind of poetry that Stevens seems to favour. And perhaps, after all, Keats is not the most distinguished name that can be found. It has been said of a line from *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle* that it has 'the Shakespearean note':

> I am a man of fortune greeting heirs.

This sounds like a line from a play, but this should not make us suppose that it recalls, in its context, Shakespeare the dramatist. If it is true that Stevens at his best can compass 'the Shakespearean note' (and I think it is), what he gets is the note of the sonnets, not of the plays. It is the note of:

> the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come.

F. W. Bateson says that what this means is 'professional soothsayers'. If he is right, then surely the splendour of the language is something in excess of the sense, adding enormously to our pleasure but not assisting (rather, obstructing) our understanding. The same can be said of Stevens at his most splendid:

> We live in an old chaos of the sun
> Or old dependency of day and night.

To twist and reverse T. S. Eliot's remark on Dryden, this is poetry that suggests enormously but states little. Consider just the repeated 'old'. Is the repetition necessary to the sense? Or can we say of 'dependency', even, that on scrutiny, it yields as much by way of meaning as it does in terms of euphony and rhythm? This is florid poetry, a poetry of excess; but in saying so, we are saying no more than must be said sometimes of Shakespeare.

And Stevens needs no sponsors. To defend his methods, we need appeal to no authority beyond the poet himself. His view of life is comprehensive and consistent. As critic and as poet, he defines this one inclusive vision. Up to this point, we have examined that part of his vision which may be called his æsthetic, arriving at it in the surest way by seeing how it works out in his artistic practice. But he has, too, a metaphysic, an ethic, an epistemology; and the æsthetic can be seen truly only when it finds its place in the whole structure of the poet's thought. If we see it in that way, we see that his rhetoric of excess corresponds to an ethic of excess, even (the expression is a queer one but may be clearer later) an epistemology of excess. As according to him the best language is excessive language, so

the best, the noblest sort of conduct is action in excess. And so the clearest, the truest sort of perception is the perception that exceeds its object, elaborating upon it.

We do not think of Stevens as an ethical poet. William Van O'Connor * agrees with Marius Bewley in finding Stevens's central pre-occupation to be with imagination, with the role that imagination plays, or should play in the apprehending of reality. That is, they see him first and foremost as epistemologist; and I think they are right – this is indeed the point of leverage. But as one can speak of imaginative perception and imaginative language, so one speaks of 'imaginative' behaviour. And if we understand what Stevens means by 'imagination', we understand not only what perception he trusts and what language he tries for, but also what behaviour he recommends. Marius Bewley has brilliantly demonstrated how Stevens has gradually built up for himself in his earlier poems a vocabulary of personal symbols which is, by the time he does his later work, astonishingly copious, and finely articulated. One advantage of such a symbolic vocabulary is in the way it provides the poet with deliberate ambiguities. When he has perfected such a personal symbolism, he can write sentences which have meaning on more than one level, so that a statement about the conditions of human perception is also a statement about the conditions of human action.

Both Mr Bewley and Mr O'Connor compare Stevens's view of imagination with Coleridge's. Mr O'Connor throws out, apparently at random, a valuable observation:

> Coleridge believes the power of imagination is denied to 'the sensual and the proud;' there is no reason to think that Stevens does.

Indeed, there is not. There is, on the contrary, every reason to think that Stevens takes one sort of pride as the surest evidence of imagination. For him, as for many Romantics, the imaginative man is the proud man. He esteems in men the quality of *panache*, the capacity for making large gestures, conspicuous self-expression, in manner and clothes as in language. The grand manner expresses itself in action as in speech. One may live with style, as one may write with style, and Stevens in his criticism has set great store by this fruitful ambiguity. As Mr O'Connor remarks, of a poem called *The Weeping Burgher*.

> The verities are 'sorry verities'. We are reconciled to them by 'excess', by style.

Yes, we come to terms with the world by going beyond it, by wearing

* William Van O'Connor. *The Shaping Spirit: A Study of Wallace Stevens* (Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1950).

our hat at a rakish angle, by elaborate movements of the arm or the wrist. It is only so that we perceive it truly, by letting our imagination colour our perceptions. In the same way it is only so that we act in the world with dignity, by letting our imagination colour our actions in excess of what circumstances force upon us. And it is only so that we recreate it in the beauty of poetry, by letting our imagination colour our words in excess of what bare meaning demands of us. Style, imagination, rhetoric, excess – these are the basic terms of Stevens's ethic, as of his epistemology and his aesthetics.

We see this in Stevens's own life. Mr O'Connor heads his first chapter 'Stevens as Legend'. Precisely. Stevens is a legendary figure; he has taken care that he should be, as Byron and Yeats did before him. Perhaps some of the legend was built up around him, wished upon him by others. But not all. It is surely clear, for instance, that some of the early poems that have not worn well, the self-consciously cryptic or culpably ambiguous pieces like *Anecdote of a Jar*, *Metaphors of a Magnifico*, even *Bantams in Pine-woods*, are Stevens's contributions to the legend. They are good for the legend, if they are not good poems – again, like many poems by Byron. Each of these poems is 'a grand gesture', a too elaborate bow, a too exquisite formality; they are Stevens's substitutes for the cape and the flowing tie.

At this point I must take issue with Marius Bewley. He quotes himself, and analyzes, *The Pastor Caballero*, where –

> The sweeping brim of the hat
> Makes of the form Most Merciful Capitan
>
> If the observer says so: grandiloquent
> Location of a hand in rhapsody.

He quotes from *Infanta Marina*:

> She made of the motions of her wrist
> The grandiose gestures
> of her thought.

And yet he can write of the jar in *Anecdote of the Jar*, 'It had style (more properly, manner or affectation) rather than reality.' This diminuendo, from 'style' through 'manner' to 'affectation', seems to me at variance with the whole course of Stevens's thought, as of his poetic practice. For Stevens, 'style', whether in life or literature, is only 'affectation' or 'mannerism' that succeeds. Admittedly the splendid hat of *The Pastor Caballero* is examined from the point of view of the beholder, not the wearer. But observe that *Infanta Marina* makes gestures of thought not with the motions of her wrist, but *of* those motions. The movement of the

wrist does not express the motions of the mind; it invokes them and creates them. She behaves grandly not because she thinks grandly, but in order to do so. So, in *Le Monocle de Mon Oncle*, the poet's solution for the drabness and sterility that comes upon him, is 'bravura', 'the music and manner of the paladins'. If a man can no longer think and feel grandiosely, then he acts grandiosely or he makes a grandiose speech, and this renovates and exalts his thinking and his feeling. The cure for sterility is to act and speak as if it did not exist; by so doing, one destroys it.

Stevens is always mannered and affected. The affectation of his poorer poems reflects back out of the poetry upon Stevens the private individual; in his better pieces the affectation succeeds and becomes style because it stays in the poetry and builds up the public and representative figure of the poet. Where the affectation is a way of dealing with experience, with the theme of the poem, it justifies itself as poetic style; where it is a way of dealing with society, represented by the reader, it may be justified in terms of social behaviour, but not in terms of poetry.

This account, I fear, will appear laboured. And yet it is the merest scratching of the surface, over-simplifying at every point a weave so rich and ramifying that it calls for volumes of explication. I hope that at least it will show I am nothing if not profoundly grateful for the significant beauty that Stevens so generously provides. Only if that point is taken, can I go on to admit that, for my own part, I think the very greatest poetry is more chaste, less florid than this. It would seem to follow that I prefer an ethic more austere, a heroism less confounded with 'panache'. That inference, too, I do not refuse. Yet it is Stevens's achievement that whenever we pick up his poems, he makes such reservations seem graceless and niggling. He is a great poet indeed.

THEATRE ROYAL

Roy Walker

The trumpets sound: stand close, the queen is coming.

It was left to Shakespeare to pay the proper Coronation compliment in the London theatre, and what words could be more fitting on the tongues of Englishmen? The Queen herself and the Duke of Edinburgh returned the compliment by a visit to the Old Vic, the first royal attendance at a London premiere, it seems, since King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra went to the New Gaiety fifty years ago. No drama in English or any other language could better have suited the occasion than *Henry VIII*, the play that celebrates the crowning of a young and happy Queen of England, describes the ceremony in Westminster Abbey and the enthusiasm of the people:

> The rich stream
> Of lords and ladies, having brought the queen
> To a prepared place in the choir, fell off
> A distance from her; while her grace sat down
> To rest awhile, some half an hour or so,
> In a rich chair of state, opposing freely
> The beauty of her person to the people.

That word-picture has its full effect in the theatre only if it comes, as Shakespeare intended, hard upon the visible splendour of the Coronation procession. 'The Order of the Coronation' is the most elaborate stage direction in the First Folio. Heralded by a lively flourish of trumpets, it is led by two Judges, followed by the Lord Chancellor, with purse and mace before him. Choristers singing and musicians precede the Lord Mayor of London, bearing the mace. Then Garter in his coat of arms and wearing a gilt copper crown, Marquess Dorset and the Earl of Surrey, crowned, bearing a golden sceptre and the silver rod with the dove that is afterwards mentioned in the description of the ceremony in the Abbey, the crowned Queen herself, accompanied by the Bishops of London and Winchester, under a canopy borne by four of the Cinque-ports, with the old Duchess of Norfolk as train-bearer and a rear-guard of Countesses. *They pass over the stage in order and state*, says the First Folio. But not in Tyrone Guthrie's production. The coronation procession is out and the Gentlemen who comment on it are turned into comics. Mr Guthrie's unruly eccentricity has achieved its crowning folly. What he wants us to do is to see the 1953 coronation procession in our mind's eye, instead of a stage tableau that

clearly belongs to another century. His ludicrous commentators pretend to be watching a royal procession passing somewhere behind us. Done with unashamed eloquence it might just come off, though Shakespeare knew his business best and did not precede his verbal images with visual ones for nothing. As a piece of character comedy it is merely annoying, sinking to the level of the interpolated 'Cantbishop of Archerbury'.

Shakespeare never was very lucky with this Coronation scene anyway. M. M. Reese, in a new book about him, refers to a tradition, of which he does not mention the source, that Shakespeare tutored the actor who played Henry VIII and himself spoke the Prologue at the first performance in June 1613. Anyway, a contemporary spectator reported that the play was 'set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the knights of the Order, with their Georges and Garters, the guards with their embroidered coats, and the like'. But at that first performance – for it is generally assumed that the Henry VIII play in question was the Shakespearian one – the coronation scene was never reached. For some time the noises-off department of the Elizabethan stage had been helping out art with artillery. At suitable moments cannons were discharged from the thatched roofs and no doubt the groundlings felt they were really getting their pennyworth. Stage-effects had a good cue in the first act of *Henry VIII*, where the King arrives at Cardinal Wolsey's house and meets Anne Bullen, who is to become his Queen. The cannon crashed out their royal salute. But in the excitement, no one noticed that the thatch on the south side had caught and was smouldering. Two hours later the great Globe itself had burned to the ground. No one was hurt, but the play did not get as far as the Coronation procession in the fourth act that day.

Much of the verse of *Henry VIII* is inferior to that of the more famous Shakespearian pieces. Mr Guthrie's way with it was to let many of his actors gabble away unintelligibly, so that we got no more than a general feeling of what they were talking about and had plenty of time to appreciate the producer's turbulent stage pictures. During the interval on the first night I heard Mr Beverley Baxter say to a neighbour with ironic approval, 'What a good thing we can't hear what they are saying!' The more usual ploy, of course, has been to exonerate Shakespeare from having written the play at all, or at any rate the inferior parts of it. This question, like so many other Shakespearian 'problems', did not arise until some two centuries after the play was written. It was towards the end of the eighteenth century that a Dr Farmer suggested Ben Jonson might have had a hand in the piece. Not until Lord Tennyson broached the idea in the last century did John Fletcher emerge as a more likely hidden hand. The notion was enthusiastically taken up, but this year's *Shakespeare*

Survey reports that there is now more willingness to ascribe the whole play to Shakespeare than there has been for a century. The change of heart is principally due to Professors Peter Alexander and G. Wilson Knight. But there was always the evidence of the First Folio. Shakespeare's friends, John Heminges and Henry Condell, had included *Henry VIII* in the first collected edition of his plays in 1623 – seven years after Shakespeare's death and when John Fletcher was still very much alive.

Writing of Henry VIII less than a lifetime after his death, Shakespeare had to be careful how he drew the likeness of the great Tudor polygamist. About the King's real motives in repudiating Queen Katharine there is in the play a deliberate ambiguity, which sets a trap for the actor and producer. The Marlowe Society at Cambridge early in 1949 – it should not be forgotten that theirs was the first revival of the play in recent years, and most sumptuously staged – and the production at Stratford in 1949 and 1950, which was, like the present Old Vic production, by Tyrone Guthrie with designs by Tanya Moiseiwitsch, fell into this trap. So does Paul Rogers. No more than his predecessors in the role can he resist imparting a lusty hypocrisy to the King's lament to Wolsey:

> O, my lord,
> Would it not grieve an able man to leave
> So sweet a bedfellow? But conscience, conscience!
> O, 'tis a tender place; and I must leave her.

By the end of the Act, when the Queen has refused Wolsey for her judge and appealed to the Pope, Mr Rogers is playing the King's apology –

> My conscience first received a tenderness,
> Scruple, and prick, on certain speeches utter'd
> By the Bishop of Bayonne. . . .

with a rugged sincerity that is most moving. One cannot say that he is not in both cases following the feeling of the text. But where the text is self-contradictory, providing no explanation for Henry's Jekyll and Hyde transformations – and where the political reason for ambiguity is so apparent – actor and producer must take the responsibility of enforcing some more consistent interpretation upon the text for the sake of dramatic lucidity. Otherwise Mr Rogers's Henry is a sound performance, particularly from an actor whose last Shakespearian part was the lean and hungry Cassius. This is the first London performance of the role since Charles Laughton played it twenty years ago at Sadler's Wells, about the time he also made the Korda film of *The Private Lives of Henry VIII*.

Leo Genn returns to the Old Vic for the first time since 1937 to play the ill-fated Duke of Buckingham and demonstrates that the film studios have done nothing to abate his vigorous sincerity, though he started to go and returned to speak again so often during the famous farewell speech that it seemed interminable. Gwen Ffrangcon Davies repeated her

Stratford performance as the hapless Katharine of Aragon, though still denied the dying vision that is also described in an unusually detailed stage direction in the First Folio. Alexander Knox plays Cardinal Wolsey rather as though he were a Trade Union leader. He seems a natural crony for King Henry, which is more than can be said for most previous Wolseys, and a likely host for the rather hectic bottle party where the King picks up Anne Bullen. But he is not the master of subtle policy and manipulator of men, still less the personification of everything that the Elizabethans hated at Rome. The successive fall from power of Buckingham, Katharine and finally Wolsey, is the recurrent downward movement of the play. Historically, of course, the fatalities on Fortune's hill included Anne Bullen. But this is not the *Anne of a Thousand Days* of whom the American poetic dramatist Maxwell Anderson has lately told the tragic tale, in a play of which a London production this year has been promised. In Shakespeare's play, King Henry has joy of his new love and his new Queen, in which part a handsome young student of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Jeanette Sterke, has her first professional engagement. If the part requires that the lady should protest too much about her own incorruptible virtue, Miss Sterke sees to it that we do not take these protestations over seriously. She plays with charm and assurance, but without the hint of character that Barbara Jefford brought to the part at Stratford.

So it comes about that there is an all-important character in *Henry VIII* who is not included in the *dramatis personæ*, not even among the waiting-women, scribes, officers, guards and other attendants who likewise have no word to speak in the play. 'What is her name?' asks the King, and the Archbishop of Canterbury answers 'Elizabeth'. This is the Elizabeth who is to be Queen of England. The whole action of the play moves to the climax in which Archbishop Cranmer – a rather glum ecclesiastic by William Squire, until he rose to the possibilities of this final scene – utters an inspired prophecy of the young Elizabeth, the royal child to whom he gives that great name. Mr Guthrie has now correctly grouped the Archbishop and the infant together, instead of separating them by the width of the stage as he did at Stratford and it was a memorable moment in the Old Vic when those words were first spoken in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II.

In his important new study of *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, Professor J. E. Neale has demolished the illusion that the great Queen could maintain her Parliament in a state of obsequious submission. Even when both Houses and the Council joined to put pressure on her, however, she was usually more than a match for them. The division of power between the English throne and the English Parliament is the theme of Bernard Shaw's political extravaganza, *The Apple Cart*, which has just been given a

stylish revival at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket. Mr Shaw may have gone through life standing on Shakespeare's shoulders, as he often alleged in an image that nicely suggests his own acrobatic virtuosity. But his regard for Shakespeare was more profound than that of many a grave scholar and his last work of all, the little puppet play *Shakes versus Shav*, left the Bard with the last word.

Prophecy was also very much in Shaw's line. It is not the emendation of references to the League of Nations to allusions to the United Nations that makes *The Apple Cart* seem more relevant to-day than when it first reached the London stage in 1929. The opening dialogue contains a particularly felicitous coincidence, over which Shakespeare and Shaw are probably enjoying a good laugh together in the Elysian Fields. The King's secretary Sempronius explains that his father arranged the last two coronations. He 'might have made millions in the theatres and film studios. But he refused to touch them because the things they represented hadn't really happened. He didn't mind the christening of Queen Elizabeth in Shakespeare's *Henry the Eighth* because that had really happened. It was a celebration of royalty'. The events in *The Apple Cart*, which are supposed to take place around the end of this century, have not really happened – not yet, anyway – but since they include the importunities of a royal mistress who yearns for wedlock and the King's threat of abdication, it has not been played in London since 1935 when I saw Esmé Percy in the part originally acted by Sir Cedric Hardwicke.

As Richard Findlater wrote in the *Twentieth Century* last month, the attraction of the present revival was to see Noel Coward 'applying his manner and personality to a text not his own as King Magnus'. We do not see Mr Coward again whenever spring breaks through again. Apart from a few appearances in his revue *Sigh No More*, he was last seen on the London stage at the same theatre, the Haymarket, in two of his own plays, one of which – *This Happy Breed* – not only borrowed a title from Shakespeare but concluded with a patriotic monologue spoken over a baby in its cradle that was surely, although I do not know that this was remarked at the time or has been observed since, consciously in the tradition of the final prophecy in *Henry VIII*. The extreme contrast between Noel Coward and Bernard Shaw is also more apparent than real. It is easy to oppose the intellectual comedy of Superman to the amoral comedy of superficial man and to point out that if both authors wrote plays that were primarily conversation pieces, Coward did so in epigrams while the length of Shaw's speeches is proverbial. But in his autobiography, *Present Indicative*, of which a second volume is now promised, Coward says that his early comedy *The Young Idea* was primarily inspired by Shaw's *You Never Can Tell*. He felt so guilty of plagiarism that he got J. E. Vedrenne to send the

play to Shaw who was endlessly helpful but advised Coward never to read another word that he wrote.

It seems unlikely that Mr Coward followed this advice. One of the attractions of *The Apple Cart* is the Interlude between the two Acts of political argumentation, in the boudoir of the royal mistress, Orinthia. How does that scene end? Magnus and Orinthia are on a large settee in the middle of the room. To quote Shaw's stage direction:

> He tackles her in earnest. She flings her arms round him and holds on with mischievous enjoyment. There is a tapping at the door; but they do not hear it. As he is breaking loose she suddenly shifts her grip to his waist and drags him on to the floor, where they roll over one another. Sempronius enters. He stares at the scandalous scene for a moment. . . .

Is there not something familiar about that scandalized discovery of the married lover struggling with his mistress on the floor? Just about the time *The Apple Cart* was ending its run in the West End, Noel Coward's *Private Lives* opened at the Phoenix Theatre. The middle act ends with the scandalized discovery of the married hero struggling with his mistress on the floor, where they have just rolled from the large settee in the middle of the room. Noel Coward himself played the part. He must feel quite at home as King Magnus after all. Even the name of Coward's heroine, Amanda, comes from *The Apple Cart* where the lady is, however, not the royal mistress but the Post Mistress.

Shaw's theme is, as Shakespeare would say, 'uneasy lies the head that wears a crown' or as James Thurber puts it in *Fables for Our Times*, 'The world is so full of a number of things that we could all be as happy as kings – and you know how happy kings are.' The Cabinet will resign in a body if the King does not sign an ultimatum renouncing the royal power of veto. But the King finds an ace. As Prime Minister Proteus furiously admits at the end, 'You stole your ace of trumps from the hand I played this morning.' Magnus proposes to abdicate in favour of his own son, and to stand for Parliament in the royal borough of Windsor, with every prospect of forming a Party and a Government with himself at the head of it. Within the framework of comedy Shaw has no difficulty in marshalling a brilliant debate on the limitations of popular democracy and the indispensable virtues of true kingship. The hundred and seventy line speech by Magnus is the Shavian counterpart of Shakespeare's 'Upon the King' soliloquy in *Henry V*. In his delivery of it, Mr Coward, whose performance has all the suavity and wit we expect of him, proves once and for all that his quality as an actor is by no means limited to parts that he writes for himself. He even succeeds in lending grace to a uniform that makes him look as though he has just come from one of the Salvation Army meetings in *Major Barbara*. Shaw was a man of the theatre who served his

players well and he must have known that he was setting the actress of Lysistrata – as he calls his Power Mistress, in a relevant compliment to Aristophanes – a difficult task when he wrote her a single speech of eighty lines to follow almost immediately on the still longer speech by King Magnus. Margaret Rawlings is an experienced Shavian actress, but she has never humanized him more superbly than here. The house was so moved by Mr Coward and Miss Rawlings in this crucial scene that the legend that there are no people in Shaw, only mouthpieces, and that his comedy is of the head and not the heart, should have died of shame on the spot. There are other excellent performances in Michael Macowan's skilful production. Margaret Leighton does not really believe in the natural royalty of Orinthia, but she does her best to make Magnus believe in it. George Rose is gullibility personified as Boanerges, the bashful bull in the royal china shop (though that is not the reason why the play was originally prohibited in Dresden: it was considered blasphemy against democracy). Laurence Naismith is capital as the passionate Premier. The American Ambassador in the last Act is safe in the hands of Cecil Trouncer, whose last assignment in Shavian diplomacy was as the dictatorial spokesman of Italy at *Geneva*.

Mr Vanhattan calls to tell the English King that 'The Declaration of Independence is cancelled. We have decided to rejoin the British Empire.' Magnus is dismayed at the prospect of England being 'reduced to a mere appendage of a big American concern', surviving only as another star on the banner and with Washington as capital of the British Empire. What will the European Powers make of this proposed American aggrandizement? 'I suppose you mean by Germany,' Mr Vanhattan amiably replies, 'the chain of more or less Soviet Republics between the Ural Mountains and the North Sea. Well, the clever people at Moscow and Berlin and Geneva are trying to federate them; and it is fully understood between us that if we don't object to their move they will not object to ours.' As to France, 'so long as Paris is full of Americans, and Americans are full of money, all's well in the West from the French point of view.' In a further effort to be conciliatory he rubs in the extent to which the treasures of traditional England have already been exported to the United States while American ways and products have been taking increasing hold on old England. This is the manifestation in foreign affairs of the unholy power of money against which the throne is the final bulwark on home affairs. It also links the Orinthia interlude with the political discussion. To Orinthia King Magnus says:

> Every star has its own orbit and between it and its nearest neighbour there is not only a powerful attraction but an infinite distance. When the attraction becomes stronger than the distance the two do not embrace: they crash

> together in ruin. We two also have our orbits, and must keep an infinite distance between us to avoid a disastrous collision.

And in the last Act, though all he says to Vanhattan is, 'We may survive as another star on your flag', to Lysistrata, with whom he has a more intimate understanding, he says of the American threat, 'It is as if another planet were crashing into us.' Shaw had learned from Shakespeare that celestial imagery can be used with a purpose, to link two different but fundamentally identical levels of dramatic action. Both dramatists believed, in their own ways, in the star of England.

Queen Jemima (Alexis France) is unperturbed. She is sure that 'we shall civilize these Americans'. The matter is put to a Cabinet meeting which is more concerned with the problem of division of effective power between the monarch and the Prime Minister. Defeated on that issue by Magnus they go off in a huff having quite forgotten, as the King remarks, 'to settle that little affair of the proposal of America to annexe the British Commonwealth'. It was the President of the Irish Free State, Vanhattan admits, who put the American President up to this particular master-stroke of policy. It was in the great Irish playwright's comedy about his own country, *John Bull's Other Island*, that Father Keegan makes the remark that sums up Shaw's own dramatic method: 'Every jest is an earnest in the womb of time.' Seeing *The Apple Cart* twenty-five years after it was written and looking around the world as it is to-day, it is less difficult to realize how much gravity of purpose and sureness of vision went into the best comedies of George Bernard Shaw. And if Noel Coward made fun of the Festival, he is not to be suspected of making fun of the Coronation. In fact, in their own distinctive ways, our two greatest dramatists, Shakespeare and Shaw, are offering on the London stage the finest tributes to royalty that our literature can show. The theatre has answered the royal patronage it has enjoyed since the time of Queen Elizabeth I with a royal welcome for Queen Elizabeth II.

GRAHAM GREENE AS DRAMATIST

Richard Findlater

In Britain there has long been a notorious barrier between literature and the stage. Poets and novelists still appear to despise both the practice and the theory of the theatre, and those who have turned to playmaking have usually shown a notable incapacity to think in terms of what Thomas Hardy called 'the technicalities of practical mumming'. In France, on the other hand, many writers are at large in a kingdom of the theatre from which English intellectuals seem still to be excluded. For this there are of course obvious social, historical and economic reasons, notably in the organization of the Parisian stage. But be that as it may, the arrival of Mr Graham Greene as a fully, luridly fledged dramatist must be welcomed, I think, as an event of some significance.

His first play, *The Living Room*, is now enjoying a great box-office success and has been crowned with laurels by some critics, myself included. Others, however, take a different view. Mr T. C. Worsley, for instance, while pleading the desperate need for 'talents of the order of Mr Graham Greene's' in the theatre, regards *The Living Room* as a complete and baffling failure, in language, situation, and characterization. 'What we are left with are convictions watering down into jejune statements of impotent views, and conflicts petering out into a series of willless, dreary and finally uninteresting self-defeats.'

For Mr Worsley's opinions I have a great respect, but here I believe that he may be judging the play too severely as dramatic literature rather than as theatrical melodrama, and is allowing his own dislike of the cult of misery to influence his verdict of it as a contemporary entertainment. Indeed, he makes it clear in his review that 'I found the total effect of the play so unsympathetic that I may be being unjust. Mr Greene has always had a sentimental addiction to failure. The brilliance of the writing in his novels covers this up. Here it is repulsively naked.'

The Living Room is, indeed, one of the most infuriating and unpleasant plays I have ever seen: it is also, I think, poignant, exciting and vibrantly alive. I detest its erratic theological smugness and its modish message of despair, but I admire the less common qualities of its moral passion and its literary skill. It has intensity and conviction, and these pay dividends on the stage. It is, of course, a play about sin - a propaganda play, if

you like, for the values of Greene and the Catholic Church; and the reader of Greene's novels will catch in *The Living Room* many echoes from *The Heart of the Matter*, *Brighton Rock* and other books – as far back as the first novel, *The Man Within* (1929).

Mr Greene, who has some claim to be considered the most successful if not the most illustrious Catholic convert of our time, has of course long been haunted by a number of obsessions about the human condition which have served him for twenty-five years as a literary theme, and which millions of his unconverted readers identify with the teachings of his Church. He is ostentatiously tormented by a sense of evil and damnation; which is for him – as a novelist – incarnate in the sex, dirt and squalor of metropolitan life; life, to him, is the corruption of innocence, a necessary penance for nativity; and he depicts – whether in Mexico, Vienna or, in this play, Holland Park – a universe of failures and beasts waiting for death in fear and loneliness. Only the fools are happy, as he implies lugubriously in *The Living Room*: it is the failures who are God's elect in the eyes of Mr Greene, and they are certainly his favourite literary material.

It is twenty-seven years ago since Mr Greene was converted to Catholicism by an ex-actor priest in Nottingham, where the novelist was then working as a press reporter. But the discovery of faith was, it sometimes appears, largely significant as an explanation of Mr Greene's own recurrent sense of nausea when confronted with the human animal. From his childhood, moreover, he was obsessed by the facts of cruelty and death, for which he has sought clues in 'primitive' communities with the inverted appetite of a latter-day Rousseau, and which are served up to the readers of his novels with an insistence which is often ludicrous. ('The first thing I can remember at all was a dead dog at the bottom of my pram.')

Mr Greene's novels, then, dramatize a very personal series of variations on the theme of God's mercy and original sin, and the enormous popularity of these moral melodramas in the world of the welfare state is one of the most interesting facts in post-war taste. Their persistence in public favour – his books have sold over a quarter of a million copies, and many have been filmed – places him in a tragi-comic situation. For he has always been at pains to declare his detestation of success on religious grounds, as it were: 'one of his most publicized obsessions, indeed, is 'the sense of doom that lies over success'.

His entry into the kingdom of the theatre, then, while he begins active work in the cinema as an assistant director, is perhaps an inevitable step forward in his career: that is, one might call it inevitable in any country but Britain. And the relative success of *The Living Room* is a pointer to the future, in the same direction that Eliot and Fry have

indicated – or that the vogue of religious drama in Paris suggests, in a different convention. Mr Greene's play is not, of course, great drama; but he does not commit the common errors of the apprentice playmaker and avoids the common victories of the veteran. And few writers to-day – in England, at least – have the power of creating lively melodrama.

The essential weakness of *The Living Room* is a flaw for which one may find many parallels in Christian drama of a less sensational kind – the inadequacy of the protagonist of Catholic values, and the intangibility of the unpredictable mercy of God. Mr Greene's champion is, of course, a failure, a crippled priest who finds that 'when I talk, my tongue is heavy with the Penny Catechism'; and it was not entirely the fault of the actor in this production, Mr Eric Portman, that Father James has the appearance of a disquieting and damnable smugness. The most unpleasant feature of the play, indeed, is the way in which the priest sneers at the sinful psychologist (a married man, non-Catholic, who has seduced a young Catholic girl). It is not only Father James who is afflicted by the burden of the Penny Catechism; yet the oracular certainties of Mr Greene in this moral melodrama contribute to its success in the theatre.

With all my reservations, indeed – and the play offers scope for a lengthy essay – and with all due respect for Mr Greene's scruples about success, I for one, express the hope that he will continue to write many more plays, and that I shall have the strength to admire and abhor them.

BOOK NOTES

TWO STUDIES IN VIRTUE. By Christopher Sykes (Collins, 16s.). The Ancient Mariner whose eloquence diverted the wedding guest from the bridegroom's door had, admittedly, an excellent tale to tell. But to detain a reader with no primary interest in the subject of the tale is a feat of superior virtuosity; and one of which few, obviously, are capable. Mr Christopher Sykes is amongst these; and it is this 'strange power of speech' in him which causes the most reluctant to listen like a three years' child while he describes the spiritual odyssey of that 'comic Newman', the Reverend Richard Waldo Sibthorp, or, still in search of manifestations of virtue, traces the origins of the Balfour Declaration and the growth and portent of Zionism. Nor do we, like the Mariner's victim, take leave of Mr Sykes 'like one that hath been stunned'; but as one who, having been lavishly entertained, is offered at the same time a vivid insight into the nature of human behaviour and human aspiration.

The Damascus Road is the first of these two studies, and despite its sub-title – *A Study of the Religious Movements of the Nineteenth Century* – is likely, perhaps, to attract the attention of the general reader more successfully than the weightier and more complex one which succeeds it. For it is easy enough to savour the element of comedy attendant upon the successive conversions and re-conversions that throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century so painfully agitated an otherwise narrow and unemotional existence. Sibthorp was a man martyred by his own spiritual sensibility; condemned to oscillate continually between two related but contrasting poles of religious experience. Barely had he succumbed to the authority of one, before the other exerted upon him an irresistible compulsion; however many times he changed his position, he could not escape from his own noble and ludicrous predicament. He wrested himself from the embrace of Rome, only to suffer an intensification of that 'strange peculiarity' by which he could neither shut his eyes 'to her beauties or her defects': on the point, once more, of reconversion to Rome, he turned with evident nostalgia towards the Church he was again about to abandon: 'I esteem and venerate her from my very heart', he wrote. It was a conflict, it seems, incapable of resolution; and accordingly, in his eighty-seventh year, 'this Catholic priest was buried in Lincoln with the full ceremonial of the Church of England, *coram autem episcopo Anglicano*'.

What, one cannot help wondering, was the origin of this singular

ambivalence? An examination of Mr Sykes's account leads to one obvious peculiarity in the early life of the young Sibthorps. It is difficult not to believe that the action of Sibthorp's father in inviting a French emigré priest to live with his family at Canwick Park, fatally split the root of filial allegiance. For Colonel Sibthorp was a rigid Protestant, and the new tutor, the Abbé Beaumont, a subtle and scholarly man, of great personal charm. (It was after a brief acquaintance in Germany, we learn, that the Colonel 'took so great a liking to this man' that he brought him back with him to England.) Young Sibthorp was thus, from his earliest years, brought up in the shadow of two authoritative male figures, of dissimilar religion and nationality, but each exacting in virtue of his position a similar respect, obedience and affection. Long after the Abbé and the Colonel had disappeared from the scene, this dichotomy was seen to persist in the life of Sibthorp, inspiring the alternate attractions and repulsions that governed to the last moment the measure of a comic, pathetic and, withal, eminently dignified, existence.

The Prosperity of his Servant is an account of 'the main lines of thought, feeling, influence and action which met in the preoccupations of 1917 and produced the Balfour Declaration'. It is not the author's claim that in this study a large amount of new material has been made available, but, more modestly, that 'some neglected viewpoints have been manned'. Here, indeed, lies the peculiar virtue of Mr Sykes's work. For in this particular landscape, the viewpoint most consistently neglected of late has been that giving onto the spiritual aspect of the Zionist story: a story as awe-inspiring, in one sense, as the belated germination of grains of wheat sealed up for centuries in the tomb of some Egyptian king. Although Mr Sykes has been at pains to reinforce and consolidate the existing material with additional documents, verbatim accounts, etc., the great value of his study lies not so much in the skilful reintegration of a large and complex jig-saw puzzle of events and memories, but in his own sure awareness of the deeper issues involved. It is his awareness which gives its most moving quality to this new study of 'many influences and men brought together in a unique conjunction to produce a unique result'.

THE EARLY VICTORIAN WOMAN. SOME ASPECTS OF HER LIFE (1837–57). By Janet Dunbar. (Harrap, 15s.) 'A good deal must have been going on behind many a housewifely façade during this period which I have taken as a frame, 1837–57', writes Janet Dunbar in the preface to her able and sympathetic study of the early Victorian woman. In the ensuing chapters, the housewifely façade is skilfully dismantled, and the component parts, material and psychological, successively laid out for our inspection. We are shown the middle-class woman in her daily environment; the houses she lived in, the servants she kept, the food she

ate, the clothes she wore, the holidays she took, the novels, newspapers and magazines that she read. At the same time, we see her within the confines of yet another, more impalpable but no less rigid framework; the laws and conventions of her own time, whose effect was simultaneously to enlarge and to belittle her. By marriage, she escaped the humiliations of the dependent spinster: but if, the mistress of her own household, she achieved a coveted position in society, it was at the expense of her own legal existence; and the woman who reigned supreme over a houseful of docile servants, was herself without rights over her own property, her own earnings, or even her own children.

Marriage, none the less, remained her sole objective: it was still, as in Jane Austen's day, 'the only honourable provision for well-educated women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want'. Innumerable books, therefore, were published on the subject of how to attract, secure and retain the affections of a husband: no easy task, for, as the popular novelist Mrs Gore pointed out, John Bull

> adores woman in the singular, and hates her in the plural. Woman is the object of his passion, rarely of his regard. There is nothing in the gaiety of heart or sprightliness of intellect of the weaker sex which he considers an addition to society. To him, women are an interruption to business and pleasure.

Nevertheless, and with a full awareness of the grandeurs and servitudes of domestic life under Victoria, Janet Dunbar ends her book with the suggestion that the Victorian woman 'received aliment and impulse from the very circumstances which would seem most calculated to narrow and bind her'. Which may leave the thoughtful reader to wonder whether, in the undifferentiated equality of today, it is so certain that what was lost on the swings of restriction has been regained on the roundabout of sexual emancipation.

BETTY MILLER.

'The paradox of the German situation today,' writes Robert E. Dickinson, Professor of Geography at Syracuse University in New York State, 'is that in order to maintain their pre-war standards of living, let alone to raise those standards to the minimum level of contemporary dietetic demands, all the smaller countries of Europe are dependent on a productive and prosperous Germany'; and in *Germany: A General and Regional Geography* (Methuen, 50*s*.) he explains many of the reasons in the course of a thorough, learned and searching survey which uses the results of modern German geographers, as well as original studies of his own. In

treating his theme, Professor Dickinson first examines pre-war Germany as a whole and in its relations with the surrounding lands and peoples of central and western Europe, and then reviews in more detail the geography of the lands and regions of post-war Germany as far east as the Oder-Neisse frontier. 'The permanent unchanging facts,' he points out, 'are that the German lands, however defined, occupy the heart of Europe and have the longest land frontiers of any other single state, and lack any natural defences along those frontiers; that the Germans, with their strength and weakness of national character, make up the greatest single block of people in Europe, except the Russians; and that western Germany contains the greatest single seat of industrial production in Europe, the Ruhr.'

This summary, no less important because familiar, could well serve as an introduction to *L'Économie Allemande Contemporaine* (*Allemagne Occidentale*) *1945–1952* by André Piettre (Éditions M.-Th. Génin, 3, rue de Médicis, Paris 6e. 1,500 francs). M. Piettre is Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, and Director of the Centre d'Études Germaniques at the University of Strasbourg; his survey, a massive 650-page volume which includes more than 200 tables, nearly 80 annexes, and eleven charts, is by far the most thorough existing study of the post-war economy and social structure of western Germany: while its penetration and scholarship have their value enhanced by the subtlety and proportion which characterize the best French Germanists. Not many people realize, even today, that western Germany has now almost exactly the same area as Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and is only a little less populous; or that in 1950 it maintained twenty per cent. more people than France on a territory less than half as large. These facts indicate quantitatively some of the immense problems which must be solved if a peaceful Germany is to be incorporated in a peaceful Europe. The recovery of the West German economy has already required an international effort. Allied policy made the recovery possible and gave it material aid. The policy of the Bonn Government laid down the conditions of internal economic freedom in which recovery could take place; the German people took advantage of these possibilities and turned them into realities by hard and sustained work.

The problems of the future remain. Here M. Piettre is both shrewd and generous. In the framework of today, he says, there exists no *German* solution to the German problem; either there is a *European* solution, or there is no solution at all. Germany, that is, must be more closely associated with other Powers in a Europe whose other members also make the necessary and appropriate efforts (and here M. Piettre addresses particularly his own countrymen); and to this end the German economy must

transform itself from what he calls an *économie dominante*, into an *économie humaine* – in other words, from a country overspecialized in the heavy industries which are required for war, into a country producing the consumption goods for mass use which are needed and enjoyed in a world at peace. But here, of course, the economy not only of Germany but of the West as a whole faces its distorted mirror-image in the Soviet Union, where the production of consumer goods is miserably stunted, while the hypertrophy of war industries has become well-nigh cancerous. Mr Piettre's conclusion must therefore be supplemented: the German problem can find only a European solution; and the European problem can find only a world solution. The key to both lies in the Kremlin.

JULES MENKEN.

BIRTH OF A WORLD: BOLÍVAR IN TERMS OF HIS PEOPLES. Waldo Frank (Gollancz, 21*s*.). Books about Simón Bolívar will never cease to be written. So far, the best biography is by Gerhard Masur (1948) and one of the worst is Emil Ludwig's (1942). Neither Madariaga's recent and venomous volume nor this sympathetic interpretation by Waldo Frank are biographies, though both works are founded on a close study of the contemporary sources and the narrative of the Liberator's life runs through them both. Frank, like Madariaga, has an axe to grind; but whereas Madariaga's axe is very Spanish, Frank's is American, in the broadest meaning of that word. Since the publication of his *America Hispana* in 1931, Frank has never ceased to preach that the qualities of the peoples of North and Latin America are complementary and that mankind will only attain true peace and health when those two halves of the New World have accepted one another and united. This also was Simón Bolívar's conviction and he tried desperately to prepare the union even before completing the destruction of Spain's imperial forces in the South. But in any case Bolívar could never have succeeded in creating an all-American federation because he was by birth a child of the South American chaos, belonging by nature to the very disorder that he struggled to dominate. His prophecy now haunts his North American interpreter.

Unfortunately, even at this late date Frank's prose, which has always owed something to D. H. Lawrence, is still as chaotic as South America itself, and the luxuriance of many of his pages swamps his argument and makes it difficult for the reader to treat the author as seriously as he would wish and as perhaps he deserves. The style is often quite unnecessarily lush: 'Bolívar had lived like a shuttle, weaving back and forth the thread of blood into the cloth of vision.' 'But the objective judgment was gone; he began to see himself with the adoring eyes of a woman who could not doubt his indefeasible rightness, his inevitable triumph. Manuela helped

him in his labours, sustained him and soothed his nerves; but when he embraced her, he embraced *her* absorption.'

Nevertheless, the reader who cuts his way through the verbal jungle with a constantly re-sharpened mental *machete*, will be rewarded. The book contains much evidence of insight into the personality and career of one of the world's most extraordinary soldier-intellectuals. Bolívar's principal lieutenants emerge as real human beings. And the portrait of the Liberator's mistress, Manuela Sáenz, is powerful, convincing and unforgettable.

GEORGE PENDLE.

MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH. By Geoffrey Murray (Sidgwick and Jackson, 10*s*. 6*d*.) This is a timely and admirable book. In its preparation the author has covered a large field of enquiry, and in its expression he never for a moment leaves the reader in doubt as to his complete sincerity and fairmindedness.

Mr Murray's handling of topics of widely different approach is judicial to a high degree, yet he leaves the final judgment to the jury, his public and the book deserves a large one.

The subjects reviewed are much in the public mind at the present time, for example, Spiritualism, Faith Healing and Psychic research (to adopt his own chief categories) and his gentle shepherding of the popular outlook (deriving, as it so often does, from prejudice, mental habit and family tradition), into some sort of independent and personal focus, supplies a real need for the ordinary man.

In all the long journey of thought from superstition and witchcraft, through the patient struggles of psychic research and the more recent adventures into the unseen world and its applications to the urgent human needs of to-day, he leads his readers, with constant courtesy to all and exclusive attachment to none. In an age of increasing detachment from sheer dogma, and equal, though sometimes dubious zeal for freedom of thought he has steered a neutral course, while at the same time imparting an underlying sense of faithfulness to the ultimate good.

LOCKHART ANDERSON.

REASON AND UNREASON IN PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDICINE, by E. B. Strauss, pp. XII + 55. (H. K. Lewis and Co. Ltd., 8*s*. 6*d*.) This short but highly concentrated book consists of three lectures, the first on the general direction of psychopathology, the other two on the concept of cause in relation to the theory and practice of psychopathology. Dr. Strauss's general thesis is that 'every empirically derived psychology is right within its own framework' but dangerously misleading when it is raised

to a universal panacea – hence the need for an eclectic outlook and willingness to take the best, or what is sincerely believed to be the best, all schools. Certainly one would have thought that in attempting to he a suffering mind, every reasonable theory should be open to trial. Th psychologist not only does disservice to his science but also to the patie if he walls himself up in one theory, however plausible. Dr. Strauss believ that much of the rigidity of contemporary systems comes from an imperfe understanding of the philosophy of cause, and he supports this by a cle account of the Aristotelian-Thomist teaching on the subject. By co centrating too much on one kind of cause, the efficient cause, psych logists are apt to think of the mind in mechanical terms. Psychoanalys comes in for a good deal of criticism, and the flaw in behaviorism is neatl summed up as being due to an attempt to construct 'a psychology witho a psyche.' Dr. Strauss is no less insistent on eclectic methods of treatmen A psychiatrist, he says,

> should feel free to employ all non-analytical methods as the occasion demands. These will include the physical methods, re-educative methods, direct and indirect suggestive methods, abreactive methods with the use of hypnosis or drugs, conditioned reflex therapy (Salter), Yoga-like methods . . . Kretschmer's Fractional Hypnosis, and many others.

Although these lectures were given to psychologists and doctors, th general reader with an elementary knowledge of the subject is in no wa debarred from understanding and enjoying them. It is hoped that th book will reach the 'wider public' to which Sir Russell Brain commend it in his Foreword. There is a misprint, 'psycholigical', on page 18.

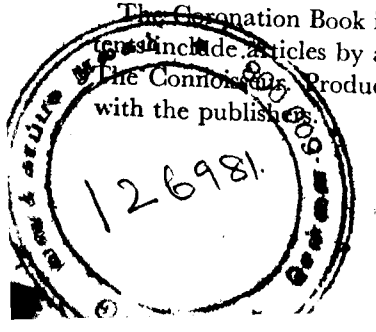
ROBERT HAMILTON.

THE QUEEN'S SILVER. By A. G. Grimwade (21*s.*). THE CONNOISSEUR CORONATION BOOK. Edited and compiled by L. G. G. Ramsey, F.S.A (21*s.*) (The Connoisseur.) In these days of economic depression in th handicraft of silversmithing it is encouraging to find its undoubte viability supported by the publication of the first of these books.

As a personal holding, Her Majesty's collection of silver plate may b regarded as fairly representative of the whole range of the best of Englis hand-wrought silver, and Mr Grimwade's text – almost amounting to monograph on the subject – is skilfully amplified, not only by reference but by sixty-four photographs of actual pieces which do justice to th visual perception of well cared-for silver.

The Coronation Book is frankly in the 'souvenir' category, but its con tents include articles by authoritative writers such as one associates with The Connoisseur. Production in each case is of the high standard usual with the publishers.

W. GRAY.


126981