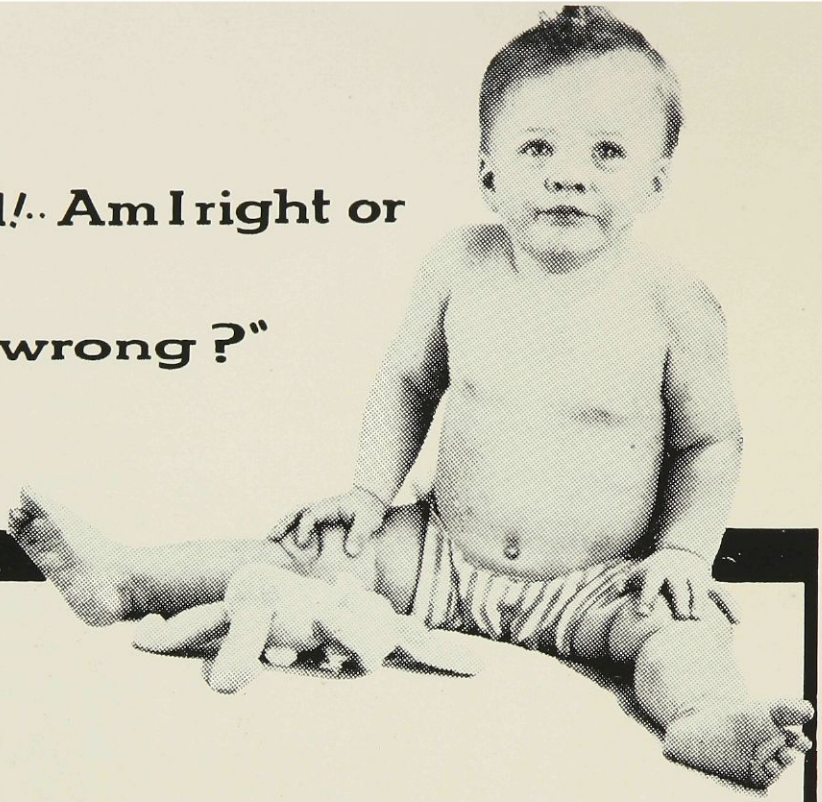
TWO SHILLINGS.

2
1958

"Well!.. Am I right or

am I wrong?"



They say money talks . . . but to lots of people it only says "Goodbye"! . . . That's not good for those people and it's not good for the State . . . Far better to put it in the "R. & I." where it can work for YOU and the State, too.

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A LITERARY AND CRITICAL MAGAZINE PUBLISHED THREE TIMES A YEAR BY THE ARTS UNION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

editor WARWICK WILSON

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no. 2, 1958

view

whither Westerly ?

"No religion and no politics. You all know the trouble that happens when you get talking about those sort of things."

We have often heard this—in clubs, on trains, in the army, at dreary parties or among students. Let's not talk about politics and religion, the two most important subjects which shape and govern our lives. Let's not talk about whether the government is spending our money wisely, or whether it is following a realistic foreign policy. Let's not decide what we believe in, where we are going, what is the most satisfying means of getting there.

But in case the reader thinks that this is going to be another comment on apathy, he will be disappointed. It's merely a lead into the main point of discussion—"What is *Westerly's* editorial policy?".

There has, of course, been criticism over the last few years, and one is expressed in the attitude above. *Westerly*, these people say, should not concern itself with politics or religion. If it does it will tread on someone's toes, and thus lose its subscribers. Much safer then to write about harmless topics—bird watching, for example.

But, as already mentioned, *Westerly* is vitally concerned with politics and religion. Its aim is to set people thinking about them; to draw their attention to abuses, foolishness, narrow-mindedness, or mere cussedness. In its literature it seeks to interpret and evaluate old doctrines, new trends, and recent discoveries in technique or man's behaviour. Above all, it aims at being positive, constructive, creative; at offering alternatives, warnings, conclusions or even answers.

It would seem that this would be a truism in both literary magazine and newspaper policy. In most

point

cases, however, it is forgotten. Too many publications merely echo (or distort) public opinion, or "massage favourite emotions". There are far fewer who dare to analyse objectively, to form conclusions and present positive proposals for government action.

It has been recognised that all but a few newspapers have lost any positive influence on current opinion, that governments seldom take them seriously or are impressed by what the (theoretical) objective observer has to say. More often it is the case of buying the paper out of habit and reading it for the comics or to while away the time. The same effect can be achieved by smoking. It's very relaxing.

There are, of course, many who have been so trained by their newspapers that they want their emotions massaged by *Westerly* in the same way. When this does not happen, they turn away disgruntled and say "That's not what we want to read at all".

Then there are the perpetual agitators, who leap on to their soap boxes and proclaim the destruction of the human race and all that it stands for. But seldom from their harangues emerges anything constructive. They are too busy condemning the communists in China, or the selfishness of big-business. *Westerly* declines to be a club or Hyde Park for these people, so it too must fall under the lash of their tongues.

Next perhaps we should mention those who see *Westerly* as a product bearing the label "Made in Western Australia". In so far as it reflects the way of life, the trend of thought, or the way it feels to be a human being in Western Australia (some don't believe this is possible!), then this is all to the good. But when it sets out deliberately to parade Westraliana across its pages, it is not fulfilling its purpose.

Finally, there is the criticism that *Westerly* is "dead". This is a serious charge. Perhaps it is made as one of the criticisms above. Or perhaps these critics think that *Westerly* does not face up to "life as it *really* is"; that it does not mirror the sordid features of sex, crime and brutality current in our generation; that it wraps itself up in a cocoon of literary language and highflown sentiments, and does no more than peer out distastefully at the "real life" going on around it.

But, to quote Norman Foerster, "If the life of man is indeed as nasty and brutish as the most typical literature of our time represents it (e.g., *Cat on a ot Tin Roof, Forever Amber,* or *Peyton Place*), the victory of organised mechanised evil in the world will only confirm a disaster that has already taken place". And that disaster, he says, quoting Walter Lipmann, "is the disaster of the character of man".

Westerly does not intend to mirror this disaster, but to try to analyse it, to reject what is bad and keep what is good, and to attempt a constructive reply. It does not, however, make any claim to infallibility. It may be that some of its views will turn out to be as foolish as those it condemns. But it invites thoughtful consideration from its readers as it seeks to fulfil the role it has chosen itself—a role that is in full sympathy with Norman Foerster as he says:

"Vast armaments alone will not save us. We must also rewin our all but lost inheritance of freedom and order, and with freedom and order, that on which they depend, belief in the dignity of man. And this in turn can come only through a religious renewal of belief in man as a spiritual being; or, if that is beyond our attainment, a humanistic belief in man as a rational and free animal, a belief that comes all the way to us from ancient Greece."

David Bradley

ANGRY YOUNG DRAMA

THE MOST INTERESTING development in the London theatre at present is the appearance of an Angry Young Drama which is beginning to catch on even with the commercial management in the West End. It is lively and wildly experimental, and therefore difficult to define in good, orthodox terms. But to the sixth sense it is as unmistakeable as the first hint of spring or the presence of death. Whether it is the beginning of a revolution in the theatre, only the event can show, for now that audiences have become so eclectic in styles and traditions, and find no more difficulty in swallowing the conventions of Greek tragedy than those of drawing-room comedy, the emergence of a new style is a mere drop in the ocean of theatrical appetite. Even Shaw's one-man revolt, which made its first stand at the tiny Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square, was a long time in making its effects felt in the West End. Whether the Angry Yong Men, infiltrating again from the Royal Cort, will ultimately capture the citadel will depend on whether the new moods and methods they are exploiting can ever appeal to more than a coterie audience, and whether, ultimately, they have anything to say.

The English Stage Society, which is based at the Court under the direction of Mr. George Devine, disclaims any intention of fostering a "movement". Its professed aim is to encourage new plays and new playwrights by bringing writers into contact with actors, producers and the physical conditions of the theatre. It gives frequent Sunday evening performances of promising plays—partly to test their suitability for production on a commercial scale—and its weekday productions include a very high proportion of new plays, amongst a staple of classics and established moderns like Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. But, unlike the Vedrenne-Barker management, which launched Shaw, Mr. Devine has been able to move productions to larger theatres in the West End, and thus attract star actors, first-rate designers and a popular audience.

Sir Laurence Olivier recently starred in a whooping season of *The Entertainer*, in one of the biggest theatres in London, and in a part which, it is said, he personally asked John Osborne to write for him. Mr. Osborne's rapid success is the most striking when one considers that two years ago his earlier (and better) play, *Look Back in Anger*, was turned down by every management and agent to whom it was shown. It is easy to write off *The Entertainer* as a personal triumph for Sir Laurence, a one-man act, the one swallow that emphatically does not make a summer, but there is a great deal more to follow from the Court, and Angry Young Drama is also arriving from other directions. There is, for example, a revue called *Share My Lettuce*, playing almost under the eye of Henry

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Irving's statue, and Alistair Sim is lending his benignity to William Golding's play, *The Brass Butterfly,* which shares the mood, if not the technique, of the new drama, as readers of his *Lord of the Flies* would have anticipated. Meanwhile Jimmy Porter has reached Paris, where they find him astonishingly un-English, and the experiments at the Court are being supported by no less an institution than the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* If Angry Young Drama is not yet orthodoxy it looks well on the way to becoming somebody's doxy.

What then is it? Most people, who haven't suffered many a Sunday night at the Royal Court, have a vague notion that it is a new drama of social protest which specializes in a scrutiny of pimps, Teddy-boys, prostitutes, down-and-outs, homosexuals, victims of hideous diseases, the hag-ridden of conscience and the like. Certainly it is difficult to spend an evening in any London theatre without the company of one or two such characters. But an interest in the themes they represent isn't confined to Angry Young Plays, or to English drama, or to drama of the twentieth century alone. I think it is wrong to lump together plays like *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *The Iceman Cometh* with Mr. Osborne's plays, or, at the extreme of the new drama, with Anne Jellicoe's *The Sport of My Mad Mother.* After an indoctrination of Court drama one feels that Tennessee Williams and O'Neill belong to a past age, thundering away, as they do, at their melodramatic problems of passion and guilt, stripping the personality rag by rag until in one cataclysmic revelation its psychological mechanism stands naked. All that, compared with Angry Young Drama, is no more than the faintly startling revelation of Auntie's obscene paintings in that old shocker of the Thirties, *Frolic Wind.*

There is passion and guilt enough in the new drama, but it is severely intellectualized and treated as matter for hysterical comedy. The problems of Angry Young Men are not of the kind able to be illuminated by any revelation of *motives,* or hidden springs of action. These playwrights have discovered a looking-glass world, where their images, labelled *Homo sapiens : failed,* stare back at them without even the comfort of distortion:

> *Why, we have problems that nobody's ever heard of, we're characters out of something that nobody believes in. We're something that people make jokes about, because we're so remote from the rest of ordinary, everyday experience. But we're really not funny. We're too boring. Simply because we're not like anybody who ever lived. We don't get on with anything, we don't succeed in anything. We're a* nuisance, *we do nothing but make a God almighty fuss about anything we ever do. All the time we're trying to draw someone's attention to our nasty, sordid, unlikely little problems.*

That is Archie Rice, in *The Entertainer*, anatomizing his family, but if you press any Angry Young Man's hero he will say something of the kind, and not only say it, but laugh at it and about it, mimic himself shouting it, run it through every artificial and theatrical tone of voice and return it at last to an honest-to-goodness sob. That tone of hysterical nausea at the prospect of the human comedy is the first unfailing symptom of the new drama.

As often happens with leaders of revolutions, however, Mr. Osborne now finds himself far to the right of centre. He is, comparatively speaking, a conventional writer, and his dramas still have a nodding acquaintance with the well-made play, while his field is still the minute observation of the surface of life which we recognize as the mark of the social problem play. He writes about English middle-class life as he knows it, not about abstractions, and even in his despairing portraits of human failure and betrayal, and his landscapes of faded patriotism, lit only by the Spanish War or the Suez sunset, we are not necessarily made to feel a *philosophy* of despair. But it is another matter when we come to his successors.

Anne Jellicoe's prize-winning play, *The Sport of My Mad Mother*, splits up Archie Rice's self-conscious hysteria into a mad farrago of theatrical fireworks. Her play has no plot or any forward movement at all, her characters are simply figures who have only a shadowy kind of continuity, and where interaction is rather like a rock-an'-roll version of the Dance of Death. There is no scenery except for props carried on by the players (though there was a sort of skylon, Battersea Park style, which suggested that the *time* may have been "post-war"). A one-man jazz-band sits on stage and accompanies the actors at their direction, while the actors themselves jive, play blind-man's-buff, dress up for a November 5th charade and, in fact, one feels, do anything, to get through the necessary time of two hours or so that a play should run. Some of the dialogue is lushly poetic, some borrows heavily from the jazz rhythms of *Sweeney Agonistes*, some comes from the directions on a home-perm packet which also provides the lyric of a song and the choreography of a dance, out of which the hair-do emerges complete.

It is difficult to take the characters as seriously as the programme exhorts us to. There are two Teddy-boys and their girl, who, as a gang, represent (we are told) "one side of modern man, impulsive anarchy". Next, a young American, perhaps a social worker, who stands for "rational, scientifically-guided conduct," and he is followed everywhere, like Mary's little lamb, by a girl called Dodo who is unexplained, but whose name, old clothes, and habit of lying on the floor like Good Deeds in *Everyman*, conspire to suggest that she may represent either the 'submerged tenth' or 'the tyranny of outworn ideas,' if Miss Jellicoe could only bear to tell us. The heroine, Greta, is the leader of a rival gang—or the goddess Kali, or a virulent Australian red-head—however you like to look at her.

In method, *The Sport of My Mad Mother* pretty clearly belongs to the school of Samuel Beckett, and there are even close links in theme with *Waiting for Godot*. The gang in Miss Jellicoe's play are waiting without hope, like the two tramps in *Godot*—waiting in this case for the rival gang to arrive from the next-door blind alley. These rivals are stronger and savager than our gang and they are the more terrible because unknown and unseen. If it comes to a straight contest in blade-flashing there is no doubt they will have the best of it, but we have just one hope. If we can coax their leader, Greta-Kali, to come over to us. We know this is a counsel of despair, because the mad goddess is as dan-

gerous in her own side as to the opposition: but better the divinity you know . . .

There is at first glance very little connection between this sort of violent and largely incomprehensible allegory, and a play like *The Entertainer,* which really does bring to life the various members of the family of a third-rate music-hall showman, even though the life of these people is much stronger than the life of the plot they move in. There is a real relationship, however, in the mood of the two plays, the subjects which get mentioned (such as the H-bomb, Suez, Welfare State handouts, education, perversion, drink, subtopia, and so forth) which occur in almost predictable sequence, and in the pattern of emotions.

Angry Young Characters are suddenly gay, suddenly sad, like half-wits; their emotions are purely orgiastic, working up rapidly, spending themselves in shouting and violence or self-torture, and then, with equal suddenness, deflating into boredom or disgust or just lack of interest. And as the characters are, so are the situations. There are no slow risings of tension, nothing is ever built up to an accomplished climax. The action, like the characters, progresses by a series of little orgies (of though or emotion), each one ending in bathos. The gaps in between are often punctuated by the simplest and seemingly least dramatic actions—reading the paper, starting into the fire, or into one's pint of Guinness, knitting, or merely going offstage to the lavatory.

What I have just written written sounds so like a prescription for producing one's first bad and dull play that you might suppose the plays I am trying to describe are simply first efforts (as most of them are) and is to miss the point that what we would normally think of as dull bad drama is here painstakingly sought for and triumphantly achieved in the service of the spirit of the age and the delayed but heady impact of raw Existentialism on the English consciousness.* Bathos is not accidental, it is part and parcel of the view of the world that these plays express.

Let us look at Wally Simpson's double bill of *The Hole* and *A Resounding Tinkle,* which began by delighting Oxford and has now reached the West End via the Court. These two plays are really exercises in dialogue and are therefore virtually plotless, like *The Sport of My Mad Mother.* On the other hand, they tend towards John Osborne's realism in their attempt to work out a stock satirical portrait gallery of Welfare State characters—for our stock characters have to be re-invented and made into vehicles of new moods and new ideas by each generation of playwrights. At the same time Mr. Simpson brings a highly analytical mind to bear on the problem of the Angry Young Man.

Here is a chirpy extract of his writing, which may seem at first sight to be a hopeful step beyond Archy Rice's disgust with the world and its works, but which is actually only the froth on the surface of the same Slough of Despond:

They say that, cataclysms apart, there are another twelve hundred thousand million years ahead of us all yet. These will have to be got through somehow, preferably without fuss, and we must just try to keep ourselves occupied as best we may. It isn't difficult. One can poke things. One can pick things up. One can distinguish between one thing and another; or between one group of things and another larger group. (Or between several smaller groups.) One can decide whether to decide or whether to leave it to someone else to decide; and there are trigonometry, copulation, travel, counter-espionage—

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* There is an interesting link with earlier experimental plays at the Royal Court in George Sansom's comments on Granville Barker's "The Secret Life," produced in the twenties: "It shows us the intellectual world reduced to spiritual nihilism. There is no clear centre of dramatic interest. The characters just come and go. . . The catalogue is sometimes normally dramatic, sometimes philosophically enigmatic. . . perhaps in no other volume is there so complete a revelation of the spiritual bankruptcy produced by war."

to name but a few of the innumerable activities from giving massage from the exercise of magnanimity—which compete for those brief moments of leisure when we are not translating poems, torturing people, timing eggs, weeping for the past, heating glue . . . or fighting, each according to his bent: some for freedom, some for the suppression of freedom . . . And in other ways, too, we can diversify our lives. It's up to us. It's up to Man.

With a Rabelaisian embrace Mr. Simpson takes in more than a score of other possible activities for *diversified* Man. You can do it for yourself. It's a kind of nonsense game, and playing it will bring you into the right sort of mood for exploring that region of consciousness which (as Hamlet says) *puzzles the will* and where the new writers find their most interesting playground. To them, the human predicament, and therefore the dramatic predicament, is this consciousness that life is, and ever will be, *just one damn thing after another*, and this, so acutely felt as to appear a cosmic law. Let us not give a cheer, even, at the vestibial impression of sequence or order in the words "one thing *after* another". The cosmic law is chaos. What then is up to Man? Simply to palliate his boredom by pottering. No use taking sides in chaos. No use even grinning and bearing it. Not a high horse for getting on within coo-ee. What is up to Man is only a Spring Feeling on the fragile barricades thrown up against the invasion of Total Despair.

(This article will be continued in our next issue.)

SOVIET-AMERICAN POWER POLITICS

THIS ARTICLE IS BASED ON A LECTURE GIVEN BY MR. HUGO WOLFSOHN TO THE SEMINAR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE HELD AT THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY FROM 2-5TH JUNE. THE SEMINAR WAS ARRANGED BY THE FACULTY BUREAU OF THE MELBOURNE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL UNION OF AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

THE WORLD TODAY is divided into two blocs, the Soviet bloc and the Western bloc, and this division, developing since 1946, is both ideological and economic. Furthermore, it seems to me that this division is likely to exist for a long time to come. International diplomacy since 1945 has therefore lost that fluidity and elasticity to which people were accustomed before the war, and the main reason for this may be seen in the various implications of the fact that the Soviet Union has become a world power. What then are these implications? Briefly, I would summarise them as follows:

(1) The U.S.S.R. is a revolutionary power. Its leaders consider themselves the representatives of the idea of social revolution in world politics, and since 1917 they speak as authorities on how an oppressed people can successfully liberate itself from the "yoke of capitalist oppression". In other words, they claim they can assist other nations still struggling for emancipation on the basis of their own experience.

(2) As a revolutionary power, therefore, the U.S.S.R. has a liberating mission in the world. Wherever the struggle against "colonialism" or against oppression of any type is still going on, the U.S.S.R. claims a passionate interest—hence the sympathetic attitude towards Asian and Middle Eastern nationalism and the strengthening of Russian influence in those areas. Russia plays, therefore, a "liberator-role" in world politics. The policy of the Soviet Union towards the satellites in Eastern Europe which contradicts this role is not as much resented or opposed in Asia or the Middle East for the obvious reason that to the Asians the European situation means very little.

(3) The Soviet Union consciously exploits its position as the power that represents to the rest of the world the workings of a new social system in which the means of production are owned collectively, in which crises and unemployment have been permanently abolished and in which the "exploitation of man by man" has been removed. The gradual improvement of living standards of the Soviet people, it is claimed, is the result of the rational planning of social and industrial development.

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(4) Russian leaders follow the Marxist belief that the system of international relations is the "reflection" of the *internal* social and political structure and class relationships inside the capitalist nations. Capitalism is considered basically to be a predatory system in which immensely wealthy cliques (referred to in Soviet pronouncements as "imperialist circles") oppress the majority of the people, manipulate their underlings and in general prevent the "peaceful" co-operation between the peoples of the world. The more acute social struggles become in capitalist societies, the greater is the danger of war between the capitalist nations themselves, as well as wars against the weaker peoples who may be subjected to capitalist controls in order to solve social problems temporarily. This is the Leninist basis of the celebrated theory of imperialism. The ultimate outcome of capitalist development is therefore war either against other capitalist systems or against weaker peoples, or against the socialist nations. One of the assumptions behind Soviet world policy is that international collaboration and permanent peace can be the result only of the spread and ultimate adoption of the socialist system in all parts of the world. World peace follows the establishment of the identical social and political system in all countries of the world.

(5) Genuine co-operation between the socialist and capitalist camps is not possible, although temporary co-operation may be not only possible but desirable, as in the case of the war against Hitler's Germany. The idea of a violent clash between the two systems no longer dominates Soviet analysis owing to the great military and industrial power of the Soviet bloc. The argument has shifted towards emphasising the competitive co-existence between two social systems in which the socialist system, they believe, will ultimately win. Such a policy is, however, compatible with giving assistance to nations still uncommitted or struggling for emancipation, especially as the type of social system which will ultimately be adopted in areas like the Middle East or in countries like India and Indonesia is still uncertain.

(6) The ultimate national security of the Soviet Union is bound up with the spread of its social system into the rest of the world. This ultimate aim can also be described as the introduction of division of labour on a world scale under Russian leadership. Identity of social system and world economic planning are therefore the prerequisites of world peace and the aims of Soviet world policy. Even if we grant the Soviet Union the ultimate success of this policy, it does not necessarily follow that world peace will be the inevitable outcome. It is conceivable that even socialist countries could compete with one another, especially as economic development under world socialism is likely to be as "uneven" as it has been under capitalism. This criticism, however, is unimportant, as we are dealing with a futuristic utopian picture which is not implausible and cannot be refuted at this stage. Whatever the nature of this aim, it gives Russian policy a strong purposeful direction and strong appeal to countries undergoing policies of national development.

(7) Before the Russian revolution, Marxists thought that the full development of capitalism in all advanced countries would be the necessary requirement for the rise of socialism. This belief is no longer held. The "first country of socialism" is now ready to "assist" other countries before the social conditions are "ripe" for a socialist revolution in one country. The Soviet challenge to the Western world therefore is twofold: (a) to the underdeveloped nations of Asia and the Middle East Russia has shown the way to rapid self-development; (b) to the highly developed nations of the West Russia throws up the challenge of quicker rates of economic growth, which cannot in the long run be

imitated in the West. Russia will finally outproduce the West. Russia "will be present at the funeral of Western capitalism". "Peaceful co-existence" therefore means the competition between rational socialist planning on the one side and the haphazard and wasteful methods of Western capitalism on the other. Russians hold firmly that the pluralistic societies of the West cannot in the long run solve their own national problems.

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After the war the Soviet Union gained control over the nations of south-eastern Europe and almost 100 million people were added to Russia's population. These advances were on the whole facilitated by the Allies during the wartime conferences at Yalta and Teheran, partly because it was considered fair that the U.S.S.R. should be secured from a renewal of German power and expansion towards the East. But what was not foreseen was the type of co-operation that Stalin envisaged when he advanced in Western Europe. It was not only the legitimate aim, as we would argue, of consolidating the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. against a possible revival of German power, but a deliberate extension of the Soviet system of social and economic planning into a space greater than the national space of the Soviet Union. The post-war settlements gave Russia for the first time the chance of extending its social and economic system into neighbouring countries.

After the coup d'etat in Czechoslovakia in 1948, therefore, the new order in Eastern Europe took shape very rapidly. With the well-known exception of Yugoslavia, all other countries were subordinated to Soviet control. This was facilitated by the presence of Soviet military forces in those countries; by allocating key positions in army and security departments to reliable communist cadres; and by the gradual absorption of the remaining political parties into the "unity" type of organizations under communist control. What was unique, however, was the political and social integration of the Eastern European countries by means of an alliance between the various communist parties themselves, which again were subjected to strict ideological and organizational control exercised by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In this way was created the system of communist "fraternal" alliances, the distinctive feature of which is that it ensures the prosecution in the satellite countries of social, economic and political policies beneficial to the planning system of the Soviet Union itself. At the same time, this form of "co-ordination" is sufficiently indirect and invisible to maintain the impression that the satellite countries are still "sovereign" nations under international law with their own representation in the United Nations. The U.S.S.R., therefore, did not interfere in the internal affairs of Hungary in 1956, but came to the assistance of the Hungarian Government which had "asked" the Soviet Government for assistance under the terms of the Warsaw Pact.

The general outcome of this development that I have only roughly sketched here is a unique system of social and political integration the scope and importance of which could not perhaps have been foreseen during the war. But the more its meaning became clear to the West, the more urgent became the defence of Western Europe and the more permanent became the division between East and West. Two more or less self-sufficient trade areas have arisen, East-West trade has been reduced to a minimum, and the Stalinist system of socialism in one country has been extended into what I. Deutscher has called the system of "socialism in one area". The American-imposed ban on trade with the countries of the Russian bloc has assisted this process, although its importance should not be exaggerated. Communist countries exercise severe control over foreign trade and import goods only of the type needed for the

expansion of their own planned economies. A Western ban on such goods, it could be argued, might slow up the rate of economic growth in communist countries.

These considerations will make it clear that the Soviet Union, despite the violent denial of its protagonists, is an imperialist power whose imperialism is in essentials identical with that of the "older" imperialist countries of the West. It would therefore be extremely risky on the part of the Western powers to upset the system of social and economic integration just outlined, as the Soviet Union might be prepared to go to war in defence of its gains made after 1945. This at any rate is the assumption of Western policy-makers, and it is for this reason that the rigidity of the international division between Eastern and Western blocs will remain for a long time to come. It is true, of course, that all is not well in the Soviet camp. Hungary and Poland have shown where a policy of too rapid industrialisation may lead. But as long as the West agrees that the price to pay for upsetting this arrangement is atomic world war, it will always have to agree that Russia will be left alone to deal with her satellites as well as she can or as ruthlessly as she wants.

Now let us look by contrast to the Western bloc. Here the situation is somewhat different from the Soviet situation. For one thing, whilst a good deal of economic co-operation has been achieved, the co-operation of Western Europe never proceeded by a well-conceived plan, but rather as a reply to the advances and policies of the Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership. The immediate cause of the rise of the Western bloc was Soviet pressure upon Greece and Turkey in 1946, but the basic cause of it was the decay of European power and the relative decline of British power in Europe and in the Middle East. To this must be added the removal from the international power picture of Germany, which up to 1939 played the part of the buffer—and a powerful buffer it was—between Russia and the West. Of course, now Germany's position in Central Europe has been taken over by the United States, and we may say that the most dramatic development on the Western side since 1945 has been the definite commitments of the United States on the continent of Europe.

But in this policy the West has been suffering from a number of weaknesses, which should be summarised as follows:

(1) The rise of Western co-operation was

hesitant and achieved in response to unanticipated Soviet advances rather than to a genuine need to co-operate.

(2) One of the deeper reasons for this slowness in reaction to the Soviet challenge is the fact that Western countries are more fully "sovereign" than their opposite numbers inside the Soviet bloc. They are not united or "integrated" by the system of fraternal alliances, cemented by the co-operation between the various communist parties. Apart from fear of Soviet power, there are few factors that bind Western countries to one another. Furthermore, the discrepancies in power between the Western countries on the one hand and between the countries in Eastern Europe are not as great. Although the U.S.A. is immensely powerful, England and France are still "Great Powers" with considerable world-wide interests, and this fact alone prevents the degree of integration achieved under Soviet leadership in the East. There are still jealousies between the Western Powers in matters of trade, defence, and in the field of colonial policy (Suez and Algeria, for instance). The Western Powers, therefore, lack common interests and it is more accurate to describe the Western defence system as a "coalition" of Powers than as a fully integrated area under American leadership.

(3) To interpret fully what sovereignty in international affairs means is almost impossible. Should the Italians, for the sake of argument, adopt communism as their new social system, would the United States allow it? It would be hard to answer this question, but it is clear that an adoption of capitalism on the part of any of the Soviet satellites would immediately bring about armed Soviet intervention. Examples of this speculative kind could be multiplied ad infinitum, but they serve at least the useful function of reminding ourselves that the Western system of co-operation is necessarily looser than that of the Soviet bloc because the nature of democratic politics does not allow a degree of integration of the type that has been adopted in the Eastern bloc. The various Western Powers must find a degree of co-operation in which the lack of common interests (except the fear of the Soviet bloc) must somehow be made compatible with prompt concerted action in case of emergency.

(4) Notice further that whilst complicated N.A.T.O. arrangements have been made and the European forces of N.A.T.O. members have been organised and integrated under various commanders and under an American Supreme Commander, the agreement over policy has been less successful. And the rise of atomic parity between Russia and the U.S.A. has created additional difficulties for the West. The American, and to a lesser extent the British, control of atomic weapons has deprived the smaller European Powers of the ultimate control over their foreign policy. Before atomic parity was reached, Western co-operation proceeded on the assumption that combined Western military strength on the Continent might be able to hold or even to "break the back" of a Russian attack on the Western position. This belief was important as it actively associated the Continental Powers with Western defence, in conjunction with British and American forces already stationed on the Continent. But at least since the defeat of E.D.C. (European Defence Community) by France, the idea has taken hold of American military planners that the superiority of Soviet manpower cannot be matched in the West, and that therefore Western defence must rely upon the use of the "ultimate deterrent" in order to deal successfully with a Soviet attack at all. The implications of this doctrine are profound. One of the consequences is that whatever issue might arise between East and West will

be viewed as involving the use of the ultimate deterrent by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. It means that there are no local problems left for local settlement, as the interests of the two giants are always involved, anyway. From this point of view, diplomacy has not only become rigid in the extreme, but the Continental Powers feel like pawns in the hands of the Americans and, to a lesser extent, the British. The American doctrine of "massive retaliation" involves the primary destruction of Continental countries. It is for that reason that many of them, even Germany, are not too keen to be equipped with atomic weapons as this would invite Soviet retaliation to which there is no answer.

(5) The problem of the West is therefore to restore diplomatic and strategic elasticity in order to escape the dilemma of total destruction or surrender. If total destruction of civilization is the inevitable outcome of an atomic war, then the alternative of surrender is tempting, especially when the issue over which the West would use massive retaliation has not been determined. To quote only one example: Would Australia under S.E.A.T.O. fight to defend Thailand against a Chinese attack if the consequence would be the active participation of the Soviet Union on China's side? Or would we, together with the Americans, yield in this case, as Thailand might not be considered an issue vital enough in which to risk the survival of civilization? We cannot answer this question at all unless we can be sure that a war in defence of Thailand, or in defence of Western Germany, *could be localized.* Americans like H. Kissinger (*Atomic Weapons and Foreign Policy*) have powerfully argued the case for localized wars in which it is alleged that the West would have an advantage. But granting this (which is very doubtful, anyway), would the Soviet Union give us a guarantee that a war would remain "localized"? In the absence of such a prior Soviet commitment, the dilemma remains unresolved and the paralysis of the diplomacy of "massive retaliation" remains with us for the time being.

(6) Only a general agreement between the Soviet Union and the West, possibly preceded by a mutually agreed adoption of the system of "disengagement," could result in the restoration of some independent action on the part of the Continental Powers. Only if Russia, the U.S.A. and Britain could agree not to equip their allies with atomic weapons and not to interfere in European affairs could some semblance of diplomatic elasticity be restored. It would at least have the enormous advantage of not making every European issue a matter for "massive retaliation" on the part of the remaining two giants. On the other hand, enormous difficulties would remain. Would the Soviet Union keep its word? Would the absence of U.S. forces from Europe invite communist penetration? Or would the Soviet policy of "peaceful co-existence" be sufficient guarantee that no new tensions would arise? These are the risks to be taken. At the same time, the use, if really necessary, of the ultimate deterrent remains as potent a threat as it presumably is now.

(7) Such an agreement might also lead to other regional understandings in such areas as the Middle East. Here only development with the active participation of the Great Powers by means of huge internationally provided and controlled capital investments would be the answer to the needs of that region, or any area in Asia. It would, however, be futile to speculate too far in this direction. Russia might severely oppose such a policy, as it would conflict with her policy to influence and finally win over the uncommitted nations of the Middle East and Asia.

leaves in the wind . . .

Prize for Westerly Short Story

On the invitation of the editor, the West Australian Branch of the Fellowship of Australian Writers has donated a prize of three pounds for the best short story submitted for the next issue of *Westerly*. Entries for this should be in by September 15th, and will be judged by the editor in consultation with the Fellowship. It is most encouraging that the Fellowship should show such interest in fostering young writers, particularly at the student level, for whom the prize is intended.

West Australian Publications

On the Perth bookstalls since our last issue are: *Master of Ransome* by Lucie Walker, published by Collins and released also in America; *Snowball* by Gavin Casey, accepted for serialisation by the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the A.B.C.; *The Lonely Shore* by Freda Vines, being serialised by the *Australian Women's Weekly;* and *Quiet Brat* by H. H. Wilson.

Expected out before our next issue are: *Where Poppies Blow* by F. B. Vickers—this novel was among those recommended in the recent *Sydney Morning Herald* competition; *Wild Turkey* by Max Brown and illustrated by local artist Bob Juniper.

Finally, there are books accepted by the publishers by Randolph Stow, Mary Durack, Jamieson Brown, and Elizabeth Backhouse.

Poetry Competition

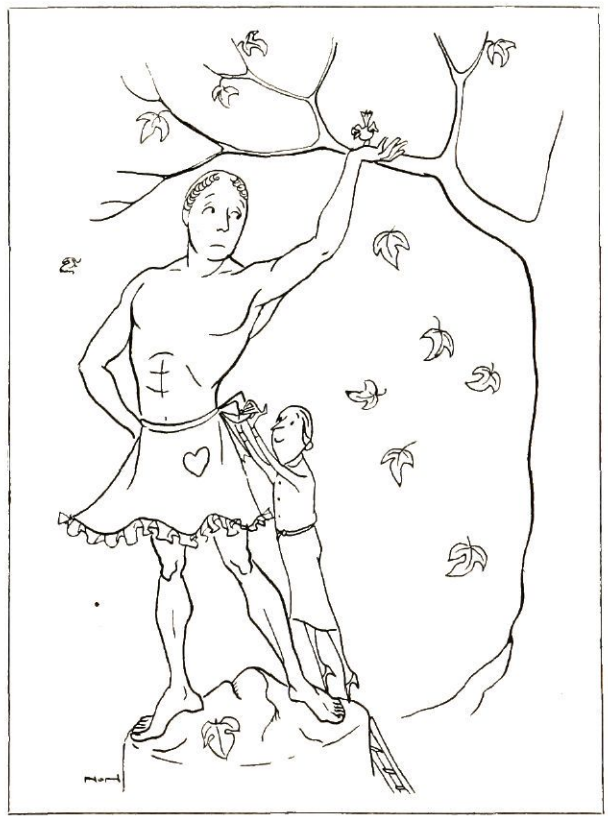
The Queensland Authors and Artists' Association announces a poetry competition, closing 30th September next, for poems (unpublished) of Australian flavour, suitable for setting to music. Prizes are £50, £15 and £10/10/-, entries to be under pen names, with the author's name and address in a sealed envelope attached, addressed to Box 187W, G.P.O., Brisbane, marked 'Competition'. There is an entry fee of 2/6, which will cover one or more poems.

Journalists' Club Awards for Short Stories

Eight months have elapsed since entries for this competition closed, but now word has been received from Sydney that the results are as follows:—

First prize of £100 for the best short story went to Hal Porter, of Bairnsdale (Vic.), for "Uncle Foss and Big Bogga". Prizes of £50 were awarded to Helen Wilson, of Dalkeith, W.A., for "A Field of Wheat", and Mrs. M. D. Cooper (Marien Dreyer), of King's Cross, Sydney, for "The Big Wind". The judges were Elizabeth Riddell, poet and journalist, of Sydney, and Peter Elkin, lecturer in English at the N.S.W. University of Technology.

The judges of the poetry competition, Edgar Holt and John Thompson, reported that no entry was "of a standard high enough to justify the award of a prize". The £100 prize money has been added to the prize for the club's 1958 award.



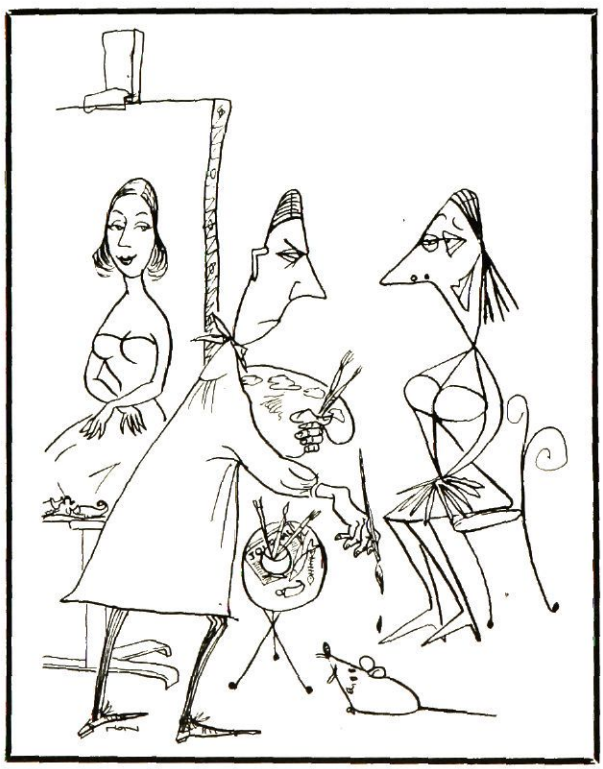
Tom Collins House

An appeal has been launched by the Fellowship of Australian Writers (W.A. Branch) with the aim of preserving this house, built by Joseph Furphy himself (Tom Collins), as a literary memorial. Tom Collins' work *Such is Life* is well on the way to becoming an Australian classic, and his house, bequeathed to the local Fellowship by his son, the late Samuel Furphy, is to be used to house literary work, the records of West Australian writers, and serve as a meeting place for writers.

The appeal is for the purpose of raising a trust fund of two thousand pounds to keep the house in good repair. It has already nearly reached the halfway mark, and further donations from those interested in preserving this unique literary landmark may be sent to Mrs. Henrietta Drake-Brockman, Lawson Flats, 6 The Esplanade, Perth.

West Australian Anthology

One of the major literary developments in this State recently has been the projected publication by Angus & Robertson of a collection of short stories from local writers under the title *West Coast Stories*. This has been edited by Henrietta Drake-Brockman and the proceeds of its sale will go towards the Tom Collins House Appeal, details of which are to be found in this column. And even better news—this event may become an annual one. Possibly the next publication will be a book of verse by W.A. poets.



A REACTIONARY

Poets' Corner

News has been received that Randolph Stow's book of verse, *Act One* is now going into a second edition. In view of the universally poor sales for poetry, this is a remarkable achievement.

A hopeful sign of the revival of interest in poetry has been the large attendance at two recent gatherings, one arranged by the Adult Education authorities and one by the Fellowship of Australian Writers (W.A. Branch). At both o these, poems by local writers were read and discussed.

Also, the formation of a group of young poets, who meet regularly to read and discuss their own work and other contemporary writing, is a healthy sign. Some of the work of these young poets appears in this issue.

Reviews of Westerly

Readers of the last issue of *Westerly* may be interested to know that it received enthusiastic reviews in the Eastern States. Kenneth Inglis in the Melbourne *Age* (May 31st, 1958) described it as "the most successful student publication since Melbourne's *Present Opinion* disappeared about ten years ago". *Farrago*, the Melbourne students' newspaper, said: "*Westerly* is attractive, alive and topical. . . . this production from the West is staggering by its quality. Every page is readable . . . My first acquaintance with *Westerly* has made this the sole literary magazine for whose next issue I'll be on the lookout." (May 20th, 1958, p. 6.)

Asia Week

The International Club of the University of W.A. is planning to hold an "Asia Week" in Perth from the 3rd to 10th August. Advice has been received from the News and Information Bureau of the Department of the Interior that a full-time officer had been assigned to assist with preparations for Asia Week. The Town Hall has been selected as the location for a striking exhibition of Asian arts and crafts, and additonal features of the exnibition will be complimentary film screenings and the provision of an Asian food bar. The films include the Chinese *Daughters of China* and a Malayan production, *Semerak Padi*. The "Asia Week" has received much enthusiastic local support, and plans are being finalised to extend some of its functions in the country areas.

Alex King

let's be contemporary

"THOUGH HE BELONGS TO NO SCHOOL the author writes in the central tradition of modern poetry and his poems are, in the best sense, contemporary." This sentence comes from the blurb of a first book of poems by a young writer in England and, if one does not try to understand it clearly, it can be felt as praise. "It is good (it says in effect) that this new poet does not merely ape other poets, that he is not, however, merely a 'queer one,' and that he understands us all in the best sense." This is not what the blurb says, of course; it is what it hopes we shall feel, since as blurb it is persuasive advertising. Why does it use, then, the paraphernalia of critical terms? Because, I suppose, to cajole an intellectual you feel you have to use a learned idiom. The phrases appear knowing, but the more one asks what they can be made to mean the more confused one gets.

It is perfectly true that we can say, for instance, that Pope wrote in the central tradition of the 18th century poetry, and that his poems were, in the best sense, 18th century. We can say this because Pope's poetry, by virtue of its greatness as poetry, *was* the central tradition, and because Pope, again by virtue of his being a great poet, told us what it was like to be an 18th century man. Pope was centrally 18th century because he was a great poet.

But the blurb suggests that somehow a central tradition lies *outside* the poetry, and that 'to be contemporary in the best sense' is what poetry is trying to be; and this is utterly confusing. The real question is always whether a poet is writing good poetry. If he is a good poet he will surprise us into new ways of feeling contemporary. For a good poet cannot choose to be contemporary or not; he cannot physically live in another age, and to protect himself from his own age is to cut off those roots in his own life from which poetry is nourished.

I think it is specially important to get this clear; for the contemporary poet is surrounded today with innumerable voices; voices of publicists, critics, reviewers; voices of intellectuals massed in University Schools of English, discussing, discussing (Cecil Day Lewis in a recent talk with Robert Frost mentioned these voices-in-the-ear-of-poets, and the self-consciousness they produce). What do these voices tell a poet? Nothing—nothing that he had better listen to. By implication, they tell him how to be contemporary in a pre-ordained manner, how in the best sense to be contemporary, how to be in the centre of the modern tradition, how to be what the voices would like him to be. They tell him everything but the one thing he needs to know—how to get into touch with the

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poem that is to be written, how to lay himself open as a channel through which the authentic creature can come into being. Nothing can tell him this; for to write a poem is to be alone, not lonely locked up inside spongey egotism, but alone with his own nature which is not his but everyone's, and alone with the habits and processes of language (not the voices of people).

What does human life need me to say? How does language (ancestrally rooted, tied into past and present living) need me to say it? These are the questions a poet tries to answer. To answer them needs a purity of intention which is hard to keep; for the precarious integrity of an artist, of a poet, is difficult to endure. How often does an artist find this singleness of purpose, his singularity, a burden—to try to create something which nobody wants, for people do not want what they have never expected. The voices are outraged, the newly created thing does not 'massage favourite emotions'; it is not in the best sense contemporary; it is not (as the critic settles the shawl of habit cosily about his shoulders)—it is 'not what I meant at all, that is not it at all'. And so the artist, like Prufrock, begins to doubt whether he can 'squeeze the universal into a ball'; he doubts whether he can even 'eat a peach' (moving through the sensual flesh to the kernel of wisdom); instead he will be a literary tripper, he will 'wear white flannels and walk upon the beach,' and, though he hears the mermaids singing out of the salty depths, he does not think they will sing to him.

This excursion into metaphor on the artist's difficulties is not for fun, but to remind ourselves that what we are looking for in modern poetry is not the sign of modernity in the best sense (that is, in our sense), but good poems. And what a good poem says is unpredictable. It is to remind ourselves that an enormous amount of poetry written today is poetry that listens to the voices too quickly, too eagerly; poetry which constructs something through which to feel modern, poetry which waves itself around in a contemporary manner, poems which you can happily blurb about.

I think one of the clearest illustrations of this is, not a poem but a play—John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. It had a great success last year on the London stage. It is almost a monologue of anger, anger directed against society, social classes, domestic life, love, education, sex, woman, religious practice, politics, and against the hero himself. The theatre, when it was first put on, was full of the young, who made the play seem electric by their response, so expressive it seemed of their contemporary feeling, of that belief-in-reverse which makes them want to butt backside on against the world of their elders, with blind haunches. When the play had run its season the theatre was half full of the middle-aged; and they were bored, not only because they were no longer young, but because the play did not excite that longing for 'wisdom' which comes with 'bodily decrepitude'.

To be angry, yes, that is a fine feeling, vigorous, cathartic, but not if it simply confuses the struggle to be human. You can be angry about society, but not with the identical anger you can feel about domestic life, or about woman, or about religious practice, or about yourself. You could not tell in the end whether the anger meant a chronic ulcer, or the childish confusion of a broken home, or class envy, or the final derision of the World before entering a closed order as a monk; it meant nothing. To the young it was 'Protest'; to the middle-aged it was something that is close to the final tedium, the release of meaningless energy. The play, in fact, was constructed to make the young feel contemporary; it came from an identity with the shifting egotism of the modern mind. Like

so much poetry today it made the contemporary gestures of unease, and linked itself at once, in my mind as I watched it, with some of the more insomniac rhythm of jive, the incessant jigging of the flesh, like a laughter that is a joyless and numbing obsession.

It is true that egotism is forced on the 'young' today. The image of humanity which the older put before their imagination is not pretty; it is for many unbelievable, because though bewildered it is pompous, though fearful and distracted it is without humility, like a weak politician got up for election day. I do not feel it surprising that so many of them say: "We will not vote for human life at all." But what are they left with? The vagaries of egotism, the soft fluid of the white of an egg with no yolk, with no germ in the yolk, protected by a brittle pale outside. No good poetry ever came out of egotism. It comes out of something below that, or beyond it, out of the discovery of what is happening to human life, not what is happening to 'me'.

How many modern poems begin and end with 'me', in this sense! Poems which ruminate on 'my' life, follow the flotsam of 'my' emotions, enumerate the complications of 'my' existence, reflect on life from 'my' angle (evolving lines "full of high sentence but a bit obtuse"). Modern poetry is sometimes thought of as a revolt against Victorian sententiousness and the rhetoric of personal feeling. Its idiom is different, naturally, but modern poetry is as full of egocentric emotion and egocentric sententiousness as any romantic poetry is.

T. S. Eliot has said that poetry, for the poet, is not (perhaps we should say 'should not be') an expression of emotion but the escape from emotion. I want to suggest that there has always been a mode of poetry which is the outward structure of this escape from emotion—a mode whose extreme form is allegory, and whose familiar form is metaphor. I do not mean, of course, that all poetry must be so structured; social poetry relies, for instance, on an imagination working along other lines. But imaginative writers have always understood that, for certain purposes, the way to a truth firmer and more central than what the personal ego can utter is the way of 'fiction'. It is not that the fictional way of creating is an automatic means to truth, for one can be as silly as a fiction writer as in any other way. The point is that a writer's business is with the 'mankind of our going', with the human liveliness that ebbs and flows through the distorting kefuffle of egocentric feeling and thought; and he has to invent a vehicle for this.

To commit oneself to a 'fiction' is to push oneself out of the world of merely personal feeling, or covert exclamations and egotistic thought; it is to wrestle with something, somebody, not yourself; it is to invent gestures, movements, actions, to imagine voices, that are not your own, that must be made humanly convincing, not merely convincing because yours; it is to be forced to see one's own feelings and thoughts (no longer parading themselves) but being examined and shown up for what they are worth—something that no human story, no mankind-story, could put up with; or something dramatically significant in terms of what is not yourself. (Even descriptive writing should be fictional in this sense; a bad description is neither exclamatory emotion, or enumeration of appearances; good description is invention, whereby the images of flowers or landscape talk to us of their own nature and its relation to our human nature.)

It is perhaps a realization of this that has made people take greater pleasure in the fiction of the short story and the novel, turning away from those outcries of poetry which sprinkle the 19th century and still go on. For people do not want to listen to personal outcries in print, however contemporary they

feel; they want to understand something about themselves through entering into the story of mankind. What is wrong, I suggest, with *Look Back in Anger* is that it is outcry; it is deficient in that backbone of fiction, plot; and so its author never had to understand whether his personal egotistic emotions (anger) could make sense in a world of human life, or even what they meant.

The fictions of poetry are very varied, from allegories like the Faerie Queene, epics like Paradise Lost, myths like The Waste Land, down to all those scenes, processes, and episodes set in motion directly or in metaphor, bedroom scenes projected by Donne, a voyage out of the sensual world of youth to the city of Byzantium undertaken by Yeats, a visit to a crowd of daffodils paid by Wordsworth. My concern is, however, with modern poetry, and I want to end with an illustration from a young English poet, Jonathon Griffin, who has received a good deal of notice.

Here are extracts of three poems lying side by side in his last book, *The Rebirth of Pride:*

> I believe, but not
> In God. I believe in man,
> But not very much. Men can
> —Cleaner than God—redeem
> Evil they never made.
> Mostly though they are tame, . . .

> The young fear life, the not so young fear death:
> Most leave a silver limbo round themselves
> And would for ever half-live — they dread youth.
> The sickness of the young is to hang back; . . .

I don't believe anyone in his senses would want to go on reading poems starting in this way; for they invite, as all personal egocentric feeling and opinion does, either an immediate rejoinder or an interest in the person who (for readers of books) is non-existent. But how contemporary they must have felt to the writer. In the best sense? Close to these poems stands this:

> Spring hurts—too sweet—
> as a scarlet bus or the white of a girl's blouse
> pierces a just released prisoner's eyes
> —he cries at the touch of the lusty street.
>
> The dazzle hides the ambush laid
> by all the level people who side with need
> to herd us in again to the inbreeding
>
> underworld of everyday.
> Spring hurts. The dazzle hides
> the ambush—the old lag in us already
> dragging us back where good inbreeds to bad.
> We've been inside; we are outsiders.

I don't know whether this is good of its kind; but the kind is good. It projects through metaphor, through fiction, a scene, a story; and as readers we are carried through the emotion of 'spring' as something beyond a personal feeling, something that the prison fiction helps us to understand, an emotion out of human life, not the poet's, not ours, but man's.

I do not think anyone would begin to ask whether this poem was in the best sense contemporary. It is going through, or attempting to go through, the age-old poetic practice of throwing us into an imaginative stance, outside that limited world of ego full of cries and exclamations and pompous opinion, where we can taste and therefore understand something of our human life caught in the invented life of the poem. Let us praise modern poetry not for being modern but for being poetry. And if we have to defend contemporary poetry, let us defend it because it is poetic in the finest sense, not because it smells so sweetly or sourly of the flotsam of our age.

POETRY

First Meeting

Did we interrupt your travel
in eternal spheres of time?
Did we mould a form of clay
with five walls around you?

Your look is angry yet resigned
to grant the fruit of our love.

Smooth your brows and scorn us not,
for also we were born
as you will hear, and capture
in an earthen frailty
your dream of immortality.

NICK NEGGO

Plainsong

They are hymns in plain-chant; the humble faces,
Seen once, and yet again
Haloed in a cloud of rain
At lonely stations—one-portered places:
Or in secret silence on a bus,
With unseeing eyes
Over unostentatious ties
Oblivious to the crowd and fuss:
Or safe behind the evening news
Peered at by those who stand.
Like lucid notes, not grand
Symphony, but simple. In the pews
Devout uncomplex prayers are prayed
For an uneventful day;
A rise in pay,
An easy death. . . . The tune is played.

JOHN O'BRIEN

White Sorrow

The world's beauty is white—
Her face, her hands,
The wide white sheet of snow.
The windy moon.
Black night beyond the moon,
The dead beneath the snow.
She is pitiless.
Beauty is white,
But lasts not.
Her love is for a day,
Thaw brings decay:
The moon is a child of change—
Nothing remains.

CLAIRE MACDONALD

PROGRESS UNLIMITED

by

Roger Carr

"LISTEN TO THIS," said Dad when he was re-reading the letter, " 'a representative will call at your place on the twenty-fifth to arrange for aerial fertilizing'. That's progress for you!"

"They gonna do it with planes?" asked young Tommy, goggle-eyed. "Yup," said Dad, "got to keep up with science."

"So I've noticed," said Mum, staring at the kerosene-tin wash troughs.

"I told you I'd get a washing machine, didn't I?" asked Dad.

"My memory's bad," said Mum, "I can't remember more than a couple of years back."

Dad grunted and went into the bedroom.

After lunch he got to work with a pencil and paper, working for an hour before he jumped up and rounded us kids together. "Shove the single-furrow plough on the tractor," he told John. "You two grab the pole we had over when we built the shed," he told Mike and me, "and you grab a couple of shovels," he told Tommy.

We all went and found what he wanted, and then headed for the side paddock. "This one'll do," he told us, "long enough and pretty level."

Dad walked round for a while, getting the lay of the land, and driving pegs into the dirt every here and there. He called John over. "Take the tractor from this peg to the one at the end of the paddock, across to the other one and back," he told him. "A single furrow should be easy enough to see from the air."

John started out with the tractor while Dad did a bit more walking about, scratching his head, and muttering. "This'll do," he called, marking a place with his foot. "Dig a hole and set that pole here."

We got to work with shovels and the crowbar, cutting a hole down about three feet. Then with everyone pushing we set the pole upright and filled in the hole.

John had finished with the tractor, ploughing a long box with an arrow in the centre. "Good job," Dad told us.

We went up to the house and spent the rest of the day working around there.

Next day the bloke from the aerial fertilizers came to give the place the once over. He looked at the square of ploughing and the arrow. "That'll make the place easy to spot from the air," he told Dad. "What is it?"

"That's to show him where to land," said Dad. "We'll have a wind sock up when he comes."

"Oh . . .er yeah," said the bloke. "Good idea." He scratched his head, looking at the landing strip. "Got to be going," he said, edging back warily into his car. "Takes all kinds," we heard him mutter as he went.

Dad made the wind sock out of old bagging and hung it on the pole. It worked pretty well when there was half a gale blowing.

On the morning the plane was to come, Dad posted young Tommy down the paddock to keep watch. About half an hour later he came belting in. "Here she comes," he yelled, turning round and heading for the paddock again. We all raced down after him.

A steady drone drifted overhead as a small bi-plane came in sight. It circled round while we danced about on the paddock. Suddenly it seemed to flip, and the next thing we knew the plane was dropping like a rocket down towards us. We could hear the spinning propellor but no sound of engines.

"Look out," called Dad, "she's going to crash. Orrr . . . I wish I'd never thought of this. They'll probably make me pay for it."

There was a shattering clash above us as the engine came to life and the small plane swung from its dive and flattened out across the paddocks. It flew slowly round till it was coming in towards our paddock.

I noticed Dad then. He was at the end of the landing strip and in his hands were table tennis bats painted yellow. He was flapping them in different directions as the plane came flying in upon him, following the directions of the bats. It was nearly on him when Dad realised that while guiding the plane straight he had forgotten to bring it down. The bats came together and towards the ground. The plane was nearly on him as it dropped on his signal. It hit the ground with a thump as Dad ducked, sailed neatly over the fence and came to land in the next paddock.

Dad staggered to his feet. He was looking crook, but his mouth showed he was getting ready to fight if the pilot took a swing at him for nearly wrecking his plane.

"Lousy, lousy, lousy," swore the pilot as he climbed over the fence. "If you want to play aircraft-carriers you got to remember to bring me *down* as well as straight." He took the bats and gave Dad a demonstration. "Now we'll load the plane up, and next landing you bring me in properly."

We carted bags of super over to the plane and dumped them in. When it was full the pilot climbed in and hit the throttle. The plane rolled off along the paddock, the tail came, and it lifted off the ground. Then the nose dropped, the plane hit the ground, bounced high into the air, and away she went.

Dad was fingering his upper lip while we watched.

"Going to try and grow a moustache like his, Dad?" John asked him.

Dad looked a bit guilty, muttered something about the marvels of modern science, and picking up the bats, headed for the top fence. He brought the plane up the fence for a start, then every twenty yards of paddock. Dad would wait till the plane was just about on him, then move to the next row. One time he did not move across—just stood there watching something under the plane. When it was nearly on him he dived for the ground. Even then his hat was caught by one of the wheels.

The plane waggled its wings to show it was empty and Dad headed for the landing strip with his bats. A lot of blokes from other farms were crowding round to watch. Dad did a faultless job, the plane came in dead centre, dropping on to the paddock and pulling up right in front of him.

He strolled over and leant against the plane, talking and laughing. We loaded her up, and the noise was so loud that we reckoned Dad was just talking and laughing to impress the others. "It's dead easy when you've got the know-how," he was saying. Most of the time he was talking the pilot was telling us what to do, winking at Dad now and then.

We got hold of the tail when it was loaded and swung her round. The pilot gunned his motor and away she went. Dad took it through every paddock, covering the whole property evenly. It was a lot faster than even the broadcaster. We had to fill her up about a dozen times before it was finished. Dad was getting expert with the bats, bringing her in on the spot every time.

The pilot finished and just wandered round the rest of the place getting rid of the rest of the load. Then he brought her down. "Like to come for a spin over your place, mate?" he asked Dad.

Dad climbed in and we swung the tail round. It seemed to bounce more than ever when it took off. The pilot took it high and ran the full length of the property. Then he went into his act.

The plane began shrinking as it bored up in lazy circles, the afternoon sun spotlighting it. Then the sputter of its motor died as it came drifting down to us, the propellor hissing through the air. It coughed into life above us and flattened out, rolling on its back as it slid through the air across the country. It headed up into the sky and came around in a skidding turn, low over the fences and on to the landing strip. Dad climbed out, tripped, and fell to the ground. He got up slowly on all-fours, said a few words to the pilot, and walked slowly over to the blokes who were watching.

"Give him a hand by turning her around, boys," he called as he passed.

We lifted the light tail and swung her round. The pilot grinned, gave us a wave and lifted into the blue. When we turned round we saw Dad heading for the house. We cleared up the super bags and started after him, trailing up the paddock with our stiff necks.

We filed into the kitchen and flopped down on to chairs.

"Had a good day?" asked Mum.

"Terrific," said young Tommy.

"W'ell," said Mum, "after seeing today's work, and remembering how long it takes to do it with the broadcaster, I think your father had the right idea."

"Be able to sell the broadcaster and buy a washing machine, Mum," said John.

"Dad went up at the last," said young Tommy excitedly. "The pilot rolled and raced him all over the sky. Up and down. I can hardly wait till next year when he comes."

"Or me inside! or me head!" moaned Dad from the couch in the other room. "Shut up about them damn planes. I'll never have another one on the place. Damn progress!"

Current Affairs

A SPRING CLEANING FOR AUSTRALIAN CENSORSHIP

BRIAN FITZPATRICK

IN THE SIX MONTHS between October 1957 and April 1958 Senator Denham Henty, Minister for Customs and Excise, gave book and film censorship procedure the greatest spring-cleaning it has ever had. The law, however, remains unamended, and a future, less liberal Minister could use and abuse its 'dragnet' clause to ban any publication which he objects to on political, sectarian, moral or other grounds as a prohibited import.

Since 1937, when the literature censorship board was reconstituted and an appeal censor appointed, the 'battle of the books' had at all times gone the Government's way. The only reverses the arbitrary Index System had experienced were the occasional withdrawals of specific bans or successful appeals to the courts by a citizen convicted of possessing a prohibited import.

Now, after an enquiry directed by the Minister, the censorship board seems to have erased about 800 titles from the Index Librorum Prohibitorum (of Expurgandorum), including all the politically undesirable. There remain about 178 books we may not read, but a perusal of the banned list—made public after thirty years of secrecy—does not lift the eyebrow often. The unexpurgated *Lady Chatterley's Lover* of D. H. Lawrence is still banned, and so are some editions of *Casanova* and one selection from the *Decameron* of Boccaccio; so too are two books by Henry Miller, and *My Life* and *My Life and Loves* by Frank Harris. But most of the titles seem to be in the erotica or curiosa categories, many of them being illustrated, foreign-language collector's pieces.

Most of my own adult life has been punctuated by campaigns against censorship of books, films, and, occasionally, plays; campaigns which the Australian Council for Civil Liberties and other sections of the intelligentzia have supported. I therefore find it heartening that at last the Minister has (1) slashed the banned list, and published its remains; (2) made it practicable for a citizen wishing to import a banned book to challenge the man in the law courts; (3) established the precedent that books are not now to be banned on political grounds; and (4) directed that the recently impunged regulation 13(D) of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations 'shall not be used to debar the registration of religious films for the reason only that the nature of the films or critical commentary may be deemed to give offence to any one religious section of the community'.

These are all most important reforms in the eyes of Australians who believe that the

various *State* laws relating to obscene publications, etc., provide more than adequately for all (in Lytton Strachey's phrase) 'that is needed to save children and morons from themselves'. Again, Senator Henty's series of decisions indicate a drastic limitation of *departmental*, as distinct from Ministerial and board, participation in censorship.

Finally, here is an example of what the new reforms will abolish. The Council for Civil Liberties interested itself in a ban which was placed on Avro Manhattan's book *The Dollar and the Vatican*. According to information which Mr. Manhattan supplied from abroad, and further details acquired from the importer in Sydney, the month's delay in releasing the book was caused by Customs officials whose religious susceptibilities were offended by Manhattan's views. Such was Customs administrative procedure that officials were able to stall and buck-pass so that copies could not be sold and, perhaps, prejudice the sales of the book in advance. Fortunately, that cannot happen again while the new procedure is in force; now, if a bookseller wishes to import a title, Customs must tell him whether it is banned. Delay is obviated if the reply is "go ahead"; if it is otherwise, the bookseller can take his protest to court.

REFORM FOR THE COMMONWEALTH BANK ?

BILL HARTLEY

DURING FEBRUARY THIS YEAR the combined Senate forces of the Australian Labor Party and the Democratic Labour Party rejected the Government's "Bill for an Act relating to the Reserve Bank of Australia and for other purposes (1957)" for the second time.

While producing some pragmatic rumblings from the right about the function of the Senate and the curse of proportional representation, it effectively relegated the banking reform issue into semi-permanent obscurity. This seems apparent from the rather obvious conclusion that the Government itself was unhappy with the legislative draft of its extra-parliamentary backers and, to apply the horse-racing epithet called by a Representatives critic, was "running dead".

The encounter gave the public generally no coherent and comprehensive picture of the issues involved and no means of reaching conclusions on the extent and character of the abuses alleged to be practised by the Commonwealth Bank on the one hand and its private competitors on the other. The newspapers, as usual allowing their political opinions to spill over from leading articles into the news columns, were little help.

A closer examination of the proposals and their surrounding circumstances does show, however, that a case can be made out for some reform. Certainly it is not the type of reform envisaged by the private bankers' union, the Associated Banks, and embodied in the now hatcheted legislation. That legislation appeared biased against the Commonwealth Bank and the general principle of government banking. The nett result could have been to turn the control of major Australian banking policy over to groups who, the Opposition claimed, have never hesitated to act against the national welfare should their interests be at stake.

Provided adequate safeguards were embodied in the appropriate legislation, there is no real reason why the current Central Bank, operating within the aegis of the Common-

wealth Bank of Australia, should not be reconstituted as the Reserve Bank of Australia. There is little truth in the charge that the Commonwealth Bank pursues a central banking policy preferentially loaded in favour of the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks. The setting up of a separate Reserve Bank with its own directorate and staff would clear up this misapprehension.

In practice, the surplus investable funds of the two public banking divisions of the Commonwealth Bank are subject to the same special account controls through the Central Bank as those imposed on the private banks. The Industrial Finance, Mortgage Bank and Exchange Control divisions of the Central Bank are rigidly and fairly supervised and any possibility of their favouring the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks is specifically excluded. Experience shows that these Central Bank departments actually fall over backwards in vindicating their assertion that no preferential treatment is extended to the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks. Consequently these banks receive less co-operation than their competitors. The creation of a separate Reserve Bank is favoured by the administration of the Commonwealth Bank.

The chief danger in the Reserve Bank proposals embodied in the 1957 legislation lay in the control stipulated for the Bank. The Reserve Bank Board was to consist of the Governor, Deputy Governor, the Secretary to the Department of the Treasury, and seven other members to be appointed by the Governor-General. Banking interests in the vested sense were meant to be kept off the board by section 17 (d): "A director, officer or employee of a corporation . . . the business of which is wholly or mainly that of banking is not capable of appointment, or of continuing to act, as a member of the Board". To anyone with knowledge of Australian business organisation and inter-relation, that "exclusion" clause was far from being watertight. It did not, for instance, exclude shareholders in private banks, or executive officers of the latter's substantially owned hire purchase subsidiaries. Fiduciary control, then, could be directed against the Commonwealth Bank's charter—"a monetary and banking policy directed to the greatest advantage of the people of Australia (and which will) best contribute to the stability of the currency of Australia, and the economic prosperity and welfare of the people of Australia".

The only way to secure a Reserve Bank as an instrument of financial policy directed towards the public interest is to vest its control in a Governor responsible to the Treasury. The Bank will then apply the financial policy preferred by the people through the electoral process of government—especially necessary in times of inflation or depression. There will also be less chance of outside intervention favouring sectional interests.

The timely proposal for setting up a Commonwealth Development Banking Corporation was welcomed in principle by all parties but had to be defeated as it was tied to the other proposals. The rationalisation of development banking funtions currently spread over the Central Bank's Industrial Finance and Mortgage Bank Departments and the extension of the development banking theme has been long overdue.

In any future legislation attention should be directed towards maximising the strength and competitive power of the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks. This could best be achieved by re-combining the two banks into one institution offering both types of facility. The Commonwealth Trading Bank, particularly, would benefit considerably in acquiring the backing of over five million savings bank accounts and additional reserves in excess of £70 millions. It is unlikely that the

present non-Labor Government would accede to this without pressure. That pressure might be effectively applied in the form of a deal with the Australian Labor Party and the Democratic Labour Party which would cede the consolidation in return for a safe passage of Reserve Bank legislation.

Such a move would contrast strongly with one of the most deplorable objects of the 1957 legislation—to weaken the commercial position of the Commonwealth Trading Bank. The taxation proposal is a case in point. The Commonwealth Trading Bank, along with the Savings Bank, already pays half its profits into consolidated revenue via the national debt sinking fund account. The other half is ploughed back into the Bank. It was proposed to impose an additional banking taxation of some 7/6 in the pound on the nett profit before division—then to halve it and still take the residual 50% for revenue. This proposal would have curbed the Commonwealth Trading Bank's expansion by over a third of its current rate.

The Commonwealth Bank of Australia, although a political target since its inception, remains the strongest instrument of credit policy in this country. A Reserve Bank organisation will not greatly alter the pronounced leadership of the Commonwealth Trading and Savings Banks in lending policy. The continued adherence of these strong financial houses to legitimate lending and banking policies in the public interest must influence the private banks towards a similar course. Any legislation loaded against such objectives will always be open to the criticism of favouring vested interests against the welfare of Australia and its people.

Bill Hartley, who is at present studying Law at the University of W.A., has spent some time working in several Departments of the Commonwealth Bank, and is thus able to speak with some knowedge of its functions and needs.

LAUNCHING AN AUSTRALIAN PLAY

FROM THE TEXT OF AN ADDRESS GIVEN TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS (W.A. Branch)

Ric Throssell

A PLAY UNPRODUCED is like a chicken in the egg—conceived, but not hatched; and the unfortunate playwright in a state of prolonged pregnancy must hunt round for a host in which to deposit the egg for hatching. I suggest, therefore, that we should centre our discussion on those problems which affect the playwright in relation to the public, rather than take in the creative problems involved in the writing of plays: the problems of characterisation, plot construction and dramatic method. I doubt whether one man's experience of these highly individual creative problems is applicable to the experience and needs of another. But the question, "How can I get my play produced?" is common to all of us, whether we follow the methods of Satre, Saroyan or Sean O'Casey; and on that question I think shared experience can be valuable.

Those of us who have asked that question and found the answer elusive have been forced back to first issues, and have asked ourselves in turn whether play writing for the stage is worthwhile, either as a creative medium or as a bread-winning proposition.

It is seriously contended that the film offers a more direct visual impact, that the radio has immense imaginative flexibility and that television combines the breadth of the film and the immediacy of the stage. But I still believe that the stage play has one great advantage over other dramatic media: the rapport, the sense of participation, which sincere actors and actors of great accomplishment can maintain with a living audience. It is this nebulous link between those on the stage and those in the stalls which Priestly describes as the "sharing of dramatic experience". In comparison with the literary arts—the novel, poetry, or the short story—I believe that fully realised drama, that is to say a play in production, conveys a more immediate, a more concise, a more concentrated representation of human experience.

The question whether playwriting for the stage is financially worthwhile in Australia can unfortunately be answered with an equally categoric "No". At present that is the only possible generalisation. There are probably not more than three or four playwrights in Australia who could earn a living from their plays alone. One thinks, of course, of Ray Lawler and Richard Beynon, or Hugh Hastings and Ralph Peterson, who have succeeded in selling plays to the film companies. A few, like Dymphna Cusack, receive royalties from the overseas production of their plays. Some, like Sumner Locke-Elliot, for example, live and work successfully in other countries. Many make a living in radio; and soon, perhaps, television drama will provide the butter for some playwrights' bread. But by and large, there is no living for Australian playwrights in Australia.

Some months ago, an article in a Western Australian newspaper appealed to Australian dramatists to write plays for the local market.

Ric Throssell is a Diplomatic Officer of the Department of External Affairs; a Commonwealth Literary Fund Fellow for 1958; and author of "Valley of the Shadows," "Devil Wear Black," "The Day Before Tomorrow," "A Kiss and a Promise," "Legend," and other plays.

A noble exhortation from one who, I suspect, has not tried it. The fact is that "the local market" is small, and its demand for local material is smaller. Briefly, the Australian theatrical market consists of:

The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust, operating on the basis of comparatively long runs in all capital cities and extended country towns;

The professional and semi-professional little theatres — The Union Theatre (Melbourne), The Little Theatre (Melbourne), The Independent (Sydney), and The National Theatre (Perth), running for about three weeks in each case;

The larger, longer run, amateur repertory theatres in Canberra, Adelaide and Brisbane; and

Small, suburban and country dramatic societies by the hundreds, who play for one or two nights, three or four times a year.

How many Australian plays have been produced in recent years by these theatres? Most of them resist the production of Australian plays because they believe them to be a box office risk, and because they believe that the plays they read in manuscript do not measure up to the standards of the tried successes of America and Europe. One can see the point. It is safer to let someone else take the risks of a first production. But enterprise is sometimes profitable — the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust's greatest earnings have come from its two Australian productions. It is now true, I believe, that Australian plays will attract an audience *because* they are Australian.

It is indisputable, too, that many Australian plays are far from perfect. It is just as true that the perfect play has not been written; but if each one of the theatres in all of the groups I have mentioned were to use Australian plays for one half of their annual programmes, there might not only be a living in playwriting for some of us, but, what is more important, a regular and continuous flow of Australian productions would give those who write for the stage the only real opportunity for improving their dramatic technique. There is no substitute for production. A dramatist can only learn the lessons of the theatre in the theatre.

There are now available to Australian theatres many Australian plays which are quite as produceable as the imported plays, which, for all their imperfections, are found acceptable. I make this boast on behalf of Australian playwrights. If Providence were to put a theatre in my hands now, I could run it for a year entirely on Australian plays not one bit more rawly constructed than *Johnny Belinda;* nor with less conventional plot than *I Am a Camera;* nor more trivial than *Book of the Month;* nor more banally improbable than *The Whole Truth.* (I do not necessarily suggest that these plays should not have been produced; but each one of them is open to the kind of criticism which would have been sufficient to land them in the waste paper basket, had they carried the name of an Australian author.)

Are there enough Australian plays to fill such a programme? Certainly. I mention a few; *Mirage* by Bert Vickers, from the book of the same name; *Hot Gold* by Henrietta Drake-Brockman; *Bid Me to Love* by Katherine Susannah Pritchard; *Swamp Creatures* by Alan Seymour; *Sky Without Birds, The Torrents* and *Royal Tour* by Oriel Grey; *Spring Song* by Ray Mathews; *Woman Bites Dog* by Alan Burke; *Exit* by Dymphna Cusack; *Theodora* by Catherine Duncan; *Harp of the South* by Ruth Park and Leslie Rees; *Blood Orange* by Hugh Hastings; *The Square Ring* by Ralph Peterson; and perhaps even my own *A Kiss and a Promise, Legend,* or *Love on the Layby.* There are more. Plays that I have not read. Plays that I have not heard of. And

I am sure that such a programme by a major theatre would not take long to lure the many capable, but perhaps more canny, writers who have either not ventured to write seriously for the stage, or who have given up in disgust for want of production.

Some day we can be sure the dream Louis Esson dreamed in the twenties, the production of Australian plays by Australian theatres, will be the rule rather than the exception. Unbelievable as it may seem today, there was a time when American playwrights were virtually excluded from the American stage.

I don't know what playwrights themselves can do to break down the resistance to their work, except to go on writing plays as well as they are able, according to their lights, and to make it known as widely as possible that they have written them, that they have goods for sale. There are organisations which exist to help: The Playwrights' Advisory Board, The British Drama League, The Victorian Drama League, The Councils for Adult Education, and, I hope, The Fellowship of Australian Writers.

There is a great temptation to write the sort of plays one imagines "they" will want—a temptation to which I suppose everyone yields now and then. (Even Chekov wrote his *Bear*.) My guess would be that following the success of *The Doll* and *The Shifting Heart*, a distinctive Australianism will be expected by theatre managers. They may want to see a "typically" Australian setting, or "typical" Australian characters, as if a clerk in a bank, or a public servant, or a university professor is not Australian because he does not speak in a back-o'-Bourke Aussie accent, and because the place where he lives is ordinary. This sort of thing is only one step removed from Dad and Dave. A national drama demands a broad canvas. It can't exist when theatres limit themselves and their playwrights to "types". How much, then, I ask, should playwrights in their search for production comply with the demand for a stereotype?

There is pressure, too, for conformity in respect to form, as well as to the content of the play. The Australian theatre has fallen into the convention of the one set, three-act play. There are, of course, exceptions, but, by and large, by far the greater number of plays produced conform to this pattern. The playwright is tempted to think his play has a greater chance of acceptance in that form—and hence tends to perpetuate it, notwithstanding the fact that the convention has great drawbacks, if it is considered as a rigid rule irrespective of the subject and mood of the play.

Some dramatic subjects can only be compressed within the three walls of a box set by ingenious and ultimately artificial contrivances. Are they to be avoided for that reason? Sometimes it is more effective to follow the flow of action where it naturally leads—as Shakespeare did; as Ibsen did in *Peer Gynt*. (And he is the man who is regarded as the forerunner of the realistic convention.) But do we dare scrap the realistic drawing-room and write for, say, a multiple unit setting, knowing that one look at the synopsis of scenes on the front page of the MS. will be enough to set a large proportion of theatre producers reaching for their "outwards" tray?

There is a more fundamental difficulty in respect to this question of form. It arises from the preconceptions of some theatrical managers about what they consider to be "the rules of dramatic construction". May I give a personal example: the formal concept of tragedy is that it arises from the actions or character of the tragic hero and proceeds through mounting disaster, culminating in his inevitable downfall. Great tragedies, both classic and modern—*The Death of a Salesman*, for example—follow this form; and it is good, as far as it goes. But is it the only permissible dramatic form of tragedy? In life,

tragedy is often totally unexpected, totally unrelated to the characters or actions of those involved. It strikes as suddenly as an overturning motor car on a wet road; a child falling from a balcony; or a bride drowned on her honeymoon. These things are tragic in reality, and I feel they are dramatically valid, too.

I experimented with this kind of tragedy in a play called *Legend*. I have been told that it is not tragic. Audiences would be surprised, not moved, by the unprepared catastrophe. I rationalise my method by pointing the parallel with Greek tragedy—the *deux ex machina*, the divinely delivered thunderbolt which strikes down the hero. My critics reply, truly enough, that the Greek audience knew the plot. They were aware of the outcome and were prepared for the catastrophe. Left without theoretical precedent, I can only argue that I believe that if my kind of tragedy were played with honesty, the audience would recognise the situation as one which happens all too often in everyday life, and would find the sudden, irrevocable shattering of happiness credible, and, because of that, moving.

But, when all is said and done, there is only one proof whether I am right, or whether there is no possibility of departure from traditional theory in this direction—that proof is in production.

My final question then is this: should the playwright, at this stage of Australian theatrical development, aim first for production, even at the cost of conformity, if conformity is a price demanded; or is innovation, a free choice of material, irrespective of the present day "market", a better course in the long run, both for the playwright as a creative artist, and for the Australian national drama which we hope will some day emerge?

BARRIERS and BIGOTRY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SECTARIANISM IN THE WEST AUSTRALIAN CHURCH

by Peter Boyce

It is one of the ironies of human history that the illumination which has brought into religion a perception of the unity of God and the brotherhood of mankind should at the same time have promoted intolerance and persecution.

Arnold Toynbee: *A Study of History*, Vol. IV.

It would be as easy as it would be unfair to dramatize the present-day influence of sectarian feeling on Australian national life. To suggest that bigotry and ignorance are reinforcing the social barriers erected by divergent doctrines is certainly not to imply that a public argument between a Protestant and Roman Catholic bishop could mean a resort to arms or even to a "cold" holy war. Moreover, although it is true that the religious affiliations of the Australian people reflect to a marked degree their racial origins, these religio-ethnic divisions are by no means faithfully repeated in the composition of the major political parties, as in Canada, for example, where the French-speaking element is traditionally true to the Liberal flag, or in unhappy South Africa, where the Dutch Reformed Church persistently lends its considerable support to the Nationalist Party's root-and-branch *apartheid* policy, against the combined hostility of nearly all the remaining churches in that country.

Peter Boyce is now completing his M.A. in History at the University of W.A., and is shortly to leave for the United States on a scholarship to the Duke University.

Sectarian bitterness in Western Australia dates from the arrival of the first Methodists in 1830, when the exclusiveness of the Anglican middle-class colony was disturbed. Following upon the official recognition of dissenters in 1840 and the first influx of Roman Catholics, many of them decidedly of the "working class", there followed a realignment of church factions from Anglican-versus-Dissenter to Protestant-versus-Roman Catholic.

Although the transplanted Church of England was never "established" in Western Australia, Anglicans were accorded privileges which were denied Roman Catholics and others. Chaplains were paid from the Civil List, buildings were financed and the social precedence of the Church consolidated. Feeling between Roman Catholics and Protestants was further exacerbated by the economic superiority of the latter, the infiltration of Spanish priests into the Roman Catholic hierarchy and subsequently by the admission of a large number of Irish convicts.

The fortunes of the Christian Church were largely dependent on the goodwill of the governor, who was normally Anglican and prejudiced against papists and dissenters. A showdown between Governor Arthur Kennedy and Bishop Serra over educational reforms and the appointment of convict chaplains spelled the total defeat of the latter and redress was not found till 1869 with the appointment of Frederick Weld as the first Roman Catholic governor of Western Australia.

Weld's conciliation in the time-worn quarrel between the Anglican-dominated State and the Roman Catholic Church improved the finances and raised the social tone of the latter body, and above all it accelerated the growth of Roman Catholic schools.

Western Australia was the last of the Australian colonies to be secularised completely, and this was the result of the initiative of

Premier John Forrest and John Winthrop Hackett, who deplored the sectarian bickering which accompanied the annual scramble for the loaves and fishes distributed by the government. Congregationalists, arch-supporters of the principle of voluntaryism, greeted the 1895 Assisted Schools Abolition Act and the Ecclesiastical Grants Abolition Act with a loud *te deum*. The Anglicans reluctantly acquiesced, but the angry Bishop Gibney with his weekly *Record* denounced both the Forrest Government for its paltry compensation and the Anglican hierarchy for accepting the legislation without protest.

Although the granting of responsible government to Western Australia in 1890 divested the governor of most of his political power, his social programme continued to be orientated towards the Church of England, especially while the Anglican bishop continued to hold a very senior (though unofficial) position on the table of precedence. Sir Gerard Smith lost favour with the Roman Catholics for accepting the leadership of the local freemasonry and following upon an indignant petition to the Queen, it was assumed by the Roman Catholics that the Queen's representative would never again accept this office. It is therefore of interest to note that on two occasions since that time the governor has been installed as Grand Master of the ancient order of freemasons in Western Australia.

At times it must have been difficult for a devout Anglican governor to distinguish between his private parish duties and his obligatory public appearances, though in very recent years Government House has preserved a most charitable and diplomatic poise in planning the governor's engagement book.

During World War I the Fenian spirit of neutrality was fanned in this country by Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne, reaching its inglorious climax in the conscription referenda of 1916-17. In Western Australia, however, the Roman Catholic community was actually encouraged to register a YES vote by the pro-British Clune, himself a chaplain to the forces and friend of the Anglican Bishop Riley.

Even today Western Australia certainly appears to have been less ruffled than the rest of Australia by the recent sectarian controversies. True, industrial groupers are not the darlings of many Protestants, even staunchly anti-Communist ones, and on the issue of state aid to church schools some Protestant sandgropers seem resolved to preserve the status quo at all cost. These bones of contention could, but need not, provide fuel for further sectarian fires, but there is absent meanwhile the hysterical hatred which separates many Anglican evangelicals in Sydney from Irish Roman Catholicism, an unsavoury hangover from Irish national history.

To what, then, can the larger Christian churches of Western Australia attribute their present-day co-existence? Is it due partly to the growth of nominalism and the absence of legions of anti-Catholic Ulstermen in the Church of England? Perhaps the personal influence of tolerant and amicable church leaders has tended over the years to pour the oil of charity over troubled sectarian waters. The close bonds of friendship which bound Riley, Clune and the Rabbi Freedman have possibly been romanticised somewhat, but they were nevertheless both real and unique, and could well be repeated elsewhere.

Lastly, it seems obvious that the old economic class divisions are no longer as perceptibly sectarian as they were in the nineteenth century, when the number of genteel, propertied Roman Catholic families was negligible. Since then, economic equality and its handmaid, social equality, has removed a Roman Catholic excuse for grievance against the Protestant majority. Whilst it is probably true that the Church of England still contains proportionally more "bourgeois" adherents than most other communions, so

many of these potentially influential churchmen have been merely nominal, or at least unaccustomed to sacrificial almsgiving, that the alleged economic superiority of the organised Church of England was for a long period more imagined than real. Admittedly within the past three years the salesmanship of the Wells Corporation and various local schemes of "promotion" have tapped the latent material wealth of the Anglican Church, but not only the Anglicans have been taking American lessons in money-raising.

Probably the dual system of primary and secondary education does as much as anything else to sharpen and perpetuate what religious differences already exist in the West Australian community. The university, on the other hand, does not produce the same diverse effect on its students, and even the colleges seem to breed a spirit of tolerance and free intellectual inquiry.

The University's founding fathers followed the Australian tradition of complete secularism and the Labour Government of the day went one better by refusing to nominate Bishop C. O. L. Riley to the first Senate, though it was well known to the public that with Hackett and Battye, Riley had been the driving force behind the Royal Commission which had induced the Government to establish the university.

There has been surprisingly little ecumenical experiment in Western Australia, a process one would normally expect to be facilitated by the pattern and sparsity of settlement. Is it not reasonable to suppose that lonely understaffed flocks in the backblocks would have pioneered a compulsory co-operation of the various Christian groups? Instead, for 130 years, impoverished little minorities have jealously guarded their distinctive traditions by erecting ungainly "temporary" buildings and eking out pittances for frustrated parsons who chase each other round the countryside ignoring the fundamental economic wisdom of a division of labour. With recent experiments in joint Anglican-Methodist church ownership in two wheatbelt towns and the Presbyterian-Congregationalist union in Kalgoorlie and Bunbury, some progress must be recognized, but in most areas the wastage of manpower and money continues to stultify the work and witness of the Christian Church. The World Council of Churches has not fired the imagination of many Protestants in this State, though all but the Baptists are represented on it. Anglicans are particularly sceptical in many quarters, despite the initiative that was taken by William Temple, who described it as "the great new factor of our time".

Against the background of this inertia and particularism must be set the appalling ignorance of rank-and-file Christians in Western Australia of practices and beliefs other than their own. It is not unknown for a devout Methodist family to have discovered with joyful surprise that a Roman Catholic priest could be extremely pleasant company—and possibly even a Christian!

Whether or not a high Roman Catholic birthrate and sustained immigration programme will ever seriously disturb the present preponderance of Protestants in the Christian population here, only time will tell; but many of the latter are already anxious to stem the tide of immigration from southern Europe, and see in the "Bring out a Briton" slogan their only means of salvation.

It is to be hoped that the uglier facets of sectarianism will be avoided at all costs. Even if Christ's own prayer "that all may be one" is not yet an accomplished fact in the organised life of the Church, it would be deplorable if critics could point the accusing finger and say of our own outpost of Christendom what Lucretious said of Roman religious life: *Tantum religio potvit suadere malorum*—"Such an enormity of evil has religion instigated."

Youthful Traditions ....a Paradox?

THE AUSTRALIAN TRADITION: Studies in a Colonial Culture, by A. A. Phillips (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1958).

FORTUNATELY, the title of Mr. Phillips' book is misleading. It is not an obituary. It does not deal with 'A Tradition,' but with a few of the traditional themes evident in Australian literature. Moreover, it is a virtue of the essays that they are far less self-conscious than the title suggests. Mr. Phillips has the gift of illuminating general themes when dealing with particular issues. Though the essays were written on several occasions, with no intentional connection, the five most important (the first four and the sixth) display connecting threads. Hints in one essay are developed in another, showing that Mr. Phillips is a true professional, constantly thoughtful about the general trends in Australian literature.

The first two essays deal with the craftsmanship of Lawson and of Furphy (Collins) respectively. Mr. Phillips knows the works of these two writers thoroughly. He rarely fails to find an apt quotation when he wants to illustrate his argument—and he argues convincingly from the evidence that Lawson and Collins were better craftsmen than is usually allowed. The only way to refute his convincing arguments would be to study Lawson's and Furphy's writing with as much careful attention. This is the sort of criticism Australian wirting needs; the sort that makes you return to some work to study it more attentively, and probably with greater enjoyment.

These two essays lead naturally to the third, "The Democratic Theme". There is a widespread assumption that the democratic theme in Australian literature is an unvarying Good-on-you-mate egalitarianism. Mr. Phillips reminds us that the attitude of Australian writers to democracy has undergone important changes in emphasis: mostly a decline from the early cocksureness that Australia was the land of the future of the Common Man to a sense of uneasiness and of partial failure. However, despite Vance Palmer's attempt at demolition,* the Nineties myth dies hard. Mr. Phillips lists a dozen novelists ("the list could be extended to wearisome length") who exhibit the formative influence of the literature of the Nineties. He concludes that "Australian practice proves the paradox that a youthful crudity can itself become a tradition".

The myth of the Nineties is useful in that every Australian is born with something of its egalitarian fervour in his veins. There are considerably less attractive congenital attitudes. However, it begins to flavour Australian novels a little monotonously—because it has the aroma of dogma. For novelists, dogma can be restricting. Certainly among Australian novelists this particular dogma tends to stifle that other Australian virtue: irony.

I am not sure that Mr. Phillips is aware of this danger entirely. In his fourth essay, "The Family Relationship," he appears to find the youthful crudity a necessary element:

Slap-dash—the word suggests a difficulty typical of the whole problem of a colonial culture. Much of our writing is rough and untidy. The cultivated Australian with a pride in his country—the qualification is important—finds this distressing. With the inhibiting colonial habit of comparison, he wishes that his writers did not thus expose themselves to the disdain of the European. But when an Australian writer attempts a polished precision, the Australian reader is no happier—the baby mysteriously disappears with the bath water.

Mr. Phillips is very near the mark here. I am personally very much aware of this ambivalent attitude. While in Europe I read Australian novels very eagerly, because I yearned for the particular vitality of our way of life. At home, enjoying our way of life at first-hand, I do find something missing in many Australian novels. Is it because the writers have not tried hard enough to reconcile precision and youthful vigour? The odd thing is that, in this regard, our poets and our playwrights seem to be more successful. That may be because most of our influential earlier writers were novelists or short-story writers; or there may be other factors.

Mr. Phillips is not altogether clear about this. I am not sure that he is always using the terms 'youthful vigour' and 'slap-dash'

* Vance Palmer: "The Legend of the Nineties."

review SECTION

with precision. The paragraph following the one quoted above concludes:

> After all, there was once a slap-dash lad from Stratford over whom Ben Jonson shook his learned head.

Well! If Shakespeare was slap-dash, what is there to argue about?

The other important essay, "The Australian Romanticism and Stewart's Ned Kelly," again increases our appreciation of a particular work while illuminating a general theme—the rather sardonic brand of romanticism which is characteristic of Australian literature.

The remaining essays are lightweight and give the impression of a slight hastiness in gathering a collection for publication in book form. I might have been more enthusiastic about all the essays if it were not that they seem to have been published without very much revision. Mr. Phillips makes many sound comments and quite often strikes the exact note: "The Australian temperament is essentially pragmatic—a quality which is sometimes mistaken for materialism." However in some places the argument is spoilt by uncharacteristic imprecision—as has been shown. I am sure that a man of Mr. Phillips' taste must regret the publication of some passages.

Has he, for example, re-read, with critical attention, that famous essay of his, "The Cultural Cringe"? He has some pertinent things to say in this essay; so pertinent that the title was adopted, soon after the essay first appeared in *Meanjin,* as a useful label for a certain attitude. But my! it is heavy-handed in places; not least in the opening sentence:

> Once upon a time (and not very long ago) the Australian Broadcasting Commission used to present a Sunday programme, designed to cajole a mild Sabbatarian bestirment of the wits.

Mercifully, Mr. Phillips is not always so slap-dash!

DAVID HUTCHISON.

Wooped Up ?

CALL ME WHEN THE CROSS TURNS OVER, by Darcy Niland. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1958).

DESPITE A DEAL of unfavourable criticism, there can be no gainsaying that Darcy Niland scored a popular success with the *Shirallee.* Even more successful was the film version, produced with an (almost) full Australian cast, so that the *Shirallee* (which, by the way, means 'burden') must literally have proved its worth in gold, for those concerned.

It was not long before the writer followed up with another with the piquant title of *Call Me When The Cross Turns Over.* The first paragraph promises well:

> A woman went to live at Moonlight when Moonlight was nothing—no more than a tumbling building, a pair of wheel tracks and a shape in the grass where a house used to be. She put up a house on the bank of the creek and waited for time to go by, but one day she left with another who became her mate and the swagman use that hut now.

Encouraged, we proceed with the story, and it is soon obvious that we have here the ingredients for another successful outback film. The dialogue seems stilted at first, but read as a scenario it is quite competent.

The heroine, Barbie Cazabon, orphaned and alone in a cruel hard "man's world," somehow manages to retain her virtue to the end. Seeking love and security, she battles round the outback in a variety of jobs, until a suitable hero emerges in the form of "Fascinating," or "Fass," who is not only a magnificent hunk of tough - but - tender - underneath type of manhood, but possesses, into the bargain, one brown and one blue eye. Through a misunderstanding, however, Barbie deserts "Fass" and marries another. Somewhat cheered at this slightly unconventional turn of events, we are again plunged into gloom as the wrong guy dies of a heart attack and "Fass" is first on the scene to comfort the young widow.

The literary quality of the book is patchy. An occasional gem of a paragraph shines through the general mediocrity of style, but the writer clearly knows what he is about. He sketches his characters skilfully and is well versed in the vernacular of the bush "booze artists". He knows what makes them laugh and cry, and, in short, what makes them tick. One suspects he must be writing from first-hand knowledge and feels, therefore, homehow let down by an underlying lack of sincerity.

Although not to be recommended for grandmothers or schoolgirls, many will enjoy this book for its colour, excitement and romance, and may even be fooled into believing that it portrays the "real Australian outback". In fact, it is about as typical as a popular American "Western" is typical of life in that setting. Incidents that are highlights of the years crowd on each other's heels, presenting a thoroughly "whooped up" version of the real thing. Many other Australian writers such as Katherine Susannah Pritchard, Kylie Tennant, Tom Ronan and Miles Franklin have written of the outback so much better, though probably with less popular appeal.

So, we must at least hand it to Niland that he knows what the public likes and serves it up in

generous helpings. Nonetheless, his wife Ruth Park manages to combine the same appeal with considerably more sincerity, and does not leave the reader with the sneaking suspicion of having been played like a fish on a line by an artful angler.

PATSY MILLER.

Mature Writer's First Novel

QUIET, BRAT! by H. H. Wilson. (Sydney: Dymock's Book Arcade Ltd., 1958).

IT IS ALWAYS a matter worthy of comment when a writer steps from one literary form to another. In the case of H. H. Wilson, who has established herself in the short story field in Australia, there are reasons why the publication of her first novel merits some introductory notes on the author before considering the novel itself.

Helen Helga Wilson, the woman who shelters behind the initials H.H.W., has been writing for her own pleasure most of her life—poetry, children's stories, sketches, and articles for press and radio. Only in her fifties, however, did she see her first novel in print.

By that time she had brought to her work a mature outlook on life, an understanding of people and an awareness of the motivations of human behaviour. A very full personal life with an adult family has provided first-hand knowledge of the post-war generation and given her unusual insight into the emotional conflicts of adolescence.

Her treatment of contemporary problems gains by this.

Helen Wilson's attitude to life is that of the Australian born, who has lived since early childhood in Western Australia. Educated at both private and public schools, she went on to take a B.A. degree at the University of W.A., majoring in history. From this source, I suggest, flows two influences which I find mark her work strongly. Her outlook is coloured by what might be termed a "professional woman's viewpoint". This is reflected in two ways in her work: in its social content and in the strength of her women characters.

The second influence comes from her special study of history, which conditions her approach to background material. Whatever she writes contains authenticity of scene with accuracy of event. In addition, she frequently turns to the past for a nice touch of historical allusion.

Helen Wilson has had stories accepted since her twenties, and upwards of one hundred have appeared in print in magazines, journals and newspapers. She has had singular success in literary competitions. Her entry in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Competition was placed sixth in 675 entries. More recently she won second place for "A Field of Wheat" in the A.J.A. Competition. The judges highly commended the striking originality of theme, and her treatment of the difficult subject of inter-racial hatred between those who had fought in the last war. The scene is set in Japan (recently visited by Mrs. Wilson), where an Australian goes to avenge deep wrongs and finds a new understanding of the Japanese people.

It might be thought, then, that having discovered so rich a vein in the field she has so successfully pegged out for herself, H. H. Wilson would have continued to exploit it to its fullest extent in view of the almost limitless possibilities it presents to her fertile mind. Another point in favour of the short story is that this writer-housewife can control this medium within the time limited to her.

Mrs. Wilson, however, has set herself the task of conquering the longer form of the novel while continuing to write short stories. Here again she has succeeded.

Quiet, Brat!—though her first novel to be published, is in fact the third she has written. A previous novel was serialised, while another was commended in the same S.M.H. literary contest in which her short story was placed sixth. Set in Shark Bay, on the Nor'-West coastline of W.A., and titled *Where the Wind's Feet Shine,* it is now in the hands of her publishers.

Quiet, Brat! will certainly build Helen Wilson's reputation as a story-teller and a mature writer of much insight. The title, by the way, comes from the expression used to quieten child patients by nurses and doctors in a children's hospital.

This novel is a fast-moving piece of fiction with the action compacted into three days over the busy Christmas festivities in a children's hospital. Here are all the elements of drama, and the author draws on them to the full.

The setting is remarkably authentic; the hospital with its wards, out-patients' department, and nurses' and medical staff quarters. The corporate life, the discipline, the well-regulated routine and the technical matters concerning administration and medical procedure are authentic and well delineated. This is, as far as I can gather, the first novel written around hospital life in Australia. The Mary Latimer Hospital for Children, founded some century ago by a co-worker of Florence Nightingale is recognisable as any hospital for children in any big city of Australia—a little private world of its own into which patients and parents come as transients, while life within the hospital goes on and on.

The events of the brief three days happen each on the heels of the other. A hit-and-run accident

bringing death to one child and the shattering of mind of his twin sister; a desperately ill tetanus case; the suicide of a nurse; and finally a fire in an old two-storied wing. The atmosphere of suspense against a background of summer heat is caught from the opening sentence, and maintained to the closing phrase. The fire is but the culmination of smouldering hatreds and resentments, acting as a catharsis, cleansing and purifying in many directions, so that a promise of a better life emerges for many of the hospital inmates.

There is a warm understanding of people and of life—its weaknesses and strengths, its pettiness and its grandeur—that makes this more than merely a fast-moving piece of entertaining reading. Memories remain of the characters, clearly etched and moulded by past events, yet changing in the stresses and strains of the cataclysmic happenings of the narrative.

Matron Fowler, well preserved, the good administrator, "progress" her slogan, sublimating the woman to the place-seeker, cultivating the people of influence for the good of the institution. True to type, yet not "typed". The Supervising Sister, Jane Tweedie, devoted and dedicated to all that is noblest in the profession, philosophically aware that not all the nurses who take up training do so for love of the job; yet trying to understand and help the two hundred or so youngsters in her care under the new system of "free" discipline.

The younger nurses, among them Virginia Duff, a warm and sympathetic country girl, alienated from home by her mother's cry from the heart, "Why couldn't it have been you" when her younger brother was killed by a wool-truck on their outback station. Able by the knowledge of this emotional wound to help heal the youngster brought into her care from the street accident. Then, finding release herself and reconciliation with her family, she falls in love with the Hospital Superintendent, Dr. James Devlin, whose sense of values was also violently upset by the events of the Christmas season.

There are other men in the tale, but it is the women who remain in the memory—especially old Sister Fullbright, whose certificate might have been in question, but not her knowledge of the value of "mothering" to sick children; who believed all parents to be born fools and hospitals places where they put their mistakes.

It is round this theme of parental influence on children's emotional make-up and subsequent behaviour that the novel is primarily based.

The whole pattern of this novel is so recognisably Australian that it is likely to prove popular here while being accepted overseas for its universal qualities. The warp and woof of the weave is of the home-grown variety, local colour and colloquial idiom; but the fabric is contemporary, of this day and age.

IRENE GREENWOOD.

Short-sighted Idealism

THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI.
Producer: Sam Spiegel.
Director :David Lean.

CONSIDERED from any point of view, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* is a film which has the qualities to make those who have seen it want to think it, talk it, and probably see it, over again. It has compressed within it the essence of the human spirit, with its rather bewildering variety of aspects and manifestations and has fused these in the awe-inspiring climax to establish a complex yet unified and compelling impression of man as a glorious, tragic creation.

The achievement of this universality is due to a remarkable combination of a tragically ironic story, sensitive and dynamic photography, and almost flawless acting. The result is an illusion of reality so strong that the entire experience seems to come alive. One feels what it is like to be young and afraid in war; one recoils from the sticky, blistering heat in the yard of the prison camp, and delights in the cold shock from a dip in the clear river water.

Such is the impact and self-contained unity of literally dozens of brief scenes in the film that one tends to dwell on them individually instead of seeing them as an enrichment of the main theme. This portrays the futility of man's greatest efforts to do what he thinks is for the best. Tragedy occurs when it is seen that his ideals are narrow, short-sighted or foolish.

Colonel Nicholson undertakes the seemingly impossible task of standing out against the Japanese andagainst the forces of apathy among his own men by inspiring them to build a stalwart bridge across the river within the deadline set down by the Japanese commander.

Nicholson appears at first to be a soldier of the greatest moral and spiritual strength, achieving a single-handed victory over the Japanese mentality by his sheer inner integrity and his strict soldier's code. But as the building of the bridge proceeds it becomes for him an intensely personal creation—the symbol of his life-success —and his very strength becomes his weakness as he prepares to sacrifice anything for the successful completion of the bridge.

To watch him as he leads a small band of sick soldiers from

the hospital to help with the construction is both to marvel at him and to despair of him at the same time. Carried away by his personal goal, he in the end betrays his own countrymen, and it is only when he is brought physically face to face with this fact that he sees his own narrowness. The truth destroys him.

In Nicholson, Guinness creates a character who, one feels, will outlive the film itself. Equally convincing is the Japanese commander, Colonel Saito. His moral defeat by the British occurs only because of his loneliness and isolation in a position of leadership where the penalty for failure is suicide. There is an implied condemnation of the Japanese system, yet for Saito himself one feels the greatest sympathy.

This feeling extends less easily to Major Warden, a British commando leader whose task is to blow up the bridge, for his physical grit and determination are overshadowed by the same fanaticism which grips Colonel Nicholson. He, too, is willing to sacrifice the qualities of humanism which are so essential to man if he is to be a complete and worthwhile human being.

In Shears, the American, are seen the qualities that Nicholson and Warden lack so tragically. His whole being is in tune with the beauty of the jungle, which is made a symbol of all that is natural and life-giving. When in contact with men like Nicholson he is hard and cynical to a fault; but his response to anything beautiful and friendly is immediate and vital, be it the (suspiciously beautiful) girl-porters, or simply the vibrant jungle through which he moves so easily that he might be one of its own creatures.

When he and his young commando companion lie dead at the river's edge, it seems tragic that they should be sacrificed by the folly of their fellow countrymen. And it seems fitting that the bridge should be blasted into a thousand pieces, leaving nature once again in possession of the quiet clearing. The efforts of "inhuman" man have ended in defeat.

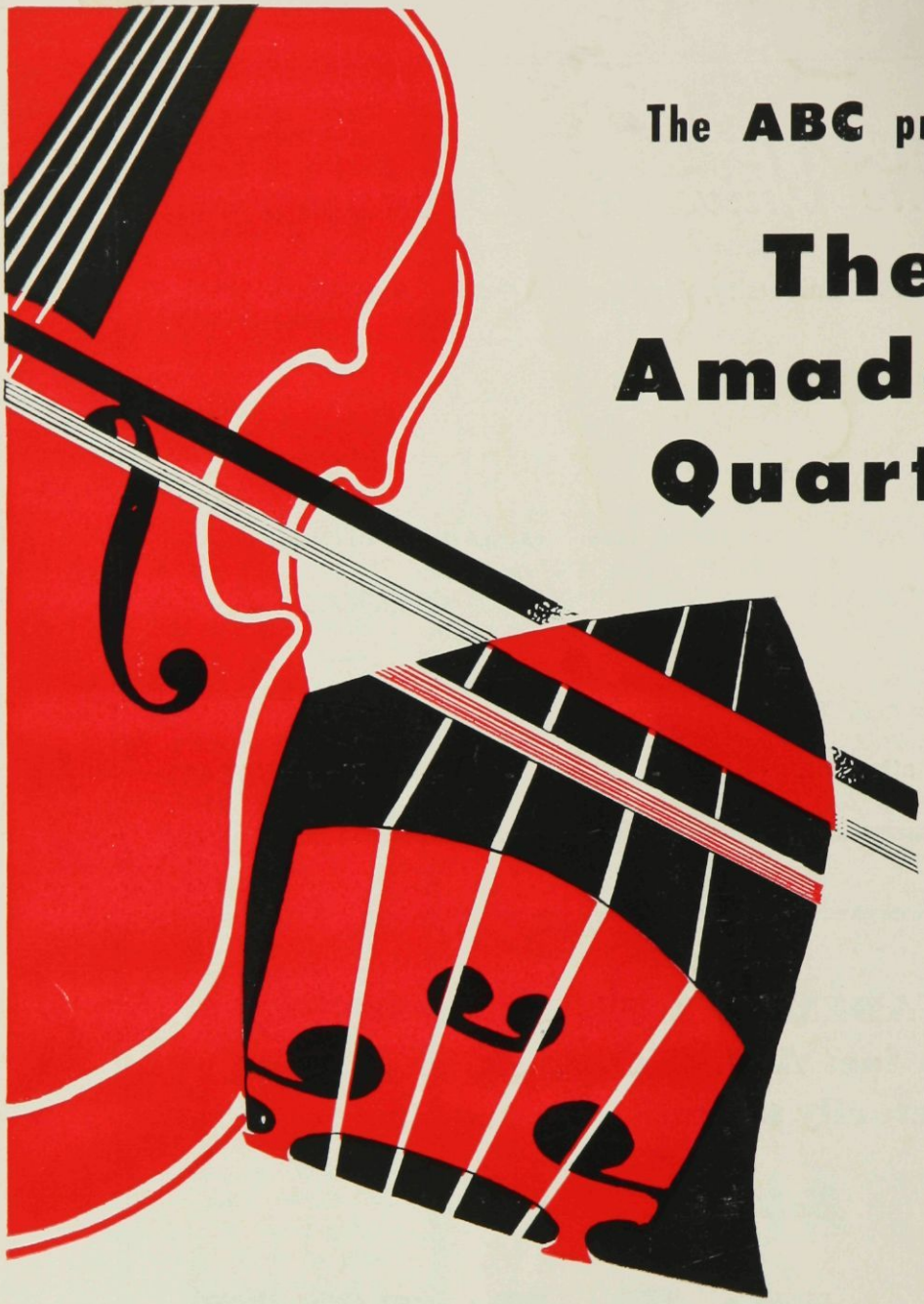
But because Shears and the young commando—stretched out on the drying sands below—sacrificed themselves for the sake of their friends, though they did not share in their folly, a strong faith in the value of the human spirit persists.

One is slow to criticise a film of this breadth, and the only observation demanding mention is that in the attempt to compress such a large number of independent scenes into the film, one or two of them appear a little contrived, particularly the question of killing a fellow-human in warfare.

It is hard to imagine that the photography in the film could be more dramatic or sensitive. In its constant pointing of the contrast between the harmony of nature and the activities of man it underlines and unifies the theme of the film at the same time as giving a rich visual feast. In one moment millions of birds rise into the air, screaming in protest at the sudden blast from a machine-gun; then the camera focusses on the still jungle pool, the waters of which are stained a brilliant scarlet by the blood from the bodies of three hapless Japanese soldiers. The motionless trees and the shocked girl-porters stand frozen in mute protest.

Such is the impact of *The Bridge on the River Kwai,"* and such it will remain.

R. W. ALLEN.



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