

The Lady Chatterley Case

overland

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TWO AND SIX

poetry. stories
reviews. features



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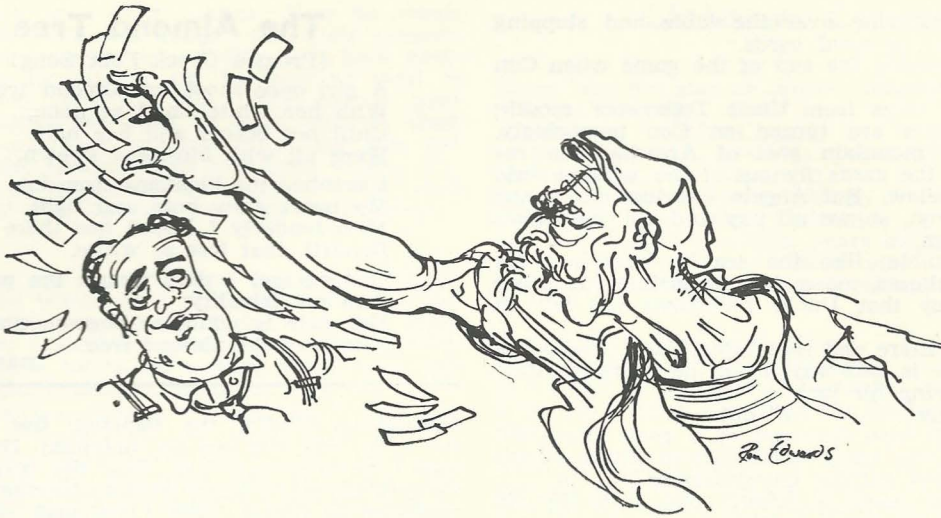
OVERLAND

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EDITOR, OVERLAND, G.P.O. BOX 98a, MELBOURNE, C.I.



UNCLE TSEBOUKAS

by James Galanis

NOBODY seems to know his name. He is called Tseboukas because he always smokes a tsebouke-pipe. He has dropped his proper name Dimitri somewhere in the dim past. Perhaps it was washed overboard into the sea where he has spent most of his life.

Now he is called Uncle Tseboukas and that's how all the Greeks know him, around Newcastle way.

In age he is over three score and ten. Short, slightly stooped, with a walrus moustache and cloth cap on his head. He has a quick walk and his pipe seems to go ahead of him.

He is known by every skipper in the Australian coastal trade and their preference for him over younger men is amazing. He can still beat any young man as a deck hand. He is a sea man, as he should be, because he hails from the island of Hydra, the place which has given Greece her sea heroes and still gives her admirals.

"Why don't you give up the sea, Uncle Tseboukas?" I said to him one day.

"Does one give up his mother? I was born in it." And so it goes.

He disappears from time to time for six, twelve months. Just when everybody at the Greek Club wonders if they are ever going to see him again, his cloth cap and pipe appear at the top of the big stairs and all feel happy he is back again.

Personally, I am overjoyed. I have become attached to Uncle Tseboukas.

"Good-day, Uncle."

"Good-day, son."

"How goes it?" I ask him, but he is not interested in that.

"Are we going to play anything?" comes his reply.

"If we can get a couple more, yes."

He turns his chair around to get a look at who is in the club rooms. He is fussy with whom he plays.

"Hey, Con!" I hear him call, and over comes the chap who has the Embassy Cafe down the street. "He cheats, the dog, but he is a good sport," Uncle Tseboukas turns and says to me.

"Hey, Angelo!" I hear again, and over comes Angelo, the pie manufacturer, as he is referred to in the Club.

"Hey, Pentakosas!" he calls to the man who looks after the Club, called that because when he first came to Australia he said that when he had five hundred pounds he was going back to his island, Ithaca, in Greece. Pentakosas—five hundred. That was long ago. Now Pentakosas has settled here and brought his wife and children out to Australia.

Pentakosas comes over. "Yes, Uncle?"

"Giftiko," old Tseboukas remarks to him, "clean slate, too."

Uncle Tseboukas then looks at us sitting around the table. "No cheating," he says to Con, and the four of us settle down to a round of Greek rummy.

I see him watching Con like a hawk, and occasionally he mutters things to himself. No one knows what he is saying. But that is the usual procedure with Uncle Tseboukas. We have played a couple of rounds when I see him turn round and give the once over to all who are near him, then take out his handkerchief and tie a knot on it. To stop the tongues who talk about him. He resumes his game. His luck seems to be out.

"How many times have I told you to learn the game," Con tells him, but Uncle Tseboukas just keeps quiet.

Several minutes pass and he has picked cards which are no use to him. Out comes the match box. Several matches are placed on top of the box, the heads turned to the centre and set alight. The matches burn and old Tseboukas is muttering to himself, cursing the evil spirits which bring him bad luck.

Pentakosas strolls over to the table with coffee for all, sees the matches burning and looks at the old man. "Bad luck, Uncle?"

"Shut up, you black son of Ithaca," he says, and resumes his muttering.

A few more rounds have been played. The handkerchief by now is a mass of knots and the box of matches empty.

A head of garlic has made its appearance; this he has waved over us, to scatter away the spirits

which are hovering over the table and stopping him from getting good cards.

We are nearing the end of the game when Con is caught cheating.

The pipe comes from Uncle Tseboukas' mouth; two cold eyes are turned on Con menacingly. "Curse you, mountain goat of Arcadia," he remarks, and the cards fly out of the window into the street below. But Angelo has just closed the game. He won, so we all pay and old Tseboukas gets up to go.

"Unpredictable, like the sea he lives in," remarks Pentakosas, meanwhile collecting his share of the money that Uncle Tseboukas has left on the table.

I pay my share and race after Uncle Tseboukas who by now is half-way down the stairs, muttering and cursing his luck.

"Hey, Uncle . . ." I call out.

"You can't trust that son of a goat, you can't trust him. You can't trust Giftiko either, that's why it's called Giftiko, Gypsy's game."

"Come and have a drink," and into the old Criterion we go for a beer.

"Just like the sea, son, unpredictable. One minute calm surface like a mirror. Color so blue that it takes your breath away. Her summer breeze so caressing on your cheeks, soothing, and you fall in love with her. You love her so much that you can't bear to be away from her. And so you go back to her again and again, a lifetime. Then suddenly she darkens, she becomes angry and wants to swallow you, to devour you, take you deep into her abyss. Her caressing breeze all false. Then you have to fight to save yourself, to live, to get away from her wrath, from her brutal gluttonous nature of wanting to take everything deep down into her guts. When you have survived and she has become calm again, what do you do? You return to her. Like a lover back to his beloved. No good cursing her. One does not curse the woman he loves. There are times when I feel like it, but I remember . . ."

★

Sixty years he has been in this country, but he is still the old Greek sea-man of Hydra, courageous, tough, weatherbeaten and superstitious, as all men are who have fallen under the spell of the sea.

Uncle Tseboukas loves Australia; perhaps he knows her as very few men do, in all her moods—from Darwin to Cape Byron, from Bass Strait to Cape York—but that is his second love. He will never forsake her; he will always be her servant; but basically he is the man from Hydra. Even his love for the sea, the Australian sea, is the love of a Hydra man.

In all the struggles of the Australian seamen to better themselves Uncle Tseboukas took part.

"You have to be in the union, son. You have to be. You have to fight to live, that's how the world is today. It will change. I have seen it change, but it will take time. In the depression we went hungry, son. Not the big fellows. They had plenty. So you see you have to be in the union. You have to be with your mates, and there are no better mates than the Aussies. To be called 'mate' by them you have to earn it. God and Saint Marina of Hydra knows that I deserve to be called mate," and he crossed himself.

We were having a cup of Greek coffee at the Club. He had just come back from a long trip, a strike was just over. The Club was full of the new arrivals.

"See all these new chums, son? They have to be taught to appreciate Australia and what the old mates have done for them. I remember the

The Almond Tree

(From a Greek Folk Song)

A girl once shook an almond tree
With her white hand at noon,
Until her bosom and her hair
Were all with blossoms strewn.

I brushed the blossoms from her hair,
My heart grew bold and light,
Most tenderly I kissed her there
Beneath that tree so white.

O! time and I shall mourn the past
And my frivolity;
Her hair is white as blossom now,
And bare the almond tree.

DAVID MARTIN

festivals in Hydra, the dancing, the dipping of the cross into the sea on Epiphany Day in January. I remember, too, how the girls used to look at me when I was young, dancing the Kalamatianos in Hydra. And I am part of that, but you have to be also part of the land in which you live. That's why I had to love Australia. It was not hard to do it. The people, my mates, made me love her. The first time I was called mate, long ago, I realised that I earned it, because I always do what my father has taught me to do—always be helpful to others, be honest and sincere. I guess I will be happy to go to sleep for ever here, I will be sleeping with Australia and dreaming of Hydra."

Taking an extra puff from his pipe, he said, "Yes, we have to teach these new fellows to understand Australia."

★

One day I was walking along Hunter Street doing my work as a salesman. I came bang up against Psera—the flea—and Kavouras—the crab.

"Have you heard the news?" they asked me. "Old Billy Brown is dead."

Many years ago Uncle Tseboukas, Billy Brown (so called because he resembled Brown the coal baron), Mimi, the oyster man, and Panta, the racing expert (his name an abbreviation of "Punter"), were inseparable. They always played cards together. Panta and Mimi had died a couple of years earlier, and now old Billy Brown has gone. I went straight to the Club looking for Uncle Tseboukas and there he was sitting near the end window drinking a cup of coffee and puffing at his pipe. No one was near him. His face betrayed nothing but I could see his thoughts were far away. I knew because the radio was on giving the latest race and he was not listening as he usually did. I sat near him and ordered a cup of coffee for myself.

Pentakosas brought it. "Billy's gone," he said. "You better get ready, Tseboukas; you are the only one left."

"Curse you, and may thistles grow on your grave when your time comes."

"And where do you think you will be?" retorted Pentakosas, and went to attend to another customer.

I sat there drinking my cup of coffee, wondering how to get the conversation going.

"Billy's gone," he started it for me. "He died a pauper. Gianni down the road said Billy has to have a good funeral and he will pay the expenses. So he should. He bled him to death for years working for him. Now he is going to bury him with all the trimmings. But where was Gianni in the depression? Not a penny for Billy, although he always worked for him. He put him off, although he had tons of money to help Billy with

an occasional feed. Not Gianni. Now he wants to bury him with trimmings. To satisfy himself. That will not happen to me, son. The poor bastard worked for Gianni till he was no good to anyone. God bless his soul. Billy was a good man. Whatever he saved he went through when he could not work anymore, and that was not much because Gianni never paid good wages. Tomorrow is the funeral. Let's go for a walk." And down to the old Criterion we went for a drink.

★

Two days had passed since we buried Billy—"with all the trimmings," as Uncle Tseboukas had said. I was making for the Club. As I was going up the stairs I could hear Uncle Tseboukas yelling: "You son of a turtle, no mother would own you for a son."

"What's wrong, Uncle?" I said as I got near him.

"Look what this son of the devil has done," he said, pointing at Pentakosas, and he handed me a letter, the envelope bearing the red lines cross-wise, indicating it was a registered one. The envelope was addressed to: Old Tseboukas, Omonia Club, Newcastle.

I took the letter out of it and started to read, he meanwhile watching me intently and muttering curses.

Grave 12356,
Sandgate,
N.S.W.

Dear Tseboukas,

I arrived here, as you know, two days ago and found all our old friends, including Mimi and Panta. I have a nice spot with a view. It was prepared by Mimi and Panta and they have a spot set aside for you when you are ready to come. We do no work, just relax all day, and when we like we play cards. It's really good not to have to work any more. Hurry up and come, and when you do, bring two packets of cards so we can play Giftiko, but they must be Queen Slipper trademark, because they last longer. And bring one bottle of Greek brandy for Astakos the lobster; he is settled nearby.

We are all waiting for you.

Your pal,
Billy Brown.

It was difficult for me not to burst into laughter. Who could have written it? I kept asking myself. To this day I don't know. Uncle Tseboukas was still cursing Pentakosas.

"They are trying to send you an hour earlier," I said to him, using an old Greek saying.

"Yes, the sons of black-headed witches, but I will be here for many years to come, a nail in their eyes. I bet that Pentakosas is the bastard who did it. That offspring from Ithaca, born not from a woman but the devil himself."

"Never mind, Uncle, we will celebrate many years together yet."

"Bloody oath, son. I will be here for many Giftikos yet."

"Come, let's play now."

A gleam came to his eyes; he turned around, scrutinising the room and the occupants. "Hey Angelo, hey . . ." I saw him hesitate, so I chipped in, "What about Kavouras?"

"No, I want no black sons of Ithaca today. Hey, Davelis," (called after Greece's greatest bush-ranger), "you son of Macedonia."

The game started; out came the head of garlic, the knots were tied in the handkerchief, and

Christmas Comes

There was the star of course over the Rockies sudden and bright as a god. In the commotion three air vice-marshals roared to the sky in pursuit. But it was only a nova in Virgo betraying some cosmic tantrum that was hushed a million years back. In a week the heavens looked safe and the astronomers' charts were updated.

That shy chanting from clouds heard by Queensland sheepmen was found to be freakish backlash from the London shortwave to Jordan.

Jean-Baptiste le Sauvage created some stir for a while. Though his radio stuff seemed only a hodgepodge of Zen, hell-fire, dunking and diet, he completely disarmed the Algerians, and the French generals were pleased. But when he mailed tracts to each soldier in NATO, "Do violence to no one," the usual line, the Wild Man from Quebec was jailed and forgotten, camel-skin trousers and all.

But then the Security Council suddenly fell to agreeing. The Supreme Soviet and the U.S. Congress ran out of work and went on a joint world-tour, complete with wives, cameras, trick-hats, Nasser, Mao, Chiang, and great sheepish grins. So the Rumor spread.

And when none could be found to defame the Jews or beat a man for his skin or his notions, when the great glistening warheads were buried at sea and faces on streets began opening like flowers, we knew it was true

that somewhere again there had been a Birth and Christmas . . . Christmas could be any day every day now and forever.

EARLE BIRNEY (Canada)

matches burned now and again on the altar of Fate to exorcise the evil spirits. Finally Uncle Tseboukas won the game.

"Come, son," he said as he collected the money, about twenty shillings, "let's go and have a drink." Down to the Cri. we strolled.

"Poor old Billy Brown, he's gone. I think I put out to sea tomorrow," he said puffing at his pipe, "I have been ashore long enough."

We had a few drinks. Then: "Health and happiness, son, till we meet again," and off he went, his pipe going before him. Back to one of his loves.

"God be with you," I muttered, but he did not hear me.

His mind already was far away, perhaps in Darwin, perhaps in Townsville . . . perhaps in Hydra.

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O'REGAN'S BRIDE

by Jill Hellyer

O'REGAN drove steadily down from his
run
Through paddocks green-fresh in the winter-
warm sun,
The creeks brimming silver with bountiful
rain
As his car jolted toward to welcome the
train.

Not one head failed to turn as he stopped
by the store
And shouldered his tucker-box out through
the door;
They'd waited for days now to witness the
scene
When O'Regan should meet the eleven-
fifteen.

For they all knew O'Regan was taking a
bride—
He who'd batched in content since his old
mother died—
And a woman who'd take on a codger like
that
Was worth speculation in Wattle Tree Flat.
Boiled mutton was sole bill of fare at his
table
With variety lent per tomato sauce label;
And at sundown the gobblers would rau-
cously lodge
To roost on the chrome of his late-model
Dodge.

Ungainly O'Regan, grizzle-haired, pale of
eye,
Inarticulate, blundering, celibate-shy,
Who had blushed at as many strange girls
as he'd seen,
Was meeting his bride at eleven-fifteen.

In a nimbus of red dust, O'Regan, conspicu-
ous
In fancy new shirt, feeling slightly ridicul-
ous,
Returned the "Good-days" of his neighbors,
aware
Of the jocular glance and the curious stare.

And not one of them guessed he had been
up at four
Down on his awkward knees scrubbing the
floor,
Nor how the place seemed to him suddenly
old
As the dawn filtered cheerlessly, drearily
cold.



But she, she would change it; they couldn't
yet know
How the smile of her lips set her warm eyes
aglow:
She would make this a home and reign here
like a queen—
His sweetheart, his bride, on the eleven-
fifteen.

Pistons shuddered and stopped and the
thirsty-eyed group
Saw O'Regan pull up from his customary
stoop
As a plump-bosomed woman, plain-faced but
serene,
Stepped expectantly down at eleven-fifteen.

It was many a summer since she had been
young
And her beauty would never be honored or
sung;
A more ordinary woman they never had
seen—
Yet she came to O'Regan his bride and his
queen.

The eyes of O'Regan were the eyes of a
child;
They all saw them kiss . . . and not one of
them smiled.
With unusual tact they withdrew from the
scene
In Wattle Tree Flat at eleven-fifteen.

Editorial

A COMMON CULTURE

T“INCREASINGLY men are baffled because the facts are not available; and they are wondering whether government by consent can survive in a time when the manufacture of consent is an unregulated private enterprise.”

Walter Lippmann wrote those words forty years ago. They seem peculiarly appropriate today with the increasing monopolisation of the channels of mass communication, and the spread of that oily slick on the waters that stops the waves breaking and rocking the boat of our complacent society. It is not just a matter of publishers' take-overs, philistine or gutless politicians faced with censorship inanities, or the relentless growth of a press and TV network handing out packaged pap like sliced bread. Nor is it just a matter of the facts not being available. What use is made of the facts that are available by those who claim the right to shape ideas?

The typical intellectual of today, C. Wright Mills points out in the latest issue of *New Left Review*, carries on “a weary discourse in which issues are blurred and potential debate muted.” Mills carries further the discussion of intellectual decadence provokingly posed by E. P. Thompson and Alasdair MacIntyre in “Out of Apathy,” reviewed in our last issue. The N.A.T.O. intellectuals, he says, are tired of what they call “ideology”. The intellectual circles associated, for instance, with the Congress of Cultural Freedom, use a “liberal” rhetoric, Mills says, compounded largely of snobbish assumptions. “The disclosure of fact—set forth in a bright-faced or in a dead-pan manner—is the rule. The facts are duly weighed, carefully balanced, always hedged. Their power to outrage, their power truly to enlighten in a political way, their power to aid decision, even their power to clarify some situation—all that is blunted or destroyed.”

★

It may be thought that we have healthier and more down-to-earth intellectual traditions in this country than in Britain or the U.S.A. This is probably true. “Sick” humor and “decadent” writing are not noticeably a part of the Australian scene, though candidly we should be happy at times to swap a bit of our “realism” for a bit of “decadent” sophistication or creative skill. Our society, in Riesman's phrase, is, compared to the other two countries mentioned, still in a period of comparatively high growth potential, and this gives a vitality and direction to much of our creative effort.

This is undermined however at two points. We have the influence of the Natopolitan intellectual ideology creeping in around the universities and those sections of the Establishment who are waking up to the importance of the Battle of Ideas. On the other hand we have the impact, worthy of sociological study, of the “other-directed” mass culture of America and Britain on a population which is being artificially and precociously conditioned to accept these tastes.

The “sophisticated” intellectuals of Australia and of overseas show a bewildering provincialism in their view of intellectual life as extending no further than mutually-agreed on circles of admiration in various countries; in their refusal to grasp the reality of change and changes, both within and without Australia, which are re-shaping the world; in their fear of relating these changes to workable generalisations on which men may act; in their failure to see that to reject ideology is

ideology itself; in their lack of faith in man's ability to make and re-make himself.

★

Our culture is a culture of frustrations and no intellectual elite will lead us to any promised land. Yet if there is one common assumption these bipartisan intellectuals have in common it is the assumption that culture generally is a minority affair; that its future lies in the recognition of this; that at the best the enlightened ones, working through the mass media, will educate the common people to better things.

We believe that culture by definition is a majority affair. We believe that no country can have a true culture unless all writing, art, music, journalism is based firmly on this premise. We agree that the road to a democratic culture is not easy, and that it has not been made easier by those who over-simplify the task and the processes necessary to win it. Australian intellectuals, by which we mean all people who care for the things of the mind, have a long and hard struggle ahead of them.

Apocalyptic views of the current situation are a hazard. There is much that is both potentially and actually good in our present position. The quality of many Australian bookshops; the proliferation of television; the increasing availability of the printed word; the demands for higher educational standards: all these and more give hope and scope for those who want, as Raymond Williams says, “a common culture, not for the sake of an abstraction, but because we shall not survive without it.”

The work for a genuine Australian culture is not an intellectual struggle in the narrow sense. It is a political struggle in the broadest sense. Elsewhere in the world all the most significant deepening of the cultural streams of the nations are taking place in a framework of broadening democracy and community ownership. We in this country are fantastically isolated, geographically and socially; we feel ourselves an advanced outpost of an advanced civilisation when, in fact, there is every danger of most of the world's people by-passing us with hardly a glance in our direction.

Our complacent Government saps our morality with its political philosophy that the best things in life—including education and health—are for sale. With the Crimes Act it aims at those who deny that the best things in life should be for sale. In New Guinea a fraudulent paternalism is pickling a rod for our backs. “Commonwealth” is a proud title for our nation, but we have yet to earn the honor. In earning it those who care for culture, in the broadest sense of that term, have a vital role to play.

RUSSIAN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

ONE THOUSAND SOULS. Pisemsky (1821-1881), in this long novel reveals the pettiness of Russian official and aristocratic life as he saw it in any provincial town and in the capital, St. Petersburg. 11/6 (1/11)

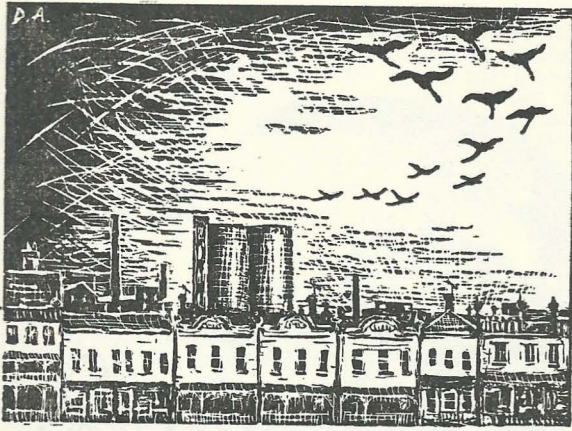
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IMAGINATION

Brian Horan

HE saw them where he could see the patch of early-morning sky through the window, and he called the boy. The boy saw them too.

"Daddy, those are pelicans. A lot of pelicans."

He was going to say that they were cranes, but then he thought they'd get in an argument because the boy would say cranes were toys that you picked things up with, so he laughed and ruffled his hair instead.

They went in a line through the greasy-looking sky above the smoke-stacks, where the last of the mist still hung around to mix with the dusty smoke, then behind the flour-mill and back into the sky again.

When he was a kid, he remembered, they'd had them in hundreds—or dozens, anyway. Down on the swamp you could creep right up almost to touch them, but there always seemed to be one scary fellow who'd fly, and then they'd all fly, scrambling across one another to get in the air, and you'd feel the warm heavy breezes from their wings beating down on you. Living in town the kid was missing things like that.

He wondered if they could take a holiday in the bush—somewhere with swamps like that—in the real bush. He still had the dough he'd won on the gees last week, and he might as well splash that up. But then a holiday in a joint like that, staying in the pub with the wife complaining all the time, not knowing anybody—well, it got a bit dead. Of course, he could try to leave the missus home, and just go with the kid, but that wasn't much chop either; kids were a bit tricky—he didn't reckon he knew enough about them to look after them all the time. Besides, time off from the job was getting a bit hard; if he went he might have to snatch the old rent, and another job mightn't be so easy to get.

The birds were smaller now, rising out of the smoky sludge to where the sky was bright. Of course, he thought, when he got the dough he'd get a farm; no life like the farm life for a growing kid. He'd won nearly fifty last week, and next Saturday with a bank behind him he might easily win five hundred or a thousand. If he got the dough for a deposit—well, maybe if his luck was in he'd get the whole lot—he'd be up on a farm tomorrow; never give those fat swine on the

stands a chance to get it back. He saw the two of them wandering in the bush, sitting waiting to see the shy animals, maybe shooting; one of the first things he ever remembered was the kick of a shotgun that knocked him over. That's the way, he decided. Get it quick while the nipper's still young.

Of course, though, that was a lot of dough to win. If he saved a quid a week? He worked it out. Nearly two years for a hundred; nearly a year for what he'd won last week. Soon it'd be too late. The lottery? He hadn't been buying tickets because it was too much bother looking the results up, but he reckoned he'd better start again.

He might win ten, twenty thousand. He'd rebuild the farmhouse—one of these concrete and glass places like they had up on the hills in the suburbs. Have to get somebody to clean the windows or the wife'd buck. Maybe he could put in a swimming-pool and have all the neighbors calling over all summer—good for the kid to meet people, people with money—

"Where did they go?" the boy asked.

There was nothing in the sky, and he shook his head.

"Somewhere."

"They went to the zoo for breakfast. They eat pumpkin and bread, and they sit down at a sitting-table and have lemon-butter out of a bag."

He laughed and pretended to punch the boy in the stomach.

"They can't beat you for imagination," he told him.

★

FOR HEAVENS' SAKE

M. E. Lloyd

"FOR heaven's sake!" said Sergeant Parish, halting before an elderly woman in a Brisbane street. "Can it be Bessie Brady? Why it must be twenty years since we were friendly neighbors in Isaac Street!"

"Yes, sergeant, it's all that," replied Bessie. "And very fine you're looking today!"

"Well, Bessie, you're not looking too bad for your age yourself," he said. "How's Old Sam? Queer, wasn't it, even when he was young we called him Old Sam?"

"Old Sam walked out on me fifteen years ago," said Bessie.

"For heaven's sake!" said the sergeant.

"That was the last I saw of him," went on Bessie. "I've kept going ever since by working hard . . . But six months ago I wanted Sam badly. You see, me pension papers were filled in, and I was thinking to be comfortable and secure with the pension, and the few jobs the law allows me to do. All was settled only for Sam's name and address, which the pension-people must have, I was told. Sam couldn't be found. I advertised well for him, saying if he called at his old address in Isaac Street, he would hear of something to his disadvantage—"

"For heaven's sake!" said the sergeant. "You were always one for mixing words, Bessie. 'Advantage' you mean."

"Those two words always get me," confessed Bessie.

The sergeant was thoughtful. "I don't want to raise your hopes," he said, "but I think—and I never forget a face, you know—I'm almost sure it was your Old Sam I saw at Ipswich last week.

He was working there—a 'slushy' at the hotel I was in. 'I know you, old man,' I thought. But I couldn't place him. He seemed to be keeping out of my way, one proof he knew me. Listening to you talking now, it flashed on me it was your Old Sam."

"For heaven's sake!" exclaimed Bessie, unconsciously repeating the sergeant's favorite exclamation. "But seeing you, he disappears again, perhaps?"

"Let me have your pension papers at once," the sergeant said impressively. "Address them to me at the Court House, Ipswich. I'm stationed there now, and going back tonight. If you don't hear from me, that man is your Old Sam, and be at the Ipswich Court House next Tuesday morning at ten o'clock. I'll be on the look-out for you. There's plenty of trains, and anyone will show you the Court House—they'd know it if it was upside down. The magistrate will be there, and Old Sam, and you'll get your pension signed. Now remember, not a word from me means all's well, and be there prompt!"

"I'd come on wings, if I had them!" declared Bessie.

★

The sergeant met her at the appointed time and place, and led her round the Court House verandah to a small private room where a grave-looking man was writing at a table, a young constable was on duty and a man Bessie did not look at, but guessed was Old Sam, sat on a bench.

Bessie was given a chair, and presently, after a few quiet words between the magistrate and the sergeant, Old Sam was asked for his name and address, and stood up and gave them.

"And this is your wife," said the magistrate, turning to Bessie.

"No, that's not my wife!" Old Sam said decidedly. "That's a white-haired woman. My wife had black hair."

Bessie laughed.

"Yes, that's my wife!" quickly said Old Sam. "I know her silly laugh."

The young constable moved closer to Old Sam, disappearingly.

To relieve the slight tension, the sergeant led both Old Sam and Bessie to the magistrate's table. And Old Sam wrote his name and address in the space indicated on Bessie's pension papers, and the magistrate signed the application.

"Is there any hope," asked the magistrate then, "of you people, man and wife, coming together again?"

"No hope at all, sir," said Bessie firmly. "I've worked for myself for fifteen years, and when I got my pension, I'll be dependent on no one. But thank you, sir, for your help today."

The sergeant went to the door with Bessie, and they parted with a hearty handshake . . . But in a few minutes the sergeant had overtaken Bessie on the road.

"Old Sam sent you this," he said, and gave her a five-pound note.

Bessie put the note carefully and silently into her purse.

"Any message for Old Sam?" inquired the sergeant.

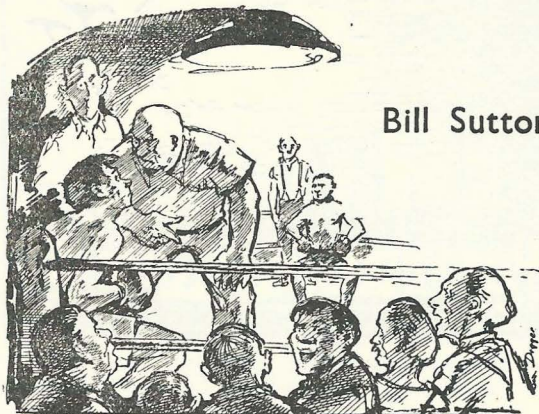
"Yes. Tell him we'll end together in the Old Men's Home," replied Bessie.

"You're mixing things again," corrected the sergeant. "A woman can't go to the Old Men's Home."

"Never mind. Say I said it," said Bessie, and was gone.

"For heaven's sake!" said Sergeant Parish.

A PAIR OF PANTS



Bill Sutton

I DON'T expect I ever told you about the time I fought Knockout Jones in the ring.

He acquired the name Knockout only because everyone he engaged in battle knocked him out. In fact, till he met me he was still a maiden performer.

Normally I could have belted the ears off Knockout. But circumstances alter cases and this case proved to be no exception.

When the contest took place our country was in the midst of the Depression. Very few people had any money to throw about, including myself. Boxing tournaments were a huge success, providing cheap entertainment to the public.

I mainly fought the four one-and-a-half minute rounds, with one minute's spell, and I had won quite a few of these scraps. So when the names came out of the hat and I had drawn Knockout I was at once a firm favorite with the betting fraternity.

I tried to back myself to beat Knockout, but only scornful laughter greeted my attempts. Dark thoughts entered my mind. After a struggle with my conscience for about ten seconds, I decided the quickest way to fame and fortune was to place whatever monies I had on my unworthy opponent.

All the money I could rake up, including the dole, was two pounds, and, through a middle man sworn to secrecy and promised ten shillings of the winnings, I backed Knockout at the very good price of two to one.

It seems that when a person knows he is to come into wealth his mind works overtime planning how to spend it. My thoughts were modest but exciting—a new pair of pants and a bit of tucker.

The night of the big event arrived. The first few fights were soon over and then my bout came up. I was first in the ring and I watched Knockout come out from the dressing-rooms into the other corner—he looked like a world champion. He was shadow-sparring and making primaevae noises. His dressing-gown was monogrammed in huge letters. He was wearing shiny black trunks with white stripes up the side—in fact he had everything but ability.

His entrance to the ring was greeted with cheers, boos, calls of "fancy pants", and words of advice. To a seasoned campaigner like Knockout these fell on deaf ears.

The referee was Basher Johnstone, an old time pug. He walked to Knockout's corner, felt his gloves to see if the padding was OK, then walked to my corner. As he bent down to feel my gloves he said words to me that will remain etched in my memory forever. Maybe these words were not as famous, say, as "Kiss me Hardy", but at that particular moment they had as much historical significance for me. What did Basher say? His exact words were, out of the corner of his mouth: "You will have every chance. I have bet four pound to two on you."

As you can imagine, my heart dropped down near my big toe—here I was in a ten-by-ten boxing ring, to fight a bloke who had great difficulty in beating his wife, with a referee who was backing me to win, and me with my last penny on my opponent. My dreams of new pants left me, but I kept cool—I had to make a quick decision. I decided the first time Knockout landed a punch on me I would go down. If I didn't do this quickly I could see the referee giving the fight to me for sure.

The call came: "Seconds out". My second climbed out of the ring, taking the stool with him as I stood up. "Time". We went to the centre of the ring, touched gloves and were off.

Knockout sparred, lunged, pranced, fainted and sidestepped but do you think he would swing a punch? I had to go in to make it look good. I decided to try to make Knockout do his block so I hit him on the nose—hard enough to make it bleed, soft enough not to win the fight.

Knockout dropped his guard, and for a moment I thought he was going to burst into tears. I heard the ref. say softly yet excitedly—"Give him a straight left." The last thing I would have done was lead a straight left. I sparred. I noticed the ref. gave me a dirty look. I reckoned he must be at least half awake as to what was going on—I'd better get down on that floor quicker than soon.

I see Knockout getting ready to swing a punch. I walk in close. I have plenty of time as this punch started one inch from the floor and finished as high as Knockout could reach. If he had connected properly you could have dug my skull out of the ceiling. I'll guarantee that punch would have missed me by three feet if I had not stopped in and let it brush me—that was enough. Down I went. A deadly silence that I was supposed to be too unconscious to hear filled the hall. The ref. was reluctant to start counting of course. I felt like telling him to hurry up, but this would have been awkward at that moment.

The count started. The ref. bent over me. "One"—a pause—"Two"—a pause—"Three"—he bent right down: "Get up you b——", he whispered viciously. I could have told him to save his breath—that rough floor felt like a feather bed to me.

The count finished. They carried me from the ring and I revived quickly.

And so it was that Knockout won his first and last fight. Flushed with victory he had many more fights but no more wins.

No moral to this story you say? Of course there is—a clear-cut one—"Never bet on anything that can talk."

J. E. MACDONNELL

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- *R. A. SIMPSON*
- *Published by*
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a series of interesting, informative articles
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intimately discusses well-known Austra-
lian authors and the younger writers who
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Read John Hetherington's "Writers in
Profile" in the Literary Supplement of
"The Age" every Saturday.

SWAG

THE death of Muir Holburn in Sydney recently must sadden all who knew him and respected him as an artist and as a man. While any writer must be continually struggling with himself and with his environment, Muir had more than his fair share of strife in the last fifteen years, and it is especially tragic that his death at the age of 39 should come when he was enjoying more happiness and serenity than he had for many years. Laurence Collinson pays tribute to Muir elsewhere in this issue. I would like to record my gratitude for the strength I personally got from Muir, the support he constantly gave this magazine, and the example of thoughtfulness and modesty in his everyday life that he set to all of us.

★

The initiative of the Australasian Book Society in gathering a remarkable collection of signatures to an appeal in defence of Australian literature needs to be more extensively publicised than I can do here. Many of the most distinguished names in Australian letters have thus drawn attention to the decline in Australian publishing, and have asked for support for the A.B.S., a co-operative venture which, in the last eight years, has published 27 works of merit totalling more than 100,000 copies. Those who wish to know more about the A.B.S., its publishing program and its appeal for action and assistance should write to the Society at 96 Phillip Street, Sydney.

★

The current attacks on the Commonwealth Literary Fund are only one of the danger signals. Those who attack the Fund don't seem to realise the fact that the contradiction between the growth of real art and argument and the growth of bad art and bad argument is becoming more critical daily. It is not a question of the C.L.F. appropriating public money. Public money, in the shape of the social product, is already being appropriated in enormous sums for the mass miscommunication industries. What we need here is not less intervention, but far more. The C.L.F. must be broadened and democratised. It should become a National Book Council, responsible to Parliament but representing publishers, writers, readers. It should have the task of the most active promotion of vigorous, independent and varied publication and distribution of books and magazines. To fight for such a Book Council is, in the long run (and increasingly in the short run), the main hope of saving what we still have of a democratic culture, and of extending it.

★

Twenty-three Australian writers signed a protest on the Crimes Act legislation during October. The protest, organised by Overland and forwarded to the Prime Minister, read: "As persons concerned with the cause of writing and of literature, we wish to express our deep concern at the proposed amendments to the Crimes Act. The evidence that these amendments could easily lead to the imposition of penalties upon written and spoken opinion which it is proper to hold is too convincing to be rejected. We ask for the withdrawal of this legislation." Those who signed this protest were Alan Marshall, Jean Devanny, Mary Gilmore, Gavin Casey, Robert D. Fitzgerald, Myra Morris, John

What You Think

The Overland questionnaire in our last issue scored 31 replies, which, as these things go, is pretty good. Of course it's true that there will be a high proportion of Overland's keenest readers among those replying to any such questionnaire, and hence recommendations, for instance about raising the price of the magazine, have to be treated with caution. The majority of respondents advocated the lifting of the price of Overland to 4/-. but it's hard for us to take any such action without thinking carefully about its likely effect on our other three or four thousand readers.

In order of first preferences, stories were the most popular item, followed by feature articles and, some way behind, poetry. I was surprised to find that Swag is more popular than I would have expected, and overseas items and news notes less popular. General satisfaction seem to be expressed with illustrations and layout.

Among individual comments received were: "Need more concentration on urban Australia"; "Why don't you have an annual gathering of subscribers in each State?"; "I dislike superficial armchair sociologists"; "I particularly dislike occasional attempts to be two-sided"; "I want less softness and orthodoxy in Overland, and higher intellectual standards in sociological analysis"; "How can you expect a Government grant when so many articles are anti-Government?"; "I particularly dislike any suggestion of political propaganda"; "Is Russian the only foreign literature worth keeping up with constantly?"; "Keep Overland just as it is"; "I suggest more rugged pragmatism, less weak-kneed wishfulness"; "I particularly dislike 'patter' about literature"; "We need more big items, and good long discussions of 'think' problems"; "Cheers to you for coming to grips with issues no-one else has the guts to touch."

Individual Overland writers singled out for repeated praise were David Martin, Noel Macainsh, John Manifold, Ian Turner, A. A. Phillips, John Morrison, Laurence Collinson, David Forrest, Gordon Adler. Vane Lindesay's drawings were also repeatedly commended.

We would like to thank all those who took the trouble to reply, and to assure them that their ideas will be closely looked into. While it's true that in any such tasting of opinion there will be a bewildering variety of loves and hates, at the same time I believe that a successful magazine cannot be produced unless nearly every reader can get something from say sixty per cent. of each issue. Thus these comments (and further comments we hope readers will continue to send us) play an important part in our plans. This is not to say, of course, that Overland will be produced on the basis of a popular vote of its readers, for a magazine must strive to lead rather than to follow. Even if it often makes mistakes.

S.M.S.

Hetherington, Leonard Mann, Frank J. Hardy, Laurence Collinson, Judah Waten, Kylie Tennant, Katharine Susannah Prichard, Flexmore Hudson, F. B. Vickers, Donald R. Stuart, G. M. Glaskin, J. J. Jones, James Galanis, Nettie Palmer, Mary Durack, Nancy Cato, S. Murray-Smith. In addition Vincent Buckley, David Rowbotham and Tom Ronan agreed, with certain qualifications, about wording, to add their names.

★

I was recently reading James Aldridge's new book of short stories, "Gold and Sand", published by Heinemann, with the reflection that few better books of stories have been published by any Australian writer. There is one memorable story obviously stemming from Aldridge's Swan Hill (Vic.) boyhood, and other stories deal with the Finnish War and with the Suez campaign. These latter give the best picture of modern Egypt that I have read, and I am surprised that the book has had so little critical attention in this country.

★

Whatever the lack of attention paid to Aldridge's work here, he is being accorded increasing recognition overseas. I was fascinated to receive a book, "James Aldridge, Schriftsteller und Kampfer," from East Germany recently. Written by Helmut Findeisen, this book contains a biography, critical studies of Aldridge's books, and an extensive bibliography.

★

Of special interest are the comments quoted by the author from Aldridge's own letters to him. Describing his childhood in Swan Hill Aldridge writes: "My only tendencies were to escape school, and I spent a great deal of my time in the bush away from it, much to (my father's) anger . . . I built, I sketched, I hunted—mostly hunted and fished." The book describes young Aldridge's conflicts with his father and how, after joining the Melbourne Sun, he was strongly influenced by a railway-worker, Charles Clifford, whose son was a friend of Aldridge's, and who is described in the book as a "Marxist-thinking representative of the Australian working-class." "It was a Charles Clifford who certainly influenced me to think politically and philosophically the way I do now," Aldridge writes, "and who gave me a political and Marxist education which has stood up to time, and is in all my work. He must take considerable credit for any ideas that are of any value in my work, since he set the change going."

★

Following rows with his employers and with his father, Aldridge left Australia for London and arrived there with £18. Subsequently he was in Helsinki when the Russo-Finnish War broke out, where his forecasts of Russian strength contrasted with those of most other correspondents. After serving as a correspondent in the Middle East, during the second world war, and writing "Signed With Their Honor" and "The Sea Eagle", he decided to settle down in London to write. He had married an Egyptian journalist in 1942.

★

Aldridge pays considerable tribute to Angus Cameron, the chief editor of the Boston publishing firm of Brown & Co.: "The man that influenced me in the actual form of writing was Angus Cameron, probably America's greatest editor . . . We hunted together in Canada, as well as having a mutual interest in everything under the sun from ancient Egypt to game conservation and, of course, every aspect of literature. He is, I think, the one man

The Floating Fund

In the last Overland we reported the receipt of £246 towards our Floating Fund goal of £500. We can now add to this the receipt of another £101 towards this Fund. There is no need to remind readers that these donations are the only thing that makes it possible for Overland to continue publication.

This year's application for a grant from the Commonwealth Literary Fund has again been rejected, but there is a grain of hope in that it is understood that the C.L.F. Board may again consider this matter, after contact with the Editors of the magazines concerned, some time early next year.

Meanwhile many thanks to the following:

J.R. £10; I.McI. £5; F.D.D. £5; C.R. (New Guinea) £4/11/0; A.D. £4/10/0; R.H.S. £4; J.W.McC. £4; M.D.M. £2/10/0; L.A. £2; J.B.K. £2; F.P.B. £1/12/0; M.R. £1/10/0; J.S. £1/10/0; W.D. £1/10/0; H.W. £1/10/0; J.G. £1/1/0; R.A.W. £1/1/0; A.G., R.F., J.B., J.B., G.A.J.F., R.W., B.S.B., A.A.P., M.E.L., R.T., M.M., W.W., C.T.S., all £1. A.McL. (New Zealand) 15/-; D.M. 15/-; D.C. (England) 11/6; B.S. 11/-; G.W.L. 11/-; M.S. 11/-; H.V.F. 11/-; W.M.B. 11/-; D.R.T., J. S., J.A.McD., J.B.C., L.M.V., J.H., R.McN., W.H.B., A.E.B., J.F.P., R.E.L., M.S.M., H.A.W., L.P., K.McE., P.F., A.A., N.J., L.D., M.X., P.D., N.D., A.B.C., M.R.B., W.B.R., E.A.H.L., M.P., P.F., A.H. (Japan), B.R., F.R.F., H.W.F., L.G., L.G., T.H., J.H., T.D., C.F., W.Y., I.M.H., J.B., E.M.B., C.P., P.A.T., S.A., D.A., R.K., D.G.D., P.A., G.S., R.G.S., all 10/-.
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Total £101/0/6.

alive who makes his Marxism the key to his deep understanding of literature and life, in the human sense as well as the professional, critical and editorial sense." Brown was later a victim of the McCarthy period.

★

I have quoted these excerpts from Findeisen's book because I believe that, although Aldridge is one of our most significant contemporary writers, little is known of him. Despite his origins here, or perhaps because of them, his attitude to Australia and Australians is ambivalent, to say the least; but, whatever the degree of his lack of interest in us, we can't afford not to be interested in him. He is, incidentally, the most popular contemporary foreign author in the Soviet Union, I believe, and there is certainly no writer living who has more effectively experimented with the conscious bringing into focus of a political theory and its fictional illustrations. This is a more important exercise than it may appear to some.

—S. Murray-Smith

RARE BOOKS

A number of distinguished authors and collectors have kindly offered items from their libraries for sale on behalf of Overland's funds.

The following is a select list of the books available, in some cases with a reserve price in brackets. Best offers received by the end of January will be accepted, although if not sold the books will of course remain available.

This is a unique opportunity to acquire some rare and precious items. Send enquiries to Editor, Overland, G.P.O. Box 98a, Melbourne. Further offers of books for this purpose would be appreciated.

"The Arunta" by Spencer and Gillen. Two volume famous Aboriginal study, long out of print (£6/6/0).

"Wanderings in Wild Australia" by Sir Baldwin Spencer. Two vols. Same comments apply (£5/5/0).

"Alexander Maconochie of Norfolk Island" by Mr. Justice J. V. Barry, of the Victorian Supreme Court. New, signed by author (50/-).

"The World of Men". Vance Palmer's first published book (1915), very rare (£2).

"The Animals Noah Forgot" by A. B. Paterson. First ed., 1933 (30/-).

"The Pearl and the Octopus" by A. G. Stephens. Excellent cond.

"The Australian Secular Association Lyceum Tutor". A rare O'Dowd item, edited, compiled and largely written (including verse) by Bernard O'Dowd. 1888 (15/-).

"My Henry Lawson" by Bertha Lawson, autographed (12/6).

"The Poems of Marie E. J. Pitt," First imp., 1925, presentation copy (15/-).

"The Earthen Floor" by E. J. Brady. Grafton, 1902. Autographed and extremely rare (30/-).

"A Guide to Ten Australian Poets" by Hugh Anderson. Limited edition, signed, now out of print (30/-).

"Kirchen und Ketzler-Historie" by Gottfrid Arnolds. Published in Frankfurt-am-Main in 1700, this beautifully illustrated old book of 700 pages is bound in vellum. It is a history of the Church and of heresies from the Protestant viewpoint (offers).

Signed postcard, George Bernard Shaw.

Overseas editions of Katharine Susannah Prichard's novels—"The Roaring Nineties" and "Black Opal" in German; "Golden Miles" in German and Polish; "Winged Seeds" in Polish.

Huguenot Bible, 1678, which has descended in Katharine Susannah Prichard's family (offers).

"The Dancing Bough" by Nancy Cato. Signed (10/-).

"Little Gidding" by T. S. Eliot. First ed., 1942.

"Fourteen Men" by Dame Mary Gilmore. Inscribed, with small unpublished verse.

"The Australian" and other books by Bill Wanner. Signed.

"Woodstock" by Sir Walter Scott. First ed., three vols.

"The Earnest Drinker" by Oscar Mendelsohn. Signed.

"The Woman at the Mill" by Frank Dalby Davison. Mint cond., signed (offers).

"Shares in Murder" by Judah Waten. Signed.

"When the World was Wide" by Henry Lawson. 1903 edition.

"Song of Brotherhood" by J. Le Gay Brereton. 1896 edition.

"Miserable Clerk" by Steele Rudd. 1926.

"The Kelly Hunters" by Frank Clune.

"Brierly Rose" by Leslie Haylen.

"Creeve Roe", Poems of Victor Daley, edited by Marje Pizer and Muir Holburn.

I.W.W. and Socialist newspapers and songbooks.

List of other bargains available from the Editor:

Pits Closing Down

Life beats closer in a coalfields town
When two large pits are closing down.

Slowly the workers walk from the mine:
"It happened before in '29."

"And yet, you know, it was different then,
We did get back to the pits again,

"But this is the end of our lives at the face,
Now the machines have taken our place."

But there's children to feed, and rent to pay;
The coalfields people are quiet today.

Talk is easy in Canberra town,
But here—two mines are closing down.

LEN FOX.

Pistol Paperweight

They say the quaint collection of old miners' camps has vanished now, and yet I mark them perched along the gully's crooked line . . . in my mind's eye, that is. Some all of bark and others built of bullock spars and clay; a hollow log there funnels from the ground where dug-out dwellers' smoke salutes the day; and from some forge spills out a tinkling sound.

Imperishably old, the miners shrunk and slowly died . . . the last ferocious one was carried from his bag-and-sapling bunk. We forced the slabs and found his ram-rod gun . . . it still recalls for me those golden times while holding down my latest tales and rhymes.

CYRIL E. GOODE.

My Child

My child

Said the mother looking at the blanket
Bundled smiling in her arms

★

Will be
Cleverer than me.
She will grow

She said
Looking at the clippie in the bus
Who stood leaning looking down

To be a finer person
Than us.

Our children

Said the clippie
With glasses on and hands of lead
And a number in the cap on her head

Will know
What we don't.
They will do

She said
Toying the tickets and tips in her hands
And ringing the bell for the boarders

What we didn't
And we couldn't.

I don't want her

Said she
Sitting alone on the long seat
With a bag and a basket at her feet

To go through
What we had to

My girl.

She said
Staring at the snow and the soft eyes
And the clouds of roofs going by

Won't do
What I did.
My young face is creased now
And looks pale,
But my girl

She said

Will have the prettiest head.
My child
My child.

She hummed,
Looking at the wrapped lace
And the finger-playing face.

TWO POEMS

by Arnold Wesker

★

The First Child

He will give me kisses and the top off the
milk

And pull down clouds to warm my ears,
He will touch my lips with a tongue of silk
And sing away my tears.

Do not make me weep with the look in
your eyes

I will give you honey little boy and a bear,
I will ask God for rainbows in the skies
And sunlight all year.

He will give me cuddles and sleepless nights
And moan with his long growing pains.
What will he dream these first nights?
He will call me his own name.

I will give you kisses and the top off my time
And a penny to buy black sweets,
And your wide laugh will last longer than
mine

As you grow in the streets.

He will give me kisses and the top off the
milk

And reasons why he was born,
And I will feel the touch of his tongue of silk
Long after his youth is gone.

O, MOTHER, IS IT WORTH IT?

THE TITLE of my talk at the Student Drama Festival was given to me as "The Modern Playwright"—in fact, when I was asked what I would like to call my subject I suggested the title should be: "O, Mother, is it worth it?" Now I know that it's possible that at the time I might have been in a rather highly strung condition owing to negotiations over the Broadway presentation of *Roots*. (Four managements were making bids for it and I was in a sort of lunatic contact via phone, cable and letter with agents, theatres, representatives, directors and relatives. Suddenly there was made known to me a vast army of relatives and acquaintances, all of whom I must see and who would be waiting to greet me. It seemed as if the entire Jewish population of New York was made up of the daughters and grand-children and great grand-children of a very randy Russian great-great-grandfather.) So it is possible my head was tired with plans, passports and decisions, but I'm not sure that "Oh, Mother, is it worth it?" was all that frivolous a question. What the Hell, I was wondering, had all this to do with playwriting? And at this point I was thinking of talking about this aspect of the profession—the aspect of the change which comes over the whole of his life—and consequently his work—when a degree of success touches the writer.

But this is a problem which I am still in the process of grappling with, and I shall have to deliver that sermon when I finally emerge. All I can say is, keep your fingers crossed for me that I shall win, and don't judge me too harshly if I fail—because it is a hard battle, I assure you it's a jungle—not because it is filled with rats all racing somewhere—that's much too easy a picture—but because the jungle is filled with lots of wonderful people who are full of love and admiration for the wrong reasons. The road to hell is not only paved with good intentions, but with saints also.

So I think I will still stick to the title: "O, Mother, is it worth it?" and infuse the question with a serious tone. Besides, I can't really, discuss the modern playwright for two good reasons. (1) I haven't been one for very long, and (2) because I don't know much about what were the sort of problems of those who passed before me. But before one can answer the question of "O, Mother, is it worth it?" there arise, I think, three subsidiary questions:

- (1) Do I make enough money to survive?
- (2) Am I writing what I want to write?
- (3) Is anybody listening?

To the first—yes! Not only do I make enough money to survive, but I'm managing to do a bit of living also, and take some others along with me. To the second—yes! I have at no point compromised and done work that I at least did not consider worthwhile. So—I am writing what I want to write, but the third question—"Is anybody listening?"—This is the real question, and I suppose should have been the title of my address, because in answering this question, you come up against what to me is the problem. The answer is—No—nobody's listening, except a few quiet columns in the press, those who have already heard it before anyway, and, of course, one's mother.

The adult population of Britain is roughly 58 million. Now, out of these, 200,000 go to the

Early this year Arnold Wesker gave this address to the Student Drama Festival held in Oxford. His plea made here for closer interaction between the labor movement and the creative arts was sent as a pamphlet to every trade union secretary in Britain, together with another pamphlet, "Labor and the Arts: or What, then, is to be Done?" The Oxford magazine *Gemini* first published Wesker's speech, and printed both pamphlets.

This latter pamphlet suggested, for instance, that half a dozen unions be responsible for building and supporting new theatres in industrial centres where they do not exist; that a socially-conscious film unit be created on bases that at present exist; that attempts be made to reclaim traditional and newly developed folk-songs, work-songs and ballads of the labor movement; that a trade union orchestra be established; that a trade union publishing house be established. It gave additional suggestions, said why the union movement should take such steps, listed precedents in other countries and suggested the likely effects.

Four unions—Cinema and Theatre Technicians, Printers, Tobacco Workers and Technical Civil Servants—responded at once to Wesker's call, and put up a resolution to the T.U. Congress asking for a special examination and proposals for a greater participation by the union movement in all cultural activities. "It is the first time for many years that anyone has suggested that the trade union movement has a moral responsibility for the arts and the things of the spirit," Walter Allen wrote. "This alone makes the resolution a significant event in the history of the Labor movement." The T.U.C. formed a committee to promote trade union participation in the arts, and Wesker and his trade union supporters have been speaking up and down Britain to labor organisations of all kinds.

Arnold Wesker, on whom an article appeared in *Overland* No. 17, is perhaps the best-known of the younger English dramatists. Of the working-class himself, he is chiefly known for his recent trilogy of which the first play, "Roots" was produced in Melbourne some months ago by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust. "Roots" is a penetrating and moving account of the cultural poverty of much working-class life.

Overland will print in its next issue some Australian comments on Wesker's article. Readers' views are invited.

theatre each night, as compared with two million who go to the cinema and four million who watch T.V. Usually, statistics mean very little to me, but this means a lot. You know what it means? It means nobody's listening. The question I asked my mum is still relevant.

So let's go on—let's ask more questions. Who are the 200,000 who do go to the theatre? I'm not sure I know, but we might get some idea by a process of elimination. Are they the girls who

work in the offices; are they the men who work in the coal-mines? Are they docker, farm laborers, steel men, bricklayers, car makers, railwaymen, or that new twentieth-century target for the advertisers—the housewife? I'm not even asking about the new civilisation which the Daily Mirror has discovered for us called "the teenagers". Is it any of these? Again the answer is obvious: 40 million into 200,000 doesn't go.

Now, I didn't divide the community up like that for no purpose—as you will see later. But the question: "Is it worth it?" becomes relevant in a different way. This time we ask it because of all those people whom I suggested did not go to the theatre—and we ask the question in different way. Why should they? Nobody's listening, but why the hell should they?

At this point, I am going to stop asking questions and instead I am going to make a series of sweeping observations, and I'm then going to make accusations, and I want those accusations to reach the ears of the accused.

The last question was: "Why should all that vast section of the community that I have just mentioned listen to what we have to say?" The question applies, not merely to the playwright, but to the poet, the novelist, the painter, the composer, the artist in general.

Right! Observation No. 1.

We are all born into a process which is called living. Now, I believe this process of living to be an active thing, and by active I mean that one is engaged body and soul in assisting this process as opposed to simply hanging around and letting the process carry you along. I further believe that by and large everyone is born with not only the faculty to be active, but the desire as well. Unfortunately, however, both this faculty and desire are vulnerable to another process—the process of stultification. In other words, the desire to engage one's self, body and soul, in this wonderful process of living is capable of being killed through lack of encouragement.

Observation No. 2.

I believe working, playing, laughing, crying, eating, singing, dancing, studying, leisure and creative art, to be **not separate** aspects of living, for separate people, but natural manifestations of the **whole** act of living for everyone to indulge in or enjoy. In other words—for example—I do not believe in serious books for intelligent people, and funny ones for simple people, but in literature for us all. Unfortunately again, however, we have managed to organise our society into classes where some of us have time to develop our intelligence and some of us are denied this time, where some of us, in other words, can develop this faculty for this whole process of living and some of us are stultified.

Now **Observation No. 3** is a slight qualification of the last sentence in **Observation No. 2**. The last sentence observed that we have divided our society into classes of the privileged and the under-privileged, but this is no longer strictly true. There have come about changes over the last century and a half, wrought by organisations like the Labor Party and the trade unions, that have created a state of affairs where there is opportunity for everybody. It is now possible—because of the economic advantages gained by the Unions and the socialist parties—for everyone to read books from the libraries, listen to concerts on the radio, visit the theatres and in general take part in the cultural life of the community.

But they forgot one thing—and this is to me the terrible crux of the problem and God knows how they missed it. The social and cultural habits of a

group will continue for generations unless something is done to break them just as much as the economic habits will continue unless action is taken to weaken them. It was necessary for the unions and the Labor Party to take political action in order to convince the worker that the habit of taking ridiculously small wages for long hours was a useless habit. They had to make efforts to convince the stultified worker that he was as entitled to a fair share of the nation's economic life as anyone—but what action was taken to convince the stultified worker that he was just as entitled to his share of the nation's cultural life? Of course he's not listening—no one's suggested to him that it might be of any interest, that it has a value for him. The economic barriers of class may be less definable, but the cultural ones are still there. He is only enjoying half of life; he may be engaged body but he's not engaged soul in this process of living.

★

NOW I return to the question, briefly, before making any accusations, because I want it realised that I'm still talking about the same thing. Is it worth it? This playwriting, is it worth it? This is a serious question for me—playwriting is the *raison d'être* for my existence—so I want to make very sure it's worth it—and, by the way, it must be understood that when I talk of myself I mean all artists in general. It is not enough to earn money, it is not enough that I please myself with what I write—all this is nothing unless someone is listening. Now, no one is listening, and I have told you why. The organisations, in whose hands still do lay the chance for the full blossoming of those men's lives, have neglected that chance. I accuse the Labor Party and most of all the trade unions for a neglect which I consider almost immoral—and I accuse them not as an enemy but as a friend, as someone who believes in what they stand for. I reprimand **them** and not their opposing organisations because I did not expect it from those other organisations. I reprimand them as one socialist to another. I believe socialism—and I'm sorry about the number of times I've said this—to be not merely an economic organisation of society, but a way of living based on the assumption that life is rich, rewarding and that human beings deserve it. Now, surely, it seems to me you cannot hope to convince people that you've discovered something exciting simply by lecturing them about it, or making political speeches, you've got to demonstrate it in plays, sing about it, make films about it, write novels about it. This has been happening throughout history. It has been proved **not** by the spate of tractor novels that came out of the Soviet Union—this is **not** an inevitability—but by the works of the Gorkis, Chekhovs, Millers, the Steinbecks and the Zolas, the Beethovens and the de Sicas, the Van Goghs and yes, the Louis Armstrongs. If you have discovered something exciting you sing about, you make up plays about it; you tell stories; this is all that culture is—a sort of hymn in praise of man. But here in England the trade unions and the Labor Party just did not see it. Of course no one is listening—the people who **should** have told them neglected to do so. Why has the trade union movement not erected its own theatres up and down the country—they should be responsible for the erecting of a National Theatre—what a monument to their struggles that would be. But they haven't even looked into their own ranks to seek even a folk culture and a whole wealth of ballad and song is filtering away as the old members die out. And, my God, what an exciting affair a trade

Cont. on p. 27

THE POET IN UTOPIA

THE poet, with his characteristic presumptuousness, having in his mind created Utopia for all, asks: "How shall I live in it—what will it be like for me?" As he puts the question he is uneasy because he knows that other Utopians, since Plato, have suspected him as a wrecker of Utopias, and because his experiences with interim Utopias are mixed.

Let us say before going further that the poet's uneasiness is not decisive. Being a man (or a woman) he is entitled to it and it is even inevitable. But being a poet he has the courage of his vision. His love and hope will in the end always thrust aside his fear.

Plato was right, of course. In the ideal society the poet remains as dangerous as in any other, since he has the power to create and express new ideals, a power which is by no means unique to him but which he develops to its highest point since imagination is the thing he works with, his basic tool. He is a professional imaginer, as others are professional engineers or professional revolutionaries, though there is an overlap. His imagination is insatiable: when others are busy consolidating the captured trenches he is already in the no-man's land, beyond. It may not make him less useful but it is an irritating habit which causes his comrades to look on him askance. They want to know if this fellow is really "with us," and whether he understands how much blood had to be shed in storming the outposts. It makes no difference that he shed his own during the advance. A soldier should not all the time dream ahead of his commanders! It's bad for discipline.

Furthermore, the poet is apt to overlook important distinctions. Sometimes he forgets that "utopian" has two meanings. A relative meaning, in which it stands, according to the dictionary, for ardent but unpractical reform or reformers. In other words, unscientific, as the utopian socialists were unscientific. But there's also the absolute meaning, relating to an ideally perfect place or state of things. The poet should have a scientific outlook, that's well understood. But often he has not, which does not necessarily prevent him from donning battle-dress and moving up into the front line. Once there, however, the "ardent" part of the definition may get in the way of the "ideally perfect" to such an extent that what is ideally perfect to the next man becomes quite imperfect to him. Bang! there comes a painful contradiction. Unscientifically he rushes ahead of nature.

★

ONE can have patience with the poet in this rushing of his, since it is a quality that can be harnessed—up to a point. It is axiomatic that he soon gets restless in harness even though, perversely, he has buckled it on himself. To mix a metaphor, what first seemed to him a chariot soon appears like a furniture van, exhausting to pull . . . so the harness starts chafing. But people have always known that the poet acts in this way and therefore they are broad-minded about it.

It is much harder to forgive him when he begins quibbling. He has demanded bread and justice

for all men. But the moment there's even half a loaf and half a justice he protests: he does not like the Welfare State because it is dull—now he says he wanted equality and not egalitarianism!—and as to the Revolutionary Democracy, it is either not revolutionary enough for him or not sufficiently democratic. It turns out that his revolution is a permanent revolution (at least in the intellectual and spiritual sector) and, when it comes to democracy, he wants every citizen to be treated as if he were potentially a poet, that is to say, a hater of every form of paternalism.

That is all very well, but the poet has only himself to blame if he is misunderstood. If he insists on being a poet and nothing but a poet, the Welfare State will be dull for him. (Here, again, let us make a reservation. History has shown that there can be Welfare States which are dull for other people as well.) Excitement is not everything, nor is aesthetics, though they matter very much. Security, the satisfaction of fundamental wants, is the first thing and if, regrettably, there has to be a choice, let us have steaks before roses.

The road to Wigan Pier leads to disillusionment which is then malignantly projected into the future to produce an anti-Utopia. The result is "1984," and that's not a prophecy but an individual hangover writ large upon the world. When the Orwells argue, all levels become confused, as in every nightmare—they try to damn the next society and do not see that all they do is to describe aspects of the present. There is some truth in such hallucinations, nevertheless. Because the future continues the present it will, for a time at least, look like the present, and like a present that is "even more so". Yet the similarity is superficial. A Chinese commune may look like, and resemble in quite a few ways, a Council-planned satellite welfare township in the home counties. It might even remind us now and then of a Butlin's Camp. But much depends on how you look at it and what you are looking for. The difference is more important than the similarity.

On the other hand, it is true that the country which consciously sets out to build the Utopia—the U.S.S.R., to wit—has also thrown the poets into a dither. We could analyse their reactions in several ways, but if we do so exclusively in terms of dialectical materialism it could lead us back to that old bug-bear, the poet's class position, which had better be avoided since it can be vulgarised so easily. For the point is this: to whatever other class he belongs, the poet also belongs to the class of poets, whether we like it or not. This is a claim which, so baldly stated, looks highly undialectical but poets know what we are talking about, and so does the rank and file of humanity. Only the clever Dicks pretend not to understand.

When the poet grumbles about the Welfare State he grumbles about the emptiness, the purposelessness, of the freedom he enjoys in it. It makes him angry. When he complains of the Soviet Union—leaving aside any other complaint he may have as a political being—he complains of a lack of freedom. With few exceptions there has never been a poet who protested at the hardships of a revolution, though there are some to whom all

revolutions are illegitimate, a denial of the source of art. With those we are not concerned.

The poet demands the right to affirm and deny at the same time. When he affirms he wants the right to affirm in his own way and words—greatly, extravagantly, subtly, originally, heroically or lyrically . . . And when he denies (because he is one or two Utopias ahead) he wants to deny in his own way and words, too. At that point the trouble begins. Affirmation, however extraordinary, can be made to fit into the general plan. Denial not; it upsets calculations. Then the quickest and most effective method of disposal is to call the poet names. Bourgeois, counter-revolutionary or petty idealist. It keeps him in order but it does no good. Poetry won't flow from it.

Trotsky speaks of the "liberated egotism of man" as a "mighty force." It is as well to give the whole quotation (from "Literature and Revolution", a neglected classic) for otherwise some will twist the reference into proof of Trotsky's vaunted egotism.

"In a society which will have thrown off the pinching and stultifying worry about one's daily bread, in which community restaurants will prepare good, wholesome and tasteful food for all to choose, in which communal laundries will wash clean everyone's good linen, in which children, all the children, will be well fed and strong and gay, and in which they will absorb the fundamental elements of science and art as they absorb albumen and air and the warmth of the sun, in a society in which electricity and the radio will not be the crafts they are today, but will come from inexhaustible sources of super-power at the call of a central button, in which there will be no 'useless mouths', in which the liberated egotism of man—a mighty force!—will be directed wholly towards the understanding, the transformation and the betterment of the universe—in such a society the dynamic development of culture will be incomparable with anything that went on in the past. But all this will come only after a climb, prolonged and difficult, which is still ahead of us."

Yes, and even now the climb has hardly begun.

Fundamentally, the egotism of the poet is not so different from that of other mortals. Like theirs, it is time-, place- and socially-conditioned. It can be emancipated to fuse with the emancipated—the liberated—hunger for self-fulfillment of whole classes to find expression in common striving. Even the desire for fame, which is not a mean thing, can be freed of its slag. Seen like this, the poet is in step.

He is out of step, however, in that he has his own way of "liberating egotism," and that way is the creative act itself. He "liberates" his egotism every time he takes up his pen. While the sources of his inspiration may be, at the very deepest level, a collective thing (and here the term "collective" owes as much to Jung and his collective memory as it does to Marxism) writing must always remain one of the most individual activities that can be imagined. What to the non-poet or the anti-poet seems the most intense self-indulgence, a naked surrender to self-centredness, can be the very opposite. The dualism is always complete. The poet, if he is of a scientific cast of mind, will acknowledge that he is surrounded by relativities—a relative Utopia, for that matter. But he will go on looking and seeking for absolute truth and beauty, and the moment he stops he is done for as a poet. What he really tries to encompass is impossible, and he infuriates the world (at the same time as he delights it) by setting up these impossible objectives. This, by the way, was the real reason for Mayakovsky's suicide—that he

wanted the impossible, not that the enemies of the revolution imposed on him impossible criteria. It is the poet's glory and his despair, and when he seeks to escape the despair and settles for a compromise, his power evaporates like alcohol.

★

WILL he never be satisfied, then? No, never.

If the time ever comes when the poet does not feel himself, at least for lengthy periods, out of step with reality, poetry will be dead because no longer necessary; there will be nothing left worth striving for. Fortunately, such a tragically perfect state of affairs cannot be imagined. But, unfortunately, the poet is often asked to proclaim that it has very nearly arrived. Which is natural enough since, for so many people, a society in which a man gets three meals a day marks so vast an advance that it seems next door to paradise. Poets should remember that.

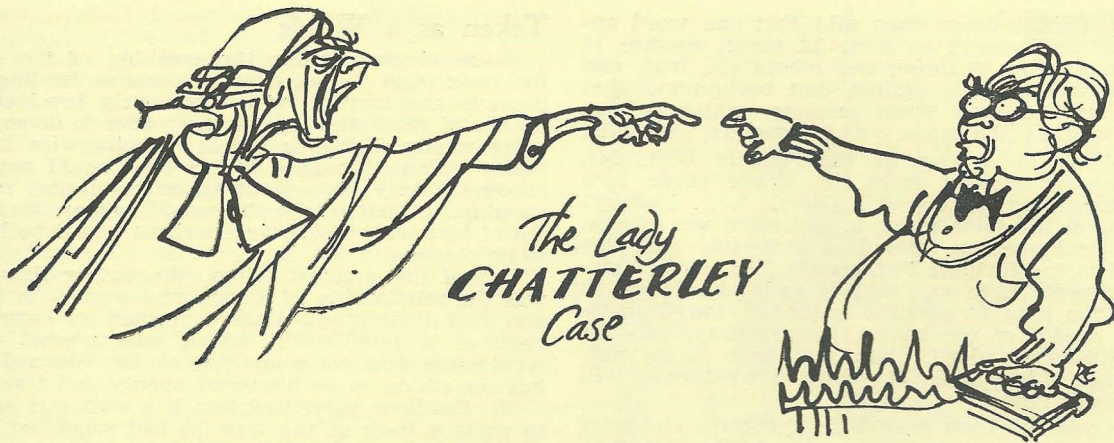
Since his frustration (a part of his positive, creative equipment) is inalienable from the poet who carries it for all mankind which is forever seeking perfection, we cannot envisage a society in which the poet will be "at rest", completely fulfilled, completely in harmony, completely in step. He is the permanent minority; permanent because he symbolises what lives in every man who is not a poet. The true Utopia will indeed have come when every man is also in fact a poet but, as this is impossible, the two-sidedness (which is at heart a unity) must survive, between poets and non-poets as between men and women.

Still, one can imagine a time, perhaps not so impossibly far away, when the gulf will be much smaller than it is now, anywhere on the face of the earth. It is possible that more than one revolution separates us from it. History has never yet shown us the example of a society which can afford heresy. Humanity as a whole will have to be immeasurably more mature (or better fed) before it can put up with its own other, heretic, poetic self and not try to destroy it. A completely "adjusted", self-accepting society would be no more worth knowing than a completely adjusted, self-accepting man. To get anywhere at all, man must and will remain at war with himself.

The fully affirmative poet is of no more practical use than a domesticated eagle or a domesticated butterfly. It is not the function of the butterfly to become a pet, nor of the poet to say an unequivocal Yes.

But he can say a pretty well unequivocal No. He can say No to pettiness, hunger, injustice; he can say No to the mailed fist; he can say No to lies, however decked out. He can certainly be a partisan. But if he wants to become a partisan only—a choice open to him, and an honorable choice—he must be prepared to pay something, and out of his art. It is for him to decide how much and when to sacrifice, and for what noble gain. It is his responsibility.

The society which Trotsky predicts—well nourished, scientific AND gay—will come one day; it is a realisable Utopia. Yet even in this society not every man "will be a poet." It will, however, assure its poets the material means for their work, as to all citizens. But the freedom the poet needs nobody can give him, since nobody can make a gift of freedom. Plato guessed that the poet in the ideal Republic might accept his stipend, go off into his house of rest and culture and from there issue a poem which would say both Yes and No. That's his job, always was and always will be, since he proclaims not only the ideal that can be realised but also the ideal that cannot, and that yet must be fought for.



We consider that the recent London legal proceedings against D. H. Lawrence's novel Lady Chatterley's Lover were, in their outcome, of extraordinary importance to those who cherish freedom in their everyday life and morality and sensibility in their culture. It is with a full appreciation of their relevance to the struggle against obscurantism in Australia that we here publish, by permission, extracts from the reports of the trial in the London Times.—Editor.

My sex is me as my mind is me, and nobody will make me feel shame about it.

—D. H. Lawrence.

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The Times, 21st October—

D. H. Lawrence's novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was described by prosecuting counsel at the Central Criminal Court in London yesterday as a book which "sets on a pedestal promiscuous intercourse, commends sensuality almost as a virtue, and encourages and even advocates coarseness and vulgarity of thought and language."

A jury of nine men and three women were advised to consider the book from the point of view of somebody living today—not in any "priggish, high-minded, supercorrect mid-Victorian manner".

On trial before Mr. Justice Byrne were Penguin Books Ltd., publishers of "*Lady Chatterley's Lover*," having been committed from Bow Street Magistrates' Court on a summons under the Obscene Publications Act, 1959, alleging that they published an obscene book, namely an unexpurgated version of D. H. Lawrence's novel.

Mr. Griffith-Jones, opening for the prosecution, said that the book was written about 1928 and it was now proposed to publish it for the first time in this country.

He submitted that the jury would really have two questions to decide—whether the book was obscene within the meaning of Section 1, and, if so, whether its publication was justified as being for the public good. "If you find that this book is not obscene, that is an end to this matter and your verdict will be one of Not Guilty, but if you find on the other hand that this book is obscene, then you have to go on to consider: 'Is it proved that the publication is justified as being for the public good on the grounds that it is in the interests of science, literature, art or learning or other objects of general concern?'"

The Act deemed the book to be obscene if it tended to deprave and corrupt, and it was not a question whether it had depraved somebody or whether it must or would deprave. "The question you have to decide is, has this book a tendency

or might it deprave those who were likely in all relevant circumstances to read it?"

The court were not concerned in this case in the least with what the author or the publishers intended. Whether they intended to deprave or corrupt was quite irrelevant; the only issue for the jury to decide was whether the book had a tendency to deprave or corrupt. He warned the jury that they must not take any particular passage or passages and say that they were obscene. "You have to study the book as a whole and say at the end of it: 'Taking this by and large, is this book as a whole by reason of the various purple passages what one might call an obscene book?'"

Satisfaction of Desires

He explained that it was a book about a *Lady Chatterley*, who was a young woman whose husband was wounded in the first war and was paralysed from the waist downwards and was unable to have any sexual intercourse. "Other views may be put before you. I invite you to say that in fact the book is one describing how that woman, deprived of sex from her husband, satisfied her sexual desires—a sex-starved girl, and how she satisfies that starvation with a particularly sensual man who happens to be her husband's gamekeeper." There were, he thought, 13 episodes of sexual intercourse throughout the book. "You will see that they are described in the greatest detail, save perhaps for the first."

The jury might think that if the description was confined to the first occasion not only would there be less complaint about the book, but it might even be better than it was. But certainly 12 of them were described in great detail, leaving nothing to the imagination. "The curtain is never drawn. One follows them not only into the bedroom, but into bed and one remains with them there."

It was not only that type of background, but the words—words that no doubt would be said to be "good old-fashioned Anglo-Saxon four-letter words". No doubt they were, but they appeared again and again, and although these matters were not normally voiced in the court, when this formed the whole subject matter to the prosecution one could not avoid voicing them.

Mr. Griffith-Jones then said that one word appeared no fewer than some 30 times, another 14 times, another 13 times, and others six, four, and three times. "It is against that background that you have to view these passages, which I have described as the more purple passages," he said.

Holding up a copy of the Penguin book, Mr. Griffith-Jones read from the inside cover how Lawrence had written of his work ". . . I always labour at the same thing, to make the sex relation valid and precious instead of shameful. And this novel is the furthest I've gone." The cover statement went on to say that it had taken over 30 years for it to be possible to publish the un mutilated version of the book in this country, and Mr. Griffith-Jones added: "You will have to say now whether it has taken 30 years, or whether it will take still longer."

He said the book gave little about the character of any of the people. They were little more than bodies which continuously had sexual intercourse with one another.

Mr. Gardiner, opening for the defence, said the jury had been told that the book was full of descriptions of sexual intercourse—and so it was—and full of large numbers of four-letter words—and so it was. "You may ask yourselves at once: 'How comes it that reputable publishers are publishing, apparently after considerable thought and quite deliberately, an appalling book of the nature which has been described to us?'"

To answer this he would first outline the history of Penguin books, and Mr. Gardiner stated that they began in 1935 under a man called Lane. They started with a novel and some detective stories, and then classics, and translations of great masterpieces of literature of other countries. They had sold 250 million books. They had published the whole of Shakespeare, books of Shaw, and before 1950 had published four books by D. H. Lawrence. In 1950, 20 years after Lawrence's death, they had published a further 10 of his books, and in 1960, 30 years after his death, they intended to publish the rest, including this book.

This particular book had unfortunately had a chequered history. It was not published 30 years ago when the law would have been against doing so. There were many books circulating in London now which nobody would have thought ought to have been printed even 20 years ago. The book was published in English on the Continent and no doubt many copies had found their way into this country. The book that Lawrence wrote had never been published before in this country.

There had been an expurgated edition, and there would have been nothing to have stopped Penguin Books years ago from publishing one, but they had never thought of doing so because whether they could have made money or not, they had never published a mutilated book. The expurgated edition was not the book that Lawrence wrote. One could have an expurgated edition of "Hamlet" and of "The Canterbury Tales" but they would not be the books that Shakespeare or Chaucer wrote. Penguins had always refused to publish any work unless it was the work of the author.

Mr. Gardiner said that in the previous Acts the prosecution could pick out particular passages from a book; the question used to be whether the work had a tendency to deprave or corrupt those whose minds were open to such immoral influences, while there used to be no distinction between pornography and literature. Pornography generally could be construed as "dirt for dirt's sake," which one could see on bookstalls or in Sunday newspapers—dirt put in which had no art or literature.

Taken as a Whole

To be obscene within the meaning of the Act, the book must be taken as a whole as tending to deprave and corrupt, which obviously involved a change of character, leading the reader to do something wrong which he would not otherwise have done. He would suggest that a book could not be obscene merely because of an extra-marital relationship. If that was so he would suggest that 19 out of 20 novels which were written would be held to be obscene.

One of the greatest things, the author thought, was the relationship of a man and woman in love and that their physical union formed an essential part of a relationship which was normal and wholesome and not something to be ashamed of, but something to be discussed openly and frankly.

Mr. Gardiner submitted that if a man was going to write a book of the type he had suggested and deal with physical relations between the sexes it was necessary to describe what he meant. Mr. Griffith-Jones had suggested that here was a book which contained 13 descriptions of intercourse, and the only variation was the time and place. He would suggest that when the jury read the book they would find the exact opposite. Here was a book about England of the twenties. It was quite right to say it included what were called four-letter words which had grown more into use now than 20 years ago. They were words which the character in the book would, in fact, use.

What the defence here would say was that the book was not obscene and it would not tend to deprave or corrupt anyone. It was a book the publication of which was in the public interest. The publishers relied on the status of Lawrence as an author and his place in English literature. There were always differences of opinion on questions of literary belief, but whether the jury thought Lawrence was the greatest English novelist since Hardy or not, few would disagree he was among the six greatest of this century. Since his death something like 800 books had been written about his works, which were sold all over the world.

Lawrence's message was that the society of his day in England was sick, the result of the machine age and the "bitch-goddess" success, of the importance which everybody attached to money and the extent to which the mind had been stressed at the expense of the body; that what we ought to do was to re-establish the personal relationships and their expression between a man and woman in love with no shame, nothing wrong, nothing unclean, and nothing which anybody was not entitled to discuss. He submitted that the descriptions of physical union were necessary to what Lawrence was trying to say. He was always a repetitious writer and that would be found with the four-letter and many other words.

The sort of character who used the four-letter words was true to life, and it was plain that what the author intended was to drag those words out of the rather shameful connotation which they had

I see no reason in morality (or in aesthetic theory) why literature should not have as one of its intentions the arousing of thoughts of lust. It is one of the effects, perhaps one of the functions, of literature to arouse desire, and I can discover no ground for saying that sexual pleasure should not be among the objects of desire which literature presents to us, along with heroism, virtue, peace, death, food, wisdom, God, etc.

—Lionel Trilling

achieved since Victorian times. Whether it was successful or not was an entirely different matter. The attitude of shame with which large numbers of people had always viewed sex in any form had reduced us to the position where it was not at all easy for fathers and mothers to find words to describe to their children the physical union. The author thought that if he used words which had been part of our spoken speech for about 600 years, he could purify them from the shame which rested on them. Anyone reading the book would be very shocked the first time but by repetition they would realise that there was nothing shameful in the word in itself, for it depended so much on the mind which was being applied to it. Whether it was a good idea or a sensible thing to do was not something with which the jury were concerned.

The Times, 28th October —

The first defence witness was Mr. Graham G. Hough, literary critic, lecturer in English and Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge. He said he had published a study of D. H. Lawrence, and first read the unexpurgated edition of "Lady Chatterley's Lover" about 1940. Lawrence was generally recognised as one of the most important novelists of this century and one of the greatest English novelists of any century. More than 800 books had been written about his works.

One of the things to be taken into account in assessing the literary merits of a book was whether it was sincere and a true representation of an aspect of life. He placed this work as about fifth among Lawrence's books.

Asked by Mr. Gardiner to explain the theme or meaning of the novel, he said they should look for the true meaning in an attempt to give a sympathetic understanding to a painful, intricate, and difficult human situation. "The book is in fact concerned with the relations between men and women, with their sexual relations and with the nature of proper marriage, and this is a matter of great importance and deep concern to all of us," he said.

Cross-examined by Mr. Griffith-Jones, Mr. Hough agreed that this was Lawrence's third version of the novel, and that in the first version, written about 1925, none of the "purple passages" appeared. When asked if he agreed with Miss Katherine Anne Porter, writing in *Encounter*, that the novel was "a dreary, sad performance, with some passages of unintentionally hilarious low comedy," and "written with much inflamed apostolic solemnity," he said: "I think that is an eccentric opinion." Lady Chatterley herself was not stupid but was rather slow and warm-hearted.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Do you mean filled with sex?

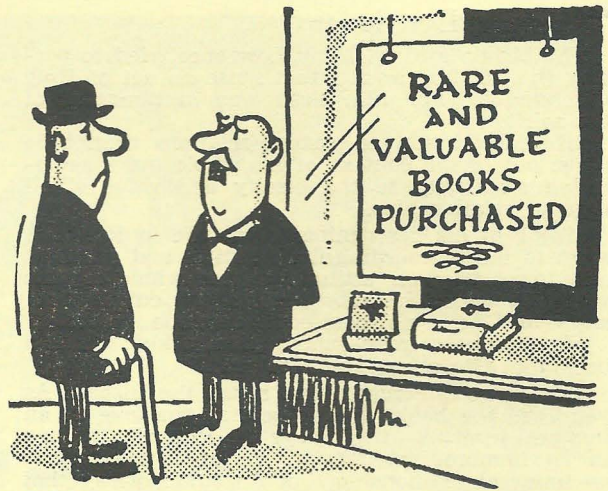
Mr. Hough.—I did not mean that.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Would you agree with me that a good book, by a good writer, generally speaking should not repeat things again and again? This is a tiresome habit, is it not?

Mr. Hough.—No. I do not agree with this. There is a great deal of this in the Bible. It is a technique frequently employed.

Rebecca West

The fourth witness was Dame Rebecca West, the literary critic and writer. She said she had read most of Lawrence's works and first read "Lady Chatterley's Lover" about 1930. His standing in English literature, she thought, was very high. This novel was not a recommendation of promiscuous and adulterous intercourse. It showed a broken life and what somebody did with it, but it did not suggest adultery. Lawrence spent much



"Ah, this Lady C. decision will be the ruin of the old firm."

—Daily Worker

of his life working out the problems of how to make a good marriage, because he thought it perhaps the most important thing in the world.

The idea that the story was padding could not be true, she said, because the book had that story because it was designed from the first as an allegory, and the allegory Lawrence intended was that here was a culture which had become sterile and unhelpful to man's deepest needs and that one wanted to have the whole of civilisation realising it was not living fully enough. She went on: "The baronet and his impotence is a symbol of the impotent culture of his time, and the love-affair with the gamekeeper was a return of the soul to the more intense life that he felt people should have had, a different culture such as one based on religious faith."

She said that Lawrence was talking about something quite real—he was not a fanciful writer. He was governed by the fear of something that would happen, and which did happen, in the shape of war. The literary merit of his book was something that readers accorded by reading him in such large numbers and the critics by writing so much criticism about him.

The Bishop of Woolwich, Dr. John Arthur Thomas Robinson, was the next witness. He told Mr. Gardiner that he had a great deal of experience in teaching and ministering to university students and had a son and three daughters.

Last summer he read "Sons and Lovers," another book by D. H. Lawrence, and had subsequently read "Lady Chatterley's Lover."

Mr. Gardiner asked: "What are the merits of this book?"

The Bishop.—I should not like to be put into the position of arguing it primarily on its ethical merits. Clearly Lawrence did not have a Christian valuation of sex, and the kind of sexual relations depicted in the book are not those that are necessarily of the kind I should regard as ideal. But what Lawrence is trying to do, I think, is to portray the sex relation as something sacred.

He quoted Archbishop Temple as saying: "Christians do not make jokes about sex for the same reason they do not make jokes about the Holy Communion. Not because it is sordid, but because it is sacred."

“Sensitive Descriptions”

The bishop said: “I think Lawrence tried to portray this relation as in a real sense an act of Holy Communion. For him flesh was sacramental of the spirit.

“His description of sexual relations cannot be taken out of the context of his whole quite astonishing sensitivity to the beauty and value of all organic relationships.

“Some of his descriptions of nature in the book seem to me extraordinarily beautiful and sensitive and to portray an attitude to the whole organic world in which he saw sex as the culmination, and which he in no sense could describe as sordid.”

Mr. Gardiner, in re-examination, asked: “Is it a book that Christians ought to read?”

The Judge interrupted and asked the Bishop: As you read the book, does it portray the love of an immoral woman?—It portrays the love of a woman in an immoral relationship so far as adultery is an immoral relationship, but I would not say that it was intended in any way to absolve immorality.

Mr. Gardiner.—Lawrence was not a Christian?—No.

Is this a book which in your view Christians ought to read?—Yes, I think it is.

The Bishop was going on to enlarge upon his answer, saying: “Because what I think Lawrence

Mr. Griffith-Jones stopped him, and told him that that was a matter for the jury.

Sir William Emrys Williams, a director of Penguin Books and secretary-general of the Arts Council of Great Britain, said he had made a study of Lawrence for over 45 years and had read all his published works. “In all his work he is attempting to do what a picture restorer tries to do for works of art which have become tarnished,” he said. “He believed we had not fulfilled ourselves completely in our feelings and sex as we ought to do but had concentrated everything on mental love. What he had tried to do in all his works was to clean off the old varnish.”

Asked by Mr. Hutchinson, for the defence, what Lawrence’s value was as a novelist, he said that he was a most uneven one. He could not think of any other novelist of our time who could range so far from perfection to imperfection. He said he would put Lawrence in the first five or six novelists of this century, with Hardy and Conrad.

Asked by Mr. Hutchinson, on re-examination, what he thought of putting “a row of asterisks in,” the witness said he thought it would just make it “a dirty book.” He thought that Penguin could have sold a large number of copies even if it had been expurgated.

The Rev. A. S. Hopkinson, Vicar of St. Katharine Cree, London, general director of the Industrial Christian Fellowship and Anglican Adviser to Associated Television, told Mr. Gardiner that from the point of view of Christian values the book seemed to be studded with compassion and human tenderness. Judged as a whole it was a book of moral purpose which set out a picture of understanding and kindness.

He said that if there were activities that were an essential part of human life it was misleading to try to replace them by asterisks and blanks.

Mr. Gardiner.—From a moral point of view have you any objection to young people reading the book?—No. I would like my children to read it and I like to think they would discuss it with me or with their mother, as I hope they would discuss anything which seems to them significant or important.

It’s the one thing they won’t let you be, straight and open in your sex. You can be as dirty as you like. In fact the more dirt you do on sex the better they like it. But if you believe in your own sex, and won’t have it done dirt to, they’ll down you. It’s the one insane taboo left—sex as a natural and vital thing.

—D. H. Lawrence, quoted by Raymond Williams in the witness box.

Mr. Griffith-Jones said that he imagined that as a minister of the Church he would have the highest regard for marriage. Would Mr. Hopkinson not agree that this was a book about a man and a woman who appeared to have little regard for the marriage vows at all? Mr. Hopkinson disagreed.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—What about Lady Constance? What regard for her marriage bonds had she when she takes Michaelis up to her boudoir?—It was apparent then that she was deeply concerned and exercised about her marriage bonds, and it may be well these had broken down at this stage.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Do you find anywhere in the book a word suggesting criticism of what she is doing?—Not a word, but I take it that the book is intended to depict a situation rather than pass moral judgment.

Mr. Richard Hoggart, senior lecturer in English Literature at Leicester University, said he thought the book had quite exceptional literary merit, and was probably one of the 20 best novels written in Britain in the past 30 years.

Mr. Gardiner.—It has been said that the two main characters are little more than bodies which continuously have sexual intercourse together. What about that as a fair summary of this novel.—I should think it was a grossly unfair summary and based on a misreading of the book.

Mr. Gardiner.—As far as the young people in your care are concerned, would you think having regard to what you have said about this book, that it was a proper book for them to read?—Viewed purely in the abstract I think it would be proper, if they came to me to read it, to tell them to ask their parents first. I would not take on myself that responsibility.

The Times, 29th October—

In Mr. Hoggart’s view the novel was “virtuous and puritanical” in some aspects. Explaining this, he said he was thinking first of the whole movement of the book and Lawrence’s enormous insistence on arriving at relationships of integrity. It was a background to the ordinary, English, Non-conformist, Puritan tradition and in striking contrast to the more permissive attitude in most novels. Asked for his views on the repeated use of the word “touch,” Mr. Hoggart said it was one of the characteristics Lawrence used with great effect, to hammer home and almost re-create the words. Shakespeare repeated “nothings” five times in one passage.

Quoting a passage in which the word “contact” was repetitively used, Mr. Hutchinson asked if such a theme was valid in a book written at that time.

Mr. Hoggart.—I think it is one of the most valid themes there is in the twentieth-century novel. Here, Lawrence is talking about the way in which so much in our society, which is so organised and split into groups, causes us progressively to see people not as people but as units—two dimensional things.

Mr. Hutchinson quoted a passage describing the gamekeeper’s feelings after the first occasion of



'HE WAS ON THE JURY'

—Daily Mail.

intercourse with Connie Chatterley. He asked Mr. Hoggart if he agreed that the book put sensuality and sex on a pedestal.

Mr. Hoggart said it seemed to bear out his statement that the book was extremely pure. "Here, we find a man who has had intercourse with a woman and who is feeling the full weight of all the responsibilities and challenges now in front of him," he said. "As in so many parts of 'Lady Chatterley' it is an extremely tender passage. He is realising that you cannot simply have a woman. At that moment you open up unnamed relationships and responsibilities . . ."

Mr. Hutchinson.—Do those seem to be the views of a man involved in vicious indulgence?—I can hardly think of a less relevant description of the passage.

He said the suggestion that the only variation on the descriptions of intercourse lay in where it took place was "a gross misreading of the whole book." Sexual intercourse took place perhaps eight or 10 times, but none of the descriptions was the same. Every one had a progression towards a greater honesty and understanding of what was happening. He thought the book advocated marriage, not adultery. The physical, sexual side was subordinated. Lawrence was interested in a relationship between people which was in the deepest sense spiritual.

Asked for his view on the genuineness and necessity in the book of the four-letter words in the mouth of Mellors, Mr. Hoggart said: "They seem to me totally characteristic of many people, not only working-class people. They are used very frequently.

"Fifty yards from this court this morning, I heard a man say '——' three times, as I went past. He must have been very angry with somebody. If you work with people, as I have done, on building sites, you will find these words occur again and again in conversation. The man I heard this morning used those words as words of contempt, and the thing Lawrence found most horrifying was that the word for this relationship had

become a word of violent abuse, so the thing has totally lost its meaning and become simply derisive."

Mr. Hoggart said he had at first been shocked at the words used in the book, but as he read farther on they lost the effect of shock. "We have no word in English which is neither a long abstraction or a vague euphemism for this act," he said. "He wanted us to be able to say at certain moments this is what one does . . . in the most simple, neutral way one ———. There is no snigger or dirt."

He thought the book was, sociologically, a document of considerable importance, telling a great deal about our society, a "highly educative book in the most proper senses . . . doing the job of all good art." He thought the use of initial letters and blank spaces, as employed in the first draft of the book, gave the words a dirty suggestion.

A Misapprehension

To Mr. Mervyn Griffith-Jones, for the prosecution, Mr. Hoggart reaffirmed his view that the book was "highly virtuous if not puritanical."

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—I only thought that I had lived my life under a misapprehension of the meaning of the word "puritanical."—Many people do live their lives under such a misapprehension. In Britain today and for a long time the word "puritanical" had tended to mean someone who is against anything which is pleasurable, particularly sex, but the proper meaning is someone who belongs to the tradition of British puritanism and the main weight of that is an intense sense of responsibility of one's conscience.

Mr. Griffith-Jones then read a further passage from the book, and asked: "Was that passage puritanical?"

Mr. Hoggart.—Yes, puritanical, poignant, tender, moving, and sad, about two people who have no proper relationships.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—I would have thought that could be answered without a lecture. This is the Old Bailey, not Leicester University.

Looking back, I think I can isolate the crucial incident, the exchange wherein the case was psychologically won. It occurred on the third morning during the testimony of Richard Hoggart, who had called Lawrence's novel "puritanical". Mr. Hoggart is a short, dark young Midland teacher of immense scholarship and fierce integrity. From the witness box he uttered a word that we had formerly heard only on the lips of Mr. Griffith-Jones; he pointed out how Lawrence had striven to cleanse it of its furtive, contemptuous and expletive connotations, and to use it "in the most simple, neutral way: one f—s*." There was no reaction of shock anywhere in the court, so calmly was the word pronounced, and so literally employed.

"Does it gain anything," asked Mr. Gardiner, "by being printed 'f—'?" "Yes," said Mr. Hoggart, "it gains a dirty suggestiveness."

—Kenneth Tynan in the London Observer.

* The point of this quotation is, of course, missed if it is not realised that the London Observer printed this word in full. If Overland's lawyers and printers had been amenable, we would have wished to do so too. We feel it is less offensive to do so.—Editor.

Mr. Griffith-Jones read a further extract, and commented: "This is about all there was to keep those two connected, was it not? It was done purely for the satisfaction of her sexual lust, wasn't it?"—No. It is done because she is lonely and lost and she feels that through the sexual act she may feel less lonely and lost.

Asked by Mr. Justice Byrne if it was not just an immoral relationship between a woman and man, Mr. Hoggart agreed.

The Judge.—And there was not a spark of affection between them?—There was. It is in the text. She felt he was a child in some ways and she felt a tenderness towards him.

Mr. Griffith-Jones read further passages, which Mr. Hoggart maintained were "puritanical." He said that in the middle of Milton's "Paradise Lost" was a great passage in which Adam and Eve came together in this way and which was highly sensual. He described another passage as "heavy with conscience" and "one of the side-issues of puritanism." Of a paragraph in which Connie Chatterley's feeling of the gamekeeper's body was described, witness said: "It is puritanical in its reference."

Replying to Mr. Hutchinson he said he thought that these were some of the most beautiful passages in the book—"intensely moving and beautifully creative."

Lawrence was unique in the way he had been able to describe the after effects of the sexual act without being in some way prurient or suggestive. He thought there might well be a strong case for prosecuting certain books which "do dirt on life," of one whole group of which there were millions on sale in Britain as 2/6 paperbacks. In every one there were two or three sexual encounters and usually rape and some sort of violence.

The next witness, Miss Sarah Beryl Jones, classics mistress and senior librarian at Keighley Girls' Grammar School, Yorkshire, said she first read the novel about 30 years ago. Its theme was the sensitivity of human relations, especially in an industrial country. She thought that girls grew up earlier now than they used to.

Asked by Mr. Gardiner if there was a great deal of literature now available to them on sexual matters, she said: "Yes, there are technical works

Richard Hoggart, author of "The Uses of Literacy," who was one of the key witnesses for the defence at the "Lady Chatterley" trial.



and what you might call 'dirty' literature, also available if they wish to read it—and most of them don't."

How far do girls nowadays at school know the four-letter words?—I have inquired from a number of girls after they have left school, and most of them have been acquainted with these words by the time they were 10.

In your view, has this book any educational merits?—I think it has considerable educational merits, if taken at the proper time, which is normally after 17 years of age, because it deals honestly and openly with problems of sex which are very real to the girls themselves. In my experience, girls are good at knowing what they want to read, and naturally reject what is unsuitable to them. If they are a little prurient they may read the book, but I find the majority of girls do not wish to read such books.

Mr. E. M. Forster, the novelist, said he knew Lawrence quite well in his day and kept in touch with him. In all contemporary literature he would place him enormously high. He still held the view that Lawrence was the greatest imaginative novelist of his own generation. "Lady Chatterley's Lover" had a high literary merit. He thought the description of Lawrence as "part of the great puritan stream" of British writers a correct one. "Though I understand that, at first, people would think it paradoxical," he added.

In the opinion of Mr. Walter Ernest Allen, the author, journalist, and broadcaster, the book was "rather in the nature of a tract" and "the work of genius."

Asked by Mr. Hutchinson what he meant by a tract, he said that Lawrence was trying to express much more explicitly his views on the state of society and the state of sexual relationship than he did elsewhere. "I think it is a moral book," he said, "because it consists of two parts: on the one hand, an attack on the evils of industrial society, and a serious inquiry into sexual relationships."

Dr. Clifford James Hemming, writer, lecturer and educational psychologist, questioned about the book's literary or sociological merits, said: "The most important point is that today young people are subjected to constant titillation and insinuation of what I would describe as shallow and corrupting values regarding sex and the relationship between the sexes . . . Against this purely physical view, Lawrence gives us a very different carefully worked out picture of relationships between the sexes which are based on tenderness, compassion, sensitivity for each other, on mutual feeling and understanding. As such, the content of "Lady Chatterley's Lover" is a positive antidote to the

Continued page 31

The Apology of Thos. Davey, Esq. *Perambulations . . .*

See next pages

Late Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land, off New Holland, during the years 1813-1817, and First Lieutenant in the Convict Fleet of 1787-1788, commanded by Capt. A. Phillip, R.N. Written to the Secretary of State, the Earl Bathurst, on the Occasion of Mr. Davey's being Relieved of the Position of Lieutenant-Governor, because of Complaints lodged by L. Macquarie, Esq., Captain-General and Governor of the Colony of New South Wales.

When I came to this Stinking Shore
The Northern Wind blew hot as Hades,
So coatless up Elizabeth Street
I stroll'd with Emancipist Ladies
Who, brazen wenches, screamed abuse
At Hobart Dog and Overseer,
"Available for Hire", by G—d
A Dump and Holey Dollar dear.

His Majesty was in our Thoughts,
We drank his Royal Health with Cheer,
With a cask of Rum outside Government
House

He had his Birthday twice a year.
But sanctimonious at Port Jackson
Macquarie spread his Scottish b—m,
The Captain-General, Esquire, I mean,
The Governor who replaced Rum
With pale-fac'd Clerks in the Bank, My
Lord,

He spewed up from his cunning Maw,
But Profit here, I beg to state,
is made and spent by Martial Law.
"Mad Tom the Governor" have you named
me,

Mister Lachlan Macquarie?
If I have caused your Laird-ship trouble
Then your Humble Servant's sorry!

But with Wine nine Guineas a Dozen
And Spirits even more a cask
Only your penny-pinching self
Could squat by Sydney Cove and ask
Intelligence on St. David's Church
And th' Melancholy gibbet Death
Of Rangers of th' Colony's woods
Who swing with foul and dying Breath

On Hunter's Island near th' Wharf,
A Spectacle most salutary,
'Tis our sight of Home and England,
Our bloody petit Tyburn Tree.
Th' Barracks of th' Prisoners
Were regularly cleansed, Your Grace,
From Gallows Hill to Murderers' Plains
Th' Public Works went on apace

And though I lived a Lecherous Life
By G—d I show'd them I'd not Fail
To emulate The Crown, My Lord,
When Governor of a b—y gaol!

L. L. ROBSON

ABOVE the boat-noir of commercial entertainments, the Arts, on wings of song and suchlike, waft. Love's labors fill the air as writers write, painters paint, and pianists pian. Petty suspends the artists like vanes upon a mobile (or horses on a carousel) and as they turn, gracefully, we note with admiration the avant-garde composition within the film-director's frame, applaud the actor in his wooden "O", and gasp (ah!) at the dancer on her points.

Below sits the audience, appreciative or snoring—and accurately sited between the maestros and the masses. But what's this! One profanely turns his head to look below . . . and look! Another leaps, like a trout, or Arthur Miller, towards mere sideshow glitter!

Roll up roll up cries the spruiker, beckoning 'neath the silver screen, and upturned faces show their interest, toss their pennies. And point their finger of scorn at the Better Things aloft.

Here are the Fleapit and the Gods. Each world depicted, as it were, holds a mirror up to its own nature.

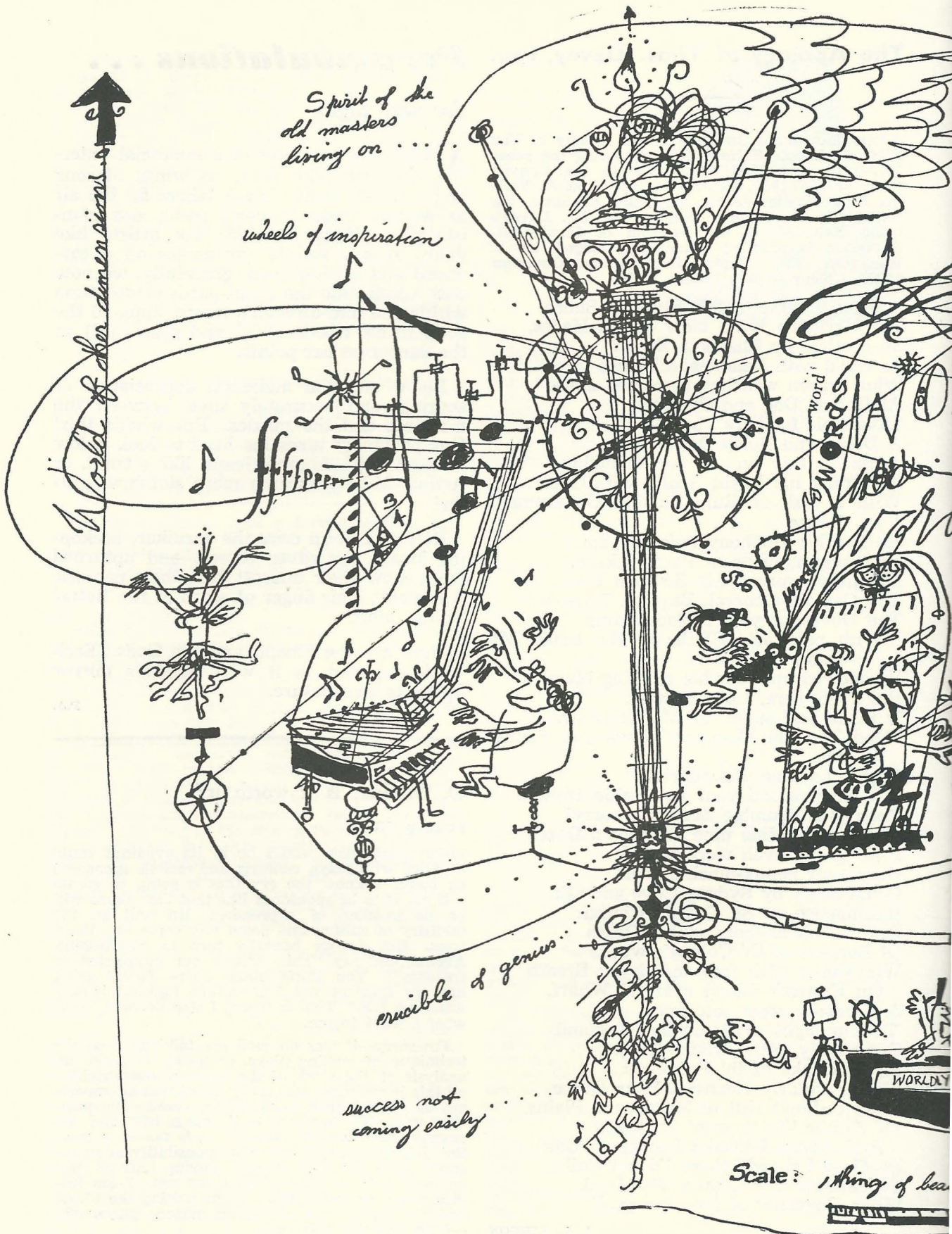
P.A.

O, Mother, is it worth it?

From p. 18

union conference would be if its evenings could be filled with plays, concerts and recitals sponsored by itself. I know the cry that is going to go up—if art is to be sponsored like that then there will be no freedom of expression. Up will go the ministry of culture and down will come the directives. But do we honestly turn to Shaftesbury Avenue and say "This—this is our expression of freedom"? You think about that—200,000 going into the theatres and four million indiscriminately watching T.V.? That is where I stop dead—I know what I want to see.

I'm sorry—it was no good my talking about the technique of writing plays, or trying to make an analysis of the work of the modern playwright—all this is academic and really to me not as important as what I have been talking about. My question was: "O, Mother, is it worth it?" and my answer must be: "O, Mother, it is not—not yet." But I have laid the ball of responsibility at someone's door—the ball is still moving only at this moment it is on their side of the net. I am fulfilling my responsibilities, I am writing the plays; and this much I can say of the modern playwright—I am not the only one.



Spirit of the
old masters
living on ...

wheels of inspiration

World of other dimensions

fff/ppp

WORDS

crucible of genius

success not
coming easily

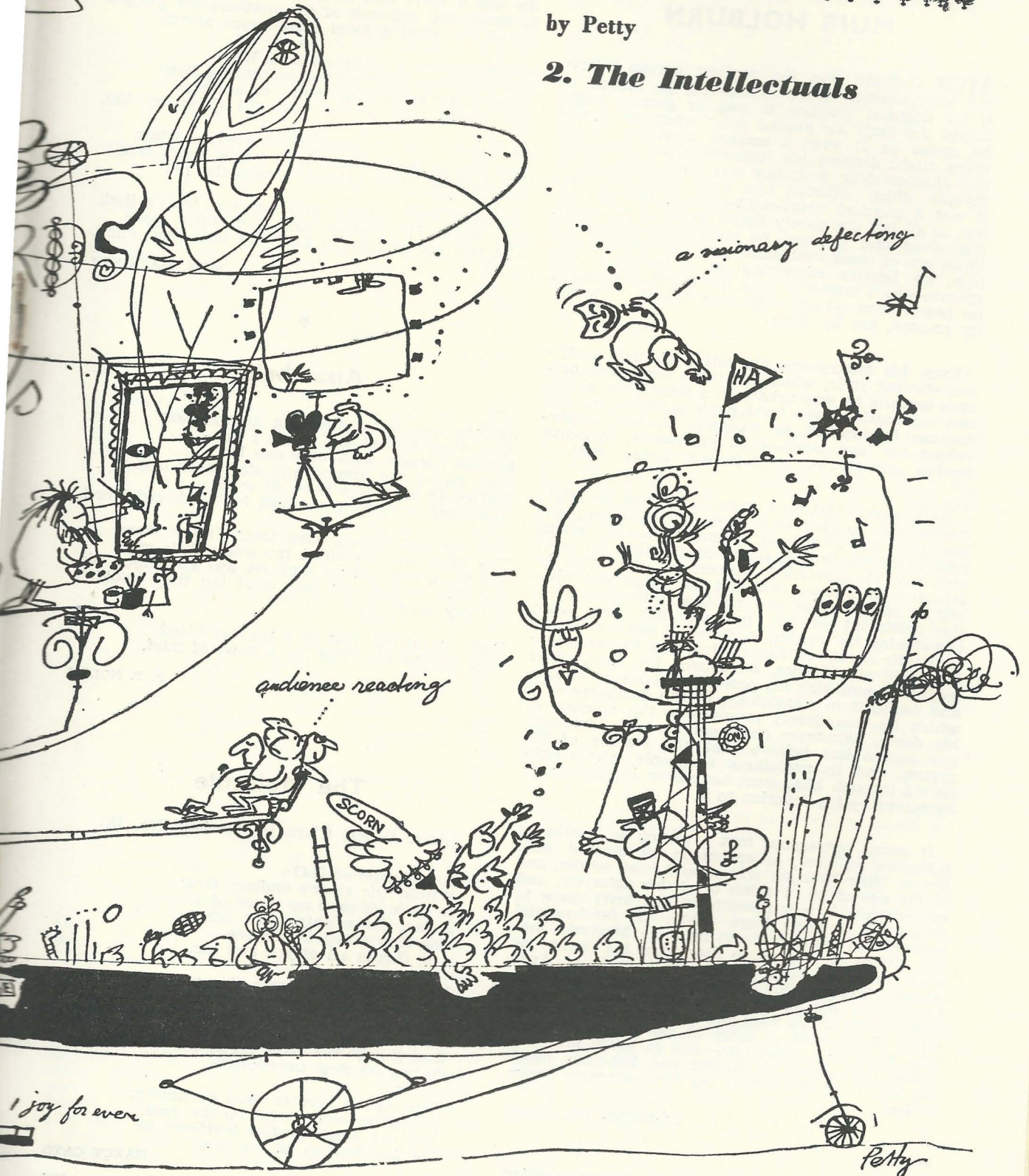
Scale: 1/10th of sea

... wings of culture

PERAMBULATIONS

by Petty

2. The Intellectuals



MUIR HOLBURN

MUIR Holburn was the gentlest person I have ever known. When he moved, he moved as if the slightest violence in step or gesture might injure the very air around him; when he spoke, he spoke as if even a meagre hardness in his voice might distress his listeners. This intriguing and characteristic hesitancy was due partly to the myopia which afflicted him from childhood, but it was a physical short-sightedness only: his vision, in all but the purely literal sense of the word, was clear and precise: no mean accomplishment in an era of mass confusion. Despite self-deprecation, he became something of a leader in the spheres which interested him, albeit one who sought no power over others, only over himself; a leader by precept, not by force.

Even his poetry—mainly satire of high quality and distinct style, which has been neglected, perhaps because he was urbane at a time when nature and exploration were fashionable subjects, perhaps because he himself, so sincerely modest, undervalued his own work—even his poetry, mocking, teasing, and pointed as it is, was never cruel.

He believed that no human being had the right deliberately to hurt any other human being; and that even the likelihood of unintentionally giving pain to others should, as far as possible, be foreseen and circumvented. Because of the value he attached to human existence, he immersed himself in social causes and political action, often to the detriment of his personal life, and often abandoning his writing to do so. When recent and traumatic events in Europe led him to reconsider his political attitudes, he sought for some other means of assuaging his possessive social conscience and found it in scientology, in the furtherance of which he was deeply involved to the moment of his death. Whatever one's opinion of scientology, one cannot but believe that the stature of the system, and its usefulness to people who sought its aid through him, must have been immeasurably increased by his devotion to it.

It seems outrageous that a person as gentle, as generous, as kind, as optimistic, as tangled with life as Muir Holburn was should have to die, and at the age of 39. I think of all his interests, and immediately it is impossible in this brief space to do justice to their huge range: his fundamental research, in company with his wife Marjorie, into the history of Australian literature; his twenty or more years of work for the Fellowship of Australian Writers, his delight in music and the theatre, his wit and frivolity which were the visible aspects of his wise and understanding personality. He loomed so large in the hearts of those who knew and loved him—and to know him was to love him—that his sudden and too-early death has left an anguish that we have scarcely begun to feel.

LAURENCE COLLINSON

When this man walks across a white man's side
it's like a wave that threatens from the south
to break the bulwark of the northerner's pride—
to roll its stinging foam across each mouth

that opens out a silent curse on him.
The measured swell of his proceeding form
attracts the jagged lightnings of a storm
that whirls from gaze to gaze till all grows dim,

till fiends arise from out the murderous whim
that swiftly flares across each white man's face.
But soon he turns a corner, snaps the line

that drew what might have swung him from a limb.
He's gone. The citizens have kept their place.
The sun comes out, let Lincoln's bust now shine.

NOEL MACAINSH

★

Apartheid

Sixteen men came knocking at my door.
And when I went out to see I saw
Sixteen niggers with only one leg
Who sat on the ground and started to beg.
Started to beg for a bowl of mud
And their faces were covered in blood, red blood.

And the salt tears soaked their sixteen faces,
The tears and the blood ran sharp little races
Till the ground where they sat was a red mud pie.
Oh! they wailed and they wept but they wouldn't
say why

They sat at my door in a pool of blood
And begged like dogs for a bowl of mud.

P. F. NOLAN

★

The Molecule

(After Robert Clark in Overland No. 18)

A molecule of H₂O
Within the river's endless flow;
A grain of sand on miles of shore;
A leaf the mighty forest bore;
One tiny polyp in the sea—
And this is all of you and me.

Yet strong reefs break the ocean's shock
With countless forms now turned to rock,
The beach still curves about the bay
Though single sand-grains wear away,
And though the river meets the sea
Its waters flow unceasingly.

Each one is greater than he knows:
A million cells make up the rose,
And one small perfect leaf may be
The justification of the tree.

NANCY CATO

The Lady Chatterley Case

From page 26

shallow, superficial values about sex which are widely current in society today, and which are corrupting the attitude of young people towards sex."

He thought the detailed description of the natural sex act in such a work of art was justified. A great deal of misrepresentation had been brought to the notice of young people, and for the description to be given in detail, with tenderness and compassion, was of value. So far from putting promiscuous and adulterous liaisons on a pedestal, he thought the whole emphasis of the book was towards a deep and enduring relationship.

Mr. Gardiner, re-examining, asked what the difference was between young people learning of sex from this book and what they would learn from books that many of them, in fact, did read. Dr. Hemming replied that in the books usually read they would get a sense of titillation—of a quite temporary act that did not involve the depth or wholeness of the personality, "just a man and a woman coming together in a trivial way." He said that among certain sections of society there was this feeling that all that human sexual relations were was a physical coming together for the satisfaction of a quick physical need "and then it is all over."

"Young women do not know the commitments of emotions they are involved in when they enter a sexual relationship, and the young man does not realise how he has to be tender, sensitive, understanding, and loving towards the object of his physical desire in order that a sexual relationship of value can grow between them. It is this which is the difference, on the one hand the shallow, trivial, and temporary values and those of tenderness, compassion, and an enduring relationship."

The Times, 1st November —

The first witness of the day, and the nineteenth for the defence, was Mr. R. Williams, staff tutor in English in extramural studies, Oxford University. He said that Lawrence was one of the five or six major literary figures of this century, who had an international reputation before an English one. "Lady Chatterley's Lover" was one of his four major works, the others being "Sons and Lovers," "The Rainbow," and "Women in Love." He said that one of the main purposes of the book was to change the bad meaning of sex into a good meaning, and to illustrate this Mr. Williams quoted a passage: "It's the one thing they won't let you be, straight and open in your sex. You can be as dirty as you like. In fact the more dirt you do on sex the better they like it. But if you believe in your own sex, and won't have it done dirt to, they'll down you. It's the one insane taboo left; sex as a natural and vital thing."

Mr. Williams said he would judge that this was very much Lawrence's own view and it had to be borne in mind when suggesting the book was obsessed with sex.

Mr. Norman St. John-Stevan, author and barrister, who said he had written the book "Obscenity and the Law," stated that "Lady Chatterley's Lover" was undoubtedly a moral book. "I have no hesitation in saying that every Catholic priest and moralist would profit by reading this book because they have an aim in common with Lawrence, which is to rid the sexual instinct—the sexual act—of any claim of false shame." As a Roman Catholic it was quite consistent with his own faith.

"I would put Lawrence among the great literary moralists of our own English literature, who essen-

tially was trying to purge, cleanse and reform," he said. "I have been horrified at the representations in some papers calling him a vicious man—in papers which I think he would not himself have deigned to read."

The fifth witness of the day was Canon T. R. Milford, Master of the Temple, who affirmed when taking the oath. He said that he had four daughters. He thought the book was important not only from the point of view of education of the young. There was a universal feeling that there was a proper reticence and modesty concerning these things. There was a distinction between the thing which was done in public—he thought it would be indecent to show scenes such as were described in the book in the cinema. The book had to be read by oneself, for it would not be suitable in general to read out in public. As he read it he felt that people were being invited to identify themselves with it, and not to be a third in the party. The scenes would be offensive if there had been an observer.

"Trimming of Life"

Sex as it is seen in much literature and advertisements tended to be treated as a trivial addition to life which really was of no great importance. The Greeks were alleged to have looked at it as one of the trimmings of life—"music, wine, and flowers." Another viewpoint was to concentrate on and isolate the physical aspects of it as an end in itself and a source of pleasure which had to be titivated or renewed. An instance of this was the Kinsey report which gave various methods of achieving the desired emotional result. He thought this was grossly immoral to isolate this and regard everything as a means of gratification of this one thing.

The aspect which he was sure Lawrence stood for was the physical basis of a deep human relationship which in principle could only be fulfilled between one man and one woman.

Mr. Cecil Day-Lewis, author, poet and publisher, said he had read all of Lawrence's works. "Lady Chatterley's Lover" was not one of Lawrence's greatest novels, for it was too much affected in places by his wish to sway the reader towards what he considered to be a right and wholesome view of sex. But at the same time he felt it to be in quite a different and higher class than the average British novel or best seller. Although Lady Chatterley committed adultery, he would not call her an immoral woman.

Mr. Griffith-Jones suggested that the book was recommending a full relationship between a man and a woman who were unknown to each other. They had virtually no conversation about any topic at all other than sexual intercourse. Mr. Day-Lewis said he would not agree with that.

He was then asked if there was anything in the book which indicated any other conversation between the two of them. Mr. Day-Lewis said he seemed to remember a conversation about the state of society. Mr. Griffith-Jones said that if there was it was only a very small part of their conversation. Mr. Day-Lewis said that the gamekeeper told Lady Chatterley about his time in the Army.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—That does not take her very far in knowing this man. What else?—I can remember nothing else which he told her.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—What did she tell him about herself?—She told him about her life with her husband . . .

"A Great Tenderness"

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—The only relationship is the sexual one between Mellors and Lady Chatterley. I suggest that virtually there is no other relationship that is discussed between them?—I would agree that most of their talk together is about the sexual side of their relationship, but when I read the book I got the strong impression they were getting to know each other better, they were becoming to understand each other better and feeling a great tenderness and tolerance for each other, and this is conveyed in the way they talk.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—This book is put forward as a tender book, one of understanding, fulfillment and happiness. Is it possible for any two human beings really to love one another when they have said not a word about anything except copulation?—I do, because we cannot assume that the dialogue was the only conversation between them.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—The only occasions when they have any opportunity of conversation is either just before, during, or immediately after the act of copulation. These are the only occasions or circumstances when any conversation can occur?—That is so.

Mr. Day-Lewis said it was perfectly natural for Lady Chatterley to run off to a hut in the forest to copulate with her husband's gamekeeper, "because it is in her nature."

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Because she is an over-sexed and adulterous woman?—No, I entirely disagree. It is in her nature because she is an averagely sexed woman—there is no evidence about that one way or another—a lonely woman, a woman not getting the affection and love she needs, and her nature sends her to the man who can give it to her.

Mr. Stephen Potter, the author and critic, said that this was not Lawrence's most successful novel. He was using it too much as a pamphlet although all his novels were written with a purpose—this one rather more than the others. "When I read it again I was surprised at its power and, sometimes, great qualities."

He thought Lawrence was trying to do something difficult and courageous with the use of the four-letter words. He was trying to take them out of the context of the lavatory wall and give them back dignity and meaning, away from the context of obscenity and the swear words. The words shocked only the eye and they soon went because they did not shock the brain. They shocked the eye because of the context in which they were usually seen.

The thirteenth witness was the Rev. Donald Alexander Tytler, Director of Religious Education in the Birmingham diocese, and former precentor of Birmingham Cathedral. He believed that the novel had educational merit, in that by reading it young people would be helped to grow up mature and responsible people.

Asked by Mr. Gardiner to explain this view, he said: "One of the most important factors which young people growing up have to adjust themselves to is their own developing emotional and physical powers. They are often encouraged by the kind of society we live in to believe that sex is either shameful or unimportant, and therefore promiscuity is what everybody does."

"This book makes clear that Lawrence was against irresponsibility in matters of sex, and therefore by reading it young people—even those who are potentially promiscuous—are likely to be pulled up short and made to think again. Those who already have a responsible view towards growing up will be strengthened and encouraged to believe that that view was worth while."

We live in an inherently corrupt society; I cannot see how our morality can be anything but corrupt. The principle of private enterprise upon which we depend for survival is not a very generous principle and therefore cannot produce very generous impulses, only sanctimonious ones. Likewise it can only produce a sanctimonious morality which in no time degenerates into a narrow-minded, perverse, and unhealthy morality.

This is the society Lawrence was writing against, and it follows it was this society that condemned him.

Lawrence's book did not need defending, but the society which condemned it needed attacking—it should have been another Reichstag.

—Arnold Wesker.

Cross-examining, Mr. Griffith-Jones asked if there was anything in "Lady Chatterley's Lover" to suggest that marriage was sacred and inviolable. Mr. Tytler said that it was a novel and not a tract. There was a great deal to suggest that the communion between a man and a woman, including marriage, was sacred.

When the question was repeated he replied: "I think it is taken for granted throughout."

View of Marriage

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Mellors did not regard marriage as sacred and inviolable, did he?—He is very much attracted by Lady Chatterley.

Mr. Griffith-Jones.—Of course he is. Everybody who commits adultery is very much attracted by the man or woman with whom he does it.

Just answer my question, please. There is nothing in his history which suggests he regards marriage as sacred and inviolable?—That may well be.

There is nothing to suggest that Lady Chatterley regarded her marriage as being particularly sacred or inviolable?—That I am not sure about. I should have thought that the conversation between Lady Chatterley and Sir Clifford in the book suggests that marriage is important.

Mr. Justice Byrne.—Is there anything in the book which appears to advocate adultery, whether or not it was dealing with such a situation?—I do not think there was any advocating of adultery.

The Judge.—Does it really deal with anything other than adultery?—It deals with the whole context of human relationships other than adultery.

If you cut the adultery out of this book, would there be very much left?—I think you still have the drama of a difficult marriage—the husband who was crippled by the war and a passionate woman—the interplay between those different characters in that situation.

"Life and Society"

Mr. John Connell, the writer and book critic, said he first read "Lady Chatterley's Lover" as an undergraduate, when a copy was smuggled into the university. He regarded it as an important and essential book in the whole corpus of D. H. Lawrence's work. One could not understand and appreciate him in full as a writer without reading it. It was a book of considerable literary merit, written with a total honesty of purpose.

Mr. Connell disagreed "utterly and totally" with the suggestion that it was "concerned only with vicious sexual indulgence." He said it was concerned with two important, inter-linked themes in human life and English society in Lawrence's time: sex and class. To put those pejorative terms on it seemed to be extremely bad criticism.

It dealt with a tragic situation. "The idea that it was about anything else," he said, "would seem to be so perverse and so to denigrate the novelist's purpose that I would really not go very much further unless I got angry."

Asked about its literary merits, Mr. Connell said: "I was unfortunate enough the other day to be sent for review an expurgated paperback edition. I found it (a) trivial, (b) furtive, and (c) obscene."

Mr. Griffith-Jones declined to make any cross-examination, and caused some laughter when he added: "I do not want to make Mr. Connell angrier."

The last witness was Miss Bernadine A. Wall, aged 21, of Ladbroke Grove, W., who said that she was of a Catholic family and had been educated at a Bayswater convent. She graduated at Cambridge, had a first-class honours degree in English, and had started to write her first novel.

When she was 17 she read an expurgated version of "Lady Chatterley's Lover." She thought it had little literary merit, "because one was not reading the book that Lawrence had written and it was difficult to assess it in a critical way." The relationship between Connie (Lady Chatterley) and Mellors seemed to be as trivial and promiscuous as her previous love affairs had been with Michaelis, in the expurgated version. She had since read the unexpurgated book which gave the balance she had found lacking in the other, because it showed there was a contrast.

Lawrence was trying to contrast positively with the deadness of the industrial civilisation that he was indicting. The novel as Lawrence wrote it held out the hope that this was not all, but that there was some way out of this existence.

"It does not put promiscuity on a pedestal," she went on. "Connie's promiscuous affairs were most unsatisfactory and her affair with Mellors was a serious and responsible affair."

Mr. Gardiner.—Had you known these four-letter words when you read the book?—Yes, I knew all of them at that time.

When Mr. Gardiner asked from what source Miss Wall had learnt them, Mr. Griffith-Jones objected that the question did not relate to the literary or other merits of the book. "Does it mean," he asked, "that anyone who takes a first-class honours degree is a literary expert? She is asked the age at which she learned certain words."

The Judge.—She might think they were of literary merit. No one can tell.

Mr. Gardiner.—How, from the point of view of literary merit, did this book compare with any other books dealing with human relations, including sexual relations?

Miss Wall.—It treated very important human relationship with great dignity. The relationship was made a serious, important and valuable one, which I had rarely read in any other novel.

The Times, 2nd November—

Mr. Gerald Gardiner, Q.C., began his summing up for the defence by emphasising that the jury must return a unanimous verdict. He said that was not a prosecution of pornographic booksellers, but of Penguin Books Ltd., whose board of directors thought there was nothing in this book which in truth, in real life, as opposed to theory, would deprave or corrupt anyone.

The jury had to consider two questions—the first, under Section 2 of the Act, being whether the book tended to deprave or corrupt those who read it. It was plain that today there was a vast amount of pornography—dirt for dirt's sake—



"Not as exciting as the trial, I thought."

—Belsky in "The Daily Herald."

about. Equally clearly, the proportion which anyone could describe as literature was minute.

In this Act Parliament was making it easier to prosecute pornography while protecting that which could fairly be called literature. Parliament had also, under this section, provided that for the first time expert evidence could be called in these matters.

The most important single fact was that Parliament had expressly provided that evidence might be called both by the defence and by the prosecution on these matters. When the first few witnesses were called they were attacked, quite properly, by the prosecution. Then, gradually, the prosecution plainly got overwhelmed by the evidence and gradually more and more accepted it, and more and more asked no questions. Then, when their turn came to call evidence, they called none at all.

Lawrence had been described as "a puritan moralist." This did not mean he was a puritan in the sense that he was not prepared openly to talk about sex or a moralist in the sense that he never told a dirty story or did not commit adultery. It meant that he was in the stream of those great authors who had great integrity of purpose and who had a message to give which was relevant to the state of our society and who approached their task with great sincerity of conscience.

Faults

No one suggested that this was a perfect book or had been his best book. Witnesses had said it was not possible to judge Lawrence if one could not read this book. It had faults, but it was a book with sociological merits. It was a description of life as it was at a particular time in the Midlands, describing the beauty of the countryside and the extraordinary sympathy which Lawrence had for nature and all living things. He contrasted the unsatisfactory and futile nature of promiscuous relations with a normal and healthy relationship

of people in love which should bind a man and woman perfectly together.

Hardly any questions had been put to witnesses about the book as a whole. The technique had been as it used to be before the Act, to read out particular passages and to say, "Do you call that moral?" or "Do you think that is a good bit of writing?" The one thing that the Act had made plain was that in future, in fairness to authors, the book must be judged as a whole.

There was a high breathlessness about beauty which cancelled out lusts. Not one single witness had been found to say anything against Lawrence or this book. One could only judge by what Mr. Griffith-Jones said in opening the case.

It had been suggested that it was a book about adultery. But it was necessary to be clear about this. In the first place, Lawrence was not a Christian and was not seeking to deal with any ecclesiastical situation. In literature, a writer put his characters in a situation which was likely to give rise to the human question of behaviour which he was seeking to consider. A large proportion of novels included adultery or actions of that kind. They might or might not advocate it. This was a moral book, because the message, the meaning, or the outcome, was that two people found an aspect of truth.

It was just not true to say that they discussed nothing but sex. The setting was one in which adultery took place, but the book was by a pagan and not a Christian. For his purpose a permanent union was a thing of great importance, and he was writing this at the end of his life.

One Marriage

No opportunity had been lost to attack Lawrence and it had been said that he himself ran off with someone else's wife. That was true, but he was married only once in his life and it lasted up to his death. Whatever his view might have been, the only view with which they were concerned was that expressed in his book and written not long before his death.

It was naturally a book about human beings—about real people—and Mr. Gardiner said he protested at the sort of statements which had been made about the character, Constance, as though she were a sort of nymphomaniac.

No one would suggest that what she did was right, but Lawrence very much stacked the cards against himself by making her husband, Sir Clifford, a character with whom no one could fail to have sympathy. When it was said that this was a book about adultery, one wondered how there could be things which people did not see. "I suppose," he went on, "that somewhere there might be a mind which would describe Antony and Cleopatra as a play about adultery—as the story of a sex-starved soldier copulating with an Egyptian queen, in the sort of way this book has been put before you by the prosecution."

There might be minds like that, which were unable to see beauty where it existed or integrity of purpose of the author where it was obvious.

"The four-letter words in 'Lady Chatterley' are not likely to be included in the Oxford Dictionary as a result of the case. This legal judgment is irrelevant to our purpose," said Oxford University Press. "We don't take into account anything but common usage."

—Daily Express (London)

As a book published at 3/6, "Lady Chatterley's Lover" would be available to the general public and it might well be said that everyone would rush to buy it. This was always the effect of a wrong prosecution. Witnesses had been repeatedly asked if it was a book which they would like their wife or servants to read. This might have been consciously, or unconsciously, an echo from the Bench of years ago: "It would never do to let the members of the working class read this."

Mr. Gardiner went on: "This whole attitude is one which Penguin Books was formed to fight against, which they have always fought against and will go on fighting against. It is the attitude that it is all right to publish a special edition at five or 10 guineas, but quite wrong to let people who are less well-off read what those other people read. Is not everyone, whether their income is £10 or £20 a week, equally interested in the society in which we live: in the problems of human relationship, including sexual relationships? And in view of the references made to wives, are not women interested in human relationships, including sexual relationships?"

The book had to be judged as a whole in relation to the general public as a whole and not to some particular section of it. There were students of literature in all walks of life. If it was right that the book should be read, it should be available to the man working in a factory or the teacher working in a school.

Man of People

Lawrence was a man of the people, and it would be very easy for counsel for the prosecution at the end of the case, when he had called no evidence, to make any suggestions he liked. It would be easy for him to say to the jury: "You and I are ordinary chaps. Don't you bother about these experts, because they don't really know what goes on in the world or life at all." But any such suggestion would not be founded on evidence.

In England we had before banned books by Hardy, Shaw, Ibsen, Wilde, Joyce, and even Epstein's statues. But was Lawrence always to be confined to dirty bookshops? This would be the greatest irony in literary history.

For the Crown, Mr. Mervyn Griffith-Jones said the case was one of immense importance, and its effects would go far beyond the actual question which the jury had to decide.

There were two questions: First, whether the book was obscene, and second, whether its publication was justified for the public in the interests of literature and so on.

The true approach intended by Parliament was that they should weigh in the balance on the one hand the obscenity, the tendency to deprave and corrupt, and with it the possible evils that might follow, and on the other to put into the balance the literary merit—any literary merit—they could find.

"There are standards, are there not?" he went on. "There must be standards which we are to maintain, some standards of morality, language and conversation, conduct, which are essential to the well-being of our society. There must be instilled in all of us, and at the earliest possible age, standards of respect for the conventions of society, for the kind of conduct that society approves, for other people's feeling, for the intimacy and privacy of relations between people. And there must be instilled in all of us standards of restraint."

LAWRENCE UNBOUND

SOMETIMES the Lady Chatterley trial seemed like a setpiece confrontation between all that is good in England and all that is bad; sometimes one could not keep a straight face at all those skilful men seriously arguing whether it was safe for people to read words they all know describing things they all do.

But one must assume the prosecution was serious, and the verdict is most certainly serious. Something died at the Old Bailey on Wednesday, some bad old strand in our culture, and the manner of its going was sometimes funny, sometimes ugly. The Judge's repeated little ping—"Holy wedlock, madam, hold wedlock"—awoke no echo in the jury. Treasury counsel, on the other hand, spouting the better documented stereotypes from the Authoritarian Personality while all that he stood for was sinking into the waters of oblivion, was a more imposing phenomenon.

"There are, are there not . . ."—when lawyers say "are there not?" and "do you not?" and "I know not" they are disdaining contemporary life—"There are, are there not, certain standards . . ."

He said that they had only to read their papers to see day by day the results of unbridled sex. He was about to quote from a Stationery Office document dealing with criminal statistics for 1959 when Mr. Gardiner objected, on the ground that no evidence had been called about the document during the case. The Judge upheld this objection, and Mr. Griffith-Jones continued: "One has only to read one's daily papers to see the kind of thing that is happening. It is all through lack of standards, lack of restraint, lack of mental and moral discipline." It was because of the lack of discipline imposed upon so many of the younger generation and the influences to which they were open—it might be the Sunday papers, the cinemas, and literature.

"Bee in Bonnet"

He said it was true, as Mr. Gardiner had anticipated, that he would urge upon the jury that they alone had to decide the case—not the various witnesses whose views they had heard. They would not be brow-beaten by the evidence given by these witnesses. They would judge the case as ordinary men and women, with their feet firmly planted on the ground. Were the views they had heard from those most eminent and academic ladies and gentlemen really of as much value as the views which they, perhaps without the eminence and academic learning, possessed, and could see from the ordinary life that they lived? He did not question the absolute integrity of these witnesses, but suggested that they had got "a bee in their bonnet" about this matter.

He went on: "When one sees and hears some of them launching themselves at the first opportunity,

"After all, restraint in sexual matters . . ." Here prosecution counsel reached, inevitably, for his copy of Criminal Statistics, which was ruled out by the Judge. The idea that a decrease in sexual restraint will give rise to an increase in criminal activity can only be entertained by one particular temperament, that which believes that all or most sexual appetite tends towards criminal actions. This is the very type of temperament which will be unable to bear "Lady Chatterley's Lover," and will seek to ban it, since that book speaks joy, kindness and trust.

One should not, perhaps, have doubted the issues. Here was a barrister asking human beings alive now, not the patriarchs of ancient Israel, whether this was a book they would like "their wives and servants" to read, always referring to lovemaking as "bouts," speaking of "my lady's boudoir," reeling off rhetorical questions to which the whole courtroom seethed inaudibly with the answer he did not want, using a contrived philistinism, and finally, reserving this for his concluding speech so that the defence could say nothing

with the first question that is asked of them, into a sermon or a lecture—according to their vocation—with apostolic fervour, one cannot help feeling that, sincerely and honestly as they feel, they feel it in such a way that common sense perhaps has gone by the board."

Mr. Griffith-Jones read a number of extracts from the book to support his contention that the publication of the book was not in the public good. After reading one such extract, he said: "Is the young girl working in a factory going to get any educational or sociological value out of this passage?" After another extract, he said: "I submit to you that the tendency of that passage can only be to raise impure and lustful thoughts in the minds of some and indeed many, who will read this book."

"You will have to go some way in Charing Cross Road, in the back streets of Paris or even Port Said, to find a description of sexual intercourse that was perhaps as lurid as that one."

Yet the Court had been told that the book was a suitable subject for discussion in youth clubs. "Can you imagine the bawdiness and what would follow, however seriously the discussion may be conducted, when that passage and similar ones in this book are discussed in any youth club?" he asked.

It was for the jury to decide this case and not the so-called experts. He would submit that the effect on the average person must be to deprave and corrupt, to lower the general standard of thought, conduct and decency, and must be the very opposite of encouraging that restraint in sexual matters which was so all-important at the present time.

about it, trying to panic the jury with an innuendo of buggery in the book. And strangest effect of all, unaware that he himself was obliterated by the fire of Lawrence's writing.

★

At one time or another he must have read aloud almost all the, as he called them, "bouts" in the novel. At first it was hard to keep still and silent so painful was that flat, grinding voice coming between us and the words. But then he voice seemed to vanish; it did not matter who was reading and I for one was brought, in spite of it, to realise that those tremendous pages of level and open eloquence had for years been living unremembered in my head as surely as the Authorised Version or Shakespeare themselves. Lawrence reared up from his grave, sheltered goodness, truth and beauty, and annihilated prosecutors, judges, guardians of taste, fusspots, sadists and all the runners of grey lust with the single cautery of clean English prose.

The whole prosecution case was a study in morbid psychology. The blind vanity of those readings was not the intellectual drama of the courtroom: it was real-life tragedy, and awoke pity and horror. The point is worth making, because a cause will find the champion it deserves.

The defence, conducted by Gerald Gardiner at his sanest and most agreeable, gave an admirable picture of how ordinary people do feel and think. A procession of clergymen held that since human and divine love are not in conflict, the book had a religious significance; a procession of writers and others said that this or that particular word cannot be evil; school teachers said children know them anyhow; a very young woman said, in effect, that she had not been corrupted; and so on.

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The hero among the witnesses was Richard Hoggart. I think he made history. In his own evidence, using the word in its correct and proper sense, he said the point Lawrence made was: "Simply, this is what one does: One f—s"*. If ever the English language comes to be at peace with itself again, thereby giving people freedom to be at peace with themselves, the credit will be Lawrence's first, but Hoggart's soon after. He also gave a model account of the history and meaning of puritanism, dealing most intelligently and profoundly with our moral and literary heritage; the prosecution asked if he was serious, and the Judge looked amazed. The jury on the other hand, heard him.

But then again, it was a famous victory. The "Daily Herald" which, along with "The Guardian," was the most forthright of the dailies in welcoming the verdict, had quoted the evidence of "Mr. Edward Forster, a novelist." "Call Mr. Forster," the policeman's voice had echoed down the corridors. "Call Mr. Forster." Nearly forty years ago, Mr. Forster and all Bloomsbury had waited for the same call in the "Well of Loneliness" case, and it had not come. But now, there was Roy Jenkins sitting in the court to see the effects of his new statute, which made it possible for evidence of literary merit to be called.

"Are you Edward Morgan Forster?" the defence asked.

"I am."

Not one of the twelve jurors turned his head. But they acquitted in the book; and this little scene can tell us a lot about the place of the writer in society. It was E. M. Forster and people like him

* This word was printed in full in the Guardian.

who made those jurors and the "Daily Herald" that they are, and they don't know it. This is how it should be: the right fruit of literature is not glory but effect. So that now at last, thirty years late, that jury, ignorant of what formed it, has allowed D. H. Lawrence to become fully effective. Time will show, but I think it possible future generations may say that on November 2, 1960, a giant who had lain in chains, the English imagination, was at last unshackled.

—Guardian (Manchester), 4th November, 1960.

People in court when verdicts are given are not supposed to express themselves, but there was a distinct ripple of applause at the Old Bailey this afternoon when Lady Chatterley was declared not guilty. It was quickly stifled by the watchful stentorian officials who abound in all the criminal courts of this country. But it was clear that there was a feeling of relief in court because a victory had been won for freedom of printing. Some of the jurors looked well pleased with themselves. Anonymous as they must remain, they will go down to history.

—The Guardian (Manchester), 3rd Nov.

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The verdict is a good one . . . Lawrence's book . . . may in the end contribute to a more humane and civilised view of the most profound and mysterious of human relationships.—Daily Herald (London), 3rd Nov.

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It means . . . that it will now be extremely doubtful whether there will be a serious prosecution of a book by a serious author issued by a serious publisher. For that, if it proves true, everyone should be thankful. One purpose of the Act will have been sufficiently vindicated: to free creative literature from restrictions that have become out of date and, in some instances, ridiculous. If the acquittal of Lady Chatterley has cleared the decks for more vigorous action against writings of a wholly different class, that may be accounted its chief contribution to the "public good".—Daily Telegraph (London), 3rd November.

Time, events, or the unaided individual action of the mind will sometimes undermine or destroy an opinion, without any outward sign of the change. It has not been openly assailed, no conspiracy has been formed to make war on it, but its followers one by one noiselessly secede; day by day a few of them abandon it, until at last it is only professed by a minority. In this state it will still continue to prevail. As its enemies remain mute or only interchange their thoughts by stealth, they are themselves unaware for a long period that a great revolution has actually been effected; and in this state of uncertainty they take no steps; they observe one another and are silent. The majority have ceased to believe what they believed before, but they still affect to believe, and this empty phantom of public opinion is strong enough to chill innovators and to keep them silent and at a respectful distance.

—Alexis de Tocqueville: "Democracy in America."

WHY NOT A UNIFORM CENSORSHIP?

CONFLICT of laws, and clashing of incompatible standards of judgment, are nothing new, and in a federal political system like ours they are almost commonplace. Now, after 60 years of federation, some of the anomalies are being ironed out; a uniform administration of marriage and divorce is being fashioned, for example, and uniform taxation, challenged in the High Court three years ago, seems likely to stand.

What remains to be rationalised includes the Censorship system.

Twenty-five years of guerilla warfare with various manifestations of official banishment lie behind your present commentator—censorship of books, films, plays, newspapers, radio. And of these the most complex, in some of its muddled applications quite fantastic, is the federal-cum-state book censorship.

Literate Australians find themselves protected from pornography by a federal Customs censorship board (to which an appeals board was added this July) and also by watch-and-ward-and-burn-books Obscene Publications and like laws of the States. Two States (Queensland and Tasmania) have censorship boards somewhat after the Irish model. Two others (New South Wales and Victoria) have 17th century-style licensing or registration systems together with police obscenity-beagling. The other two States retain Obscene Publications laws, more or less in the tradition of the English Common Law, from which springboards sporadic and spasmodic dives are made on publishers and booksellers and authors seeking whom they may deprave and corrupt.

Adding to the complexity, common law prosecutions, variously for "criminal libel", "obscene libel", and "seditious libel", have been launched on three occasions since the war: against Robert Close and Georgian House in respect of the novel "Love Me Sailor", against Frank Hardy for "Power Without Glory", and, most recently and in South Australia whereas the other two prosecutions were brought in Victoria, against Rohan Rivett and the Adelaide "News" for criticising and contemning a Royal Commission.

Now, there is perhaps no simple, satisfactory solution of this confusion: book censorship involves considerations of such delicacy and intricacy that no legal code, anywhere, has been devised which can cope satisfactorily with problems that arise—given acceptance of the need for **some** censorship. But, granting that need since there is no practical possibility of abolishing every form of regulation of pornography, at least something uniform, and understandable in the principles on which it may operate, can be substituted for the federal-state-common law disorder which obtains.

The States could by agreement among their governments, and enabling legislation by their Parliaments, delegate their book censorship powers to the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth could, if it agreed to accept the chore, administer a single Obscene Publications Act to be a deterrent to local depravers and corrupters, as well as damming fealthy postcards at the ports of entry. Eight years ago some States made some effort to arrive at

Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick, well-known historian and Secretary of the Australian Council for Civil Liberties, appeals here for a rationalised censorship administration in Australia.

Following a press suggestion by Mr. Fitzpatrick on this matter last July, the Minister for Customs (Senator Henty) announced that he had asked the State Premiers whether they desired a joint Commonwealth-States conference on the problem of censorship.

The refusal of N.S.W. to attend such a conference has meant that it cannot be held. Meanwhile the Victorian Chief Secretary (Mr. Rylah) told a book publishers' delegation at the beginning of December that he thought Commonwealth Customs censorship of doubtful validity, and that the Victorian Government would not abandon its right to prosecute sellers of pornographic and horror literature.

Why should not the States agree, however, not to act on any **imported** work passed by the Commonwealth? This would leave the way open to the States to take such action as they wished on locally-published material—preferably, as the book publishers asked, after reference to a competent Board.

uniform censorship laws of their own, but the principal upshot was new **different** enactments: confusion worse confounded.

A conference of the Customs Minister, and State Chief Secretaries and Attorneys-General, might agree on a rational program, after admitting to their deliberations authors and critics, judges and lawyers, publishers and booksellers, of relevant experience and ideas.

Not—to say it again—that there is any royal road. The Editor of Overland will recall that he and I took part, a while ago, in discussions at a Melbourne dining club on these problems. Participants included men ranging in age from the thirties to the seventies, ex-servicemen of both wars, graduates of several universities, adherents of various sects or none: judges, authors, critics, philosophers, historians, schoolmasters, a business man and an artist. Arguing in good faith and from, between us all, a pretty richly varied experience of books-and-bans, we found no simple solution. The only system which seemed likely to be workable at all was examination of "doubtful" books by well-informed persons, with right of appeal to a court administering a uniform law.

THE "WE WERE THE RATS" CASE

AMONG the ludicrous features of the banning in New South Wales of my war novel "We Were The Rats" were the facts that it was 18 months before the State Government discovered it was "obscene", that the prosecution arose from the actions of a child and that the main witness said he had not heard Lord Byron was on Lord Louis Mountbatten's staff.

The farce began in 1946 when a boy in Tasmania took the novel from a bookshelf at home, read part of it, and asked his foster mother some embarrassing questions about it.

She read it, no doubt as Norman Lindsay, who wrote the foreword, would say, "with moral outcries and little shivers of refinement", rushed off to the Women's Non-Party League, which had an average attendance of 10 at its meetings, and the game was on.

The prosecution relied on Sgt. Roy Munro, a member of the Vice Squad, and I was told his cross examination by Mr. Dovey, Q.C. (now Mr. Justice Dovey) was given half a column on the front page of a London paper. It certainly deserved it.

Sgt. Munro said he found the book "offensive to chastity and delicacy." He admitted he did not read much and said he thought Shakespeare's Christian name might be William, had not met Chaucer on the Vice Squad but knew a man named Shelley.

"I take it you refer to an author of something," he added. "I have never heard the name of Shelley as a man who wrote anything."

Sgt. Munro, a member of the Vice Squad, mark you, gave evidence on oath that the word "bloody" was offensive to him. The magistrate fined Angus & Robertson, the publishers, £10.

The newspapers lampooned the Government so mercilessly that the "We Were The Rats" case quickly became political dynamite, and when the appeal was heard it was obvious the Government was anxious to get out from under.

It is the only instance in all my court reporting experience in which I have seen the prosecution trying to lose. The barrister prosecuting said, "I won't press this matter too strongly, your Honor. In fact, I read the book myself and enjoyed it," and sat down.

Dismissing the appeal, the late Judge Studdert said, "You could not get a better picture of how men lived and died in Tobruk than in this book. At times it rises to great heights of literary art but certain pages are just plain filth."

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What better example of the imbecility of Australian censorship could you have than the fact that those "certain pages" were mainly extracts from a paper-backed book called "Saucy Stories" which circulated freely in this country? This book could be bought at practically any bookstall but "We Were The Rats" was banned because I sought to show by the use of parts of it the impact of sex on a group of Tobruk Rats who had not seen a woman for a long time.

"Saucy Stories" was simply saucy stories. My chapter, I believe, had an important social significance.

Judge Studdert said he wanted to make it clear he was giving his decision on the law as it stood when the prosecution was launched and not as it was at that moment.

By that he meant that in the meantime the Act had been amended to make immune from censorship objects of art and literary works and to provide for trial by a judge and jury.

I believe "We Were The Rats" could have been republished the day after Judge Studdert gave his decision, that the State Government would never have dared prosecute again and that the amended Act gave it full protection because every critic who reviewed it accepted it as a literary work.

A Gilbertian aspect of the case was that 15,000 copies of the book had been sold before it was banned and that the court proceedings aroused such intense interest that at least ten people must have read each of those copies who would not have done so if the Government had not been asinine enough to prosecute.

In other words, the Government, by prosecuting, polluted the minds, degraded the morals and endangered the "chastity and delicacy" of 10 times as many people as had already been corrupted by my naughty novel.

The Sydney "Daily Telegraph" published a classic Molnar cartoon at the time. It showed the Chief Secretary (Mr. Baddeley) saying "Muggins, left to himself, would not listen to anything but smut. Without proper supervision he would be drunk and disorderly all the time. He would read only lewd and obscene books. In short, he is an idiot who can't be trusted to choose for himself. I should know. He elected me."

At a cocktail party in Canberra I asked a judge who could have heard the appeal whether he would have upheld it. He replied, "Now that's a leading question, Mr. Glassop, and you can't expect me to answer it." Then he grinned and said, "But what do you think?"

It was obvious that if he had been on the bench the book would not have been banned, another example of the stupidity of censorship.

The "We Were The Rats" case is not over although the novel has not been republished anywhere since the appeal was dismissed in 1946. Do not be surprised if it is on sale in New South Wales again soon.

Then we will see whether the State Government will dare to produce another police sergeant who will swear on oath that the word "bloody" is offensive to him.

To be "Left" means to connect up cultural with political criticism, and both with demands and political criticism, and both with demands and country of the world.

—C. Wright Mills.

THE POLITICS OF LABOR

THE Australian labor movement prides itself—and rightly so—on its high degree of trade union organisation, the relatively advanced living standards it has won for Australian democracy, the social reforms it has achieved through parliamentary activity.

Fifty years ago, it claimed with some justification to be setting the pace for the world. The advent of labor governments, social welfare measures, the growth of state enterprise, the introduction of a system of arbitration for resolving industrial disputes, were seen as the first steps towards the construction of a new social order.

Today, such extravagant claims are no longer made, not even by the moderate wing of the movement. They were never conceded by the socialist wing, which has always regarded such palliatives as at best having only a limited or temporary value, at worst as being a diversion from or an obstacle to the reconstruction of society.

But, despite the rich history of Australian labor, there has been little written of the movement, either its theory or its practice. This perhaps reflects the pragmatic approach which has been one of its most consistent characteristics, the cavalier attitude to social and political theory which is common to those labor movements whose political arm grew out of an already existing trade union movement. No general study of Australian labor has appeared since the essays of Fitzpatrick (1944) and Campbell (1945). There has been no attempt at a history of the trade union movement since Sutcliffe's work was published, nearly forty years ago. No individual union has had its story published (Brian Fitzpatrick's history of the Seamen's Union remains unhappily buried in the files of the Democrat). There have been no studies of especially important periods in labor history—the '90s strikes, the 1917 general strike, the depression—except Leicester Webb's book on the 1951 anti-Communist referendum. There have been no books on particular aspects of the movement, except L. F. Crisp's work on the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party.

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For this reason, two recently published books are particularly welcome: Robin Gollan's "Radical and Working Class Politics, A Study of Eastern Australia 1850-1910" (M.U.P., 35/-) and the memorial volume to the late Noel Ebbels, "The Australian Labor Movement 1850-1907" (Noel Ebbels' Memorial Committee and Australasian Book Society, 25/-), a collection of documents begun by Ebbels, completed by his colleagues and friends, and edited and introduced by L. G. Churchward.

These two admirable books fit well together; between them, they provide an excellent cover of the important early years of the movement—the growth of radical democratic ideas, the formation of the first trade unions, the emergence of socialist groups, the great strikes of the '90s, and the creation of the political labor party.

The two books supplement one another in their general account of the period. The story they tell is of the gradual emergence of an awareness, among

the workers, of their separate identity as a class apart from other classes in Australian society.

So long as there was a real hope of independence as artisan, miner or selector, the working class was tied to the radical democracy of the middle class. But, as new (largely British) capital was invested in the pastoral industry and in manufacturing, the dream of independence faded—men saw themselves as workers. The formerly exclusive craft unions began to amalgamate and federate; "new unions" of the unskilled were formed; socialist ideas found a toehold among the workers.

The growing antagonism between masters and men, the recognition of conflicting interests, burst into open class war with the maritime and shearers' strike of 1890-94, which were fought largely over the right of the unions to organise and to speak for the workers.

Defeat in these first great class struggles taught the unions—and especially the new unions—that reliance on the radical middle-class parties was not enough. An independent working class party was needed, to ensure that the weight of the state came down on the side of the workers, and not against them. The Labor Party was formed.

Lacking any social theory or clearly defined objective, the Labor Party quickly fell into a pragmatic programme of demands largely taken over from its radical predecessors. As it sought success at the polls by tempering its policy to the middle class vote, so it produced disillusion among its most fervent supporters, conflict between the industrial movement and the parliamentarians, and a further swing towards the theories of class war and socialism.

Gollan's book and the Ebbels documents compliment one another in important respects, too. The emphasis in the documents is on the clash of ideas within the labor movement—between the narrow craft unionism of the skilled workers and the all-embracing industrial unionism of the miners and shearers; between the doctrinaire theories of the early socialist groups and the programme of day-to-day reforms urged by the practical politicians of the movement. Gollan, on the other hand, is concerned more with the political evolution of labor, with explaining in terms of its middle class ancestry both the policy of the Labor Party and the cause of the internal struggle within the labor movement which followed on the formation of the first Labor governments. Gollan sees in the stronger radical movement in Victoria the explanation of the comparative weakness of the Labor Party in that state, and, in the adoption of a radical rather than a socialist programme by the Labor Party generally, the reason for the quick growth of trade union dissatisfaction with the performance of labor in politics.

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Both books end of the down-swing of disenchantment with the parliamentary parties, and the renewal of hope in the extra-parliamentary movement. The next fifteen years saw strike struggles on a grand scale, coming to a climax with the disastrous 1917 general strike in New South Wales. The spirit of the movement was militant, and the

industrial wing set the pace. Not always successful in its economic struggles, it scored a number of impressive political successes, including the defeat of the two conscription referenda, the "cleansing" of the Labor Party of its conscriptionist leaders, and the release of the twelve Industrial Workers of the World leaders, imprisoned in 1916 for sedition and arson. The labor movement could not be confined within the limits of slow-moving political reform; it burst and overflowed into new theories and forms of organisation. Driven by rising prices, falling real wages and unemployment, the trade unionists fought within the Labor Party for a new, radical leadership and policy, or turned angrily away from politics towards the One Big Union of the working class as both the necessary weapon for immediate struggle and the administrative framework of the new society. So came the formation of the Communist Party in 1920, under the inspiration of Bolshevik success, and the adoption by the Labor Party in 1921 of the socialist objective, together with plans for a Supreme Economic Council through which the workers would control the production and distribution of the nation's wealth.

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THE dominant theme of this whole period of labor history is the growing self-awareness of the working class, its search for those forms of organisation which would enable it to act unitedly and independently, in both industrial and political fields, with social aims clearly distinguished from those of other classes in contemporary society.

It is this conception of the labor movement as a movement representing class interests incompatible with those of capitalism, and looking towards socialism for a resolution of the conflict, which comes under discussion in Tom Truman's book, "Catholic Action and Politics" (Georgian House, 35/-, new edition, paper bound, with additional material, 19/6). Truman approaches the problems of the nature and purpose of the contemporary labor movement from the angle of the attempt by Mr. Santamaria's "Movement" (originally Catholic Action, now "action of Catholics"), which came perilously close to success, to capture the labor movement by infiltration and convert it to its own ends.

Truman details the process by which the Movement passed from a secret organisation within the trade unions, aiming to destroy the dominant position of the Communist Party at the end of the war, to the attempt to take over the Labor Party and graft onto it the social objectives of Catholicism—the "Organic Society"—as understood by Mr. Santamaria and his backers. In Truman's view, this cloak-and-dagger movement represented a serious threat to Australian democracy, since the form of society which Santamaria aimed at was an authoritarian state effectively ruled by the Church.

Despite charges of specific errors of fact, the Catholic reviewers of Truman's book (notably Father Murtagh, Mr. Denis Jackson and Mr. Santamaria himself) have in effect conceded that the Movement did have these aspirations. They have made two major points in reply:

That since the intra-Church dispute about the activities of the Movement was referred to the Vatican in 1957 for decision, the Movement (now called the National Civic Council) has not been officially sponsored by or under the guidance of the Bishops. From this time on, it has been strictly a lay movement—although laymen, in Father



"People of high station talking of the Rights of Man".—From "History for Beginners" by Antonio Mingote and Jan Read (Nelson, 25/-). The Spanish author of this personal pictorial history of man recently survived a trial in the Supreme Court of his country.

Murtagh's words, "should be free, and indeed feel themselves obliged, to act in the trade union and political field in the struggle against communism and in defence of Christian civilisation." (This formal severance has recently been underlined by Mr. Santamaria's resignation from the secretaryship of the National Catholic Rural Movement, his last official post in Catholic Action.)

That their concept of the Organic Society is not authoritarian in purpose (although it involves control of industry by councils representing capital, management and labor, and the reconstruction of society on "vertical" instead of "horizontal" lines).

Clearly what is involved is more than just anti-Communism, although this is of great importance, since it has involved the Movement-N.C.C. in urging the intensification of the cold war, and the adoption of anti-democratic domestic policies. But beyond this it challenges the traditional conceptions of the labor movement—both those of the Labor Party (state intervention in the economy, an extension of state enterprise) and those of the radical wing (socialist, syndicalist, communist-social ownership of the means of production, and, in the case of the former, direct workers' control of industry).

Truman does not carry his analysis as far as this. His own views are "pluralist"—that is, he stands for a society in which various interest-groups and political parties compete; and his book is a carefully-documented (with minor exceptions, amply noted by Mr. Santamaria) case against what he sees as a totalitarian menace. But it is this central clash of concepts which underlies his immediate story.

THE point of history and political science is that it helps (or should help) people to draw sensible and useful conclusions about what is happening now and what is likely to happen tomorrow. What conclusions do these books suggest? (Here I should perhaps make it clear that my own views are socialist, which conditions the sort of conclusions I draw.)

The self-awareness attained by the Australian working class in the 1880s and 1890s—one expression of which was the formation of an independent Labor Party—was trade unionist in character, rather than socialist.

Even so, it remained the driving force within the labor movement; and, as the parliamentary labor parties were weighed down with the difficulties of administering a private enterprise economy, and retreated towards a policy acceptable to the middle class, it grew at first irritated and then actively dissatisfied. The trade union movement began to look for new solutions, and socialist and syndicalist ideas found wide acceptance. However, attempts to extend these ideas into the political labor movement were frustrated by the “practical politicians,” who thought almost entirely in terms of electoral success.

Syndicalism proved to be a blind alley. The inadequacy of its theories and its tactics were demonstrated by its collapse under government fire in 1916-17; its main objective—workers’ control of industry—could only become a real question following a social revolution and the assumption of political power by the working class, and then only when the immediate necessity for a forced high rate of investment had been overcome, as is amply demonstrated by the recent controversies on this issue in the Communist world.

There is little indication at present of any widespread feeling in the trade union movement for major social change. Official trade union opinion is content to seek “a guaranteed annual wage . . . a common pool of employment . . . our proper standards of living” (in the words of Mr. Kenny, Secretary of the N.S.W. Trades and Labor Council), without challenging the existing social order.

Need we conclude, then, with Dr. D. W. Rawson, in the recent “Trade Unions in Australia” (Angus & Robertson, 25/) that the trade unions have changed in character from class organisations to interest groups? I would suggest not. In the first place, the evidence suggests that, while the trade unions have generally set the pattern of thought for the labor movement as a whole, their orientation has only been towards radical social change in times of economic and social stress—and that these ideas have always come from minority political groups rather than from within the unions themselves. In the second, any rapid tightening of the economic situation (especially if it were accompanied by a sharp rise in unemployment) could change the present satisfaction. So could a general disruption of employment and living standards caused by the introduction of automation. So perhaps could the continued strain of nuclear hysteria and cold war; or the implications of the decisively higher rate of economic growth in the Communist world.

In such circumstances, minority theories of social change would again find wide support in the trade union movement; and here the Communists would be very much in the box seat, both because of the positions they hold in the movement and because

The Ship’s Captain

(after Rafael Alberti)

Poised on the swaying vantage of your ship—

That ledge of bright weed, barnacles and shells

Washed green as emerald—without pipes or bells

You came into your wreath of consulship
Over the winds and humbly dipping gulls.

Then every undulating foreshore sang
To land your plough, your liberated ship;
And more than merely siren-music rang
When you could answer to the stars’ thin strains.

Free, you are prince of winter’s weeping grey

And bursting fruit of dazed summer noon,
Snow-flag of changing foam . . . we vainly pray,

Landlubbers all, that you may draw us soon
Into midsea, trailing our broken chains.

CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE

they offer a solution which is already operating over one-third of the world. However, if the 1916-21 pattern were repeated, some amalgam of Communist and other left-wing opinion would probably become trade union policy, and there would be a new round of conflict between the trade unions and the political labor party, in which the politicians would be backed by a powerful section of the Catholic Church. Workers’ control could again become a live question—particularly in relation to industries in which automation was causing unemployment.

What would happen? That depends on many things—so many that it is impossible to do any more than list some of the factors which will affect events. Firstly, of course, the extent to which economic and political change creates a conviction of social crisis. But also whether the fear which many workers have of Communism is overcome; how much support the Santamaria movement can count on among Catholic workers; what attitudes are adopted by New Australians and white collar workers; whether non-Communist left-wing groups are able to present a coherent programme; what pressures are brought to bear on Australia from outside.

This is all very speculative, of course. But society does not stand still, and it is inconceivable that the social tranquility Australia now enjoys can last indefinitely. The question is, what will shake this tranquility, what sort of changes are likely to occur, how can the direction of change be influenced? The point of reading history is to make such speculations possible.



Robert Tudawali

ROBERT Tudawali is not easy to sketch. There is gentleness in his face, and yet a glimpse of fire down below. It is not easy to portray both; the portrait that eventuated shows the gentleness but not the fire.

That's not altogether a bad thing, for in most of his films Tudawali has had to act the fiery villain, which unfortunately confirms the false stereotype of the Aboriginal as the wild savage.

So it's important to see Tudawali's gentleness—a gentleness with a distinct Australian flavor. "It's all right," tends to be his answer to any question—but what a difference in the undertones to those few words!

Acting in "Jedda" was "all right"—and his tone of voice indicates a double feeling—pleasure at being able to act, for he feels that film acting is the most important part of his life—and unhappiness at the false values of the film story with its implied slur on his people.

Being in Fanny Bay gaol for the "crime" of giving a drink to a mate was "all right"—and here he says the words in a matter-of-fact way to imply that he accepted this as part of the fight that has to be fought for the dignity and equality of his people. (Interesting comment on our civilisation—there's no racial discrimination in Fanny Bay!)

But when you ask him about Namatjira, and he says, "He's all right," you know what he means, even before he adds the words "A fine man".

Tudawali comes from Melville Island. His name means shark; he is also of the curlew, goose and turtle totems. If his people hear the curlew call, they think he is sick. He was brought up partly among the old tribal customs, and danced in a corroboree nine years ago when his father died.

But he is part of the white man's world too. As a boy working at R.A.A.F. headquarters in Darwin, he saw the Japanese planes come over and the bombs falling. He became a medical assistant, then for two years was in an army patrol boat.

He played football (Aussie Rules) for the Wanderers, an Aboriginal team that won the shield two years running, and he's a member of two unions—North Australian Workers' Union and Actors' Equity.

As a boy he had a few months' school at Darwin; he has taught himself to be a mechanic, driver and assistant plumber and to speak Malay and English as well as five Aboriginal languages. Bob Tudawali typifies the Original Australian adapting himself to white civilisation, refusing to die out, bringing his own gifts. He has broken tribal customs where common sense demanded it, but has kept a pride in his people and their culture and communal way of life. His wife is a niece of the Aboriginal dancer Mosik, described by American Ted Shawn as one of the great dancers of the world.

The police had little evidence to drive home their charge of giving liquor. "I could have said No and got away with it," Bob explained. "But I don't like telling lies."



He was out on bail for a time but his appeal failed. So on Christmas Day he had his Christmas dinner, then took a taxi to the gaol—without any bitterness.

And without bitterness he recently made a public statement urging full equality for his people. "The Aboriginal," he said, "is not asking for anything impossible—just the right to live decently."

(Our governments' reply was to gaol another Aboriginal artist at Alice Springs, and to let nearly a fortnight elapse after the death of an Aboriginal child on the shanty-town "reserve" at Armidale, N.S.W., before taking any action; by then three other children had died. Perhaps we are the ones who should be bitter.)

That Tudawali is able to come to Sydney to act in T.V. films is of course good. But what must he think deep down of the white men who have taken his country and then give him mainly the part of "bad man" in their films? With a properly developed Australian film industry, there would be films with parts worthy his talents. (The film that Cecil Holmes, Gavin Casey and others are making could be such a film.)

Robert Tudawali has been asked to write his life story. "Perhaps I am not ready for it yet," he suggests. But if, in his own good time, he can write it simply, without a commercialised white man to lean over his shoulder and pep up the narrative, it could be an important book that could help our understanding of the Original Australians in a changing world, and also help us to question many of the values of white acquisitive society.

LEN FOX

Sensation Rather Than Thought

"PERSONALLY I was terrified." Thus wrote Max Harris in a mood of unusual sensitivity after hearing a lecture by Alexei Surkov. A coward myself, I must confess that nothing said or done by Mr. Surkov during his three week's stay in Australia gave me the least tremor of fear. What really terrified me were, in this order, the devout adoration of several (but by no means all) of our local left-wing intelligentsia, the spitefulness of a number of ex- and anti-communists, the irrational behavior of a few of our writers who should have known better, and the inflexible determination of a section of the press to make Surkov into a monster.

It ought to be pointed out that the two members of the Soviet delegation of writers, Oksana Krugerskaya and Alexei Surkov, were invited here by the Fellowship of Australian Writers to meet Australian writers and to see something of the country. They were **not** invited here to defend the policies of the Soviet Union or the Union of Soviet Writers, although by the end of their visit they may well have believed this to be the case. I was all the more impressed, therefore, by the calm and moderation with which they withstood assault after assault (and sometimes insult after insult) on the Pasternak affair, seemingly the only event in recent Russian literary history of which the journalists (with a couple of honorable exceptions) and some other of our citizens were aware. At the meetings and functions which I attended, most of the questioners were genuinely seeking information about a society of which our "free" media of mass-communication generally keep us in ignorance when they are not downright antagonistic; the various efforts made to trip Surkov into "damaging admissions" stood out in considerable contrast. At one Melbourne cocktail party, two ill-mannered "seekers after truth" were answered by Surkov, when they permitted him to get a word in edge-ways, with good-natured courtesy. I could not help wondering whether I would have been able to maintain a similar tolerance and composure if, on a visit to a foreign country, I had been bombarded so persistently and so rudely with questions and sneers about, say, the imprisonment of Robert Close, Australian book censorship, or the official neglect of some of our greatest writers. Whatever other freedoms even the youngest Soviet iconoclasts may lack (and I gathered from our visitors that there is at present quite an upsurge of anarchistic talent) the freedom to earn a living by the practice of their art is not apparently one of them.

The ground of course had been well-prepared. Articles in newspapers and magazines, by a mixture of rumor and misinformation, to which was added a slight seasoning of fact, had skilfully transformed Surkov into a scoundrel several weeks before any of the writers of these articles had had a chance of talking to him. One journal made an unintentional but delightful gaffe by comparing him with officers of the F.B.I. (a "literary G-man"). Even "Nation", that most liberal of Australian reviews, gave comfort to the Establishment by pillorying Surkov in a somewhat inaccurate and loaded profile before the man had set foot on these shores.

One of the claims of our self-styled democratic way of life is its emphasis on the rights of the individual. Opponents of Soviet society allege that there the individual has no freedom, is submerged in the 'mass'. This may well be true, although the brilliance of Russian performers in the fields of

As President of the Fellowship of Australian Writers (Victoria) and of the National Reception Committee for the recent Soviet writers' visit to this country, Laurence Colinson was in a favorable position to talk to his guests and follow their activities.

music and the dance, lately in this country, would seem to deny it. Certainly the encounters I had with the charming, intelligent, and, despite illness and exhaustion, vivacious Mrs. Krugerskaya (whose knowledge of our literature, by the way, far exceeds that of most Australians) would force me to be sceptical of the idea that the Russians are a completely conformist lump. What astonished me, however, was that some Australian writers, usually most vociferous in demanding that every human being be recognised as an individual, were quite content to prejudge Surkov on the basis of what they had heard of him through various sources, not all of which, I fear, could be described as objective. Several noted writers acquired columns of publicity by this means (though at least one of these claims that remarks made in private were printed as though they had been given in an interview); a couple of Fellowship members resigned simply because the Fellowship was sponsoring the visit; and one well known poet, for whom I have much respect, and whom I very much wished Surkov to meet in order to prove to the latter that a proportion of our intelligentsia is strongly and honestly anti-communist, refused to have any contact with the Russian fiend.

What value must such writers place on their own common sense and judgment if their principles or their fear of contamination kept them from discussions with two people who were, to say the least of it, travelling in an essentially hostile environment? Equally as appalling, of course, were those who went to the other extreme. Some writers and intellectuals, at other times reasonably perceptive, behaved on the occasion of this visit like witnesses at a Billy Graham crusade. One of my fondest memories will be of the stupid woman who declared herself "reborn" after a few hours in the company of these representatives of the new Soviet Man.

★

My own attitude was, from the very first news of the impending tour, that a visit to this country by two Soviet intellectuals could do nothing but good. Whatever one thought personally of Russian intervention in Hungary, of the Stalin-cult and the tragedies it brought about, of the Pasternak affair, the overwhelming principle is that, with the advent of the atomic bomb, one has to live with the Russians or die with them. No government is perfect, not the Russian, nor that of the United States, nor our own; and the degree of liberty or restriction, of opportunity for happiness or cruelty, each government affords its people, varies from time to time and from place to place. But each country has one common factor: a human population. In Russia, therefore, I concluded, the people have needs and feelings very like our own: food, peace, work, physical and spiritual recreation. No doubt they have their mean men and their murderers, but so has the United States, and so have we. Let us use every possible means to know each other, for it is difficult to hate people we know.

Perhaps I was duped. Professional anti-communists will accuse me of being a tool in the hands of this cunning pair of Soviet propagandists; just

as when, at the annual Victorian Fellowship dinner, a local communist accused me of playing the game of the imperialists because, during my presidential remarks, directed mainly to the necessity of the fullest possible cultural exchange, I made a mild criticism of some of the Soviet books and films we receive in Australia.

I believe, nevertheless, that the visit was a success, not merely in technical terms (the Fellowship had to overcome some incredible setbacks due to visa difficulties and consequent schedule alterations), but in terms of mutual understanding between the two countries concerned. Naturally it was an extremely small-scale affair involving mainly literary persons, to whom this country, at any time, gives scant acknowledgment. But anyone who was sincerely interested in the present-day Soviet Union received, it seemed to me, sincere and truthful replies to his questions. The answers of Surkov and Krugerskaya were very frank, often moving, often brutal, often puzzling, in the light they cast on the problems that bother many "Western" intellectuals. The pair covered many topics, including the persecution of the Yiddish writers, freedom of the mind, and of course "Dr. Zhivago". I particularly recollect their account of the emotions of the Russian people at the death of Stalin, and the subsequent disillusion following the revelations of the Twentieth Congress.

Obviously the Soviet intelligentsia as a whole had not behaved during certain periods of crisis as courageously as we, or even they themselves, might have hoped they would. But they were endeavoring to create a new form of society in a feudal and often disgusting country, they suffered an unbearable war, they were deluded by the idea of an infallible Party. Surkov told me that he believed that the kind of events I deplored could not recur. I have asked myself how I might have behaved in a similar atmosphere of fear and suspicion, and have come to no conclusions. At any rate, with the extension of the Crimes Act facing us, I myself, and all those so urgent in their denunciations of communist thought-control, will have the opportunity of testing ourselves.

LAURENCE COLLINSON

★

Gumtree To Universal Symbol

Australian Art in the Sixties

UNTIL the second world war artistic progress in this country went by "schools". The Heidelberg school (the gumtree school of parochial idealism) tried to create an Australian ethos in purely local terms. The thirties saw the impact of modern painting trends, mainly through the influence of Cezanne. This produced the anti-academic painters of the Contemporary Art Society, the more formal Bell and Meldrum schools, and the diffuse though discernable painters of the Australian impressionist, post-impressionist and expressionist schools, expanding their work in the light of European developments.

The late forties and early fifties brought to prominence individualists more concerned with promulgating their own personal aesthetic vision than in furthering group aims or principles as such. The success in London and America of Albert Tucker and Sidney Nolan showed that these painters could produce images of general relevance.

The late fifties saw the emergence of a powerful school of non-objective painters in Melbourne.

Inspired by Europeans whose abstract patternings expressed a personal mystique, a humanist outcry against the technology and over-organised complexity of post-war urban capitalism, and led locally by Ian Sime (who had come into personal contact with Japanese non-objectivists), these painters added a new dimension to Australian painting and brought the art of this country into line with the world-wide trend of extending the visual understanding of emotional experience.

The sixties will see a further major change; not so much new developments in painting styles as a change in the relationship of artist and public. Post-war industrial expansion, which turned this country into an outpost of western industrial society rather than the socialist utopia envisaged by Lawson and the nineteenth century artists, brought us closer to the centres of Europe and America and into line with the cosmopolitanism of mid-twentieth century thought.

The wealth accruing from this expansion and the awareness of European trends it has inculcated means that a much larger section of the middle-class is and will be able to buy original works of art. And this presents the greatest threat to the healthy development of aesthetic standards. For the artist of tomorrow will not be working, as he has been in the past, only for a group which for all its narrowness approached his work with some measure of real understanding and appreciation, but also for a large group of nouveau riche more interested in social prestige and economic investment than in aesthetics. The temptation to accept their concepts will be great. This could lead to a widespread practice of "pot-boiling," or work of a purely decorative nature.

★

This trend can be noted already in Melbourne at the Australian Galleries, which supports a large number of decorative painters as well as the romantic expressionist school made up of Arthur Boyd, Charles Blackman and John Perceval. The demands of the gallery on the artist, made with the aim of facilitating sales, amount to directives rigidly controlling the size and subject matter of works exhibited. They have had an adverse effect on Perceval and Boyd in particular. Perceval's latest works appear as pot-boilers beside his earlier landscapes and the first canvases of the "Williamstown" series, and Boyd has expressed understandable displeasure at being forced to paint landscapes in a style he had abandoned.

The same trend is evidenced in Sydney. Apart from the "old masters" Dobell, Herman, Drysdale, and a few individualists such as Jon Molvig and Bob Dickerson, the bulk of Sydney painters fall into two schools—abstract expressionists and nature abstractionists. But the produce of either school rarely rises above attractive and fashionable addenda to modern architectural and interior decorating trends. The former school has attracted few practitioners and their work is uniformly shallow. The latter school deploys form and color, combined with textural surface effects, to evoke some recognition of plant forms or natural topography. Only a handful of painters reveal any deep understanding of the lyrical or emotional qualities of painting or the psychology of abstract design.

Melbourne should, however, remain the scene of the most vigorous activity. The realist painters, who have not been active as a group in recent years, are planning a revival and already are preparing for an exhibition early next year. The Museum of Modern Art of Australia, in conjunction with professional associations of commercial artists, is planning a campaign to draw attention to the work of creative aesthetic principles and

AFTER KUBLAI KHAN



by John Blight

In Xanadu a piano played
A ragged, jangling tune, in origin
Negroid, devoid of harmony. It made
Bats flap, moons bounce upon the horizon;
And horizontal as the wilga dips
Its leaves the long, hot summer, there,
I saw, through Xanadu's vast windows, hips
Dripping satin and half-bosoms bare
To match her low-cut eyelids, Mary Clare,
The daughter of a grazier millionaire.

There, all the meaning of our culture stops.
Its cultivated plots of myrrh are her.
I like her, that's the trouble, where it flops,
The living-standard which the most prefer.
In Xanadu a piano played,
I have to hear it playing to remember
Mary Clare. Even the disobedient obeyed
The jungle rhythm of its latest number.
Thus, slumbering, cumbersome in slumber, umber
Clouds of lust curled through my troubled slumber.

In Xanadu, that flat next door,
The world was reaching, yet, another peak.
Perfection is a state denied the poor.
Xanadu's rent's fifty pounds a week.
I like the poor. I like high-living, too.
This gracious living one can't overdo.
Standards of living, glimpsed at Xanadu,
Were gracious enough; a veritable Who's Who,
Its tenants came and went, the Well-To-Do
Who certainly knew who to do well to.

In Xanadu a piano played,
And Mary Clare, the tenant at that time,
Was standing drink in hand, a modern maid,
The loveliest our standards call sublime.
But, lest you ask me who it was was playing,
You never having stayed at Xanadu,
Do not think our culture is decaying
If I tell you, hi-fi, plus all the latest new
Dimensions that science can construe,
Co-opting art, were putting on the "do."
In Xanadu . . . do you know I am too
Tired to think, like Mary Clare, and must
Restore my ego with a sip of dew
Latent with heather, or some Irish Mist.
Something to tweak and twist my nose for spying,
Ignominiously, on Mary Clare (the darling).
I know, I feel the anguished world is dying . . .
The 'plane goes down, the people are all snarling.
The times are lost. Oh, Coleridge, like you,
We have that hangover from Xanadu.

artists in everyday fields where they had not before been noted. Exhibitions of first-class advertising art, graphic design and photography will be interspersed with showings of the best creative work in an endeavor to raise the level of artistic appreciation in the general community. And the Museum's acquiring of an institutional status within the Establishment by its association with academic and business leaders ensures it will have a widening audience for this end.

The spotlight of public attention will be held, in the main, by the three groups—decorators, expressionists and non-objectivists—but the best art of the next decade will almost certainly come from individualists. Although the work of the non-objective school, led by Ian Sime, John Howley, Roger Kemp and Don Laycock, should continue to be of world class, the very personal and introspective nature of this work makes it impossible for their communication to reach more than a small number of the initiated. The figurative work of Molvig, Dickerson, Fred Williams and Boyd is much more likely to win wide public support.

Australian painting is now on a par with that of Europe and America, as revealed by the recent London success of Arthur Boyd and John Brack. There will be cultural exchange; an exhibition of Australian non-objectivists has been arranged by London's Whitechapel Gallery for March next year, and the Museum Art is negotiating for exchange exhibitions with the New York Museum. This country's art is beginning to achieve international recognition and if our artists can resist the temptation of lowering their standards for financial gain Australia will go on to assume a place of importance in world art—and then painters will find themselves commanding high prices; not because all people are aware of the intrinsic worth of their work, but because Australian art will be "the thing" in Europe and America.

ADRIAN RAWLINS

★ COMMENT



Letters to Joseph Furphy

Katherine,
Northern Territory.

Dear Joe:

I don't know whether *Overland* circulates through the back gullies of Parnassus where you are probably camped these days. It should. Seeing that it claims a "Temper democratic, bias Australian," it is a journal you would obviously be interested to read. But you would conclude from a glance through issue No. 16 that either democracy and Australia have changed a lot since your time, or else that this little magazine is about as democratic as a Communist manifesto and as Australian as spaghetti. To an old billabong philosopher like myself who learned his ethics and his nationalism from men who were shifting on to Queensland about the time you started to get about the Riverina, this particular *Overland* seems to run from Bloomsbury to the Baltic. There's not a gum tree along the whole track.

For instance, it carries two elegies on Albert Namatjira. He was an Aboriginal who was taught to paint. He was quite successful at it. Made a lot more money out of his pictures than you or I ever made out of our novels, and he could have been the Moses who led his people into the Promised Land of racial and individual parity with the whites. Instead of that he sat down outside Alice Springs as host at a succession of drunken orgies which culminated in a young gin being bashed to death near his camp. I'm not blaming poor Albert; only the fools who taught him to drink and subsequently treated him as a martyr, when, after a warning from the magistrate, he went on handing out grog until the authorities were forced to take action against him to prevent further bloodshed. Yet on the evidence of *Overland* he is the most celebrated Australian since Ned Kelly.

One of these elegiac effusions brings up the horror stories of poisoned flour and hunting blacks like foxes. Now listen here, Joe, you lived and wrote half a century before these yarns became accepted historical facts. Why didn't you write them up? If your temper had been sufficiently democratic and your bias genuinely Australian, you wouldn't have wasted your time relating the injustices meted out to a mob of teamsters who were, after all, petty-bourgeois of the most contemptible type.

Now Joe, if your sense of humor will stand it, turn to where Mr. Ian Turner discourses on the "Australian Tradition". Initially he takes exception to the "strongly nationalistic and in some unhappy respects, chauvinistic strain" of the earlier labor movement. It's a long time since I read "Such Is Life". But from recollection I'd say that the book fairly reeked of the same sentiments. Of course they have been expunged from the modern labor movement. There is no Jim Scullin to ad-

dress the Australian Natives Association even if that organisation was strong enough to be worth talking to.

The political party which Scullin led seems to be torn by the faction fight between two small but well organised minorities. One of these appears to take its philosophy and possibly its orders from the Comintern while the other gets its from the Camorra.

Mr. Turner also lists certain writers whose "web of common attitudes" apparently means the interpretation of the Australian temperament. You get a mention, Joe, but Edward Dyson does not. Neither does the Vane-Lofting partnership which gave us those glorious sketches of Woolloomooloo. Neither—incredible as it may seem—does Gavin Casey. If "Short Shift Saturday" and "It's Harder For Girls" aren't expositions of the Australian Legend, then there isn't one.

Or if there is neither you nor I nor the men we boiled our quarts with are part of it.

★

The trouble Joe, with these earnest hunters after the truth of our social and political evolution, is that they can't see the 'roos for the rabbits. Socialism has never been a popular creed among native born Australians. It has been imposed on the labor movement by malcontents from overseas. The only version of "The Red Flag" with any local significance is the boast of the navy who got taken on the railways as a fettler:

The master class
Can kiss my arse,
I got a gov'n't job at last.

We were, until forty years ago, not only a horse-borne race, but a horse-owning race. Even in the most embittered stages of the shearing strikes, the squatter still agreed to provide free grass for two horses to every shearer. Mainly, the shearers' horses were good ones, and the pride of ownership they inspired was pretty poor soil in which to generate the exotic plant of pre-Marxian egalitarianism. That is why Lawson can never be said to personify the Australian Legend. In a time when the lowliest itinerant bush worker owned something with a "strain of Panic or Pyrrhus", and any young fellow who hadn't drank water from the Gulf-side of the Queensland watershed was looked on as stay-at-home, when the entire northern half of the continent was in its most colorful period of development with its stories ungarnered and its songs unsung, Lawson went bush, on foot, and turned back from the Paroo. Yet the interpreters (I nearly said the inventors) of this Australian Tradition treat his memory with almost pathetic reverence.

I think, Joe, it was the depression years which killed the Australia which you knew. The deflation of money values was nothing; the deflation of our national pride was fatal.

"Advance Australia" is a cliché which now earns no response except a contemptuous snigger. We were never so lucky as the Yanks. They had George Washington's Cherry Tree and Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech. We only had Johnny Gilbert's grave and Henry Parkes' defiance of the Imperial scheme to flood New South Wales with Chinese. There was nothing else to inspire the youngsters with the belief that it was a great privilege to be an Australian.

Even in the accepted chronicles of the labor movement the same thing has happened. The men who formulated the plan for a Queensland Bush Workers' Co-operative, which would buy into the pastoral industry, are forgotten both in name and in intention, while William Lane (imported) who

disrupted the scheme is revered in this sphere almost as much as Lawson is in his. There's a funny side to this use of the term "imported", Joe. Though the old colonial blood in man and beast was as good as any in the world, and our records have proved it, our bloodstock breeders get their stallions, and our more extreme unions and journals get their spokesmen, from abroad . . .

Yours in resignation,
TOM RONAN

★

Canberra,
A.C.T.

Dear Joe,

You were always a man who liked plenty of words, so I don't suppose you'll mind if I add one or two as a post-script to Tom Ronan's letter—just to say that I hope you won't feel as out of place in Overland as Tom thinks.

I wonder what sort of imports it was you objected to, Joe. Somehow, I don't think it could have been those malcontents who were preaching socialism—after all, you imported "Colonel" Rigby yourself, just to do this job, and you weren't too happy when A. G. Stephens cut "Rigby's Romance" out of "Such Is Life"—you always thought it was the better book. (I don't agree with you, but we're arguing what you thought.) And I don't think it could have been Will Lane—you were just as sold on Bellamy's socialism as he was.

It was imported aristocrats you didn't like, wasn't it? And snobs who kept looking over their shoulders to England as home? And men who hung onto their money, and used it to make more? You were as proud of your horse as the next man, but you were a great one for sharing, and you voted the Labor ticket when Labor had a lot more socialism than it has today.

And you weren't crooked on Lawson because he walked outback when most men rode—it was because he didn't fight enough. He was your favorite Australian poet, but you wanted him to show more anger, more resentment, less sloppy, religious sentiment—"What of the present day children, not to speak of the coming myriads for whom we should win better conditions that now exist? This means battle; and in battle there is something to do besides pick up the wounded."

I don't think you would have been around picking up the wounded in the battle Namatjira had with the government and their courts. You knew what the white man had done to the black—you wrote about it in your "Vignette of Port Phillip"—and I think you would have been on the black man's side. It wasn't a question of drink, but of dignity.

You'll find it amusing, no doubt, Joe, that we're still writing you letters, when we only bought two hundred copies of your book while you were here. But you'll be pleased to know that it's still selling, and people are still arguing about it, as you wanted them to—even though the mailman isn't delivering those royalties any more.

IAN TURNER

★

Max Brown writes from Port Hedland (W.A.):

I question the use of the names Pindan and Pindan Co-operative by Overland and Gavin Casey in your latest issue.

The pindan, for those who don't know, is fringe country. Pindan in its initial sense was merely one of several companies formed and used by Don McLeod and the blackfellows associated with him in the decade following the walkout from the sta-

tions in 1946, and was not even an idea in 1953 when McLeod's Mob numbered 650, and was at the peak of its achievement. In its contemporary sense Pindan represents one section of the natives who struck in '46—one might say, the more assimilated section.

The background is this: For many years McLeod's people were the main prospecting force in the Pilbara and turned up valuable deposits among the more recent of which were Nimingarra manganese and the nearby iron at Mt. Goldsworthy. Then about three years the newly-formed Pindan company commenced discussions with the Albert G. Sims Co. of Sydney concerning an arrangement by which Pindan would contribute the lease and Sims the capital to exploit Nimingarra. As a result Simdan Pty. Ltd. came into being.

However debate grew amongst the natives as to whether they should receive royalties merely, and/or work Nimingarra themselves and take wages too—which led to a split. In June last a majority of Pindan decided to work the lease for wages and removed McLeod and his supporters from the board of directors. One result was that McLeod and the more orthodox tribal elements established a prospecting camp near Roebourne under the name of Nomads Pty. Ltd.

At the moment of writing Pindan has about 250 people (about 25 of whom are at Nimingarra), and Nomads about 150, most of them mining beryllium. At the same time about 300 others who formerly belonged to The Mob now find employment elsewhere, prospecting in autonomous groups, or working for the squatters or in the towns.

Why then, since Pindan exists only in recent history and represents less than half of those who took part in the events of '46, has its name gained such currency?

The reason is that The Mob was in opposition to the squatters whose interests are all but sacred in W.A., and to the policy of assimilation so forcefully summarised at last year's Perth A.N.Z.A.A.S. Congress when Paul Hasluck repeatedly struck his palm with his fist and said: "We must smash the tribal remnants." As a result news of The Mob, other than court actions, was all but taboo in the press of W.A. for 13 years.

Then late last year it became clear that McLeod's lieutenants Ernie Mitchell, Peter Coffin and Coombi, with the help of the Native Welfare Department and the Sims company, would oust McLeod and his supporters, and the climate changed. The publication of Donald Stuart's "Yandy", the visits of Cecil Holmes, Dr. Barry Christophers and others to the Pilbara, and of Daisy Bindi to Perth, were all given publicity, and a people which had struggled along in a twilight for so long suddenly found themselves acclaimed heroes. So the name Pindan which had been in use for less than five years and now represented a minority of the Pilbara natives became respectable overnight.

Much of this was lost on the Pindan people, of course—no more than one or two could read. But these people who live close to the damper line, prospecting, mustering, collecting oysters and buffel grass seed and so on, are among the first to reject use of the Pindan name for a film dealing with the strike. They are close relatives of the people working with McLeod and both groups have told me: We don't blame the leaders for the split—it is a matter between ourselves!

It is in fact a matter in which their own law under the impact of our own society becomes deeply involved.

Judah Waten (Vic.) writes:

The newly established Chair of Australian literature at the Sydney University can become an important aid to the development of our literature only if the professor appointed is sufficiently objective to teach all schools and not just champion one trend.

The labor movement supported Dr. Colin Rodrick, who initiated the campaign for the chair, because it believed that the teaching of Australian literature would be an important way of making the whole of our national cultural heritage more widely known, through students and future teachers.

Welcome though the establishment of this Chair is, a word of warning is in order. The occupier of the Chair will become a person of considerable consequence in the Australian cultural world. Jockeying is already under way around who is to fill the Chair. Out of the manoeuvres that could more aptly be described as intrigues could come the appointment of a reactionary figure—one such is being widely canvassed—who could turn the Chair into a centre of anti-progressive ideas, a decrier of the democratic traditions in Australian literature, and a destroyer of the literary reputation of progressive Australian writers, living and dead.

It would indeed be a bitter blow to cultural life in this country if our first Chair of Australian Literature, gained largely by the endeavors of supporters of the democratic tradition in Australia, were to be filled by a nominee of the Australian Congress for Cultural Freedom or D.L.P. circles.

It will be a national scandal if this Chair is occupied by any representative of sections who claimed that no such Chair should be established as there was not enough Australian literature to warrant it. But there is no doubt that such people, now that the Chair has at last been established, will make every effort to see that its significance is blunted, and its possible progressive cultural role undermined by working for it to fall into the hands of an opponent of the democratic tradition, and a supporter of reaction politically and culturally.

Rex at Sorrento

Christ impaled on a tree
is not more death than
Rex at Sorrento, or any beach boy,
fixed to the earth.

Christ's limbs wash tree's limbs,
Rex quietly rests
and scorches . . .

he, lover, torch, youth,
flaming flesh of ancestors
who were kings and convicts
who is pretty dead.

If Christ is King!
sun and moon, bow down!
boy, under the sun, sing!

DONALD MAYNARD

History of a Despised Love—III

INACTION

How intricate is love: profuse in acts
that tangle on time's surface where they grow
brilliant with joy or, like my landscape now,
withered as all my nightmares freeze to facts.
Thus I, explorer protestant, have found
tendrils dry as grief exhausted yet
thrusting like some extravagant green shoot
across flat time's interminable ground.
The tendrils of passivity! Which coil
and worm-thrive like decay inflexibly
around the love that seemed to me once free,
but now is bound to this obsessive soil.
Held too, impatient, I—I must be wise,
lest panicked love is broken, flurries, dies.

AU REVOIR

My darling, I must smile farewell for now;
I've said my say, and wretchedness prolonged
is boring if you're not the one who's wronged . . .
I'm running out of sonnets anyhow.
The worst is past, though memory hovers round
like some gaunt thief to grab my richest thought;
but murderer no longer: reason caught
him just before he knocked me underground.
And while I wait in this numb interlude
I'll touch at life—and lovers, too. In fact
already there've been several whose love lacked
nothing but love. But dear, I'll not conclude
because your flesh compares unfavourably
you still don't mean the whole damn world to me.

REVENGE

My love, my last love sonnet now, for you:
each mourning word an elegy for youth;
for he is dying now who hardly knew
maturity, though he knew all of truth.
I hug our yesterday, and wish you well,
his well-intentioned murderer; and yet
your casual treason gashed the flesh of hell,
and mind tormented minds, cannot forget.
And so, despite my love, this hope I own:
that you, like me, thinking your love a sun
beyond eclipse, one darkening dawn will moan:
Did I do this, to whom now this is done?
And in betrayal handed on again
find the smashed sun astounding in its pain.

LAURENCE COLLINSON

★

Shadow Line Seen

Youth is sensation felt as a whole,
Felt in result in no manner at all—
You experience yourself.

Yet let each part
Extend in ways
Unknown to the heart

Reflection becomes you and you become old
The forehead furrows the force of each part
Youth is sensation, age is the thought.

BARRY ELLIOTT

BOOKS



Neither So Great Nor So Small

"The Verse of Christopher Brennan" (Angus & Robertson, 30/-) confronts Australian critics with a challenge to their integrity. There is a myth surrounding this poet: the myth of greatness. It is now producing its inevitable corollary—de-bunking.

It is easy enough to see what made Brennan such a central figure in Australian literature. He has a high seriousness; his themes are universal and he was scholarly at a time when some poets of the Bulletin school consciously discounted intellect. In a way his position is analogous to O'Dowd's. Both were romantics who modelled themselves on the classics and aimed at greatness. But while O'Dowd was concerned with a Democracy he tried to spiritualise, such purposes are alien to Brennan. What his ultimate purpose was is hard to say because there is no consistent "line" in his work, but perhaps we can admit that he was among the first to put art itself at the core of his intention.

A great deal, and a great deal too much, has been claimed for him. George Farwell sees him as towering over all his local contemporaries, echoing the praise bestowed on Brennan by his friend and biographer, Prof. A. R. Chisholm. Among the younger critics a reaction has set in against the Brennan cult, and the cry is heard that the most urgent task is to demolish the pretentious monument. But to one who reads this volume with a fresh, unbiassed mind both these views seem untenable. Brennan was a poet—there seems little doubt of that. But if by great poetry we understand a body of work of sustained and far-reaching individuality, original but of its time and capable of standing up to the years on its own wisdom, strength and beauty, we must deny that Brennan's poetry was great. It lacks the two chief ingredients of greatness: range and development. As a whole, but with striking exceptions, it is too cramped, both in content and form.

An attempt should be made at the proper occasion to subject his whole work to workmanlike analysis with a view to arriving at a firmly based new appraisal. Such an appraisal should as much as possible, ignore the secondary aspects of his fame: his tragic and touching life story and the problem (which I suspect has much to do with his reputation) of Brennan as a Catholic. All we can do here is to glance at some of his verse and ask ourselves how good it is.

It seems to me that his earlier poetry ("The Burden of Tyre") contains more freshness, more

real successes, than much of what comes later, which in itself is a criticism. The work is tight, the vision not narrowly circumscribed, and where he experiments he does so with great tact, using allusions and poetic forshortening very effectively. It makes one think that he could have developed into a kind of Australian Manley Hopkins.

A lord of war, our God on high
sits thron'd, and other none beside:
and evermore beneath His eye
greater we wax, His stay and pride.

His tent is spread about the suns,
and all the hoary abysms around
(if grace was theirs to bear such sons)
they are empty of God, they lie discrown'd.

It is quite true that no other poet in Australia before 1900 could have written this: even with O'Dowd the grand, prophetic manner too often becomes a rather heavy mixture of Whitman and Milton, or even Whitman and Tennyson. A time will come when Brennan, too fascinated by the possibilities of "hoary abysms," slides into them, metaphorically. But that time comes later. He reaches high but his feet are still on firm ground:

They hunger? give them men to slay:
they lack for light and air? then room
is free, yonder, and chance of play
where the ill-scarring cannons boom.

The house is rotting? flags will mask,
and trophies best, where damps intrude:
lift light and song, and none will ask
(being fools) if this be to their good.

And they who fall will vex us not,
And those who stay shall feed full meal
of glory: while their pride is hot
no need to whistle them to heel.

These be your gods, O Israel!
—And who am I to blame their law?—
Nay, as they will not learn, 'tis well
that fools should chew the husks and straw.

It is not only that here Brennan faces a cognisable reality, but that it is fused with true feeling; hence the "'tis well" and the "shall feed full meal," which always remain regrettable conceits, do not spoil the blend of thought and rhetoric. There is a unity.

In "Towards the Source," which was written between 1894 and 1897, Brennan, the thinker, goes to work. The total effect of the sequence is strong, but the imagery is not always.

Where star-cold and the dread of space
in icy silence bind the main
I feel but vastness of my face,
I sit, a mere incurious brain,
under some outcast satellite,
some Thule of the universe,
upon the utter verge of night
frozen by some forgotten curse.

The ways are hidden from my eyes
that brought me to this ghastly shore:
no embers in their depth arise
of suns I may have known of yore.

The poem ends:

vain fictions! silence fills my ear,
the deep my gaze: I reckon of nought,
as I have set for ages here,
concentred in my brooding thought.

The trouble is that there is more brooding than thinking, and the neo-Goethian feeling which underlies these stanzas does not become a personal thing. "Bind the main," "Thule of the universe,"

"ways hidden from mine eyes," "I reckon of nought"
. . . No: that's not poetry. It was not then and it
is not now. The gesture is there, but not the
muscle.

At all times Brennan strives to fuse the "lofty"
symbol and the earthy picture; more often than
not he fails. When he does not fail his success is
brilliant and, strangely enough, occasionally due
to formalistic separation rather than integration:

Under a sky of uncreated mud
or sunk beneath the accursed streets, my life
is added up of cupboard-musty weeks
and ring'd about with walls of ugliness:
some narrow world of ever-streaming air.

My days of azure have forgotten me.

My days of azure have forgotten me . . . very
fine!

And on an even bolder scale:

. . . methinks a drown'd maid's face might fitly
show

what we have slain, a life that had been free,
clean, large, not thus tormented—even so
as are the skies, the salt wings and the sea.

'Ay, we had saved our days and kept them
whole,

to whom no part in our old joy remains,
had felt those bright winds sweeping through
our souls

and all the keen sea tumbling in our veins . . .

Wings and the sea, winds sweeping through the
soul: all quite conventional pictures, but uncon-
ventionally used and unhampered by an over-
conscious striving. But even so, a poet who can go
no further has still not gone half-way to great-
ness. What some of the critics obviously enjoy
is the modernity of his despair. It is curious, too,
and exceptional, the way it intermingles with those
classical lines. It produces something new of a
sort, but not new ideas, nor truly new music and
rhythm.

And the road to pure banality is paved with
loftiness.

Four springtimes lost: and in the fifth we stand
here in this quiet hour of glory, still,
while o'er the bridal land
the westering sun dwells in untroubled gold,
a bridegroom proud of his permitted will,
whom grateful rapture suffers not be bold . . .

Pastiche. If it's a reaction to bush-balladry (the
date of writing is 1898) it's hardly a fine reaction.
Or:

I am shut out of mine own heart
because my love is far from me,
nor in the wonders have I part
that fill its hidden empery . . .

Æ might just conceivably have produced such
a quatrain, or Sturge-Moore, but not a poet of
the first rank.

A comparison between Æ (G. W. Russell) and
Brennan is apt enough, at least as to technique.
The first stanza of Æ's well known "The Great
Breath" is very Brennanish:

Its edges foam'd with amethyst and rose,
Withers once more the old blue flower of day:
There where the ether like a diamond glows,
Its petals fade away.

The "Lilith" sequence, written when Brennan
was still only touching thirty, seems to me to be
the most interesting in the book; certainly none
of the hitherto unpublished poems collected in
this volume contains anything that is better. Nor
are the few lyrics, inspired by his late and tragic
love for "Vic," more remarkable. "Lilith" contains

whole passages of superbly close-knit verse where
emotion and "argument" become one, but it, too,
pales when read in its entirety side by side with
any twenty lines of Mallarme whom Brennan so
much admired.

I have not, unfortunately, succeeded in extract-
ing from "Lilith" the inner meaning which it
presumably has. It could be that she is symbolic
of the woman all men long for and who never
comes and, in this, symbolic of man's ever dis-
appointed striving for the absolute. One gets from
it a whiff of loneliness and "alienation," word
beloved of so many moderns. Maybe it is this
which made Chris: Brennan so fascinating to his
admirers? The sequence is a strange mixture of
19th and 20th century—as so much of Brennan.
Alas, he could never shake himself free of the
Victorian variant of romanticism for long enough
to give full scope to his original passion. Had he
lived fifty or sixty years earlier, and written in
England, he would have escaped the conflict and
perhaps achieved the stature which, if not achieved
in his work, is implicit in it. In 1916 he wrote:

God is with Roland, whereso'er he lies,
and Roland lies so deep
that not his own horn's blast might breach his
sleep;
and Durlindana swims the ensanguin'd wave
on Michael's day alone, while years shall come;
and Roland ever dies
that day in Roncisvalle, and none to save,
for Christendom forgets its high emprise;
and Islam on the Holy Wisdom's dome
still holds its crescent in the usurped place,
and puny voices dare to hymn God's grace
and bless His holy work;
God is with Roland and we have the Turk.

A splendid last line, a powerful opening and a
noble structure, but full of the pseudo-poetic as
well. This thought was worth thinking before
Tennyson.

A volume to follow the present one will present
Brennan, the scholar. But essentially his renown-
ed scholarship is irrelevant to his poetry—a fact
which should at last be faced. To see him, as the
Penguin Book of Australian verse does, as "the
first Australian poet," is complete nonsense, how-
ever we interpret the word "first". But he was
a precursor, and a line runs from him to the
younger Australian Catholic poets of today: the
problems which concerned him concern them also,
though they find different solutions, by and large.

There is no point in inventing greatness. This
country has not yet had a truly great poet—but
is that so terrible? Slessor, Brennan and O'Dowd
together amount to a good deal, but the great poet
will, in his poetry, take for granted the qualities
which they separately possessed. He will not feel
the need to cut the cloth between himself and the
other—more popular—tendency in Australian
literature, for the contradiction between the two is
fundamentally artificial and can be transcended,
as Yeats transcended it for Ireland.

DAVID MARTIN

★

City Founder

The foundation of Adelaide, and with it, of
South Australia, was not meant to be the chancy
affair it had been in the other Australian colonies.
It was to be a soundly organised and executed
model of colonisation, capital allied with labor

(without disturbing the traditional prerogatives of the former), no disproportion of the sexes, town and rural sections neatly marked out, and water, soil, terrain and convenient harbor facilities assuring success.

In the event, the clamor and rancor among the first settlers outdid the rest, and they directed their spleen against the man working patiently in their interests—Colonel William Light, the Surveyor-General appointed by the Colonisation Commissioners in London.

Light had served with distinction in the Peninsular War. His self-portrait, reproduced in Geoffrey Dutton's "Founder of a City" (Cheshire, 42/-), and his sketches, prove him to have been a sensitive and accomplished artist; his voyages showed him to be a competent mariner. In Adelaide, he founded and laid out a graceful city.

Colonel Light was competent in nearly everything he undertook, and yet tragedy stalked him. He made two marriages. Nothing is known of the first except the name of his bride. His second wife, a daughter of the Duke of Richmond, had her children by other men.

What was it that Light lacked?

He was a man dogged by misfortune. It robbed him of his patrimony and pursued him relentlessly in his last enterprise. A scrupulously honest and diligent officer, it was Light's fate in South Australia to be obstructed by weaklings like Hindmarsh, the first Governor, and by Hindmarsh's viperish secretary, Stevenson; undermined by ignorant subordinates like Kingston, and harassed by sundry other citizens spurred by impatient self-interest. In Mr. Dutton's view, Stevenson was a veritable Iago, wrong at every guess, but conspiring to twist and defeat the plans and purpose of the one man who adhered faithfully to his duty.

Light gave the settlers the only site for their capital which then, and now, fulfilled all the requirements of his orders, but few were satisfied with his choice. They sought immediate investigation of every chance report of favorable sites elsewhere. Four lives were lost in the surf in Encounter Bay before they conceded that the capital could not be placed at the Murray mouth. Some championed Victor Harbor, others Port Lincoln. They complained about the distance between Adelaide and the anchorage. They demanded a suspension of the surveys on which Light and his staff were engaged, and immediate attention given to other work. When Light resigned under this abusive barrage, every remaining man of the original survey staff resigned with him.

Governor Gawler, succeeding the recalled Hindmarsh, withheld too late the gesture that would have appeased the wounded Light, who retired to a small property at Thebarton, a sick and broken man, to die. He received no Christian charity or comfort from the incumbent of Trinity Church, on the ground that it was not the practice of the Church to attend to the sick and dying unless they express penitence and desire the services of the church!

Yet as he lay dying, Light could derive a grain of comfort from the knowledge that his choice of the site of Adelaide was becoming generally endorsed.

Light's life span—born at Penang in 1786, and dying at Adelaide in 1839—united two eras of British expansion and two types of colonialism. His father, founder and first Governor of Penang, was a forerunner of the more successful Raffles of Singapore. The date of Light's birth is not recorded. His mother, Martinha Rozells, is a figure of mystery.

Mr. Dutton found many gaps in the chronicle of Light's life. Nearly all his journals, sketches and letters were destroyed by fire—a loss that undoubtedly hastened his death. Other documents cannot be traced. The Nasser regime in Egypt, knowing Mohamed Ali to have been a forebear of the exiled monarch, Farouk, denied the author proper access to the archives in the Abdin Palace relating to the Pasha, whom Light served for a brief period.

The gap that is most apparent conceals the explanation of how and when Light acquired the professional training which fitted him for his taxing survey task, for it is evident that Light was not merely a figurehead, but the principal instrument in the survey plan and its execution.

Mr. Dutton's sterling contribution to Australian biography contains a few unnecessarily repetitive passages and other minor editorial lapses. But these are trivialities compared with his unflagging scholarship. His excavations have yielded much that is new, or more fully explanatory, of the character and tragedy of the man whose image, from the upper slopes of Montefiore Hill, now regards the product of his handiwork.

RAYMOND PAULL

★

Verse in Australia

The annual selection "Verse in Australia" (Australian Letters, 17/6) aims at "doing something towards providing a clear picture of what the year's poetry has been." Of course, any selection of forty-odd poems from an annual harvest of (the editor's estimate) something like a thousand published, must be inadequate, and even with four editors it must also be biased more or less by personal preferences. But in a year when Australian publications, not only of poetry, but of everything else, have dropped disastrously, this is a valuable series and ought to be accepted with gratitude.

So here is, at least, the editors' picture of verse in 1960. What is most noticeable about it? I think it would first strike an overseas reader, trying to get a line on our poetry from this selection, that most of it is conducted on an oddly conversational level. The raised voice, the rhetorical note, that once characterised our poetry (Brennan, O'Dowd and others) has sunk to something like a rather irreverent aside; the lines that once were plugged are now thrown away.

Perhaps the change can be neatly epitomised by comparing a verse from Fitzgerald's "Copernicus" ("Moonlight Acre"):

If I should die tonight—
should death strip the festoon
twisted for brief delight
and slung from wall to wall
of my time's banquet-hall—
at least I have seen the moon.

with another from his poem "Macquarie Place" in this collection:

I will go out and hear the strain
of ratbag orators at large.
There is a battery in my brain
which just that fever might re-charge.

But this drop in tone, this ironic intrusion of reality on vision, is not confined to the older poets; many of the newcomers seem already to echo Elizabeth Riddell's lines:

That's what I say. I mean the peak
is too far up, and I know what I speak.

There is Sylvia Lawson, observing with dexterous sarcasm on Newport Beach "the golden people of my tribe, temporarily ceasing from exchange and gain-gathering", and the young journalist dreaming of escape from "jaws and benevolent eye of the Organisation":

But man must learn language and eating
habits of monsters
that move in his element . . .
he will become a Staff Correspondent, then
go into Public Relations.

There is Judith Green reading the inscriptions on the rocky outcrops of the Granite Belt:

"Vote Lyell." "I love you." "Wrath of God."
Gods' choirs are silent. Paintwork sings,
Means more than hail, beats any bird;
Man's bigger, better spatterings.

Or Ian Healy, comparing his love to a kettle on the gas:

And who'd turn out the gas and spoil
What all too soon goes off the boil?
Not I.

Certainly, if this collection is any indication, Australian poetry has gone off the boil quite early in its history.

Well, even if this is not exactly "the roll, the rise, the carol, the creation" we were once taught to expect from poetry, it has its value. Someone has to prick the bubble of our self-esteem, of the "parading duco", to quote Sylvia Lawson again, and no doubt it is praiseworthy in the poets to do the job, since nobody else seems to want to.

But what effect does this general lowering of tension have on the reader? This is an anthology that makes practically no demands on our emotions, and almost as few on our intellect. So it is pleasant to read—amusing, witty, wistful, observant, and, in accordance with the South Australian atmosphere, a little contrived and rough-handed. One could buy it—probably some people will—to present to any suburban housewife. She might not bother to read it (poets were tamed long ago), but if she does she may easily enjoy it. Not much of it will worry her. Perhaps Francis Webb's fierce recreation of Eyre's return from his year of loss and misery, and Geoffrey Dutton's remembrances of the war years, may cause her momentary anxiety; she won't know what A. D. Hope is talking about. Not much else.

So, after all, perhaps we do live in the Australia Felix that Sylvia Lawson pokes fun at—yes, poets and all. It makes one wonder what on earth Christopher Brennan was prophesying about, and why he thought poets were different from ordinary people. Yes, this is a very pleasant collection. And probably the editors' choice was fairly representative.

JUDITH WRIGHT

★

Three Anthologies

I have never been over-partial to anthologies since I first met up with Palgrave's Golden Treasury about half a century ago. Therefore my eye, on looking through three anthologies which came my way recently, was probably a little jaundiced. The fact remains that of the three—"West Coast Stories," a Western Australian anthology, selected by Henrietta Drake-Brockman (Angus & Robertson, 17/6), "The Queensland Centenary Anthology," edited by S. Byrnes and Val Vallis (Longmans, 30/-), and "Southern Festival", edited by the South Australian Fellowship of Australian Writers (Rigby, 25/-)—only the first appears to me of a sustained high standard throughout.

It is inevitable with such collections that they can be good only in spots. That "West Coast Stories" contains a greater number of those good spots is obviously because Western Australia contains a greater number of good writers than the other two States—which is not to say that the latter do not contain good writers.

But take a look at the contents list of "West Coast Stories": to select but a few names with their titles from this list—Katharine Susannah Prichard with that most perfect of all her short stories, "The Cooboo," and her strange, tersely brilliant "The Curse"; H. Drake-Brockman's gallant "North-West Ladies"; Gavin Casey at his understanding best with "Short-Shift Saturday"; D. J. Hislop's brief but beautiful "The Victor"—and you have an idea of the quality of the whole.

In "Southern Festival" you get poetry as well as prose. In fact, there are such divisions as "Out of the Past", "Legend, Story, and Passing Time", "By Sea and River", "People", "The Heart and the Eye", "In Many Places", "The Country of the Spirit", "War", and "Today and Tomorrow", as well as brief biographies. There is plenty to choose from—indeed, too much. Fortunately, the editors do not call the publication a "selection". It is a "collection", and the trouble would seem to be that they have collected over-generally, so as to give as many people as possible a chance.

But of course there is beauty in it. Flexmore Hudson's "White Owl" I consider more "poetry" than his poems, and in the actual poetry section "Summer in the City" by Ian Mudie and two of Nancy Cato's works "The Flesh, the Flame, and the Flower" and "After the Atom-Bomb Test" stand out. "Dad Sank a Well", a short story by Colin Thiele, is excellent comedy, while Myrtle Desmond's "The China Doll" presents a short, terrible picture of a child looking on the dead for the first time.

There are other good items in this "Southern Festival" anthology; that I don't mention them by name is entirely due to lack of space.

Let us move up North—and come to "The Queensland Centenary Anthology". The editors are scholarly people who, one feels, have done an intelligent job. But one can do an intelligent job only with the available material.

Of the available material, the most interesting from my standpoint, though not necessarily the best, are Laurence Collinson's poem "Three Places", Clem Christesen's "Homage to One Betrayed", and Vance Palmer's "Josie". I think I must exclude Vance's "Josie" from "not necessarily one of the best", for "Josie" is not only one of the best of Vance's short stories, but one of the best of any Australian stories.

There are poems by Judith Wright, one of Australia's finest poets, "Rememberings" and "Pan" by James Devaney, "The Map" by John Manifold, "Droving Man" by Thea Astley, "One Day You Will Get Murdered" by Brian Penton and "Crushing" by Xavier Herbert, among so much else.

Don't be affected by my jaundiced eye. Read and decide for yourself, as of course you must and will.

JEAN CAMPBELL

★

Immigration Policy

Advocates of a change in Australia's immigration policy have been persistently ignored by all the established political parties, and it is remarkable that, in the face of such official stubbornness, they have gradually won around the majority of the people, according to Gallup polls, to supporting

their point of view. Yet even among liberals there has been confusion about both the reasons for change and the methods of achieving it. The appearance of "Control or Color Bar" (3/-), this short study by the Immigration Reform Group of Melbourne University, should therefore be welcome both as a means of persuading all but the invincibly intolerant, and of providing a sane and unemotional policy for those who have been worried but confused.

The lack of emotion is, indeed, one of the most notable features of the booklet. It sets out quite calmly the policy as it is administered, the case for a change, the likely effects, and the difficulties which would be encountered. The cold assembling of facts and logical examination of the conclusions to be drawn results in an almost unanswerable case. We would be underestimating the emotional attachment of so many intelligent and well-meaning Australians to the idea of a White Australia if we expected this work to be received in the spirit in which it is written, but we equally underestimate the strength of the case for a change if we descend to their level in debate.

The other particularly notable feature of the booklet is its insistence on the positive benefits which would accrue to this country from the admission of non-Europeans in larger numbers. It is this constructive attitude which leads the group to reject the idea of quotas in favour of negotiated agreements and a policy based on economic and social factors instead of on color, although they suggest that some sort of upper limit should be fixed arbitrarily for the first few years of the new policy.

In conclusion, might I seriously make the trite remark that this is a book which every Australian should read? It may have its limits as a study of the reasons for the policy as it is at present, or of its social and economic context, but such studies can be made when it is merely an historical curiosity. In the meantime, I commend it as a significant document of practical and immediate politics.

J. D. McLAREN

★

Walk Along the Beach

Every critic attempts to define poetry, but without success; at best, he merely defines himself. Only a poem can define poetry, and its definition is true only for itself; and even time and place may alter its truth.

This is a trite statement; I make it for two reasons. The first reason I pass over quickly: that there has been an enormous increase in the volume of criticism printed in this country during the past few years, and a large proportion of it is written by knowledgeable young men and women who, with breathless ease and from obviously superior heights, tear smugly at works of art until nothing is left except the critics' own reflections in the carefully-placed mirrors beneath. No critic is a god, though many express themselves as if omniscient. No critic is infallible, even if it were possible to believe (as I do not) that assertions of literary values are capable of proof. It therefore bears repeating that every single sentence of criticism, by no matter how august a critic, is no more than a personal opinion.

My second and primary reason is the publication of R. A. Simpson's first collection of poems: "The Walk along the Beach" (Edwards & Shaw, 12/6). My personal opinion is that this is the best collection by a younger poet to have appeared in this

country in recent years, but critically I can produce no evidence in support of such an absolute view that any matriculation student, with equal validity, might not contradict. Therefore I confine myself to examining some aspects of Simpson's poetry that I find interesting.

What has most impressed me about "The Walk along the Beach" is its tranquillity. This is not passionate poetry that pours out in adjectival turbulence: subjects that might seem naturally to require heroic treatment are written in a subdued manner. The bystander at an Anzac Day procession, for instance:

Instead
Of armies he finds rows
Of medals, meaningless
To him, and not one ghost
Comes . . .

Even the poem about love, a subject on which most young poets find an excuse for extravagance, if not for frenzy, are lit by the candle of reflection rather than the sun of violence:

We keep our timelessness
Though arm untwines from arm:
Though lovers stand and dress
Illusions stay in calm . . .
Or does our love possess
A room no light can harm?

Yet in describing Simpson's work as tranquil, I have no intention of inferring that it is sedative. In the contrary, the restraint in style merely emphasises the poetry's inner tumult. Although his poems seem smooth and dry, although they possess a facility of language and a music so gentle as to be almost genteel, although the hasty reader may be deceived into dismissing them as trivial or academic, closer reading reveals a poet of considerable subtlety.

The subject matter not only covers the admitted prerogatives of the lyric poet: death and love, always expressed in images of exceptional strength and clarity, as in "House in the Suburbs":

For thirty years within this house
He has learnt its frown and stare.
He leans, regards his fruitless spouse:
Left, like a twig upon a chair,
She knits the pattern of her poise.

or "The Retreat":

We see him climb the hill, past trees and
rocks:
His small and militant hat is firm and
straight
To meet the enemy, the cause of love,
With all his agile armaments of thought . . .

but also includes ideas of completely contemporary relevance. All the poems, in fact, are "of the moment", even those that seem to deal most directly with life's "eternal" problems.

A constant theme, always present but not always explicit, is that of nonconformity—not the nonconformity of the aesthete, who is "above the crowd", nor that of the power-lover, who would destroy the crowd, but the nonconformity of the human being who has discovered that many of the ills of his brothers are due to an education which leaves them ignorant of everything but facts, and consequently amenable to the persuasion of "admass", of religions, and of political dogmas. Simpson, having observed that superstition, fear, and war are the results of such persuasion, is distrusting of any "mass" idea or emotion; he insists on the value of reason, the importance of the individual: the "frail, essential bread of self". Doubt, scepticism, and questions that

. . . strive
Like waves that reach the sand
And die with froth and shine . . .

are necessary to man. To have faith is to be like
. . . children in streets, rolling their hoops
Of unreal hope
That die against determined walls.

The poet attempts persistently to free himself from what he regards as the repressive bonds of religion—in this case, Catholicism:

They planned to keep me there and threat-
ened with their frowns
To nail my flesh to wood and spear my side.

This sensation of being stifled by the irrational forces of modern society pervades the book and gives it its character: the poet's desperation and despair tensed against the formal qualities of his poetry.

The world, however, is not entirely dark. There are still men of good will, perhaps a little shabby, perhaps a little tired, but possessing, like the teacher in "First Form Science":

As pontiff in that room,
Though stains were on my white
Garment, I raised the beaker
Of distillate to light,

the knowledge to overcome and the skill to replace the charlatans.

LAURENCE COLLINSON

★

Colonial Minstrel

Charles Thatcher came to Victoria in 1852. In London, he had been a musician by trade, and had some experience of the embryonic music halls. In Australia, he put in a brief spell as a digger, and then turned entertainer again. For almost twenty years he was in high favor as song-maker and singer on the goldfields of Victoria and New Zealand. His songs are a rich commentary on the life of the diggings; as commentary, though not in other ways, at least as valuable as the sketches and lithographs of S. T. Gill.

In earlier books—"Colonial Ballads", "The Overlander Song Book", "The Goldrush Songster"—Hugh Anderson reprinted a good number of Thatcher's songs, and gave us a brief account of his career on the diggings. Now, in "The Colonial Minstrel" (Cheshire, 30/-) he gives us a life of Thatcher.

In doing so, he tries also to show us how Thatcher's career fitted into the general pattern of goldfields entertainment, and how his songs reflected the life of the diggings. Numerous quotations of songs at full length are necessary to these purposes, but they often hold up the flow of the story, and make the book seem rather disjointed, not to say messy. "The Colonial Minstrel" would, I feel, have read better (and lost nothing) if many of these texts had been reserved for an appendix.

And after all, I think that "The Colonial Minstrel" will be valued chiefly, not for its biography of Thatcher, but for its secondary purposes; for the light it casts on social history and the history of popular culture. From this point of view, the book would have gained by giving a fuller picture of entertainment on the diggings, especially of the work of other topical song-writers, such as Small. Alan Lomax's "Mr. Jelly Roll" stands as a model to show how the biography of a popular entertainer, and a picture of the entertainer's milieu, can make one satisfying story.

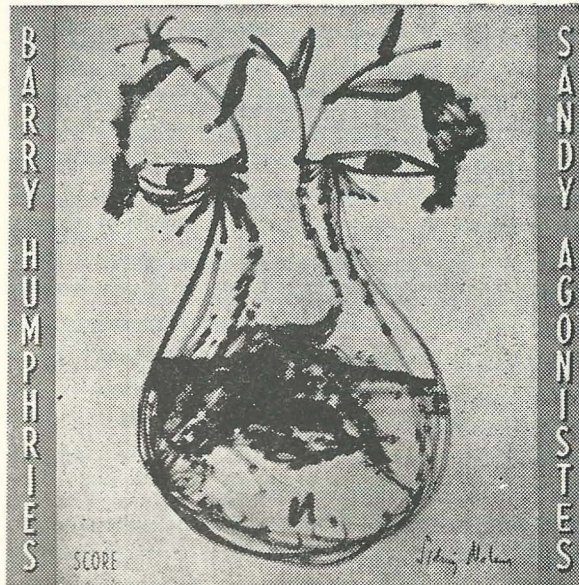
"The Colonial Minstrel" will not be quoted along with "Mr. Jelly Roll" as a shining example of how to do this kind of thing. But it is a book that will be valued by everyone with an interest in Australian history that extends to social history, to the **how** as well as the **why** of history; for it is a book that tells us something about the texture and quality of human life as it was at this point in time and place. Which is to say also that it will be enjoyed by many simply as the story of a colorful man in a colorful time.

A point of information (for anyone who wishes to look at Thatcher's original songsters): the Mitchell Library's holdings of these are much richer than Anderson's bibliography suggests.

A question (for anyone who knows the answer): why should a book of 150 odd pages "published with the assistance of the Commonwealth Literary Fund" cost thirty shillings?

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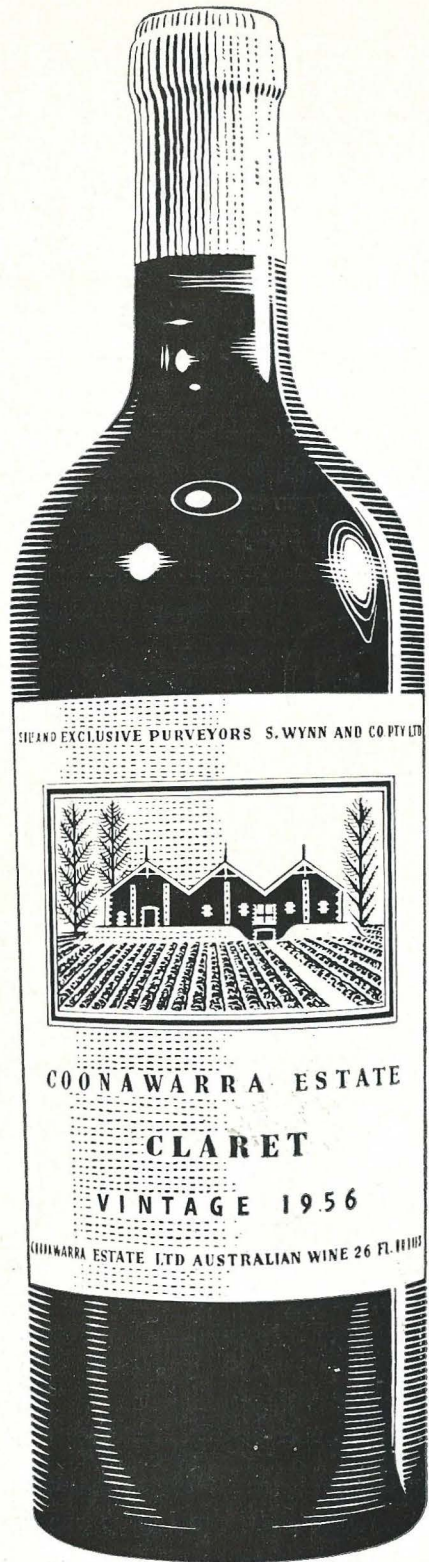
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