

The Gryphon

FOUNDED 1895

MARCH, 1949

THE JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Contents

	<i>page</i>
EDITORIAL	4
WITH MALICE	<i>R.M.</i> 6
KIERKEGAARD AND THE ORIGINS OF EXISTENTIALISM	<i>J. M. Cameron</i> 9
MORE STEPS IN AN UNDISTINGUISHED CAREER	<i>Bill Moody</i> 15
RELACHE	<i>S.J.C.</i> 18
THE GRAVEN IMAGE	<i>W. A. Hodges</i> 19
SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY	<i>Fernando Henriques</i> 25
BALLAD OF A BELLE	<i>Robin Skelton</i> 28
TRAVELLER	<i>C. Kingham</i> 29
BROTHER ERNEST	<i>William Encson</i> 30
NEED WE BE UGLY ? An Open Letter	<i>Francis Merton</i> 32
FOUR USELESS PEOPLE	<i>Brett</i> 36
REDBRICK	<i>Joe</i> 44
HONOUR WITHOUT PRAISE	<i>A.G.</i> 45
REFLECTIONS ON A FRENCH UNIVERSITY	<i>P. W. Edwards</i> 47
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	50

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EDITORIAL

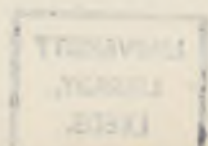
THE EDITORIAL "we" is, for once, a reality. There are two of us, widely separated in taste, united only in our affection for the fractious child whose chief guardians we are. We are sorry that our former Editor left us. She kept us in order and she improved *The Gryphon*; we think so, anyhow. And so do most of you, if we may judge from your answers to the questionnaires.

About fifty of you put pen and pencil to paper and let us know something of your opinions. We are grateful to the fifty and to those who meant to fill in the answers and didn't, and to those who were too polite to do anything at all.

Our statistics show that most of you like light and chatty articles and uncomplicated stories as much as you dislike the verse we have printed recently. There is a great demand for popular scientific articles, and we are noting the many useful suggestions (our difficulty, we fear, will be to find the writers). After these general statements it becomes difficult to say anything.

It is usually agreed that the pocket-size *Gryphon* is better than its predecessor, but there are doubts whether the improvement is in proportion to the increase in price. Art Supplements, though generally considered a good idea ("a break in the monotony"), receive many brick-bats: "Modernistic art is of interest only to the artist and his psychiatrist." Some readers are concerned with the expense: "These reproductions must cost quite a packet." Alas, they do. And that partly explains why there is no Art Supplement to this issue. The other reason is that we have nothing on hand which we think you would care to see. The glossy pages *may* re-appear in our next issue; please roar with rage if you miss them in this.

The following criticism is typical of many: "To all but Art students *The Gryphon* is an utter waste of money. It should be re-named 'The Art Students' Magazine,' so as not to tempt other students to throw away valuable coffee funds." Much could be said about this, but it has all been said in previous



Editorials. A reader gives one reply: "I hope we have more science background undergrads. writing." So do we.

What are we to do? Gratefully we pick up crumbs of comfort. A critic who starts off by choosing the Guinness advertisement as the best article ends up with "Thank you for trying so hard!" Another writes: "Stop apologising in your Editorials and (without bad temper, of course) fight back at 'em all!" You may regard the verse in this issue as an attempt at "fighting back"; we have no apologies for its inclusion. On the other hand much of the stuff we print is aimed at pleasing the majority of our readers. We intend to please more and more of you; but we can never please everybody, and it would be silly to try.

* * * *

We thank the Editor of *The Mermaid* (Birmingham University) for kind permission to reprint "Red Brick," which we think deserves a wider public.

WITH MALICE

I DISLIKE THE NORTH—the dullness of its towns, the stark countryside, and the bleak pall which overshadows everything. But, above all, I dislike the people—their stubborn lack of humour, their arbitrary judgments, their material outlook, and their conservative dislike of change. Especially I deplore the self-consciously introspective attitude, so characteristic of the Northerner.

Any visitor from another part of the country is at once mentally isolated, in spite of the well-known protestations of hospitality; of supreme hospitality. He finds that, while forcefully accepting him, they draw their native characteristics defensively around themselves, and continually emphasise the artificial barrier thus created. One is, indeed, much less alone when completely ignored in the South, than in the North, where a kind of antagonistic intimacy is forced upon one.

I consider that this ardent national spirit, so typical of the Yorkshireman, is perhaps the most irritatingly difficult thing to condone. His universe is obviously divided into two parts—Yorkshire and the rest of the world. So engrossed is he with the former, that the latter receives, at the most, a tolerant acceptance. He knows that, in him, God has created a unique species, and that it is therefore his obvious duty to prevent it from dying out, or being contaminated by outside influences. Hence, his morbid pre-occupation with local dialect, custom and humour—anything which will show he is not as other men are.

This desire to perpetuate the species probably accounts for the extreme clannishness of Yorkshire people, an obvious fear of being unsupported, which makes them cling together, even in other parts of the country, where they inevitably create a Society of Yorkshiremen, as a protection against the infiltration of an alien civilisation. It probably accounts too for the over-emphasis on the family, which still talks possessively of "our Fanny," long after the young woman has branched off on her own and founded a series of future generations.

No one appears to have a separate existence of his own, all are part of this dreadful intimacy which embraces the whole county. Possibly the local addiction to singing in choirs is another reflection of this imperative need for moral support—redolent of the primitive era of society, when unity was the only strength.

The contemporary Yorkshireman has perpetuated still further the ideals of this age; namely, in his desire to establish himself and gather possessions around him. For his horizon is bounded by material interests, which make him reduce every experience and contact to tangible terms, rejecting as foolish anything which refuses to submit to this treatment. Life, for him, passes in a methodical assessment of pros and cons, where nothing can be taken for granted or allowed to pass. This remorseless and unflagging enthusiasm colours all aspects of his life, not only business, but social life, amusement, and even gossip over the back fence. All reflect his restless busy-ness, his inability to relax.

No doubt this high pressure life which seems essential up here accounts for a certain obvious crudity of perception, a basically prosaic concept of life. Being incapable of appreciating subtlety himself, the Yorkshireman resents it in others, with the obscure feeling that he is being "got at," and prefers to cling righteously to his narrow, middle-class tenets, which assure him of a comforting mediocrity, safe from disconcerting doubts of his own value.

No doubt other countries have their irritating facets, and one might accept Yorkshire's along with the rest, if only the Yorkshireman himself did not insist on a segregation which will give him the place of supremacy, merited by the native virtues which he has created for himself—mainly out of his own shortcomings. Faced by indifference to his claims, he satisfies his ambition in some measure by an unending attack on everything and every one South of the Humber.

The favourite weapon in this isolationist campaign is, I think, the Northerner's most fatal characteristic—candour! He exploits a belief in the value of plain speaking, which

enables him to indulge in rudeness with a smugly virtuous feeling, to shatter trifling social conventions with heavy-footed materialism, forcing his fellow men into an uncomfortably direct relationship in which no retrenchment is possible. Why this fetish for candour? What possible virtue can it have in a civilised society, where the very basis of harmonious relationship is deceit?—A pleasant, easy deceit, whose conventions are understood by either side, and which gives a glow of pleasurable self-confidence to both. Where is the virtue in firmly distributing one's own opinion—which, after all, is only acceptable if favourable?

Who, when talking to a Yorkshireman, has not experienced that apprehensive shudder as he fixes you with a firm eye and declares that he believes in "speaking his mind"? This is generally the prelude to some disagreeable remark, which he—protected by his accepted native characteristic—is able to deliver on his wilting victim without challenge, and indeed with a conscious air of duty done. The unfortunate recipient, his covering of social convention shattered, has no redress against such onslaughts, unless daring to retaliate in kind. But this procedure is not advisable, in view of his opponent's proverbial lack of humour, which, allied to his hypersensitiveness, forbids him to accept a joke against himself.

Yet, one is not permitted to accept and ignore him, along with other irrelevant phenomena. Some reaction—even an unfavourable one—is demanded, to give him the assurance that he is felt in the world. Perhaps one day, when research into the inferiority complex is yet more advanced, we shall be able to solve his mal-adjustment and chase away the Saxon bogey, but until then, I stay South.

R.M.

J. M. Cameron

KIERKEGAARD AND THE ORIGINS OF EXISTENTIALISM

THE QUESTION: What is Existentialism? is becoming a recognised conversational opening in the social game.

Soon, perhaps, the categories of the Existential philosophy—Existence, Dread, Concern, the Leap, and so on—will become the small change of polite conversation, much as did the categories of psycho-analysis in the 'twenties. I have tried elsewhere to say something about the contemporary movement;* and in any case there is an abundance of short introductions to and commentaries upon modern Existentialism.† I wish here to say something about the man who is recognised by Existentialists of all schools as the founder of the philosophy and its most creative thinker: the Dane, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-55)—hereafter referred to as K.

There is a curious and, I believe, not uncommon experience in which one sees a name about which one knows nothing; in the ordinary sense of the term it *means* nothing to one; and yet the reading of it provokes an inner questioning that demands, not urgently, but sooner or later, an answer. I had this experience on first coming across K.'s name in Unamuno's *The Tragic Sense of Life*. This must have been in 1931 or 1932. In 1935 the Oxford University Press began its magnificent enterprise of publishing all K.'s major works in English, an enterprise that was in the main completed by 1944. (K.'s fascination and reconciling power are well brought out when one considers that the three men chiefly responsible for

* "On Existentialism," *THE HIGHWAY*, October, 1947.

† *An introduction to the Existentialism of Sartre is Jean-Paul Sartre: EXISTENTIALISM AND HUMANISM (Methuen). For Christian Existentialism, see Gabriel Marcel: THE PHILOSOPHY OF EXISTENCE (Harvill Press).*

the success of this enterprise—Walter Lowrie, Alexander Dru, and the late Charles Williams—were respectively an American Protestant, a Catholic, and an Anglican). Even on the continent of Europe the reputation and influence of K. only began to grow in the twentieth century. In part this was on account of his being a Dane writing in Danish; but much more the relative slowness of his epiphany is accounted for by his writing in the middle of the nineteenth century what only became intelligible in the twentieth. We can look back upon the nineteenth century and see that its cherished hopes were illusions; and so we can listen to K. and begin to understand him; his contemporaries would not listen and could not understand.

K. once said that his martyrdom consisted in his being a genius in a provincial town. (He might have added, in the most provincial country of Western Europe). It is easy to miss the ferocious irony of this remark. K.'s utterances, like those of his master Socrates—"my teacher"—are often ironical. The irony here is that K. truly hungered and thirsted after a genuine martyrdom, to die as "a witness to the truth"; but his martyrdom came to him as he once prophesied it would and in the manner he foretold: "to be trampled to death by geese." What the brief life means in the moral and intellectual atmosphere of our time can only be grasped by a reading of the works themselves. The remarks that follow are designed in the hope that some may be induced to become lovers of K., in the hope that *as individual persons* they may become readers of K., who always insisted that he did not write for a public but for "that individual whom with joy and gratitude I call *my reader*." A Kierkegaardian coterie would conflict with the whole spirit of K.'s work.*

* *I suggest that one should begin with THE JOURNALS OF SOREN KIERKEGAARD, A Selection Edited and Translated by Alexander Dru (Oxford University Press). If all goes well, the rest will follow. If the reading goes badly, you should decide that K. is not a dish for your stomach, at least, not yet.*

The thought that he was singled out, different from "the others," chosen for suffering, went very far back in K.'s recollection. He grew up in the shadow of his father's melancholy, in a household that took perfectly for granted the thought that before God man is always in the wrong. What this consciousness of being singled out meant, what vocation it pointed towards, K. for a long time was not sure; doubt over this question made up the crisis of his youth. He was enriched with a keen sensibility and a magnificent intellect which in dialectical power can be compared only with that of Socrates. He was afflicted, as was St. Paul, with "a thorn in the flesh,"* which made it plain to him that the laborious temperate life of the Christian family was not his vocation. Suddenly it became evident that it was a question of all or nothing: the consecration of his talent to the work of God; or perdition. (Theodor Haecker has suggested that there was something daemonic in K., as though he were body and spirit, animal and angel; but the *soul*, that which knits body and spirit together and makes possible the organic life, fundamentally harmonious though never free from inner tension, of the average sensual man, was, as it were, not there.† This characterisation must not be taken literally; rather it is a paradoxical statement designed to emphasise something we feel under the impact of K's genius, something he has in common with another daemonic personality, one to whom K. felt himself to be spiritually related—I mean Mozart.) During the period when the choice was in the balance, K. was in the state he so well describes, a state which becomes one of the

* *What this may have been is disputed by the commentators; but Magnussen's work, an account of which is given in Theodor Haecker: KIERKEGAARD THE CRIPPLE (Harvill Press), leaves little doubt that "the thorn" was the fact of his being a hunchback.*

† *Theodor Haecker: SÖREN KIERKEGAARD (Oxford University Press). I cannot too much recommend this brilliant short study; but it is not really intelligible without some prior acquaintance with K's writings.*

Existentialist categories, the state of Dread. This state cannot be defined; it can be hinted at and described, but perhaps only to those who have tasted it. "The whole of existence frightens me, from the smallest fly to the mystery of the Incarnation."* The state of Dread is the precondition of the leap into the abyss of faith in the belief that this is not to risk destruction but to be held up, miraculously, beyond all understanding, by God. That the act of faith can only be likened to the leap into the abyss follows from K.'s conviction that the relationship between God and man—that there *can* be such a relationship—is inexplicable and, from the rational standpoint, impossible. He believed that "the fundamental error of modern times (which runs into logic, metaphysics, dogmatics, and the whole of modern life) lies in the fact that *the yawning abyss of quality* [my italics] in the difference between God and man has been removed."† Hence for him the central dogma of Christianity, that of the Incarnation, the historical appearance of the God-man, is a crackling paradox which is bound to be foolishness and a scandal for human wisdom. It is not perhaps surprising that one of K.'s German translators, not himself a Christian, saw in K.'s work the *reductio ad absurdum* of Christianity. Such a mistake is plausible but not really excusable; for K. many times makes it plain that what he writes is a "corrective," that is, he is redressing—not holding—a balance. At times, perhaps (one feels) too rarely, he forsook his characteristic emphasis on the paradox, the "impossibility," of Christianity. Somewhere he writes: "Christianity is the perfection of the truly human." *Gratia non tollit naturam, sed perficit*. But he believed that had he made this central in his message it would have been perverted into an easy liberal optimism.

That which is peculiar to K.'s approach to philosophy can be grasped if we compare what can best be described as "living the truth" with the mere apprehension or contemplation of

* THE JOURNALS, p. 72.

† *Ibid.* p. 222.

truth. A truth can engage the intellect without committing the personality very deeply. We assent to the propositions of Euclidean geometry; given the premises we cannot not assent to them. There is thus what K. describes as "an imperative of the understanding": there are propositions that, once seen, as it were *coerce* the intellect. But to assent to the truths of geometry does not trouble the roots of my nature. Life goes on as before. Now, it seemed to K. that there were many who assented to the dogmatic propositions of Christianity as all assent to the propositions of Euclid. They nodded their agreement, voted Christianity to be true, and passed to the next and more interesting item on the agenda. As K. put it in one of the acrid pamphlets written at the end of his life, "the Apostle Paul is not a serious man"—from the standpoint of the modern *bien-pensant* Christian, that is; for the Apostle Paul had no official position, no money, not even a wife; he had only hunger, thirst, torments of body and soul, a shameful death. The act of faith, then, so it seemed to K., must either be the total commitment of oneself or it must be nothing. Hatred of Christianity is to be preferred to a merely conventional gesture of assent to the doctrines of Christianity. Truth which is to be more than that truth which coerces the intellect but leaves the depths of the personality untroubled must be grasped not only intellectually but affectively and with the will. One must stake everything upon it. *Il faut parier*: there is a certain kinship between K. and Pascal, who also knew Dread and implored men to stake everything upon God—"not the God of philosophers and scholars, but the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob."

This teaching of K.'s on the subject of faith has been secularised and vulgarised into the modern Existentialist's conception of *engagement*—commitment. The question is whether *engagement* can, in a universe from which God is absent and in a soul lacking any conviction that moral values belong to the objective sphere and not to the subjective sphere of individual preference, bear the *weight* that K. places upon the act of faith. Granted that to be uncommitted is to be a shadow-man, yet if there is no reason in the nature of things

why I should be committed in one way rather than in another, if there is no appeal from the naked choice to a rational ground of choice, then there is simply no reason why I should be committed at all.

Of all the many things said about K., the wisest known to me is Haecker's remark that "he wanted the Judgment in the middle of time." The sight of the weeds among the wheat put him in a passion, and he was perhaps a little too sure that he knew a weed when he saw one. Redemption for him had always to be a catastrophe; that it could be, and was with others, a slow, organic, interior process he would not understand. Through no fault of his own, for he was the child of his country's history, he had a defective conception of the Church. At the end of his life, on his death-bed, he turned his face to the wall and would not receive the sacraments at the hands of those he called "the King's officials." This is a dreadful moment; and yet there is in it a fragment of consolation: to the end he paid Christianity the compliment of taking it seriously; and this he did (I believe) not out of pride but out of love. He died on the 11th of November, 1855, and the world is still fumbling towards the measure of his greatness.

Bill Moody

MORE STEPS IN AN UNDISTINGUISHED CAREER

AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-FOUR I felt middle-age creeping on. I sold what was left of my motor-cycle after a smash near Llanberis and decided to get married. Money was needed so I took on the headship of an evening school which nobody else wanted. It was quite a small affair. About twenty boys who worked at a local colliery were compelled to take evening classes or they lost their jobs. I was responsible for Arithmetic, English, Mechanical Drawing and Science, and a minor colliery official from another town took Safety in Mines. There was also a class of girls but I have forgotten what they were doing there.

My instructions were that all lessons had to have a bearing on mining. The Science course dealt with coal. After we had drawn the Bunsen burner from all angles I got stuck with the course and palmed it off on to someone else. In Mechanical Drawing we began with nuts and bolts and passed by easy stages to coal wagons. For English I began reading Jules Verne's "Journey to the Centre of the Earth," but it didn't go down well. I looked hopefully at Arnold Bennett's "Buried Alive" and found it didn't apply, so I passed on to "King Solomon's Mines," which was a great success. Our text book for Arithmetic was a pamphlet of mining statistics. When we worked out the accident rates we discovered that if a man worked forty years down the mine he was due to have forty-seven minor injuries, lose five limbs and be killed two and a quarter times. I was sure these figures were wrong somewhere so I hastily moved a decimal point and divided everything by ten.

It was Safety in Mines that caused me the greatest trouble. The teacher was much too gentle and I had to stay with him to keep anything like order. One evening I was called to the

Education Office to see the Director. When two hundred yards away from school on my way back I heard the school bell ringing. I ran along the road. The school was in darkness, there was pandemonium inside and a small crowd of interested people was gathered at the outer door. I rushed inside and struck a match. There was a cry of "The Boss" and everybody disappeared except for the teacher whom I found under a table in the corner, wedged in by desks.

His nerve was gone and he came no more. I was lucky to get a much older man who, after being injured underground, worked on the surface near the boys themselves. On his first appearance before his class he said he wasn't allowed to touch anybody in school, but lads who didn't behave could look out for their ear-holes next morning. He was a great success.

Suddenly I grew weary of teaching in one slum school by day and another by night. I applied for a job as peripatetic teacher, to go, when need arose, to any school within the county at a few hours' notice. As this meant serving as head-teacher at times, it was looked upon as a step upwards and the pay was better.

I received a letter calling me for an interview in a week's time and made enquiries about the selection committee and the questions they would ask me. An old teacher said that of course I knew Goldilocks. No, I said, and who was Goldilocks?

"He's chairman, you fool," he said, "and if you don't know him you may as well stay at home."

I humbly pursued my enquiries and discovered that Goldilocks, who was of course bald, had a flourishing tobacconists' business about ten miles away. Teachers came from all over the country to buy cigarettes at his shop.

Father asked me why I was looking so glum and I told him. "You mean little Joe!" he said. "We were lads together. You go and see him and tell him who you are. And ask if he remembers the night Town won the Cup."

So when Goldilocks opened his shop on Saturday morning I was waiting. I bought twenty Gold Flakes and told him who

I was. He looked glum and shook his head. "Father said I was to remind you of the night Town won the Cup," I said desperately.

"Oh!" he roared. "You're Tommy's lad. I'd forgotten his name, I meet so many folk. Come in my office and tell me what its all about."

I told him and he took a large envelope out of his pocket. "Let me see. Appointments. Tuesday. That's awkward. You see the committee splits in two and I'm not in your half." He considered a moment and looked carefully at some pencilled notes on his papers. "I think I can fix it. Wait here a moment."

He was back in five minutes. "You'll get the job if you don't act the fool," he said. "I've been on the 'phone to Lady Wottlespoon. She'll be the chairman of your committee. She's not my Party of course but we have a knock-for-knock agreement. She wants the headship of Little Mudbank and I want a peripatetic job. Its a fair swap. Get it?"

"Thank you," I said, and smiled broadly.

"Now look here," he said, suddenly and fiercely. "Don't get me wrong. I suppose your testimonials are good?"

"Yes."

"And you can do every blasted thing under the sun from playing goal for England to singing lead in grand opera?"

"Oh, no."

"I'm surprised. To look at the applications we get, you'd think so. They're all perfect, absolutely perfect."

He leaned forward and gripped my knee.

"Do you know that headteachers sometimes give good testimonials to get rid of assistants they don't want?"

I withdrew into myself for a moment. "That's dreadful," I said, faintly.

"Yes, but its human nature. So what are we to do? Give the job to the chap who gives the smartest answers to a few daft questions? Stick a pin in the list? No, we give the

job to somebody we know something about. So you can thank your father for this."

He laughed. "Your dad and me ought to have been teachers. We'd have taught 'em something! Tell your father I'm not likely to forget the night Town won the Cup. And ask him if he remembers that trip to London. He'll know all right. But don't ask him when your mother's about!"

He slapped me on the back and wished me luck and so I got the job and somebody got Little Mudbank and what could be fairer? But of course it was all long ago and far away and they do things differently nowadays. Or so I understand.

RELÂCHE

Puisque j'ai tout dit, tout donné,
 et que de mon âme le ver rongeur
 repu s'est lentement traîné,
 je suis prêt, Seigneur, sans haine, sans peur
 à prendre en pleine figure ta main gantée.

Rappelle-toi notre gage
 un passe-partout aux cœurs des filles,
 "Ouvre Mélanie, tu seras sage..."
 contre un coeur, marchandise de pacotille
 pour faire briller le sale potage.

Bon, alors, tope-là, on joue, on gagne,
 plus de menaces, veux-tu; que ça soit vite,
 une vie, un corps, un coeur là dans ta main!

.....
 Dieu, Dieu, si seulement c'était pour demain.

S.J.C.

W. A. Hodges

THE GRAVEN IMAGE

EVERY DAY OF HIS LIFE, Janni tended his circular saw in the sawmill at the furniture factory in the village.

Hour after hour he would stand, ankle-deep in sawdust, pushing the long baulks and planks along the cutting bench while the saw screamed and sang by turns, and the mill became full of the scent of raw woods; pitch-pine, sharp-smelling and sticky; pink, silky mahogany; maple; walnut; oak; and an occasional piece of wood so hard that with the effort of cutting it the high-pitched note of the saw would come sliding down the scale until it was almost a growl.

Janni seldom spoke, except in answer to a question. His mind seemed always so firmly fixed upon what he was doing that his workmates rarely tried to include him in their conversations. But if ever any one of them were in trouble or had some personal sorrow it was to Janni that he came, for in spite of his apparent concentration upon his work Janni missed nothing which passed, and was therefore very wise in the ways of people. Few who came to him went away without having found comfort in Janni's friendly wisdom. So utterly did he accept them into himself, so softly impersonal his manner as they poured out their troubles to him, that even the proudest spirit broke before it, and men who had been bottling up their griefs for years for fear of ridicule found that they could weep before Janni without self-consciousness, and lose nothing by doing so except their own burdens.

And so they all respected and loved him. But what they did not know, for he never gave them any sign of it, was that he, of all of them, was the most unhappy and the most despairing. For Janni, all his life, had felt about people rather than thought about them, and when they came to him was able to help them only because he felt their tragedies, great or little, in the depths of his own being. And when they had

left him, he went up to the attic in his house and carved. For Janni was not merely an artisan. He was a craftsman and an artist.

It had begun when he was a boy at school. There he soon had found that he could not learn what they wanted to teach him. There was no room in him for book-learning, for his mind and soul were so full of the impressions and feelings which he gained from contact with his fellow-beings that nothing else could make a sufficient mark in his consciousness to allow of his memorising it. He was often thrashed for his apparent lack of interest in his lessons, for it seemed nothing to his masters but a sign of laziness. And then, after lessons, Janni would go out into the woods and with his knife hack out a piece of wood and carve, and carve, trying to express in the shapes which he made all the grief and love which he felt for those living people all round him, who were only cruel, and unjust, and vicious, and ugly, because of the lives which they were forced to live. Made desperate by poverty, spoiled by riches, made sullen by the thwarting of desires which they might have seen were unreasonable or impossible in the first place, had they stopped to think about them, they built up false selves out of their despair and fear, until the false selves became a habit with them and they stopped realising that there was anything else to them but these images which they had made. One day, when he grew up, he did not yet quite know how, he would carve a figure in wood which would show all this, and which would make everyone who saw it instantly see his or her real self, with all the artificialities stripped away, so that they would be proud to be men and women and not beasts, and happy to love each other and to be loved.

Janni did not believe in God. He believed in men and women and in their souls, which seemed to him the real things, so much more wonderful than any difficult theological abstraction. He knew. He had felt so often how the minister was despising and patronising them all, secretly, even while, in his Sunday sermons, he talked to them about the love of this strange GOD-in-the-shape-of-a-man. Janni could not understand such

an idea. For Man, to the minister and the congregation, was not the real, perfect man which he was seeking to express in his carving. So he continued to carve, rejecting each figure which he made in the very moment of its completion, for all the time he was observing more and more, feeling more and more, so that each figure was incomplete as soon as his hands and his knife had ceased to labour upon it.

So he left school and went to work in the factory. He rarely went to village dances, and did not, as most of the lads who had grown up with him did, drown his faculties with ale, lurching home, shouting and vomiting, in the early hours of the morning. When his father and mother died, within a month of each other, he was twenty. In his sorrow and despair he stopped carving for a while, and went to a dance or two at the village hall. There he met Solka. She was a helpless and tormented creature, terrified of the poverty and squalor in which she had grown up. Her hands were rough with labouring in the fields. Feeling her helplessness and misery, Janni, who had never known any love which was not love for all mankind, mistaking his strong feeling for Solka for love, married her. When, after no more than two months of marriage the melancholia which was in her flared up into mania, and she threw herself out of an upper window and killed herself, his grief and horror was so great that immediately after the burial he shut himself up in the attic and started to carve again, working solidly for thirty-six hours, forgetting, even, to go to the factory. But the figure had the face of Solka, and try as he would, he could not prevent the vision of her tormented features as he had seen them the day before her death from clouding his mind and guiding his hand, obscuring that very perfection which he was concerned to express, and substituting for it Solka's distracted image.

For some months after his workmates did not trouble him with their problems. His grief was too clearly written in his face. But, gradually, as the months went by and his eyes became less strained in their expression, and the hard line of his jawbone under the skin showed less plainly, they came to him again down there among the sawdust and wood-smell, or

waited outside the gate for him at night to tell him their troubles.

Soon after his thirtieth birthday, Janni went back to the carving for which he had had no heart since his experience after the death of Solka. For some time he found that for lack of practice he could not work so cleanly or so skilfully as he had done, but his vision had broadened. He no longer fiddled with unnecessary detail, but worked boldly and with a majesty of conception which, often, with the figure nearly finished, would thrill him into an absolute frenzy of effort. But then, as always, when it was finished, the work would seem to fall just short of his conception, and, as always, in a mood of despair he would consign it to his fire, and start again upon a fresh piece of wood.

Then, one day, a workmate shouted to him just as he was heaving a fresh baulk of timber on to the workbench. Janni, startled, looking up sharply, tripped, and carried forward by the weight of the baulk, fell spreadeagled across the bench. He felt nothing until it was all over. There was a sharp whine as the saw bit into his flesh and bone, and Janni recovered to find himself looking at a right hand from which the thumb and two fingers were missing. One thought only was running in his head—"I shall never carve again." It was as if his life had ended. It all happened so swiftly that his mates took some little time to realise what had happened. Seeing the blood, however, which was fast reddening his hand and clothes, and which spread out into a wet, dark patch in the thick, muffling sawdust, they rushed over to him, and in their rough and ready way attended to him till he could be taken home to bed with his wounds dressed and the bleeding controlled.

Every day the District Nurse came to see Janni. But Janni lay sunk in deep despair. It had never once occurred to him that he might, after all, come to his deathbed without having fulfilled the task which he had set himself when, as a boy, he had taught himself to carve out there among the living trees. Then, one day, about a week after the accident,

as they talked, Janni suddenly felt an intense love for this quiet friendly woman with her clean, cool hands and quiet voice, who came into his house as naturally as if she belonged there. It was a love such as he had never previously felt for any woman. And though he knew that she only pitied him as he had pitied Solka, he felt, nevertheless, that this new love which he felt for her was the one, final experience which explained everything which had previously happened in his life.

As soon as he awoke the next morning he dressed and went up to the attic. For a long time he tried to find some way of making his mutilated hand hold the knife with sufficient strength to carve again. But as soon as he tried to cut into the wood the knife twisted out of his grip. In his striving he burst open one of the half-healed scars, saturating the bandage with blood. A few minutes before the nurse was due to make her mid-day visit he went down and unlocked the door, and began to busy himself with laying the table. Where the soaked bandage touched the cloth he left smudges of blood, but went on unheeding, trying to puzzle out some method which would enable him to overcome the weakness of his two remaining fingers. When the nurse came she looked at the smudges and said nothing, seeking no explanation of the newly-opened wound. But after they had eaten and she had washed the crockery she folded up the smudged cloth and put it in her bag "I'll wash it for you, Janni," she said, "You mustn't put that hand in water just yet." Then, quietly, she touched his cheek with her cool fingers, and left him.

He locked the door again, and went back to the attic. If he tucked the knife handle in the palm of his hand and held it there with his two fingers there was not enough grip to allow him to carve. But the stump and the fingers could still guide and control the knife. If he wrapped the fingers of his left hand over them and held firm the two hands together might be strong enough. He tried a few cuts, somewhat clumsily at first, but, as he found that with care and concentration he could control the knife without dropping it, he began to work more confidently, disregarding the blood which

his efforts soon caused to flow again. As the hours went by the figure took shape. He was utterly possessed by the new vision which had come to him since the day before. Nothing mattered now except to give that vision form before his strength gave out through loss of blood. Frantically he cut, and gouged, and scribed, suppressing everything which did not help to express the greatness of his conception. Somehow he knew that this time there was to be no burning, no destruction. For what he was symbolising in wood, so that it seemed to be coming to strange life under his hands, was the soul of man embodied in the lineaments of man. He heard the church clock chiming the passing hours as if mocking his gradually growing faintness, and worked on desperately, obsessed with the necessity of finishing before the nurse came again.

An hour after dawn he put down his knife, and looked. Two more hours at most and it would be finished; a few more touches to that right hand and he would have completed his task. He felt a faintness surging at him out of space. The statue, the floor, his clothes—everything was spotted and smeared with blood. But as he looked at the statue he was sure. Into it he had put everything that he knew of man at his best—his patience, his sublime obstinacy, his courage under suffering, his nobility—all those things which he hid under those grotesque shapes in which he clothed himself. Nothing mattered now—not even the blood. This was the one statue which he would not need to burn. He swayed and turned giddy. His last conscious knowledge was of the peace which now flooded into his soul for the first time in his life.

Next day, when they broke in the door, and at length found him it was too late—had been too late for many hours. For Janni had bled to death. But there was no man of them there, looking first at Janni and then at the statue, who did not catch his breath and stand silent with a lump in his throat. For the statue was the graven image of Janni, exactly as they had known him at his bench—line for line, shadow for shadow, plane for plane—but with the unfinished right arm ending in a shapeless lump of wood.

W.A.H.

Fernando Henriques

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

THE AVERAGE PERSON'S REACTION to anthropology is that it has something to do with bones and skulls, preferably old ones. Unfortunately Social Anthropology is not concerned with either. Its domain is that of man and society.

It attempts, by utilising the method of the natural sciences, to formulate general laws of society from the comparison of a number of different societies. There are of course enormous difficulties. Many of them lie in the very nature of the material which we attempt to analyse. We cannot reproduce humanity or society in the laboratory and so study it at our leisure. Again we cannot isolate a social fact from its context of the whole society. We have to go into the field and study society as it lives and functions.

In this we differ from the old school of anthropology which was known as arm-chair anthropology. The anthropologist would sit at home in his study and list the accounts of travellers and missionaries of strange, exotic peoples they had visited. Quite often these accounts are somewhat onesided. It is expecting rather too much from the nineteenth century missionary that he should give an entirely unbiased description of a polygamous society. From his material the arm-chair anthropologist would then construct theories to explain particular social phenomena, such as religion or magic. In contrast to this the modern anthropologist relies upon first hand observation made of particular societies.

But it must be remembered that as a science social anthropology is very young. The great names of anthropologists in this country, such as Sir James Frazer, Edward Tylor, and W. H. R. Rivers, are still only in the very recent past. We are only really just beginning to cover the ground.

But, the critic might say, have you discovered any laws of society? Don't you spend most of your time running about after impossibly savage people in impossibly savage parts of the world. What has that got to do with the society in which we live which is totally different? The answer to the last question is, "is it?"

First of all social anthropologists are not only content with the investigation of so-called primitive peoples. They have in fact produced excellent studies of communities in Ireland, the American Mid-West, Canada, the West Indies, and the southern United States, in other words, of contemporary societies.

Let us take a particular group of problems connected with the family.

Material from the study of a great number of societies has shown that the family or domestic group can be said to exist in all human societies. Our general law might be framed thus, "That no society can exist without some form of family or domestic group." The Eskimo practise wife-exchange and conjugal hospitality, that is to say an honoured guest is offered the host's wife; or again, the Nayar in Malabar in Southern India have a polyandrous system under which the woman marries a man for the sake of form but divorces him after three days. She then proceeds to take lovers whom she dismisses at will, the man having no domestic responsibilities is able to bend his energies towards becoming a good warrior. These practices may appear to have no relevance to the system of the family and marriage as it exists, say in Leeds, where it is, at any rate theoretically, monogamous. We can take another example. The Trobriand Islanders in The Pacific have a period of pre-marital intercourse which makes for the solidarity of marriages and a small incidence of adultery in Trobriand society. It is interesting to note in this connection that a similar custom existed in the Middle Ages in the old kingdom of Northumbria, when it was known as "handfasting."

These examples are not instances of the barbarism of the benighted heathen but merely different ways of solving the

same basic problem, satisfying the needs of sex, food, domesticity, procreation, etc.

Different solutions of the problems of familial relationships may help to shed light on the same problems which exist in our own society.

There is another and very practical field where the knowledge of the social anthropologist can be very useful. An understanding of the way of life of dependent peoples is essential if they are to be governed properly. Lack of this knowledge has led to mistakes later regretted. There is the case of a District Commissioner in Central Africa, who on his first tour of duty reported that a certain chief was disaffected towards the government as he had not left his kraal to welcome the officer. It turned out that the chief was not only the temporal head of his people but their spiritual leader, and by reason of his sanctity was not permitted to leave his kraal.

The realisation that most people are ignorant of the way of life of societies other than their own, and that from this ignorance springs much of the aggression and tensions affecting international agreement has led U.N.E.S.C.O. to inaugurate a research project, under the guidance of Dr. Otto Klineberg, to investigate the tensions affecting international understanding. Prominent in this research are individuals trained in social anthropological techniques.

The study of man's material culture, of his arts and artifacts, of racial differences, of the antiquity of man, of his ideas and thought systems, of the variety of societies he has created in the world, all of which we group under the heading of Anthropology, can only lead to a better understanding of man by man.

*Robin Skelton***BALLAD OF A BELLE**

The highwayman upon the road
Met a red haired lady,
Saw her pallid skin, her walk,
Her red lips beckoning zany.

Saw her movements merge and flow
And heard her shallow trivial talk
Haunting at his horse's head
Through the starlit dark.

He saw her eyes, and knew her hair
Of burnished wave's fecundity,
And saw her breath stain wintry airs
With sensuous fatuity.

He felt the bright flame in his thighs,
The shivering in his marrow bone
To hear her singing shrill and vague
Above the midnight town.

The highwayman leapt off his horse
And kissed her red lips' blasphemy,
And felled her in the lamping gorse
And put a bullet through her thigh.

And then he rode on through the dark,
Past the boggarts' fitful light,
Past the dreadful quarry's chalk,
And sang this ballad to the night.

“ I met a lady with, O, red hair
And knew her body's potency,
And kissed her on her crimson lips
Because her mouth enchanted me.

“ Because her body ravished me
I kissed her lips and killed her there
For charnel worms to foul her hair
And gnaw the red lips’ blasphemy.”



C. Kingham

THE TRAVELLER

Bellhollow footfall on reverberate pavement
Strays in a slow somnambular movement
Warily advances with advancing light,
Seeing the way, yet seeing always late.
Mind dayward plodding thinks realities
Where eye sees shades of human qualities ;
Thought ranging sees ghosts gloomgrey—hears the click
And ragged ticking of time’s dragging clock ;
Needs haste : lets panic logic force the pace
To huddle knowledge in, achieve its peace ;
But finds doomsea too soon, and on its shores
Capricious Atropos with ready shears.

William Encson
BROTHER ERNEST

BROTHER ERNEST, you must understand, is Gamaliel's brother. And Gamaliel is the farmer for whom I am working during haytime.

Now Gamaliel is what you might call in a brief sort of a way a *farmer with vision* : sees beyond his farm and his beasts, does Gamaliel, takes an interest in the world outside, reads about football and cricket in the paper that comes about two days late. Not so brother Ernest. Writ on his heart, so to speak, is LAND : it is his sole, his *only* interest. He watches every field, every cow, every farmer, and knows respectfully when they need manuring, milking and monishing. He marks and remembers every change, every phase of Nature ; he notes every sparrow that falls ; to him is Nature's volume broad-displayed. . . . Forgive me, I guess I lost my head.

We are having our mid-day meal. The four of us sit chewing patiently like the cows we tend, ruminating on our morning's work. For there is with us Nelly, Gamaliel's thin anxious placatory wife : thin through incessant bird-like activity, anxious that the weather should hold until the hay is in, and always placatory so that Gamaliel (Aley to his friends) will digest his meal without upset and not give himself that rolling rollicking bell-like flatulence that she is convinced is leading to durodial ulcers.

I forgot to tell you that Ernest is rather hard of hearing : only very loud noises reach him. He lives in a little world of his own, dreaming his own bemused slow-thinking dreams about land, and at lucid intervals breaking into articulate utterance. And the subject of his speech, it goes without saying, is land.

As we sit demurely eating, thinking our own thoughts, we who are capable of it are listening to a report about something or other (by a dialect speaker doing his best to speak proper) and then along comes a commentary on the Test at Headingley. Gamaliel pricks up his ears (yes, really—he can) and turns a glassy eye on me, as who would say “ Now us two cricket lovers can enjoy ourselves ! ” He himself in

deference to the Great Game eats with his mouth closed now, so that we can hear better.

Here it is that Ernest breaks silence. "A see Tom Brown ower at Long Heead's late wi 'is mowin'." Gamaliel looks coldly through Ernest, who takes it as some sort of acknowledgment. "Hutton is now facing up to him, and——" "Frank Robinson's bought a bull, a see," vouchsafes Ernest, to whom the loudest broadcast is as a faint hum in the distance. Gamaliel grunts and stoops over to turn up the volume a little. He is getting restive and Nelly is getting anxious and obviously preparing to be placatory. "Here comes Miller bowling pacily ——" "Yon far meadow's a good crop." Gamaliel blatantly turns up the volume with a sort of savage look on his face. Nelly is fearing for his flatulence. "Again Hutton is the ——" "A see Charlie Jackson's sow's i'pig." I distinctly hear Gamaliel's indigestion—and Nelly leaps frantically in: "Yes," she shouts in Brother Ernest's ear.

The volume is now, as they say, *full on*: the commentator talking hard and fast: the last few tense balls before lunch. "A see Walter Wooler's 'ad 'is teeth out"—"As 'e?" screams Nelly, by now practically distraught. Of course we have missed the end of the over and the players have gone in for lunch and we are left completely at a loss; and Ernest sits with the soft smile of innocence—I will not say "an idiot grin"—on his face. Gamaliel's patience—and his heartburn—explode: he switches off the radio, creaks to his feet, and belches out "Dammit, you can't 'ear nowt for you talkative devils!"—then out he stalks to his stooks.

Brother Ernest rises sedately from the table, like a swan off a lake, rather proud of the way he has "kept things going" during the meal. I follow, rather sophisticatedly amused, of course; and Nelly begins searching in the cupboard for the stomach powder.



*AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITORS***NEED WE BE UGLY ?**

Sirs,

It is inevitable, I suppose, in a University primarily concerned with Science and Technology that aesthetics should be of concern to fewer people than in those in which the Arts and Science Faculties are more evenly balanced. Yet I feel sure that there are very many who would support me in a plea for an effort to beautify the unnecessarily drab surroundings in which we work. The unadventurous decision not to move the University after the last war to the comparative cleanliness of Weetwood cannot now be reversed, but there are measures which can be taken to offset some of the evils attendant upon being so near the centre of an industrial city.

The older Universities have the advantage over us in their legacy of fine buildings and their cleaner air. Although Oxford is an industrial city, its industries are few and far from the University, and the annual rate of soot deposition falls far short of the 500 tons per square mile per year which blankets the centre of Leeds. Nevertheless, there is a greater and more general sensitivity to ugliness and despoilation than we show here. This need not be and should not be.

I should like to draw your attention to a few specific examples in which a change could be made for the better. The main University chimney is a major offender. I have often passed the Physics laboratories while stoking is in progress and have been unable to see the tower of the new building for the thick clouds of black smoke which were pouring out. There is an automatic stoking machine which, I am assured, with proper adjustment and maintenance could feed the fuel in such a way that very little smoke would be given off.

But there are other and more obvious ways in which we can beautify the University or at least refrain from making it ugly. Every day I pass the bare stretch of trampled mud between the Union and University Road, with its ill-sited relics of Victorian gardening, the row of forlorn laurels and that untidy patch of back yard allotment which adjoins the Gymnasium. The sandpit for the now disused long-jump is being filled with old tins as if it were a village garbage-tip.

I see no reason why the site should not be laid out in gardens, even after allowing room for a carpark. It is sunny and not overshadowed by trees. Lawns, at least, could be laid down. It is not easy to find plants which will flower well in an industrial city, but there are many, and if others can grow them why not we ? Sheffield has shown great initiative in her public gardens in the centre of the town, which are full of colour in summer. Rockgardens have even been constructed on islands in the main streets—and Sheffield is a dirtier city than Leeds. Yet the only flowers we see during the whole year are a few straggling bedding plants in unobtrusive positions. The greater part of the flower beds round the University remain bare from one year's end to another. If more is to be done to improve this site there will probably have to be some sort of temporary fence or hedge erected to prevent damage by children, but this should not present insurmountable difficulties.

This is a sin of omission but there are instances of a more positive disregard for beauty. The lovely ash-trunk which stands on its pedestal outside the new buildings, facing Woodhouse Lane, is, at its most charitable interpretation, a monument to overenthusiasm. I know what it is to have a saw in my hand, myself. I go about looking for things to saw off.

But reflect, I beg of you, that our trees only bear their leaves for seven months of the year ; for the rest we must contemplate their bare skeleton structure, so often and so

ignorantly mutilated. If you don't want a tall tree cut it down and plant one which is naturally small, or none at all; if you do want it then leave it alone. There is a plane tree by the side of the Department of Education which stands less than six feet from the outbuildings fronting University Road. It has been lopped and trimmed until it is a mere standing log, presumably because it shaded or otherwise interfered with the building. Why not cut it down entirely ?

So much for the site. The interiors of many of the University buildings are as depressing as the exterior. Presumably the prevalent cocoa colour of the walls is chosen because it does not show the dirt. In fact it never looks clean. Because I believe it to be a tradition rather than a policy that this should always be the colour used, and because there is still some of the post-war repainting to be done, I am sure that a little agitation now could have immediate effect. The Geology Department (and I believe, the Department of Education) has shown initiative in choosing a range of pastel shades for the redecoration of their buildings, which gives an impression of light and cleanliness sadly lacking in many other departments. If it is argued that the choice of light colours will mean that the expense of redecoration will recur more frequently, may not the answer be to use more distemper instead of paint. Paint can in theory be washed; I may be wrong, but is it ?

There is just one more point while I am on the subject of lighting: some of the lecture rooms are inadequately lit. More and better lighting equipment is the obvious goal, but much could be done by cleaning the windows more regularly. The University employ men to do this, but for much of their time, often for weeks on end, they are used as general handymen.

Then there are the pictures of the Sadler bequest. An effort has been made to hang them where they will be seen and they are changed from time to time, but surely it is lamentable that the only place in the whole University that could be found to hang them was an ill-lit draughty passage.

I am not unaware, Sir, of the difficulties of remedying some of these deficiencies, but there need be no lavish expenditure. Scarcity of labour has been and is a handicap, but I feel sure that if the University and the Union cannot raise the money or labour to improve the site, volunteers could be found who would be willing to help. These suggestions are necessarily personal, but I am sure that it is high time that public interest in these matters was awakened.

Yours faithfully,

FRANCIS MERTON.



Brett

FOUR USELESS PEOPLE

THE YOUNG MAN who had done everything that the world had made it so easy for him to do swung his legs over the edge of the sill and landed lightly on his feet in the kitchen. Softly he moved over the tiles, and his torchlight picked out the gascooker, the vegetable bin, the crockery shining on the dresser. Cautiously he opened the door, and padded through the dark carpeted hall to the staircase, which he mounted, taking the stairs two at a time in his arrogance. On the first landing he put away his torch, relying on gloved fingers to guide him by means of wall and furniture to the familiar door.

The girl's breathing was slow and even and, reassured, he entered the room quickly, shutting the door with a slight deliberate noise, which did not however, waken her, but caused her to stir a little in the double bed. He moved over towards it then, and shook her by the shoulder until her drugged eyes opened and widened and recognised him. His palm laid flat over her mouth stilled her frightened scream, and as he pressed the thin blade of his knife into her heart, he said in a soft almost sad voice : " I wanted you to be awake when I killed you. You slut."

When he was sure she was dead, he drew out the blade and wiped it carefully on the turned down sheet before slipping it into his pocket. He went out of the room without looking back.

He had left no clues ; no finger prints, no footmarks, no cigarette ends, no hairs, no weapon. The girl's husband, recalled from service in Berlin, was unable to assist the police. He knew nothing. He had been abroad for five months during which his wife, whom he loved and whom he believed to have loved him, had written regularly and sent him parcels containing woolly garments she had knitted herself. He knew of no lover, no enemy. She had been attractive and twenty-five, her interests humble and domestic. Her only ambition and

grief, her failure to bear a child. Heartbroken, the soldier returned to Berlin, leaving everything in the hands of the police, and eventually the coroner returned a verdict of murder, by person or persons unknown.

The police and newspaper records were filed. The house was sold. The soldier in Berlin sorrowed, and remained inactive. His wife lay silent in her grave. And the young man who had done everything prospered and did not prosper. His physical attractiveness did not fail, nor his determined application of this in his pursuit of women. Money flowed mysteriously into and out of his pockets, keeping them silk-lined, his appearance smart, and his standard of living somewhere above average. His lips could smile, his fingers curl easily round the stem of his wineglass, his feet shift gracefully over dance floor and thick carpet, but his eyes were withdrawn and indifferent: he was not amused. His mother, who received from him an occasional letter and a monthly cheque, cried quietly over her fire in the long lonely evenings, his five-year-old curls and dimples mocking her from a silver frame. She never saw him, had not seen him since he was twenty-two. His activities were unknown to her, the war having swept him out of one set of miserable circumstances into another, whose nature was never then or since exactly disclosed in his letters. But these had always arrived, regularly during, and irregularly since the war, only the postmarks varying, the headings to the page always blank, the sentiments always the same: that he was well, that she should take care of herself, that if the money he sent was inadequate she should contact him *via* G.P.O., Sloanesforth. Once, in the desperate hope that she might see him, she had written saying she was ill, near death. His reply had been prompt but disappointing, fresh flowers, fruit, an extra large monthly cheque, many regrets and good wishes.

"I was always a good mother to him," she lamented to her neighbours, whose sons worked in local trades, and whose grandchildren stood in their doorways, "what have I done to deserve such unkindness?"

"Takes after his father for rumminess," the neighbours muttered to each other, as her bowed misery felt its way back

to her cottage. "Still, she's lucky in one thing if she's cursed in another. Her men have always kept her in funds if they've never had any affection for her company." And in the "Bull" at nights the older men would remember that event in the early 'thirties, which had roused the whole village from its slumbers for hours of a winter's night: when Casson's son and heir coming home from a wildoats party had stumbled over a body stretched across the road, a knife wound gaping in its side. This had been Jeffery, the decadent young man's father, dead now of a vicious blow delivered by a thin blade, found privately and much later under a hedge and never discovered by the police.

Jeffery's widow had found and kept it, first as a pious memento, between the leaves of a rarely opened family Bible, and then more practically as a paperknife. The day on which her only son departed to the wars, the knife disappeared. Writing to him asking for its return had produced no effect, other than the terse comment that it might come in handy a second time.

But no one in his home village expended much thought on the old unsolved murder, or on the widow's runagate son. The bills were paid, she kept to herself, and was never seen at church. Out of sight was definitely out of mind.

"And what," mused the widower soldiering in Berlin, and lost to the newspapers for many a year, "could have motivated such a murder?" The passage of time had slowly resolved in him the overpowering desire to see his wife's assassin brought to justice, and now he was adding up yet again what vices would go to make such a murder as that of his wife. What lust had he had no occasion to suspect? What narrow pass she had never complained of? What threats, indignity, sleepless nights, loneliness, gloom... what error or negligence in what affair of mystery had been glossed over by her blindly comforting regular letters and intermittent parcels? How could she have loved and at the same time betrayed him? The soldier's mind had not ruminated ceaselessly about these matters, but sometimes the realisation hit

him squarely that the woman he had married was bone in her grave and her murderer still at large, and that the wife he had loved and lived with was not the same woman as the one who had been murdered. Good wives don't get murdered was the theory back of his mind. During the years he had undergone a moral castigation administered by himself, because of his sluggish acceptance of the inevitable, his reliance on others to do the sleuthing for him, think the matter to its conclusion. But now, this minute, sipping the thin hock gratefully, some revelatory echo of words seen, heard or read in the past at some time, momentarily forgotten, flashed into his understanding: "*A hedge hidden by wild honeysuckle under which she found the knife.*" The soldier downed his drink and leapt to his feet...where? when? who? How and with what did it connect? He paced his bafflement into the carpet for minutes on end, and then tore out of the room and up the stairs to his sleeping quarters. He rifled his drawers and found her letters...A pile of cigarette stubs marked the end of the search, and an hour later, the phrase located, he had obtained permission from H.Q. by telephone to absent himself from duty for one week on affairs of an urgent compassionate nature.

By five o'clock the next day he had visited the News' Offices in Fleet Street and perused the files for 1938, and by eight on the same evening he was standing at the bar of the "Bull" in deep conversation with Casson, who finally shook his head and reaffirmed his previous ignorance of hedge, honeysuckle and knife. "Ask Jeffery's widow," he said, "tell her your story."

The soldier sat in the widow's parlour and the widow cried quietly into her handkerchief as he made his suggestions.

"In the letter," he told her, "my wife says casually, between sentences of a purely domestic character, '*The other day I went to my home village and passed the hedge hidden by honeysuckle under which she found the knife.*' Now why should she be thinking out loud like that about a thing like that, years old, in a chatty letter to me only a few months

before she was killed? And how would she know where and apparently who found the knife that the police never did? Writing that letter to me she forgot for a moment that she had never shared with me that particular experience she was so casually mentioning. . . . that I would not know who 'she' was, nor the significance of the hedge and the knife. And yet it was that phrase that I remembered, and that I've now linked up with the murder of your husband, the coincidence of my wife's having come from this village before I married her being obviously involved in a way I don't as yet understand with both murders. How?" He leaned forward persuasively. "Mrs. Jeffery, you have nothing to lose and your peace of mind to gain by telling me anything you know. Did my wife come to see you on that day she came back here? Why *did* she come back here at all? There was no reason after so many years of absence to return suddenly. . . . was there?"

The widow stirred unhappily in her chair, but eventually she brought herself to the point.

"Your wife and my son were courting before ever you knew her," she said in a low bleak voice. "They were at school together when they were tiny, and grew up to be friends." She coughed harshly into her shawl.

"But she was walking out with nobody when I met her," the soldier said roughly, "what happened? Did they quarrel?"

"My husband," said the widow, "was a young man when he died. . . . not yet 40. . . . he was never a good man to me, only with money. He broke up the courtship. . . . and. . . ."

"And?"

"He took away my boy's girl himself."

"You mean he ran away with her?"

"No. He just took her away from my boy."

The widow showed no inclination to continue. The soldier stiffened his jaw and changed his tactics.

"What became of the knife your husband was killed with?"

"I don't know."

"You do, Mrs. Jeffery."

There was a silence for a minute or two while their wills battered each other. The widow's broke first. Crying she told him how she had found the knife herself, after the verdict had been declared, how she had recognised it as one given to her son by his sweetheart, and how she had been too afraid to hand it in to the police. The knife had made a silent bond between mother and son in the long twelvemonth before he left home for the army.

"But how," mused the soldier, "were all these things kept quiet in a little village like this?"

"There's a dark side even to buffoonery," said the widow, "my husband was known as a buffoon in his life, a happy go lucky wastrel. Your wife was known for a good lass. She broke with my boy—so the village thought—*because* she was a good girl. No one suspected as much badness as there was. It wasn't for me to talk."

"But," said the soldier, "what has become of your son? Isn't he here? Isn't *he* the reason my wife came back here that day?"

The widow remained silent.

"How can I get in touch with your son?" he repeated.

"You can't," she said, suddenly defiant.

"Well," he returned briefly, preparing to go, "no doubt the police can. Two unsolved murders hasn't done them any good."

The widow pleaded with him, but he was adamant, and in the end she told him the only address she knew, G.P.O., Sloanesforth.

There were thirty-six hours left of his leave when the tryst was eventually kept between the soldier and the young man. They faced each other over a pint of beer in the Sloanesforth local, and in icy, indifferent tones the young man explained his motives.

"Four useless people," he said, lighting a cigarette, "a father, motivated by sex and a desire to epitomise the village conception of vagabond and wastrel; a mother whose morality consisted of sitting tight and squealing for money;

a girl and a boy who were intended for each other, but one of whom relaxed too easily and the other too little. Uprightness and frigidness, particularly in a young man, can easily appear priggishness when a girl's emotions are warm and sensitive and an older man's advances met their demands so willingly and slyly. I'm sorry," he said sarcastically, as the soldier's beer slopped over the side of the glass uplifted to his lips, "she was your wife after all, and no doubt you were happy."

"Go on," said the soldier.

"I killed my father with as little compunction as I afterwards killed your wife. He offended me, he was rotten and had no right to be alive to behave like a beast and not a man. He was, of course, drunk when I killed him, so he felt nothing. Being a youngster then, and no reader of thrillers, I threw the knife into a bush on the way home...it probably stuck in the ground as somehow it was missed until mother found it one day when she was picking honeysuckle."

"But why...?"

"There's no hurry, surely?" said the young man, "and besides, there's not much more to tell. I would never have bothered about your wife if it hadn't been that, while I was in Italy, she started to write to me...via the G.P.O. address my mother has always used, and which she obtained from mother. She had had no child, and with that perversion of interest only an over-emotional woman is capable of, she decided that when I came back she would divorce you and marry me. I never replied. I don't care...pardon me...for third hand articles...and my fault has always been a too frigid sense of what was right. Unfortunately, my silence had the effect of a stimulant, and after keeping up the one-sided correspondence for a good six months after I was demobilised without additional success, she obeyed some instinct to visit my mother..."

"Ah!" murmured the soldier, "then I was right."

"You know the rest?" asked the young man.

"No," said the soldier, "Go on please."

"This would have done her no good at all had it not been that neither woman knew exactly where she stood with the

other in relation to the murder of my father. You see, although my mother had found the knife and was scared enough not to hand it over to the police, she had never learned from me a single fact about that murder which might have incriminated your wife. She never knew if or if not your wife was party to it, before or after. Your wife was in a similar position. She had no idea how much my mother knew. Their conversation must have been interesting. So interesting, in fact, that they were both completely carried away, what with their mutual love for me and my father, your wife's frustration and my mother's loneliness....and the result was, in a sentimental fit, my mother took her a walk past that very honeysuckle hedge where she had found the knife....All this I learned from your wife's next letter. Unless I would agree to the divorce and the marriage, she would give me away to the police. This was insulting, holding me to ransom, death or dishonour, as it were....And now you really do know the rest."

"Except one thing," said the soldier...."Why in all this spate of murders have you left your mother alive and supported her in the bargain....?"

"Up to your visit to her." Said the young man, taking his overcoat from the hook. "The monthly cheque will not, however, be necessary any longer." He took the evening paper from his coat pocket and the soldier read across the headlines that Mrs. Jeffery had been found that morning dead of a knifewound. "My way of life," the young man continued, "has made it comparatively simple for me to keep a weather eye open on you my friend, and your otherwise regular life being so abruptly disorganised by a trip home aroused my attention. Do you think that had I desired it otherwise you would have caught up with me so easily?...when both my mother and your own wife, very interested parties, have never succeeded? Tell the police that I surrendered because I was disappointed in life, not because of your skill." His body gave a frightful violent jerk, and a sharp groan distorted his last word as he fell in a heap at the soldier's feet, a knife nearly to the hilt in his left side.

RED BRICK

MORNIN' MUM, MORNING DAD. No sorry, got no time for breakfast; got to be off, I'll be late clockin' on if I don't. Oh alright then, just a cup. Oh Dad take yer plate off me book, you'll get it all grease—its me Shakespeare too. T's a shame.

Mornin' Joe, morning Elsie, move up a bit, don't they rattle along, somebody'll get killed one of these days. Done yer Psych. essay; done yer prose; done yer needlework; done yer lector expliquée. I 'avent except me Shakespeare—yes Joe, course we're doin' 'im this year—four tutes we're spendin' on 'im too. 'Ere we are, my Gawd two minutes past we'll be late clockin' on.

Mornin' Dr. Wobble. Yes I 'ave, really enjoyed doin' me Shakespeare. Want me to start readin' now?

“Shakespeare is part of our noble English 'eritage, and I think Richard the First is very similar to Macbeth in a lot of his characteristics.”

Pardon Dr. Wobble? Yes, I see, yes, but I 'ad me Psych. me Economics and me needlework and lector expliquée to do as well like. Yes, yes, yes, yes I see, yes, yes—oh yes I see now. Did yew say Tillyard or Tittyard? Will 'ee take long? but 'ee isn't in the readin' list. Oh I see.

Afternoon Mollie, afternoon Frankie—comin' for a spot of coff. Oh do yew like it, yes I made it myself. Wot *do* yew think Wobble said about me essay? Ee did! Oh Frankie don't be daft. Gawd! two minutes past, I'll be late clockin' on. Wot yer readin' Mollie? Oh I lurve Compton Mackenzie. Can I borrow 'er?

Afternoon Professor Wibble. Yes 'istory is interestin'. I like it. Yes I like Henry 6ths characteristics. No I 'avent read that. Is it on the readin' list? Yes, yes I see. Did yew say Trevelyan or Hotchkiss? Sorry, I must be goin' now. I'll be late clockin' off.

“The last twist of the knife”

I don't like it—it don't rhyme.

JOE.

HONOUR WITHOUT PRAISE

THE SPANISH SOCIETY'S recent production of Lope de Vega's "Punishment without Vengeance" (*"El Castigo sin Venganza"*) well illustrates the vitality of the current interest in drama in the University. An ambitious undertaking such as this could not have been conceived without the primary stimulus provided by an active Theatre Group, nor could it have been carried out except by drawing upon the Group's reserve of technical skill. (The promised productions of "Dido and Aeneas" and Fletcher's "Triumph of Death" are further examples of the same argument). An interesting problem was also raised which must always, to a greater or lesser degree, accompany the productions of plays which belong to an unfamiliar, alien, or obsolescent dramatic convention. A play, perhaps more than any other work of art, derives part of its appeal from its socio-historical context. And if in some cases—Shakespearian tragedy for example—the universality of theme transcends the merely local and temporal, there are other plays (such as the one under discussion) in which the social and dramatic conventions are obstacles for both actors and audience.

Lope de Vega wrote in the first decades of the seventeenth century and this play reflects both the contemporary interest in violence and the breakdown of mediaeval concepts of love and human relationships. Duke Ludovico, married for reasons of state, neglects his wife, who finds a ready lover in the Duke's somewhat spineless illegitimate son. Returning from the wars reformed and full of honour, the Duke discovers the adultery and has to solve the delicate problem without the disgrace becoming public. His—to a modern audience—somewhat megalomaniac honour must be appeased and he evolves a pretty stratagem in which his son murders the blindfolded erring wife and is himself killed by the Duke's followers. Fettered by a concept of honour which recognises no crime greater than that which allows it to remain soiled, the Duke is a magnificently sombre figure who retains our

interest, if not our sympathy, by his almost demoniac resolution. Philip Foster, clad appropriately in funereal black, caught something of the Duke's quite un-Hamlet-like ferocity of purpose. His wife Cassandra, a more modern figure in her refusal to accept uncritically her position as a neglected wife, was played by Angela Kilbride in a stiff-laced style which contrasted oddly with her eloquence. Her lover, Federico, was simply ham without mustard. As Aurora, Valerie Andrews, beautifully dressed in a period costume, moved graciously about the stage and would have been a delightful ornament in any Ducal court. Her suitor, the Marquis, on the other hand, embellished nature and contrived to give us the impression that he was as stupid a soldier as he was graceless as a courtier. With the aid of a clear voice and two gestures, Michael Frost, as Batin, extracted what humour there was in the play.

The play was translated by John Boorman and W. A. Hodges in a style which perhaps unavoidably suggested a nodding acquaintance with Shakespeare and Shelley. Mr. Boorman's production was rough and uneven. The pace was slow and the play seemed to lack any organic unity. Senora Auigrre's set was excellent in its baroque elegance and the costumes were historically and aesthetically correct.

A.G.

LEEDS UNIVERSITY VERSE ANTHOLOGY.

In order to facilitate the work of distribution and sales, intending purchasers are requested to send in their orders as soon as possible. Although a Sales Day will be arranged in the Union, the limited edition makes it necessary for orders to be placed well in advance.

P. W. Edwards

REFLECTIONS ON A
FRENCH UNIVERSITY

THE TOWN was one of a hundred thousand inhabitants and there were five thousand students. The oldest faculties, Law and Medicine, dated from the early thirteenth century. Yet the town didn't resemble Cambridge in the least. It would almost have been possible to spend a week there and not notice that it was a University town. To the eye, I think, this was because of the lack of Colleges. The several University buildings in the town were non-residential in nature. For centuries the students had lodged in the town under their own arrangements and put their names down at the Faculty of their choice. (The University had so little effective existence that one can't for instance, make out a cheque to it, only to a Faculty). And although between the wars a large, rather barrack-like hostel had been built on the outskirts, the great majority of the students were still in lodgings.

This question of Colleges is by no means only a matter of architecture. When nothing is interposed between the faculty and the student, at once there is intellectual isolation. On enquiry I found that it was rare for students of law to have any contact at all with students of another faculty; and the medicals were even more isolated. Everything tended to the same result: the reduction of general communal life and the concentration on "shop." There was a "Union," but its total premises were about the size of the Men's Common Room and cloakrooms at Leeds, and their furniture and general style were those of a "dive." Membership was by separate subscription, and was fairly small. There was also a "Catholic Union," of which I was told that it was smaller, duller rather than quieter, and in no way more intellectual. The seating accommodation in the University Library was about sixty.

The normal student lodging was a small bed-sitter. With such an organisation of mere cubic space, it is not surprising that many students went from their lodgings to their lectures and back to their lodgings, meeting only those who attended the same courses—and the number of lectures attended was much less than at Leeds.

So far as my acquaintances could tell me the only inter-faculty linking that was really effective was based on *previous* association. People from the same lycée, or from the same country district, who had vaguely known each other for years, sometimes came closer together to combat the essential loneliness of the University life, especially at the beginning; and this kind of grouping is, of course, the antithesis of the wider human outlook which, with many others, I look for from a University education. In normal times, the meeting-place of these cliques was the cafés or the promenade; but in these post-war years the poverty of the students reduced the café side considerably, and it was really remarkable (even in that southern climate) how many hours groups of young people could spend strolling round and round the Place de la Comédie.

In such a University everything centres on turning out numbers of qualified persons for various professions, not on forming men: everything centres, that is, on the actual study and examinations.

At any rate in the faculties of Letters and of Law, by far the greater part of a student's time was given to completely independent work. The programme was laid down, some books recommended, and the rest was up to him. What lectures there were (six a week was thought a lot) were devoted to special points not adequately covered in the books readily available. A student who satisfied the examiners had therefore proved, among other things, his ability to teach himself; and to that extent he was no longer a school boy. The examinations were always in two parts: written and oral. Their relative importance was well shown by the terms used. A candidate who passed the written tests was listed as "admissible," that

is, qualified to take the oral. After passing the oral he was "received." When an oral test is given such prominence it always means that a very thorough knowledge is required, since it must be precise and immediately at command.

So far, then, the academic standards may be considered high; but there is much to go in the other side of the scales. The programmes were precise and rigid, in matters of opinion as well as of fact. The student was required to know other people's opinions on, for instance, the sociological importance of Galsworthy, and not to form his own estimate. A bad point, decidedly. It makes for a type of learning which doesn't involve understanding. Again, five certificates are required for the "Licence," each of which is given on one year's work. There is no examination which goes back over work done two or three years earlier. This again sets a premium on parrot-learning in the form of last minute cramming. A student can be pretty sure of passing if he can remember a large number of facts for six weeks.

It is not easy to describe the final impression, because "intensive" and "superficial" seem incompatible words, and yet both are called for. Perhaps we should get the same mental atmosphere if, instead of a B.A. Examination, we had to take Higher School Certificate again, with the pass standard raised to 65%.

Letters to the Editor...

Sirs,

The parody of Swift published in the last issue of *The Gryphon* seems to me and to others to step beyond the bounds of good taste. Surely your pages should not be used for an ill-mannered attack on a particular department of the University?

Yours, etc.,

S. R. ROLLINSON.

(The article in question was not intended to be taken seriously; but irony is a dangerous weapon and if in this case it has caused offence we offer our apologies.—THE EDITORS).

Sirs,

My own conception of the duty of a poet is that he should endeavour to convey to his reader the experience of his own emotional reactions. In order to do this effectively, he should, as far as the aesthetic value and subject matter of the poem permit, avoid any obscurity of language or thought.

This view, however, does not appear to be that of the contributors to your last number and I would therefore suggest that these literary Picassos publish with their verses a few clues as to the meaning of their effusions in order that we of the stabler mentality may better appreciate their imaginative acrobatics.

Yours, etc.,

TEXTILE STUDENT.

Sirs,

I want to congratulate the Staff of *The Gryphon* on having at last produced a paper more or less conforming to University standards. Those who want to read *London Opinion* can buy it on any bookstall, and therefore there is no earthly

reason why the Union should provide them with an imitation of it. Those who want "Departmental Notes" full of little personal allusions understood only by a coterie can write it themselves and have a dozen copies duplicated. It will be a sufficient number. Those who don't want to read it at all can look at *Picture Post*. And you are perfectly right in ignoring all these sections of your public. They none of them bear in mind that a University is *primarily* an intellectual centre.

As to the mythical idea of "general interest," don't let it worry you. It's only the cloak under which your correspondents hide their personal prejudice. "What's everybody's business is nobody's business" they say; and the same applies to "interest." Let every article interest someone, and the whole will interest. For my own part, I loathe modern verse; but as I am not a bigot, arrogant in my limitations, I exhort you to go on publishing it.

Yours, etc.,

AURELIAN.

Sirs,

I believe a barber is to be appointed to the Union shortly. May I suggest that before the position is filled the applicants be very carefully vetted. My reason for urging this is in no way totalitarian, but is a realisation of the responsibility that will be vested in this gentleman's scissors. Imagine, Sirs, the consequences of appointing an addict of some 'ism. If the barber should prove an enthusiastic Tory a Conservative victory in 1950 (sad thought) might see a crop of V's cut in the hair of left wing members of the Union. Would it be asking too much of the imagination to visualize such a man singeing hair with a cigar? At the other extreme, as one learned member observed at a recent debate, the annual result of Stalin's birthday (unless he has one more frequently) might be equally disastrous. I shudder to think of the fate of the custodian of the Union classical record collection should the barber have what is affectionately known (I believe) as "rithum."

Even more insidious, however : what if the barber proves corrupt ?—from a purely financial viewpoint, of course. Doubtless the vast majority of members of the Union are too impecunious to tip lavishly, but some of them are in a privileged position. Engineers may render their tip in kind—on the barber's motor bicycle ; colour chemists may bleach his apron ; and gentlemen in the leather department may even mend his shoes. The hairdresser's reactions to the loan of an opus by Gibbon, or T. S. Eliot, or even Boulding, might very well be savage.

Above all let the appointing committee make certain that any applicant that has a Todd in his ancestry is immediately rejected. This is a theme that needs no elaboration, I feel sure. The notoriety resulting from headlines in the popular press, occasioned by such a man's activities, is all too easy to imagine.

Whilst strongly disapproving in principle of an eye-for-an-eye attitude, I feel that I must conclude by making an impassioned plea that if the gentlemen in this University are to surrender their pilose elegance, the ladies be also subjected to some sort of coiffeur de dames.

Yours, etc.,

P.C.

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Owing to pressure of space in both *Union News* and *The Gryphon* it has been decided only to print Hall and Society Notes of general interest to students or of outstanding importance.

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