



# GRYPHON

1S

# The Riddle of the Sphinx



*What has a head,  
And body, too ;  
Though dumb, says,  
I am good for you ;  
Is full of go,  
A standing treat,*

*Although it has  
No legs or feet ;  
A paradox  
In many ways,  
The more it goes,  
The more it stays?*

**MY GOODNESS - MY GUINNESS**

# **THE GRYPHON**

**WINTER  
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**1956**

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## Editorial

It would be hazardous to comment on the international situation when it may have changed completely by the time this magazine comes into print. But its impact on the Union is unmistakably heartening, at a time when a large body of academic opinion considers the "floating" student population who "lack above all any deep sense of the purpose and principles involved in their education"\* to be killing the provincial University tradition. One feels that the demands of petitions, protest marches and meetings must have engaged at least some of these people in moral decisions, and forced upon their attention issues greater than their own personal concerns. The response at the public meeting on Suez, and, more recently, at a Union debate on Conscription, was extremely encouraging, and may perhaps justify such a hope. In any case, for ourselves, let us not in the festivities ahead forget Hungary, or Egypt. They are as much our concern as Christmas is, and their message is the same: peace on earth will only be realised when personal, as well as national interests are submerged in a common intention of goodwill towards all men.

\* Dr. Arnold Kettle in "Twentieth Century" (Redbrick Universities Edition)



## THE GRYPHON

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Contributions for our next issue should be submitted by JANUARY 27th, 1957.

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## One Cheer for the Hit Parade



The other day I bought an old record in a second-hand shop of Bidgood's Symphonic Dance Band playing *Happy Days and Lonely Nights* (recently revived) with "vocal refrain" by an anonymous soprano who valiantly applied her aria technique to strutting rag-time : a relic of the time when "popular" singers were less efficient copies of "serious" singers. The folk singer has never been this. The musical labourer, sailor, etc., who lived when folk composers were writing ballads and the tradition was still a live thing, sang with their own accents and vocal tricks. Very often they were musical story-tellers, and strove for immediacy and a sort of realism to attract the unorganised audience ; something personal, startling in the delivery and incidents, about real people to interest real people without complex theories of aesthetics. Nobody ever confused an operatic tenor with a real person.

However, folk music in England, Ireland, and many European countries is dead ; you can tell this by the number of societies formed to resurrect it. These blasphemously attempt a miracle ; but dead things do not come to life, and their descendants go on their own way.

In America, owing to factors about which I know little, folk music has been very much alive and may possibly be

today. What I do know is that folk music (traditional style) in that country has deeply influenced popular songs and singers, and to some extent healed the breach between popular and folk art. So healthy is the resulting body of music that it reigns in England and many other parts of the world wherever coca-cola is sold. The people who sing this music are not badly trained "tenors and baritones and basses" but a new species . . . the crooner.

I was brought up listening to crooners, and should like to examine this source of my enjoyment and attempt an assessment of its value. I have many times tried to discuss this phenomenon with thinking men (those in the faculty of Arts) who are interested in music, but to no good purpose. They are determined that since it is not Opera, nor Leider, nor Folk singing, it does not musically exist. I trust the reader is surprised. The fault lies in the "thinking men's" conception of the folk singer. He is a man, they feel, who sings songs learnt from older people, anonymous songs, handed down songs. The sickening thing about these criteria is that they are all extra musical. Any silly man in the street knows that what matters about a song is whether it pleases him or not. There is no such thing as an anonymous song, all songs were written by someone; to know the name of the composer or if he got paid for it has no bearing on intrinsic merit.

It seems to me that the crooner is the nearest thing we have to a folk singer. The darlings of the Folk Societies, recreating dead atmospheres and accents, often making the words deliberately incomprehensible, would receive more of my sympathy if they did not scorn modern songs BY DEFINITION. It means they don't really approach old songs in the right spirit.

Let us examine Frank Sinatra, a contemporary crooner, folk singer, what you will, who sings for the "folk" of 1956. We can look at the songs later. A popular singer does not need to project his voice because he uses a microphone; the unprojected voice is the more flexible, and the crooner can rely on all sorts of vocal effects that would not be audible without adequate amplification to a large audience. He is not judged by his volume or range, nor by his approximation to some ideal, rather by an ability to project a song, coupled

with a personal, unusual quality in the voice. Singer, song, and accompaniment are equally important.

All popular arts are great in quantity, so that even more than other arts they are in the mass worthless. It is natural therefore only to speak of the best and ignore the Mrs. Hemans and Ella Wheeler Wilcoxes of popular music. One other factor : a popular singer only exists to please the populace, if he fails to do this he is never heard.

Mr. Sinatra is distinguished from his colleagues by a peculiar solemnity in sentimental songs, a dead pan quality, that helps to drain off the excess tears from a pathetic lyric and transmute it into something of a human statement. He achieves remarkable effects in singing (as Ralph Richardson and Marlon Brando do in acting) by understatement and a naturalistic approach. He also shares with these gentlemen and their like the ability to add a third dimension to certain colloquial phrases.

He is something of a musician, singing not only with great tunefulness and stylish phrasing, but with small, telling variations in the melodic line to augment his interpretations. His voice, moreover, is beautifully controlled, and his ability to go for long periods without breathing enables him to bring off occasional quite startling effects, as he does in *Old Man River*, where, instead of breathing at the end of the middle passage which ends "land in jail," he sustains the note into the beginning of the next phrase : "I get weary and sick of trying . . ." which begins on the same note. It is remarkably effective. His voice also has an extraordinary variety of textures which enable him to assume very different moods and emotions, the dry and tough, the ironic, the self pitying, the ecstatic lover, etc. Small wonder he shows ability as an actor.

I chose Sinatra as an example particularly because he does not sing jazz. Traditional jazz and the blues are negro folk forms ; the merit of re-enacting them in England is outside my subject. Since the blues songs are not grafted onto the English way of life, but copied with some seriousness, they would seem to come under the heading I mentioned earlier of antiquarian folk singing. Modern or cool jazz fits quite naturally into the English scene, being a contemporary

urban phenomena ; but the voice in this sort of music is not used for actual word-singing but as an instrument ; so that whereas Ella Fitzgerald is a supreme stylist, she is seldom concerned with interpreting a lyric. Sinatra does seem to have absorbed a great deal of cool style, but remains a singer of words and music. He does however too often suffer from accompanying bands and arrangements that confuse the interpretation by laying down jazz beat and blasting brass unrelated to the sentiments of the song. This mars Sinatra's recent L.P. *Songs for Swinging Lovers* which contains excellent material, and to a lesser extent *Swing Easy*. Of course his earlier records suffered from an excessive if quite musical lushness organised by Exel Stordahl.

The ideal accompaniment is a small group of improvising musicians sympathetic to the crooner's intentions ; I have great faith in the ability of a plucked double bass to keep a quiet pulse going and guard against latent sentimentality.

The singer we have discussed, and the accompaniment. This leaves the songs. Many hundreds of composers have written in this idiom, but a dozen names would account for most of the best songs. Harry Warren (I only have eyes for you), Richard Rodgers (Blue Moon), George Gershwin (Man I Love), Jerome Kern (All the Things You Are), Cole Porter (Just one of those Things), Irving Berlin (Blue Skies), Jimmy McHugh (Moonlight Becomes You), Jules Styne (Same Old Dream), Walter Donaldson (Love Me or Leave Me), Herb Nacio Brown (Temptation), Harold Arlen (Over the Rainbow). These men are virtually anonymous writers and their partner lyric-writers are even more so, except for Berlin and Porter who write their own lyrics. Some of the names are familiar enough, but few know who wrote which songs.

The music is quite complex harmonically and many of the melodies are intriguing. How can one assess them ? Does it help to say that the foxtrots of Kern are at least as memorable as the waltzes of Strauss ? What offends the " thinking men " chiefly is the lyric. But this I think comes from hearing and judging in bulk (apart of course from an inane sort of snobbishness that is surprisingly widespread).

If the B.B.C. spent a year reading every poem they could lay their hands on from the nineteenth or any century, the



listener would be inclined to shy away from all poetry with horror. Any normally intelligent person would apply this to popular music as well: pick out what is good and return to it.

Richard Rodgers' two lyric-writers will do as types for the many others. The current partner is Oscar Hammerstein 2nd, who aspires to the reputation of a poet. This seems to ignore the trends and virtues of the best modern music; but his pseudo poems written out in cold blood and set to music by Mr. Rodgers have brought in a great deal of money as adjuncts to musicals like *The King and I*, *Carousel*, *Oklohma*, and *South Pacific*. I suppose no poetic method is really out of date if done well enough; but this still excludes Hammerstein 2nd from artistic success.

What does matter is that he has had a deleterious effect on his partner composer Richard Rodgers. The latter, when he wrote the tunes first and had words added by Lorenz Hart, wrote many that are in the permanent repertoire of every good singer and modern instrumentalist. Hardly a serious long-playing record is issued (apart from the Dixieland Jazz sort of thing) that does not include at least one of his tunes: *Blue Moon*, *My Funny Valentine*, *Mountain Greenery*, *The Lady is a Tramp*, *This can't be Love*, *Where or When*, *Blue Room*, *Small Hotel*, *You're getting to be a habit with me*, etc., etc., etc.

Lorenz Hart was a frustrated University wit, who rejoiced in word play, puns, and preposterous rhymes. Being more impressed with his failure by University standards and the like than his financial success, neurotic, almost a dwarf, having no success with ladies and his share of angst, he was neither pretentious, nor cramped in his attempt to attract the gormless millions. It is useless for me to quote passages from his work, which achieves a high percentage of its effect only in terms of the framing melody and when sung in the way he expected it to be. The best samples I can think of are Lena Horne singing *The Lady is a Tramp* (which shows off his satirical gift); Mel Torme singing the very accessible recording of *Mountain Greenery* (which displays his nimbleness and genuine gaiety in word terms); and *You're getting to be a habit with me* (showing his dry approach to love); and Sinatra has recorded *My Funny Valentine* and *Little Girl Blue*, which are both tender and amusing.



Those that despise all popular lyrics should try to rewrite some of the above ; not that it is an artistic test, but it shows how these curious men can twine words round a melody so that the two are always after intermingled. The modern lyric-writer at his best shows a remarkable sensitivity to the colloquial phrase, and picks those that have echoes of something slightly more general or more penetrating than seems apparent at first sight. *Blue Moon* from the saying "Once in a blue moon" has the overtones of something that never, or almost never, happens, yet it is treated in the song as being the physical appearance of the moon. *Moonlight Becomes You. I didn't know what time it was. Makin' Whoopee. Stormy Weather. I don't stand a ghost of a chance. Just one of those things* and *Don't smoke in bed* are other examples of this virtuosity.

There is one lyric of Ira Gershwin's (I think) to a tune by his brother George which would just about stand being written down in cold ink. Gene Kelly croaked it, with celestial choir and strings accompanying, in *An American in Paris*. The gentle sort of irony in *Love is Here to Stay* is certainly very apparent to me thus nakedly, starting in the middle :

... "The radio and the telephone and the movies these we know  
May just be passing fancies and in time may go ;  
But O my dear, our love is here to stay,  
Together we're going a long, long way.  
In time the rockies may tumble  
Gibraltar may crumble,  
They're only made of clay,  
But our love is here to stay."

I feel Marvell would have approved.

I do not feel inclined to make excuses for our modern popular songs ; anybody with a relaxed sort of taste who is prepared to listen and select can hardly fail to get pleasure from these. Popular art is always over simplified and sentimental in general, but since it exists by being popular it carries some echo of what is alive to the teeming world. We do not go to them for sermons and sustenance, but for relaxation, as one talks to strange women who would be unsuitable for wives. These are the songs the people sing,

and sometimes it will please you, my colleagues, to escape from the responsibilities of "good taste" and pass unnoticed as members of the whistling crowd. These songs may haunt the most self-conscious of you : phrases, snatches, a lilt of a voice. Every night from wireless and gramophones they flood out, and we may find valuable bric-a-brac floating with the debris from the hidden mansion where all art begins.

James Simmons

## TWO POEMS BY THOMAS BLACKBURN

### Othello's Dream

On either side of the public way  
Great dreams wait for a man to stray  
Under their wings from the light of day.

I saw a black man on a stage  
But did not guess his blinded rage  
To murder love was my heritage ;

Till of his presence the stage was bare  
And I was the black man standing there,  
My fingers gripped in a woman's hair.

I heard my own voice from a cloud,  
" The myth has caught me ! " it cried aloud,  
" I have lost myself in its jostling crowd."

Then through my lips the great words ran,  
Meant for me ere time began,  
I knew too well how they must scan,

And helter-skelter, neck and crop  
Through words and deeds, without a stop,  
Harried on to curtain drop ;

So married to the dreamer's need  
I only knew I had to speed  
To the catharsis of his deed.

But when the final word was said,  
Pale as her smock on the great bed  
The woman, and my hands stained red,

I heard a voice cry, " All is lost,  
But lost and found, and now at last  
We meet together ghost to ghost."

Oh, bless the circumstance and time  
That lends its moment for a crime  
To purge itself in space and time,

Brings Desdemona to the Moor  
Above the murderous threshing floor,  
Winnowed of lunatic and whore.

## The Shadow and the Bubble

The shadow of a candle flame,  
The bubble of the sea,  
Take from the water and the fire  
Their brief complexity ;  
And we are also figured out,  
Though what it is that throws  
A human nature from the dark  
No man or woman knows ;  
For just as in between their lips  
They seem to form its name,  
The sea has drunk the bubble up,  
The shadow is the flame.

But still our origin may find,  
At least at one remove,  
Some aspects of its nature  
In the images of love.  
Though double and divided there,  
A woman and a man  
May reach into the life they had  
Before their lives began ;  
And each within the other one  
Know from whose place they came ;  
The bubble from the water,  
The shadow from the flame.

'Till kindled by its metaphor,  
No-one can hope to see  
What ghosts each creature and holds up  
Their brief mortality.  
But if they do not understand  
This wildfire, that has shown  
Its lineaments of glory in  
Another, is their own,  
Lovers must black each other out  
And leave no chink of day  
Because they fear a metaphor  
Can steal their lives away.  
Since unpossessing we may love,  
I know they are the same,  
The bubble and the water,  
The shadow and the flame.

## The other side of the wall

On entry into the sixth form at school the student becomes aware for the first time of an intellectual segregation which will influence the rest of his life. This is the division into the Arts and Sciences. At the University this separation is emphasised by the more intensive nature of the study courses and the loss of friendships built up at school. At the University a student may well make no close friendships outside his own department. Thus the initial parting of ways leads to completely different mental outlooks and a concomitant feeling of mutual inferiority. This is due to the student's concern about his subsequent place in society. The arts student feels an inability to cope with the demands of an economy dependent for its existence on an intense industry, and often finds solace in a detached cynicism. The science student, disconcerted by half heard implications that his subject is a not quite respectable new toy, tolerated only because of necessity but not really intellectually worthwhile, seeks refuge in a mental barrier of boorishness.

This fundamental difference lies in the attitudes of mind inculcated by the completely different methods of study and the demands of the subject on the two sides. The basic dichotomy lies in the fact that while both study-fields start



from fact, in arts subjects the heritage of the printed word, and in science subjects the immutable laws of nature, the arts student must develop his studies round basic human nature, into the study of man, his foibles and vagaries, while the science student moves objectively in a realm of rational formulae and data, seeking their explanation always in terms of pure fact. This is not to deny that in analytical criticism the student of literature uses a stereotyped method more commonly found in the realms of science and that at the limit of scientific research, and in the field of engineering design for industry a point is often reached where progress is impossible without resort to an almost mystical element.

It is worth remembering that at the two highest peaks in the development of Western civilisation there was no sign of the two ways of which we have spoken. Plato and Pythagoras enjoyed equal reverence in their day and Leonardo da Vinci was in one man a great engineer and one of the foremost artists of the world. Without his technical knowledge he could not have painted as he did and without his artistic insight he could not have foreseen the technology of four centuries hence. Today we feel an urgent need to recapture the vitality of the Greeks and the enthusiasm of the High Renaissance through a widespread realisation of the importance of the all-round development of the individual.

This entails radical mental readjustments. The arts student must realise that an art, excluding two thirds of present society is no art, and that before it can become a vigorous and healthy culture we must liberate it from the emasculated theories of the last twenty years. Science is not something that can be fitted in with a pat on the head to give a poem the impression of modernity. The artist must open his mind to the new trends and discoveries of science and become passionately concerned about them, not only as an aid to his art but because he too must be a scientist in order to survive. He must develop from an obscurist, a defender of remote canons, into a whole man, realising that unless we can defeat in ourselves the so-called dissociation of sensibility, and recapture the ideal where thought is emotion and emotion analysable in thought, neither artist nor scientist will ever be truly part of society, and the civilisation that has bred such an unbalance will die.



Because of the success in his own particular field of logical thought processes, developing step by step, the scientist must not be tempted to apply them to all problems, especially where human beings are concerned. He must accept the vagaries of human nature as being outside this province. They are the basic material of the universe and as such must not be brushed aside because they do not conform to a tidy system. Many science students hold the belief that because Arts students do not have as intensive a study course as themselves, they are having an easier time at the University. They should realise that an Arts course requires extensive reading, always with a critical mind, which might be said to be the equivalent of laboratory work. They might try the experiment of asking the opinion of an Arts student about a poem or novel with which they think they are familiar. That the science student would probably be very surprised at the scope embraced in the reply is an indication of the need for a wiser mental outlook on both sides, broadening into a deeper understanding.

Great opportunities exist for such a synthesis in the very nature of university life but they are not being utilised. Arts and science students rub shoulders in caf., share the same table in refec., work in the same library and live together in the same halls and digs. Yet how many have achieved any mutual understanding deeper than the normal light social contacts. The University is a microcosm of what they must expect in life outside. It is up to them to form the society they would wish to live in. While, through indifference to this lack of contact, they make no effort to understand and appreciate the work of the other side and to realise their mutual dependence, they will perpetuate the division in society. Here and now the opportunities exist which if used could radically change present conditions. If year after year the Universities send out artists and scientists, each skilled in their own work but prepared to fight for each other's rights, society will not only benefit, but regain a unity and strength of purpose. It is to himself that the student should look for leadership in this cause.

DAVID TWYMAN.

ANNE V. LEVEY.

## Anniversary in Ajaccio

Not all towns can boast of having a local boy make good to the extent of a Napoleon. Ajaccio, the capital of Corsica, where Napoleon was born, is not a large town and its consciousness of having been the cradle of such a conqueror has pressed heavily upon civic pride. There is a Napoleon Square, a Hotel Napoleon, cafes named after his battles, streets named after his generals, and effigies of him in wood, stone, and porcelain jostling with the stilettos in all the souvenir shops.

The town itself is ranged along the blue Gulf of Ajaccio, the houses climbing up the side of the mountains which fringe the Gulf. The Ajaccians themselves are a friendly people speaking a distinctive patois. It seems odd to think the Corsicans are noted for the fierceness of their vendettas but it is probable that in so far as the vendetta, like the stiletto, has become an object of local curiosity for tourists, the Corsicans have stopped having them.

The Bonaparte house in the Place Letizia, where Napoleon was born, is surrounded by narrow streets which capture the shade from the powerful sun, and which must have changed very little since Napoleon was a child. The garden opposite, graced by a vine from Chislehurst where Napoleon III was exiled, has a bust in the centre which appeared, on the morning of the 15th August, festooned with a huge wreath of gold and purple ribbon inscribed from Le Maire et le Comite Independante Bonapartiste. It is difficult to know whether the latter organisation is merely a wreath providing sub-committee of the local council or some more ambitious group with visions of a third Empire ruled by some obscure descendant of the Bonapartes, heavy browed, and groomed for some fantastic destiny in the twentieth century. The Imperial wreaths were also in evidence in other parts of the town, notably in front of the classical statue of Napoleon on horseback in the Cours de Gaulle which overlooks the Gulf of Ajaccio, with the Emperor staring sternly from under his laurels in the rough direction of Majorca.

The whole town of Ajaccio seemed on holiday, but this was mainly perhaps due to the Fete d'Assomption which by an odd coincidence took place on the same day. The banks

as usual closed at least half a day earlier than the commencement of the festivities, perhaps considering that mundane things could be blithely forgotten in the expectation of feting two elevations, one spiritual and one temporal, on the same day. The religious procession to the ancient Venetian style cathedral in the old part of the town was solemn and dignified with the kind of grace one associates with Italy rather than with France. Strangely enough, the Paolists, who fought for Corsican independence when the Roman Church was disestablished by the Republic, enlisted British help to expel the French, and expelled the Bonapartes as well, thus launching Napoleon on his career. Perhaps if the Corsicans had been less Italianate and conscious of their Genoese inheritance, Napoleon would have remained a Paolist and the Bonapartes would have remained in Corsica. The town's widows as usual had pride of place following the procession, chanting the responses as they walked, as if asserting *en masse* that their perpetually conscious widowhood had definite compensations. One wondered if they would really have approved of Napoleon.



Predominating in the cafe music after dark was a martial song, perhaps more appropriate to the plains of Austerlitz,



which ended with "La Gloire, La Gloire, Napoleon, Napoleon," which is a simple enough sentiment to hear while sipping one's Pernod. It seemed at least to pinpoint the spirit of the celebration although one could not help feeling that the temporal and spiritual excuses for the day's jousts were getting involved. After a while the crowd in the square in front of the floodlit Hotel de Ville grew more numerous, walking about under the palm trees. All the widows were really having a night out. The balcony of the Hotel de Ville was almost obscured by tricolours, from behind which came occasionally the sound of impressive fanfares which would have done justice to the red marble of Les Invalides. As the crowd grew thicker and waited expectantly for something to happen on the balcony the fanfare gave way now and then to the sound of an angelic chorus which made one wonder again if perhaps the occasion everybody was waiting for was entirely secular. All the cafes by now were relaying their martial songs to the people sitting along the terraces. One felt that nothing less than a living effigy of Napoleon would save an anticlimax, and it was almost difficult to remember that Waterloo and Austerlitz were only railway stations. Finally, however, after the fanfares and cafe songs had fixed the atmosphere of the First Republic, the mayor of Ajaccio came onto the balcony into the very Fourth Republic looking floodlights and gave a speech to honour the occasion. The tricolours largely obscured him, but one felt that this was quite in order. The main theme was in praise of the Napoleonic Idea, which one gathered was intimately bound up with the international situation and the local road-making programme, and though this latter may seem out of place there are smaller things to conquer than some of the Corsican mountains. Whether or not Napoleon was proud of Ajaccio, one was left in no doubt that Ajaccio was proud of Napoleon, and perhaps rather sorry that he was dead. In a way of course he was not dead. To finish his speech the mayor stood to attention and shouted, "Vive la bonheur, Vive la France, Vive L'Empereur."

The latter may be a result of wishful thinking or local pride but one should not analyse the Napoleonic Idea in this context. It may mean the altering of history by one man, or by one force; it may be the establishment of equitable law of the destruction of any ancient regime; but finally one

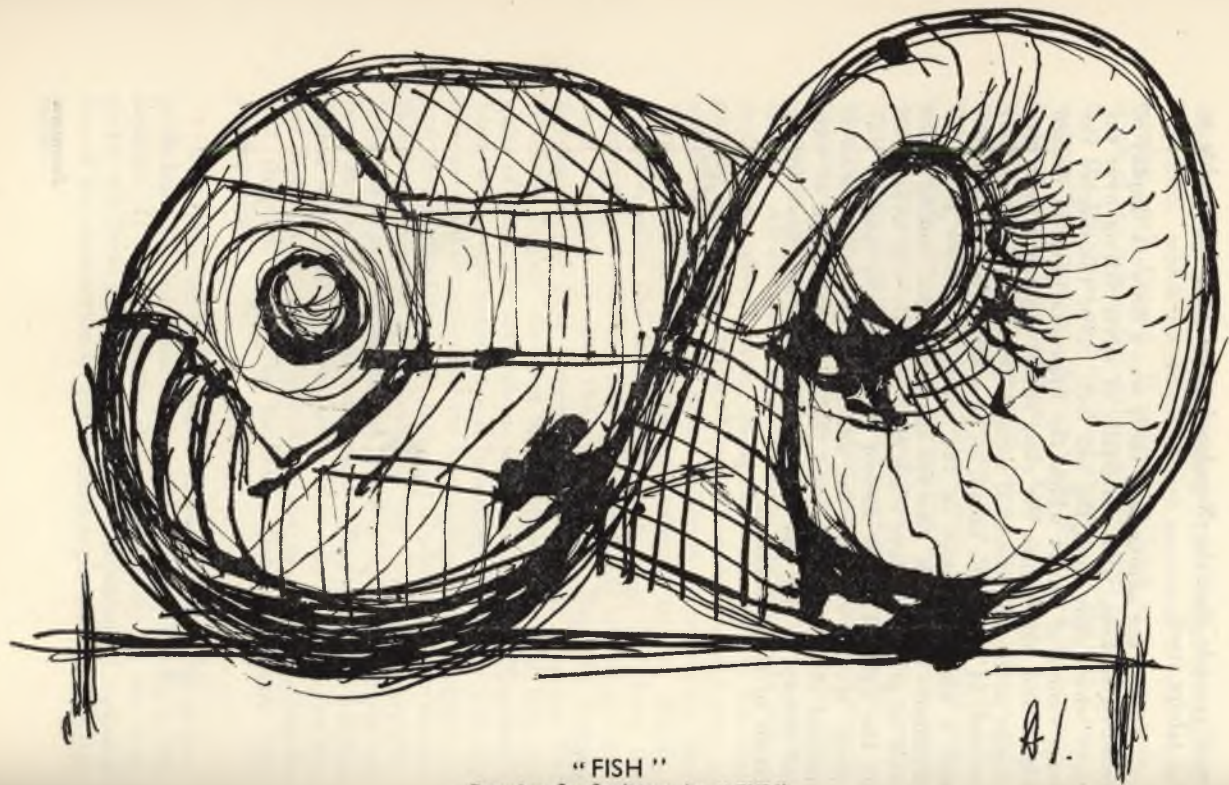
must concede that the Napoleonic Idea is as indefinable as La Gloire itself.

To end the anniversary there was a firework display of coloured rockets, with waterfalls of silver falling over the quay which runs from the old fort. After the display the large clouds of smoke which the fireworks gave off drifted higher and higher into the clear starlit sky, until their own origins in fire and chemical seemed quite obscured and they seemed, lit up by the moon, to be a simple part of a higher and a wider existence in the winds that blow from the mountains to the sea. One felt the symbolism, hinting at the whiff of grapeshot days when Europe really was hypnotised by the sight of a new meteor relentlessly burning its way along. Maybe when the fire and sound of such a career is finished the smoke rises into the wider panorama of time and history, so that the men of destiny can be known by the extent of their elevation.

G. T. HEARD.







" FISH "

*Drawing for Sculpture by "GUS"*

## “The Last Word in Pictures”

“British Railways?”

“British Railways (Scarborough Depot)!”

“We’d like to photograph a train.”

“A train?”

“Yes.”

“Who are you?”

“We’re the Leeds University Union Film Society.”

There was a long pause at the other end of the line.

“Where do you want to photograph the train?”

“At Robin Hood’s Bay.”

Another long pause.

“How long will it take you to photograph it?”

We did a lightning calculation.

“About a quarter of an hour.”

“Well—that seems alright.”

The voice relaxed into a friendlier tone. Obviously the business side of the conversation had come to a successful conclusion.

“Not the best of weather for photography, is it?”

We made the right noises.

“Did a bit myself over the weekend. Came out all hazy. What’re you going to do with the photographs?”

Proudly: “We’re making a film and we want them for one of the sequences . . .”

You’re not going to *photograph* it?”

His voice had taken on a note of urgency and awe. We assured him that we were going to photograph it.

“No you’re not!” he insisted. “You’re going to film it—and that’s a different thing altogether.”

We protested.

“It’ll have to go to York. I can’t give you permission to do that!”

His voice had become harsh and impersonal again.

“Only York can give you permission for that.”

He proceeded to ask us questions.

We told him we were non-professional, non-profit-making, that no charge would ever be made for seeing the train dash across the screen, that we would not hold the British Transport Commission responsible for any damages caused to life, limbs, or cameras.

He told us that he would get in touch with York, that he would inform the Robin Hood's Bay Station Master of our request, that we should get in touch with the Station Master later that afternoon.

We gathered the impression that if York disapproved of our intentions we would have to fight our way into the station in order to get out of town (the 'bus service was not of the best).

We went to see the Station Master at 4 o'clock.

He was visibly impressed with the camera and tripod.

He straightened his tie and adjusted his cap.

"Yes," he said, "You may film the train." He stressed the word "film."

We inferred that on no account were we to photograph it.

"The 4.05 is due any minute."

He left us.

As the 4.05 steamed in the cameras buzzed.

It had been a successful afternoon. We had shot at least ten seconds of our film.

"We'll just have to sit and wait for the sun to come out," said the Producer. He pulled up the hood of his duffle coat and snuggled into the shelter of a damp rock.

"Can't we shoot a few backgrounds?" asked the Camera Man. He was winding up the camera.

No one replied. The wind blew the dry sand about in small puffs; the beach was deserted; the sea looked cold and menacing.

"We could begin setting the shot up," said the Camera Man. He was standing on the rock looking through the view-finder.

"It might come out when everything's set up."

The Producer grunted. The Continuity Girl wrote a comment in the column headed "Remarks" in her script. The Director lit another cigarette.

"I think . . ." began the Camera Man.

He picked himself up off the sand and cursed the wet patch on the rock.

The Continuity Girl wrote another comment in the column headed "Remarks."

"I think," said the Camera Man, wiping sand off the camera lens, "that we should at least do something."

The Producer coughed.



“What can we do?” said the Director. It was obvious he was going to resent any answer.

The Camera Man climbed back onto the rock, and placed his feet firmly on either side of the wet patch. He stared through the view-finder.

For a split second the clouds parted and watery sunlight licked across the beach.

The Producer, the Director, the Continuity Girl, the Star all looked up, and, as it disappeared, shrugged their shoulders.

“You see,” said the Camera Man, “We could have taken a shot then if we’d been set up.”

The Director buried his cigarette stub in the sand and stood up. The wind was cold.

“Well let’s set it up,” he said.

The Camera Man leapt from the rock and pointed to a waist-deep pool.

“Let’s do the shot where the character staggers through the water.”

The Star made a verbal comment that could not have been written in the column headed “Remarks.” The Producer snuggled closer into the rock. The Continuity Girl wrote “Shot 8; Take 1” on a slate in white chalk, and the Director and Camera Man set up the camera.

“It’s not at all cold really,” said the Director, gingerly dipping the extreme tip of his little finger in the pool.

The Star hugged her coat firmly to her and turned up the collar.

“It’s only a fifteen second take,” said the Camera Man; there was a note of disappointment in his voice.

Eventually the Star took off her coat and stood shivering at the side of the pool.

“Just wade in and stand still while we take a light-reading,” said the Director.

The Star stood shivering by the side of the pool. The Camera Man looked impatiently through the view-finder.

“Please go in,” said the Director. “We can’t do a thing with you standing there.”

The Star waded into the pool and turned blue.

“We can’t photograph you like that. You look terrible,” said the Camera Man.

The Continuity Girl wrote “blue” in the column headed “Continuity Details.”

The Producer stuffed his gloved hands deeper into the pockets of his duffle coat.

"Just once again," said the Director.

The Continuity Girl wrote "Shot 8; Take 4" on the slate and held it in front of the camera.

The Star stood shivering in the waist-deep pool. Just as the camera stopped she sniffled and sneezed.

"You almost ruined that take," said the Camera Man.

The Producer stood up and came over to the pool. The wind was cold.

"Well, if that's alright we might as well go back for some lunch. A most disappointing morning!"

The Camera Man packed away the camera; the Continuity Girl put a large tick in the script by the side of "Shot 8"; the Producer and the Director walked quietly along the beach; and the Star sneezed her way back to lunch.

"What we want," said the Director, "is for the girl to come out of this shop and walk off down the hill."

The policeman looked down the hill and considered the problem.

"How far is she going to walk?" he said. It appeared to be important.

The Camera Man consulted his view finder.

"To the nearest lamp-post."

The policeman gazed intently at the lamp-post.

"And she comes out of the shop?" he said.

The Director and the Camera Man nodded.

The policeman walked further up the road and held up the traffic.

The Camera Man set up the camera in the middle of the road.

The Star went into the shop and waited for the Director to make a signal. Just as he was about to do so the policeman tapped him on the shoulder.

"Is everything alright?" he asked.

The Director nodded and prepared to make his signal.

"Where does she go to?" asked the policeman. It was evident that something was troubling him.

The Camera Man straightened up from his crouching position and looked appealingly at the Director.

"Where does who go to?" asked the Director.



"The girl," said the policeman. He waved his gloves in the direction of the shop.

"Oh!" said the Director. "She walks down to the first lamp-post." He said it very slowly and with great deliberation. He raised his voice a little as if the policeman were deaf.

"Yes, I know," said the policeman. He smiled. "But where does she go after that?"

The Camera Man sat down in the middle of the road.

"She doesn't go anywhere," said the Director. "She's just walking round the village."

The policeman's cheeks went a little red.

"Wouldn't she ask someone the way, don't you think?" he said.

The Director suddenly tumbled to it.

"Would you be willing to let her?" he asked. He tried to sound enthusiastic. They could always do two takes—one with, one without.

"I don't usually do this kind of thing," said the policeman, "But if you think it's necessary."

The Camera Man reset the camera, the policeman stood obtrusively waiting outside the shop, and the Director gave the signal.

"That wasn't too bad, was it?" said the policeman.

The Camera Man packed away the equipment and fifteen cars shot madly down the hill.

The Producer poured himself another glass of sherry.

"There's something very satisfying about making a film," he said, "Something achieved!"

The room was not really big enough for the party, but with the Camera Man sitting on the floor and the Star sitting as close to the fire as possible, there was an easy chair for the Producer, and two straight-backed chairs for the Director and the Continuity Girl.

"Some more sherry?" asked the Producer. He refilled the Director's glass.

"A very useful few days' work," said the Producer.

The Director sipped his glass meditatively. The Camera Man placed a small rug at the bottom of the door to stop the draught.

"All that needs to be done now is the editing. That shouldn't take very long," said the Producer. He was looking

at the Camera Man. "When work is shared out everything goes very smoothly and quickly."

The Continuity Girl poured herself another sherry, and drank it before the Producer had time to notice.

"There's just one early morning shot to be done," said the Producer. "It's pointless everyone getting up at that hour. You two could do it yourselves."

He looked at the Camera Man and the Star.

The Camera Man reached for the camera. The Director sipped his sherry. The Continuity Girl put a tick in the script.

The Star sneezed and moved even closer to the fire.

James S. Lee

## The South African Race Problem

The colour problem is only one aspect of a far larger question. In past ages men persecuted others on religious grounds because of the same complex of fear based on misunderstanding, arrogance, and bigotry. Always fear breeds hatred, and domination instils the lust for further domination. If the process of self assertion appears to an outsider to be inconsistent with the ethical standards to which the society concerned subscribes, rationalisation provides a convenient way of escape. The naked desire for self assertion may masquerade as a quite justifiable longing for self preservation and security, or appeal may be made to the welfare of the subservient class: do they not prefer to have matters stand as they are? do they not realise that a policy of racial segregation implemented by others is ultimately for their own benefit? Their pride and sense of personal dignity will be appealed to. Is not segregation preferable to its necessary alternatives—racial admixture and misagenation, and their own continued dependency on the dominant class?

This is the theme perpetually being sung by Government propagandists in order to justify to the world South African racial policy. Moreover, should all else fail they will tell you that immediate contact with a problem alone allows for true understanding; the further away one is from the problem

either socially or geographically, the smaller the chances of grasping firmly and dispassionately the exact nature of the cruel dilemma facing most South Africans today. There is obvious truth in this statement which we ought seriously to take to heart ; we cannot judge still less condemn, until we are acquainted with the situation which calls for a judgment. Yet to work for a true understanding of a problem such as this does not lead one to condone it.

The root of the matter is largely historical. Three centuries ago South Africa received from Holland her first European settlers ; three centuries isolation from the rest of the civilised world, coupled with their destiny as they now interpret it to bring civilisation and Christianity to the African, were not calculated to help them direct their thoughts outward. The bitter hardships which they were called to face developed in them great resistance, staying power and independence, together with an understandable regard for the civilisation and the faith which they had preserved and kept pure. Incidentally their proud boast of having maintained racial purity ignores the presence of a million half castes in South Africa today. But it all inculcates a myth of superiority ; coupled with strength and zeal and a sense of vocation this can lead to a power mentality and the preclusion of freedom from the inferior race. Furthermore, if this sense of aloneness in the "black void" is complicated by aggression from equals, nationalism weaves itself into the texture of the already grave problem. This has in fact happened ; what the Boers term British aggression took place from the annexation of the Cape Colony in 1802 until 1910. Consequently two issues are involved. Into the larger racial problem is interwoven the smaller issue of Afrikaner nationalism which has achieved a triumph in the return to power of the National Party, its mouthpiece and handmaid.

Here another point is to be remembered : it is generally thought that the sole supporters of the present government policy are the Afrikaners ; so the English speaking South African leads us to believe by much of what he says, and more of what he seems to imply. The Afrikaner has faced the problem squarely ; he is quite ruthless in his adherence to a policy which he acknowledges as leading to permanent domination over the African ; he avows this publicly, says



that only thus can white South Africa survive, and is prepared to go to any lengths to achieve it. The English South African, motivated less by intense feeling than by a general desire to be left in peace, will generally complain against violations of freedom, and then follow suit. He has few genuine convictions on the matter, but should it come to a head he would undoubtedly be in general agreement with the traditional Afrikaner views of the problem.

South Africa is an heterogenous society, several races, shades of culture and civilisation from Stone age to Atomic era, in which the more primitive have a large numerical ascendancy over the others. Inevitably the white section fears deeply for itself and its posterity. The choice seems to be one of domination or extinction; submergence under an overwhelming black flood or rigid political control. This is the basic attitude that leads to apartheid. If the arguments used in its favour are valid all else follows as a matter of course.

A detailed legal and social system implements this policy. The African is politically powerless. He does not have the franchise, nor are his interests directly represented anywhere. He may not form trades unions in the accepted sense nor may he use the strike weapon. To prevent physical incitement his consumption of alcohol is severely limited by law and he may not possess weapons. Several measures are taken to prevent his succumbing to seditious political influences. A powerful weapon to this end is the Suppression of Communists Act, in terms of which the Minister of Justice may, at his own discretion and without advice, name as a Communist anyone suspected of activities calculated to encourage sedition; against the implementation of this act there is no appeal, nor need the Minister state his reasons for such action. The penalty varies from a prohibition to address public gatherings to deportation or imprisonment. The full implications of this act will be seen, if it is borne in mind that organised Communism was never strong in South Africa, while seditious activities are elsewhere defined as anything intended to undermine confidence in the government, and the existing social order. In terms of another act any Church, school, or other building, in an African suburban area, may be closed should the authorities consider that anti-government propaganda is in any way being disseminated there.



On the more personal level there are to be no opportunities for social contact except in terms of a rigid master servant relationship, which must at all costs be maintained. Neither may the native ever dare hope for equal opportunities in social, artistic, or vocational, fulfilment. The lower and more servile crafts are generally reserved for him, except among his own people; even there he has to combat white professional competition, while the reverse is never permitted to occur.

All urban Africans must carry passes, the variety and complexity of which are multitudinous. Their main common purpose is to emphasise the dependant state of the African; he is no free sojourner but a stranger and sojourner with no continuing city in any urban area. Although there are half a million Africans in Johannesburg, a number as large as the Europeans and others combined, they constitute a floating population, here today, gone tomorrow—to the allotted reserves. For although it is through his labour that South African mining and secondary industry flourish the reserve must remain his home. It is unfortunate but incidental that the reserves are already too small, too poor, to support their present population; so that Africans find the city, however disappointing, a relative escape from drudgery and malnutrition. It is unfortunate but incidental that the wives must remain at home while able bodied males are encouraged to man the mines and factories, immorality and consequent delinquency and disease being common features of city life for the unattached male who finds himself free of tribal restraints and taboos.

This is in fact one of the reasons often used to keep the African in the reserve; another is that the African should be allowed to preserve his cultural traditions, his tribal customs, and the age old respect for the chief; as a result of which he can retain a certain amount of self respect and economic independence. The inconvenient truth is that such tribal culture and customs have succumbed to the violent and sudden impact of Western civilisation and are fast crumbling away. Tribal disintegration proceeds apace; and a void is being created in the soul of the African, which must some day be filled by a new standard of conduct and new social

ideals. The Bantu at present is compelled to be European willy nilly ; the pertinent question is whether it will be made easier for him to adopt European culture, or just European lusts, vices and diseases.

An official report recently published shows, as has been demonstrated often, that South Africa is an economic unity ; to destroy that unity, or break it down in order to separate territorially its constituent races, would be economic suicide. Yet the South African government is determined at all costs to maintain its present policy. If it does not fulfil its electoral promises it will have to answer for its failure to do so.

All this would be ultimately futile if the possibility existed of advanced education for all African children. It would be difficult to defend the myth of white superiority in view of the existence of an enlightened and well informed Bantu population. Moreover, the Government must prevent at all costs the growth of individual and national self consciousness, or any sense of unified purpose among the Bantu ; illiteracy is divisive and acts as a damp blanket against all cohesion and unity of purpose. Complete illiteracy however is unprofitable ; the tool that cannot count is more liability than asset to its user. So the Bantu Education act was passed to close the African secondary schools, formerly run by missionary bodies, and supply instead widespread primary education. The closing of the mission schools was enforced by withdrawal of all government subsidies. In the new schools children are taught sufficiently the three R's to make efficient servants, but little more. Thus is obviated the danger of their developing ideas above their station. For a similar reason Africans are "discouraged" from studying overseas. They may return with liberal ideals likely to disturb the present social and political situation. A loophole has been left for private schools, run without government subsidies, but even these can function only at the government's pleasure. A school which was recently privately opened at Sophiatown, was closed shortly afterwards by government order, because written permission had not been given. Clearly this is education for subservience. For this reason many regard it as the most diabolic weapon yet used by the South African Government for the furtherance of their avowed purposes.

The picture is bleak indeed. It seems as if men incapable of seeing beyond the demands of unenlightened self interest

have abandoned reality and truth for the realms of cold depersonalised abstraction. Reduce flesh and blood—black flesh—to neatly constructed categories and logic, the relentless logic of white South Africa will do the rest.

D. C. DOWIE.

## Confession spoken by the Spirit of Religion

### I

Hear now the eternally awakened  
Maker, broker, now breaker  
Of myths ; wake up dreamer  
I positively know  
That neither king nor hero,  
Poet nor melancholy peasant  
To a pleasant haven goes  
After life or triumph.  
With my planks and spars  
You built thin ships,  
I taught you to read  
The erratic stars,  
Drew maps, suggested supplies  
To see a gleam in your eyes,  
Hear keen words on your lips.  
When your eyes closed,  
String pulling from the moon  
Their convex tides  
I showed you paradise,  
Valhalla and the New World ;  
Knowing such tall tales  
Only could sustain  
Your journey up the wet  
Mountain, along the dry plain.

I did it for the best,  
But envious after all  
I confess, though was not me  
Who invented the sea  
I spoke of a landfall  
Who here undeceive you  
For I alone could not believe.

## 2

You remember my first visits  
 In jungle or bleak plain, when  
 The misprized or the lonely,  
 The deranged or the weak  
 Went off alone and returned  
 Suddenly able to speak ;  
 The mystery of inlets  
 And the Sphinx's smile  
 Controlling the annual  
 Swelling of the Nile.  
 Athenian's housed me  
 In symmetrical temples  
 And aspired to a bawdy  
 God's eternal carouse.  
 Urged on by me  
 Christ flowered in legends  
 When they grafted him  
 To that barren tree ;  
 Legends that hushed  
 The roar of Rome  
 Where by later invaders  
 I was almost crushed.  
 Nurtured in rough houses  
 On hills and sea-shore  
 I gave the assurance  
 Of something more.

## 3

Stories at bedtime  
 Comfort the child ;  
 There is instruction  
 In the nursery rhyme ;  
 But with maturity  
 He must do the giving  
 And help the family  
 Business of living.  
 What he did at church  
 Or school for a prize  
 Kind man continues  
 Or else he dies.

JAMES SIMMONS.





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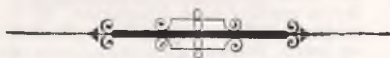
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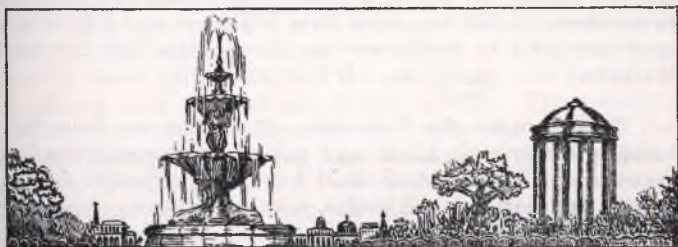
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## Fountains and Facades



On my first arrival in Leeds from the South, I took one look at the City, and hurriedly prepared myself for some years of visual torture; the black film over the stonework of the buildings gave everything a curious similarity, which in reality it does not possess. In the same way my first sight of the University was one of considerable pleasure: "The seat of learning uncontaminated by the commercialism which has beset the centre of the city"; here was a modern equivalent of the dreaming spires, white neo-georgian stonework glinting in the sun. On more mature consideration, and when the dust had affected my eyes, so that I saw with it, rather than against it, I re-examined my judgments.

The Parkinson Building was designed, I believe, during the early thirties, round about the same time as the Senate House of the University of London. The University of London decided to build the highest structure in central London, this they achieved with some satisfaction. The building in its final form is not unpleasant, it cannot be said to be in the least elegant but it has a sense of massive proportion which creates a lasting impression of power. The University of Leeds also had some idea of constructing a highest building, this was also to be in white stone. Plans were produced and the Parkinson emerged, a long white facade to stretch up Woodhouse Lane and on the top a slender white tower, symbol of learning. What was built before and after the war was, apart from the added attraction of a Babylonian style Modern Languages Block strung along the front, the original design of the architect. The result, as everyone travelling on a 'bus towards Headingley may see, is rather unpleasant. But to give it some due, the Parkinson

is an Acropolis to buildings such as the City Hall and the Queen's Hotel. Do not be misled by the colour of a building to condemn it, the two most dirty buildings and two of the most beautiful in Leeds are the Town Hall and the City Markets.

To return to the University, now that we have this building as our main block, and taking into account the fact that nothing much better could have been expected from a British architect in the thirties, why can't we do something

to show up its better features? Has the Senate ever considered fountains? I very much doubt it. Nevertheless, we have one of the few positions in Leeds where fountains could be shown to advantage. A fountain at the southwest corner between the Baines wing and the Parkinson would add to the elegance of the building and give some character to its rather soggy appearance; likewise another could be erected on the lawn outside the Chemistry Block, where the contractor's sheds are at the moment. The English as a nation do not seem to have realised the possibilities of ornamental water; fountains abound on the Continent, but in England they are exceedingly rare. The University might easily lead the way, by admitting the grace and beauty of falling water.

To progress to something less obvious at the time of writing. How many people have gone up to the corridor outside the Vice-Chancellor's office to see for themselves exactly what the new buildings in Reservoir Street are going to look like? I have. I have discovered that they are going to look even worse than the new wing of the Union that was thrown together the year before the last. The buildings were designed by the same architect, Dr. Lodge. His plans would have been outdated in the thirties, if submitted to any knowledgeable body; today they are nothing less than ludicrous, resembling an old fashioned garage or Lewis's in the Headrow more closely than any other educational building designed for an authority with taste, that I have seen built since the beginning of this decade. It seems amazing to me that a University that can appoint Basil Spence, the architect of the new Coventry Cathedral, to the Chair in Architecture, should be unable to discriminate between good and bad design of this kind.



The new buildings are to have a long frontage on Woodhouse Lane, and where the row of shops now stands, there will be gardens. The architect has indicated herbaceous borders. The buildings themselves will be of a fawn colour, possibly faced with stone, and the main shape will be that of an oblong with a slight rise in the middle. The windows will be connected to each other vertically like those on the present Mining Department, but there is none of the pseudo-georgian decoration of the Parkinson; in fact there is no decoration at all, the sharp lines are unrelieved and uninteresting in themselves. It is a far worse building than the Man-made Fibres Block which, to my mind, most closely resembles a warehouse. Compare the abysmal productions of the University of Leeds with the design for the new arts block at the University of Exeter, and our buildings appear worthless. It will be surprising if they are not demolished as monstrosities in the next century.

Our new arts block, when it is erected, will be a continuation of the Parkinson across University Road, enclosing the Baines wing. I have no idea as to the layout of the interior, but may I beg the architect not to condemn the remaining Arts Departments to rooms and corridors resembling a prison, like those forced on the Modern Languages in the Parkinson. Personally I would far rather that the Departments such as History, Theology, and English Literature stayed exactly where they are in their houses than see them incarcerated in square cells leading on to a long bleak corridor. If this is to be the plan, and I fear that it will be, let us hope, before it is too late, that the architect goes berserk and gives us staircases which lead nowhere and rooms that can only be approached by a rope ladder from the roof. All our architecture implies a complete lack of imagination; what is built is substantial but hardly interesting. Oh, for a Dome of Discovery to house the Greek Department, or a Victorian gazebo in which the philosophers might take tea.

CHRISTOPHER NEWTON.

## The Land of The New Yorker Three American Humorists

Will Cuppy, Dorothy Parker and James Thurber



I said the Hounds of Spring are on Winter's traces

—but Let it Pass, Let it Pass.

The morning after Will Cuppy died, in September 1949, the newspaper to which he had contributed regularly for twenty years printed an announcement of his death. The photograph accompanying the obituary labelled "Will Cuppy" was of someone else. No more apt comment on the man's particular brand of humour has since been evoked. Cuppy's best work, contained in a slim volume called "The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody," is a series of historical vignettes-with-a-difference, which make Sellars and Yeatman's classic "1066 and All That" look like a slightly inferior school magazine contribution. The sophisticated simplicity of the best Cuppy pieces is deceptive. His method was to accumulate a card index system of accurate information in every topic he wished to treat. He would then order and arrange and paraphrase his material to a point this side of lunacy; approaching it in a spirit of almost naive matter of factness which resulted in an impression of

a superficial order only barely restraining an underlying chaos and muddle of almost terrifying proportions !

The reader's secret conviction, left over from First Form History lessons, that all historical personages of any stature were either monomaniacs, paranoics or subjects of some incredibly powerful, extra-human hypnotist, with sideline interests in puppet shows, is slowly confirmed as Cuppy reveals the pet obsessions and phobias of the historic great.

He conjures up visions of dynasty upon dynasty of Egyptian Pharoahs bankrupting themselves and their Empire in a mad endeavour to build bigger and better pyramids than their forebears. Pyramids, by Cuppy's definition are places for "concealing the royal corpse and its treasure in a monument so conspicuous that it could not possibly be missed by bodysnatchers and other thieves" . . . an only too shrewd comment on the fate of the chief tombs. Pericles is exposed, with some truth, as a swindling, embezzling looseliver with the gift of the gab ; while all the Ancient Greeks apparently "did nothing to excess, unless they were crazy about it." His summary description of the effect of classic Greek drama on its first audiences must gain the sympathy of many a sufferer from its enthusiastic modern revivers ; it consisted, he says, "mostly of tragedies about Agamemnon and Clytemnestra written by Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides" . . . here follows one of the superb footnotes of which Cuppy makes exorbitant but effective use, "Pericles was very fond of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides because he could not see jokes either." The definition then goes on : "The Greek drama was based on well-known stories, so that every one knew what was coming next, just as one does today . . . the audience sat round on tiers of wooden benches ranged on the hillside and wished they were dead."

Alexander the Great comes under the Cuppy knife but is dismissed as a "distressing young man," with a habit of knitting his brows for no apparent reason.

The catalogue of the great which follows sees Nero as a thwarted concert-singer ; Attila the Hun as an ugly little man on a mangy pony ; Godiva as an exhibitionist with a craze for ultra-violet ; Peter the Great as a stove-squatting

prankster and the whole of the Hanoverian dynasty as "any old man in a wig."

This matter-of-fact, almost slangy treatment of the historically sacrosanct creates in Cuppy's hands, an atmosphere of pure fantasy which is yet curiously near to prosaicness.

From a lunatic with a card-index system, it is far cry to a social satirist with a gift for give-away dialogue which makes her a lineal descendant in one sense of Jane Austen. If the Cuppy brand of humour is that of escapism, Miss Dorothy Parker's own particular genre is out in the front line facing up to the social battle. Perhaps satire is too strong a description for the Parker manner; the keen-eyed, acid-tongued attitude; the betraying, ruthlessly faithful dialogues. Miss Parker observes and she records . . . pitilessly in each case. We pass what judgment we please upon her findings, but it would take a very insensitive mind indeed to ignore her essential seriousness and tolerance.

She has several moods; prominent and perhaps, most successful, is the sentimental, the semi-serious poems of heartbreak and disillusion among the pseudo-sophisticates of her generation, from the hymn of joy at love in its flowering, to the "blues" dirge of the broken-heart and the cynical "ballade" of the worldly-wise acknowledging the faithlessness of lovers, while recognising the inevitability of beginning all over again to love afresh:

Oh, gallant was the first love, and glittering and fine;  
The second love was water in a clear white cup;  
The third love was his and the fourth love was mine;  
And after that, I always get them all mixed up."

"By the time you swear you're his,  
Shivering and sighing.  
And he vows his passion is  
Infinite, undying—  
Lady, make a note of this:  
One of you is lying."

Miss Parker's other very successful mood is that in which she remorselessly dissects the foibles and mannerisms, the



triviality and intolerance of the various types of women of her age and nation : the woman " with pink poppies in the assisted gold of her hair " gabbling hard to convince her audience and herself of her lack of racial prejudice, and of her delight in being able to shake the hand of a negro spiritual singer who is in the vogue with her set. (" I haven't any feeling at all because he's a coloured man. Why, he's awfully nice, just as nice as he can be. Nice manners and everything . . . "). Women of the Anita Loos tradition too, emerge clearly from under Dorothy Parker's pen . . . ingénues with an eye to the main chance . . . the empty-headed, tense bride ; the cheap, delightful typist with her dreams of millions and the apotheosis of a mink coat ; the intoxicated woman ; the jealous woman with her popular lover ; the catty woman . . . all perfect, wicked studies in line and the self-incriminating phrase.

Miss Parker, by the way, was the originator of the aphorism that " men seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses," which is perhaps responsible for the delight of so many in the myopic world of James Thurber. His books are a distorting mirror where all the characters are once-in-a-lifetime eccentrics, and even the most everyday occurrences inevitably complicate themselves beyond extrication. He is of course primarily a cartoonist, which gives him a double medium for the exploration of his comic insight.

The prose world of Thurber is apt to be one of " confusion worse confounded," where a whole household can go berserk over a collapsed bed, a suspected ghost or a dog which bites people ; where the mere rumour of a bursting dam causes thousands of stolid Middle Westerners to flee on foot ; where servants run amok and guinea-pigs sleep on zithers ; but in the Thurber cartoon world a curious calm prevails. The subjects may be scenes of the wildest improbability—a seal in a bedroom ; a stuffed ex-wife on a bookcase ; a dragon entering through a window to terrify the dog of an all-oblivious master ; yet the tranquillising influence of the Thurber line-technique forbids panic in the beholder. Along with the characters in the cartoons, we are superbly unalarmed by these happenings of pure fantasy.

In so far as the Thurber vein has any unity of theme, there seems to be a preoccupation with the meek " little





The Father Belonged to Some People who were Passing Through in a Packard

man," the eternally balding, perpetually middle-aged and modestly obese figure, his glasses understated in one masterly line, coping limply and ineffectually with the wild eccentricities of behaviour and the incredibly bizarre situations with which he is constantly faced. In actual fact he never gets to grip with these things; he limply and uncomplainingly concurs in them. The Furies who seek to avenge his crime of ineptness are the big, forceful, belligerent women who are the bosses in the Thurber world. Completely unappealing in any sense, these females are too wrapt up in their noisy, extroverted existences to even notice the dreadful predicaments which their male partners are constantly facing. They are perhaps a tacit comment on the superiority of American womanhood's social position.

The Thurber little man therefore does not find a friend and companion in a woman; he finds his consolation in the dumb sympathy of one of those lumpy, endearingly dejected dogs who look like a cross between a spaniel and a miniature elephant. They alone are on his side in spite of all. They can even grieve over their master's stupidities. In the Thurber version of the modern American scene, amidst a hotch-potch of cocktail and bridge-maniacs, homicidal adolescents and the devotees of the Dale Carnegie "How" cults; where the psychiatrist is as necessary as the grocer or the barber; alone the dogs apprehend the wider issues; like the dog lurking, in a torpor of resigned misery behind his master's chair, while two brutal, insensitive women whisper of him: "He's never been the same since Munich."

PAT PURCELL.

## Utopia Limited

It is inevitable that satire should date—as the butt of the satire recedes in the past and as the point of the satire is lost as a result of change which is the essence of progress. This is patently obvious in the Satirical Operas of W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan. The very fact that they are now called Comic rather than Satirical is a tribute to the fact. Nobody goes to see *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Gondoliers*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*,



or *Iolanthe* for their pointed satire. The art—or is it science? of watching and appreciating these or, for that matter, most of the Savoy Operas is a highly specialised one, carefully fostered and nurtured by the D'Oyly Carte Company. One has to know, for instance, when and where to laugh, when and where to applaud, when and where the puppet cast expect to be called upon for an encore. The D'Oyly Carte tradition has, in fact, removed the spirit, the soul from the Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

This may well explain why certain operas are omitted from the D'Oyly Carte repertoire. It is easy to teach the audience how to behave in such as *Yeomen of the Guard*; but *Princess Ida* or *Utopia Limited* are different propositions, since the audience may laugh or applaud of its own accord at the wrong places: that is, at the places where Sullivan and Gilbert intended and not at the places where D'Oyly Carte dictate. This must always be the case when the libretto can be grasped and appreciated by the audience; when, in other words, the satire is so universal, or rather the butt of the satire is so universal, that it transcends time and is always up-to-date. Thus *Trial by Jury* must ever be a hilarious forty minutes, and the audience must always call the tune, because the desire to laugh at justice and at the law is a desire which, in free and democratic countries, never cools.

*Princess Ida*, a satire on the education of women, was performed in the Union four years ago. Surprisingly, it has since been reinstated into the D'Oyly Carte repertoire. Are we to assume that it too has had its soul removed and that the audiences have been led "into the straight and narrow," or could it be that the D'Oyly Carte shackles are wearing thinner as the date for the termination of copyright approaches? The opera was an unqualified success here—because of its freshness, unfamiliarity and topicality. Yet, while one could appreciate the fun at the expense of the learned (and unmarried) women in *Ida*, the word "topicality" can be applied with far more justification to *Utopia Limited*. The opera has rarely been performed since its first, and highly successful, run in London; yet it must surely rank as the greatest of the Savoy operas. Until 1984 in all its Orwellian blackness dawns on this island, *Utopia Limited* will always find an appreciative audience; for it is a satire on Great

Britain and on its people. Who can suppress a smile when, in the midst of a pompous section in the Finale to Act I the strains of "Rule, Britannia" suddenly obtrude? This, of all the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas, is the one in which music and libretto are truly at one, welded together into a unit. It was written shortly after the reconciliation of Sullivan and Gilbert, which healed the rift that had existed between them for some time.

Briefly, the plot of the opera devolves around the return from England to the halcyon and languorous isle of Utopia of the Princess Zara, daughter of King Paramount. Since the Princess has been favourably impressed by what she saw and experienced in England, and since she has gone to the trouble of bringing back to Utopia six "ambassadors" from England, the island soon loses its exotic qualities and becomes thoroughly anglicised, to the complete dismay and ultimate overthrow of the three villains of the piece—Scaphio, Phantis and Tarara. The title of the opera finds its origin in the advent of one of the English ambassadors—or Flowers of Progress—Mr. Goldbury, a Company Promoter, who proceeds to make the entire island a Company Limited. The jibes at England which arise out of this situation are, strangely, more topical now than ever: "Utopia is to be modelled upon Great Britain (to which some add, but others do not, Ireland)"; "English girls are good as gold, Demurely coy, divinely cold"; "English girls are not pretty, but good-looking"; "Whether you're an honest man or whether you're a thief depends on whose solicitor has given me my brief": "The County Councillor—Great Britain's latest toy"; "thanks to coal—and thanks to coke—we never run a ship ashore"! The satire on "this pleasant isle" reaches a climax in the septet sung by the King and the Flowers of Progress: "Divorce is nearly obsolete in England." "We haven't any slummeries in England." "Poverty is obsolete and hunger is abolished." "Literary Merit meets with proper recognition." "No peeress at our Drawing-Room before the Presence passes Who wouldn't be accepted by the lower middle classes." This is not the damaging or destructive kind of satire, but that which instructs and warns us of our idiosyncracies, and also advises us not to take ourselves too seriously. We laugh at our peculiarities as we see them given dramatic representation, we think about them afterwards.

Artistically, *Utopia Limited*, performed by Light Opera Society at the end of last session, was a great success. Technically, it presents more difficulties to the Producer, the Music Director, and the Actors, than any other Gilbert and Sullivan Opera; yet one would never have thought, from the standard of performance, that this was the Society's first full-scale production. The audience, unfamiliar with the opera, had to judge entirely on merits; judging by the remarks one heard, there was no question as to whether it was "coming off." The cast responded well to the production of Mr. May and the music direction of Mr. Mumby. This was by no means the first time they had worked together on Gilbert and Sullivan; the final polish was a tribute to excellent team work.

The one black spot (and there is a literal as well as a metaphorical implication) in the production was the stage lighting. The switchboard is far from perfect—but careful and imaginative use can work wonders, as Mr. Boorman used to show a few years ago. Not only was the lighting plot mediocre, but the actual operating was atrocious; thus instead of subtly creating mood, the lighting created a constant and glaring irritation. Good lighting can save a bad show: poor lighting can spoil a good one. It is to be regretted that more attention was not paid to this essential part of the production.

For the soloists there is nothing but praise. Jean Marshall and Margaret Skinner have both performed in *Patience* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Miss Skinner's mock heroic style and rich contralto blended far better here as Lady Sophy, *gouvernante* of the Princesses, than in her previous roles of Lady Jane and Ruth, while Miss Marshall's trim figure, dramatic style and sweet soprano were better suited to Princess Zara than to *Patience* or *Edith*. It was a pity that the lisp which June Gott affected tended at times to obscure the words; June Shaw controlled her affected short-tongued defect rather better: nonetheless, the two together gave fine performances as the virgin (*i.e.* unanglicised—until later) princesses—Nekaya and Kalyba. It is hard to imagine a more villainous-looking trio than Jim Berry (*Tarara*), Russell Clarke (*Phantis*) and George Smyth (*Scaphio*). Among them, they had to contend with some of the trickiest counterpoint that Sullivan ever devised and a "difficult-to-time"

whispering sequence. Eric Ruff was a little weak as Captain Fitzbattleaxe and Hugh Wilman lacked assurance as Sir Bailey Barre. The other Flowers of Progress were, however, admirable. David Cockeram gave plenty of body to Captain Corcoran, K.C.B., Robert Briggs gave a delightful public school suavity to Lord Dramaleigh; David Horsfall was just David Horsfall masquerading as Mr. Goldbury, the Company Promoter, while Edwin Lack livened proceedings within his pronounced Cockney interpretation of the County Councillor.

The great success was undoubtedly James Holt as King Paramount. The polite policeman of *Pirates* and the coy usher of *Trial by Jury* was transformed into a vocalist and actor of ability, personality and power. The interpretation of the part showed the requisite difference in the two acts: in the first, the cowering King in the grips of the Judges, brashly trying to pass it off in public; in the second act, the conquering King free from the old clutches and full of confidence, the King who really is *Paramount*.

The Chorus was slightly lacking in numbers, especially the women's chorus whose opening number was rather thin; the recumbent posture is not, however, ideal for full vocal resonance. Nonetheless, they were equal to the situation and negotiated some tricky passages with the ease that is born of thorough rehearsal.

The thanks of all Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiasts are due to Light Opera Society for performing *Utopia Limited* and giving the opportunity to hear this rarity. The opera has that universal quality which is for all time—satire at its best—and the finale reaches beyond the satiric to the prophetic. For the finale expresses the hope which should be the hope of us all, as long as Britain is Britain:

“ Let us hope, for her sake, that she makes  
no mistake,  
That she's all she professes to be.”

S. LARTER



## Book Review

Germaline Bree :

Marcel Proust and Deliverance from Time

CHATTO AND WINDUS 1956, pp. 15, 256 £1 1s. 0d.

That Proust should have become, so to speak, a classic of Anglo-American literature in a way not equalled by Claudel, Gide, Valéry or Malraux, is not perhaps surprising. Proust, to a far greater extent than any of the other authors mentioned, is among other things paying back (with very handsome interest) a debt to English literature. To the long English novel—to the novels of George Eliot in particular—Proust freely and fervently recognises his indebtedness; and his debt to Ruskin is hardly less great.

In *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (which means "In search of lost time" and ought never to have been translated as "Remembrance of things past") the reader who is accustomed to the English novel tradition will find much that is familiar to him: a great social panorama, several "love stories," a touch, or more than a touch, of satire, a vein of fancy and, more important than all of these, a haunting consciousness of time and mortality.

Although a very great deal has been written about Proust, the quantity of valuable critical literature which is available in English is surprisingly small. For this reason, if for no other, this translation of Mlle. Bree's book will be welcomed. Its title might prove misleading. It is not a thesis on the problem of time in the work of Proust. An essay on this subject is only one of the several loosely related essays on various aspects of Proust's great novel. Mlle. Bree's choice of headings can neither be praised as original nor condemned as capricious; only in raising, very provocatively, the question of the comic element in the personal relations Proust describes does she break new ground.

But within each heading, precisely the reverse is true: there can be no doubt about the originality of some of Mlle. Bree's contentions and some of them must surely appear capricious. She writes with firm assurance:

"*A la Recherche du temps perdu* is not however a metaphysical novel . . . his ideas are always at the service of Swann, Odette, Charles, the Verdurins and the Guermantes, and not vice-versa." (p. 245).

" . . . he has no affection for the characters he creates . . . (p. 225).

"At no time does art strike the narrator with the force of a revelation . . ." (p. 210).

There are many similar categorical assertions, all of which are at least highly debatable. It is true that in Mlle. Bree's book they are not put forward entirely in the void ; but the task of substantiating all of them is far too great for a book of this size, even if it is not impossible. They are generally propped up with just enough argument to make the reader wonder (and this is an extremely valuable contribution) whether there may not after all be some truth in them. It is true that he is often disappointed. One allows oneself, for example, to be drawn by such a sentence as : "Proust is infinitely greater as a creator of characters than as a psychologist, simply because his characters resist all psychological theories—even his own." The very unfamiliarity of this view of Proust makes it tempting. And it seems to rest on some kind of argument, for the text continues : "They are remarkable for their resistance to logic, for their sheer impact upon the imagination. Because each character is a complete, closed world in himself, his world determines for him his values, his joys and his sufferings. But only the narrator is able to force open the door to his own world, and then only for himself." (p. 197).

Now it is absolutely essential to Proust's conception that we see each of the characters in the novel through the eyes of the narrator ; and it is necessary on definite psychological grounds that as far as the narrator is concerned the other characters should impress themselves in a fragmentary manner on the imagination rather than yield their secret to logic. Moreover, and this would appear to be self-evident, since the narrator is a narrator, in succeeding in "forcing open the door to his own world" for himself, he does so for all his readers.

Proust's skill in creating characters is not in dispute ; but it is at least arguable that the main function in the novel

of Swann, say, or Charles, is to provide clues to assist the reader to grasp in all its richness the psychological study of the narrator.

That Mlle. Bree should commit herself to this statement is all the more surprising since she herself exhibits great powers of psychological penetration. By far the best parts of this book are the studies of social relationship in the society conjured up by Proust. As one reads her account of the interpenetration of social groups in Proust's work, one feels rather inclined to hope that she might herself venture upon a novel.

One cannot but feel, however, that it would be a very different novel from Proust's. For at the heart of her view of Proust there is a misconception which is implied in the title of her book. Proust's problem is not one of "Deliverance from Time." If it were, one cannot conceive that he should have called his novel "In search of lost time" and given to its triumphant conclusion the title "Time Regained." His problem is not how to recapture moments from the past, but how to break down the barrier of habit and indifference which separates him from real life. Memory gives him a hint and an inspiration; but it is art that offers him a means.

The reader of Mlle. Bree's book will find many penetrating remarks scattered through it; and though he may not feel with Mr. Angus Wilson (who provides an introduction) that "it is a work to read with the great novel as a kind of compass of direction," he will certainly return to the novel with a livelier interest than ever which will also, thanks to this book, be more than ever richly rewarded.

G. W. IRELAND

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ANNE LEVEY, an English Research Student, and DAVID TWYMAN, an Engineer, combined with "The Other Side of the Wall."

THOMAS BLACKBURN is the Gregory Fellow in Poetry at the University, and JAMES SIMMONS, CHRISTOPHER NEWTON and PAT PURCELL are members of the English Department.

DONALD DOWIE, who wrote the article on Racial discrimination, is himself a South African reading Classics here at Leeds.

J. S. LEE is a Medic and a prominent member of Film Society.

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