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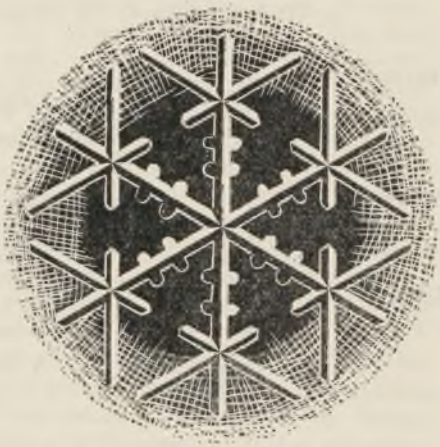

DOUBLE GRYPHON

Leeds University Journal

SUMMER 1953

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Diana Clavering

EDITORIAL

the story so far Honestly we thought there was *nothing* in our last editorial that could possibly offend even the most delicate - minded sensibility : we were wrong. It would appear that although the Average Reader does not read editorials (are you still with us ?) he very definitely reserves for *himself* the right to decide not to read them. Of course when we realised this we immediately craved pardon for the way in which we had usurped this right, and promised to make full amends for our sins of omission in the last issue by including two editorials in this. Imagine then how we were pained and surprised when we found the reaction against this proposal to be even more violent. However we hope to soothe some of the hard feelings caused by our falling between two stools in the last issue, when we sit upon two stools in this

now read on What is extraordinary is the fact that although there was plenty of protest when we started tampering with the *status quo* (Latin) we could not remember having heard any previous affirmation of the positive value of editorials. Like " The Freedom of the Individual " they are just one more of the many hard-won social or cultural achievements surrounding us that are accepted nowadays without question and without interest. And they were hard-won, for Britain was once threatened with invasion by a foreign power, and The Gryphon deficit once stood at £148.

The only beneficial result of this bloodbath was that the Party was so alarmed by the signs of its waning popularity that it reversed its policy of " War Communism " and allowed a partial return to a free economy. For the next eight years the Russian peasantry enjoyed a degree of prosperity which they had never known before and many of them still look back to the N.E.P. as a golden age—to many Russian peasants it seemed that the Revolution for which they had fought had been fully justified. In 1929 N.E.P. came to an end and the second Revolution, " the revolution from above," as Stalin called it with his inimitable candour, began. The collectivization of agriculture meant death or deportation to millions of Russian peasants (by no means all of whom were " kulaks," which was in any case a very elastic concept) ; the First Five Year Plan was carried out by methods of brutal exploitation such as would not have been tolerated in the heyday of primitive capitalism. In a novel by the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg about the building of Magnitogorsk, one of the characters aptly compares the " construction of socialism " to the building of the pyramids. With a frankness which is no longer possible many Soviet writers of this period described the life of the wretched herds of deported peasants in the shanty towns which sprang up round the major construction sites of the Five Year Plan. At the same time the vast forced labour camp empires were built up round such places as Vorkuta in the far North and Magadan, in Siberia, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. During the whole of the thirties, and particularly during the purge of 1936/39 (popularly known in Russia as the *Ezhovshchina* after the Commissar for Internal Affairs, Ezhov, whose reign of terror ended with the discovery that he, like his innumerable victims, was also an " enemy of the people," large numbers of Russians were sentenced administratively—that is, by the decision of special tribunals—to long terms of forced labour in these camps. Since the war mass deportations have been carried out in various parts of Russia by the internal security troops and there is no reason to believe that the number of Russians held in concentration camps is less than it was before

the war. In some quarters it is regarded as almost indecent to mention such facts as these—they are now extremely difficult to deny owing to the presence in the West of about half a million Soviet citizens, officers and men of the Red Army, workers, peasants and intellectuals, who escaped from the Soviet Union during and after the war—but they are the essential background to any study of " Soviet Man " unless one is content to accept uncritically the myth created by Soviet propaganda and apparently accepted by many people in the West, irrespective of their political views, that the Russian people are an undifferentiated mass of docile devotees of " communism." It is true that no Russian ever publicly criticizes the policies of the Soviet Government, that the elected representatives of the people in the shape of the Supreme Soviet meet twice a year to approve unanimously all the measures taken by the government in the interval between its sessions and that millions of Russians file dutifully over the Red Square on May 1st and November 7th. On the surface what better proof could there be of the " moral-political unity of the Soviet People " and its " boundless love for the Party of Lenin and Stalin," of which the Soviet press daily and at great length reminds its readers ? Any one who lives in Russia for any length of time, provided he knows the language and has opportunities of meeting people unofficially and without witnesses (which is by no means easy in present conditions), soon becomes aware that the vaunted "moral-political unity " is to a considerable extent fictitious. This is not to say that there are not many Russians who wholeheartedly and fanatically support and serve the system —no regime could exist without fairly extensive support —but there are also many Russians who are critical of various aspects of the regime under which they live. Such criticism is necessarily inarticulate since there is no channel through which it can be expressed. At the most it may be shared with a small group of intimate friends : all Russians, whatever their attitude to the regime, know that any incautious word is liable to be reported to the " competent authorities " by the police informers in their midst. Nobody takes seriously the article of

the Soviet Constitution which guarantees freedom of speech, but everybody reckons with article 58 of the Soviet criminal codex which prescribes up to 25 years' detention with forced labour for " anti-Soviet propaganda." Difficult as it admittedly is to gain reliable evidence about the submerged section of Soviet opinion, it is, I think, essential to take account of it out of all fairness to the Russian people.

There are four main categories in Soviet society—the factory workers, the peasants, the intelligentsia (students, schoolteachers, artists, writers, etc.) and the bureaucracy. I cannot discuss any of these groups in detail, but I will say a little about those with which I had most contact.

In pre-revolutionary Russia the intelligentsia was once defined as the " critically-thinking part of society." Its tradition is a glorious one and it was always in the forefront of the people's struggle against the social injustice and oppression of Tsarist Russia. As far as I was able to judge from my acquaintances among Russian intellectuals in Moscow it has still retained its power of critical thought, even though it is powerless to do anything about social injustice (which theoretically does not exist). The intelligentsia is a constant target for attacks in the press and there seems to be no end to the " ideological deficiencies " to which it seems to be addicted —idealism, bourgeois subjectivism, bourgeois objectivism, formalism, vulgar materialism, cosmopolitanism, obsequiousness towards things foreign and a host of others. This in itself would seem to betoken a much greater diversity of outlook among Soviet intellectuals than is commonly supposed. It is difficult to escape the mental straightjacket of dialectical materialism, but the natural intellectual curiosity of the Russian often leads him into the dangerous path of independent philosophizing which may get him into hot water. Quite recently a leading Soviet author, Leonid Grossman, was accused in *Pravda* of the curious sin of " pythagoreanism." In a novel about the Battle of Stalingrad, which has been appearing as a serial in the literary journal *Novy Mir*, it seems that he presented the Battle of Stalingrad as a symbolic struggle between eternal

forces of good and evil, thus deviating from the Marxist interpretation of history as a struggle between classes. Such manifestations of an " alien philosophy " rarely appear in print nowadays owing to the vigilance of the editors of Soviet journals and the fact that most writers vet their works very carefully before publication. Even so people are always making " errors " which they invariably have to recant once they have been pointed out by *Pravda*. The President of the Union of Writers, Fadeev, was obliged to re-write his novel " The Young Guard," which describes a Komsomol resistance group in the Ukraine during the war, after *Pravda* had criticized it for failing to show the leading rôle of the Party in the organization resistance to the Germans. Not long ago the Ukrainian poet Sosyura was severely criticized for writing a poem on the beauties of his Motherland, in which he failed to mention the mechanization of agriculture, the " Stalinist transformation of nature " (*i.e.*, the afforestation of parts of the Ukraine subject to drought), and other boons conferred upon the Ukraine by the Soviet Government. During the purge of " homeless cosmopolitans " at the beginning of 1949, the Jewish poet Pervomaisky was exposed as a Zionist (although like many Soviet Jews he had always been a fierce opponent of Zionism) because he happened to mention in one of his poems a Mount Sion in Rumania, which he had seen there as correspondent attached to the Soviet Army during the war. It is this sort of constant interference with the work of Soviet writers and artists which has given rise among them to the sardonic maxim : " If you think, don't speak ; of you speak, don't write ; if you write, don't publish, if you publish, recant ! "

Most of the intellectuals I was able to talk with expressed great resentment at the restrcitions on their freedom of expression. The predominant feeling was one of pain at the fact that they are so little trusted by the Party. As one of my friends put it to me : " We are treated not like responsible adults, but like little children. We are told what to read and what not to read, what to write and what not to write." The jamming of foreign broadcasts in Russian, which began

while I was in Moscow, caused great astonishment. Many people with short-wave sets had formed the habit of listening to them, although I doubt whether they were very much influenced by them. They did, however, do much to satisfy the immense curiosity of the average Russian about life in foreign countries and they enabled people to learn things which, for one reason or another, were not reported in the Soviet press.

Among many Russian intellectuals there is a great appetite for all kinds of banned literature, which is partly satisfied, at least in Moscow and Leningrad, by a black-market in books. The works of many Soviet writers, such as Babel, Kirshon and Pilnyak, who were liquidated in the late thirties, which have been removed from the bookshops and libraries, still circulate in this manner.

This appetite for forbidden fruit is whetted by the clumsy methods of the Soviet censorship (known as *Glavlit*—an abbreviation standing for Chief Literary Directorate), which "doctors" second-hand books by ripping out offending passages —generally prefaces written by authors who at one time or another have fallen into disgrace—and scratching out or inking over the names of "enemies of the people" wherever they occur. There is also some evidence that forbidden literature circulates in manuscript, although I did not see any of this myself. There was, however, a report in one of the Central Asian papers three years ago about the unmasking of a lecturer in Russian literature at Tashkent University who had committed the heinous offence of reading to a private gathering of students some verses of the decadent aesthetic Boris Pasternak which had "not been accepted for publication."

The chief beneficiaries of the Soviet system are supposedly the industrial workers. It is true that many of them, particularly in such major branches of industry as steel and coal-mining, are quite prosperous. The monetary incentives for a skilled worker who overfulfils his norm are high. On the other hand there is an enormous gulf in terms of wages and privileges between the skilled worker and the semi-skilled or unskilled labourer—a skilled steelworker, for instance, may earn as much as 4,000 roubles a month, whereas an ordinary navvy may

"What are you laughing at? You have just had the last warning for slacking, before being sent off to Siberia."
"Oh, it wouldn't be the first time I'd had the last warning!"

earn as little as 400 a month, that is ten times less. The discrepancy between the highest and the lowest paid workers is certainly much greater than in England. Perhaps one of the most curious features of the Soviet system is the harshness of the dictatorship which the proletariat exercises over itself. Many of the laws by which the life of Soviet workers is regulated make the Taft–Hartley Law look progressive and would be quite unenforceable in countries where the proletariat languishes under the heel of the monopoly capitalists. Under a series of laws enacted by the Council of Ministers (and unanimously approved by the Supreme Soviet) just before the war, workers were forbidden to change their place of work without the permission of the factory director; they were made liable to up to six months' forced labour for absenteeism without good cause and they were made financially responsible for materials or tools which they damage or spoil during work. The Russians would indeed be an extraordinary people if they accepted this sort of legislation without internal protest; in fact it has caused as much ill-feeling against the authorities as anything since the collectivization of agriculture. Although it is quite impossible to speak out against it, it does seem to be possible

to evade it in various ways, since the press is always complaining about " infringements of labour discipline." Whether it is strictly enforced or not depends on the managers and foremen, who are bound by law to report infringements of it to the courts—failure to do so theoretically makes them liable to prosecution. In the eyes of the workers a " good " manager is one who takes the risk of winking at infringements, or at least does no more than give a warning. Provided nobody makes a denunciation to the public prosecutor or the local Party committee such " liberalism," as it is called, may be practised with impunity, particularly in smaller factories where everybody knows each other. Another malpractice in the factories which causes the authorities great concern and which they are almost powerless to combat is what is known in slang as "*tufta*." *Tufta* to the Russian worker is what the strike is to the British worker, *i.e.*, it enables him to increase his wages without working any harder. Roughly speaking it consists in the collective falsification of norms by turning in inflated reports about the output of a group (or " brigade ") of workers. This is quite simple under the piece-work system on which wages are based as long as the connivance of the foreman can be assured, and it is practised so widely that the actual output of a Soviet factory is often much less than indicated by the figures returned by the factory director to the State Planning office in Moscow. A slight " adjustment " of 20–30%, judging by frequent reports in the press, is by no means uncommon.

The most abused and harried section of Soviet society is the bureaucracy. The bureaucrat is the link between the broad masses and their rulers, which is about as enviable a position as being between the proverbial hammer and anvil. Constant pressure from above to fulfil directives and targets which are often met with passive resistance from below makes his life into a hell. He is attacked and lampooned in the press for his human weaknesses and every economic and administrative shortcoming is laid at his door. He has no security whatsoever, since any mistake made by himself or one of his subordinates, is quite likely to cost him his job and all the privileges (such as his car and chauffeur) which go with it.

It is, in my opinion, quite untrue that the Soviet bureaucracy has become a kind of middle class like the bourgeoisie in Western European countries. To become this it would have to enjoy far greater security of tenure than is the case. It is certainly true, on the other hand, that many Soviet bureaucrats behave like bourgeois, making the most of their economic privileges while they last. The Soviet press abounds with feuilletons and caricatures denouncing bureaucrats for living in high style at the expense of the State. The career of many of them ends with a colossal banquet thrown for their friends and relatives. Some of them manage to get by and maintain themselves in office by bribing their superiors and the government inspectors, but few of them escape in the end.

Although Russia has made gigantic economic progress during the Soviet period, and particularly under the rule of Stalin, the progress has been achieved at the expense of reverting to and, in many cases, intensifying some of the most obnoxious features of Tsarist Russia. It is often argued that this was inevitable owing to the anarchic, undisciplined nature of the Russians, and that in any case the Russians have always had (and therefore deserved) a tyrannical form of government. This view seems to me highly questionable and uncharitable. Certainly no Russians within the Soviet Union wish to undo the positive achievements of the Communist regime or restore the landlords and capitalists, but the vast majority of them would welcome some modification of the political system.

March, 1953.

Two Poems by

ON PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN HIGH HOUSES

I climbed to where high houses ridged the hill
For all around sprawled stony ranked woe,
Book pages crooked from perverted skill,
engraved on earth's brow dooms ago.

People who court the early snarl of snow
Live there, and smile at autumn's shrill,
Loud, boasting, on the bare plateau,

And their quiet power and gravely simple smile,
Unheeding other forces, false or foe,
Was creed enough to raze all wrinkles vile
engraved on earth's brow dooms ago.

Gordon Heard

THE PHILOSOPHERS

Our time is whittled cutting strands
And locking them into long chains
With which we fasten tendril hands.

Time is taskmaster to our brains
Directing every fevered finger.
Life, a shore of scattered grains

Where we, grit-choked, are left to linger.
Sweeping shifting sands away,
While fighting an unwithered hunger.

If we hear a song in May
Sung by happy, witless boys,
We wryly raise our heads to say,

"A kind of 'transcendental' noise
These greenlings make," but we remember
Other days, white spirit poise,

Youth garnered, sapling limbs and limber,
Long before abstraction's fog
Had brought this clever, dull November.

DOUBLE BILL

Bonamy Dobrée

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Henry IV by LUIGI PIRANDELLO. Theatre Group. 10th March, 1953.

WHO, AND WHAT, ON EARTH ARE WE? What is the sort of life we, and all the people round us, live, or think to live? These questions would have seemed mad to playgoers a generation ago, folk who lived on a good solid basis, and knew where they were going. But to-day, what with indeterminacy in science, with ideas of the illusory personality in psychology, with odd notions of the time-space continuum rolling about in our minds like balls in a skittle alley and, foggier than all, a philosophy of Existentialism, these questions are the web of our daily life. It is all very well to sit about, and talk, and cogitate, but how are these ideas to be made actualities? How can they be expressed palpably so that they become part of what we call reality? That is the problem that faces the dramatist, the problem that Pirandello solved so brilliantly, especially in this play, and in *Six Characters in Search of an Author.*

Pirandello would seem, in *Henry IV*, to have made the difficulty all the more appalling by involving the audience in matters assuming a knowledge of the Eleventh century. Which of us knows enough history for that? But what a magnificent way of approaching the question of reality and unreality it turns out to be! Shakespeare had approached it in *The Tempest*, Calderon in *La Vida es Sueño*, each by wildly unrealistic methods; but here the mixture of the now and the then throws us at once into the heart of the philosophic mystery. No unusual strain is necessary to achieve the willing

suspension of disbelief for the moment which is the condition of entering into any stage play. For at least one thing is certain: it is first rate theatre, which grips from the first moments—though these are really only a history lesson! Then as the play proceeds, maintaining its extraordinary tension, the "meaning," the relevance to ourselves, creeps in till when, in the last act, Henry says:

> I am cured, gentlemen: because I can act the mad man to perfection, here: and I do it very quietly, I'm sorry only for you that have to act your madness so agitatedly, without knowing it or seeing it,

the whole application to ourselves strikes home. Do we habitually wear our own mask as we play the part others require of us, or somebody else's mask that has been imposed upon us?

How far this awakeningly original attack upon the assumptions by which we live is eternally valid only time will show. Perhaps it is too particular to our own time, wanting in the poetry, the releasing power, that makes the imagination able to modify reality. Perhaps it is too local and immediate. For the moment it works, it sends us away brooding, freed from the petty circumstances of our own "agitated" condition, which is the function of tragedy. But it is not just a play about ideas, an Expressionist exercise, but a play about flesh and blood in action, the tragedy of a man faced by an agonising dilemma in which his whole being, literally, is involved. That it succeeded in being an experience at the Riley-Smith Hall was largely due to the acting of Malcolm Rogers, who made Henry absolutely convincing, the production in general being good enough not to interfere, which is saying a good deal in a play which needs so much sensitive understanding. Barrington Black very nearly succeeded in a completely cold-douche part, apparently easy but actually very difficult; he spoilt it by a slackness of being in the last act. The setting was admirable. If the performance was not the best the Theatre Group has achieved, it can congratulate itself on a piece of work that was more than worth while, and the sort of thing it ought to do.

Fedia Charvat

THE STAR GIRL

THIS IS A TRUE STORY, and it's all about Jenny and her silver star. Now just as Jenny was born, many years ago, a falling star was blown through the broken window pane of their cottage by a sudden gust of wind, so when her mother took her first look at her she was taken aback by the shining silver star on little Jenny's forehead.

And the whole village, who quickly heard the news, soon filled the little room to see this extraordinary occurrence (for nothing ever happened in that village). Some thought it was a work of the devil (but did not say so aloud) and others said it was a sign of something (but they did not know what). Even the vicar only nodded his head knowingly and did not say anything (but he said an extra prayer that night just to be on the safe side).

But little Jenny grew up until she was not so little, and she wore two long pigtails just like any other girl, and she did not like sums, just like any other girl. And everybody forgot about the silver star except Jenny herself.

First thing Jenny did every morning when she woke up was to look into the mirror to see if her silver star was still there, and during the afternoons

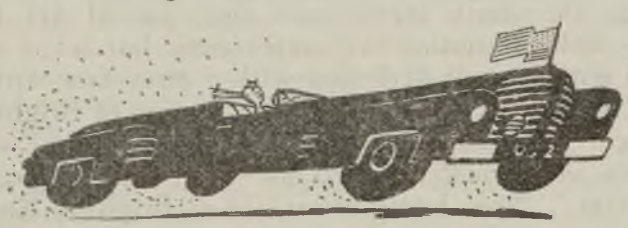
after school she would lie in the long grass at the edge of a field and dream about the prince who would arrive on a white horse and take her away to his castle. And there she would not have to go to school, but just chew bubblegum all day and become as beautiful as the girls in the magazines her aunt sent her from America.

But princes on white horses must have been scarce in those days because when Tony arrived in the village with a shiny black motor car with a magical horn that played Oranges and Lemons, Jenny went with him for long drives in the country. And as they swept through towns and villages and took corners on two wheels Jenny thought that Tony must be the prince after all, and a motor car is really much better than a whole herd of white horses—any way Tony said he had a hundred of them under the bonnet. And one day they so fast they went faster than the wind itself and, when they stopped for a few minutes, Jenny noticed that a star was missing from the flag which always fluttered over the bonnet of the car. She counted them once, twice, but she could not make them add up to the right number. She told this to Tony, but he just laughed and said : " Then you had better give me the star from your forehead —let me count." But he counted the right number and Jenny felt very silly and wished she was better at sums.

When she got home, however, she looked in the mirror and she could hardly believe her eyes—

the silver star was gone. She rubbed her eyes and turned out the contents of her handbag, but the star had vanished.

"Now I have lost my star I will never he able to find my prince," she said. "I must go to the police station." So she went to the police station and all the policemen were very kind, but they said that a silver star on the American flag was a very important matter and they told her she would have to go and see the Prime Minister.



Now Jenny thought the Prime Minister would be much too important for her to talk to, but he consented to see her between two divisions in the House of Commons, so it was all right. However, when he heard the story his face grew more and more serious and when she had finished his face showed extreme worry.

"My dear little constituent," he said. "In these evil days which have befallen our great country we all have to make sacrifices. Now fifty years ago I would have ordered a fleet to retrieve your silver star. However times have changed and in this world of shifting values it is necessary that any situation of this nature should be handled with the greatest delicacy. I am afraid that at the

moment we cannot see our way to removing a star from the flag of our ally, but let me assure you that the matter will be kept constantly under review"

But when the matter had been under review for the third month Jenny lost all hope of getting back the star. "Now I shall never meet my prince," she said, "so it does not matter where I go or what I do." So she just followed her nose and walked and walked and walked and did not notice even the shiny motor cars that passed her by. She did not notice the motor cars, but what she did notice was a little boy with a dirty face sitting by the side of the road sucking a piece of Brighton Rock. "Hullo, little girl," he said. "Come and have some rock and tell me what has happened to you." Now Jenny always liked Brighton Rock, so she sat down next to him and told him all about her silver star, and how Tony took it away on his flag, and how even the Prime Minister could not get it back.

"Let's see if I can do anything about it," said the boy, "My grannie used to tell me that all good girls have silver stars. But first you must promise me that you will be a really good girl from now on." Jenny quickly dried her tears and promised and crossed her heart twice just to show that she meant it, and the boy then turned out his pockets and produced a bottle of Sydol Silver Spoon Polisher and a piece of rag, and when he had polished Jenny's forehead, presto! there was the star again, brighter than ever.

REVIEWS

A Single Taper and *The Inward Eye—Boy*, 1913 :
The Partridge Press, 2/6.

RONALD SCRIVEN has written these two verse plays especially for radio and in doing so he has been most acutely aware of the limitations which the medium imposes upon the creative artist as well as the freedom it enables him to enjoy.

Both plays are autobiographical and have now been published in book form with a short appreciation by Phyllis Bentley. The first is an account of a patient undergoing an operation of eye-trephine under only a local anaesthetic The fact that the patient is the poet himself enables him with almost clinical detachment to witness the processes of his own mind through each phase of the ordeal and he expresses each with frightening candour.

These phases appear to be formed against the taut background of the artist's heightened consciousness of light. Light in all its forms—

" Night
maybe lit by stars
worlds
suns.
eyes bright as Blake's tyger
all diverse :
but single is light
one whether burning as candles before
the high altar
in mildness
or blazing and shaking, hard, harsh and metallic,
intolerable, bright,
as it bursts from the thermite bomb,
burns like all flame
to God's glory ;
one ; infinite ;
light."

Mr. Scriven has succeeded in taking an unusual experience —an experience much more mentally than physically agonizing —and transforming it into a strangely satisfying verse play.

" The Inward Eye—Boy 1913," is the charming account of the kind of day which everyone treasures in the mind. For the poet the day has the added splendour of existing in an age that was peaceful, sunny and undismayed—before the first world war. He takes the day carefully out of his memory, examines it and treasures it, investing each incident and detail with a quiet nostalgic happiness. It is not only a day in the life of a small boy—" the lost summers of boyhood "—it is a commentary on an era which has gone for ever.

The poet emerges from both poems as the acutest observer. No detail, seen by the outward or the inward eye, escapes him. But his minutest observation, chronicled with scientific thoroughness is, he claims, the province of all men and the essence of poetry.

Both plays are concerned with sensitive inner probing. Yet the tenuous awareness of the first, balancing as it does between commonsense and hysteria, is a profound contrast with the second, which balances with equal precision between youthful exuberance and nostalgia.

Bearing in mind the medium for which these plays were written, one cannot but be impressed by the skill and craftsmanship with which the artist has adapted his talents.

MARIAN OWEN.

Sir Richard Acland
MUSIC IN THE SHRUBBERY

ANYONE CAN *MAKE* a musical hose pipe; to play it, you must be able to lip a note really strongly (I hope "lip" is the right word), as you would if playing a trumpet or trombone.

You take about two yards of garden or garage hose pipe. Heavy hose with thick walls to the tube answers better than light hose whose internal and external diameters are almost equal. When playing, you are going to hold the hose with the two thumbs (underneath) and the first and little finger of each hand (on top). Hold the hose accordingly with the first finger of the right hand about eight inches from the mouth and, with the remaining three fingers spaced equally and as widely as possible down the tube. In ink mark where the fingers fall, and mark the angles or slant at which they lie across the hose. Cut holes accordingly and make them as big as the fingers will cover. Make one more hole, which will always remain uncovered, about six inches beyond the last little finger hole. And there you are.

The only question is whether you can blow into the thing as if it were a hunting horn and whether you can lip the note you want sufficiently forcefully to get a range of about three or four low tones when the bottom hole only is opened,

and about two or three successively higher tones as you open each of your four "stops." If you can, you have an instrument with a range of about a scale and a half; and within that range you can, of course, get all the tones, semi-tones and quarter tones.

It must be confessed that the hose is more favourable to the *largo* than to the *presto*. But I have always wanted to meet someone else who would master it, because then, by using a four yard piece, we could play duets in close harmony from opposite ends of the same instrument.

Engraved by the Hon. G. Alan Cooper

From The Gryphon *of Fifty Years Ago*

WOMEN'S DEBATING SOCIETY

THE FIRST MEETING of the Society took place on the 4th May, 1903. The first business was the election of a Treasurer, it being the custom for a first year member to fill this position. Miss M. Hastings was elected. The meeting then drew up a set of rules for the conduct of the Society, and this being done the first debate took place.

The subject under discussion was "Vivisection." After the minutes had been read and confirmed, Miss Cardozo spoke in favour of vivisection, taking as a basis of her speech the Licensing Laws, which secure a maximum of progress with

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I'LL SING YOU ONE O!

I'll sing you one-o !
(Gold grows the barley-o).
What is your one-o ?
One is 1.–and GUINNESS TIME
And evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you two-o !
(Green grow the hops-o).
What are your two-o ?
Two, two — the toucan knows
Just what toucan do-o.
One is 1.–and GUINNESS TIME
And evermore shall be so.

I'll sing you Guinness-o !
(Live grows the yeast-o).
What is your Guinness-o ?
Guinness is good for you.
Two, two — the toucan knows
Just what toucan do-o.
One is 1.–and GUINNESS TIME
And evermore shall be so.

G.E.2113.A

a minimum of pain. Miss Hilary followed and took the opposite view, speaking feelingly against all experiments performed on living animals. Miss Goodson vividly described the entire co-operation of animals under treatment by vivisectors and their intense delight in being vivisected, and stated that professors were only too glad for respectable people to visit their laboratories and see this for themselves. Miss Porritt, Miss Skinner, Miss Maccoby and Miss Skinner followed with short speeches. The President quoted a little Bacon in an attempt to show how the inductive method of research might apply to vivisection, and then called on Miss Hilary to reply. After Miss Cardozo had again spoken the votes were taken :

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For Vivisection	..	19
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The second meeting was held on the 8th June. After some business arising out of the rules had been dealt with, Miss Lishman was called upon to propose "That Universal Thrift is Not Desirable." Miss Lishman's definition of thrift implied saving money and doing without all comfort and luxuries, in fact without everything not absolutely necessary. Miss Claridge opposed the motion, drawing a distinction between the miser and the thrifty person, and taking the bee, the ant and the squirrel as examples. Miss Cardozo said she was not against thrift, but against its being put down as

Continued on Page 33

"Money talks, you know,"

began the Platitudinarian,

" if I might coin a phrase — "

" TALKING OF MONEY," interrupted the Man of Affairs, seizing the initiative, " I let Lloyds Bank look after *my* interests. My wife has a current account there, too. I have appointed Lloyds Bank as my executor. I consult them frequently — and fruitfully — on the financial aspects of overseas business. And now, my dear Sir, if you will excuse me, I must get along to the Bank — I'm going abroad in a few days and I find it always helps to have a word with Lloyds Bank before I travel. Thank you for a most informative and profitable conversation."

Let LLOYDS BANK

look after *your* interests

1677

a principle of conduct. She considered that the poor man had no chance to be thrifty, and there followed a calculation to show that if the earnings of any man were x, if all became thrifty this would be reduced to $x-y$. Miss Neville gave the instance of the great use to the world of Mr. Carnegie's thrift. Miss Cardozo said she had nothing against millionaires in particular, but considered them as legal swindlers ; and Miss Martin thought that universal thrift would narrow us down to the exclusion of scientific research. After Miss Claridge and Miss Lishman had replied the votes were taken, which were :

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Contents

AS OTHERS SEE US

EDITORIAL

through the distorted looking glass

"Nonsense," said Alice, "I don't look at all like that."

"Not so much nonsense neither," said the Duchess, who had up till that moment been walking up and down admiring her reflection in the looking glass. "*I* think it brings out my natural beauty."

Alice thought that there must be something drastically wrong with any looking glass that made the Duchess look beautiful, but she was too polite to say so.

"You're thinking again," interrupted the Duchess. "I can't abide folks that are always thinking."

"I just thought there was something queer about it."

"Stuff!" said the Duchess in a tone of finality. "It's a triumph of mirror building. It shines out like a red light in a naughty world. It's based on all the best laws of reflection like diminishing returns as the square of the distance from a single point

●

The position of Britain as a Great Power, and the British Way of Life, are regarded as a sort of extension of the Divine Right of Kings, and as such it smacks of blasphemy to question them, and is considered rather poor taste to consider them at all, let alone show a lot of ungentlemanly enthusiasm and uncouth fervour.

The right of the individual to freedom of speech is accepted completely and complacently, but we forget that rights and duties go hand-in-hand, and implicit in this right is a duty : the duty to be not silent. Because one of the articles we publish in this issue *could* be the sort of thing that would be regarded as " deviationist " on one side of the iron curtain, or as " unamerican " on the other, we can hope that it might be accepted on both sides. We are in the position of the independent observer, we are not required to owe allegiance. The Gryphon cannot hope that its voice will be heard above the thunder of propaganda and counter-propaganda, our contribution lies in being an alternative. And we think that with this responsibility we should be much less irresponsible in future ; so count your blessings, and do please cast an eye over the editorial occasionally.

are you still with us? Good. Now read on.

H. M. Hayward

THE RUSSIAN AND HIS REGIME

DURING THE LAST THIRTY YEARS OR SO the Russian people have been the object of a unique social and political experiment. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which always was and still is a minority party, has conducted this experiment with unparalleled ruthlessness and singlemindedness, and the cost in human life has been tremendous. The " construction of socialism," which was, in effect, the conversion of a largely agricultural economy into a highly industrialized one, probably cost as many Russian lives as the Second World War. Almost every major measure of the Soviet Government has been carried through in the teeth of massive though completely unorganized opposition from wide sections of the people. The Civil War was scarcely ended when, in 1921, there were two revolts against the new regime. Both of them were essentially popular and were the result of a widespread feeling that the Bolsheviks had won support during the Civil War by false promises of land to the peasants. The first revolt was that of the sailors on the island of Kronstadt in the gulf of Finland. The Kronstadt sailors, all of whom had supported the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, demanded free elections, with the right of free preliminary agitation for all revolutionary parties (*i.e.*, Mensheviks, Social revolutionaries as well as Bolsheviks) and an end to the dictatorship of Lenin and Trotsky. The second revolt was that of the peasantry in the Tambov region, which was led by a Social Revolutionary called Antonov. Both revolts were crushed and many thousands of Russians who had taken part in them were summarily executed by the select Red Army detachments sent against them under the command of Trotsky and Tukhachevsky (both of whom later turned out to be " agents of the Gestapo)."

"But don't you think it's a bit distorted," asked Alice.

"Oh, it's just the frame that's warped, that's all. You see it was made by a warped Carpenter. I always thought he was queer from the moment he started going about with that Walrus."

"What Walrus?" asked Alice.

"Oh here's the Gryphon," said the Duchess. "He'll tell us all about it."

"He looks very upset," said Alice.

"Oh that's just his way," said the Duchess, and stirred him with her foot: "Up lazy thing and tell this young lady your story."

The Gryphon slowly raised himself from the rock where he had been sitting, which was now quite damp with tears, which he continued to rub out of his eyes.

"Well it all started with my brother-in-law," he finally managed to say between sobs.

"Was he a Gryphon, too?" asked Alice.

"Yes, he was a Gryphon Two, in fact they was. You see he was a Double Gryphon."

"A Double Gryphon," said Alice, "What's that?"

"Well you've heard of a Double Penguin, or a Double Pelican. Well why shouldn't there be a Double Gryphon?"

Alice was duly impressed.

"As I was saying," he continued, " it all started with my brother-in-law. He was quite a respectable Mythical Beast, and he was emblazoned on some of the best shields in the country, but then shields went out of fashion and the only scope he found for his exhibitionist nature was with a small teaching establishment in the Midlands. Until . . . "

and there was a pause while he blew his nose

" until he took up with some natural vision merchants from the Polaroid Corporation, who were determined to ram him down the public's throat at any cost."

" Really down their throats? " asked Alice.

" Well no. But he had to leap out at them in a most unmannerly fashion."

" A Gryphon in Your Lap," quoted Alice.

And when the Gryphon found that Alice, too, had heard

about it he buried his head in his paws. Alice was really sorry for him, so she tried to be as nice as she could.

Have you read any good books lately ? " she asked politely.

" I can't read," said the Gryphon in a muffled voice, " but my brother-in-law. . . ."

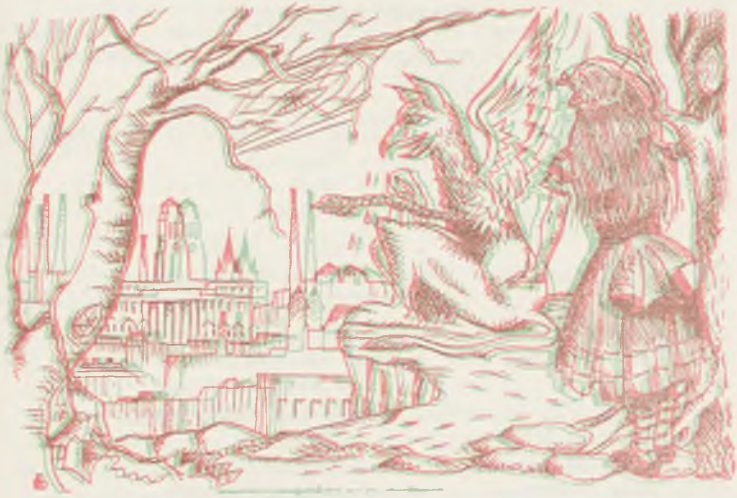
" Well have you seen any good shows ? "

" He was in all the best shows," he continued sadly. " He had long runs in the West End. ' The Gryphon Has Two Heads,' was acclaimed by all the critics, and appeared in all the headlines."

" Then I suppose ' The Gryphon Has Two Feet ' would have appeared in the footnotes," pondered Alice. " But didn't his two heads give him double vision ? "

" Oh no. You see, one head saw the world through rose-coloured spectacles. And the other took a distinctly blue view of life."

" Then he must have been colour blind."



"But he used to say that seeing red in one eye and blue in the other enabled him to perceive hidden depths. He could see the Swallow before the Summer and the Pride before the Fall. He could see forward into distant lands, and backwards into history. He used to say that two biassed views were a much better way of assessing a situation then one objective report. In fact the whole point of being a Double Gryphon was that you could present two mutually incompatible views at the same time."

Alice thought this was rather hard going, but the Gryphon was so inspired by his rhetoric that he would not stop to repeat it for her.

"In the past we Gryphons have been accused of being unreasonable," he went on. "Of course we are broad minded enough to admit that perhaps we might be prejudiced." And here he drew himself up proudly. "But we would maintain stoutly that the prejudices we do have are the best there are."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The illustration on page 15 appears by the kindness and courtesy of *Dublin Opinion*.

"Triptych" appears by kind permission of the Editor of *Echoes*, St. Andrews University Magazine.

AS OTHERS SEE US

H. A. Riza

BRITAIN CAN LEAD THE WORLD AGAIN

MANY PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY are heard, nowadays, to speak of the wonderful old days when the prestige and power of Britain was second to none in the World, when she had a strong and extensive Empire " on which the sun never set " and to grumble that Britain has now lost her position as a first-rate power, and suffered a decline of her international prestige and the disintegration of her Empire. It has been a habit for the British politician of the post-war period to stress that Britain is no longer a great power whenever he had to defend Government policy both at home and abroad.

This attitude is based on wrong assumptions and on conclusions drawn from false premises and is itself a real cause of harm.

Firstly, there has been a great ignorance towards what actually constituted the prestige and good name of Britain and what were the real factors which led Britain to the top.

Many people tempt to associate prestige with material wealth and exhibition of physical force.

I feel very sure that this is a wrong association and that it was the *moral excellence* coupled with the *mental health* of the British people which was the real and main factor in Britain's leadership. The English politeness, cold-bloodedness, skill in human relations, justness, determination, punctuality, keeping to promises and decisions, trustworthiness, high quality and craftsmanship, etc., were set as examples by other peoples

of the world, and it has been usual to speak of many desirable qualities as "English," such as English punctuality, English determination, English policy, etc. One felt sure that one would get justice from the English, that the time would be definitely observed when one invited Englishmen as guests to one's house or for presiding or speaking at a meeting, that one would get the best when one bought English-made goods in the market and that all the promises given or decisions taken by the English would be kept. These all in a network of countless relationships worked for and built the English prestige and made possible the accumulation of material wealth and power. So material wealth and physical power, especially in the case of Britain, have not been the Cause but only the Effect of the Moral and Mental excellence of her people. It is a fact that Britain has lost great material wealth due to the War, but to say that Britain lost prestige because of this loss of material wealth is wrong, as the actual positions of cause and effect are thus reversed.

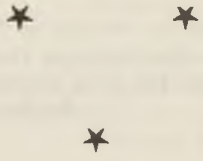
Secondly, there has been a great deal of misunderstanding as to what constitutes real power. Many people think that an arbitrary single-handed command of force and of a great Empire is a real power and deplore the so-called disintegration of the Empire and loss of power through it. But, in fact, real power comes through efficient society, which depends on the "mutual constructiveness of the peoples animated by a sense of common interests." And this state of affairs can be attained by the willful co-operation of equal member States of a Commonwealth and not NOT by subjection and exploitation inherent in imperialism. In the event of war, the power of such a Commonwealth will be much greater and more effective than that of an Empire, because the fight will be for the freedom of all member states and not only for that of the master.

In fact, it is these wrong ideas and judgements enumerated above and the whole set of psychological complexes to which they gave rise which are the real factors of harm and most vital dangers to Britain. The delusion that Britain has lost her prestige and power has got great adverse influence on the

moral and mental state of the people, so that it can shake and endanger the very foundation on which the life and honour of Britain has been built. Its international repercussions are also obvious.

It is the high-time then for the people to get rid of their delusions and complexes, to regain self-respect and self-confidence, see the facts as they are and prepare for the future. This is essential if Britain is going to emerge successfully from the process of reconstruction and transformation which she is undergoing to a position which I believe will be much stronger than it has ever been.

The genuine English qualities which captured the imagination of the peoples of the World for centuries, in short the moral superiority of the British People was the real cause of everything Britain won or attained in the past ; and I strongly believe that Britain can win even a higher place than before and can again lead the World if her people preserve those invaluable qualities which are both of intrinsic value and sources of unlimited power.



John Heath-Stubbs

SAPPHIC ODE

Now I who once knew favour from those high-bred
Ladies frequenting daleheads of Parnassus,
Finding my lute slack, and my skiff in doldrums,
Seek to recall them,

Framing a measure which perhaps remembers
Rose-weaving Sappho; linsey-woolsey English
Draped for the folds of chlamys or of chiton;
Flute-note and lyre-call,

Nosegays plucked on the isle of Mytilene,
Though now the dew's dry on their fresh corollas.
Meliot, crocus and the pink cyclamen,
Back-folded petals.

And will they come then, as they came in boyhood
Blandly consoling loneliness and terror,
When, by the Stour, or by the Hampshire Avon's
Woods, I invoked them;

Or must my songs to drought be relegated—
Night, with her black wings, brood among my laurels,
Art unforeseen then be my only study,
In patient dumbness?

O Muse, descend now, Cinderella goddess—
If not to my lips, yet descend, astounding
(Lambent with terrors, or in clear compassion)
These sand-blind English!

Cataract, come down—or as cat-o'-nine-tails—
Striking the waves of Isis, Usk and Duddon,
Since in their reed-beds, geese are counted swans now,
Kestrels, gyrfalcons.

Cloud-signs are ill-set; light departs—permit not
We should allow the things your wings had taught us,
As in a dream's shame, utterly to vanish,
Through keeping silence.

Brian Lees

BRITISH MUSIC ON THE CONTINENT

FOR ALMOST THE LAST THREE HUNDRED YEARS British composers have been content to copy. Their musical ideals have been no greater than the current Continental modes : and even these have been diluted to quench the somewhat meagre thirst of the British musical public. Never, since the Seventeenth century, has Britain produced a "musical giant." The long list of composers, "familiar in our mouths as household words," contains almost no one to rival German, Italian and French contemporaries. The one exception is probably Frederick Delius. We have our Elgar and Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst and Benjamin Britten ; but their appreciation remains almost completely a nationalistic affair.

Elgar is known abroad as the composer of those enigmatic variations : a musical exercise of remarkable unoriginality. His Enigma Variations were performed for the first time in 1899. About the same time Arnold Schoenberg was writing his string sextet "Verklärte Nacht" and the enormous score of his orchestral "Gurrelieder" : the first brilliant and shattering works of the great leader of the "twelve tone" cycle-composers. Elgar's contribution was, in fact, a good fifty years behind the times : the last gasp of dying and obscenely pompous romanticism. As for his other compositions : his 'cello and violin concertos, his symphonies, they are completely unknown. Even in England they receive only polite and rather sympathetic applause at concerts. Why should British appreciation depend on nationalistic considerations ? It must surely be admitted that the great majority of Elgar's works would never be heard

with any sympathywhatsoever were he not the idol of Edwardian pomposity and the oracle of Apollo to the Three Choirs Festival.

The other great national myth is our contemporary school of composers. They are generally far more efficient than their predecessors : some show considerable promise. But their promise is dedicated to please the majority. No one, it seems, dares go against the musical standards laid down by Sir Henry Wood's Promenade Concerts, which demand severable hummable themes presented in a sufficiently obvious manner.

The chief causes of our musical conservatism are easy to trace. The more popular figures in British contemporary music are still almost completely occupied in paying doubtful devotion to " our folk-song tradition." It is not really an original contribution to transcribe songs dictated by the oldest inhabitant of a remote village and then call the result a " Folk Song Suite." How can our composers fulfil their promise when they are still preoccupied with disgusting weavers, foggy dews and whistling ploughboys wandering over Linden Lea?

That is the typical Continental reaction to British music. Last year, at the Festival of Music of the Twentieth Century in Paris, it would seem that Britain's music of the Twentieth Century goes no further than works like Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis. To the British Public Vaughan Williams is now an almost legendary figure of amazing symphonic proportions. In Germany, however (except for the British Zone) he is virtually unknown. The same applies to France and Italy. In the U.S.A. Toscanini is rather fond of his Sixth Symphony. There lies the limit of the Grand Old Man's appeal. Benjamin Britton is slightly more popular abroad : his style makes him acceptable to Germans and Italians. He is accepted, but he is not ranked with the great.

And yet those, the two foremost of British composers, stand no real chance of great international success because of their inherent conservatism and narrow nationalism. Some British composers have been knighted for their " services to

music," but even this distinction cannot preserve them from joining the already long list of unremembered.

One of the few rays of hope is the small but energetic group of composers headed by Humphrey Searle and Elizabeth Maconchy. They are striving desperately to save Britain from drifting into the extremes of musical parochialism. In making no attempt to " compose down " to the public, they realise they are sacrificing immediate national acclaim ; at the same time they are preserving for themselves everlasting eminence.

What a contrast indeed between British music of today and that of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries ! Few people realise and fewer even care that more British composers were leaders of European music. John Dunstable was one of the triumvirate of the earlier group of great polyphonic composers. In the later group William Byrd ranks equal with Palestrina, Lassus and Victoria. British keyboard instrumentalists could be found in all the Courts of Europe, even in the remote and almost barbaric Hungary. It is in those two centuries that we can find a musical heritage of which we can be really proud.

Why is it that since the Seventeenth century we have become the great importing nation of music ? The two main causes are the growth of nationalism which in its turn effected a conservative policy of *laissez faire* towards music and a preference for current (recent would perhaps be nearer the truth !) continental fashions. It began in earnest with the return of the exiled royalist courts (always the centre of art) and was consolidated by the great artistic lethargy which beset Britain in the next century.

The prime example of the stout British determination not to acknowledge the best, even if it be a home-product is the refusal to accept the one great composer Britain has produced in the Twentieth century—Frederick Delius. In Germany his operas and orchestral works won immediate applause, and France, where in fact he composed most of his works, accept him as one of the most outstanding figures of modern music.

To the British, however, he has only been dead some 18 years and his music has not had time to become decent.

If only we had more composers of Delius' initiative! But he remains alone, and he will always remain alone until British composers are not content to receive immediate success at home as the criterion of greatness. When they have learned not to rely on folk-songs and foreign idioms and to write in terms of the future, and not the present or the past, then perhaps will British composers resume the position which they lost three hundred years ago.

BERNARD BROWN

FILTH AND EGO

I am the God
of my own creation
I revel in
my own stink
and grovel in my own muck
I take up
my iron rod and chastise myself
for in my Kingdom shall run
the sores and blood of men
I am the timeless one

I am not forced on my knees to pray
for daily bread
I am the carnal one
the blasphemer
I am
the fish and chips wrapped up
in the *Sunday Times*
I am the adulterer
the sire of every other bastard
I am the scum
I am the eternal grievance of Humanity

in fact
I'm one of those poor devils who hasn't got a background

TODJA TARTSCHOFF

Parting

Translated by JAMES KIRKUP

We shall take each other's hands
and smile and look at one another
and hardly say a word
for it was never our way
to talk much about
things that touched us
you will be very brave
as you have always been
even at the final instant
you will steel yourself
and if tears fall
I shall not see them
but only your smile
not radiant as I have known it
for you are filled with grief
a handclasp
farewell
I murmur softly
you walk away
and look back
smile once more
and I am left standing
looking after you
watching you gradually
disappear.

AS OTHERS SEE US

Lise Offenberg

TRIPTYCH

JULIA THREW BACK HER HEAD a little, shaking lightly her short, wavy hair; one hand at her hip, she regarded herself in the mirror, with a slight smile of satisfaction. She saw a tall, handsome woman in a simple, well-fitting black dress, whose soft draperies stressed the lines of her body; not too slim, yet firm, pretty legs; the well-proportioned figure of a mature woman. One would hardly guess at first sight that she had passed 40 already; yet it was perhaps that strong, calm light in her eyes that one would first notice about her, the look of a woman sure of herself, who has passed her first youth and knows it, realising the gain as well as the disadvantages of her age.

Suddenly she advanced towards the mirror, pulled out one or two grey hairs from her dark cutting, frowning a trifle at this unwelcome sight. She would rather that Peter should not see those; unnecessary to point out *how* much older she was than he; the role of desirable "protectrice" approaching forty suited her perfectly.

At the thought of Peter her eyes softened; something like a mother's pride or an artist's satisfaction with a good piece of work was mingled in that smile. He was her "work of art"; she felt she had formed him—was indeed the constant source from which his existence nourished itself. He was so hopelessly young and stupid, so awkward, and quite touching in his adoration.

Julia glanced at her watch. He ought to be there now! Her watch was a bit fast actually. He would be in time all right—afraid of being early, yet eager to come, he was always punctual as a clock, and she knew he always would be, always with the same look in his eyes: admiration and fervour, yet full of nervous uncertainty, always seeking to please, eager to guess her wishes. How well she knew him!

Did not the church-clock strike?

Then she laughed at herself: of course, she was fond of him in a way; she had come to be quite used to him, and to appreciate their relationship. Naturally, *she* had made the man of him; she was the entire "force" of their affair; she had directed it where she wanted it, and she could change the direction if she wished. But for the moment it seemed perfect. It was with satisfaction she thought of her ability to fill completely a young man's existence. He lived by her; his work and his home were subsidiary, he did not need to tell her: she could read him like an open book.

Once more she looked at herself, passed her hand over her breast and hip; and smiled. She knew her worth; she had what no young girl would give him: her mature years, experience and calm assurance were what he needed.

* * * * * *

He is wonderful! Oh, you can't imagine what a perfect character he has got. So deep, so strong, such an interesting personality. So wonderfully mature, you know; not like those little college-boys you meet at dances and things. I am so tired of their stupid awkwardness, and it is so refreshing to meet someone who is full of knowledge and wisdom and experience, if you see what I mean. It is like at last finding a book containing the answers to all your questions, after searching and searching. Oh, it is so difficult to describe it—do you think I am stupid?

No-o; but Isabel, do you think it will last? Well, you know I am fond of you, and I know you are intelligent,

as well as pretty ; but you *are* very young ; after all, we are " just school-girls." Are you not afraid that he will want someone nearer his own age, someone at his own level ? Please do not be angry with me for saying all this ; I don't want to under-estimate you, but it *is* a terrible responsibility to marry such a mature man. Do you feel up to it ? You don't mind me being so frank, do you ?

Why, of course not, silly girl. You are sweet to worry, but honestly, there is no need to. Look : he *adores* me ! Of course, I still can't quite understand it ; it seems so fantastic and too good to be true ; *me*, a little nothing, compared with him ; I feel like a grain of dust in the air. But you see, that is just the point : he is so strong and independent, so full of force ; there is not room for another " force " with him. What he needs is someone to protect, someone to take care of —and I simply love being protected by him !

It is terribly romantic, Isabel ! Are you going to get married then ?

He will see Daddy next month, straight after exams. ; he thinks I had better finish school before there is any talk about it. He plans everything beautifully.

You must love him ! But do you feel you know him well enough ? *Really* know him, I mean ?

Oh yes, that's the wonderful thing. Even though he has got so much, a " superior intellect," you know, and experience, of course. Still, I know him at heart ; he is quite open to me ; that's because I am the only one for him. I understand him, you see, and I think I can be for him what he needs.

* * * * * *

The little kitchen was clean and tidy ; a few dirty dishes neatly piled beside the old-fashioned sink ; in the corner the dinner-table was set for two, and a tempting smell from the sauce-pans on the gas-cooker filled the room. The little old

woman dried her hands on her apron, then lifted a corner of the starched curtain to look down at the road. She was waiting for her son to come home. He usually came about 7-30. He always *walked* part of the way out from town ; that was why he returned so late. He was so fond of walking, her son ; he sometimes went out after dinner too. Always alone.

He thought a lot, her boy. He never was much of a talker; he was not interested in the other boys when he was a kid, but used to go out in the woods, or in the fields. The birds and trees and flowers were his friends. God's innocent creatures. He went into town to his work every morning, but he did not like the town. He's never said, of course, but she knew without asking. Noise and cars, men and women, that wasn't anything for him. He did not really like people, her boy. Strange in a way that such a nice, big fellow had never looked at the girls. But then women were not anything either for her boy ; he simply did not see them. He had the trees and the birds, and then home ; although he was not so much there, that was the only place where he belonged. " Mother," he would say, " you are the only one I care for in the world "—or at least he would *think* so. He had not actually said it, but then he did not have to say those things, her son ; she knew anyway. What he wanted was just her around him, cooking, and cleaning, and he was happy. Such a nice and loving boy, her son ; even if he did not say much to her, he had such kind thoughts.

* * * * * *

There was a man standing out at the end of the pier. The waters were deep and clear, the new moon shone faint in the sky. From behind came the mounting and sinking murmur of the wind in the trees.

The man looks down into the water, then he raises his head slowly, and turns round. How he hates that monotonous and plaintive chant of the trees—and yet so attractive ! How hostile and yet fascinating all these sounds in the woods ; animals and

plants, living their own life, not caring a damn about the wretched human beings.

What a complex world, nobody really cares about anybody else ; each of us has to make up for himself. There is no reality ; man is such a damned egoist as to see only himself and his own response around him. We cannot tolerate what we do not know or understand. Who the devil are we to think we can understand anything, anyway ?

Peter Barker goes slowly up through the woods. He thinks of Julia, Isabel, mother. He thinks of his own solitude. He does not quite understand it himself ; he loves them all—and hates them all, for what they are, and for what they are not. He needs them all, and yet they do not help him—not enough.

Beneath him now is the village. He'll go into the house and sit down with his mother ; he can still feel the weight of Julia in his arms ; after dinner he'll go down to walk along the lake with Isabel.

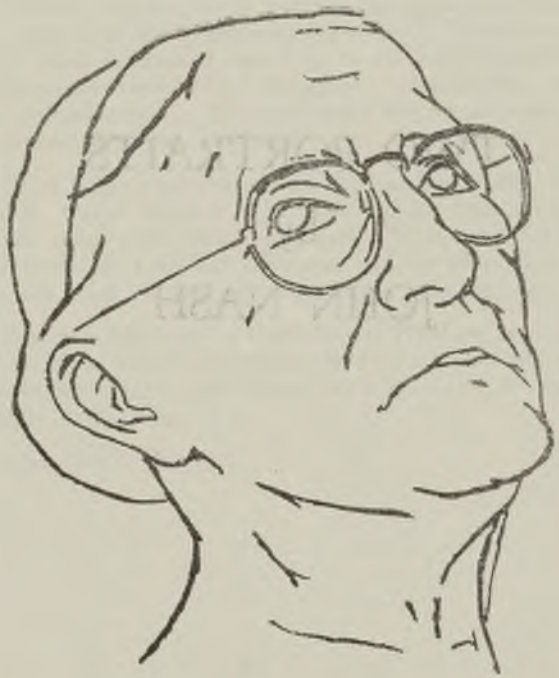
And still be himself.

* * *

TWO PORTRAITS

by

JOHN NASH



3·3·52

FIRST LADY

THIRD GENERATION

" In those days it used to take ten weeks for a letter to come from America. I remember the first one we had from my brother told us what lovely sunshine they were having in California, but it arrived on a November afternoon that was so dark we had to light the lamps specially to read it."

" I thought I'd better start to clean my bike, as the weather seemed to be getting a bit better, and I was messing about in the garage when I found a box with some old letters in it. They all had American stamps on, but they tore when I tried to tear them off. I suppose I shall have to steam them."

AS OTHERS SEE US

Edgar Love
LETTER TO AMERICA

LEEDS, ENGLAND,
Friday, March 13th, 1953.

YOU WAKE UP IN THE MORNING and sometimes you cannot see the building across the street for the fog. And it isn't just the mist *we* call "fog." It's largely smoke from the factory and the "jolly" open fireplace without which no English house is a home. It's smoke that makes your nostrils black and your throat raw, that leaves the unmistakeable stamp of industry on the Victorian buildings and the great slag heaps and the grey stone walls. "There is little," says the travel book with admirable sincerity, "to detain the tourist in Leeds."

This is not my first visit to England. I was here briefly in 1950, making the usual sweep of places that *do* earn their share of the American tourist dollar: London, Hampton Court, Windsor, Stratford, Oxford. It was great fun—thirty of us on a moving house party, and I don't think we met a single Englishman. Someone asked me later what impressions I got of the people. "Well," I ventured, "they sure do have some interesting sights to see." So I'm back again. And in the manufacturing city of the North, where esthetic diversions are scarce indeed, I begin to piece together the complex and confusing elements that form the English pattern of life.

One day a radioman came by to install my wireless set. He was a pleasant enough sort of fellow, and we sat down and chatted for an hour and a half. "I don't suppose a workman could do this other places," he said. "Here we take life in stride." I haven't seen anything which would make me doubt him. It's a strictly low-pressure existence. There seems to be a sociable cup in an Englishman's hand at every hour of the

day, mealtime, morning coffeetime, and teatime, with any time serving as " pub " time. University students simply do not work as hard—American " soulless industry," Bruce Truscot calls it in *Redbrick University*. Service in banks and laundries is enough to make you tear your hair. Where else do people arrange themselves into orderly " queues " ? And wouldn't a sign saying " Keep America Tidy " be hooted down ? This *lento tempo* must result from longevity as a nation.

The epitome of style is the Fleet Street financier in black morning coat, pin-striped trousers, and a bowler hat, with umbrella in hand—just the outfit we might wear to a funeral. A woman who knows how to use her make-up kit is likely to be considered of the " painted " variety. But the English are conservative in matters other than dress. Houses continue to be built in dreary, undetached rows, without being exposed to modern horrors like central heating and weather-stripping. Leeds Grammar School looks for all the world like a medieval church. Speaking charitably, the tasteless and starchy food they down complacently may be traced to their reluctance to experiment, although they certainly can manage queer concoctions for breakfast : baked beans, stewed tomatoes, herring, spaghetti on toast, and even mushrooms. Conservative, then, but mature, too. The adult entertainment on B.B.C. and the interest shown by the man on the street in world affairs is impressive. And dependable and stable. You won't find many who wouldn't rather forego that washing machine than go beyond their income and purchase it in instalments (which they significantly call the " never-never "). I am quite prepared to believe that there *will* always be an England.

You would not expect to find an intensely practical Englishman courting the realms of the theoretical. Possibly his country's long experience as a leader has made him cautious and distrustful of idealism and, at the same time, tolerant of all viewpoints. Who else could have initiated this austerity programme when conditions demanded it and yet endured it with such humor and fine spirit ? Could *you* shrug off not

being able to buy the finest products your country produces, like the best Wedgewood china, and then see it packed in big boxes marked " For Export Only " ? England can laugh at herself all right ; indeed, a large portion of her jokes seem to be self-satirizing. But she has a healthy regard for tradition, too ; for her time-honored common law and equity and mechanics of government ; and for the monarchy, her symbol of unity. I confess that I stand silent and misty-eyed with everyone else when " God Save the Queen " is played. Sometimes ceremony can be unfortunate, as at every banquet I've attended, where proposing and seconding speeches of thanks and comment after the main speech seem anticlimatic and slightly embarrassing. However, I discovered when I arrived at my first university ball that a student who looks drab all during the week, when elegance is the order of the day, blossoms forth with new luster. Dignity and stateliness, they have a flair for.

I remember melting under my seat when a speaker blatantly observed that he taught in " one of the lowest working class schools in Leeds." This class consciousness is perhaps hardest for us to accept. American society is undoubtedly stratified, but it is as yet a novelty for James P. Marquand to write a book like *Point of No Return*, setting up definite class prototypes (and it is worth noting that his usual locale is strongly British-influenced New England). One of the advantages of being American is that Englishmen find it practically impossible to evaluate our exact status. Snobbishness or acceptance of inevitability, call it what you will ; it is repugnant when it manifests itself in a fatalistic outlook or a " public school " complex, laudatory in that it often ignores pure monetary standards and accounts for much of the statesmanship and diplomacy for which this country is justly famous. It is frightening to meet an M.P., as I did, who entered Parliament straight from a coal pit and can see no farther than introducing

a bill which would abolish one of England's most popular radio channels merely because his constituency has difficulty tuning to it.

The foreigner should expect to be met with a certain degree of suspicion and should be prepared to smile indulgently while he is left completely out of the conversation. Reserved, the Englishman certainly seems to be. I cannot say with conviction that this is due to " an excruciating national inferiority complex," as Fielding does in his best-selling *Travel Guide.* In fact, it rather looks like the other extreme. But to his credit, he is not given to relying on first impressions. Slow to praise, he is slow to go out on any sort of emotional limb. Contrast frantic American cheering sections at athletic events with the occasional comment here : " Good show " or " Well done ! " There is a premium on facility with words, the clever epigram commanding much respect. University debaters depend almost entirely on wit, seldom bothering with cold facts. Sometimes the subtlety evaporates into thin air. At male gatherings the dignified Englishman really lets his hair down, and the seemingly incongruous bawdy songs might bring blushes to many an old salt. Perhaps this is just his way of revelling in the absence of women. I have an inkling that this is a decidedly masculine country.

The Channel approach to the haunting chalk cliffs ; the lush green of the island with its charming country villages, ancient churches and deerparks ; Mayfair London and Noel Coward's sophisticated West End ; theyr'e only part of the pattern. A people easy-going, conservative, mature, practical, tolerant, stable, class-conscious, reserved—this is the England I have come to appreciate. But as essential to its meaning as the dreaming spires of Oxford are the murky chimney pots of Leeds.

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Ronald Balaam

AN EAR OF THE DOG

Illustrated by Richard Downer

"I SUPPOSE YOU CAN EXPECT a crime-wave after a war," said Superintendent Farrencourt. "Encourage people to assault and murder for a few years and they may go on for a while when the official line changes. It's only a matter of time before we get it under control, but there was a bigger problem with the lot that came out without the hangover and who made trouble quite deliberately. Some of these had picked up a few things in the war they wanted to try on the civilians. Let me tell you about a 'higher-command' gang who set out to be cold and scientific and came to grief because poor old unscientific humanity let them down.

"In an industrial town in the North a small factory had changed hands and was being refitted for the new owners, who were subcontractors to a big firm of precision metal-workers. It stood in a side-street and the service lorries turned off this street into a twenty-yard alley, with the entrance gates at the far end. Though these gates were massively padlocked on the outside and bolted inside the attack was planned to go through them. Its object was to get away with as many lathes and presses as a big lorry would hold. They'd cost a lot to buy new, especially in 1946, but you'd think what they could get for precision machinery, second-hand and 'no questions asked' wouldn't pay a large gang—besides, what firm would risk buying? Well, no British firm perhaps, but once away the load was to be smuggled into Germany, where with war-damage

and reparations crippling business a small secretive workshop could make its owner rich—and keep him fed. Payment would be in cameras, gold and works of art which, discreetly sold in England, would bring big money.

" I said the attack was planned to go through the gates, and the operative word of the whole business was ' planning.' That's where the war-time training came in. They'd built an operations table and were ' well in the picture ' with architect's drawings, street maps and photographs. Vital Parts of the raid were practised against a stop-watch.

" Early one gloomy November evening, after the last workman had left, they went into action. A pantechnicon drew up to block the opening and the driver got out and lifted the bonnet. As he stopped a Trojan Horse door opened in the blind side and six men loaded with equipment tumbled out and went to the gates. One flung a blanket over the barbed-wire strands above them and was boosted up on to it to leap inside. Another followed and took the blanket down as he jumped. The first unfastened the nuts that held the padlock's bar to the door, and the second, after slipping the bolts and making sure there was no debris in the yard that would catch the gates, got to work on the nuts of the hasp. As the two pieces, now held together only by the padlock, came loose they were eased free from outside, and two of the men opened one door and slipped inside. The other pair had ready a facsimile, prepared from their photographs, of the pieces they'd just removed. There was of course a difference—it was welded into a solid bar, and they bolted it to one gate so that the shorter arm projected stiffly. This arm had boltheads welded into it, and the padlock swung from its hasp, and when they wedged the free gate flush with the back of it, it looked no different. The lorry drove off—the first big risk had been taken.

" It had all been well rehearsed. The first pair to go through unpacked some home-made apparatus. On a heavy base they put up a sectioned rod fourteen feet long with what looked like a loudspeaker on top. This went against the factory wall where it wouldn't be noticed, with the speaker pointing down

the alley, and a few wires connecting it with a little box on the floor. Then they all relaxed and stayed still and quiet, save for one who spent a minute or two oiling the hinges. In ten minutes, if he was on time, the policeman on the beat would pass. Nobody moved as his footsteps came down the alley and his light silhouetted the barbed-wire. If he checked at the padlock they'd jump him and scatter: but when he rattled it the bolts and wedges held firm. His unhurried tread died away.

"In the street a lounger watched him go and strolled along until he faced down the alley. He was cloth-capped and white-mufflered like a Northern working-man, and he went down on his haunches against the wall across the street the way a miner squats. He had an unlit pipe between his teeth, and taped to its side was a thin tube—a dog-whistle. He blew a cheerful rhythm down it. There wasn't a sound, of course—the vibrations are too high for the human ear—but the 'speaker' picked them up and registered them on a jumping needle. A red light blinked acknowledgement. The loafer had given the signal to start work. You can't take half a factory apart without some noise, and he was there to warn off passers-by.

"As soon as the street was empty he flashed a torch along it and seconds later, as the pantechnicon swept towards him, gave three long 'blasts.' The gates swung open, the vehicle reversed and backed in, the gates closed and the second big risk had come off. The loafer squatted, waited and watched. He had a code of signals, with Morse letters for the foreseeable dangers. When he blew his warning the man who saw it register on the needle flashed a torch into the building and work stopped until the all clear. 'Work' was unbolting machines from their beds, cutting any connecting bars and power belts, and rollering them to a ramp at the back of the lorry, up which they were dragged by a winch.

"So the evening went on. When the lorry was full they'd pack their own gear on the back and flash their red light at the watcher. He'd put up his inaudible whistle and favour them with part of a popular song if it was clear to come out.

One man would stay for a minute to wedge the gates shut as unobtrusively as possible to hold up the hue-and-cry. Then he and the loafer would walk off in opposite directions, happy at a good night's work and looking forward to the share-out.

"It's heartbreaking to think how much ingenuity, brains, technical knowledge and courage were misapplied to that 'good night's work.' And those same qualities meant it wouldn't have been easy to catch them if they'd got away—and they very nearly did get clean away.

"What *did* go wrong? I told you, they had too much 'up top'—and yet there were gaps in what they knew. They weren't supermen, though they told one another the future lies with the efficient. Their pipe-blowing guard proved

the weak link. As far as they were concerned a dog-whistle was a splendid idea because they knew its vibrations were 80,000 a second and 50,000 more than a policeman's ear could catch. But they hadn't given much thought to the dogs, who were most attracted by the blasts and ran to see who was calling. The watcher was a bit on edge and didn't want to attract *any* attention, so he cuffed the street mongrels away when they came within reach and kept them clear. That wasn't all, though. The others had practised their parts, but who needs practice to look like a miner off shift? So he hadn't tried squatting and didn't learn till the crucial night it's a posture that's cruel on unused muscles. He became more and more uncomfortable and at last had to stand for a while to ease the cramp. Just then he saw a man walking his way so he blew his ' di-da-di.' It was then that, having already failed in his imitation of a miner he failed as a Northerner and brought the gang to ruin. A dog ran to him because of the whistle—it looked a bit like a small greyhound, but this meant nothing to him. Nervous, cramped and pestered, he was irritated enough to give it a heavy kick—if he'd been on his feet before, he thought, he'd have booted the others away. He looked up to see the whippet's owner half-way across the road to him and coming fast, and his pipe was underneath him and broken when he hit the pavement.

"The policeman who found him saw an irritable red light signalling from a yard that should have been empty. He rang his station, a squad car came to block the entrance, and our friends, intelligent to the last, had the sense not to fight the police. They've all been released now and we've heard nothing more of them. But I seriously wondered whether I should warn the R.S.P.C.A. that one of them might be coming back to the world with something of a grudge to work off!"

DOUBLE BILL

Gerald Robinson

IN SEARCH OF PIRANDELLO

Presented by Italian Society and Theatre Group, 16th March, 1953.

SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR is a dramatic presentation of the interaction of the four Orders of Creation of the theatre: the stage hands, the actors, the characters they portray, and the audience; and in Richard Courtney's production this last seems to have enjoyed the antics of the other three. "The significance" of the play depends entirely on its framework of philosophy, but I am sure its wide appeal springs from the very real dramatic values hitched on to this framework.

Stage crew had that air of quiet efficiency that one associates with them, and the Characters gave performances of a consistently high standard in roles that were of necessity limited and two-dimensional, for a Character is for ever and eternally the same, as it is impossible for him to "act out of character." Kenneth Brown squeezed the last drop of theatrical remorse out of the part of the Father, and as the stepdaughter Barbara Hughes attained a brittle brilliance. These two, together with Roy Bywood as the ulcerous Producer, bore most of the weight of the production.

One of the tenets of Pirandellian philosophy is that we can never be sure that our assessment of a situation has absolute validity, but this can hardly excuse the fact that there seemed to be a general misconception of "what the play was about." We were asked to believe that fellow students whom we already

know socially had by the magic of theatre become transformed into the actors and actresses of a rep., and yet they addressed one another by names which we associate with them in everyday life. And when we were given not only their names, but such a wealth of personal detail as would fill out a *Union News* Profile, we found it impossible to suspend disbelief. Lighting was similarly muddled. The play goes to great lengths to demonstrate that lighting is not a kind of spiritual halation, but is the direct result of the labours of the electrician. Therefore when we were slugged with red and green at the climax we could only wonder whether the electrician was an epileptic. In a play of this style it is impossible for the lighting to punch home the emotion : the most that can be hoped for is a surreptitious and delicate underlining of mood. And the silhouetted tableaux of Six Characters through a green gauze, had it ever worked, would still have been the gesture of gross theatricality which effectively stopped the play, instead of bringing it to any sort of conclusion.

We can, however, present two bouquets. For the make-up, which hit the highest general standard we have yet seen on the Riley-Smith stage ; and for the grouping which throughout the play was an unspoken comment on the changing dramatic relationships.

* * *

REVIEWS

An Unsolved Problem of Biology, by P. B. MEDAWAR (University College, London. Inaugural Lecture, 6th December, 1951).

Different Methods of Signalling employed by the Nervous System, by BERNHARD KATZ (University College, London. Inaugural Lecture, 31st January, 1952).

Both published by H. K. Lewis and Co. Ltd., London.
Prices 5/- and 4/- respectively.

THESE TWO PAMPHLETS being originally scientific lectures intended for a rather general audience, deal with subjects which are firstly of general interest and secondly of easy appreciation, although the development of the argument is clarified if the audience have *some* specialised knowledge. Both possess as a common feature an easy conversational style, pleasant to read, and combining the warmth of informality (do not be misled by the stern grey covers) with the dignity of authority.

Professor Medawar's problem is " that of the origin and evolution of what is commonly spoken of as ' ageing ' "—he goes on to substitute senescence, which he carefully defines, for ' ageing ' and reserves the latter term for ' mere increase in years.' Such a problem, as he points out, is one almost exclusively of domesticated societies—wild animals do not live long enough to grow old. To the medical practitioner Professor Medawar's views could be of considerable importance, for with the steadily increasing proportion of old people in the population, the doctor must soon feel, if he does not already feel, the need for something more than a purely empirical basis to the treatment of their problems. It is perhaps a pity that the title of the pamphlet gives so little information as to its content, though it is a very attractive lecture-title.

Professor Katz's lecture makes its content clear from the very beginning, with a title which in addition to being provocative is full of information.

Nowadays we are well initiated into the use of electrical analogies in reference to the Nervous System (though ' Signalling ' may remind some of Boy Scouts and coloured flags) and not unnaturally a professor of Biophysics chooses many of these to illustrate his points. At the same time he leaves his audience in no doubt as to the limitations of electrical analogies.

He concerns himself with Nerve Impulses and their limitations as regards function. By adding the local non-propagated changes, electrically of a graded and continuous character, to the contents of the Nervous System's signal-box, he is led to the cautious suggestion that these may be of importance in " the central decoding of a sensory message." Pointing out that he is here close to the border of physiology he makes no further speculations regarding material interpretations of the processes of the mind, and begs leave to step down. Though self-effacing to a surprising, indeed distressing degree, Professor Katz shows himself well able to walk along the razor's edge without cutting himself. No one can protest that he spilt blood in either territory.

JAMES DOWSON.