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THE GRYPHON

MARCH
ISSUE

1957



JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ALAN DAVIE is the new Gregory Fellow in Painting at the University.

J. D. HILL and TONY ASTLE are reading Education, and the latter is this year's Rag Chairman.

IAN BRADLEY, WOLE SOYINKA and A. R. MORTIMER are members of the English Department.

The Cover is by ROGER DICKINSON, and he and RODNEY MOORHOUSE did the illustrations.

Editorial

The current aim of the South African Government to segregate the country's open Universities demonstrates the methodical extension of Apartheid into all spheres of life. It will mean the elimination of perhaps the last places left in South Africa where educated people of the different races can discuss their problems. Furthermore, the inferior facilities given to coloured students at already segregated South African Universities leave little doubt that University education too will become, for the African, education for subservience. Most important of all, since the Universities concerned are opposed to such a policy, its imposition will be an encroachment upon academic liberty. There are four essential freedoms that we take for granted in the West as necessary for the academic pursuit of truth: that the university itself must decide who to teach, what to teach, how to teach and what is to be taught. An attempt to dictate to the University on any of these matters means that liberty of thought is endangered and there is no ultimate protection against advanced indoctrination and complete tyranny over the mind.

THE GRYPHON

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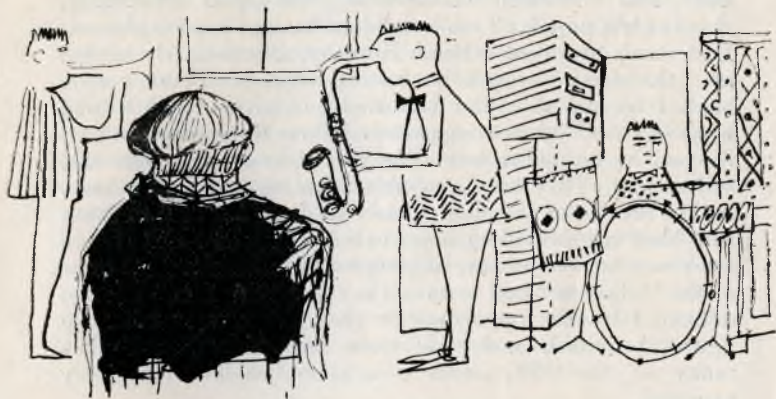
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Jazz goes to College



When I first came to this University, just over three years ago I joined the Rhythm Club, a silent, withdrawn organisation with about sixty members. I acquainted myself with the rather "low-caste" looking men, about fifteen of them, who attended the meetings every week (I can only remember seeing one woman there during the whole year.) The size of the club, and the size of the "modernist" section of it, to which my own tastes led me, did not surprise me unduly, for I had long since been made to feel that my musical tastes were exceptional, rather "beyond the pale." I already knew that people who could talk about Brubeck, and Getz were few, and from my knowledge of such "short hairs", I did not hope to find many in a University. But this year the Rhythm Club has the highest membership in its history, and with over 350 fans is easily the largest society in the Union. I am amazed and delighted by this fact, and though the motives of some of the people who have joined are probably questionable the Rhythm Club now has the means of providing good jazz for all who want to hear it.

It is the ability and enthusiasm of the committee which has held the club together during its rapid expansion. Arnold

Peters, with his sane critical approach, has been the mainstay, and "Baz" Bedford has ensured, with equal enthusiasm, that the less popular "modern" jazz has not been neglected. Last year's president—Brian Hornsby, affectionately known as "the creep"—must be mentioned too. These people backed by an able and balanced committee, and helped by the stylish, eye-catching posters of Dave Robinson, provided the jazz we wanted to hear. But they did not, and could not, sell us jazz. They have probably been surprised, as I have, by the success of the club. This year I am inclined to think that they are providing more concerts, sessions and dances than we deserve to hear, judging by the attendance at some of the "shuffles" last term. They lost their heads a little, delighted by the opportunities that the new membership figures provided, and now they are disappointed that many of the 350 members are not as keen as they expected.

I suppose the bulk of the members of the club are "traditional" fans. They have plenty of opportunity today of hearing bands like those of Lyttelton, Barber, Colyer, Brown, Randall, and they feel the appeal these special bands have. Some differentiate, and decide that Lyttelton is better than Randall, Barber than Colyer. Most don't care. Others enter the University and seeing the word "Rhythm" think they will have easy access to Donegan, Haley, Presley and the other Rock'n Rollers. When they find the Record Library does not contain records by these people they lose interest. Many of the "traditional" fans, even some of those who are very keen, are hiding under a cloak of respectability their easy, uncritical acceptance of rhythm for its own sake. There are dead branches of jazz, like these, which can do little to improve anyone's taste, sensitivity, or critical awareness. Jazz itself does not benefit, as it was jazz which first brought about these accretions. And the people very rarely benefit, for they are looking for the wrong thing in the wrong way, and discovery of the right thing would take a minor revolution of the spirit. If a reader is led to "Wuthering Heights" by a taste for Hank Jansen, he must realise that Jansen is bad writing before he realises that "Wuthering Heights" is good writing.

Then there is the dead branch on the other side of the tree. Artists of all kinds and pretensions have rebelled against the University approach because it kills something as it defines it. Jazz grows more legitimate every year, and more and more people are attracted by its legitimacy, or what they would call its "social value". More and more scholars and professional students are entering Rhythm Clubs, causing a tension which can only be destructive. It is disconcerting, to say the least, when you know as you are playing that someone is watching closely, defining not your ability but your "significance." I came across an example of this tendency the other day. Someone bought a record of a modern jazz pianist. He had never heard a performance by this gentleman, he had not heard the record when he bought it. But the pianist was alleged to have started "bebop", and was therefore indispensable to a collection.

It is probably significant that the Rock'n Roll craze and the dissection of jazz are going at the same time. It suggests that something is rotten, or at least not quite right. The medium is being exploited and, as will inevitably happen distorted. It is also significant that the two factions, later additions to the whole merry-go-round, refuse to see anything valuable in each other, while the jazzman in the middle (he was there all the time though often under a cloud) will listen to each and perhaps nod the head. He will listen to anything, but this is usually all he will do. I am probably betraying the cause of the jazzman in writing this—if so, it is an innate weakness in me, not in him. Jazz has come to college and will probably die there; then it will be dissected, defined and gradually forgotten, (though you will be able to look it up under "J.") If this happens we shall all lose because its accretions will live on.

This may seem like wilful pessimism, especially as a University is not likely to kill jazz on its own. But what is happening here is merely a reflection of the whole tendency of the medium today. Jazz started as a folk art—that is, an emotional statement, simple in form, without the self-consciousness instilled by critical analysis. The "intellectual" element followed as society became more conscious of the

values at stake. Jazz has probably been the most ill-treated medium since art began, and perversions, misunderstandings, persecutions have made the whole thing as complicated as modern politics or economics. But the main reason for the growth of the hybrid jazz form in the 'twenties and 'thirties were two: the social ostracism by a section of the public and the musicians' own feelings of inadequacy. They, rightly or wrongly, felt the need of an intellectual element, and for this they turned to the more facile, meaningless styles of European music. The result was less an art form than a compromise with society, though in the case of the Goodman and Basie bands something of value did emerge.

The excesses of Swing were the result of the wrong kind of musical intellect, and they formed a demand which produces tasteless music even today. As swing, Rock'n Roll, and "stylish" Dance Music have no intrinsic merit, they cannot be aesthetically satisfying in themselves, and they are forced to command attention by illegitimate means. All 'progressive' experiments in modern swing suffer, and are rejected by many for this reason—they may be commendable innovations in many ways (and some of Kenton's are really effective) but their fundamental musical idea is a worthless one. The technique, extensions, and other qualities may be excellent but they are basically invalid, founded upon an appeal which has no aesthetic interest either as jazz or classical music. Modern Swing, by grafting on to itself various kinds of musical cliché, is trying to disguise its basic lack of value. A palace will not last long if you build it on sand; and Swing will cease to be heard when its novelty effects become trite and its productive veneer wears thin. It is transitory music as any jazz musician will tell you.

This was the result of the introduction of the wrong kind of musical intellect into jazz. We have since seen the introduction of the right kind—what we may call the "jazz intellect". Since those early days of bebop at Minton's and 52nd Street a whole new means of musical expression has been evolved, with an emotional capacity, a sophistication, a complexity never known in popular music. This type of modern jazz is the direct statement of our age, a fusion of musical intelligence, spontaneity, and deep personal expression.

It has produced musicians worthy to play it—Parker, Gillespie, Davis, Konitz, Lester Young, Stan Getz and many others. And now after many misunderstandings it is becoming legitimate. The Dave Brubeck Quartet and the Modern Jazz Quartet have made what seems to be the final musical statement of this era. They are worthy successors to Parker, to Monk and Tristano, and they are certainly selling more records. But again as with traditional jazz, they are finding their music inadequate, or so it would seem. We are reaching a point where as much attention is being paid to writing about jazz as to playing it. Brubeck himself has achieved quite a name as a spokesman for the medium, and people with more dubious claims to authority are “getting on the wagon”. Kingsley Amis has used the “central” significance of his best selling novel to assume the position of jazz critic in the “Observer”. I do not see that he has anything of relevance to say. He is an example of an age that is distorting a musical intellect into an extra-musical one and by so doing is driving a nail into the coffin of an essentially spontaneous music.

At its best, jazz is an important art form. It manages to fuse personal and group expression in a way that gives stimulus and improvement to both. But it can easily go wrong. It can become unbalanced by stress on either the group or the individual. The presence of a critical consciousness outside the music itself can easily distort the aims. Jazz musicians are notoriously inarticulate people, but this does not mean they are irresponsible or trivial in intention. To a person who is sure of what he is playing, anyone who apologises for him is a crank.

In the Union this year we all have a chance of hearing good jazz—better than I have heard since I have been here. Some of the musicians are already mature and accomplished, some soon will be. We are lucky in our pianists as we can hear Brian Layton playing with the John Booth Quartet at most of the Saturday hops. The mainstay of the Saturday morning “raves” in the Social Room is the fabulous “Shemph” attacking the piano in a way most professionals would envy. It is significant that in his rare communicative moments he admits that he cannot see any way for jazz piano to develop

on its present lines "—as far as I can see everything's been done. They are playing themselves out." The accomplished technique of trumpeter Pete Melling is a well known sound in the Union, and Gerry Smith has, in a short time, made a name for himself as an alto player. He will probably be joined on Saturday mornings in future by the swinging tenor of Alan Davie, the new Gregory Fellow of Painting. John Woodhead still visits the Union occasionally, and his guitar technique is better than ever. For traditional fans the Ramblers and the Gerry Wilson Five are constantly featured in the Union, and this year the Devon band are bringing a new polish and a more mainstream style to their ensemble work. On the whole, musicianship is of a high standard, and the musicians remain unabashed by intellectual criticism of the wrong kind.

This is a good sign because popularity can have a bad influence on a jazzman, especially as he is open to so many corruptions of taste. Though jazz is not now a folk art, it has close connections with folk art and can be killed as easily. As long as people give to it a position it does not deserve and does not want, it is in danger—and that danger is evident today.

TONY ASTLE

Hungary and the U.S.S.R.

Political leaders don't seem to have done much constructive thinking about Hungary. Communists have said that errors and crimes were committed but that everything will be alright in future; anti-communists have said that crimes and errors were committed and that everything will go on as before; neutralists have tried to pretend that nothing much has happened. No-one has yet produced a satisfactorily detailed account of how the position in Hungary became so critical or of how it may reasonably be expected to develop. Nor have the western statesmen so ready to applaud the "heroic Hungarian Freedom Fighters" shown much effective concern for the plight of the people remaining in Hungary.

On October 23rd there was a vast demonstration in Budapest, led by students with a 14 point programme for

democratic reform. Many of the leaders and supporters of this demonstration were Communists, and the 14 points included demands for elections and a Congress of the Hungarian Workers Party. Gero, the first secretary of the HWP, said in a radio speech that evening that the demonstration was counter-revolutionary and that nothing would change. At the radio station AVH men opened fire on the crowds following students who were trying to get their programme broadcast. Hungarian troops and police were called in, but they handed their weapons to the demonstrators. During the night Imre Nagy was made Prime Minister, in response to popular demands, but at the same time Soviet troops were asked to intervene. At once the constructive political content of the mass-movement began to be overshadowed by simple nationalist anti-Russian feelings. There is some conflict of evidence about the behaviour of the Soviet troops, but the general opinion seems to be that they were very restrained, and that such atrocities as occurred were committed by AVH men. On November 1st the Soviet troops withdrew from Budapest. In the next few days many Communists were murdered (including many who had supported the movement for reform) and both known and suspected AVH men were killed. It is not clear whether this violence was increasing or decreasing by November 3rd : eyewitnesses disagree. The Nagy government changed its composition several times without seeming to make much progress in establishing its authority. On November 4th Soviet troops attacked Budapest and subdued it after bitter fighting. Since then an extensive strike movement has been more or less starved into submission.

The first use of Soviet troops was a piece of criminal stupidity, and the responsibility for this must lie with the Central Committee of the HWP, which took the decision. Having already proved themselves unfit to lead their country, these men crowned their work by destroying their own party. The widespread participation of HWP members in the movement for reform had given the party a chance to reform itself and regain the confidence of the people. After the use of Soviet troops the party practically ceased to exist.

The second intervention of Soviet troops has been defended as necessary to prevent the restoration of fascism

in Hungary. In a country that has never had to face a serious internal threat from fascism this tends to sound silly. Perhaps the most eloquent evidence that it is not silly comes from Anna Kethly, the anti-communist social-democratic leader who passed from gaol to exile by way of the Nagy government ; she said on November 1st, " Among the revolutionaries there are right wing fascist extremists who would dearly love to capture our national revolution so as to impose another kind of dictatorship." There may have been a difference between what the fascists wanted to do and what they could have done, but it would be unreasonable to deny their existence. On the other hand, the fascist threat doesn't seem to have been sufficiently serious to explain the strength and speed of the Soviet reaction, so additional reasons must be sought. The first reason is Suez. At the time of the Soviet decision it was by no means certain that the fighting there could be stopped, or even prevented from spreading to the whole Middle East. In such a situation an anarchic Hungary could easily have sparked off a world war. The second reason is less transitory. After the initial blunders the best possible solution was for Hungary to become a neutralised republic on the Austrian pattern, in which the HWP could perhaps have reformed itself and become a genuine working class leadership once more. There seems no good reason why intervention should not have been delayed until a fascist coup had been attempted, and if such dangers had passed away the Soviet troops could have been withdrawn. But the Soviet leaders were unwilling to let matters go as far outside their direct control. Events in Poland indicate that this unwillingness might have been overcome if the other, external, courses had been absent, and the authors of these causes must be given their fair share of blame for the bloodshed, but the roots of the trouble lie in this Soviet attitude.

Western politicians, trying to curry favour with their ex-subjects in Asia and Africa, have described the Soviet attitude as imperialist, and this needs clearing up. Imperialism is a technical term describing an oligopolic capitalist system in which highly developed metropolitan countries export capital to and import raw materials from underdeveloped countries. Now whatever else the USSR was doing it was not

importing raw materials from Hungary. On the contrary it was feeding them as fast as possible into the developing Hungarian industry. These are two opposite economic relationships, and they produce very different political and social trends. By way of example we may take education. In the imperialist system industrial progress in the backward country is slow, and it doesn't hurt the system much if the people remain uneducated. In the other system industrial progress is rapid and a supply of educated technicians and workers is an economic necessity. It is obvious that the Hungarian peoples' movement was much more politically mature than that of, say, the Kenyans, and one of the reasons for this was their more progressive economic system. There remains, of course, the possibility that the USSR was making a profit out of Hungary by some non-imperialist method—simple robbery for instance—and this might be indicated by the fact that the Hungarian national income was increasing less quickly than that of the USSR, but the difference was probably due to the lack of a base of heavy industry and to the admitted inefficiency of the Hungarian administration. It is also true that Hungary had received a good deal of Soviet aid, particularly in the form of machinery and technical advice. It was the political rather than the economic relationship between the two countries which was at fault.

In 1920 the peoples of the USSR, having ejected the troops of no less than fourteen nations from their territory, were left with a country which, initially very backward, had been devastated by six years of war. Since then they have transformed this country, by their own efforts, into the second most powerful in the world. On the way they have fought in and recovered from a world war in which they suffered greater losses than any other country. Not unnaturally they're proud of themselves. Throughout this period they have been almost completely isolated, politically and economically, by the rest of the world, and this has given their pride a strong tinge of nationalist feeling. Such feelings are natural, but when they appear in the leaders of a great power they can be very dangerous. After the second world war there were very few experienced working class leaders in Hungary (most of them had been killed by the fascists) and the Hungarian Communist

Party was therefore especially susceptible to influence by the power and prestige of the CPSU. Soviet experience was applied mechanically to Hungary without regard to the very different circumstances. The most serious result of this was that an excessive amount of power fell into the hands of the bureaucracy and the Security Police.

One of the conditions necessary for the transition from the feudal to the capitalist mode of production is the creation of a powerful central administration, and one of the functions of the bourgeois individualist tradition is the democratic control of this administration. The vast feudal territories of the Asian empire provided easy pickings for the ruling class of Tsarist Russia, and it was never forced to complete the transition from feudal forms to bourgeois democracy. It had, however, produced a huge inefficient bureaucracy to cope with the task of controlling the empire. Meanwhile, imperialist penetration of European Russia had developed enough capitalist industry to create a working class capable of leading the socialist revolution of 1917. Now socialist production needs an administration even more centralised than that needed for capitalist production, and, correspondingly a more careful concern for the democratic control of the administration. The USSR was forced by its precarious international position to develop socialism at an unheard of rate, without even the experience behind it of controlling a capitalist administration. This, coupled with the cumbersome tradition of Tsarism, explains the proliferation of bureaucrats in Soviet society.

Another feature of the situation in the inter-war years was the active hostility of the big capitalist countries, which made necessary the formation of a security police force with very extensive powers. The position of this body was reinforced by official blunders in the first campaigns for the collectivisation of the farms which antagonised many of the peasants. In these conditions the security police gradually became independent; they were responsible to no-one but themselves.

There was no way of avoiding risks of this kind, and in fact they were not disastrous for the USSR. They were not disastrous because the same isolation and underdevelopment

which made it necessary to take the risks also produced strong nationalist feeling in support of the drive to develop the country, and as long as this drive was succeeding people were prepared to put up with a lot of unpleasant things. In Hungary these things were more dangerous because the conditions, although not easy, were not so peculiarly difficult as they had been for the USSR. The Hungarians had a powerful and relatively rich socialist neighbour which might reasonably be expected to give them sufficient aid and protection to shield them from the worst austerities of the Soviet Union's path, and the people were therefore not so ready to put up with things. A good start was made, and by 1948 the Hungarians, led chiefly by the Communists, had made many improvements in their society. But then things began to get worse.

By 1948 the first pressure of post war recovery needs had relaxed a little in the USSR, and it began to be possible to deal with the degenerations in the bureaucracy and the security police. As is usual with outworn social forms, they became even more prominent in their death-throes. These forms were able to gain their power because of a period of extreme tensions and struggles, and in order to preserve it they naturally tried to perpetuate such conditions. Because of the improved economic position of the USSR they had a good deal of freedom of manoeuvre and were able to co-operate with the imperialists in bringing about the cold war. (This was the result of the play of forces on individuals, not, of course, of a conscious plot, but the process is most easily described in purposive terms). The political tension was reflected in a further growth of the security police, in lack of freedom to criticise the bureaucrats, and in a heavy armaments burden. Hungary, having taken over the failures as well as the successes of Soviet methods, was forced to follow the same path. The effect on the USSR was bad enough, on the poorer country it was crushing.

The strength of the outworn institutions was largely bound up with the deserved prestige of Stalin, and his death was the signal for determined efforts at reform. In the USSR Beria was removed from his post and later executed; a thorough review of the cases of all political prisoners was

begun and thousands have been released ; the security police has been stripped of its arbitrary powers and put under the control of a minor minister ; 750,000 bureaucrats have been dismissed and given useful jobs. These are only a few of the advances made since Stalin's death. In Hungary a similar process of reform began with the appointment of Imre Nagy as Prime Minister in 1953. Because national pride was not mobilised in support of the old government in Hungary, as it was in the USSR, the processes of reform, once begun, tended to move faster. The tragedy of the situation is that the same Soviet leaders who made the reforming movement peacefully possible were still unable to see this essential difference between the two countries. Rakosi was brought back as Prime Minister in order to slow things down to a " safe " rate, and from then on a peaceful solution became less and less likely.

This analysis has necessarily been generalised and incomplete, but I think it is sufficient to offer some hope for the future. Even in Hungary things are not the same as they were; the programme of the Kadar government is essentially the same as that of the Nagy Government of 1953, which was very popular. Those who take a jaundiced view may say that this is not from choice but from necessity, and that there is no guarantee that this will be carried out, but it is worth noting that Kadar spent several years in prison because he supported Nagy. This in itself is not extremely hopeful ; even with the best of intentions it will take a long time to overcome the legacy of bitterness left by the last few years in Hungary. It is more important to remember that the events of last autumn were made possible by the success of the reforming movement in the USSR and elsewhere in Eastern Europe and there is no reason to suppose that the movement can now be halted by any internal forces unless they are aided by outside pressure. There are people in the West who would like to use Hungary as an excuse for returning to the cold war policies which strengthened the position of the degenerate elements in the socialist countries. We should rather try for a relaxation in tension which will enable the reformers to make peaceful progress, and will also give us a chance to put our own house in order.

I. R. BRADLEY

Ganga

Because its demons troubled mankind, a legendary hermit is said to have destroyed the oceans. The terrible drought that followed was ended by the saint, King Bhagiratha, whose fierce ascetic penances persuaded the gods to release the Ganges, sacred river, from Heaven (The Ramayana).

“ If I hold my breath and do not speak,
If I stop my ears and my mouth and close each eye,
For the sake of the vacuum I make and the silence,
Ganga, river of God, come down from the sky.”

To reach into themselves and be no other,
And whistle as they pleased a single tune,
Unmingled with the loud talk of the water,
Hither and thither pulled by any moon,
The springs were filled with clay, the streams diverted,
But though a city and its towers stand firm,
There are no buds or blossom on the fruit trees,
The young wheat will not quicken in the germ.

“ If I suffer thirst and do not drink,
If my stomach is empty of meat and my throat is dry
For the sake of the need I bear and the great hunger,
Ganga, river of God, come down from the sky.”

Out of the waters climbed many demons,
Coughing and laughing into the city squares ;
For their knocking bones and braying conches,
No one could sleep at night or say his prayers.
In his mountain cave the holy Brahmin
Had succubi round his mat as thick as fleas ;
So hemmed about with ghostly vermin
No wonder he cursed the rivers and wicked seas.

“ If I keep my place and do not move,
If the string is taut but the arrow does not fly,
For the sake of the bent bow and the silent archer,
Ganga, river of God, come down from the sky.”

THOMAS BLACKBURN

A Tale Of Two Cities

"James?" The parson looked puzzled. "Are you sure you haven't made a mistake?"

"I do not lie," replied the three-foot square court jester, his eyes glaring in the gloom of the thatched church, his teeth snapping to the rhythm of the drums that beat outside.

"Easy now, my good friend; I never suggested anything of the sort. It's just that I think James is a most unusual name for the son of a king to have in this part of Africa. However, so be it."

He dipped his finger into the bowl of holy water and made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the sleeping baby—"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I christen this child, Prince James Ademola Olumuyiwa Akinjagunla Madojutimi Kupamiti, Heir to the Illustrious Throne of Abeolumo."

Immediately this pronouncement was completed, the court jester landed outside the church in two easy somersaults and shouted to the waiting people:

"Long live Prince James!"

And upon this pre-arranged signal, one hundred and one musket shots were fired in quick succession. If it had been a girl, there would only have been twenty-one shots, as everyone knew quite well. But the people did not really care whether it was a boy or a girl. The important thing was that an heir had been born and the kingdom was saved from reversion to Britain, under whose law the Abeolumos would then be subject to British tax. Outside the palace, the exclusive rights of the first pictures of the baby were auctioned among the court painters. In the meantime, the court musicians had begun to compose songs and ballads on the important event. They did not fail to remark that the prince slept soundly through the firing of a hundred and one shots, for which performance, he received the title of "His Serene Highness." But it was a beautiful baby. His skin was a chocolate (milk)-brown, his eyes were like two black diamonds set in a milky pond. And he had a beauty-spot on his nose a fact which was eulogised in at least four verses of the song, and chronicled

by every national drum-news. One abject individual who dared to request a closer look "just to make sure that it was a beauty-spot and not a wart!" was sentenced to be deported to an infamous land where the world's worst gamblers were known to congregate.

But the true historical significance of this event was missed by the ballad-makers. This event, which took place early in the nineteenth century, marked the earliest relationship of the Anglo-African dynasties. We must go back at least twelve moons to trace the true course of events that led to an African prince being stuck with a name like James.

It was Oddy Summers of course who suggested the idea to the king. When the missionaries came to this part of Africa, they not only converted the little kingdom, but they left behind a team of experts to make sure that the people did stay Christians. What's more, with a shrewd political sense, they presented the king with a private tutor to instruct the future princes and princesses in the marvellous way of Western life, a precedent which was followed much later by His Baldness Yul Brynner of Siam. Oddy Summers was the lucky man, and before long, he had made the palace household Western-conscious. He was a most unusual man, this Summers. He was a missionary in the sense that he had a mission in life but he was not really a Christian. Summers was the most astute diplomat that the missionary service had ever known. He was unscrupulous, believing as he did, that the end always justified the means. To him therefore always fell the task of breaking in royal heathens, and making them see the light. Of course, in strict historical accuracy, and not from any desire to detract from the achievement of the missionaries, it must be admitted that their task in Abeolumo was a very easy one. Kupamiti was a very revolutionary young man, and long before their arrival, he had even read the bible backwards and forwards several times. (This forbidden enemy propaganda had been surreptitiously presented to him by nomad traders while he was a prince.) The missionaries, of course, timed their arrival like seasoned invaders. The old king—a real brutal conservative die-hard—had just died the way he lived, and Kupamiti had been on the throne only long enough to have five wives. And of these five, he had set

eyes on only one. The result was that, having never tasted the joys of polygamy, he was easily persuaded to become a Christian (The question of polygamy was the main obstacle to the progress of Christianisation in many lands). And so King Kupamiti welcomed his enemy with full African hospitality.

"Greetings, O holy men" he said, "Be not surprised that I can speak your language, for I learnt it by reading your bible, I have been warned of your coming, and therefore welcome you for the men of honour that you are."

"We bring you greetings and gifts from our great queen, Queen Victoria, And we ourselves . . ."

"Come to the point. You've really come to convert me and my people haven't you? But have no fear. My spies have told me all about you, and your wonderful white god. It is progressive, and I like progress. Moreover it breaks my heart to see good food go to waste at our sacrificial altars, and I have been told that your god does not eat. That is good. And I like my people to have many more holidays. I understand there are some more holidays in your religion."

"Oh, yes, your majesty. There is Easter, and there is Christmas . . ."

"Good. I shall retain the holidays of our religion as well as yours. Now you can convert me. I am ready."

"Your Majesty, before we can christen you, there are one or two points we must get straight. Is it true that you are married to five wives?"

"I see that your Intelligence is almost as good as mine. Yes, I have got five wives. I believe in a slow start."

"But, your Majesty, before you can become a Christian you must get rid of four of them."

Kupamiti stiffened. He prowled around his guests like an irritated tiger, eyeing them from every angle. He thrust his ebony chin at them, snapped his finger, and went for his lunch.

Two hours later, he was back. "I have decided" he said. "You will give me one week to decide which of them I like most and then I shall dismiss the rest."

The leader stepped forward. "Your Majesty", he said "I hope that in making your decision, you apply only Christian standards. Look for character, compatibility, homeliness and a kind and understanding heart."

"Thank you" said Kupamiti, "but you forget that I am a man, not a missionary. There are other things that I must consider."

"Like what, Sire?"

Kupamiti smiled. "The nights, dear friend, even in Africa can be very cold."

The leader bristled. "My lord, that would be adultery!"

"What!" thundered His Aghast Majesty.

Seven days later, the missionaries were brought before the king after their brief spell in gaol. Kupamiti had made his decision. He was accordingly baptised; and this meant that in a few days, the whole kingdom was Christian, with the exception of the customary fascist elements.

When, twelve moons later, Oddy Summers suggested the name James as the christian name of his son, Kupamiti was very suspicious. But Summers assured him that this was a well-known name of British monarchs, and that his sole motive was to establish a link between the dynasties of the two nations. He lied. The link was already established. The true story of how the prince came to deserve this name was one of a court intrigue which was fomented by Summers. It was a shield-and-matchet episode which rivalled in boldness of execution even the greatest conspiracies of Cardinal Mazzini.

For Kupamiti's queen was barren. She acknowledged the fact after six bitter moons had passed since her wedding night. She sobbed bitterly into the glistening river that flowed gently through the sugar-cane reeds, and shone jet black with rubbish that was thrown into it from the king's palace. Then, one day, as she sat discussing the court fashions of London with Summers, it occurred to her that here was the very person to help her.



“Mister Summers,” she said. “Alas, I fear that I barren is. You must help me, for verily, I say unto you, if that I do not bear a child unto the king, our kingdom shall revert to the British, and we shall have to pay dirty British taxes. As the king cannot divorce me, my people shall hate me for ever. Help me, my friend. I have spoken.”

Summers dashed to the mission house. He realised at once that this would spell disaster for the Christian mission, not only in Abeolumo, but in every territory that could be reached by smoke-signals and drum-telegraph. A hurried council of war was held. It was apparently successful, for Summers returned to the palace to pacify the queen.

Three more moons passed away. They were brushed aside by the ever-hurrying clouds, and the queen anxiously watched them disappear one by one. At last she could bear it no longer. She went to Summers and began to cry :

“ Three more moons have passed since I confessed to you the anguish of my heart. But still I feel neither the quickening of a child in my womb nor see an increase in the girth of my abdomen. Even my king is beginning to have his suspicions and . . . ”

“ Your Highness,” Summers replied, “ you must have more faith. What is three moons to my Great White God, who performs miracles in the twinkling of an eye ? Did I not myself read you the story of his son, who was born unto a woman that had never known man ? Did I not tell you the story of Sarah, the aged grandmother of seventy-nine or thereabouts, who gave birth unto a seven-day wonder ? Wherefore do you doubt, O Highness of Little Faith ? Cheer up, ducks, when an Englishman makes a promise, he never breaks his word.”

He had every reason to be confident. On the day of the eleventh moon, a parcel arrived from England, which proved that the missionaries had not been idle. It contained an object like two frying-pans stuck together. It was shining new, and was evidently made from brass, copper or a similar metal. The missionaries took turns to guard this object with their lives.

From this moment, they talked only in whispers. Their movements were furtive and conspiratorial. The palace was watched day and night until the movements of the guards and all the occupants were timed to the nearest second. In the meantime, their most experienced jungle breaker set forth on a strange journey, armed with the most extraordinary equipment—swaddling - clothes, feeding bottle, safety-pins

and similar items. His destination was known only to the leader of the camp, but the road which he took led only in the direction of the Tarewayos, a notorious tribe who always dumped one of their twins. They considered it unlucky to keep both. On the birth of twins therefore, both children were taken into the forest, and tossed in the air. Whichever first hit the ground stayed there, while the other was taken home, broken bones and all. So that, by waiting long enough in the forest, it was always possible for one to obtain one of these children of nature.

Ten days later, the missionary returned from his mysterious journey, and nobody was any wiser about his mission. For the next few nights, the king observed that the singing at the mission house was lustier than ever. He sent his messenger to demand the reason for the increase in the volume of devotion, and was informed that, for a few days, it was necessary to "hide the light of miracle under the bushel of hymns."

The appropriate night was chosen at last. Rumours had been discreetly circulated about a pending miracle. Summers persuaded the queen that she looked a bit off-colour - a very careless metaphor - and gave her some medicine to enable her to regain her tan. The queen slept more soundly than she had ever done in all her life. In the morning the whole palace was awoken by the lusty cries of the future King James of Abeolumo, and the queen was delirious with joy. But another object lay by her bed-side, shiny and bright. It delighted her more than even the baby did. Summers was the first to congratulate the king, and was knighted on the spot for his services to the kingdom of Abeolumo. And as they all gathered round the maternity room, the king noticed the warming-pan for the first time. He opened it, and he found inside it a gilt-edged card, with the royal coat of arms. It read :-

"With the Compliments of the People of England to the Illustrious Nation of Abeolumo. May this warming-pan indissolubly link together the dynasties of our two countries, and may it be the everlasting symbol of all true monarchies all over the world."

WOLE SOYINKA.





BLACK DRAWING — ALAN DAVIE

The Creative Art and Zen Buddhism

A Painter's Notes

As a painter, I work, of necessity, alone (one must even depart from oneself). But having worked and struggled with myself and reached from time to time a little enlightenment, I desire more than anything else to have other people experience it too and to share my discovery. I feel that this struggle is not merely personal but a basically human one with close relation to the life struggle of men and women everywhere. Art is an affirmation of the triumph of the human spirit.

I would like to put forth some of the ideas which have come to me through a lifetime of creative work. What I have noted is fragmentary and perhaps not quite coherent; many ideas are not easily translated into words, painting itself being their proper means of expression. But what I want to do, humbly, is to relate my own experience, with ideas which self analysis has brought forth from the process of working. These are not final and are likely to be contradicted.

Art seems to be something thrown off—almost a by-product of the very forces of living and worrying. Yet the work produced is something apart from the life of the creator, existing independently. This apartness of art has always fascinated me.

And what is art, and why art? These are questions which took me searching into the far past of human history. The answer I found in that dim dawn of the mind, the point of time when man first became aware of the strangeness of life and the mystery of death. I believe that Art and Religion were born in the same moment.

Primitive art, insane art, jazz music, and child art at their best embody that primitive awareness, part terror, part intoxication, part joy; and from them I experience the immediate emotion close to what I feel my own art must have. The otherness of such arts: they are the products of intensity of thought on a deeper than conscious level of mind; of what might even be called "no mind." This immediacy is what I am trying to put my finger on; but alas,

this simplicity, so natural to primitive people is for a modern complexly-conscious artist, the most difficult thing in the world. There are so many false conceptions of what art can be.

I have been called (amongst other things) an Expressionist painter. Expression of what? Self-expression is something contrary to art, art being concerned with that which is beyond the self; and as to the expression of mood, art can never do that, although a mood can certainly give expression to a work of art. The critic is often confused in this when, feeling a mood, he says: "Ah, yes, this picture is an expression of a mood." But in reality, the mood is something which he himself has created out of his own direct experience. Another mistaken idea is of progress in art—of the artist struggling towards a preconceived end. There is no need for him to go anywhere; his work is forever here and now. False also is the concept of perfection based on the elimination of faults. There can be no such thing as a perfect work of art any more than there can be a perfect human being; faults are just as important as virtues and become integrated in the complete human being, good with bad.

Often I make the experiment of good and bad with my students. First, I ask them to make me a bad design, which they find is impossible, and then a good design which is equally impossible. Sometimes, those which we intended to be bad are the only ones that are any good. The creative point which emerges from this is that it is impossible to fabricate a work of art.

Quite early in my life, I came to the conclusion that goodness in art had little to do with either skill or technique, composition, perfection, balance or harmony. Good colour does not come from the use of lovely colours; good line does not come from an elegant brush or a finely controlled point. So my ambition was, at an early stage, to set myself free from the conventions of picture making, to produce paintings without subject or form, the essence of which would be a kind of marvellous unloveliness, depending for its effect on the pure activity of painting. But having achieved, as I thought complete freedom in the unbounded field of pure paint, refusing to accept any idea which would suggest itself, I

began to be more and more bogged down in what can only be described as chaos. As the work proceeded, the desire for freedom would begin to fade into a kind of terrible despair ; and only after I had beaten myself into a state of exhaustion and nervous collapse did anything creative ever occur. Then would the shy, ordered forms venture forth unseen : but then I was in no condition to appreciate what had taken place. All I knew was that I was beaten and therefore withdrawn from the struggle. I began at last to realise that freedom of this nature was actually a restriction to the creative impulses and a waste of creative energy. Results were obtained by a roundabout way through an actual self-destruction and mental exhaustion ; but results there were, as I would sometimes find on returning to the scene later with a refreshed mind. In the end, there had come rare things unknown to me ; they had been the last despairing acts : acts of self-negation in the abandonment of despair, when I did not know what I was doing. In fact, they seem to have been not acts of destruction so much as NON ACTS. Here I can note that the name "Action Painting" given to pure pigment painting of this kind seems to be, in my case, completely wrong. I would prefer to call it NO ACT PAINTING.

I have realised the role that destruction plays in art and that it is an important factor in creation—this breaking down of the actual "ideas", even if the idea was to "discard idea." Often, indeed, it seems that the impulse to create comes from an intense loathing of myself ; then the picture which I had been toying with suddenly becomes unbearably bad. The will to destroy grips me and I slash it with paint. Likewise, I feel that I am more stimulated to paint if someone says they do not like my work. The important thing is to know how bad one is, not how good.

I gradually realised that freedom was no advantage. I must abandon my freedom and impose a discipline on myself which would not entail so much actual destruction of myself or I would become quite insane. If destruction there must be it must be disciplined. I do not mean "calculated" but rather relaxed ; that is I must calmly make forms and images (or non-forms) with no aim, no end in view—the end must

come only at the end, when it is time, when I have abandoned the work. Chance forms, any ideas, ugly or sweet or even just the division of a surface; and when the time comes, the picture must paint itself and the form taken out, destroyed and made again—in the end—a first creation. But, alas, it was not to be as simple as that, one cannot strike off a part of oneself, the whole being must be accommodated, each little part fulfilling its function. The calm could only last so long before the storm was renewed with the desires and the frustrations. But now, there is not quite so much waste; there is now room for ideas and the ideas are the keys of many doors, although the keys often do not fit, or the doors are too small for us to go through.

So there continues the search for a way, the search for order, the desire to control; yet knowing that life is so strange and so uncontrollable, and that art is impossible—as impossible as living. And yet one lives and strange things just happen, and Art also just happens, like falling in love. But the more one appears to appreciate something of the process the more paradoxical it becomes. And the questions keep coming. All I can do now is note my reactions and any worthwhile ideas as they come. I have a deep conviction—but it cannot be presented in any final form—only through individual images or symbols as the conviction has no form. No synthetic understanding can possibly pass from my mind to yours. A synthesis must occur in your own mind by means proper to you, each in his own way.

I practise Art for the same reason that the Zen Buddhist practises archery; for enlightenment. When I discovered Zen, I realised how close the idea were to my own. I found, that to the Japanese, Archery is not a sport but a religious ritual, a shooting, as it were, of oneself, the spiritual exercises of Archery are not concerned with outward accomplishment with bow and arrow, but inwardly with oneself. The shot will go smoothly only when it takes the archer by surprise. One musn't loose it purposely—the right Art is purposeless, aimless. The more obstinately one tries to learn how to shoot for the sake of hitting the target, the less one will succeed.

Zen literature contains a remarkable little parable:—
“Once upon a time there was a man standing on

a high hill. Three travellers passing in the distance noticed him and began to argue about him. One said, 'He has probably lost his favourite animal.' Another said, 'No, he is probably looking for his friend.' The third said, 'He is up there only in order to enjoy the fresh air.' The three travellers could not agree and continued to argue right up to the moment when they arrived at the top of the hill. One of them asked: 'O friend standing on this hill, have you not lost your favourite animal?' 'No sir, I have not lost him.' The other asked, 'Have you not lost your friend?' 'No, sir, I have not lost my friend either.' The third traveller asked: 'Are you not here in order to enjoy the fresh air?' 'No, sir.' What are you doing here since you answer no to all our questions?' Then the man on the hill replied: 'I am just standing.'"

I find it is necessary to reach a state of pure meditation or pure thought (which is formless) whereby the vanity and pretentiousness of conscious aspirations is understood. In the result, one sees that the effort, the struggle and the egotistical ideas all play their part. For me, the creative moment can be compared with the Jazz Man's adjective, "Crazy," meaning something marvellous. In the creation of Jazz music, when the audience is actively participating, one can feel the human physical sympathy which is all embracing, and the individual self becomes submerged in a selflessness.

But the fine things in Art are all very rare. So often we are infatuated only, believing that great things are happening. but great things happen when they are least expected, when the creative moment arrives, when the mind is in oblivion.

This creative moment, for most of us, is connected with some incident in our everyday lives. It is during this moment of perception that I receive simultaneously both a knowledge of the outside world and of myself. Creation consists, not so much of doing as of UNDOING, undoing all the illusory, egotistical beliefs and desires which keep tightly closed the lid of what the Japanese call the "Third Eye." Having "undone," the work then does itself. With faith, there is a metamorphosis, just as the formless mass of milky fluid

inside a chrysalis finally achieves a marvellous form—complete and perfect—a winged butterfly. The creative moment arrives only when one has achieved, one way or another, RELAXATION, NON-ACTION and SIMPLICITY.

The danger is, of course, that one will slip into a kind of intoxicated stupor. This is met by a peculiar leap of concentration ; a completely spontaneous act. At that moment one experiences the rapturous certainty of being able to summon up energies in any direction.

So much of all this is reflected in the teachings of Zen Buddhism. It is here that all teaching is compared with a finger that points at the moon ; we are put unceasingly on our guard against the mistake of associating Reality with this finger which is only a means, and which in itself has no importance. This is a faith without “intellectuality,” in the formal sense. It is the wisdom gained from no-action.

“The Perfect Way knows no difficulty except that it denies itself any preference.”

(Suzuki — “Essays in Zen Buddhism”)

ALAN DAVIE

The Partition of Ireland

To many Englishmen, the recent disturbances in Northern Ireland must have seemed like echoes from the murky past. For them, the Irish question is history ; it was settled with the treaty of 1922, and the fact that the vast majority of Irishmen are not prepared to accept the present situation comes as a considerable surprise. The position is briefly this : twenty-six counties form a completely independent republic, whilst the six in the north-east are part of the United Kingdom, sending representatives to Westminster, but having a Parliament of their own for internal affairs.

Some time ago, the editorial of a prominent daily newspaper remarked that Irish Unity had a powerful emotional appeal. Without contesting this, I intend to show that the arguments against Partition are based on something far more convincing than mere jingoist idealism.

Few people will deny Ireland's right to self-determination and democracy, and it is my contention that the only unit

for this democracy is the nation. Ireland is historically one nation. She has all the marks of a nation, a separate culture, a homogeneous people and a distinctive national tradition. Her religious and academic bodies are organised on a national basis. Ireland has always been recognised as one nation, and still is by everybody except her next door neighbour. It should be made clear that the six counties do not form a geographical entity. No river, no range of mountains marks them off from the rest of the island, and even the county boundaries were altered at the time of the Partition. A glance at the map will suffice to show the tortuous course followed by the border so that the most northerly point in Ireland is not in what is so glibly called Northern Ireland but in the Republic. Nor is the term Ulster, a strictly correct one. The British divided the province of Ulster; Lavan, Monaghan and Donegal going to Eire, and Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh, Antrim, Derry and Down remaining British. The complete artificiality of the border can be demonstrated by the fact that at Gortinceddon, Co. Fermanagh, it runs through the middle of a house. At no time were the counties a unit of government until arbitrarily made so by the British. Lloyd George himself admitted in a letter to James Craig in 1921:

“The Partition on these lines the majority of the Irish people will never accept, nor could we conscientiously enforce it.”

But the British government did enforce it and are still doing so.

Perhaps the strongest argument against is Partition an economic one. It hardly makes sense for a country with a population of only four millions to be expected to support two governments; especially when there are eighty thousand men employed in Eire and thirty thousand in the six counties. The border creates an economically disastrous division between the agricultural parts of Ireland and the industrial north-east which is robbed of its necessary hinterland. The chain of customs ports of Northern Ireland is helping to strangle the trade of the country. Perhaps I can best illustrate this important point by a hypothetical parallel. Let us imagine the chaos and permanent harm that would be caused to England if London and six south-eastern counties were to attach themselves to some other country. In the same way,

the Partition injures Ireland and impedes the progress of both North and South. United, the nation could do something to lessen the numbers draining away through emigration; divided, it must suffer.

Why, then, do members of Ulstermen oppose union with the Republic? The whole answer is too complicated to give here and has its roots deep in history. The Orangemen, as they are called, inherit their British sympathies from the settlers who came to Ulster in the seventeenth century, and it is a strange irony that the most Irish of characteristics, a sense of tradition, and the past, should defeat the unity of the nation. There is also a natural reluctance on the part of Protestants to relinquish a state where they are in a majority for one in which they would be a minority. The fear that 'Home Rule is Rome Rule' is not yet dead, although statistics seem to show that it is groundless. The Belfast Telegraph, a strongly conservative paper, admitted that although non-Catholics form only 5% of the population of the Republic, they provide 13% of the Civil Service and fill 30% of the administrative posts in industry. Sectarian strife has often been promoted in Ireland by British politicians for their own ends, as by Bonar Law in his rabble rousing Ulster campaign in 1911, but it is completely false to assert that Catholic and Protestant cannot live peacefully together in Ireland. Many prominent Irish Nationalist leaders have been Protestant, including Dr. Douglas Hyde, first president of the Irish Free State in 1922. It is only the unnatural border that perpetuates religious bitterness.

The position of the Catholic minority who form more than a third of the population of the Six Counties, is rather different, although it is likely that any discrimination against them is the result of their nationalist politics rather than their religious opinions. I will cite only one example which I think demonstrated the situation without further evidence. In 1946, a bill was passed through the Six County Parliament at Stormont, changing the qualifications required of local electors. It gave those with property several votes and deprived many with lower incomes of the single vote they had. The Government admitted that its purpose was to prevent Nationalists gaining control in the areas where they had a majority. Major Curran, Parliamentary Secretary to the

Minister of Finance, was reported on 11th of January, 1946, in the "Northern Whig," a Tory paper, urging M.P.'s not to oppose the bill, as it would result :

"in the obvious conclusion of the Nationalists' control of the local government of the three Border counties."

On being questioned, Major Curran replied that :

"the best way to prevent the overthrow of the government by people who had no stake in the country... was to disfranchise them."

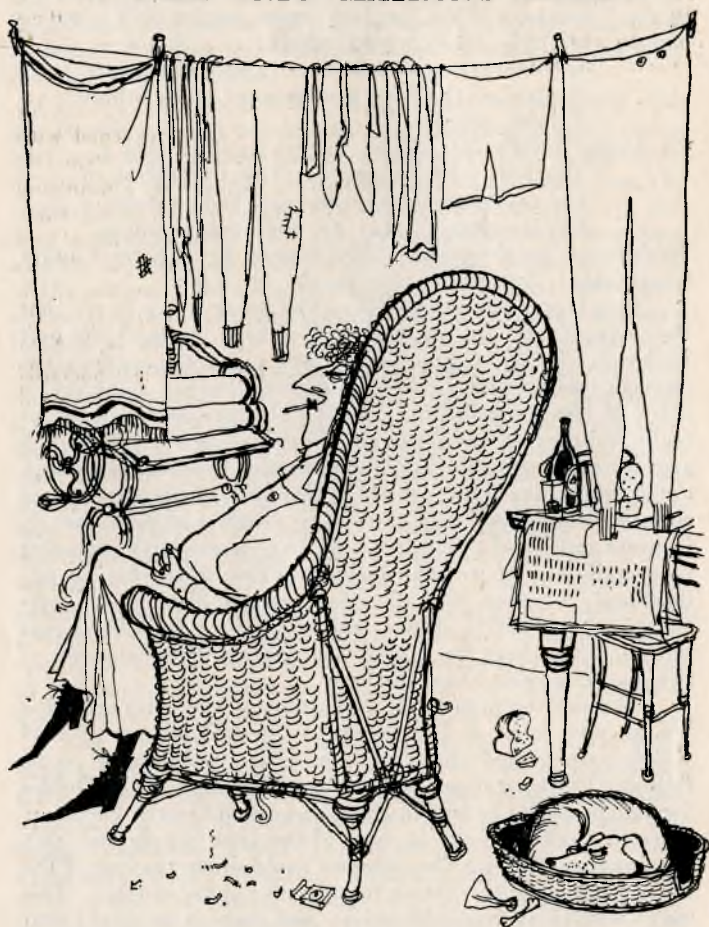
Intolerance has frequently been denied by the Six County Government, but surely this speaks for itself.

It is frequently stressed by the Conservative Party that the majority of the people in Northern Ireland support Partition. This, of course, is true, but as one can see from the passage quoted above, the Nationalists have a majority in three of the six counties. If then the British Government really believed in the principle of separating the pro-British area from the rest of Ireland, then counties Tyrone, Fermanagh, and Armagh would be part of the Republic. This leaves three counties which are being allowed to divide and permanently injure a nation of thirty-two : we have a minority dictating to a majority. If we take Ireland as the unit, which it undoubtedly is, then according to area, population or representation, over 80% desire Ireland to be one independent nation. Can there be a more convincing demonstration of the national will than this ?

The first step towards a solution of the Irish question would have to be to the repeal of the Ireland Act of 1949 which perpetuated the Partition. This would have to be followed by an arrangement between Westminster and Dublin for a plebiscite to be held in Ireland on the subject of Partition. Once the will of the great mass of the Irish people had been obtained, the British Government could order the end of the border and leave the nation to unity and independence. This may seem an over-simplification, and there is no doubt that the Orangemen in Down and Antrim would put up a determined resistance to any such scheme, but they should not be allowed to impose their will upon the rest of Ireland, for whose problems Partition offers no hope of a satisfactory solution.

A. R. MORTIMER

A PEEP INTO MATRON'S ROOM



Special attention is paid to health and all boys are under the supervision of a qualified matron who has at her disposal the full resources of the sick room.

From *Down with Skool*, by Ronald Searle (Max Parish).

Worlds Impinging

An averted glance at the work of Emmet
Searle and Giles

Well it's not art for art's sake which is a relief, and not for politic's sake either which means we are not concerned with perspectives simplified to a point of lunacy (both literally and figuratively speaking). What's sake it is for, minimising though not nullifying any passing reference to Turner, Klee, or El Greco, is laughter. The works of Emmet, Searle and Giles make us laugh; but then, so do the slogans of the Young Conservatives. For of course laughter isn't enough in itself; it's a thing hyenas are forever doing in their meaningless uninhibited way, and please don't think I want to stop them; it's just that we—and I use here the Socialist "we" which implies "you damn well ought to"—want something better. What we want is to laugh in the right way (our reaction timed to a chuckle by the artist) at the right thing; and more important than technique, or the quality of the paper, or the length of time the spasm shakes us, is the right thing, the subject, the base over apex view of the cosmos that the artist chooses to show us. Apart from artistic excellence, apart from our gain every time we follow the pattern or the line of a drawing, we must exercise our imagination on the object before us, and the reason it is there. And if you feel that this is rather a lot to expect from a decorated plane about twelve inches square, well, I do expect it, I emphasise it as a prime need in any drawing worth the time taken in putting it on paper. It is one of the inconveniences of this world of fresh ground coffee in air-tight tins, shoddy architecture, public and domestic, and universal light entertainment frothy as ersatz lemonade every evening from seven to eleven, that if anything is worth taking seriously, even humorous drawing, it has to be taken bloody seriously.

The claims of humorous art nowadays to be other than the decadent perversion of a skill rendered obsolete by the camera rest entirely on the relation between reality and what in this instance Giles, Searle and Emmet see it as. It is a question of worlds of vision.

Emett, for instance, making use of draughtsmanship in a way that reminds one of Kathleen Ferrier singing "White Christmas," has plumped for a misty, twisted landscape usually caught up in a fifty year time lag, served by an enchanted railway line with the magic run to seed, and peopled with grotesques of two sexes (and "male or female" is less apt in this context than most), melancholy slim of feature, mouths virgin-tight against a smile, following the professions of railway official, agricultural labourer, or decayed gentlefolk. A county forever crepuscular is studded with falling Follies; in the dim sunshine small fields, aslant contours of mild nightmare, contain farm machines no less likely than the small figures within their meshes, and the vegetation nearby. All is rural; all of spider web definition; all beautifully finished; all whimsy.

Six years ago *Festival of Punch* was offered for sale, a publication whose mood of petulance, aridity, cynicism, and black bile was only equalled by its atmosphere of hate, querulousness, despair, and general disorder of the digestive tract. Here at cheerful variance with its companion articles can be found Emmett's sole claim to responsible comic art. I shan't do the silly trick of describing this drawing, an action as indefensible as explaining a funny story, or stealing from a blind cripple's tray, but I advise anyone interested to go look for themselves.

The intrusion of the eerie-wheeriness of Emmett's private world into strident reality (when he built his train and combined harvester for Battersea Pleasure Gardens) proved as embarrassing to his admirers as a public lavatory on the route of a Royal Progress. Giles has never been called upon to make this mistake. The inspiration for his world is drawn from the immediate horrors of our Admass landscape. When you look at a Giles print, ignore the figures in the foreground, ignore the caption, invariably weak, and concentrate on the nasty public parks, the interiors and exteriors of the grim secondary modern schools, the dreary suburban avenues and groves: there you will find the genuine social comment, the true journalistic record of what we are doing to ourselves and our surroundings. Concentrate, and for God's sake shudder. There is no artist, Lowry's frame of reference is too

narrow, and no writer, a Fielding to his Hogarth, who can equal Giles at this. It would be masochism to ask for any more.

It is hardly surprising that an artist so moved by bad architecture (it is significant that he works in the ugliest throw-up in Fleet Street) should approach his subject materialistically. The whole of a Giles drawing is inanimate, whether it be of ferrous concrete or flesh and blood, so that his people show no affinity with either angel or devil, and as a result are less real than their backgrounds even as comic creations. As a kind of compensation for this Giles comes close to spoiling the whole, when dealing with these figures, with a clumsy funniness, a deliberate striving for the belly laugh. If only he would be content with making us see, early on a grey industrial morning with the first cigarette scoring furrows down the throat, the very buildings from his drawings, that would be all that was necessary. Instead he gives in to that same sense of inadequacy of material as does the music-hall clown who makes millions laugh by losing his trousers regularly before the television cameras.

Now would seem to be as apt a time as any for the compilation of a list. Here's a useful one that will not only split up the page rather pleasantly but also give you something to think about while I deal with the art of Ronald Searle : *John Gilpin* ; *The Journal of Edwin Carp* ; *How to be Top, rum*, prisoner-of-war camp sketches ; *The Rake's Progress* ; *The Terror of St. Trinian's*, Get Well Cards ; *Back to the Slaughterhouse* ; *A Short Trot with a Cultured Mind* ; and *Lilliput* as it was in my younger days.

The quantity and variety of Searle's output can be overstressed, but not by me ; I merely use his versatility to point out that his world of imagination can never be called narrow, bigotted, whimsical, overworked, or too much with us. As further evidence may I remind you that before the public taste had become tired of one aspect of his satirical invention—St. Trinian's—Searle himself decided to have no more of it. A lesser man would have flogged the corpse to bloodstained tatters. I'm glad I mentioned blood, for Searle alone among his contemporaries uses his pen as his gloriously angry violinist does his bow, although too rarely the wounds are mortal.

The inadvertences of Salvador Dali apart, the best humorous drawing today is by Searle, but not because he is exempt from the faults of Emmett, say, or Giles. It's just that his excellencies make him the stronger to sustain a misplaced sense of humour and an irresponsibility directly opposed to his genius. It's a question of the superficial laugh, the product of ingenuity and facile sophistication, and the other feeling, not really laughter at all, without which satire doesn't exist. Look, why don't you, at Searle's *The Rake's Progress*. Pausing to register disappointment at what a back reference like this title promises, I suggest that here is an epitome of Searle's work, from the splendid caricatures of Contemporary Notoriety and the *Great Lover* twist on the final page to the joke in the frontispiece, which nearly stopped me reading any further.

A prayer to finish with : for the little we can expect to receive from our humorous artists let us be sufficiently grateful. And although this has not been an uncritical appreciation of the work of Emmett, Giles and Searle, don't think I'm not grateful for what we get. Like you I read with pleasure that another small book of drawings has been published, and, like you I go along to the nearest bookshop and like you flick through as much of it as I can before the assistant embarrasses me away.

JOHN D. HILL.

TWO POEMS BY GEOFFREY HILL

Requiem for the Plantagenet Kings

for whom the possessed sea littered, on both shores
Ruinous arms ; being fired, and for good,
To sound the constitution of just wars,
Men, in their eloquent fashion, understood.

Relieved of soul, the dropping-back of dust,
Their usage, pride, admitted within doors ;
At home, under caved chantries, set in trust,
With well-dressed alabaster and proved spurs
They lie ; they lie ; secure in the decay
Of blood, blood-marks, crowns hacked and coveted,
Before the scouring fires of trial-day
Alight on men ; before sleeked groin, gored head,
Budge through the clay and gravel, and the sea
Across daubed rock evacuates its dead.

The White Ship

Where the living with effort go,
or with expense, the drowned wander
easily, seaman
and king's son also

who, by gross error lost,
drift, now, in salt crushed
polyp-and mackerel-fleshed
tides between coast and coast.

submerge or half appear.
This does not much matter.
They are put down as dead. Water
silences all who would interfere ;

retains, still, what might give it
as casually as it took away :
creatures passed through the wet sieve
without enrichment or decay.

Festivals and Fellows

Thank God for the Gregory Fellows ; at least in one sphere of University life we have some contact with the living arts. Due to the far sighted generosity of Dr. E. C. Gregory we have living amongst us Mr. Hubert Dalwood who, as I write, is holding a joint exhibition at Gimpel Fils, Mr. Alan Davie the newly arrived non-figurative painter, and Mr. Thomas Blackburn this years joint editor of the P.E.N. Anthology. I believe that over the past few years the scheme has been so successful that the University itself has taken over the financing of the Fellowships, so that they have now become a permanent fixture. There is, however, one question which no-one seems to have answered, though many people have asked it, concerning these appointments—what has happened to the Fellowship in Music? Mr. Kenneth Leighton was extremely popular amongst the student body of the University, he is one of the best of the younger school of British composers and his presence in Leeds was an incentive to many people to become acquainted with the latest developments in music.

I remember with pleasure from my first year the several illustrated talks that he gave in the Departments of Music and English Literature. This year for some reason there has been no appointment, yet there are a number of young composers who would welcome a University post and whose presence would be very welcome here. Surely there is a place for one of them amongst us.

There is one startling gap which recently has been brought much to my notice, and which, I am sure, the University could do something to fill; this concerns commissions. I fully realise that the University just has not got all the money that it would like to spend on buildings and general amenities, nevertheless I feel that a little more might be spent in commissioning works from the artists amongst us. The Union possesses a picture by Terry Frost, and Tetley Hall is lucky enough to have two further examples of his work on permanent loan in their dining room, but where else is he represented? Where is there a work by Martin Froy the Fellow before Mr. Frost? There is nothing, so far as I know, by either Kenneth Armitage or Reg Butler in the University, yet we have had ample opportunity to buy from both of them. To bring it down to purely commercial terms, a work by Reg Butler which the University could have bought when he was working in Leeds, would now probably be worth three times the amount that they paid for it. If then they had bought two pieces of sculpture they might, if hard pressed, be in a position to sell one of them at a considerable profit. Surely it would not be too difficult to establish a small fund, collected, in the first place, by private subscription to finance the purchase of works by each of the Fellows, so that at the end of their three years we could have some permanent record of their stay amongst us.

One instance of what might have been achieved is quickly brought to mind. What is the University part in the Leeds Festival? I do not think it is very important—yet it might well have been. We could easily have commissioned a work from Kenneth Leighton specially for the occasion, this would have given the University considerable advertisement in musical circles and done something to establish

it as an institution which encouraged the arts in a very positive manner.

My suggestions are not in any way revolutionary ; the American Universities who, I realise, are often in possession of funds considerably greater than ours, constantly support the artists working in the United States and occasionally those abroad as well. What British University has commissioned a work from Sir William Walton ? Yet in America for the centenary celebrations of the University of Minnesota the authorities commissioned a fourth symphony from Walter Piston, a composer of comparable standing. Similarly, in an entirely different field, one of the New England Colleges ordered a complete dinner service for their high table from Wedgewood's incorporating a design suggesting the activities of the Atlantic States.

It may be said that something has been done in Leeds, we have the war memorial by Eric Gill and the hands by Miss Gaynor on the new Textile Building ; but consider for a moment when this work was done ; there is an interval of nearly thirty years between each commission. Let us do something each year, let us have a piece of sculpture by Mr. Dalwood in the Parkinson, a Frost in the Brotherton, and let us commission an ode from Mr. Blackburn on the erection of the new Engineering Block.

This is not cavilling criticism but an attempt to make people aware of the Universities' growing importance as a centre of informed culture. In Leeds we have a University of which, from the point of view of scholarship, we can be very proud and yet we make so little of the potentialities within easy reach. Why is there no University Press ? Why does not the Brotherton publish a bulletin or review on the lines of the John Ryland's Library ? The answer is not only money, the answer is so often a general apathy or lack of initiative.

CHRISTOPHER NEWTON

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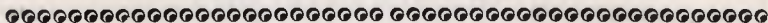
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