TALKING TO INDIA

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by E. M. Forster,
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Hsiao Ch'ien and Others

A Selection of English Language Broadcasts to India
edited with an Introduction by
GEORGE ORWELL

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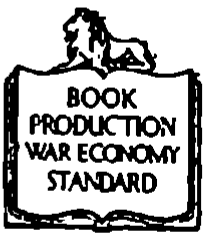

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Talks marked with an asterisk were written and broadcast by Indians or other Asiatics.

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Introduction

THE B.B.C. broadcasts in forty-seven languages, including twelve Asiatic languages. Five of these belong to the mainland of India, but Hindustani is the only (Indian) language in which transmissions are made every day. The Hindustani broadcasts, including news bulletins, occupy eight and a quarter hours a week. There is also an English language programme intended primarily for the European population and the British troops.

But in addition to these programmes, three quarters of an hour every day is set aside for English broadcasts aimed at the Indian and not the British population. It is from this period that the talks in this book have been selected. The main reason for keeping this service going is that English, although spoken by comparatively few people, is the only true lingua franca of India. About five million Indians are literate in English (including some hundreds of thousands of Eurasians, Parsis and Jews) and several millions more can speak it. The total number of English speakers cannot be more than 3 per cent of the Indian population, but they are distributed all over the sub-continent, and also in Burma and Malaya, whereas Hindustani, spoken by 250 millions, has hardly any currency outside Northern and Central India. In addition, the people who speak English are also the people likeliest to have access to short-wave radio sets.

The work of organising and presenting the English language programmes from London has been done mainly by Indians, in particular by Mr. Z. A. Bokhari. A fairly large proportion of the speakers have also been Indians or other Orientals. Much that is broadcast (for instance, plays, features and music) is not suitable for reproduction in print, but otherwise

the talks included in this book are a representative selection. It will be seen that they are predominately "cultural" talks, with a literary bias. Frequent or regular speakers in this service have been E. M. Forster, T. S. Eliot, Herbert Read, J. F. Horrabin, William Empson, Desmond Hawkins, Stephen Spender, Edmund Blunden, Clemence Dane, Bonamy Dobree, Cyril Connolly, Rebecca West, and other writers have also broadcast from time to time. At least one half-hour programme every month has been devoted to broadcasting contemporary English poetry. Obviously the listening public for such programmes must be a small one, but it is also a public well worth reaching, since it is likely to be composed largely of University students. Some hundreds of thousands of Indians possess degrees in English literature, and scores of thousands more are studying for such degrees at this moment. There is also a large English-language Indian Press with affiliations in this country, and a respectable number of Indian novelists and essayists (Ahmed Ali, Mulk Raj Anand, Cedric Dover and Narayana Menon, to name only four) who prefer to write in English. It is these people, or rather the class they represent, that our literary broadcasts have been aimed at.

In order to give a true balance, some talks of a more definitely political type have been printed as an appendix, including five passages from weekly news commentaries. These are not consecutive, as they have been specially chosen from weeks when the war situation was being discussed, and Axis propaganda answered, in general terms. For the purpose of comparison we also include a verbatim transcript of a broadcast from Berlin by the Bengali leader, Subhas Chandra Bose. This has been chosen because it represents, as it were, the high-water mark of Axis propaganda. The general run of Axis propaganda to India is poor stuff, but Bose, who is potentially as important a quisling as Laval or Wang Ching Wei, is in a different category, and his speech is worth examining in detail.

It will be seen that for propaganda purposes Bose is reduced to pretending that the Axis powers have no imperialist aims,

and that " the enemy " consists solely of Britain and the U.S.A. Actually, this speech is remarkable for containing a reference to the war in China. So far as I know this is the only occasion on which Bose has mentioned the Sino-Japanese war, and even then he is obliged to claim that in some mysterious way it has changed its character during the past year or two. (Only a few years back Bose was prominent on various " aid China " committees.) But there is one thing for which you would search in vain through Bose's many broadcasts, and that is any admission that Germany is at war with Russia. This fact does not fit in with his general propaganda line, and so it has to be simply ignored. Nor does he on any occasion make any reference to the fact that both Italy and Japan possess subject Empires, or that the Germans are forcibly holding down some 150 million human beings in Europe. In other words, he is obliged to avoid mention of the major issues of the war, and of somewhere near half the human race.

There is a difference between honest and dishonest propaganda, and Bose's speech, with its enormous suppressions, obviously comes under the latter heading. We are not afraid to let these samples of our own and Axis broadcasts stand side by side.

GEORGE ORWELL.

I. GENERAL TALKS

EDWARD GIBBON

By E. M. Forster

Guess who wrote the following sentence :

> It was at Rome on the 15th of October 1764 as I was musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.

The sentence is a very famous one, and even if you don't happen to know it, the words " decline and fall " will give you the clue. It is written by Edward Gibbon the historian, and it comes from his autobiography, and he is telling us how he came to write the great history which has made his name immortal. I want to talk—or rather to chat—about Gibbon to-day. He has been in my thoughts lately for two reasons. One reason is that I often have occasion to go to Putney, now a suburb of London, where he was born. I see the church at the end of Putney Bridge, close to which he resided as a little boy, and the river which he contemplated. Resided, contemplated, I use those pompous words on purpose, for even as a little boy, Gibbon was not playful or frisky. I cannot imagine him bowling his hoop down Putney High Street, or fishing for sticklebacks in the Thames. But I can imagine him " residing " there, and since I go there, too, he comes into my thoughts.

I also think of him for a second reason, which is of more general interest, perhaps : I have been lately re-reading the *Decline and Fall* and have been trying to find parallels between the collapse of the Mediterranean civilisation which he there describes, and the apparent collapse of world-civilisation to-day. I have not found many parallels, no doubt because I am not

a philosopher, but I do think it strengthens our outlook occasionally to glance into the past, and to lift our eyes from the wave that threatens to drown us—to the great horizons of the sea of history, where personal safety no longer signifies. Gibbon is a great navigator of the sea of history—the greatest whom this country, or perhaps any, has produced—and his work has the majesty, the precision and the reliability of a well-built ship; I had almost added "the poetry and the beauty of a ship," though it is not, strictly speaking, beautiful. Because of my visits to Putney and because of this graver reason I am chatting about him now to you—you to whom the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* may mean little, but who are as anxious as I am to avert the decline and fall of the earth.

Gibbon, after a sickly childhood at Putney, and an unsatisfactory term at Oxford, led a very happy life as well as a diligent one. His health improved, he made good friends—particularly Lord Sheffield who edited the autobiography—he worked unceasingly, and after the moment at Rome which he has just described, he worked according to a plan. Study and amusement were to him the same thing: he didn't split his life into "work" and "recreation," which is what most people do and have to do to-day; he belonged to the eighteenth century, and he has all the stateliness and the sanity of that limited but admirable age. He died just as the industrial era was starting. I don't think he would have understood it, and it certainly could not have produced him. Later historians, such as Macaulay or Carlyle, are always fussing about something or other—worrying about the underdog or preaching the gospel of work. Gibbon never fusses. He is an aristocrat. The underdog never unduly distresses him, and he never preaches the gospel of work because work to him was the same as amusement: he often interchanges those two words, which we regard as opposites. In the house of his friend, Lord Sheffield, or in his own house in Switzerland, unremitting, unperturbed, he pursued his congenial task, and as the great history went on, as it was published volume after volume, he

began to realise that to this delightful labour, another delight might be added, namely posthumous fame; which has indeed been granted to him. Although the *Decline and Fall* came out nearly two hundred years ago, it is still the leading authority on its period. Macaulay and Carlyle need correcting and supplementing, but the history of Gibbon stands firm. This is an amazing achievement. He is read because of his accuracy to fact and his sound historical judgment: not merely because he is a master of style.

Now this success—this command over his material and over the circumstances of daily life—had to be paid for. Everything has to be paid for, and Gibbon paid by curtailing his passions. He was not an ardent character, he disapproved of enthusiasm, he disliked religion, and the raptures of lovers moved him either to ribaldry or to contempt. Once he, too, had been in love with a Swiss girl, but his father had disapproved, and sensible young Edward, seeing storms ahead, had given her up without difficulty. "I sighed as a lover. I obeyed as a son" is the famous phrase in which he records this. He could be affectionate and grateful—to Lord Sheffield, to the rather tiresome old aunt who had been good to him when he was a boy at Putney, but he never developed his emotions. For this he has been blamed. But if you develop your emotions—for that also you have to pay—everything has to be paid for, and he would have impaired the particular qualities that made him great. To me he remains an attractive character, despite his formalism and worldliness. I like to think of him not only writing and reading at his desk, but in society, fashionably dressed, for he was quite the beau, and shaped like a balloon, for he was extremely fond of good food and became plump. The balloon was supported on little legs which twinkled and turned with immense rapidity as Gibbon bowed right and left to the company, and it supported, in its turn, a face of quite unusual ugliness. Yes! poor Edward Gibbon was excessively plain. Once he was taken to see an old French lady who was blind and was accustomed to pass her hands over the faces of

visitors, to realise their appearance. When she touched Gibbon's face, the old lady was so startled by what she felt that she exclaimed: " Mais c'est une mauvaise plaisanterie "— " It's a practical joke." She could not believe it was a face at all. No doubt Gibbon was sensitive over this—people the shape of balloons often are. But he had many recompenses. He had wisdom, learning, good taste, tolerance, and he lived in an age when those qualities were appreciated as they are not to-day. We could not have a Gibbon to-day. Our conditions forbid it. The war says no. Totalitarianism says no. The social conscience also says no. For good and for evil our faces are turned away from the eighteenth century which he adorned and exemplified. Our historians are either fanatics or scientists, and he was neither. He was a man of letters, equipped for evoking and interpreting the past. The great ship of his genius ploughs seas which, according to theorists, should lie beyond his range, and we can only thank the human star that this is so, that he lived, and lived just when he did.

I have quoted from his *Autobiography*. I needn't emphasise his *Decline and Fall*, which is known wherever English is known, but the *Autobiography* mayn't be so familiar, and a few words may be in place. It is one of the minor masterpieces of its century. It is a formal, self-conscious work, written to be read, it is intelligent, entertaining, dignified, and often amusing: there is, for instance, a devastating account of contemporary Oxford, which Cambridge at all events has never forgotten. Here's a passage from it where Cambridge also gets involved. He is discussing which is the senior foundation—a question which still agitates their dons. And he calmly remarks:

> Perhaps in a separate annotation I may coolly examine the fabulous and real antiquities of our sister universities, a question which has kindled such fierce and foolish disputes among their fanatic sons. In the meanwhile it will be acknowledged that these venerable bodies are sufficiently old to partake of all the prejudices and infirmities of age. The schools of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in a dark age of false and barbarous

> science (Gibbon by the way was blind to the achievements of mediævalism): and they are still tainted by the vices of their origin. Their primitive discipline was adapted to the education of priests and monks: and the government still remains in the hands of the clergy, an order of men whose manners are remote from the present world and whose eyes were dazzled by the light of philosophy.

He spent but fourteen months at Oxford, "the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life," and the *Autobiography* goes on to describe his expulsion because he had lapsed into Romanism, his salutary travels on the Continent, the growth of his mental powers, his service in the militia (an invaluable practical training for the future historian)—his residences in Switzerland, and the slowly maturing achievement of the *Decline and Fall*. Don't look for gaiety here or for spontaneity, but you will find wit, shrewdness, and the pardonable weightiness of a man who knows that he has genius and has used it properly. The book, by the way, is not Gibbon's own arrangement, but a compilation made by Lord Sheffield out of several separate memoirs which he had left behind him. Sheffield did his work well, so we are quite right, though not quite accurate, in referring to the book as Gibbon's *Autobiography*. Ask for it in the bookshops, if you don't know it already, and if my account of it has roused your curiosity, Gibbon's *Autobiography*. There are several cheap editions—it is in "Everyman" for instance, and in the World's Classics, and it isn't a big book. I bought a copy last week for 3s.

I began this chat with a quotation from the *Autobiography*, describing how he had the idea at Rome in 1760, of starting to write the decline and fall of the city and the Empire. I will conclude with another quotation from it, equally impressive, where he describes how, twenty-seven years later at Lausanne in Switzerland, the colossal enterprise is concluded:

> I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather on the night of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the

last page in a summer house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters and all Nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken my everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatever might be the future fate of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.

There is great English for you, and a great rounded life! It is not our English or our life, and it would be useless for us in our twentieth-century circumstances to imitate either the style or the conduct of Gibbon. We have to carry on differently. But he is a landmark and a signpost—a landmark of human achievement: and a signpost because the social convulsions of the Roman Empire as described by him sometimes pre-figure and indicate these convulsions which shake the whole world to-day.

PAUL ROBESON

By Cedric Dover

Paul Robeson is a spell-binder who bewitches the idolatrous. He has been so much surrounded by superlatives and legends that he might easily have become an ebony genius sitting on top of the mountain of art for art's sake. But he has remained in the market-place, a man of the people among the people. More than an artist, he is a worker, struggling with other workers for a real glory time. I can think of no better tribute to his quality.

It is this sense of the contemporary, blended with a sensitive awareness of the past and regard for the future, that raises him above fame to greatness. It is true that he is an actor who can encompass an epoch into a moment of vibrating sincerity, but I have known many Negroes with the same inspired ability to illuminate the joys and sorrows and potentialities of a people. It is equally true that his incomparable voice has a texture compared to "black velvet," and a purity reminiscent of "deep bells ringing," but I have known many Negroes whose voices can also create the ecstasy of a spiritual experience. Robeson is unique only in having that extra something—a composite of culture, humanism, feeling and personal charm, which mounts up to the fact that he is a grand person and a good mixer. He knows how to live life and move with the times.

So in the 'twenties he was intimately a part of the 'twenties, that sadly gay period, when enthusiasts in Chelsea and Greenwich Village and the Latin Quarter drank and talked and formed groups, seeking urgently for sincerity and self-expression, but succeeding only in expressing frustration in new and intriguing ways. One of these groups was the Provincetown Players, to which some of the most interesting figures in American art and letters attached themselves. Early in 1924, they invited Robeson, then a young lawyer waiting for his next

job, to play the principal rôles in Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones* and *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. *Emperor Jones* symbolises the degeneration, ending in animal terror responsive to the incessant throbbing of the tom-toms in the familiar, back-to-the-jungle manner, of a swaggering black egotist. *All God's Chillun* . . . illustrates the frustrations and tragedies of inter-marriage in an overstrained and sentimental way that moves one at the time and makes one angry afterwards. But these plays gave Robeson to the stage, and Robeson gave them an emotional content charged with the raw stuff of life.

From the Macdougall Street Theatre, the converted stable in which they were presented, to the concert platform was an inevitable step for a man whose voice had so many influential admirers. In the spring of 1925 he gave his first recital of Spirituals at the Greenwich Village Theatre, also under the auspices of the Provincetown Players, in association with Lawrence Brown, whose gifted collaboration happily continues to be a feature of his progress. It was then that I first heard of Paul Robeson. I was running a little magazine, unconsciously affected by the 'twenties myself, which brought me Negro papers in exchange. And I remember being strangely thrilled by their accounts of the success of this young coloured man who had been an unusually brilliant student, an athlete and all-American football star, and a lawyer and public speaker of undoubted promise. His future interested me as a possible example for my own people and I meant to follow him up. But by the beginning of 1926, I lost myself chasing scientific shadows across the Malay States, and heard no more of him till late in 1928, when a young planter told me about the sensation he was making in London. My friend played *Ol' Man River* on a portable gramophone in the verandah, and as the rich notes floated out above the rubber trees, silencing the crickets, I sensed behind them the pressure of a people whose tragedy became mine. I still share it.

In the years that followed I studied Paul Robeson's triumphs so attentively that I feel a somewhat mystic thrill in remem-

bering that I must have read the first copy—a final proof given to me by Thacker's in Calcutta—to reach India, of Essie Robeson's biography of her husband. She called it *Paul Robeson, Negro* (Harper, 1930), which Ethel Mannin said later should have been called *Paul Robeson, Artist.* The fact " that he happens to be a Negro," wrote Ethel, " is of considerably less importance than the fact that he is a great artist." Many who wished to " rise above race " agreed with this well-meaning criticism, but Essie's judgments are seldom wrong. For her, as for me, the fact that he is a Negro is fundamentally much more important than the fact that he is an artist.

Essie's book brought my knowledge of him up to date. He came to life for me against the background she painted. I saw him as the child of a deeply religious but tolerant family, overcoming the difficulties of poverty and prejudice (as later he avoided the pitfalls of success), through constant effort and self-criticism. I saw him as a man determined, as he had said at the outset of his career, to give his audiences a proper " knowledge and understanding of my people. They will sense that we are moved by the same emotions, have the same longings—that we are all human together. That will be something to work for, something worth doing."

He has done the job so well that in doing it he has become an international figure. But the appeal to sentiment has limitations. The artist who depends on it becomes circumscribed by his own achievements and audiences. He gets stuck in a circle through which he cannot break. In the early 'thirties it seemed that Robeson had reached this point, that he would finally take refuge in the escapism suggested by the title, *I Want to be an African*, of an essay he published in 1934. But when I first met him in the middle 'thirties, I realised that he was already finding the way out. He was acquiring a new dynamic that went beyond the Negroes to the whole oppressed world, that did not ask for pity and sympathy, but insisted that united effort was the only way to the good life. We talked into the night of many things: of Spengler and civilisations,

the nearness of slavery to the American scene, the revolutionary meaning of the Spirituals, the relationships and influence of African art, the responsibilities of the artist, the progress of minorities in Russia. And the more we talked, the more I realised that I was with a man who was bracing himself to climb a taller tree.

When I saw him as Lonnie Thompson in *Stevedore*, I knew that I was right. That part is separated from Brutus Jones and Jim Harris by a turbulent ocean of ideas, and that play is one of the turning-points of the new drama as surely as *Sanders of the River* is a left-over from the old. Robeson's success in it is much more important than the glory, disputed by some Shakespearian pundits, he acquired as *Othello*. Lonnie Thompson, slowly awakening from consciousness of race to that of the larger issues, was Robeson himself. And it was not only Thompson and Robeson, but all the new leaders of the coloured world, who asked the question in the terrific final speech: "When you gwine put a stop to it, black man? . . . When you gwine say: you can't do dat. I'm a man. I got de rights of a man. I'm gwine fight like a man. . . . Ain't no peace fo' de black man, preacher—ain't never gwine be, till he fight to get it."

The outlook which Robeson brought to his work as the Abyssinian War pointed the way to increasing destruction, is clearly shown in an article, packed tight with ideas, on "Primitives" which he wrote for *The New Statesman* in August 1936. He had found the concrete and abandoned the way of the Western intellectual. "There is not much doubt," he wrote, "that the artistic achievements of Europe, as abstract intellectualism penetrated deeper and deeper into the people, have steadily declined. It is true that this decline is partly obscured by an output of self-conscious, uninspired productions, which have a certain artificial grace; but discriminating people have little difficulty in distinguishing these lifeless imitations from the living pulsing thing. . . . To understand this, you need to remember that by 'creative ability' one means something more than the capacity of a few individuals

to paint, to write, or to make music. That is simply the supreme development of a quality that exists in the make-up of every human being. The whole problem of living can never be understood until the world recognises that artists are not a race apart. Every man has some element of the artist in him, and if this is pulled up by the roots, he becomes suicidal and dies. . . . This is a severe price to pay even for such achievements as those of Western science."

With this understanding of "the whole problem of living," Paul Robeson has since gone about the world singing, acting, talking and working, appearing on innumerable platforms for every great cause concerned with human liberation, sacrificing time and money to integrity, adding something to the understanding of others, stirring "the strong men to keep a-comin' on gittin' stronger." And so he will go on—warming us with that wide grin and that glorious voice, shedding light in dark places, taking his part as a man, a Negro and an artist in the fight for the future.

And Essie Robeson will be at his side, practical, critical, brisk, grumbling frequently about the incorrigible laziness of her "Baby"—which, between you and me, is what she calls him, and how she regards him. It is the creative laziness of a man who knows when to take time off—"to stroll along the Avenue," and have a chat with his friends. But I like to agree with her because Paul is convinced that I am the laziest guy that ever was.

Thinking in this way of my friends, Paul and Essie, makes me wish to tell you more about them, but I only have time for one story which I think is revealing. Paul and I were walking down the road one night from the Unity Theatre, where he was helping a band of enthusiastic youngsters to make English theatrical history in *Plant in the Sun*. "Cor," said a man to a group outside a pub, "there's Paul Robeson." "Look, Maisie," said another, "there's Ole Man River hisself." The group seemed to like the crisp description, and so do I.

For Paul Robeson is just that . . . Old Man River himself.

MICROFILMS

By Ritchie Calder

This morning I got an airgraph letter from India. It was one of a batch of 650,000 letters which were flown from the Middle East and beyond. Before the war that load of mail would have weighed 4000 lb., about the weight of a Hurricane. This lot weighed only 15 lb., the weight of the pilot's flying-suit. This tremendous saving in weight was made possible by the microfilm process.

"Microfilm" is still an unfamiliar word, but before long it will be as commonplace as the word "printing." And there is nothing uncanny about the process itself which shrinks enormous bales of printed paper to the size of a cotton-reel, but, judging by the difficulty those of us who have been trying to popularise the idea have had, you'd think it was a kind of voodoo magic like that used by the head-hunters to shrink the heads of their victims to the size of a lemon.

As a matter of fact, I carry around in a pill-box in my waistcoat pocket the microfilm version of my first scientific book. I had it reduced to that size ten years ago by the simple device of clamping the book to a table, focussing a bright light over it and fixing above it a miniature camera—the kind which uses ordinary movie film. Then it was just a case of turning over the pages and clicking the trigger. Nowadays the apparatus is less crude but, in the case of book copying, the principle is just the same. In the hands of an experienced operator the process is as slick as a card-sharper dealing a pack of cards. In the case of airgraph letters or sheets of manuscript it is just a case of feeding the sheets through a slot. The rest is all automatic. One spool of film takes 1600 letters and the originals are fed in so rapidly that the operator doesn't even get a glimpse of the contents of the love-letter he is copying.

A few years before the war the British Museum began to use microfilm. A team of operators were moved in to copy books printed before 1560—some of Britain's rarest treasures. Microfilm copies were distributed to fourteen American libraries—a pre-war instance of Lend-Lease. That work has gone on, and has been expanded as a result of the great dangers produced by war. With the onset of the air raids, urgent measures were taken to copy irreplaceable documents—including, I'm afraid, my income-tax return. Banks, museums, legal firms, government departments began to put their records on to films and scatter copies, in the small bulk made possible by this method, over the country.

Now it has gone a long way farther. A great deal of our war-effort depends upon the rapid exchange of technical information between the experts of the United Nations, between armament firms, between scientists and between engineering draughtsmen. Such information is rare and secret. So, in one of London's museums, there is a battery of microfilm machines working long shifts, with armed guards posted. They make the microfilm extracts from the precious documents. These are flown by fast planes to the United States, to Soviet Russia, to India, Australia or wherever the information is needed. Yet, as a very humble pioneer of microfilm I get a smug satisfaction out of this development because I belonged to just such a service before the war. If, for example, I wanted the facsimile of a document in the Library of Congress in Washington, all that was necessary was a cable and, by the fastest route—not so fast as in these war days of bomber crossings—I would get it on a piece of film little bigger than a postage stamp. The Declaration of Independence for a few pennies!

In pre-war days the University of Harvard used to get copies of every British national newspaper. A year's consignment of any one of these papers used to weigh about 300 lb. and form a bale five feet high. Now that consignment is no bigger than a housewife's cotton-reel. But in war-time the

little packets of microfilm copies of newspapers which are flown across the Atlantic are more thrilling—they include newspapers smuggled out of Nazi-controlled Europe—the underground newspapers printed by daring and desperate men and women under the noses of the Gestapo, in the forests and swamps of Poland, in the caves of Czechoslovakia, in mountain-huts in Norway, in cellars in Brussels and in the ruins of Rotterdam. They include the Nazis' own papers and copies of the newspapers which the R.A.F. drop behind the enemy lines to give hope and courage and uncensored news to the peoples of Occupied Europe. And when I finger in my waistcoat pocket that pill-box book, I think of the volume which was smuggled out of German Europe on a reel of microfilm concealed in the high-heel of a courageous Frenchwoman.

New developments are projected. Transatlantic newspapers made up in London or New York, with all the skill and lavishness of modern newspaper production, complete with illustrations and flown over to be reproduced as a normal newspaper on sale on the news-stands the same day. That way lies closer understanding between the British and American peoples. The same technique will probably be employed to provide the newspapers of liberty which will follow the troops which go in to liberate territories under Nazi domination.

The importance of microfilm to the culture of the world can never properly be measured, but it is certainly one of the factors which is saving that culture from the Nazi vandals. One of the greatest tragedies in the history of learning was the destruction of the library of Alexandria. That library built up from the wisdom of the Eastern World contained over 700,000 rare papyri volumes, housed in two different buildings. One building was sacked by the troops of Julius Cæsar two thousand years ago. The other was destroyed by fire three hundred years later. In those two disasters rolls of learning were irrevocably destroyed. To-day that could not happen. The wisdom of the world is again being put on rolls—little rolls of film which can be scattered widespread beyond the

reach of Nazi destruction and the holocaust of war. When the world exhibition was held in New York before the war, microfilm records of our civilisation were enclosed in an indestructible case and sunk deep in the foundations of one of the buildings with the idea that even if our civilisation became as remote and mysterious as that of the Etruscans or of Ur, the archæologists of five thousand years hence would have a complete picture of life as we lead it to-day.

Microfilm has great possibilities in other directions. Some of you may know of H. G. Wells' great conception of a World Encyclopædia, which would contain all the knowledge which exists in the world so that the ordinary man everywhere would have access to it. It means taking the British Museum library into the humblest home. But, said those who ridiculed the idea, there are over 5,000,000 books on the shelves of the British Museum. Well, of course, Wells never suggested that anyone would ever have the space or the time to cope with all that. But even if that had been his idea, microfilm would make it possible for all those books to be copied and housed in the public library of any town or village. It is quite possible for a 200 page book to be reproduced on a piece of film no bigger than a post card. A thousand books could be stored in an ordinary desk drawer. Wells' idea was to survey all that knowledge in a World Encyclopædia and to tell the average man, or woman or child, where the facts could be studied in the original sources. That would not be much good if the only copy of the original source was locked away in the vaults of the Vatican Library, or if the reader in Calcutta or Pekin was told to consult a document in the Bodleian Library at Oxford or the Library of Congress in Washington.

Now it is quite feasible to have all the source-books everywhere assembled within reach of everyone. The rarest volumes could be assembled in microfilm libraries in every district. The student could consult them readily by merely going to his nearest microfilm centre and sitting down, as the readers at the British Museum do, for his daily studies.

He would have in front of him a reproduction device. This is what is known as a "reader." It is no bigger or more expensive than a portable typewriter. It consists of a box with a ground-glass lid on which the page one wants to read is projected—normal size—from inside the box. To "turn the page" all you have to do is press a trigger and the next frame of the film is thrown on the screen. It is all delightfully simple.

Another use of microfilm is the production of books for limited circulation. By normal printing methods this is a costly business. Some highly specialised scientific books may have a circulation of only fifty people, and what publisher is going to be attracted by that idea, and who could afford the price he would have to charge? Instead of printing and binding, the manuscripts, complete with coloured illustrations if necessary, can be filmed and just as many copies as necessary run off. The negative is still there if more copies are needed.

As a journalist, I'm excited by another prospect. The newspaper of the future will be no bigger than a post card. Just as in those Transatlantic newspapers we are thinking of trying now, they will be edited, illustrated and set up just as they are now but instead of the 5000 miles of paper used every night to produce the daily peace-time issue of a national newspaper, it will be reproduced on microfilm. Instead of the hundreds of tons of newspapers which have to be circulated daily, requiring fleets of lorries, special trains and vast expenditure on freightage, they will be popped through the letter-box by the postman on his early morning round.

Microfilm belongs to the new Renaissance, as much as printing belonged to the old.

CHINA'S LITERARY REVOLUTION

By Hsiao Ch'ien

The greatest change in China in the last thirty years has been the awakening of the masses. During our five thousand year history, we have had plenty of upheaval. You have heard of our "dynasties," such as the Tang, the Sung, the Yuan, Ming and the Ch'ing Dynasty which gave way in 1911 to the present Republican Government. In Europe, the change of dynasties often meant that one royal family had run out of heirs, but in China it nearly always meant a revolt either from inside the court or from among the peasants. The common people of China, as you know, are stoical and content. They never revolted until the tyranny of a regime became unbearable. And when they drove away the tyrant, they then returned to their fields, leaving the ruling of the country to the new and enlightened literati. In this way the revolution of 1911 differed substantially from all the past changes. In the first place, it involved an intruder—the influence and pressure of the West, for China could no longer remain a giant hermit in the family of the world. In the second place, unlike the past, the masses were already vaguely awakened. They were not willing to leave the country entirely to the scholars. Nor did the younger generation of the intelligentsia think it right to treat the masses as a herd. The literary revolution which took place in 1917 was a result of this fundamental change. Externally it aimed at the simplification of the language so as to make room for the study of science. It was obviously an important step we took in order to adjust ourselves to the modern world, for the classical style required the greater part of one's lifetime to master. Internally, it was a natural course for a young republic to take, as it was not in keeping with democracy to leave the masses illiterate. It was therefore a drastic but necessary attempt to democratise the style. It

started as a struggle against our traditional literary tool—an attempt to replace the classical style with the vernacular so that it could be accessible to the common people. But in changing the bottle, we found that the wine was no longer the same either. For the literary revolution in China is inseparable from its social and political impact.

The last thirty years have been the most dramatic period in Chinese history, a most dangerous period when our existence has been constantly threatened, and a most heroic period, in so far as we have successfully resisted for five years the hordes of a most ruthless foe. During this period weaknesses of the last centuries were not only exposed but bore fruits, fruits of poverty, of disunity, and of danger of extinction. But it was also a period in which the young generation was most articulate. The intelligentsia of Republican China were at first like young adolescents. For the first time they stepped into this immense world, very timid, very bewildered and very sceptical. But they were not just adolescents. Their environment was like a garment many centuries old. So there came the question as to whether they should shake off the garment altogether or patch it up. The old garment was by no means a comfortable one. Invisibly it still cramped and confined. The revolt against convention was the keynote of modern Chinese literature; the revolt against marriage without consent, the revolt against government by the few, the revolt against opium smoking, foot-binding or anything that weakens the already weak race.

The guiding spirit of the vernacular movement is Dr. Hu Shih, our present ambassador to America. His main thesis was that each age should have its own way of expressing itself and that posterity had no obligation to follow blindly the footsteps of its ancestors. In his essays on Human Rights, Dr. Hu Shih wrote: "The chief mission of the new movement is the emancipation of our thoughts. We criticise Confucius and Mencius; we find fault with philosophers Chwang and Chu, we oppose this and that; all we aim to do is to abolish dogmatism and cultivate scepticism. The fundamental meaning

rincess Indira of Kapurthala, who gives a talk every Monday on the Par
Debates in the series "The Debate Continues" in the B.B.C. Easter
Vith her in the studio are Z. A. Bokhari, B.B.C. Indian Programme
with Miss Venu Chitale, a member of the B.B.C. Indian Sect

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SENDING MESSAGES TO INDIA. Twice a week Indians in Great Britain send messages to their relatives at home in the B.B.C. service to [illegible]. They are introduced at the microphone by Iqbal Bahadur Sarin, of the Indian Section of the B.B.C.

of the new cultural movement is to acknowledge the fact that the traditional culture of China does not suit our modern environment and to advocate the acceptance of a new civilisation with the rest of the world." According to Dr. Hu, the new language should be "plain and colloqual, lucid and intelligible."

But when I say the "new" language, you must not think that we have invented one artificially. It is just the ordinary language we have used for centuries in daily conversation. Only, in the days of Imperial China, a different sentence structure, and a more sophisticated vocabulary were used officially, and were quite inaccessible to the man-in-the-street.

This battle was indeed not easily won. The reformers faced quite a formidable opposition. Mr. Wang Ching Hsuan, for instance, wrote that these youngsters were just like fickle women who, as soon as they fall into the arms of new lovers, cast away their husbands. The husband alluded to was, of course, China's traditional culture, the intruder, European influence.

Despite such antagonisms, the movement can still be called a sweeping victory. The major campaign started in 1917, when Dr. Hu was still studying in America. The next year, *New Youth*, the earliest and the chief organ of the movement, was published. The whole year was full of quarrels throughout the country. In 1919 the first vernacular newspaper appeared in Peking, and in May of the same year the movement reached its climax in the outbreak of the student revolt against partial acceptance of the twenty-one demands made by Japan. In 1920 hundreds of magazines appeared in this popular style, and in the autumn the Ministry of Education decreed that text-books for the first two grades of primary schools should be written in vernacular. This plan has since then been extended, allowing only a certain proportion of classical literature to be taught in the advanced classes. By 1921 over 100 literary societies had been organised, which became centres for new writers, and which led to fresh movements.

Chronologically, vernacular Chinese literature can be

divided into three periods. The first period, roughly from 1916 to 1925, is known as the Literary Revolution. The battle was fought between the conservative elements in China who upheld the classical style and the vernacular writers under the leadership of Dr. Hu. The latter's organ was the *New Youth*. During this period the problem that confronted us was mainly linguistic and the achievement was also more linguistic than literary. Indeed, in the early 'twenties, young Chinese fought hard against social conventions with their " emancipated brush." When Mr. Kang Pai-ch'ing published *The Pasture Ahead*, a collection of his love lyrics, many " gentlemen " in the country accused it as being immoral. But very soon after, Miss Juan Chun began to write short stories in the first person about the elopement of a girl with a man. Beside landscape descriptions, the themes in the early 'twenties were mainly about love or social injustice. The writers of the Literary Society, which adopted the humanitarian attitude, wrote about child labourers, girl beggars and the rickshawmen's winter, while the Crescent Moon Society writers, then exponents of the romantic school, translated Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, Goethe's *The Sorrow of the Young Werther*, and wrote profusely emotional verses and prose, thus completely breaking the traditional taboo on amorous expressions.

While the vernacular style was making headway, the Shanghai Massacre of May 1925 took place. Like the students' demonstrations in 1917, which resulted in the spreading of the vernacular movement, the nation-wide uprising in 1925 brought a distinct change in modern China. In literature it was the beginning of the Revolutionary Literature. For the first time a split developed among the vernacular writers themselves, which in the following two years merged into the political dissension between the Kuomintang and the Communists. The Left wing writers called themselves " Proletarian writers." Heated quarrels in ideology raged, and the cleavage culminated in the formation of the League of Left Wing Writers in 1930. Disregarding political events, the controversy

between the Right and the Left wing was the age-long issue of whether art should be a servant of life or whether it should exist for its own sake. The Proletarian writers regarded the "Ivory Towerists" as decadent, while the "independent writers" felt the dogmatism of the Left wing critics intolerable. Cheng Fang Wu, a leading critic of the Left wing, wrote: "A writer's love should be just as strong as his hatred, for literature is the conscience of the age. Writers themselves are the warriors of this conscience. We deem it our duty to attack all systems of injustice and the evils of convention."

This futile argument lasted for quite a long while. By the early 'thirties we hear quite different tones. The Left wing themselves realised that to popularise Proletarian literature, they had to produce samples worth reading. We had already *Midnight*, by Mao Tun, a monumental novel about city exploitation and rural bankruptcy in the China of 1930, the factory scenes of Miss Ting Ling, and Hsiao Chun's *Village in August*, which was about the guerrilla warriors in Manchuria. The author himself was with the guerrilla forces for some time after the Japanese occupation.

With Japan's invasion of Manchuria, the new literature entered a fresh period. The "Mukden Incident," which served as a timely example for Hitler and Mussolini, was a great shock to the Chinese. The shock had lasting effects. For the first time we realised that to survive we must unite, and that to unite we had to leave a number of minor differences to be settled gradually. Politically also, the need for an internal solidarity was beginning to gain ground. In literature the ideological quarrel was overshadowed by the popularity of the "literature of National defence," a veiled anti-Japanese literary movement which became a nation-wide cry. The literary United Front came slowly but surely, just as the political one did. In 1938 a National League of Writers was founded in Hankow with branches all over China, which really marked the beginning of our literary unity. There is no name for this happy period, but I should call it the period of maturity.

Twenty years ago the position of the vernacular style was well established. After that, we spent nearly ten years in arguments which led us nowhere. We discovered that literature is not just a question of doctrine. Just at the moment of this realisation came the Japanese aggression. Writers at first threw away their pens and joined the army. But soon this was found to be a waste, for China was not short of man-power. What the country needed was political workers. As so many of our soldiers come from the illiterate peasantry, writers organised themselves into political workers' corps operating at the front and behind the Japanese lines. What this will mean in post-war China no one can fail to appreciate. We had been talking of realism, when our writers had hardly seen a barn or met a real farmer. That is why much of the dialogue of our proletarian characters was so unconvincing. Now, Chinese writers are actually in the interior, tramping over the plains and scaling the mountains in the guerrilla areas. The war has brought the pedantic, the near-sighted, the writers who were ignorant of actual life, into the vast hinterland of China. For the first time in the social history of China, the literati class and the farmers share the same sort of life. The horizon of our writers has been infinitely broadened, their knowledge of the country deepened. While becoming more conscientious about their art, they have been enriched by participation in the grim reality of history. Can it be expecting too much to hope that something solid will come, after the war, from those authors who have become so intimately part of the people and part of the soil?

I have often been asked why the atmosphere of modern Chinese fiction is so gloomy and depressing and the characters so very gruesome. One must remember that the vernacular movement has always remained part of a reform movement. As reformers, the tendency has been to portray the seamy side of contemporary life. Here in fact lies the basic difference in content between classical literature and the vernacular. With the exception of such authors as Tufu, Pai Chu-yi and many

of our novelists, Chinese writers in the past often composed in order to escape from life, while the vernacular writers write in order to improve it. So we have ruthlessly exposed the incongruous, ridiculed the stupid, and cursed all the social evils we could name. Not until the outbreak of the war did a constructive attitude emerge. In this respect, particularly, Chinese literature can be likened to Russian. Up to 1931 the bulk of Chinese fiction paints a gloomy picture very similar to Czarist Russia. In fact, with all the floods, the senseless civil wars, and the foreign oppressions, life was perhaps not very much easier for us than the life depicted by Turgenev or Chekov. But as in the *Cherry Orchard*, we never lost sight of an approaching dawn. You have heard of Lu Hsun, I believe. Some people call him China's Gorky. His *Ah Q* has been translated into English, French and Russian. But as a matter of fact, his original ambition in life was to be a doctor. In the preface to his collection of short stories entitled *Graveyard*, Lu Hsun said he wanted to be a doctor to cure the diseases of his countrymen, who were then at the mercy of unscientific quacks. One day, when he was a student of medicine in Japan, his professor, in order to amuse him and his fellow-pupils after a tedious lesson in anatomy, showed them some lantern slides of landscape. One of the lantern slides showed some Chinese who acted as spies for the Russians in the Russo-Japanese War. They were arrested and were beheaded by the Japanese in the street before a cheering crowd. Lu Hsun was more than hurt. He then realised that there was more disease to be cured in the souls of his compatriots than in their bodies. So his very first story, *Ah Q*, was a merciless caricature of a typical Chinese, with all his psychological absurdities exaggerated. It was indeed devastating and effective. His second story, *The Diary of a Mad Man*, was on the same lines.

To-day, the spirit of self-criticism still prevails, such as that shown by Chang Tien-yi's story of Mr. Hwa Wei which appeared in the *New Writing* last year, but writers have already changed their tone. They sing of the resistance and the

reconstruction as the Soviet writers do of their Five Year Plan. Among the essays, one finds to-day sketches, full of hope and enthusiasm, about the guerrilla areas. There are portraits of heroes and martyrs of the war, both on land and in the air. Many such heroes are very ordinary men, such as the gunner in the " Third Rate Gunner " and the very touching illiterate peasant in Yao Hsueh Hen's " Half a Cart of Straw Short," both of which appeared in the *New Writing*. Shortly before the fall of Hong-Kong, I saw a poem in a newspaper which illustrates the constructive spirit of war-time Chinese writers. It is called " The Tattooed Wall," and is by Lin Huo Tze :

The Tattooed Wall

Few countries have walls
More magnificent than those of China !
A veteran sailor,
The pigment of war
Grained into his chest,
Needling his body with dragons and tigers,
A sign of his devotion to his love.
He never belittles himself,
And holds his head high in the street,
Even if roof-beams and columns fall around him,
The whole city about his feet,
He with the strongest of voices,
The largest of eyes,
Calls to the passers-by in uniform
And the unarmed citizens.
Let him be as a revelation to these people,
For he has survived the bloodiest fighting.
Every inch of his body bears its stains.
When they stop to stare at him
He tells them legends of tattooing ;
Long ago they were wise,
Shielding themselves with tattoo
Against [illegible] beasts and all besiegers.
The wall of China to-day
Likewise stands as a guard.
Look, his chest is heaving,
There is a loud voice raised in the open.
Few countries have walls
More magnificent than ours !

THE MAN IN THE STREET

By J. M. Tambimuttu

To-day I want to say something about the London Underground—not about its technical side, but about the peculiar atmosphere of the stations, and the new kind of social life that seems to be growing up there as a result of the war.

The Underground is London's principal method of transport. Think of Richmond in Surrey, where the Thames flows through stately parks and the youths are happy in bathing costumes. Or of historic Hampton Court, where Cardinal Wolsey entertained King Henry VIII, and the low-lying river country surrounding the Tudor Palace. It is good to think of these country scenes from the heart of busy London, and one may imagine that they are distant memories not to be easily recaptured. Yet they are only about half-an-hour's ride in the London Underground, and perhaps a short bus ride, and the fare costs less than the price of a pint of beer at your local. I have asked several people who have visited London, what particular place impressed itself most in their minds, and they have always answered, "The London Underground." Yes, I too shall remember it as the most memorable feature of London when I return to Ceylon.

It is a pleasure to enter a station from the bitter cold outside and to feel the warm air swirl round your face. Stations are air-conditioned, summer or winter. The temperature is never below 60 degrees Fahrenheit or above 70 degrees. The station is bright and cheerful after the drabness of the street. You may buy your evening paper here from the little sad-faced man with the walrus moustache who knows you as a "regular" and wishes you a cheery "good-evening." He has stood there wistfully by the station, in the same place, for years. His friend has probably gone round the corner for a cup of tea, but

he has left a pile of his papers behind on an overturned soap-box. People take their paper from the pile and drop a penny on the box. I have never noticed anyone being dishonest about paying for his paper, whether it is a penny or a twopenny one. If you have put down a shilling or a half-crown, you collect your own change, and you don't cheat, because the newspaper seller thinks he can trust you. The station is a convenient meeting place, and there is a soldier waiting for his sweetheart, and beyond him some girls and a young man who are probably waiting to keep appointments or perhaps to use the public telephones when they are unengaged. If you are in need of some books, periodicals or stationery, there is a stationer's at every station entrance.

Certain stations are even more impressive, and house tobacconists, confectioners, fruit-sellers and drapers. South Kensington Station proudly displays an antique-shop where one may buy a Chinese Buddha as large as a fireplace, or a miniature Indian ivory elephant smaller than a pea. Sloane Square has a buffet where you can buy "intoxicating drinks" as the notice says. Further down the line there are display windows in Piccadilly Station where one may gaze at the latest creations in evening gowns, shoes or hats. There are occasional exhibitions of pictures and photographs and Kitchen Front Exhibitions at Charing Cross station.

Three halfpence for a ticket is the modest price you are asked to pay for a short journey in the Underground, and for the experience of watching this triumph of modern engineering skill in operation. It used to be a penny in peace-time, and one then used to think of the Underground as a penny paradise where a penny in a slot-machine worked miracles producing cigarettes, matches, dried raisins, chocolates, throat pastilles or your name-plate, stamped by yourself. The slot-machines are now, alas, empty, but I hope that it will not be long before they are full again and work their wonders on unsuspecting travellers. The Underground is also a paradise of posters. The lifts that take you down silently to your train are covered

with posters from the roof downwards. Rooms to let with hot and cold water at 25s. a week, toothpastes that are promised would transform your teeth into pearls, variety shows, concerts and other distractions to lighten the boredom of the black-out hours, are advertised. Posters also adorn the sides of the tunnel down which the escalators or moving staircases run, the walls of the tube platform, and the corridors leading up to it. As you travel deeper and deeper underground the posters get bigger and bigger, until at the tube platform where you wait for the train you are confronted with giant cakes of soap, bottles of beer and chubby-faced girls of great proportions sipping Ovaltine or lemonade through delicate straws. The platforms are brightly lit, unlike the Paris Métro, and the atmosphere is convivial. You always find that your friends are good-humoured standing there sixty feet below ground level beside you. It may be that the sense of isolation from the more noisy world above makes them care-free; but I think that the large gay posters and the bright lights must induce a heightened spirit in people. I have always admired the posters issued by the London Transport which are cheerful and colourful. Some of the best artists in England have contributed to these subterranean art galleries, and I can remember seeing posters by Anna Zinkeisen, McKnight Kauffer, John Banting, Paul Nash, Fred Taylor who is perhaps the best poster artist in England, pictures of circus life by Dame Laura Knight and sunny seascapes by Charles Pears. What especially pleased me was to notice that modern conceptions of art were not taboo with the London Transport Board as exemplified in the posters of that delightful team of painters who work together, Eckersley and Lombers.

The war has unfortunately curtailed the issuing of these posters, but there is a very jolly set of new posters on the Undergrounds by David Langdon presenting Billy Brown of London Town, who is a new character to me, although he may be founded on tradition also, like the popular concept of the British bulldog nature. He is a bowler-hatted, black-coated

figure with a cheerful impish face, pin-striped trousers, a rolled-up umbrella. He is always giving good advice about how to behave to a crowd of less impish looking people who don't carry umbrellas and are not so prominent in their lighter clothing.

I copied this verse about Billy Brown from a Langdon poster because it amused me very much :

> Billy is standing in a queue
> As we all must sometimes do.
> Queueing in these days of Rush
> Means you don't have any crush.
> And the seconds saved would lend
> Extra wings to journey's end.
> But, says Billy, see you choose
> The proper one of several queues.

Talking of London in war-time reminds me of queues and queueing, because it is a very English institution. In Paris when one wants to board a bus he takes a numbered ticket from the "stop" post and waits for it. This is a fair scheme to ensure that those who come first, board first. But this arrangement is not suited to London. It is cumbersome and difficult to operate as passengers increase. London prefers the queue, and the Londoner has usually preferred it. The national quality of order and fairness among the people finds public expression in the queue, and jockeying for position in the Underground ticket halls is practically unknown. There seems to have been a queue for Noah's ark. Noah deserves to be famous if only for that. The queue is symbolic of the war spirit prevailing among the Londoners, and that is why I have mentioned it. Londoners will queue with perfect nonchalance for hours on end on a cold day, and with good humour, to see a play or a picture. Nowadays they troop cheerfully into the Underground carrying their bedding, to shelter for the night. Entrance is by tickets which are issued free on application, and which allocate a reserved place for each individual. When the bombing first began they were not allowed to shelter in the

"Tubes." But the shelterers had their own way because they bought penny fares and made legal their entry into the station platforms. A system of season tickets was then introduced, and it has eliminated the tiresome queueing that was once necessary to secure places.

The shelterers are well looked after. Most stations have a resident medical officer and nurses. From six to ten in the evening and from five to seven in the morning they are served with hot meat pies, fruit tarts, cakes, buns and cups of tea or cocoa for a very low charge. Since there is not room on the platforms for canteens, waitresses bring refreshments round to the shelters in wicker baskets slung round their shoulders. Food train Specials are provided by the London Transport to bring the food to distribution centres. Gramophone concerts have been arranged by the ENSA, and those of the shelterers capable of providing entertainment are allowed to exercise their talents. Classes for children have also been arranged in some shelters. Many of the Underground stations were gaily decorated last Christmas, and the neon lights specially erected for the occasion blazed out the season's greetings. There was even dancing on the platform for all.

A new spirit of comradeship has been born among the shelterers. It is obvious that many go there not to escape the bombs, but because they like being together, and exchanging conversation. This is the new spirit, I think, that will emerge from this present world chaos, and it is a state I feel sure we are all looking forward to.

THE RE-DISCOVERY OF EUROPE

By George Orwell

When I was a small boy and was taught history—very badly, of course, as nearly everyone in England is—I used to think of history as a sort of long scroll with thick black lines ruled across it at intervals. Each of these lines marked the end of what was called a "period," and you were given to understand that what came afterwards was completely different from what had gone before. It was almost like a clock striking. For instance, in 1499 you were still in the Middle Ages, with knights in plate armour riding at one another with long lances, and then suddenly the clock struck 1500, and you were in something called the Renaissance, and everyone wore ruffs and doublets and was busy robbing treasure ships on the Spanish Main. There was another very thick black line drawn at the year 1700. After that it was the Eighteenth Century, and people suddenly stopped being Cavaliers and Roundheads and became extraordinarily elegant gentlemen in knee breeches and three-cornered hats. They all powdered their hair, took snuff and talked in exactly balanced sentences, which seemed all the more stilted because for some reason I didn't understand they pronounced most of their S's as F's. The whole of history was like that in my mind—a series of completely different periods changing abruptly at the end of a century, or at any rate at some sharply defined date.

Now in fact these abrupt transitions don't happen, either in politics, manners or literature. Each age lives on into the next—it must do so, because there are innumerable human lives spanning every gap. And yet there are such things as periods. We feel our own age to be deeply different from, for instance, the early Victorian period, and an eighteenth-century sceptic like Gibbon would have felt himself to be among savages

if you had suddenly thrust him into the Middle Ages. Every now and again something happens—no doubt it's ultimately traceable to changes in industrial technique, though the connection isn't always obvious—and the whole spirit and tempo of life changes, and people acquire a new outlook which reflects itself in their political behaviour, their manners, their architecture, their literature and everything else. No one could write a poem like Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" to-day, for instance, and no one could have written Shakespeare's lyrics in the age of Gray. These things belong in different periods. And though, of course, those black lines across the page of history are an illusion, there are times when the transition is quite rapid, sometimes rapid enough for it to be possible to give it a fairly accurate date. One can say without grossly over-simplifying, "About such and such a year, such and such a style of literature began." If I were asked for the starting-point of modern literature—and the fact that we still call it "modern" shows that this particular period isn't finished yet—I should put it at 1917, the year in which T. S. Eliot published his poem "Prufrock." At any rate that date isn't more than five years out. It is certain that about the end of the last war the literary climate changed, the typical writer came to be quite a different person, and the best books of the subsequent period seemed to exist in a different world from the best books of only four or five years before.

To illustrate what I mean, I ask you to compare in your mind two poems which haven't any connection with one another, but which will do for purposes of comparison because each is entirely typical of its period. Compare, for instance, one of Eliot's characteristic earlier poems with a poem of Rupert Brooke, who was, I should say, the most admired English poet in the years before 1914. Perhaps the most representative of Brooke's poems are his patriotic ones, written in the early days of the war. A good one is the sonnet beginning "If I should die, think only this of me: That there's some corner of a foreign field That is for ever England." Now read

side by side with this one of Eliot's Sweeney poems; for example, "Sweeney among the Nightingales"—you know, "The circles of the stormy moon Slide westward toward the River Plate." As I say, these poems have no connection in theme or anything else, but it's possible in a way to compare them, because each is representative of its own time and each seemed a good poem when it was written. The second still seems a good poem now.

Not only the technique but the whole spirit, the implied outlook on life, the intellectual paraphernalia of these poems are abysmally different. Between the young Englishman with a public school and university background, going out enthusiastically to die for his country with his head full of English lanes, wild roses and what not, and the rather jaded cosmopolitan American, getting glimpses of eternity in some slightly squalid restaurant in the Latin Quarter of Paris, there is a huge gulf. That might be only an individual difference, but the point is that you come upon rather the same kind of difference, a difference that raises the same comparisons, if you read side by side almost any two characteristic writers of the two periods. It's the same with the novelists as with the poets—Joyce, Lawrence, Huxley and Wyndham Lewis on the one side, and Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy on the other, for instance. The newer writers are immensely less prolific than the older ones, more scrupulous, more interested in technique, less optimistic and, in general, less confident in their attitude to life. But more than that, you have all the time the feeling that their intellectual and æsthetic background is different, rather as you do when you compare a nineteenth-century French writer such as, say, Flaubert, with a nineteenth-century English writer like Dickens. The Frenchman seems enormously more sophisticated than the Englishman, though he isn't necessarily a better writer because of that. But let me go back a bit and consider what English literature was like in the days before 1914.

The giants of that time were Thomas Hardy—who, how-

ever, had stopped writing novels some time earlier—Shaw, Wells, Kipling, Bennett, Galsworthy and, somewhat different from the others—not an Englishman, remember, but a Pole who chose to write in English—Joseph Conrad. There were also A. E. Housman (The Shropshire Lad), and the various Georgian poets, Rupert Brooke and the others. There were also the innumerable comic writers, Sir James Barrie, W. W. Jacobs, Barry Pain and many others. If you read all those writers I've just mentioned, you would get a not misleading picture of the English mind before 1914. There were other literary tendencies at work, there were various Irish writers, for instance, and in a quite different vein, much nearer to our own time, there was the American novelist Henry James, but the main stream was the one I've indicated. But what is the common denominator between writers who are individually as far apart as Bernard Shaw and A. E. Housman, or Thomas Hardy and H. G. Wells? I think the basic fact about nearly all English writers of that time is their complete unawareness of anything outside the contemporary English scene. Some are better writers than others, some are politically conscious and some aren't, but they are all alike in being untouched by any European influence. This is true even of novelists like Bennett and Galsworthy, who derived in a very superficial sense from French and perhaps Russian models. All of these writers have a background of ordinary, respectable, middle-class English life, and a half-conscious belief that this kind of life will go on for ever, getting more humane and more enlightened all the time. Some of them, like Hardy and Housman, are pessimistic in outlook, but they all at least believe that what is called progress would be desirable if it were possible. Also—a thing that generally goes with lack of æsthetic sensibility—they are all uninterested in the past, at any rate the remote past. It is very rare to find in a writer of that time anything we should now regard as a sense of history. Even Thomas Hardy, when he attempts a huge poetic drama based on the Napoleonic wars—*The Dynasts*, it's called—sees it all

from the angle of a patriotic school textbook. Still more, they're all æsthetically uninterested in the past. Arnold Bennett, for instance, wrote a great deal of literary criticism, and it's clear that he is almost unable to see any merit in any book earlier than the nineteenth century, and indeed hasn't much interest in any writer other than his contemporaries. To Bernard Shaw most of the past is simply a mess which ought to be swept away in the name of progress, hygiene, efficiency and what-not. H. G. Wells, though later on he was to write a history of the world, looks at the past with the same sort of surprised disgust as a civilised man contemplating a tribe of cannibals. All of these people, whether they liked their own age or not, at least thought it was better than what had gone before, and took the literary standards of their own time for granted. The basis of all Bernard Shaw's attacks on Shakespeare is really the charge—quite true, of course—that Shakespeare wasn't an enlightened member of the Fabian Society. If any of these writers had been told that the writers immediately subsequent to them would hark back to the English poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the French poets of the mid-nineteenth century and to the philosophers of the Middle Ages, they would have thought it a kind of dilettantism.

But now look at the writers who begin to attract notice—some of them had begun writing rather earlier, of course—immediately after the last war: Joyce, Eliot, Pound, Huxley, Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis. Your first impression of them, compared with the others—this is true even of Lawrence—is that something has been punctured. To begin with, the notion of progress has gone by the board. They don't any longer believe that progress happens or that it ought to happen, they don't any longer believe that men are getting better and better by having lower mortality rates, more effective birth control, better plumbing, more aeroplanes and faster motor-cars. Nearly all of them are homesick for the remote past, or some period of the past, from D. H. Lawrence's ancient Etruscans

onwards. All of them are politically reactionary, or at best are uninterested in politics. None of them cares twopence about the various hole-and-corner reforms which had seemed important to their predecessors, such as female suffrage, temperance reform, birth control or prevention of cruelty to animals. All of them are more friendly, or at least less hostile, towards the Christian churches than the previous generation had been. And nearly all of them seem to be æsthetically alive in a way that hardly any English writer since the Romantic Revival had been.

Now, one can best illustrate what I have been saying by means of individual examples, that is, by comparing outstanding books of more or less comparable type in the two periods. As a first example, compare H. G. Wells's short stories—there's a large number of them collected together under the title of *The Country of the Blind*—with D. H. Lawrence's short stories, such as those in *England, my England* and *The Prussian Officer*.

This isn't an unfair comparison, since each of these writers was at his best, or somewhere near his best, in the short story, and each of them was expressing a new vision of life which had a great effect on the young of his generation. The ultimate subject-matter of H. G. Wells's stories is, first of all, scientific discovery, and beyond that the petty snobberies and tragi-comedies of contemporary English life, especially lower-middle-class life. His basic "message," to use an expression I don't like, is that Science can solve all the ills that humanity is heir to, but that man is at present too blind to see the possibility of his own powers. The alternation between ambitious Utopian themes, and light comedy, almost in the W. W. Jacobs vein, is very marked in Wells's work. He writes about journeys to the moon and to the bottom of the sea, and also he writes about small shopkeepers dodging bankruptcy and fighting to keep their end up in the frightful snobbery of provincial towns. The connecting-link is Wells's belief in Science. He is saying all the time, if only that small shopkeeper could acquire a scientific outlook, his troubles would be ended. And of course he believes that this is going to happen, probably in the quite

near future. A few more million pounds for scientific research, a few more generations scientifically educated, a few more superstitions shovelled into the dustbin, and the job is done. Now, if you turn to Lawrence's stories, you don't find this belief in Science—rather a hostility towards it, if anything—and you don't find any marked interest in the future, certainly not in a rationalised hedonistic future of the kind that Wells deals in. You don't even find the notion that the small shopkeeper, or any of the other victims of our society, would be better off if he were better educated. What you do find is a persistent implication that man has thrown away his birthright by becoming civilised. The ultimate subject-matter of nearly all Lawrence's books is the failure of contemporary men, especially in the English-speaking countries, to live their lives intensely enough. Naturally he fixes first on their sexual lives, and it is a fact that most of Lawrence's books centre round sex. But he isn't, as is sometimes supposed, demanding more of what people call sexual liberty. He is completely disillusioned about that, and he hates the so-called sophistication of Bohemian intellectuals just as much as he hates the puritanism of the middle class. What he is saying is simply that modern men aren't fully alive, whether they fail through having too narrow standards or through not having any. Granted that they can be fully alive, he doesn't much care what social or political or economic system they live under. He takes the structure of existing society, with its class distinctions and so on, almost for granted in his stories, and doesn't show any very urgent wish to change it. All he asks is that men shall live more simply, nearer to the earth, with more sense of the magic of things like vegetation, fire, water, sex, blood, than they can in a world of celluloid and concrete where the gramophones never stop playing. He imagines—quite likely he is wrong—that savages or primitive peoples live more intensely than civilised men, and he builds up a mythical figure who is not far from being the Noble Savage over again. Finally, he projects these virtues on to the Etruscans, an ancient pre-Roman

people who lived in northern Italy and about whom we don't, in fact, know anything. From the point of view of H. G. Wells all this abandonment of Science and Progress, this actual wish to revert to the primitive, is simply heresy and nonsense. And yet one must admit that whether Lawrence's view of life is true or whether it is perverted, it is at least an advance on the Science worship of H. G. Wells or the shallow Fabian progressivism of writers like Bernard Shaw. It is an advance in the sense that it results from seeing through the other attitude and not from falling short of it. Partly that was the effect of the war of 1914-18, which succeeded in debunking both Science, Progress and civilised man. Progress had finally ended in the biggest massacre in history, Science was something that created bombing planes and poison gas, civilised man, as it turned out, was ready to behave worse than any savage when the pinch came. But Lawrence's discontent with modern machine civilisation would have been the same, no doubt, if the war of 1914-18 had never happened.

Now I want to make another comparison, between James Joyce's great novel *Ulysses*, and John Galsworthy's at any rate very large novel sequence, *The Forsyte Saga*. This time it isn't a fair comparison, in effect it's a comparison between a good book and a bad one, and it also isn't quite correct chronologically, because the later parts of *The Forsyte Saga* were written in the nineteen-twenties. But the parts of it that anyone is likely to remember were written about 1910, and for my purpose the comparison is relevant, because both Joyce and Galsworthy are making efforts to cover an enormous canvas and get the spirit and social history of a whole epoch between the covers of a single book. *The Man of Property* may not seem to us *now* a very profound criticism of society, but it seemed so to its contemporaries, as you can see by what they wrote about it.

Joyce wrote *Ulysses* in the seven years between 1914 and 1921, working away all through the war, to which he probably paid little or no attention, and earning a miserable living as a

teacher of languages in Italy and Switzerland. He was quite ready to work seven years in poverty and complete obscurity so as to get his great book on to paper. But what is it that it was so urgently important for him to express? Parts of *Ulysses* aren't very easily intelligible, but from the book as a whole you get two main impressions. The first is that Joyce is interested to the point of obsession with technique. This has been one of the main characteristics of modern literature, though more recently it has been a diminishing one. You get a parallel development in the plastic arts, painters, and even sculptors, being more and more interested in the material they work on, in the brush-marks of a picture, for instance, as against its design, let alone its subject-matter. Joyce is interested in mere words, the sounds and associations of words, even the pattern of words on the paper, in a way that wasn't the case with any of the preceding generation of writers, except to some extent the Polish-English writer, Joseph Conrad. With Joyce you are back to the conception of style, of fine writing, or poetic writing, perhaps even to purple passages. A writer like Bernard Shaw, on the other hand, would have said as a matter of course that the sole use of words is to express exact meanings as shortly as possible. And apart from this technical obsession, the other main theme of *Ulysses* is the squalor, even the meaninglessness of modern life after the triumph of the machine and the collapse of religious belief. Joyce—an Irishman, remember, and it's worth noting that the best English writers during the nineteen-twenties were in many cases not Englishmen—is writing as a Catholic who has lost his faith but has retained the mental framework which he acquired in his Catholic childhood and boyhood. *Ulysses*, which is a very long novel, is a description of the events of a single day, seen mostly through the eyes of an out-at-elbow Jewish commercial traveller. At the time when the book came out there was a great outcry and Joyce was accused of deliberately exploiting the sordid, but as a matter of fact, considering what everyday human life is like when you contemplate it in

detail, it doesn't seem that he overdid either the squalor or the silliness of the day's events. What you do feel all through, however, is the conviction from which Joyce can't escape, that the whole of this modern world which he is describing has no meaning in it now that the teachings of the Church are no longer credible. He is yearning after the religious faith which the two or three generations preceding him had had to fight against in the name of religious liberty. But finally the main interest of the book is technical. Quite a considerable proportion of it consists of pastiche or parody—parodies of everything from the Irish legends of the Bronze Age down to contemporary newspaper reports. And one can see there that, like all the characteristic writers of his time, Joyce doesn't derive from the English nineteenth-century writers but from Europe and from the remoter past. Part of his mind is in the Bronze Age, another part in the Middle Ages, another part in the England of Elizabeth. The twentieth century, with its hygiene and its motor-cars, doesn't particularly appeal to him.

Now look again at Galsworthy's book, the *Forsyte Saga*, and you see how comparatively narrow its range is. I have said already that this isn't a fair comparison, and indeed from a strictly literary point of view it's a ridiculous one, but it will do as an illustration, in the sense that both books are intended to give a comprehensive picture of existing society. Well, the thing that strikes one about Galsworthy is that though he's trying to be iconoclastic, he has been utterly unable to move his mind outside the wealthy bourgeois society he is attacking. With only slight modifications he takes all its values for granted. All he conceives to be wrong is that human beings are a little too inhumane, a little too fond of money, and æsthetically not quite sensitive enough. When he sets out to depict what he conceives as the desirable type of human being, it turns out to be simply a cultivated, humanitarian version of the upper-middle-class rentier, the sort of person who in those days used to haunt picture galleries in Italy and subscribe heavily to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. And this

fact—the fact that Galsworthy hasn't any really deep aversion to the social types he thinks he is attacking—gives you the clue to his weakness. It is, that he has no contact with anything outside contemporary English society. He may think he doesn't like it, but he is part of it. Its money and security, the ring of battleships that separated it from Europe, have been too much for him. At the bottom of his heart he despises foreigners, just as much as any illiterate business man in Manchester. The feeling you have with Joyce or Eliot, or even Lawrence, that they have got the whole of human history inside their heads and can look outwards from their own place and time towards Europe and the past, isn't to be found in Galsworthy or in any characteristic English writer in the period before 1914.

Finally, one more brief comparison. Compare almost any of H. G. Wells's Utopia books, for instance *A Modern Utopia*, or *The Dream*, or *Men Like Gods*, with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Again it's rather the same contrast, the contrast between the over-confident and the deflated, between the man who believes innocently in Progress and the man who happens to have been born later and has therefore lived to see that Progress, as it was conceived in the early days of the aeroplane, is just as much of a swindle as reaction.

The obvious explanation of this sharp difference between the dominant writers before and after the war of 1914-18, is the war itself. Some such development would have happened in any case as the insufficiency of modern materialistic civilisation revealed itself, but the war speeded the process, partly by showing how very shallow the veneer of civilisation is, partly by making England less prosperous and therefore less isolated. After 1918 you couldn't live in such a narrow and padded world as you did when Britannia ruled not only the waves but also the markets. One effect of the ghastly history of the last twenty years has been to make a great deal of ancient literature seem much more modern. A lot that has happened in Germany since the rise of Hitler might have come straight out of the later

volumes of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Recently I saw Shakespeare's *King John* acted—the first time I had seen it, because it is a play which isn't acted very often. When I had read it as a boy it seemed to me archaic, something dug out of a history book and not having anything to do with our own time. Well, when I saw it acted, what with its intrigues and double-crossings, non-aggression pacts, quislings, people changing sides in the middle of a battle, and what-not, it seemed to me extraordinarily up to date. And it was rather the same thing that happened in the literary development between 1910 and 1920. The prevailing temper of the time gave a new reality to all sorts of themes which had seemed out of date and puerile when Bernard Shaw and his Fabians were —so they thought—turning the world into a sort of super garden city. Themes like revenge, patriotism, exile, persecution, race hatred, religious faith, loyalty, leader worship, suddenly seemed real again. Tamerlane and Genghis Khan seem credible figures now, and Machiavelli seems a serious thinker, as they didn't in 1910. We have got out of a backwater and back into history. I haven't an unqualified admiration for the writers of the early nineteen-twenties, the writers among whom Eliot and Joyce are chief names. Those who followed them have had to undo a great deal of what they did. Their revulsion from a shallow conception of progress drove them politically in the wrong direction, and it isn't an accident that Ezra Pound, for instance, is now shouting anti-Semitism on the Rome radio. But one must concede that their writings are more grown-up, and have a wider scope, than what went immediately before them. They broke the cultural circle in which England had existed for something like a century. They re-established contact with Europe, and they brought back the sense of history and the possibility of tragedy. On that basis all subsequent English literature that matters twopence has rested, and the development that Eliot and the others started, back in the closing years of the last war, has not yet run its course.

KARL PETERS: A FORERUNNER OF HITLER

By Wilfrid David

The Kaiser's Reich produced many Germans who thought themselves supermen chosen to rule the universe. None of them was so formidable as a certain under-sized doctor of philosophy in pince-nez who nearly made himself master of half of Africa and dictator of Germany. His book of philosophy boasted of his unbridled nature which spared neither friend nor foe, neither man nor woman. And if his lust for power needed further stimulation, he found it in the belief that he was Genghis Khan come back to conquer the world again.

The superman's name was Karl Peters. In August 1856 —a month by the way, later than Bernard Shaw—he was born in the village of Neuhaus in Hanover. He was one of the village pastor's eleven children. This was not a promising start in a semi-feudal society. But Peters had the knack of winning lavish scholarships. They paid for his education and left a surplus. So he was able to leave the University of Berlin not only as a Doctor of Philosophy, but as a notorious drunkard and rake.

As an obscure professor he was faced with the prospect of poverty and drudgery. But destiny at once intervened in the shape of a well-to-do uncle—a naturalised British subject living in London. He invited Peters to come and stay with him.

Soon Peters began to hope for a legacy from his uncle and a career in the British Empire. He claims, in fact, that he was going to be sent to Bengal as a Civil servant. However, the legacy and the career did not materialise. Peter's personal grudge against his uncle became a political grudge against England. Germany's lack of colonies, he declared, was an insult to her racial superiority. He went back to Berlin, still a poor and unknown professor, but obsessed with the idea of

giving Germany a Colonial Empire—as vast as England's and, if possible, at her expense.

In those days, however, Germany was so far from being Empire-minded that Peters was ridiculed and denounced as a charlatan. Whereupon he began to exercise his hypnotic personality and eloquence. He soon induced some wealthy patrons to provide him with funds. Then, with two companions, he sailed for East Africa.

Having reached the island metropolis of Zanzibar, they crossed over to the African mainland and set out for the interior in November 1884. Barely six weeks later, having left his companions behind, Peters again raced through Zanzibar on his way back to Berlin. In his pocket he had a number of so-called territorial claims. He had extracted them from Negro chiefs by dosing them with alcohol and giving them scarlet Hussars' tunics. These chiefs were under the nominal rule of the Arab Sultan of Zanzibar, and he was Britain's protégé. So Peters's claims lay within a British sphere of influence. But because Britain was very preoccupied, the German Chancellor, Bismarck, ignored her for the moment. Though he distrusted Peters as a brazen adventurer, he rewarded his exploit with a colonial charter. And soon after a German gunboat cleared its decks before Zanzibar to silence the Sultan's objections.

Encouraged by this success, Peters ordered his lieutenants to carry on with the good work of treaty manufacturing. The Empire of his dreams was going to extend from the Indian Ocean to the Great Lakes, from Mozambique to the Nile. "A German India in Africa," he called it.

About the same time Germany had won other colonies elsewhere. Peters's cause was becoming more popular. The industrialists, led by the armament manufacturer, Krupp, relished the prospect of new markets for their goods. They became Peters's patrons.

Meanwhile, England and Germany came to terms in East Africa. England agreed to surrender half of her preserves.

The hinterland of what is known to-day as Tanganyika became German, while England retained the Kenya hinterland. But Peters was far from content. What he wanted was to expel Britain from East Africa. He reappeared in Zanzibar on the pretext of negotiating for seaports with the Sultan. But negotiate was one thing a German superman never condescended to do with Arabs or Negroes. He intended, in fact, to oust the Sultan and usurp his dominions and thus exclude Britain. Peters used a Fifth Column. He used violence and guile. He seemed about to make himself master of East Africa. But if he did not care about the international consequences, Bismarck did. He recalled Peters to Berlin.

Peters was enraged to find his imperialist zeal not appreciated; even more enraged to find that he would now be kept out of his own colony.

He was soon plotting a new adventure elsewhere. The explorer Stanley had set out, on Britain's behalf, to rescue the Upper Nile from the Dervishes. Peters resolved to get there first and seize the territory himself. And this time he vowed to fight to the death to keep his conquest—to fight not only against the British, but against his own Government.

He was at once denounced by Bismarck. German and British warships barred his path at sea, but he gave them the slip and reached the Kenya coast. This time he carried no goods as barter for territory or for a right of way through the interior. So he massacred and pillaged as he advanced hoisting flags. When he heard that the Upper Nile was lost, he turned and marched on Uganda. At last a British expedition was on his heels. He forgot his talk about a dramatic death and scurried back to the coast. All his new claims were surrendered to Britain; the Reich was confirmed in the possession of Peters's original colony, known as German East Africa, but Peters's dream of a vast "German India in Africa" was shattered for ever.

The thwarted empire-builder had one consolation: Bismarck, his foe, had been dismissed. And the young Kaiser,

Peters's admirer, was now in control. The powerful faction of extreme imperialists idolised Peters—idolised him far too much for the Government's liking. It gave him the title of Imperial Commissar and packed him off to the remote Kilimanjaro highlands in East Africa. Now he felt he had been banished as well as frustrated. However, he could vent his rage freely on the defenceless Negroes around him.

Some time later he came back determined to play a part in the stormy politics of the Fatherland. The Kaiser, backed by the industrialists and Junkers, was talking of abolishing the Reichstag and suppressing his opponents, particularly the Socialists. Once that was done, he intended quickly to build a vast fleet to smash the British Navy. The Socialists and the British were the Kaiser's pet aversions; they were also Peters's. He began to incite Germany against them with all his great demagogic talent. In our day Hitler seized Power with the help of the bogies of Communism and the Jews. Peters used the bogies of Socialism and the British for the same purpose. He would begin as the Kaiser's lackey—but he intended to end up as His Majesty's master. The Kaiser was about to appoint him Minister. That was the first step. The next step would be—Dictator of Germany.

Just as he was about to climb the summit of power, Peters fell. In the Reichstag in March 1896, Bebel, the Socialist leader, exposed his brutalities in Africa. All Peters's previous excesses had been outdone on his expedition to Kilimanjaro. He had accepted the gift of a harem from the local Negro chiefs. When one of the girls strayed into the arms of his Negro servant, a youth of eighteen, Peters ordered them to be flogged repeatedly—while he watched the proceedings from his verandah. Then he commanded them to be hanged. The German Government had hushed up the affair. But now, in view of the public outcry, it could no longer shield Peters. He was tried before a Disciplinary Court, deprived of his title, and dismissed from the Colonial Service. He went into voluntary exile.

The years passed and the First World War approached. The imperialists in Germany were more firmly installed in power. They had avenged Peters's disgrace by persecuting his opponents. One of these, the Colonial Minister, had been literally hounded to death. Now they brought Peters back. The Kaiser restored his title. But not all his enemies were intimidated. They repeated their charges against him. He tried to vindicate himself by suing them for libel. The Peters Affair was revived. Peters was revealed as a loathsome sadist —a sadist who committed his enormities with a grin. Typical of his mentality was the remark he made to a friend who was about to leave Kilimanjaro: "You haven't shot a Negro," Peters told him—as if the German had not participated in the favourite sport of the camp.

The trial divided Germany into two bitterly hostile camps. It created a sensation throughout the world. In the end Peters failed to get the disciplinary verdicts revoked. Justice prevailed over the dictates of imperialist prestige.

Peters returned to exile. At the outbreak of war in 1914 he went back to Germany and spent his last years goading the Germans against their enemies. Those enemies must be "hacked to the ground," he declared, and when they begged for peace, they must be made to feel the woe of the vanquished. And as he had lived, so Peters died in September 1918, a man of hate, yearning for the annihilation of Germany's foes who were also his own.

The moral of Peters's career is not that he came so dangerously near to supreme power; it is that he, an adventurer of genius, backed by powerful patrons, failed in the end to foist himself on Germany. He failed because in those days the anti-Nazis in Germany proved too strong for the Nazis.

It can be said of the Nazis as was said of the Pan-Germans, that they sought to apply Peters's colonial principles to the world. Peters's principles were to plunder and exterminate a conquered race and to enslave those whose lives were spared. The Nazis to-day look upon the world as a vast colony awaiting

such conquest. Peters once declared that "the immortality of the soul has nothing to do with a healthy system of forced labour." He expounded that theory for the benefit of Negroes. To-day it is being rigorously applied to the bodies and souls of thousands of Russians, Frenchmen and a dozen other races in Hitler's slave camps. Karl Peters's dream, so amply realised by Adolf Hitler, is the nightmare that haunts us: the nightmare of a regimented and bestial Germany lording it over a regimented and bestial world.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE SEAS

The Tale of the Suez Canal

By K. K. Ardaschir

Among the major triumphs of man, and one which has been of inestimable cultural and economic benefit to humanity, must be set down the great Suez Canal, which weds the eastern and the western seas. Most men would claim with complete sincerity that this is a triumph of our own industrial age. It is nothing of the sort. The first Suez Canal was, as a matter of strict historical fact, built Four Thousand Years Ago. Part of it has been embodied in the present waterway. The methods used then were not unlike those employed in the middle of the last century, under the Khedive, Ismail the Magnificent, *to whom most of the credit is due* for the existence of the canal, which he opened in 1869, his guests on this occasion being the then Prince of Wales (Edward VII) and Napoleon III, as well as the father of the late Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Ismail had fostered the canal scheme, spent millions on it, and by opening it, had given Egypt a status she had not held since remote antiquity. Yet he was deposed by his overlord the Turkish Sultan at the request of the Powers in June 1879, and such is the folly of mankind, that few ever associate the canal with the name of this most progressive Oriental ruler who, despite the reckless extravagance which brought about his downfall, was at least a century ahead of his time. Fewer still ever remember that the Suez Canal is essentially Egyptian in its inspiration as well as in its inception. No other people can deprive Egypt of this claim, and it must be said that Englishmen, both historians and engineers, have always given the credit for it to those to whom it is due.

According to records left by the Pharaohs on their temples,

the first Suez Canal was dug about twenty-five centuries before Christ. According to Herodotus, the father of history, who travelled in Egypt about five centuries before the dawn of our era, its priests held firmly to the belief that at some remote period the Mediterranean and the Red Sea formed one compact ocean. Those priests of Egypt were no fools. They arrived at their conclusions on the same evidence as the highly efficient geologists of our days. They studied the strata of the rocks. They observed the presence of sea shells in the waterless deserts which bound their country, and on such evidence came to the conclusion that originally the two seas were one. The priests of ancient Egypt, like those of sixteenth and seventeenth-century France, were statesmen, scientists and administrators as well.

The mere fact that the existence of such a canal is recorded on a temple at Karnak seems to point to priestly influence in the building and running of the old waterway. Probably the priests, who did not scorn finance, collected the tolls! Be that as it may, it is now accepted that in the reign of the Pharaoh Sethi, who lived 1400 years before Christ, and about 2000 years before Mohammed, there was a Suez Canal. In the middle of the Suez Isthmus there are three lakes, lake Timsah and the Great and Little Bitter lakes. They are closer to Suez than to Port Said, and, together, are about 25 miles in length. In the old days the Gulf of Suez stretched inland about 25 miles farther than now. This is a case of the desert encroaching on the sea. The Nile flowing towards the Mediterranean takes a sharp curve towards the lakes. In those days the mouths of the Nile were different from now. Certain channels, which are now filled up with the rich silt collected by the river in its 4000 mile journey from Abyssinia, were navigable. The ancient Egyptians therefore determined to utilise both the river and the lakes to form a part of their canal. They began by linking the lakes to form a part of their canal. They continued by linking the lakes with the river, and then by linking up the three lakes with each other by two canals. So it became

possible for sailing boats, or feluccas, as they are called, to travel from the Mediterranean through the desert to within a few miles of where the navigable waters of the Gulf of Suez then reached. The next step was to dig a canal from the lakes to the waters of the Red Sea. It seems that here the Egyptians came across their main difficulty, for in this stretch of the isthmus sand gives place to thirty to fifty-seven feet of rock. If ancient historians are to be believed, this link in the canal was never finished by the Egyptians, who had already begun to lose the gift for "building big" which they had once possessed to an unrivalled degree. According to deciphered inscriptions on temples, this partially built canal fell into disuse and decay by the time of Pharaoh Necho, who reigned about 700 B.C. Soon afterwards Egypt was conquered by the Persian Emperor Cambyses, and during the reign of his successor, Darius, the Suez Canal was completed. There is not the shadow of a doubt about this. Historians of antiquity and modern archæologists are agreed that during the three centuries and a half of their rule in Egypt the Persians completed and worked the canal. But, like the Pharaohs before them, the Persian kings began to degenerate. No second Darius arose to win the affection as well as the homage of alien subjects. Wealth and luxury sapped the virile sons of the frozen Caucasian uplands, and they were swept like chaff before the wind as Alexander the Great descended on kingdom after kingdom in a vain bid for world mastery. In the centuries which followed, gloom descended on the ancient valley of the Nile, as half-Egyptians, Greeks and Romans struggled to hold the gates of the eastern and western worlds. Under the Roman Emperor Trajanus a feeble effort was made to resuscitate the canal, but nothing was done until nearly seven centuries later. Then a new and glorious civilisation swept the dark age away from the Nile Valley and hoisted over it the invincible banner of Islam. Cairo came into being, and since that day has remained the wonder city of Africa and a citadel of Mahomet. The second Caliph, Abu Ja'far Mansur,

restored the canal, but shortly afterwards had it filled up again, fearing that it might be used by Arabian rivals to overthrow him!

When the Cape route to India was discovered by the Portuguese, and Venice, which had been the entrepôt of Eastern overland commerce, was threatened with disaster, successive Doges toyed with the idea of reviving the canal in order to revive the shrinking trade of Venice, which was passing into Portuguese, Spanish and English hands. But nothing came of these plans and Venice followed Persia, Rome and Egypt into comparative oblivion. The Turkish conquest of Egypt in the seventeenth century brought back the dark age once more to the Nile, for the luxurious and proud Ottoman sultans never bothered their heads about their African territories, save as sources of revenue for embellishing their palaces on the Golden Horn. At the end of the eighteenth century, as Napoleon the Corsican arose in the kingdom of France, so Mohammed Ali, the Albanian, arose in the empire of the Osmanli. Each rebelled against his rightful liege lord and bore arms against him. Each was endowed with military genius and boundless ambition. While he was the Sultan's VALI, or Governor, Mohammed Ali rebelled against him and proclaimed himself the independent Pasha of Egypt, while professing a shadowy allegiance to the Sultan as "Caliph," merely not to offend the more orthodox among his new subjects. Mohammed Ali, being a European himself, was determined to westernise Egypt, and encouraged the Powers to send representatives to his Court. He also encouraged foreigners of distinction to visit him. Benjamin Disraeli, afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, was among those who availed themselves of the Egyptian ruler's cosmopolitan tendency. In 1832 the French Government sent to the court of Cairo a young officer in the Consular service named Ferdinand de Lesseps. His father, Mathieu de Lesseps, had rendered Mohammed Ali many services in the early days of his usurpation, and the diplomats of Paris, in sending the son to Egypt, showed that they did not intend

Mohammed Ali should forget his obligations to France. The robust old usurper had lately been showing a marked preference for Britons, whose insular qualities suited his palate better than the finish of the French. In due course Ferdinand de Lesseps was named tutor to the Egyptian sovereign's favourite son, Prince Said Pasha. The boy became genuinely fond of his tutor, who after three years was transferred to another post, and subsequently fell into disfavour with the French Foreign Office and retired. While he was in Egypt de Lesseps had toyed with the idea of reviving the Suez Canal. He was not, as so many *will* persist in supposing, an engineer. He had never spent an hour in a workshop, and his scientific knowledge was neither more nor less than that possessed by any other young Consular officer of his day. At that time science was in its infancy, and nearly everybody was caught with scientific fever. But de Lesseps was only one of millions.

On September 15th, 1854, tidings reached him in his retirement in France that his former pupil, Prince Said, had succeeded his uncle on the throne of Egypt. Let me at this point allow de Lesseps, so-called and mis-called builder of the Suez Canal, to speak for himself: "On learning of the accession of my former pupil, I sent him a note of congratulation. In his reply he begged me to come and see him immediately. During my retirement I had studied completely everything pertaining to the Suez Canal. I took up my old work fully convinced that I should obtain the concession." De Lesseps lost no time. On November 7th he had arrived at Alexandria to be joyously welcomed by the new Khedive, Said Pasha. He was presented with a palace, throughbred horses and bevies of slaves. In three weeks de Lesseps had obtained the concession and the Consular Corps of Europe, convened in solemn session in the Throne Room at Cairo, were genially informed by Said Pasha that he had given the concession to form a canal-building company to his former tutor, Ferdinand de Lesseps! The attitude of the British Government was strictly correct. They recognised Egypt only as an autonomous unit

of the Turkish Empire, and, as the Sultan had not been consulted and had not issued the requisite *firman*, the Government of Queen Victoria ignored the whole thing as a put-up job, which it was. De Lesseps hastened to England to get money. He was received cordially enough by social and commercial circles, but Whitehall had little time for him or his project. The British authorities knew that the concession which de Lesseps had got out of the doting Khedive included hundreds of thousands more acres of land than were required to build the canal. The House of Rothschild refused to advance a penny. The Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, publicly challenged the " character of the undertaking." He was right. When Said died after a short reign he was succeeded by Ismail the Magnificent and the spendthrift. He inherited de Lesseps and his concession. Hoping to make some money out of the canal, Ismail confirmed the concession, on the understanding that it would cost him nothing. Shortly after a dispute arose, and the matter was referred to the arbitration of Napoleon III, of all people. This adventurer awarded his subject, de Lesseps, £3,500,000, thus adding another pile of debt on the unhappy Khedive; over and above that it cost him another £12,500,000, making £16,000,000 in all. He was already up to his ears rebuilding Cairo, reorganising the Egyptian services and bestowing on his subjects such unwanted luxuries as a State theatre and State opera. But de Lesseps was required to hand back 150,000 acres. The French company which had been formed used forced labour, and thousands of Egyptians perished while digging the canal. There was an uproar in England, and these labourers had to be discharged. The canal was opened in 1869, in the sixth year of his reign, by Ismail. His yacht the " Mahroussa " cut the waters over the bodies of thousands of Egyptians who had perished. The Khedive's affairs went from bad to worse. He was surrounded by the riff-raff of Europe who had been attracted to Egypt by his magnificence, and the potentialities of the canal. He owed money to every Power in Europe. In despair he put up his shares in the

Suez Canal for sale. The French, knowing the Khedive's difficulties, tried to beat him down. Whitehall heard of what was going on, and Lord Beaconsfield bought the shares, 177,000 in number, for £3,976,582. He borrowed the money from the House of Rothschild, which had refused to advance de Lesseps a single penny!

All through June 1879 friendly representations were made to Ismail to abdicate gracefully. He declined. On June 25th Sultan Abdul Hamid II, his patience exhausted, sent to him at Cairo an open telegram addressed to "His Highness the ex-Khedive Ismail." This was more than the harassed ruler could stand, and the following day he left his country for ever. But history has done him justice. He is not remembered as "Ismail the Spendthrift," but as "Ismail the Magnificent," the real BUILDER OF THE SUEZ CANAL.

SCIENCE AND MAGIC

By Professor Gordon Childe

The first scientists must be sought far back in the Old Stone Age when savage ape-like men hunted mammoths and hippopotami in England and France. The classification of animals that were good to eat, collected observations on their habits, essential if they were to be hunted successfully, and the recognition with the aid of moon and stars of the appropriate times and seasons for the chase—these are really already the rudiments of zoology and astronomy. The foundations of science are in fact embodied in craft lore—the biology of the hunter and later of the stock-breeder, the botany of the nut-gatherer and then the husbandman, the chemistry of the fire-kindler, next of the potter, lastly of the metallurgist.

Craft lore of this sort falls short of the accuracy and comprehensiveness of modern science. As we know it to-day among barbarians it is always mixed up with a lot of useless notions that we dub superstitions. It is transmitted from elders to children, from master to apprentice, very largely by example instead of precept, and just for that reason remains very concrete, applicable only to special cases and not formulated in general rules. Still, its content expanded; experience was accumulated and pooled. Prehistoric illiterate barbarians began the cultivation of plants, the domestication of animals, discovered how to make pots out of clay and to extract metals from their ores, invented the plough, the sail and the wheel, harnessing the strength of the winds, of oxen and of horses to man's service.

Eventually, about five thousand years ago, societies inhabiting the alluvial valleys of the Indus, the Tigris-Euphrates and the Nile, benefiting by these discoveries and inventions, were able to produce a large surplus of foodstuffs above what was

needed for bare subsistence; villages grew into cities. In practice society's surplus became concentrated in the hands of deities or a divine king; it was administered by a perpetual corporation of priests or civil servants. To keep track of their income and expenditure such bodies were simply compelled to devise some system of recording that should be intelligible to all their colleagues and successors in the corporation. So they invented systems of writing and numeral notation; that is, they agreed to give short-hand pictures, traced on clay tablets or papyrus sheets, definite conventional meanings.

For the execution of monumental works like temples or pyramids which society now undertook, standardisation of measures was essential. For instance, when hundreds of workmen were engaged in cutting timbers for a temple roof, the lengths required must be defined in terms of a constant "social foot" instead of the variable individual feet of the several wood-cutters. For men's feet are not all equal; if each man measures the beams to be cut in terms of his own feet, some beams will fail to span the sanctuary while others will project beyond its walls. So a conventional foot, inscribed on a measuring rod, replaced the actual bodily foot as the standard unit of length. In the same way, to prevent frauds on the gods or king a standard conventional load replaced the variable loads real men could carry as the unit of weight.

Then life in cities requires more accurate division of time than is needed in the country. When multitudes of priests, officials or workers are co-operating in the celebration of temple rites, in public business and communal undertakings, a glance at the sun in the sky no longer suffices to ensure the requisite punctuality. Sundials and water-clocks were invented to divide day and night into equal conventional hours or watches.

Out of these needs and with the aid of the instruments devised to meet them arose sciences of a new sort—exact and predictive—arithmetic, geometry and astronomy. To expedite reckoning the Babylonians recorded and tabulated the results obtained by additions and drew up multiplication tables—

"five times seven," you know, means simply "add together five sevens." They found, presumably by trial and error, that the amount of seed requisite for sowing a rectangular field could be estimated by multiplying its length by its breadth. So, too, the number of bricks required for a platform that should raise the temple above the annual flood could be gauged by multiplying together length, breadth and height. So they obtained what we call the formulæ for area and volume—mathematical rules that allowed accurate predictions to be made as to the results of action in precisely the same way as the complicated laws of physics do to-day.

Later the Babylonians went on to devise a system of dealing with fractions, precisely similar to our decimal system, that gave them effective mastery over the whole domain of real number. They *discovered* how to solve quadratic, and even cubic equations—provided their roots were rational—and that by essentially the same methods as we were *taught* at school.

The Egyptians were more successful in geometry. Pyramids played an important part in their religious ritual. Presumably for that reason the Egyptian mathematicians discovered many abstruse properties in these figures—such, for instance, as the curious formula for the volume of a truncated pyramid.

Any farming community must look to the stars, even more than a band of hunters, for signals when to start ploughing, sowing and reaping. Farmers' almanacks were improved when observations were recorded in writing and treated by the new geometrical and arithmetical methods. The Egyptians indeed about 3000 B.C. established an official calendar year of three hundred and sixty-five days, less than a quarter of a day short of the true tropic year. Later they learned how to correct its deficiencies by observations on Sirius. Knowledge of this calendar enabled the royal officials to predict the advent of the flood. Encouraged by the success of astronomical predictions in agricultural life, priests and clerks in Egypt and Babylonia too continued to study and record the movements

of the stars and planets, albeit in the vain hope of foretelling men's futures. By mapping the heavens and measuring the celestial motions with the aid of water-clocks and simple instruments the Babylonians discovered, behind the obviously recurring events, more comprehensive uniformities; they eventually recognised the cycle of eclipses and finally the precession of the equinoxes.

In Mesopotamia and Egypt clerks and astrologers were guaranteed leisure for study by society. The training schools for clerks may be compared to universities; Babylonian temples functioned as observatories and research institutes. Their inmates used part of their leisure to discover arithmetical and geometrical truths that enabled them to solve the problems set by their societies and to amass such astronomical lore as was relevant to felt needs. But the methods of teaching seem to have been as imitative as those adopted in manual crafts. The arithmetic books that survive from Egypt and Babylonia, despite pretentious titles, consist entirely of actual examples worked out. No general rule is stated in any extant text. (By the way, some ancient Babylonian problems were handed down through the Greeks and Arabs to be reproduced in almost the same words in mediæval arithmetics in Europe!)

But clerks, as an ancient Egyptian's letter says, "were exempt from all manual tasks"; priests were cloistered in temples. Both were cut off from the practical sciences actually being applied in craftsmen's workshops. On the other hand, the ancient Babylonian and Egyptian systems of writing were so complicated that only professionals could master them; they remained mysteries beyond the reach of the ordinary artisan. So craft lore was never written down, but transmitted in the old imitative way throughout the Bronze Age.

Now Bronze Age means the period when the best tools were made of bronze, iron being unobtainable. But bronze was, and still is, relatively very expensive. Craftsmen were thus made dependent not only for the sale of their products, but also for their raw materials and equipment on courts and

temples that in practice enjoyed monopolies of metal. The consequent degradation of manual workers accentuated the divorce between the learned literate sciences and the crafts. The cost of metal tools set rigid limits to the tasks society could effectively accomplish. One could not waste such expensive tools in driving tunnels through hard rock to bring water to a city. The same circumstances consolidated the power of divine kings to whom the State was "I." But these and their satellites were firmly convinced that the most effectual way of controlling nature was by means of the magic rituals that sanctified their power. Of course, the dependent clerks and priests shared this view. Medicine relied almost entirely on magic spells and charms, although the prescriptions were duly written down. For these and other reasons both the learned sciences and the crafts made surprisingly little progress during the thousand odd years during which the Oriental Bronze Age States remained stable and sterile.

But Oriental results were transmitted to other peoples. By 600 B.C. they reached the Greeks. In the meantime the discovery of an economical method of smelting iron had made efficient tools quite cheap. Even a poor society could execute works undreamed of by a Bronze Age despot; the practical scientists in the workshops were no longer dependent on royal and priestly patrons for the tools of their trade. Nor were they condemned to illiteracy; for the Greeks had adopted a simple alphabetic system of writing like ours. Writing need no longer be a mystery confined to a narrow class of initiates, but as to-day anyone could—and very many did—learn to read, write and cipher. Thirdly, the Greeks were a seafaring people. Now mariners must study the stars to find their way across the trackless sea. They have chances of observing phenomena not accessible to a priestly astrologer permanently stationed in the same temple. For example, as you sail south across the Mediterranean, the Pole star appears ever nearer the horizon. Fourthly, the annual shift of the sun's path from north to south and back again is much more noticeable at

Athens than at Babylon or Cairo. Accordingly the adjustment of a sundial to seasonal variations is both more urgent and more difficult in Greece than it is near the tropics. Finally, those Greeks who were initiated into Oriental learning were not heirs of a hoary tradition of priestcraft nor dependents of a despot's court. If not themselves independent merchants or statesmen, they could always sell their learning to business men and politicians who would appreciate its practical implications.

So among the Greeks, Egyptian and Babylonian arithmetic, geometry and mathematics were applied to new problems and transfigured in the process. Applied to surveying, geometry enabled engineers, now equipped with cheap iron tools, to carry water through the mountains to the city of Samos. Combined with astronomy it provided the basis for accurate maps that were a boon to merchant seamen and the admirals of fleets.

But the Greeks' contribution to science was by no means limited to applying Oriental techniques to new problems. They introduced essentially novel methods, notably laboratory experimentation and induction therefrom. The revolution achieved is perhaps best explained by a simple example from geometry.

The Babylonians knew that, in a right-angled triangle, if the sides containing the right angle were in the proportion of three to four or five to twelve, then the square on the side opposite the right angle would be equal to the sum of the squares on the sides containing it (twenty-five or a hundred and sixty-nine). Some Greek, reputedly Pythagoras, said "Let ABC be *any* right-angled triangle, then if you make an experiment upon it and construct the appropriate figures on its sides you will find that the square on the side opposite the right angle equals the sum of the squares on the sides containing it." This is true, therefore, not only of some particular right-angled triangles, as the Babylonians knew, but of every such triangle you like to draw. Similarly, by cutting up cones in the laboratory, the Greeks discovered the properties of those very interesting curves—ellipse, parabola, hyperbole—that we still

call conic sections. And they proved inductively that these properties were inherent in all such curves.

Again the Babylonians had discovered the cycle of eclipses and could thus predict when an eclipse was likely to take place : nothing indicates that they knew what caused them. But the Greek Anaxagoras by applying the new geometry to the movements of sun and moon showed that it was the interposition of the moon between earth and sun. His successors went on boldly to measure and weigh the heavenly bodies and to describe their movement with increasing accuracy of measurement. Aristarchus, indeed, went so far as to propound the seemingly paradoxical notion that the Earth goes round the Sun. History has justified his presumption, but his contemporaries and successors rejected it on perfectly rational observational grounds.

Well, I have tried in the last few sentences to suggest the sort of contributions Greeks made to science by means of very simple examples. Had I more time, I should go on to speak of new branches of exact science that the Greeks founded—the theory of numbers, trigonometry, mechanics, optics—and of descriptive botany and zoology, of anatomy and medicine. I should then mention the practical fruits of this theoretical work—accurate maps of the world, artillery, water-mills, pumps, acclimatisation of new food plants, new remedies. I should have to speculate about the reactions of these inventions and discoveries on theoretical science. Was the geometrical study of conic sections connected with the new artillery, the projectiles from which described parabolas in their flight ? Did the use in water-mills and clock-work gears of larger and more delicate wheels than were ever used in the Bronze Age help to inspire those successful efforts to obtain by geometrical methods ever closer approximations to the ratio of the circle's diameter to its circumference (our pi) that provide one of the

But I should be obliged to ask also why the impetuous advance of Greek science was so soon arrested. After 250 B.C. no important new hypothesis was advanced, no great unifying theoretical principle discovered. Only new facts were accumulated by observation and experiment along lines already laid down. The output of useful inventions slowed down too. I can't think of any significant new device given to the Ancient World after 50 B.C. The celebrated architectural and engineering feats of the Romans were really only improvements or enlargements of what Greeks and Etruscans had already been doing. Indeed, many of its most epoch-making inventions were neglected in the Ancient World. The water-wheel, the first application of inanimate motive power since the sail, remained a rare curiosity for five centuries. Among thousands of classical sites excavated, only one pneumatic pump has ever been found! I can't try and explain these paradoxes to-day. I must leave it to other speakers to show how Greek discoveries and methods, transmitted and enriched by the Arabs, were taken up and elaborated for application to the novel problems raised by a new social and economic order at the end of the Middle Ages.

FREEDOM AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION

(Abridged)

By Cedric Dover

A CULTURE is not something which can be picked up by anyone who cares to take a little trouble. It arises from the circumstances and surroundings and language of a people, and flows through the generations for the refreshment of those whose heritage it is. The foreigner, or the man without roots in it, can appreciate it intellectually, he can enjoy it and be moved by it, but he can seldom have the native's feeling for it, nor can he interpret and expand it with the sureness of inner experience. "Could anyone," asks Virginia Woolf in *The Common Reader*, "believe that the novels of Henry James were written by a man who had grown up in the society which he describes, or that his criticism of English writers was written by a man who had read Shakespeare without any sense of the Atlantic Ocean and two or three hundred years separating his civilisation from ours?" Yet James was a man of special awareness, born to the English tongue and an Anglicised heritage, who loved England and was exposed for many years to its social and intellectual climate.

I can talk of this difficulty with some feeling. For as a Eurasian writer I have felt the absence of cultural roots bitterly. There are paths, both in India and England, that I cannot take without climbing over almost insurmountable obstacles. In India my language is English and my carefully acquired, but now happily disintegrating, accent exposes me to suspicion, while in England my speech is obviously tainted with the monotonous intonation and misplaced stresses of my community. I write English, I am told, with a certain fluency and some tendency towards malice, but I could never use it for creative expression with the ease of an Englishman. I have

read greedily but without much feeling : vast tracts of English literature are closed to my sensibility, while I know the works of my own country, with which I should have been brought up, only through translations when I know them at all. In fact, I am not of England when I am in it, while India torments me with attempts to clothe the feelings and impressions and ideas aroused by my world in the words and ways of expression belonging to another.

My difficulty is widely shared by Indian writers writing in English. That is why Indian problems have been expressed more in political and survey writing than in poetry and fiction. For such writing only requires a problem to state and a sufficient grasp of a language to be able to state it. And as the English we have learned is the conventional English of the so-called " mandarin class," we state it in the rolling periods of that class, garnishing our nouns with adjectives and breaking up our sequences with a generous sprinkling of commas and semicolons. It is good enough, clear enough, English, but it is not living English—and to state living problems in a living way we must write a living language.

I am not saying that English is not a living language. On the contrary, I know it has great power and vigour. But I am saying that most of us cannot write it creatively, because we are not part of the scene that produces it. The logical solution, but not always the practical one, for creative Indian writers, is to write in their own language, since the best Indian literature has always been, and always must be, written in the languages of the country. Otherwise they either become frustrated to the point of stagnation, desert creative writing for other forms, or become so involved in the search for a suitably Indianised technique that they become precious experimenters with language who forget the main purpose of writing—which is to say something worth saying and to say it economically and intelligibly.

Added to the difficulty of language is that of audience. Writers must be able to get their work published and read.

Deprive them of the means of reaching their audience and they will either give up writing or eke out a precarious existence as *émigré* writers supported by small coteries. For the general public in England is not greatly interested in Indian fiction, especially Indian fiction in which the icing smothers the cake, while only a fraction of the small literate population of India has the habit of reading contemporary writing.

The effects of this crushing of literary talent on the cultural development of India can hardly be overstated. One realises it best by comparisons. Twelve million American Negroes, for example, have produced a literature and a culture of such vitality that it dominates the American scene. Their achievement has grown in an atmosphere of discrimination and discouragement, but they have at least had the advantages of writing as natives in the one native language of the country, and of appealing to a keen Negro audience enlarged by white American and other readers. In Africa, on the other hand, there isn't a single black writer of any significance to-day.

The problem of Indian writing is therefore an aspect of the problem of language and literacy in India. It is part of the whole social problem. Yet it is largely by writing, extended and made more effective by artists, that we can ventilate and reduce this problem. We who write must go on writing in spite of our difficulties, and you who read must read what we write in spite of yours.

It is a situation in which the only Indian writers who can hope to stay the course are those who are burning with purpose. It is content not form, not literary exhibitionism, not self-conscious tricks with words and cadences, that will make modern Indian writing a force in our development and give it a place in the world's literature. Feeling and purpose can raise even political writing to the level of art, as Jawaharlal Nehru has done. They can overcome the difficulty of language in creative writing, as Mulk Raj Anand's novels prove. Anand is the most important Indian novelist writing in English to-day simply because he has a great deal to say, and is not imitative

or precious in the manner of saying it. His power comes from roots in the life and traditions of our people, and a sensitive responsiveness to the events and needs of his time.

Without these qualities genuine cultural expression is impossible. The writer, or the artist, whose roots do not go deep enough, whose loyalties are divided, whose mind has been dulled by artificial ways of living, can do no more than express his own frustration. Take, for example, English poetry written in India. It is mostly poor stuff—imitative, florally romantic, sycophantic, escapist or merely vulgar—and I am sorry to say that Eurasians, with their pathetic love of amorous sonnets and odes to the ideas and idols of the nineteenth century, have written the worst of it.

Yet it was a very young Eurasian teacher and journalist, Henry Derozio, who wrote the best English poetry produced in India during the early years of the last century. His work sprang from a deep love of India, " my own, my native land," and is charged with the spirit of freedom and progressive thought. He was the prophet of a free and United India before India had dreamt of freedom or unity. He was, in fact, one of the makers of modern India, but in the century of Anglo-Indianism that followed his death in 1831 no comparable Eurasian personality arose to carry on his work. Nor did the intense intellectual energy of Eurasians in Derozio's day continue, though in the last fifteen years or so they have again found inspiration in the cultural and political activities of other Indians. In some Eurasian poets, writers and nationalist workers I see once more the promise of renewed Eurasian vitality.

There is a moral in these observations which should perhaps be pointed. It proves within my community what world history demonstrates: that culture springs from a sensitive attachment to one's motherland and the causes of humanity, not from pursuing the fashions and profits of the passing hour. And a people is judged by its cultural worth.

I am afraid I have read you a sermon. But it is not a

sermon aloof from the immediate realities of this critical moment. For those who try to make culture, and those who share in the making, will fight for freedom with a sharpened sense of values and a stronger will. I want to say, too, that we who live abroad know our duty in this struggle. We know that we cannot stand sympathetically aloof, that our place is in India. We shall make every effort to take that place.

SCIENCE IN THE U.S.S.R.

By J. G. Crowther

The Soviet Union has successfully resisted, not only the German Army, but a combination of the armies of several nations. In the conditions of modern warfare, she could not have had this historic success unless she possessed vast quantities of first-class scientific weapons, and the knowledge of how to use them. The great Soviet strength is the direct proof of the high development of science and technology in the country. Nowadays, military strength depends as much on production as on men. Even the best armed soldiers cannot fight unless they receive a stream of ammunition and provisions. A whole nation must be permeated with science and technology if it is to hold its own as a great power to-day.

Events have proved the degree of scientific and technical development in the U.S.S.R. How has this come about, and what is it like ?

Science and technology have been developed for several reasons. The first one is philosophical. The people of the U.S.S.R. have certain intellectual conceptions of nature and of human society. They believe that the material environment is the foundation on which human society rests, and that mankind's ideas are a kind of superstructure on this foundation. You can see that if you have a philosophy of this kind, and you believe that ideas rest on material facts of society and nature, you must attribute a fundamental importance to the material world. You will seek to know about it, because that will provide the clue to human ideas and actions. Now science is nothing more nor less than knowledge of the material world. The Soviet people regard science as the basis of their outlook on life. Consequently, it has a leading place in all their education and thought.

There are other very important reasons why they are interested in science. They are a working-class community whose aim is to provide a high standard of living for the masses. The only way in which the quantity of goods necessary for this purpose can be produced is by creating a highly scientific industry.

Then, again, they know that military security to-day depends on science, so they have also developed it for this reason.

Still another is that the exercise of the desire to know raises the dignity of man. The Soviet people are proud of their society, and desire its talented members to discover all that they can about the secrets of the universe.

The characteristics of science in the U.S.S.R. are such as would naturally follow from such tendencies. There is a tremendous amount of science teaching in the schools and universities. Millions of pupils are given the rudiments of scientific training, and learn to understand the power and possibilities of science.

One effect of this is that the scientific profession is very highly esteemed. A distinguished scientist has a great social position in the U.S.S.R. The people also elect many scientists to represent them in the Government. For instance, the agricultural scientist Lysenko is a vice-chairman of the Supreme Soviet, a position which would correspond in Britain to being a vice-chairman of the Cabinet.

The conscious utilisation of science to raise the standard of living of the people has had effects of overwhelming importance. It has led to the planning of scientific effort.

Soviet planning, which is now so famous, is extremely simple in principle. In order to give the population a proper standard of living, certain quantities of goods are necessary. For instance, if every member of a population of 170,000,000 is to have two pairs of boots a year, the boot industry must have an annual production of 340 million pairs. If every member is to have a certain amount of housing space, it will follow that an appropriate number of houses will have to be built. If

everyone is to have a proper standard of diet, certain quantities of various kinds of food will have to be produced. If everyone is to have electric light, so much electricity must be produced for this purpose.

It is not difficult to calculate the basic quantities of goods necessary for a satisfactory life for the whole of the population. But it is very difficult to produce them.

This involves the creation of giant industries and agricultural developments. Enormous electric power stations, driven by steam or water power, have to be built. They have to be spaced through the country so that a balanced development is possible.

In the last fifteen years the Soviet people have paid particular attention to the building of new plants in Western Siberia and South-Eastern Europe. They have erected great industrial cities with enormous blast-furnaces and metal foundries to the east of the Urals, and they have built numerous industrial plants in the lands of the Khirghiz, and other Eastern nomads. The education of these Eastern peoples in science and technology, and the beginning of industrial development in their countries, is one of the Soviet's most brilliant achievements.

In order to develop industry and agriculture, scientific research has to be planned on parallel and related lines. The design and construction of electric power systems poses many kinds of problems in electrical engineering and physics. Consequently, a series of physical research laboratories has been built, where novel problems can be investigated, and scientists of the highest quality can be trained.

This creation of physical research laboratories began immediately after the Revolution, under the direction of Professor Joffe, who has just received a Stalin Prize of 200,000 roubles. He collected a group of gifted young men from all parts of the country and created a Physics-Technical Institute in Leningrad. As these men matured they were made the directors of new institutes built at Kharkov, Sverdlovsk,

Samarkand and other centres. These new institutes were adapted to the needs of the provinces where they were situated. For instance, the institute at Kharkov was especially strong in high-tension electrical physics, and in low-temperature physics. The first was important for the vast electrical industry connected with the Dnieper Dam, and the latter with the coal and gas industry of the Don Basin. At Sverdlovsk special attention is devoted to metallurgy, which is related to the industry of the Ural region.

This intense scientific activity has led to many important discoveries. For instance, one of Joffe's original group of young colleagues at Leningrad has become the world's leading authority on the chemistry of detonations and explosions. This is N. N. Semenov. He is the chief creator of the modern theory of chain reactions, which helps to explain the properties of explosives, and such phenomena as "knock" in motor and aircraft engines. You can imagine the value to the U.S.S.R. at the present time of a group of unsurpassed experts on these problems.

Another direction in which the Soviet scientists have had notable success is in the most difficult parts of the theory of radio-communication. Here Mandelstam is the master. He has recently shared in a Stalin Prize of 200,000 roubles for his contributions to the theory of non-linear oscillations. These are characteristic of aeroplane spin as well as radio circuits, so the military value of this branch of science can easily be appreciated.

Soviet scientists have a special aptitude for aviation engineering. They combine a taste for mechanical *gadgeteering* with great skill in abstract mathematics, which is just what is required in this subject.

The Soviet people generally have a passion for mechanical gadgeteering. They like playing with machines. Students of their science observed long ago that, if anything, Soviet scientists were inclined to be too mechanical and to waste time on perfecting instruments, instead of finding out new things with them.

Lord Beaverbrook remarked, after his recent visit to the Soviet Union, on the passionate taste of the people for machines. It is a good tendency in these days of mechanical warfare.

Many people have heard of Professor Kapitza, the Soviet physicist, who has invented new kinds of apparatus for liquefying gases. He cools gases by expanding them in a turbine. His apparatus is simpler and more efficient than its predecessors, and it promises to provide cheap liquid helium and other gases for use on a large industrial scale.

Many people are under the impression that the planning of science has hindered the advance of abstract science in the U.S.S.R. This is a misunderstanding. The Soviet Union leads the world in some of the most abstract parts of science, for instance, in some sections of the mathematical theory of numbers. The Royal Society of London has just elected Professor I. M. Venogradov of Moscow to its foreign membership. Professor Venogradov is the greatest authority in the world on what is called the analytic theory of numbers. He has for years produced a series of epoch-making discoveries in this subject. His methods are characterised by wonderful imagination, great power and comparative simplicity. He has made a big step towards the solution of the problem of Goldbach, which had resisted all attacks for two centuries. Goldbach conjectured that every even number is the sum of two prime numbers. It looks simple enough, but it has defied all the mathematicians of the world for two hundred years! Venogradov has now proved that every sufficiently large odd number is the sum of three prime numbers, and has certainly broken through the formerly impenetrable wall of mathematical difficulty. He has also recently been given a Stalin Prize of 200,000 roubles.

Is it surprising that with mathematicians of this calibre, the Soviet Union is able to produce men who can solve the most difficult problems in aeroplane and radio design?

So far, I have spoken only about the physical and mathematical sciences. The U.S.S.R. is a great agricultural country.

Its production of grain and potatoes and livestock can only be increased by improved seeds and animals, and improved methods of cultivation.

Their achievements in this direction may be illustrated by the work of Professor N. I. Vavilov, who has just been elected a foreign member of the Royal Society of London. Professor Vavilov has organised great expeditions to collect specimens of the domesticated plants in the regions where they grow wild. He sent botanists to Abyssinia to collect wild wheat, and to Central America to collect wild potatoes. They found dozens of species of these plants which had not hitherto been known to science. They brought them back to the Soviet Union, and bred and crossed them with the plants already in cultivation, and thus obtained new types which would grow in regions where these crops could not hitherto have been cultivated.

One of Professor Vavilov's most interesting conclusions was that the domesticated fruit plants came from Persia. Jungles of wild fruit plants exist there, and are the basis for the story of the Garden of Eden, recorded in the Bible. Travellers from Persia probably carried tales of the forests of fruit trees down into the valley of the Euphrates.

The Jewish authors of the Book of Genesis no doubt heard the story from the Babylonians.

The experiments of the Soviet physiologists on animal breeding have produced very striking results. They have developed the technique of artificial insemination, by which one male animal can become the father of very many offspring. For instance, in one Soviet experiment, a ram has become the father of 15,000 lambs in one year, and a bull has become the father of 1500 calves. These very remarkable results are of particularly great consequence to the whole world to-day. They will enable the livestock of the devastated areas to be replaced by stock of higher quality than before. By ordinary methods of breeding, the average bull produces 30 calves a year. But by artificial insemination it can produce 1500 calves or as much as 50 bulls by the ordinary method. Thus

the best of every 50 bulls need only be retained in order to secure the same number of calves. Now some bulls produce daughter calves which are much better milkers than others. So the new method enables 49 out of every 50 bulls to be abolished, with enormous saving in fodder, and at the same time greatly raises the quality of the herd.

In the same way, artificial insemination can be used to raise the quality of the fleece and meat in herds of sheep.

Since the Revolution, scientists have been trained in hundreds of thousands. They are largely a new class in the community, and they are nearly all young men. This gives a special atmosphere to Soviet scientific institutes. It is usual to find that the director is about forty years old, while the heads of his departments are about thirty, and the bulk of the research staff is in the twenties. These youthful staffs are exceptionally lively and full of zest.

There is a great deal of discussion and debate on the affairs of the institute. There are meetings of the whole of the staff, and departmental meetings, for discussion of the plans of research and the conduct of the institute. There are political meetings, which have a most important part. The general directions of policy issued by the Central Government are interpreted at these political meetings, so that everyone in the institute understands them, and can discuss how the Institute can best carry them out.

This systematic attention to affairs has provided the machinery by which the remarkable mass-evacuations of factories and institutes has been organised. Being used to discuss and act on directions from the Government, all institutions were able to organise and carry out evacuations with a speed and success that has foiled the enemy and astonished the world.

The institutes have an intense social life. There are clubs for all kinds of recreation, chess clubs, ski clubs, aero clubs, climbing clubs, orchestras, etc. By joining his institute's aero club, the Soviet scientist is able to learn to fly, without any cost to himself. It is through such clubs that the Soviet has vast

numbers of airmen and ski troops. They have already had the elements of their training through their reactions during peace-time.

The planning and organisation of Soviet life is the foundation of their scientific development, and their marvellous social and military discipline under the most severe strain.

The people of the Soviet Union are intensely proud of their achievements. They consider they have made a unique constructive contribution to civilisation, and they regard with relentless hatred the enemy who has destroyed so much that has been built at such cost and sacrifice.

The Soviet Union has still far to go in its effort to build up a sufficiently high standard of science and life for all its citizens, but its achievements during the last year show that it has laid foundations of rock-like strength, which were sufficient to bear the main weight of the Nazi attack, while the United Nations organised and armed to destroy the enemies of civilisation.

PRISON LITERATURE *

By Reginald Reynolds

How old is prison literature? Its story certainly begins over a thousand years before Christ, and probably the first example on record is a treatise on astronomy, written by a Chinese official who was imprisoned for protesting against governmental tyranny. Among other early Chinese prison writers was an ex-Prime Minister, Li Ssu, who wrote a letter to his Emperor from his place of captivity. The letter is bitterly sarcastic, imputing to the Emperor the grossest ingratitude in such treatment of an old servant, and it is written with plenty of spirit.

Another early writer in this class was the Roman poet Nævius. He was jailed for attacking the Roman patricians in his writings, and wrote two plays in prison, both of which are unfortunately lost.

The first woman who wrote in prison, to the best of my knowledge, was Saint Perpetua, who is credited with several chapters of the original account of her martyrdom. These chapters were written in the first person, and her authorship, though not certain, is quite probable.

Actually the number of women who wrote anything memorable in prison seems to have been small in comparison with men. Mary, Queen of Scots, will be readily remembered, though her verses are of indifferent merit. Many of the "Suffragettes," including Lady Constance Lytton, wrote in jail, but unfortunately their writings were too much concerned with issues already forgotten. On the other hand, the writings of the Countess Markievicz have an enduring quality, and Rosa Luxemburg developed literary powers which she seldom seems to have used to the full when she was at liberty. In his book, *The Mind of Post-War Germany*, C. H. Herford says that

* The second of two broadcasts on the subject.

Rosa Luxemburg's prison letters "reflect the rich gifts of cultured interest, of delicate and eager insight into art and nature underlying the white-hot passion of the revolutionary leader."

Other famous women who wrote in prison include Maria Spiridonova in Russia and Louise Michel in France.

Some of the most moving writings from prison are ordinary domestic letters. Consider the sheer beauty of the last passages in that letter which Paul of Tarsus wrote to the Philippians from his prison in Rome :

> Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Or among modern instances there is Mr. Gandhi's letter to the children at his *ashram :*

> Ordinary birds cannot fly without wings. With wings, of course, all can fly. But if you, without wings, will learn how to fly, then all your troubles will be at an end. And I will teach you.
>
> See, I have no wings, yet I come flying to you every day in thought. . . . And you also can come flying to me in thought.
>
> Send me a letter signed by all, and those who do not know how to sign may make a cross.

The letters written to a man's wife or friend before death have a terrible pathos which commonly makes it impossible to read them without emotion. Such letters were written by many, among whom we must once more include Sir Walter Raleigh. Wolfe Tone, John Brown, Nicolo Sacco and many less-known men and women met death bravely, but with hearts torn by pity for those whom they loved. During the protracted years of his trial Sacco wrote many simple and beautiful letters in broken English, of which I always think of one especially. He is writing to a friend, and recalls "a year ago on our love day, when I bought the first lovely blue suit for my dear Rosina, and the dear remembrance is still remain in my heart." Rosina was his wife, and later in this letter he

says: "I wish you could see Rosina, how nice she was look, while now the sufferance of to-day had make her look like an old woman."

There is often much humour, however, whether conscious or otherwise, in the writings of prisoners. There was Thomas Aldam, for instance, a seventeenth-century Quaker, who wrote from his prison at York that the Lord would separate the sheep from the goats. "Their fruits," he said, "make them manifest." Or there is Geffray Mynshul, who gives us some witty descriptions under the title: *Characters and Essays of Prison and Prisoners.* He wrote in 1617 from the King's Bench Prison, where he was probably incarcerated as a debtor; which would certainly account for most of the sentiments he expresses. A creditor, he wrote, "hath two pair of hands; one of flesh and blood, and that nature gave him; another of iron, and that the law gives him."

In times past an English prison was a terrible place indeed for the poor, but quite tolerable if the prisoner had money, as he was then able to supply himself with good food and other comforts. Of such amenities George Wither wrote in the seventeenth century and James Montgomery in the eighteenth. Both wrote very cheerfully, making amusing comparisons between their good fortune and the perils and misery of people outside. Of these George Wither wrote:

> No thief, I think, to rob me dares appear,
> Within these walls the gallows are so near;
> And likewise, I believe, 'tis known full well,
> I've nought to lose, nor ought for them to steal.'

Montgomery expresses a similar thought in his *Prison Amusements*, praising the place:

> Where debtors safe at anchor lie
> From saucy duns and bailiffs sly;
> Where highwaymen and robbers stout
> Would, rather than break in, break out.

Leigh Hunt, too, described with pleasure his cell, and even as late as 1886 W. T. Stead was allowed to continue his job as

editor of a paper while in prison. Indeed, his own sketch of his cell shows it as a very comfortably furnished office. This distinguished editor even went so far as to write, after his release, in favour of prisons as places of retirement.

"I am not sure," wrote Stead, "that if a small voluntary gaol were started by a limited liability company, to be run on first-class misdemeanant principles, and managed as admirably as Holloway Gaol, it would not pay a handsome dividend. It would certainly be an incalculable boon to the over-driven, much-worried writers of London."

Doubtless these feelings were not shared by those whose faults were considered worthy of harsher treatment, or whose pockets could not supply them with so many amenities. Since those days jail conditions in Britain have tended to make writing a difficult and unprofitable occupation, confined to writing on a slate, apart from a limited number of censored letters which the prisoner may write. Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis* was probably the last prison classic written in Britain; and modern prison writers, such as Mark Benney and Jim Phelan, wrote actually very little in jail that has survived, owing to these restrictions. There is, however, a very remarkable letter of Mark Benney's which was published in his book, *Low Company*, and I wish I could quote it at greater length than my time allows, to show once more the profound effects of suffering and solitude upon a sensitive mind.

After a singularly beautiful description of a calm evening, of things heard, seen and sensed from his cell, Mark Benney found himself (as he tells us) "wiser and blinder than I remember having felt before." Then he continues:

> The inchoate fears and resentments that usually warp my thoughts are at rest. I can find it in me to wonder that I should once have hated the vast complacent thing which built these walls. Now, as I feel it out there with its villas and factories and roads sprawled under the silent skies, I feel a great fellowship for it. . . . I can see it as a projection of myself, striving towards the same perfection in the same grotesque way. For this moment of relaxation we can understand each other, civilisation and I.

I do not suggest that this is the reaction of any average prisoner, or even of one in a thousand. Experiences that bring out the best in a few men may even destroy weaker spirits. This is the reaction of a mystic to one of the experiences of asceticism, though the asceticism here is imposed upon him, and not chosen for its own worth. But remember that this man entered prison a convicted burglar. When a burglar becomes a philosopher and a mystic we may find reason to resort our human values.

Jim Phelan is another modern prison writer who deserves our attention. A prison officer who had read most books of the same type agreed with me recently that Phelan's *Jail Journey* was of all such books the most fair and accurate, the most incisive in its analysis of characters in the prison—prisoners and officials included. *Jail Journey* was not, of course, actually written in prison; but, like Mark Benney's book, it includes some genuine prison literature in this sense, and I would mention as an example the astonishing "Balmy Ballad" of which Phelan records some extracts. Composed entirely in prison jargon, and incomprehensible without Phelan's translation, it is another example of the prison folk-lore which I mentioned last week, and a very interesting one, in my opinion.

These modern prison writers are often brilliant critics, not only of their prison world, but of society at large. In America particularly, many men imprisoned for common crime have emerged as writers and critics of distinction. Many American prisons appear to facilitate and even encourage such development by such means as prison newspapers written, edited and printed by prisoners. Of these modern Americans I will mention the outstanding names of Ernest Booth (who wrote *Stealing Through Life*), Robert Tasker (author of *Grimhaven*), and Jack Black, a master of paradox who informs us that: "the criminal's code is based upon the same fundamentals as the social code—protection of life and property!" All these writers are extremely stimulating to read.

There have been literally hundreds of other prison writers, of whom I can only select a few more for the guidance of any listener who may feel interested in pursuing this subject further. Some may wonder why I have not so far mentioned Cervantes, who was in prison more than once, and is reputed to have written the first part of *Don Quixote* on one of these occasions. Unfortunately there is no warrant for this tradition except an ambiguous reference in the preface to this book, where Cervantes writes as follows :

> What could be expected of a mind sterile and uncultivated like mine, but a dry, meagre, fantastical thing, full of strange conceits, and that might well be engendered in a prison—the dreadful abode of care, where nothing is heard but sounds of wretchedness ?

However, apart from this uncertainty, Cervantes does not lend himself easily to brief quotations illustrating the mind of the writer or the possible effects of prison. The same applies to three famous Italians—Tasso, Campanella (who wrote *The City of the Sun*, in which he anticipated the modern Totalitarian State) and Sylvio Pellico, the Italian poet and patriot.

Voltaire wrote in the Bastille the first part of his *Henriade*, where you will find a splendid passage condemning religious intolerance. Henri de Bourbon, later King of France, is explaining to Queen Elizabeth of England the appalling consequences of religious intolerance and religious wars in Europe, and Voltaire makes him speak as follows :

> These eyes have witnessed one continual tide
> Of crime and horror flow on either side ;
> And if from error perfidy proceeds,
> If, in the struggle with which Europe bleeds,
> Murder and treason be the unfailing test,
> To mark the side whose error stands confessed,
> In crime as error neither party yield,
> But still maintain a well-contested field.

Tom Paine is another prison writer we must not neglect to mention. He was a prophet still not sufficiently honoured in

his own country, who served the cause of liberty as soldier, writer and statesman in America, England and France. A revolutionary victim of the French Revolution, he lay in peril of death in the Luxembourg prison (from which he came out alive by the merest chance) and quietly employed his time in jail writing the second part of *The Age of Reason*. One particularly remarkable thing about that book is the complete detachment with which it was written: there is not a hint from the beginning to the end of it that the writer might be carried off in a tumbril at any moment, leaving the work unfinished. And about the same time the famous Madame Roland was also in prison, writing a character of Tom Paine with equal detachment. She too awaited death, a death which, less fortunate than Paine, she did not escape. Her prison writings are not well known, but all the world knows her last words upon the scaffold—"O Liberty, how thou art mocked!"

My last name, and a surprise, perhaps, for many, is "O. Henry." His real name was William Sidney Porter, and in 1898 he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in the Ohio Penitentiary. The charge was embezzlement while he was teller in a bank. During that imprisonment Porter settled seriously to writing stories, and adopted the *nom de plume* by which he has been known ever since. Among the stories which he wrote in jail were *An Afternoon Miracle*, *Rouge et Noire* and *A Chaparral Christmas Gift*.

They are a strange mixture, these prison writers, and perhaps I have set some of you thinking and asking questions. Some will ask how it can be right for such people ever to have been in prison; others will reply by asking what society is to do with people who defy its laws. I am not here to answer either of those questions, but when I mentioned the name of Rosa Luxemburg I had it in mind to save a quotation from that gifted woman till the end, because much the same questions came to her in her cell, and this was how she answered them in one of her letters:

> Sonyusha, you are feeling embittered because of my long imprisonment. You ask: "How can human beings dare to decide the fate of their fellows? What is the meaning of it all?" You won't mind—I couldn't help laughing as I read. In Dostoievsky's novel, *The Brothers Karamazoff*, one of the characters used to ask the same questions; she would look round from one member of the company to another and would then blurt out a second question before there had been time to answer the first. My dear little bird, the whole history of civilisation ... is grounded upon "human beings deciding the fate of their fellows." The practice is deeply rooted in the material conditions of existence. Nothing but a further evolution, and a painful one, can change such things. At this hour we are living in the very chapter of the transition and you ask, "What is the meaning of it all?"

That, at least, was the way Rosa Luxemburg saw it all. Notice once more the absence of bitterness, hatred, recrimination. I think you will agree that most of us have a great deal to learn from some of these jail-birds. So many of them acquired a new strength, a patience that was not the patience of submissiveness; a firmness that had room for courtesy and generosity; a way of striving without malice or anger, even with love towards those against whom they strove.

Rebels, reformers, heretics or criminals, they were all probably at least better people than anyone imagined when they stood in the dock. Their history should teach us to consider what we condemn even more carefully than what we praise, and to beware of an intolerance which may expose our own poor judgment to the contempt of posterity. Some of these prisoners were right when their judges were wrong. Others, though wrong, were nevertheless great men and women, whose powers still served a good purpose in spite of the faults which led them into conflict with organised society.

THE PRESS AND ITS FREEDOM

Discussion between WICKHAM STEED, HAMILTON FYFE *and* A. L. BAKAYA

Bakaya : This country has now been at war for nearly three years. Some of us are wondering what effect that has had, and is likely to have, on the freedom of the Press. It is not often I get the chance of talking to two such experienced journalists at the same time, and I should be very glad to hear your opinions about this.

Steed : Well, if this debate is to have any value I think we ought to begin by saying what we mean when we talk of the Press and its freedom. Hamilton Fyfe and I are old stagers ; and I suppose we agree about most things except, perhaps, upon fundamentals.

Fyfe : I'm not so sure that we disagree about fundamentals, though we may not agree upon details. If you will go ahead and say what you think, I'll chip in and tell you when and where I think you're wrong.

Steed : By " the Press " I don't mean only newspapers. I mean the printing press itself, that is to say, the machines that turn out books, periodicals, pamphlets and newspapers for the public to read. If the printing presses of a country are so controlled that they can only print what a Government, or one political party, or a Church, or powerful business interests, would like them to print, the Press can't be free. And, in my view, a Press that isn't free is no Press. It might as well be a factory for gramophone records.

All the same, printing presses can't turn out reading matter unless somebody pays the cost of buying them and keeping them going. This applies particularly to newspapers. Those who pay the piper like to call the tune, whether they be a

Government or a political party or a religious organisation. Then there are the advertisers who, in Great Britain at any rate, provide most of the money spent on newspapers, and all the profits for owners or shareholders. So a free Press may not be, and usually is not, an impartial Press.

Fyfe : I'm glad you mentioned the advertisers. In one way it's true that their money keeps most newspapers going. In another way they may be enemies of the freedom of the Press. I shall have something more to say about them in a moment. But I want you to tell your story first.

Steed : So that you can cut in and upset it, I suppose ? I admit that this business of freedom for the Press, or for anything else, is a very curious affair. It takes for granted the existence of a community that wants to inform itself freely, and not to accept as true any ideas which a Government or a party or powerful financial interests may wish to be accepted. Now such a community has either had to learn from experience, or has got to learn, a very difficult virtue—the virtue of tolerance. Without tolerance there can be no real freedom.

Fyfe : I agree with you there. That is why dictators always begin by abolishing the freedom of the Press. And from their point of view I think they are quite right.

Steed : Of course we must admit that tolerance can never be absolute. I don't know if you ever agree with Bernard Shaw, but what you have just said reminds me of something he wrote in the Preface to one of his plays. He said that criticism is indispensable if any civilisation is to make progress and to be saved from stagnation or putrefaction. So, he argued, criticism must be respected and, within certain limits, this respect must carry with it impunity for critics. But he showed that the limits are important. One of them is that the members of a free community are not entitled to change their conduct the moment they change their minds and, indeed, not until public criticism has changed the law. As Shaw put it : Karl Marx writing criticism of private property in the Reading Room of the British Museum was entitled not to be punished when

the owners of private property didn't like his opinions; but if Karl Marx had sent the rent of his house to the Treasury, and had then shot the landlord who asked him to pay the rent, Karl Marx could not have saved himself from being hanged by pleading his right to criticise.

Fyfe: Yes, I remember that Preface; and though I don't think Bernard Shaw is always right or always consistent, he often hits the nail on the head. Only in that Preface I think he says that the difficulty is to distinguish between the criminal or the lunatic and the critic. What is one to do about what you might call "border-line cases," like conscientious objectors and other people who have moral scruples about obeying the law but whose scruples, if they were allowed to prevail, might endanger or ruin the freedom of the whole community?

Steed: Yes, that is exactly where the limits to the freedom of criticism and to the freedom of the Press come in, especially in war-time.

Fyfe: Yes, tolerance has to go by the board then—war wipes out all the decencies of life. The necessity of saving our free community from destruction by the enemies of freedom has to come first.

Steed: Well, aren't the proper limits on freedom of writing and speech more likely to be set by a community that prizes its right to know, to think and to speak freely than by a community, or a dictator acting in its name, which has not learned the difficult art of freedom? In this sense I look upon the Press and newspapers as trustees for public freedom, and upon journalists as owing allegiance only to what they believe to be the welfare of the public. There can be no free Press without tolerance of opinions that may seem wrong, as well as of opinions that seem right. For the essence of tolerance is the unspoken belief that truth is many-sided, that none of its aspects can be absolute, and that true freedom only means that each member of a community shall have as much liberty to express his thoughts as anybody can have if all are to share the same liberty.

Fyfe : I think you are talking of an ideal state of things, not of one that existed before the war even in this country. You say rightly that journalists should owe allegiance only to what they believe to be the welfare of the public. That may have been possible during one short period, the later part of the nineteenth century. The Newspaper Press was then called, as you may remember, "the Fourth Estate." This meant it had to play a part in the working of the Constitution along with the other three Estates of the Realm. Not King, Lords and Commons, as most people suppose, but Lords Spiritual, Lords Temporal and Commons. The Press did play that part in those days. The leading articles in the London morning papers were written by men who, in knowledge and judgment, were more than the equals of Cabinet Ministers. Newspapers were then mainly organs of opinion. Lord Salisbury—I mean the eminent Conservative Prime Minister—said that Britain was governed more by the spoken than by the written word. But if this was true it could not have been true if the Press had not printed in full the speeches of front-rank politicians on both sides. This made the newspapers dull reading for anybody who wasn't keen on politics or public affairs—which, by the way, is what everybody in a sound democratic community ought to be. The Press to-day is infinitely more readable. It touches life at a far greater variety of points, and it gives more information on a wider range of topics. But it would be ludicrous now to call it the Fourth Estate, and nobody does.

Bakaya : How did that change come about, I wonder ?

Fyfe : The British Press ceased to be an organ of considered opinion when Northcliffe's New Journalism, as it was scornfully called at the time, triumphed over the dullness and the complacency of the Old Journalism. He made it an organ of entertainment. You remember the definition that Charles Dana, the famous American Editor, once gave of news. He said : "When a dog bites a man, that ain't noos. If a man bites a dog, that's noos." Well, Northcliffe agreed with Dana's definition. His papers, and the rest which followed his lead,

were full of "men biting dogs." They took notice of the unusual, the unconventional. Ordinary things they ignored.

Steed : Yes, I remember quite well. And I remember another American definition of news : "Vice is news ; virtue isn't." But this wasn't quite the innovation you seem to think it was. The respectable, dull newspapers turned out by the Old Journalism printed long accounts of murders and murder trials, divorce cases, and so on. The chief difference was that they didn't use big headlines.

Fyfe : And that they had comparatively few readers. My point is that Northcliffe enlarged enormously the number of newspaper readers. He raised it from between three and four million at the end of the nineteenth century to twenty million or more. This made newspapers hugely profitable to advertisers, who preferred papers with large circulations. So there was a race for large circulations which made newspapers very profitable to their owners. This sent the price of advertising space up and up. To be the owner of a newspaper, which had once been more or less a hobby, often an expensive hobby, became a source of great wealth either for the owner or for shareholders, who didn't care how their papers were made up so long as their dividends were punctually paid. And as advertisers provided more than half the cost of producing the newspapers and all the profit made on them, the advertisers got the whip hand—and the freedom of the Press went pretty well to the devil. What have you to say to that ?

Steed : I say it is largely true. But you and I both worked with Northcliffe. We know that before he died in 1922 he repented of what he had done. We know also that he himself often put advertisers in their proper places and refused to let them dictate the policy of his newspapers. He did care for the freedom of the Press ; and, during the last great war, he took big risks to uphold it.

Fyfe : Of course he had a great many good points as well as some bad ones. In his way he was a great journalist, whereas some of his imitators and successors have been only

money-makers. But he couldn't undo the harm he had done; and now the question is how to undo it—after the war, because then it will be more important than ever to have public opinion informed and educated. For that we shall need newspapers which are not only free but are conducted with a sense of responsibility; newspapers lively and interesting, yet refusing to play down to the ignorance and lower instincts of the masses. There are plenty of newspaper men who would be glad of a chance to turn out such newspapers; and there will be plenty of such men in future. How do you think they can get their chance?

Steed: I don't know how they will get it, but I am quite sure they can get it if they are fit for it and determined to take it as servants of or trustees for a free community. Where there is a will there is a way. The triumph of the cause of freedom in this war may help to show the way. For it is a war against absolutism of every kind, in politics, and internationally. Freedom is the negation of absolutism. Has it ever occurred to you, my dear Fyfe, that newspapers no longer have the field all to themselves?

Fyfe: It occurred to me, my dear Steed, twenty years ago. I touched on it then, giving evidence before a Parliamentary Committee on Radio News. I have frequently spoken of it since then.

Steed: Yes, broadcasting certainly is an equally potent means of informing and educating public opinion; and as long as it is not run for private profit, through advertisers, it can make the Press look to its laurels and create a public demand for better newspapers. Then it may again be said that Britain is governed rather by the spoken than the written word. This should put journalists on their mettle; and competition with broadcasting should help to give us a free Press in a free community.

Fyfe: I say Amen to that—so may it be!

T. S. ELIOT

By J. M. Tambimuttu

The door is marked Thomas Stearns, you knock, and enter. The office is very small, and there is a single window overlooking the grey drabness of London's rooftops. Papers and books are strewn about the floor and on the table—proofs of books, manuscripts—for you are at the offices of one of England's largest publishers. A tall man, slimly built, with dark hair, now slightly greying, rises from the swivel chair to greet you. "How do you do?" He motions you to a chair with a smile of recognition and sinks back into his seat with a slow, careful motion. You are with T. S. Eliot, who is the only great English poet living; that is, the only poet who will be read in years to come, even when it is fashionable to ignore him.

Mr. Eliot's life has been described by Richard Church as one of a "Search for Foundations." The young Eliot, appalled by the hollowness of New England culture where success counted in terms of sky-scrapers and cigars, gave vent to his cynicism in a series of satirical poems, indicating the shallowness of middle-class life:

> Miss Nancy Ellicot
> Strode across the hills and broke them,
> Rode across the hills and broke them.
> The barren New England hills—
> Riding to hounds
> Over the cow-pasture.
>
> Miss Nancy Ellicot smoked
> And danced all the modern dances;
> And her aunts were not quite sure how they felt about it,
> But they knew that it was modern.
>
> Upon the glazen shelves kept watch
> Matthew and Waldo, guardians of the faith,
> The army of unalterable law.

BBC photograph

(Left) Hsiao Ch'ien from Occupied China, now Lecturer at the London School of Oriental Studies, author of "Etching of a Tormented Age." *(Right)* I. M. Tambimuttu, a Tamil from Ceylon, Editor of "Poetry."

"VOICE" the monthly radio magazine programme in the Eastern Service of the B.B.C.

(Left to right, sitting) Venu Chitale, J. M. Tambimuttu, T. S. Eliot, Una Marson, Mulk Raj Anand, C. Pemberton, Narayana Menon; *(standing)* George Orwell, Nancy Barratt, William Empson.

This is no more than a piece of youthful exuberance expressing the spiritual bankruptcy of his American cultural background. But the first three lines have something of the precise rhythm and literary austerity that were to mark Mr. Eliot's later work. There is also the use of pure vowel sounds that marks the born musician and the poet who feels deeply. I cannot discuss this point here, but the innumerable consonantal words and impure vowel sounds that Shelley and Swinburne, say, use, show not only that they were dynamic rather than static but also that their emotional adventures were of a superficial nature. Keats and Shakespeare are examples to the contrary. They use far more pure vowel sounds.

Mr. Eliot, in his search for foundations, came back to the country of his origin, England, only to witness the death-struggles of a culture without values or stability. The Georgian poets of the time, in response to the crumbling of older conventions and attitudes, adopted an eclectic traditionalism, limited, refined, carefully hedged round, and within their narrow confines sang confidently about the rural acres they loved best—Grantchester or Littleholme, or for romantic relief about Far Western places—Chimborazo and Cotopaxi. The poetry is thin, there is no more in it than meets the eye. It is all statement on one level. The idea of the Georgians was retrenchment, and they kept their gaze averted from anything that might remind them of change. Retrenchment of another kind was effected by another group, called the Imagists, who endeavoured to seriously narrow down the technique and language of poetry to avoid the flabbiness which was the result of attempts to practice in a worn-out tradition. The Georgians attempted to save tradition by limitation of subject-matter, and achieved wateriness, the Imagists attempted the same thing by limitation of technique, and achieved hardness and precision even though these qualities were often accompanied by triviality. Here is an imagist poem by T. E. Hulme, who supplied the philosophic background for the movement, having learnt it mostly from Oriental sources :

I walked abroad,
And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge
Like a red-faced farmer. . . .

O God, make small
The old star-eaten blanket of the sky,
That I may fold it round me and in comfort lie.

Now pass I to the final river
Ignominiously, in a sack, without a sound,
As any peeping Turk to the Bosphorus.

The images are precise and communicate visual impressions accurately, but they do not cohere together organically to give a total experience.

Mr. Eliot was influenced by these Imagists, as he was by the French Symbolists. But instead of concentrating on the expressive power of the single image, as they did, he concentrated rather on the relation of these images to the poem as a whole. He gave the poems an organic quality. With his fine sense of form and of attitude (both qualities absent from Imagist verse), he was able to give his poetry a dynamic quality seldom if ever found among his contemporaries when he started writing. Mr. Eliot gave imagism a dialectic. Let me read a few lines from his "The Hollow Men":

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
we whisper together
are quiet and meaningless,
as wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar.

When Mr Eliot writes "We are the hollow men | We are the stuffed men," we cannot say whether they are just and accurate images until we have read the whole poem. Other adjectives might be equally descriptive of the kind of men he wants to

describe, but these are the only appropriate ones in the context, and they combine effectively with the other images in the poem to express his mood. The Imagists wrote in naturalistic images, Mr. Eliot uses organic imagery. This is, of course, not a prerogative of Mr. Eliot alone. All great poets use images organically.

Eliot was able to do this, because instead of trying to escape tradition (which was the way the Imagists and Georgians reacted to the disintegration of values) he returned to an older scheme of values which he expressed in his work. He also had positive beliefs about which I shall speak later. Thus did Mr. Eliot bring dialectic into modern poetry, which had been banished from it for some time.

In his preface to " For Lancelot Andrews," Mr. Eliot says that his attitude in the book is Classicist in literature, Royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion. Thus was the American wanderer to find his foundations that he had been groping after. When he calls himself classicist Mr. Eliot uses the word in the sense that T. E. Hulme used it. It is difficult to say how much Mr. Eliot owes to Hulme, and it is not important to know that. Both writers reject romantic individualism and the liberalism which produced the state of affairs existing in the early part of the twentieth century. Both believe in the concept of Original Sin and reject the proposition which springs from Rousseau that man is by nature wonderful and of unlimited powers, " and if hitherto he has not appeared so, it is because of external obstacles and fetters, which it should be the main business of social politics to remove." Mr. Eliot's (and Hulme's) is " the conviction that a man is by nature bad or limited, and can consequently only accomplish anything of value by disciplines, ethical, heroic or political. In other words, it believes in Original Sin." Mr. Eliot believes in discipline, form and control: Da, Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata, says the thunder in " The Waste Land," which translated from the Sanskrit means—give, sympathise, control. And the poem ends—" Shantih, shantih, shantih "—which means—" the peace that passeth understanding."

" The Waste Land " is the most important single poem of the twentieth century, though not his best ; it is a hall-mark in modern poetry, and it has given its name to a period. The basis of the poem is a multiple myth deriving largely from Jessie L. Weston's book, *From Ritual to Romance*, and partly from other sources, such as the Upanishads and Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. He calls into service almost all the great myths of the world, the story of the grail, vegetation myths, the Christian story of the resurrection and several others, and the whole poem is about the death and resurrection of the spirit. In this poem he attempts to speak the voice of ages, using all tongues, using all myths, with the voice of universal man. If the modern world has no beliefs, he writes in terms of all beliefs. The poem does not seem to state a belief, but his belief in the importance of belief. " The Waste Land " is not a pessimistic poem—that there are no values and there never can be any. It ends with the thunder speaking its message of salvation, and the descent of fertilising rain.

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
Shantih, shantih, shantih.

SCIENCE AND MODERN POETRY

By C. H. Waddington

I want in this talk to consider the influence of science on English poetry since the last war. Of course there won't be time to go into it in complete detail. Science is a very large and complex part of modern intellectual life, and there are innumerable ways in which it influences all the arts. For instance, the development of science is continually adding new words to the language. Now poets usually employ a richer vocabulary than ordinary speech. In some periods, for instance, in the eighteenth century, the poets used so many peculiar words that they practically amounted to a special language, the so-called poetic diction. There was, of course, a reaction against that; and just before the last war, the Georgian poets were using a language which was as close to ordinary speech as they could make it. After that war, a new reaction the other way set in—not so much in the words poets used, but in the way they used them. Poetry became, in fact, extremely difficult for the ordinary man to understand. Although this difficulty was mainly in what one might call grammar, and not so much in words, one does find that some poets did begin using a number of rather technical scientific terms. For instance, you get Empson using words like "irrotational," "potential function," "asynchronous," "agglutinate." And one finds poets using as images the phenomena which can usually only be seen inside the laboratory. Thus Empson again, in a poem called "Camping Out," describes a girl cleaning her teeth into a lake, and writes, "Soap tension the star pattern magnifies"; referring to the formation of a monomolecular layer on the surface of the water and its effect on the surface tension. That, I should guess, is going a bit too far for most educated people to follow.

But there were a lot of scientific images which were much more easily grasped, and therefore more successful. For instance, Eliot's famous simile :

> When the evening is spread out against the sky
> Like a patient etherised upon the table,

or Day Lewis addressing death :

> If I seem to treat
> Your titles, stamina, skill with levity,
> Call it the rat's bad-loser snarl, the madman
> Humouring the two doctors, the point declaring
> War on the calm circumference. . . .

But these influences of science are very trivial. It is not important whether the language or imagery of poetry are scientific or not. It is much more important to enquire what the poets think and feel about science. But there one has to be cautious. We can see what they think about various things which are going on in the world to-day, and before we can decide what their attitude to science is, we have to decide what we really consider science at the present day to be.

The question is important, because actually the concept of science has been changing rather rapidly. It used to be thought of as not merely a causal and analytical study of the world, but as something which tried not only to explain things but to explain them away. The early triumphs of analytical science were greeted with enthusiasm by poets. Witness Pope's famous couplet :

> Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night :
> God said, " Let Newton be," and all was light.

But by the time of the last war the enthusiasm had definitely worn off. Yeats explicitly describes the scientific attitude of mind as

> A levelling, rancorous, rational sort of mind,
> That never looked out of the eye of a saint
> Or out of drunkard's eye.

Day Lewis numbered among the enemies any point of view which expressed itself thus :

God is a proposition,
And we that prove him are his priests, his chosen.
From bare hypothesis
Of strata and wind, of stars and tides, watch me
Construct his universe.
A working model of my majestic notions,
A sum done in the head.
Last week I measured the light, his little finger ;
The rest is a matter of time.

And this protest against arrogance of the intellect, against the attempt to substitute hypotheses and abstract concepts for the full rich texture of life, is one of the most important, and most general, of the poetic statements of the present time. Nearly all the poets agree in holding this attitude of cocksure mechanical materialism responsible for the devastating breakdown of our civilisation, which they see all too clearly. Thus Yeats, in one poem, both protests that he does not wish to be a mere intellectual, and that he does not want to earn the empty respect of a world he despises :

God guard me from the thoughts men think
In the mind alone ;
He that sings a lasting song
Thinks in a marrow-bone ;

From all that makes a wise old man
That can be praised of all ;
O what am I that I should seem
For the song's sake a fool ?

I pray—for fashion's word is out
And prayer comes round again—
That I may seem, though I die old,
A foolish passionate man.

And Auden, when he began a poem with the line

Fleeing the short-haired mad executives

obviously meant that he preferred the long-haired poets to the respectable and neatly-dressed efficiency experts. As one would expect, the protest has been very powerfully expressed in some of the poems written after this war had brought all

the horror of the present world to the surface. Here is Day Lewis's " Assertion " :

> Now in the face of destruction,
> In the face of the woman knifed out of all recognition
> By flying glass, the fighter spinning like vertigo
> On the axis of the trapped pilot and crowds applauding,
> Famine that bores like a death-watch deep below,
> Notice of agony splashed on headline and hoarding,
> In the face of the infant burned
> To death, and the shattered ship's boat low in the trough,
> Oaks weakly waving like a beetle overturned—
> Now, as never before, when man seems born to hurt
> And a whole wincing world not wide enough
> For his ill will, now is the time we assert
> To their face that men are love.

Now it can hardly be denied that this monstrous thing against which the poets are protesting has got something to do with science. But it certainly is not what the word science really means. It is a sort of pseudo-science. It is an attitude of mind which has taken a few of the earliest scientific hypotheses and accepted them as though they were dogmas from which the whole universe can be deduced ; and it has therefore been ready to reject anything which did not seem to fit into its ready-made scheme. But that is a most unscientific thing to do. Science is not a set of dogmas. At any given time, it has a certain number of hypotheses by which it can explain some of the things which go on in the world. But if a scientist started to think that his hypotheses would explain everything, he would have to go out of business ; there would be nothing more left for him to do. He must, in order to be able to continue working, be ready to recognise that there are phenomena which he has not yet investigated, and problems which he cannot yet solve. It was not the scientist, it was Auden's " short-haired mad executive " who read a little elementary science and then thought he had got all the answers to all the questions. He read of Darwin's discovery that animals evolve through a process of natural selection and struggle for existence ;

and he took that as an excuse to justify the fiercest competition in human society; though why man should try to live like an animal he did not stop to enquire. The "leaders to no sure land," as Day Lewis called them, read up in their encyclopædias how to make a few machines, and wrote glowing advertisements that they could produce a new heaven on earth; and the American poet Keneth Fearing mockingly sums up the best that their promises amount to:

> To-morrow, yes, to-morrow
> there will suddenly be new success, like Easter clothes, and a strange and different fate
> and bona fide life will arrive at last, stepping from a non-stop monoplane with chromium doors and a silver wing and straight white staring lights.
>
> To-morrow, yes, to-morrow, surely we begin at last to live with lots and lots of laughter,
> solid silver laughter,
> laughter, with a few simple instructions, and a bona fide guarantee.

That was not science, that was the industrial revolution, picking up science, debasing it, and using it for its own ends.

True science is fundamentally more humble and more receptive than that, though ultimately, I think, more powerful. The scientific attitude of mind must be ready to acknowledge the existence of anything that may turn up; it cannot reject things merely because they do not fit into its neat theories. But of course it is not a merely passive attitude. It does not only attempt to perceive everything which there is in the world to be perceived, but its essential endeavour is to gain control of things by understanding how they work. That is the meaning of its insistence on experiment. One can attain to something which seems to be understanding by pure contemplation; but that is not a scientific type of understanding because it does not lead to control of the things contemplated. Some modern poets express the need for a more receptive attitude which will quietly investigate what it does not know.

For instance, Eliot writes :

In order to arrive there,
To arrive where you are, to get from where you are not,
You must go by a way wherein there is no ecstasy.
In order to arrive at what you do not know
You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance.

But Eliot is not in sympathy with the scientific methods of investigation. In the poem I am just going to read he classes chemical or psychological investigations as mere pastimes, like palmistry or astrology, and he puts his reliance in moments of mystical revelation :

To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits,
To report the behaviour of the sea-monster,
Describe the horoscope, haruspicate or scry,
Observe disease in signatures, evoke
biography from the wrinkles of the palm
And tragedy from fingers ; release omens
By sortilege, or tea leaves, riddle the inevitable
With playing cards, fiddle with pentagrams
Or barbituric acids, or dissect
The recurrent image into preconscious terrors—
To explore the womb, or tomb, or dreams ; all these are usual
Pastimes or drugs, and features of the press :
And always will be, some of them especially
When there is distress of nations and perplexity
Whether on the shores of Asia, or in the Edgware Road.
Men's curiosity searches past and future
And clings to that dimension. But to apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint—
No occupation either, but something given
And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender,
For most of us there is only the unattended
Moment, the moment in and out of time,
The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,
The wild thyme unseen, or winter lightning
Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
While the music lasts. These are only hints and guesses,
Hints followed by guesses ; and the rest
Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.

Now the scientific method is not merely receptive. It not only tries not to overlook anything, but it equally insists on not reading more into a thing than is really there. It doesn't mind receiving things, but it likes to get them clean; as themselves and not as symbols carrying with them a whole lot of associations with other things which are only vaguely connected. Eliot's mystical contemplation of things may be very valuable —it is not my business to discuss that—but it certainly is not the kind of activity called for in science. But in many poets of the present day, it is very easy to see an influence of the scientific endeavour to strip things of their symbolism, of all the secondary associations men have come to attach to them, and to regard them simply, with fresh eyes. The point has been very clearly put by Auden, who is much the most consciously scientific of modern poets:

> The hour-glass whispers to the lion's paw,
> The clock-towers tell the gardens day and night,
> How many errors Time has patience for,
> How wrong they are in being always right.
>
> Yet Time, however loud its chimes or deep,
> However fast its falling torrent flows,
> Has never put the lion off his leap
> Nor shaken the assurance of the rose.
>
> For they, it seems, care only for success:
> While we choose words according to their sound
> And judge a problem by its awkwardness:
>
> And Time with us was always popular.
> When have we not preferred some going round
> To going straight to where we are?

And the same endeavour to deal with things as they are, not omitting any nor seeing things which aren't there, can be found to be at work in most recent poets. Perhaps one of the most striking examples of it is in the writings of Yeats. As a young man in about 1900 he wrote very elaborate verse about a world

which was full of all kinds of conventional symbolism, fairies, magic, and so on. One typical poem begins :

> He stood among a crowd at Drumahair ;
> His heart hung all upon a silken dress,
> And he had known at last some tenderness,
> Before earth made him of her sleepy care ;
> But when a man poured fish into a pile,
> It seemed they raised there little silver heads,
> And sang how day a Druid twilight sheds
> Upon a dim green, well-beloved isle,
> Where people love beside star-laden seas ;
> How Time may never mar their faery vows
> Under the woven roofs of quicken boughs :
> The singing shook him out of his new ease.

Thirty years later Yeats had not, of course, become a scientist ; but; as Louis MacNeice has said, " the brute objective quality of his people and events refuses to be mainly submerged in myth." The beauty with which these later poems is concerned grows out of a simple and straightforward acceptance of things as they are :

> I have met them at close of day
> Coming with vivid faces
> From counter or desk among grey
> Eighteenth-century houses.
> I have passed with a nod of the head
> Or polite meaningless words,
> Or have lingered awhile and said
> Polite meaningless words,
> And thought before I had done
> Of a mocking tale or a gibe
> To please a companion
> Around the fire at the club,
> Being certain that they and I
> But lived where motley is worn :
> All is changed, changed utterly :
> A terrible beauty is born.

And again, in one of his last poems, states that his fundamental faith is, not in a mystic super-reality such as he had written about earlier, but in the actual existence of things :

Whatever stands in field or flood
Bird, beast, fish or man,
Mare or stallion, cock or hen,
Stands in God's unchanging eye
In all the vigour of its blood ;
In that faith I live or die.

This movement, which we have just seen in Yeats, towards a more realistic or objective way of looking at the world, is certainly a step, though not a very long one, towards a scientific attitude. It is a step which has been taken, to some extent, by nearly all the poets who have written since the last war. Some of the newest writers, who have become of importance in the last few years, have gone a good deal further towards science. For instance, Day Lewis has usually written as a violent critic of the present chaos, and a prophet of a new world. He has rarely given very definite hints of what he imagines will be the basis of the new world. But when he does so, he suggests that it will be the very same thing that we have allowed to become the origin of our present disorder :

It would be strange
If from the consternation of the ant-hill
Arose some order angelic, ranked for loving,
Equal to good or ill.

It would be more than strange
If the devil we raised to avenge our envy, grief,
Weakness, should take our hand like a prince and raise us
And say, " I forgive."

Is not this an admission that the science, which Day Lewis has so often described as the root of our ills, has within it the germ of our salvation ?

A much more definite statement to that effect is made by Auden, who is probably in every way the most important poet of the last decade. He states perfectly clearly that the world will only be saved when the irresponsible Will becomes controlled by Knowledge ; and when that happens, he believes

that all the different aspects of man's nature will be drawn together into harmony :

Every eye must weep alone
Till I Will be overthrown.

But I Will can be removed,
Not having sense enough
To guard against I Know ;
But I Will can be removed.

Then all I's can meet and grow,
I Am become I Love,
I Have Not I Am Loved,
Then all I's can meet and grow.

Till I Will be overthrown
Every eye must weep alone.

But he is even more specifically scientific than that. He is one of the few poets who knows what modern science is like ; who knows that it is not confined to following the atoms as they blindly run, but is deeply concerned with the psychological and social nature of human beings. Auden realises that the fundamental problems of to-day are problems of the relation between human nature and the material world. They are problems on the one hand of psychology and sociology, and on the other of physics, chemistry and technology. In his latest book, *New Year Letter*, he discusses these problems in a poem which is provided with numerous notes referring to the writings of many scientists of different kinds. His final analysis of the situation is couched in terms which derive directly from modern psychology. He states that the basis of our troubles is that the uppermost, intellectualised levels of our personality (the part psychologists call the Ego) has become conscious of its isolation and has forgotten its social connections with the rest of mankind :

Up in the Ego's atmosphere
And higher altitudes of fear
The particles of error form
The shepherd-killing thunderstorm

And our political distress
Descends from her self-consciousness
. . . . . .
All happens as she wishes till
She asks herself why she should will
This more than that, or who would care
If she were dead or gone elsewhere,
And on her own hypothesis
Is powerless to answer this.
Then panic seizes her ;

He goes on to argue that this consciousness of aloneness is inescapable at present ; the technical revolution has broken down the traditional forms of society which used to make people feel that they had a place in, and were a part of, a collective whole :

However we decide to act
Decision must accept the fact
That the machine has now destroyed
The local customs we enjoyed,
Replaced the bonds of blood and nation
By personal confederation ;
. . . . . .
Compelling all to the admission
Aloneness is man's real condition.

But he goes on to claim that this does not make it impossible to form a new social system. In fact he writes :

All real unity commences
In consciousness of differences
That all have wants to satisfy
And each a power to supply.

He is putting forward the paradox that it is only when man realises that he himself is alone that he is in a position to comprehend the true bond linking him to other men—the bond of sharing the experience of isolation. And the method Auden recommends for coming to this comprehension—for taking the step from a consciousness of isolation to a knowledge of unity —is "free confession of our sins"—and it is clear that he is thinking, when he says this, of the technique used by

psychoanalysts when they attempt to bring the Ego into closer harmony with the other parts of personality. In the last section of the poem he invokes the spirit to which he looks for man's salvation, and he addresses it

> O Unicorn among the cedars
> To whom no magic harm can lead us,
> White childhood moving like a sigh
> Through the green woods unharmed in thy
> Sophisticated innocence
> To call thy true love to the dance ;
> O Dove of science and of light
> . . . . . .

TOLSTOY'S BIRTHDAY

By E. M. Forster

The birthday of the Russian novelist Tolstoy occurred this month. He was born on September 9th, 1828, in the home of his fathers—in that same home which the Germans damaged lately in their unsuccessful attempt on Moscow. Let us celebrate his birthday.

Let's celebrate him as a writer of short stories. That will limit the field a little. Let's miss out the great novels by which he is best known—*War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*—also his treatises, social, philosophic and religious, and his autobiography and confessions. Let's concentrate on his shorter fiction. There is still a wide choice, but I want to talk about only three of his stories: namely *The Cossacks*, *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch*, and *The Three Hermits*.

They are very different, these stories. *The Cossacks* is an early work, it's full of adventure, it swings ahead, it's about war and love and mountains and ambushes, and it takes place at the foot of the Caucasus where there is war to-day. *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch* was written later: it's a story of illness and suffering, and it takes place indoors: we never breathe the fresh air here. *The Three Hermits* (also a late work) is a little folk-tale. It is about some Holy Men who were so stupid that they could not even learn the Lord's Prayer.

So they are very different, these three stories, yet they have one thing in common. They all teach that simple people are the best. That was Tolstoy's faith. It took various forms at various times of his life and led him into all sorts of contradictions—sometimes he believed in fighting, sometimes in non-violence and passive resistance, sometimes he was a Christian, sometimes he wasn't, was sometimes an ascetic, sometimes a voluptuary, but this idea—simple people are the best—underlies

all his opinions from start to finish. If you remember it, you have the hang of him, and incidentally of these short stories. He was himself far from simple—one of the most complex and difficult characters with whom the historian of literature has to deal, he was an aristocrat, an intellectual, a landowner who thought property wrong, he was ravaged with introspection and remorse. But that's his faith, simplicity.

In one of his earlier revolts against society he had retired to the Caucasus and joined the Russian Army there. At that time—about 100 years ago you must remember—conditions were primitive, and savage tribes would descend from the mountains to raid the lowlands to the north. To check them the Russian Government subsidised the Cossacks, who were almost equally wild. The Cossacks lived in their own villages, but were a military organisation who manned outposts and co-operated with the regular army. They were independent and charming, they loved violence and pleasure, and the women as well as the men went free. The life warmed Tolstoy's imagination, and is responsible for his first masterpiece. *The Cossacks* is loosely written and the plot is simple. A young Russian officer is stationed in a village and falls in love with a Cossack girl, Marianka. She is betrothed to a wild local youngster, who has made good by killing a tribesman. There are complications, and just as the Russian thinks he has won the girl over, the young Cossack is desperately wounded by the Circassian's brother; Marianka turns away from the officer in fury and returns to her own people, whom she had been tempted to desert. Told as I tell it, the plot sounds thin and stagey, but it is alive by the character-drawing, by the wealth of incident, and by the splendid descriptions of scenery. It's a story of youth, written by a young man. Listen! One of the Cossacks is speaking:

> Yes, this is the kind of man I am. I am a hunter and there isn't another hunter in the regiment like me. I can find and show you every kind of animal and bird—what they are and where they are, I know all about them. And I have got dogs and two guns

and nets and a mare and a falcon ; got everything I want, thank God ! You perhaps may become a real hunter but don't boast of it. I will show you everything. That's the kind of man I am ! I will find the scent for you. I know the beast. I know where his lair is and where he goes to drink or lie down. I will make a shooting hut and I will sit there all night and keep watch for you. What is the use of sitting at home ? One only gets warm and gets drunk. And then the women come and make a row, and one's angry. Whereas there—you go out and you smooth down the reeds and you sit and watch as a brave young fellow should. You look up at the sky and see the stars : you look at them and guess the time. The wood stirs and you hear a little noise, and a boar comes out to roll in the mud. You hear how the young eagles cry and how the cocks or the geese in the village answer them—geese only till midnight of course. All this I know.

The Cossacks was published in 1863. It made a great sensation in Russia and laid the foundations of Tolstoy's fame. He followed it with *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*—with which we aren't here concerned. I'll go on to *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch.*

Ivan Ilyitch is a successful public servant who rises to become a judge. He is a decent fellow—he has had to pull strings to get on, of course, but everyone has to do that—if you're in the public service yourself you realise that, don't you. He married, and for love. Romance doesn't last, of course, and by the time he and his wife are middle-aged they quarrel a good deal. That's not unusual—if you yourself are middle-aged you've experienced it perhaps. When he becomes a judge he takes a charming house at St. Petersburg. He is interested in the house, and supervises its decorating, climbs on a ladder to show a workman how to hang a curtain ; he slipped and in saving himself knocked his side against the corner of a picture frame. The bruised place ached a little, but the discomfort soon passed off, and that's nothing, is it ? He went on with his worldly and respectable life, attended the courts, got in with the best people, gave parties. He had a terrible row with his wife over some cakes and sweetmeats.

She called him a fool because he had ordered too many and he threatened her with divorce. You know the sort of thing. Still it passed. The only trouble was—he didn't feel quite well. There was a nasty taste in his mouth at times, his temper got worse, and there was an uncomfortable feeling—not exactly a pain—in his side, where he had banged it against the picture frame. He is persuaded to consult the doctor who diagnoses—either a loose kidney or appendix trouble. He resumes his daily life—but the pain gets worse.

I won't inflict on you further details of this gruesome story—the most powerful Tolstoy ever wrote. The end is—agonising death, death embittered by Ivan Ilyitch's knowledge that he is in everyone's way, and that they will be thankful when he is gone, and by the polite pretence around him that he is going to recover. In this bitterness there is one compensation. Among his servants is a young peasant called Gerasim, whose job it is to do the rough work in the house. Gerasim is strong, good-tempered and unsophisticated, and spends his time in doing things for other people without making any fuss. "Death will come to all of us, so what's a little trouble, your honour?" says Gerasim. And Ivan Ilyitch discovers before the end that something is wrong with his life; unlike Gerasim he has lived only for himself—even when he was in love with his wife it was for the sake of his own pleasure, and that's what has been wrong. The illumination comes, and at the supreme moment he understands. "In the place of death there was light."

In *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch* Tolstoy criticises modern civilisation. In *The Three Hermits* he shows what civilisation needs. This story is very short—one of the folk-tales which he remodelled for modern use. A bishop, an excellent man, is on a voyage, and hears of an island where three hermits live, saving their souls. He determines to visit them, and finds them indeed holy and sincere, but so ignorant that they do not even know the Lord's Prayer. He teaches them, but they are so stupid that they have the greatest difficulty in learning it, they try

again and again, one gets it right, another gets it wrong, however the Bishop is patient, and does not re-embark until the lesson is learnt. He has the satisfaction of leaving the hermits in a row on the shore, saying the Lord's Prayer fairly accurately. By now it is night and the full moon has risen. The ship continues her course, and in the middle of the night something is seen following her rapidly over the sea. It is the Three Hermits. They have forgotten the Lord's Prayer, and they are running over the surface of the waves to ask the Bishop to teach them again. The Bishop replies, " It is not for me to teach you." The Three Hermits then turn and walk back to their island over the sea.

You will see now what I mean by saying Tolstoy believes in simple people. And you'll note that he believed in a different sort of simplicity at various times in his life. When he was young, and himself a bit of a rip, he believed in the Cossacks, because they were spontaneous and loved animal violence and pleasure. In *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch* he has shifted his affection to the Russian peasant, Gerasim, who is placid and imperturbable and unselfish. And in *The Three Hermits* he recommends a third type—the saint who is an imbecile in the world's judgment, but walks on the water through the powers of the spirit. Tolstoy was inconsistent. Here are some of his inconsistencies, and they laid him open to attack. But he never wavered in his central faith : simplicity.

I haven't the time, or indeed the ability, to criticise it, but I'd like to put this question to you before I shut up. Do *you* believe in simplicity as a cure for our present troubles ? And if so, how do you think simplicity can be worked in a world that has become industrialised ? Tolstoy's outlook was mainly agricultural : he never realised the implications of the machine. We have to live under machinery, and it's here I think that our scale of values and his are bound to differ.

THE CHILDREN'S EXHIBITION

By Venu Chitale

Yesterday I spent my whole afternoon in a suburb of London. When I stepped out of the station I was greeted by a row of bombed houses on the left, and some deserted ones on the right. But I saw some milk bottles on the steps of one or two others, and was relieved to find that the place was pretty well inhabited after all.

I wended my way along the streets to the address on the pamphlet that had been sent to me. Soon I arrived at the modest little house, which welcomed me with that *pluck* and *warmth* which is to be found in this London—*bombed*, but defiant. I paid my entrance fee to the charming Czech girl at the door. She spoke very wobbly English, but knew enough to direct me to the various rooms occupied by the exhibitions to which the children of fifteen nationalities had contributed their works of art. It was remarkable to me to see how children the world over are the same—impressionable, spontaneous, sincere, susceptible to their surroundings. This particular exhibition represents chiefly children from devastated Europe, and the unhappy but courageously struggling China; but there are also pictures by children of other nationalities.

The works of the European and Chinese children show, inescapably, a preoccupation with war—bombardment, destruction, devastation. But, let us leave aside for a bit those pictures which show preoccupation with war, and what do we find then? The child engrossed in the familiar things of life. Landscapes seem to be a favourite subject, and it seems as if Nature makes a great appeal to the child artist. Animals run landscapes a close second. I saw funny-looking bears, fat cows and ridiculously amusing monkeys. The brightness of the sun and the

dreariness of winter get their just due in the hands of these little artists.

A most delightful picture, entitled "Lorry in the Sun," was by a child of six. It made me chuckle with delight. Now how can I describe it properly? Anyway it was on such an enormous piece of paper that I visualised the child sprawling right over it to reach all the corners. It was a picture of bright colours, of course, blue, red and yellow predominating. Two large brown lumps, looking like mountain rocks, were the wheels—and on them was balanced, very precariously, the red and blue lorry. Immediately above it hung a red and yellow sun, like a fantastic sunflower. Curiously enough, the child artist did seem to have infused motion into the vehicle, and the sun did actually seem to shine. I stood watching this picture for a long time. To me it symbolised glorious childhood. The generous splash of colour, the unhampered style of the work, the sincerity of the touch, revealed the most carefree yet conscientious artist.

Another quite remarkable picture which had life and motion in it was that of a clown. Quite three or four children of different nationalities had done this particular subject, which through the ages has delighted all. The best part of the clown in each picture was, of course, his fascinatingly long cap—again the same thing making an impression on different children.

The little artists in this exhibition seemed particularly good at drawing trees. They looked so neat, so cool, so dignified—the colouring was so extraordinarily good. Does a little child perhaps also think as the poet does:

> I think that I shall never see
> A poem lovely as a tree . . .

or why, otherwise, should a child portray a tree so gracefully?

A picture which made me really laugh was one entitled "Oranges." The "oranges" were scattered all over the canvas, and—believe it or not—they were in the most violent colours you can imagine, except the colour of oranges. That may sound "Epstein-ish" to say the least of it, but perhaps

the child artist sees deeper than we do! But let me confess that these amusing lumps and balls called "Oranges" did look rather luscious!

Most children love flowers, so I need hardly emphasise that the pictures of flowers, flower pots and flower shops were most pleasing. But the children had chosen a variety of subjects. One little boy had drawn his mother pushing a pram in which lay his baby sister. Baby sister consisted of a little yellow bonnet; mother was a red dress with a blue hat, and of course great care was taken to match the hat with the blue pram.

The pictures of ghosts and apparitions were most cute. I certainly would not mind meeting any *one* of them on a dark night—they looked so harmless and delightful . . . queer little shapes suspended in the air. I spent a long time in this section of the exhibition. The exhibitors here were between the ages of four and six . . . and they were mostly English.

Doubtless, the child is the same all the world over. Yet this also is true, that children under different circumstances and in different environment will reflect what they experience and see. War, suffering, horrors, must inevitably leave their traces on the child. Who can gauge the extent of the child's inner tumult?

The works of some of the refugee children from Europe, and the Chinese children, were outstanding examples, showing how intensely a child *can* feel and think. The Chinese children's work showed a strong will to *fight* and *win*; the European refugees showed in their works despair, disaster, horror. I was puzzled by the contrast. Why should there be such energy and drive in the Chinese pictures, and such despair in the European ones? I decided that it was because China is still fighting and Europe is in bondage. China still has her armies, Europe is in a concentration camp. The refugee children from Europe showed pessimism. . . . "Dark is Life and Dark is Death" was the title of a pair by a Polish boy; the picture of a city under fire showed women

and children running frantically; devastation and panic around.

The symbol of the Chinese exhibits was " Forward March ! " or " Aggressive Dreams of Enemy Destroyed."

There was one room which had, pinned to the window, a map of the Isle of Man. Pencilled right round it was a design of barbed wire. This obviously was to show that the Isle of Man had become an internment camp for the enemy aliens in this country. I was quite surprised to find a whole room devoted specially to the works of the children from this camp. I went round the room, and to my greatest surprise what I observed was the feeling of serenity and calm in almost every picture. Perhaps the surroundings in which the children are living explain the atmosphere of these pictures. There were pictures of flowers, of trees, of boats, and blue and cool-looking waters; of houses, of peaceful fat cows. It was also quite obvious that teaching lessons were going on as peacefully as if there were no war on. Many of the pictures were illustrations of stories about deserts and camels and the Red Sea, and Turkish Turbans.

I loved the Isle of Man pictures.

There was another room hung with pictures by children of the " Children's Republic." In a castle somewhere in England, forty children, whose parents have perished in the struggle in Europe, are living in a " Children's Republic " governed and ruled by themselves. Their speciality is their Wall Newspaper, for which they themselves write and draw.

I could never have thought that an exhibition of children's pictures could be so fascinating. The little ones showed themselves as moving in a world of their own. But the pictures of the children from ten upwards were serious pieces of work. I saw a picture with a large sky and fantastic clouds; another of a forest in a storm; I saw one of a modernistic family of a father, mother and child; another of a wonderful head of a girl, and I thought, who knows how many a future van Gogh, Degas or Cézanne may lie dormant here.

I came away with two thoughts dominant in my mind. One was that children from poor, devastated, oppressed Europe could find refuge here—more than refuge, that they are given a chance to develop their talents. The second was, that whatever we want to say, the fact remains that this country breeds people of endless resource. In the midst of a major war, there is time and interest for an International Children's Art Exhibition.

NATIONALISM AND BEYOND

By Cedric Dover

Nationalism means a great deal to me. I have found it, as you have found it, in the sights and sounds and smells of our native land. Speaking to you now, across eight years and eight thousand miles, my mind is full of the contrasting majesty and simplicity of India. I treasure a thousand memories of tranquillity shared with good friends in happier days. They would remind me, if nothing else did, that the future of India is very intimately my concern.

But I have also had the good fortune to turn the pages of a larger atlas. As a boy I used to steal away to the Outram Ghat in Calcutta to set out on dream voyages of discovery in the ships that went inching out to sea. Eventually the dreams became realities. And I found that the strange lands of school geography were not so strange after all, that above the diversity and differences of nations there was a binding unity. This knowledge came as a shock when I first arrived in Marseilles on a wet evening twenty years ago. "Even the mud is the same," I said disappointedly. It was a naïve comment, often used against me by my family, but it marked my progression towards internationalism. Since then I have never lost the belief that the brotherhood of man must be put above the unity of a nation, just as national unity must always come before communal pride.

There are many who will say that this is a foolish philosophy. They will agree with Rousseau that internationalists are "pretended cosmopolitans who, in justifying their love for their country by their love for the human race, make a boast of loving all the world in order to enjoy the privilege of loving no one." Yet the fact remains that mankind must claim a man's first loyalty. And for a coloured man like myself the

coloured peoples must come before his country and his community.

These are my emotional responses to my country and to the world of which it is an indivisible part. They cannot be critically analysed within the limits of a talk. For nationalism is a nebulous, changing concept, with its roots in the first groupings of mankind and its nourishment in religion, monarchy, social law and economic expansion. Machiavelli and the political students of the Renaissance gave it a secular shape, based on the theory that the right to rule belonged to the strongest. Hobbes elaborated this idea, in the seventeenth century, into national unity through national sovereignty. He believed that a dominant state apparatus, combining political, economic and religious power in one sovereign authority, was essential to the growth of nationhood.

Rousseau went much further. He visualised the state as a free association of individuals, bound by common interests and working together for the common good. Unfortunately a ringside seat in heaven was the only common objective in Rousseau's time. He therefore sought a common secular purpose, a "civil religion," which would take the place of Christianity. And he found it in patriotism. It had, he said, worked "the greatest miracles of virtue." It would, he was sure, work greater miracles still.

He was not wrong. His philosophy of secular democracy, reacting on the force of circumstances during the French Revolution, underlaid the frenzied making and breaking of nations in the nineteenth century. Robespierre applied it, Napoleon expanded it, the League of Nations held it as a trust, and Pétain helped to bury it at Compiègne with the honour of France.

Marx and Lenin saw the defects in Rousseau's idealism. Benefiting from Hegel, Marx took the dialectical view of history. He studied the constant interplay of opposites, the destruction and creation through which one thing gave rise to another. He realised that states could never be permanent. Consequently

the Marxian state was definitely presented as a means to an end, a step towards a stateless world in which political nationalism would give way to cultural nationalism, and all men would enjoy the fruits of their labour. The dictatorship of the proletariat provides the central authority of the Marxian state, the class conscious emancipatory struggle of the workers its common purpose. And both the dictatorship and the class consciousness are expected eventually to destroy themselves and leave a classless communist society, from which force, the chief weapon of the state, would have disappeared. In this way a rational nationalism would gradually produce a stateless internationalism.

But the idea of the state is not easily eliminated from the minds of men. And others naturally approached internationalism from different angles. They appealed for expanding alliances, based on community of interests, language, culture or so-called "race." Innumerable pan-movements grew up which were enlarged by the last war, while this war will certainly increase the millions who support Federal Union, the English-speaking World, Asia for the Asiatics, and so on.

Indeed, in one way or the other, the tendency towards internationalism is inescapable. Supra-nationalism is already dominating political thought and effort to-day. Powerful nations are swallowing up lesser nations so rapidly that the age of little nationalisms is evidently over. The lights are certainly going out, but new lamps will be lit. The stations are closing down, but new ones will be built. The new world is growing before our eyes, though the old is still ablaze. That is the way of history.

The lesson for India is obvious. The war makes it clear even if I have not. The stream of events has moved so fast that we seem to have missed the boat. We did not try hard enough to catch it. We failed to resolve the problems that obstructed the way to national independence. We failed sufficiently to develop our potential unity, to create a radical foundation for social reform, to extend Hindustani as a lingua

franca, to build out of our many cultures the vital indigenous structure that is the foundation of national development. We failed to learn from other nations that had achieved independence. We wasted energy on frivolous abuse and internal squabbles which we should have spent on serious creativeness.

But, personally, I am not ashamed of our failure. Perhaps we have even gained by it, perhaps our weakness has been our strength. For the full price of a narrow national independence is an uncompromising temper of exclusiveness, which the great leaders of India, I think fortunately, lacked. We have luckily escaped with an instalment; we have missed the boat of a self-sufficient autarchy.

And we still have a boat, a larger and better boat, to catch. With men like Jawaharlal Nehru thinking in terms of Eastern Federation on progressive principles, I am sure we shall catch it. We shall still be Indians, but Indians with a wider perspective and a larger concern for freedom, when we do.

LITERATURE IN THE NINETEEN-THIRTIES

By Cyril Connolly

Nothing is so dead as the day before yesterday. To go back to the 'thirties now involves an effort of will and imagination; it is like going back to the dentist's waiting-room. Anything I can say about them has to be dragged out under protest. Why? Let us examine this distaste, which is, I am certain, widely shared.

To begin with, the 'thirties were a failure. The literature most typical of those ten years was political, and it failed both ways, for it accomplished none of its political objects, nor did it create any literary work of lasting merit. When a future generation comes to study the names of those ten years they will be baffled to account for the esteem in which most of them were held. It is only when we come to look at the 'thirties as a completely unsuccessful movement which was politically abortive and æsthetically null, and which did not even accomplish the elementary feat of discrediting the generation before, as it set out to do, that we can perceive what was really important and valuable about it.

The 'twenties saw the end of one of the greatest individualist periods of literature. The Modern Movement, that splendid surge of the human spirit based on the stability of bourgeois society, on the desire to know reality or the truth about life, on the cult of æsthetic integrity, of patience, sensibility and craftsmanship, which we owe to Stendhal, Baudelaire, Balzac, Flaubert, Turgeniev, Tolstoy, James and Proust, had thrown up many interesting experiments and had survived the war, but was doomed not because it was exhausted, but because of the doom of the bourgeois society on which it depended, and which it had done so much incidentally to destroy. The 'twenties carried on the period of wild experiment which had

begun about 1910, but in England the 'twenties, which had begun as an expanding experimental decade, had contracted to a smug superficiality as the fundamentally reactionary nature of Post-Versailles Europe became more apparent. What was original in the 'twenties easily degenerated into frivolity, dandyism, cynical cleverness, worship of the fashion. The best writers, extreme examples of individualism, led lives of increasing privacy and isolation and, considering their relative youth, were quite extraordinarily cut off from the collective movements which followed. They were some of the last rich variations of the still vigorous nineteenth-century bourgeois-liberal-capitalist system, with its huge rentier class, generous patrons and world-wide literary market. These were some of the kings of the literary castles when the 'thirties started, the "low dishonest decade," as Auden called it, which was to begin with the slump and end with the war.

The Movement of the 'thirties was differentiated from everything that had gone before by its social conscience, its leaders being both morally aware of the unjust system on which the individualism of their predecessors rested, and economically aware of the harder times ahead. They differed further in that, once admitting their social conscience, they tried to act on it. They wrote to serve the cause of Socialism at home and anti-Fascism abroad. They not only wrote, but worked and fought and died for this, and this makes them a different animal from the writers of the 'twenties who had come through the last war and left all their illusions of violence behind with it.

One may analyse the 'thirties a little further, and find two European movements running through them—one is Surrealism, which began in the 'twenties but gained impetus in the 'thirties, when it cropped up in England and America, revolutionary, Freudian and unpopular with the orthodox movements of both Left and Right; the other the militant Left-wing literary and political movement based on Marxism and the International *Front Populaire*, with its doctrine of social realism. Much of

the confusion of the 'thirties lies in the fact that this movement attracted, besides many genuine militant Socialists, some extremely gifted young writers from the universities whose work, though at times part of this movement, became gradually disentangled from it. This Socialist Movement, with its party lines, its slogans, its own brand of realism, its proletarian writing, is not peculiar to the 'thirties. It has existed before, and will continue, for it is part of the Socialist Movement. But in the 'thirties the issues of anti-Fascism and the class struggle became so prominent—far more prominent than, obscured by nationalism, they are now—that no serious young writer could be unmoved by them. It so happened that two school friends, Auden and Isherwood, one at Oxford, the other at Cambridge, were to form a group with Day Lewis, MacNeice, Spender (Oxford), Upward, Rex Warner, John Lehmann (Cambridge), who were to combine great talent with a common political outlook, and that great defence against enemies and impetus for advancement which a clique provides. When you add to this nucleus one or two more names, such as George Orwell, who through having been in the Burmese police was cut off from English literary movements, Graham Greene, who is a Catholic, Henry Green, who is a business man, Arthur Calder-Marshall, and the shadows thrown by the great international anti-Fascist writers like Malraux, Hemingway, Silone, Koestler, Toller, you have a fairly complete picture of the group.

And what a group they were! Seldom have any literary figures received the attentions meted out to Auden, Spender, Isherwood, Day Lewis, and MacNeice—partly because of their youth and promise, partly because of their genius for publicity, partly because of the deep public need for just such a movement as they provided, and partly because of the extraordinary cohesion of the group itself. Thus Auden and Isherwood collaborated in many books, and dedicated all their other books to each other; Auden and MacNeice also collaborated; Day Lewis defended the movement in *A Hope for Poetry*; Spender himself printed the first poems of Auden (dedicated to

Isherwood) and Isherwood wrote at length of the trio in his autobiography, *Lions and Shadows*. *New Country*, *New Signatures*, *New Writing*, *New Verse* published anything they wrote, and they had their own publisher in John Lehmann, their painter in William Coldstream, their composer in Benjamin Britten, producer in Rupert Doone, and singer in Hedli Anderson. They monopolised the Hogarth Press and the Group Theatre, as subsidiary companies are monopolised by a steel cartel. Auden, Spender and Isherwood all lived in Berlin, which was for the writers of the 'thirties what Paris was to the artists of the 'twenties.

When we come to examine their writing we are faced with difficulties. Certain common factors appear in all their work. Yet the quality is very uneven. Thus we find in all of them these tendencies:

1. A profound dissatisfaction with the political and social system of England and the types it is producing, complicated by a love-hate reaction to the English countryside.

2. A corresponding desire to change this by appealing to the young, to the international brotherhood of writers and technicians all over the world who think like them, and believe in a world revolution.

3. An acute political awareness of Fascism and war which amounts to an obsession with the coming fact of European war.

4. A positive belief in general and sexual love, sometimes revealed by private Freudian imagery, sometimes by appeals to the love force throughout human history which makes their love poems their best.

5. A literary style based on Freudian and Marxist theories, a diction making use of scientific, political and travel vocabularies (passports, *visas*, frontiers, customs, watersheds, trains, boats, air-ports, waiting-rooms play a rôle in all their works, so do school and prefect formulæ).

6. A general belief in a fairly austere and metallic poetical diction, with a bias, in prose, to what may be termed "utility writing."

This mixture is common to all five. Each have certain ingredients of their own—Spender is obsessed with death, Isherwood with wicked mothers, Auden with diseases and their psychological causes, Day Lewis with flying, MacNeice with the classics (one might add Orwell with poverty, were he to be included), but in many cases it is quite impossible to say who is writing, so similar are the points of view, diction and imagery.

When we come to assess their individual merit we meet with more difficulties, and any opinion can at this stage only be personal. I would myself say that Auden is a genius. He has the most irritating faults, such as his over-simplification, as of a schoolmaster cramming little boys, and his slick pseudo-scientific epithets. But he is a genius all the same, as well as a deep thinker and most prolific writer. Isherwood is a novelist of very great talent, whose greatest defect is ingratiation—he charms the reader because he doesn't really trust him. The Spender of the 'thirties is, however, only an indifferent poet with an outstanding clumsiness of mind and a very bad ear, in spite of one or two fine poems when he was just beginning. One feels his future lies in prose. The MacNeice of the 'thirties is a lyrical journalist with a feeling for verse, and Day Lewis another clotted imitative poet who only achieves poetry in his metaphysical love-lyrics. Of these, Auden alone has the gift of writing memorable lines.

It may be wondered how such a movement, more ambitious, more organised, more popular than any since the Lake Poets, could possibly have failed. Towards the end of the 'thirties the Auden - Isherwood - Spender - Day Lewis - MacNeice combination was sweeping everything. Not only had they the ear of a huge gullible, discontented public which was ready more than at any other time to look to literature for salvation, they had also the support of the workers' movements, and they had, in the Group Theatre, a medium for experimenting in the Theatre, which was introducing them to an even wider audience. *The Dog Beneath the Skin* is a brilliant charade,

The Ascent of F6, however, is a very ingenious Freudian play. *On the Frontier*, although a failure, is the best constructed of them all. Spender's *Trial of a Judge* is unactable, but his best work in the 'thirties is to be found in it. MacNeice's play was the most disappointing, though he has revealed a theatrical gift since.

The output of these five people was, in fact, not a literary movement, but a heavy industry. What put an end to it? The answer is in one word, Hitler.

The two outstanding political events of the 'thirties were the rise of Hitler to power and the Spanish War. Both of these affected the Group, the first because they were so closely connected with Germany, the second because the Spanish War stirred the literary imagination in a way that nothing else has done. The beauty of the country, the bravery and generous idealism of its inhabitants, their pathetic faith in the importance of their English visitors, the simple ideological nature of the struggle and its tragic hopelessness affected the writers of the Left to their roots. It was an experience that was unforgettably moving. The defeat of the Spanish Government was a terrible blow from which some writers never recovered. It was followed by two more blows—Munich and the Hitler-Soviet pact. Thus those who believed in Spain were disappointed by defeat, in England disillusioned by appeasement, in Russia bewildered by compromise. No literary movement based on the hope and enthusiasm of a brave new Socialist world could hold together after such shocks. By 1939 these poets, like Cassandra, had croaked themselves hoarse prophesying war and doom, and seen the *Front Populaire* they believed in everywhere betrayed. It is no fault of the writers of the 'thirties that they have failed politically, yet their failure destroyed them; the events with which they grappled were such as no group of writers could influence, and in criticism of them it must always be borne in mind that they saw the dangers of Hitlerism and the coming war; there were no ostriches, no appeasers, no wishful-thinkers among them. It was the

nations who refused to listen, it was the statesmen who refused to act.

Here is the last paragraph of Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, which illustrates the atmosphere of the period when the sense of war, injustice and oppression hung over all thinking people : Orwell has just landed, after being wounded in Spain :

> And then England—southern England, probably the sleekest landscape in the world. It is difficult when you pass that way, especially when you are peacefully recovering from sea-sickness with the plush cushions of a boat-train carriage underneath you, to believe that anything is really happening anywhere. Earthquakes in Japan, famines in China, revolutions in Mexico ? Don't worry, the milk will be on the doorstep to-morrow morning, the *New Statesman* will come out on Friday. The industrial towns were far away, a smudge of smoke and misery hidden by the curve of the earth's surface. Down here it was still the England I had known in my childhood : the railway-cuttings smothered in wild flowers, the deep meadows where the great shining horses browse and meditate, the slow-moving streams bordered by willows, the green bosoms of the elms, the larkspurs in the cottage gardens ; and then the huge peaceful wilderness of outer London, the barges on the miry river, the familiar streets, the posters telling of cricket matches and Royal weddings, the men in bowler hats, the pigeons in Trafalgar Square, the red buses, the blue policemen—all sleeping the deep, deep sleep of England, from which I sometimes fear that we shall never wake till we are jerked out of it by the roar of bombs.

When the war did break out the members of this Group, the sacred geese who had warned for so long the Capitol, were emotionally exhausted. Auden and Isherwood had emigrated to America after Munich. MacNeice followed as a university lecturer. Day Lewis in Somerset made a fine translation of Virgil's *Georgics*. Only Spender and Orwell took the war seriously and flung themselves into it as into something for which they had been in a sense responsible. They realised that though it was not quite the war they wished, it was the duty of all writers who believed in freedom to support it, and now only Auden and Isherwood, with one or two of their circle—Benjamin Britten, James Stern, George Barker—

remain in America, where so many figures of the 'twenties, like Huxley, Heard, Aldington, Wyndham Lewis, had gone.

So much has been said about Auden and Isherwood that I would only remark that as artists they were perfectly free to go and live where they liked when they emigrated, though as leaders of a literary political movement they have done untold harm to their cause by remaining there. I think also that they are missing a great deal, and will miss more if we who stay can make the new Europe we hope for. "You're traitors to Pressan," calls the General, to those who leave their village in *The Dog Beneath the Skin*. "Traitors to your Pressan, not to ours," is the answer. But now Pressan belongs to all of us and needs them.

I have left till last the most serious failure of the 'thirties Movement in England, the failure to produce a single work of art. Something on a level with other achievements of the 'thirties, like Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Malraux's *La Condition Humaine*, or Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*. These books show that there is nothing in the movement itself which prevents a work of art being written, and since there is no justification for any literary output, unless a masterpiece is achieved or aimed at, the blame must lie with the authors themselves. Looked at from this angle, the work of the writers of the 'thirties is hasty, scrappy, unformed and unpolished, without either the grandeur of conception, the rigour of construction, or the beauty of diction which is essential to art that is to survive. We may blame for this the too easy applause which the writers received, their love of publicity and weakness for collaboration, their political affiliations which deprived them of impartial criticism, and their youth. I think only Isherwood's *Memorial* and *Goodbye to Berlin*, Orwell's *Burmese Days*, and Auden's poems in *Look Stranger* and *Another Time* will really stand up. *The Orators* will always remain an interesting first book, and *The Ascent of F6* survived the other plays. *The Burning Cactus* is the best Spender of the Period, and "Lions and Shadows," by Isherwood, the best introduction

to it. Lehmann's *Penguin New Writing in Europe* is a work of adulation rather than of criticism. *Poems for Spain* and Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* are good about the Spanish War, especially Cornford's pathetic lyric in the former. MacNeice's September Journal rounds the whole period off, not with a bang, but a whimper.

So much for the 'thirties. There is one consolation—all these writers are still under forty. They were very young, almost adolescent, in the 'thirties, which accounts for the unreality of much of their seriousness. But they are considerable writers, and great things are to be expected from them. Isherwood, who is now a Quaker Pacifist, is in some danger of never writing again, MacNeice may be claimed by the Theatre, and Orwell by the Political Pamphlet, Day Lewis has not yet found his position, but their real creative period is only beginning. In the world after the war they may come into their own. This is even more true of Spender, who has written better than ever since the war, and of Auden, who is pursuing his search for wisdom in the U.S.A. The Socialist Auden, in those 'thirties which are, after all, only a brief, arbitrary measure of the course of things, wrote in one of his vulgarest poems an attack on the Mystic:

> Dare-devil mystic who bears the scars
> Of many spiritual wars
> And smoothly tell
> The starving that their one salvation
> Is personal regeneration
> By fasting, prayer and contemplation;
> Is it? Well,
> Others have tried it, all delight
> Sustained in that ecstatic flight
> Could not console
> When through exhausting hours they'd flown
> From the alone to the Alone,
> Nothing remained but the dry-as-bone
> Night of the soul.
> Coward; for all your goodness game
> Your dream of Heaven is the same
> As any bounder's;

You hope to corner as reward
All that the rich can here afford,
Love and music and bed and board
While the world flounders.

Compare that with his proclaiming in September 1939 a new belief in poetic isolation of which " New Year Letter " is the first fruit, and we see that though the 'thirties are dead, the writers of the 'thirties are only now finding their vocation :

All I have is a voice
To undo the folded lie,
The romantic lie in the brain
Of the sensual man-in-the-street
And the lie of Authority
Whose buildings grope the sky :
There is no such thing as the State
And no one exists alone ;
Hunger allows no choice
To the citizen or the police ;
We must love one another or die.
Defenceless under the night
Our world in stupor lies ;
Yet, dotted everywhere,
Ironic points of light
Flash out wherever the Just
Exchange their messages :
May I, composed like them
Of Eros and of dust,
Beleaguered by the same
Negation and despair,
Show an affirming flame.

OPEN LETTER TO A CHINESE GUERRILLA

By Mulk Raj Anand

Dear Madam Shelley Wang,

I don't know where you are. Someone, I think it was our common friend Liem, told me that after your husband was killed while he was leading an anti-Japanese squad of writers in occupied territory you settled down as a guerrilla fighter near Shanghai.

It is some years since we were together at the writers' congress in Paris, and at the Brussels Peace Conference, and I lost touch with you in London on my return from Spain, as I hurried off to India. You will wonder, therefore, why I suddenly write to you now. But ever since I heard of Shelley Wang's death I have been meaning to send you my condolences.

As I come to write this letter, however, I am not so sure that you would want my sympathy. For both you and your husband deliberately went out to Japanese occupied territory to do propaganda work against Japan and to write a collective novel of life in that war-swept country. And when Shelley Wang died in occupied territory he died a hero's death, thus earning the only immortality which it is worth winning in this world, a place in the memory of all those he left behind. Therefore, I am not so sure that you wouldn't want me to offer you my condolences. When I think of you, a seemingly frail, doll-like woman, who yet suffered poverty and exile with your husband with unselfish devotion, translating Dickens and Balzac into Chinese, at a pay lower than that even of a coolie, in order to make both ends meet, and when I think of your pride, I am convinced that though it would make you weep

involuntarily to think of him who was your husband and my friend, you would avert your head, shed your tears and return to smile your ever surprised smile.

Nor would that proud Shelley want me to be sad at his death, who when he hadn't a penny in the world could make poetry out of his penury. Do you remember the poem he wrote in 1937, called " Advising Mice," which ran :

In these thin days I am living in a room,
Bedroom, study and kitchen in one.
My books rise in walls around me, but my
furniture is not lavish.
Let me sleep well, dear mice, in the long night.
Can you too not be satisfied with books.
Fragrant with labour and sleep and delight in food ?

No, I shall keep awake through the long night
to hear your pattering company ;
Although I salute your hunger, do not, I beg you,
eat my books, they are not palatable ;
Were they so, I myself would have devoured them long ago.
How can I satisfy my life with writing, and selling
according to the number of words ?

No, I can't imagine the author of that extraordinary comment upon our civilisation wishing us to mourn his death. I can only hear him wishing everyone well, as in the " Night at the Village Inn " :

On the cracked wall hangs a ghastly light :
I lie in the mellow hay on planks beside a cowpond :
The long night through I hear wind screaming amid the forest ;
I wish sweet rain to the parching field
And as dry and soft a bed to all travellers.

Shelley Wang was one of the bravest men I have met, he was a hero, a new man.

Some people, particularly in Europe, may not like my use of the word hero to describe a poet and a writer so sensitive and detached as Shelley Wang. You see, cynicism and a kind of polite scepticism have been so characteristic a feature of the European climate since the betrayals of the last war, that any

kind of heroism is rightly suspect. But Shelley was no ordinary kind of hero : he won no medals, he was not even accepted by any Rice or Salt Generals in China. He was a writer and, since writers are not particularly heroic people, he remains one of the many unhonoured, unsung heroes of the world. His triumphs consisted in his understanding of the inner significance of the multifarious struggles of our time, which are part of the main struggle in which the world is involved, with a deeper awareness than those of most people ; his heroism was akin to the heroism of the people of China who *believe* in building a new life in their country, and who have been fighting to preserve decency and human values ; his heroism lay in blazing a trail with you and the other intellectuals of China, where others may follow. He was one of the heroes who lived in enemy occupied country, organising thousands of students and men as partisans and guerrillas, who harassed the Japanese sentries, put on the uniforms of Japanese gendarmes, stormed prisons and released political prisoners, and even collected taxes in Japanese occupied ports.

I can understand the heroism of Shelley Wang and his contemporaries because I, too, come from a country which, like China, has been living in a kind of heroic age. For we, too, have *believed* in creating a new India ; we, too, have been part of a vast cultural awakening which witnessed not only the blinding spectacle of a great renaissance of the spirit, but the education of the people through mass literary campaigns, the training of men in the art of physical defence against oppression and aggression. When, for instance, the Indian writers recently resolved to form themselves into anti-Japanese propaganda squads to tell the peoples by word of mouth or through the newspaper, of Japan's intentions with regard to India, they were evidencing to the same heroic spirit as possessed you and our brother writers in China.

Shelley Wang said once, "We Chinese have learnt from our history how our ancestors shed blood for the country, when it was conquered by the Mongols and by Manchus, and how they

shed blood to overthrow the Yuan Dynasty in the fourteenth century and the Chin Dynasty in 1911. . . . We, the Chinese people, know resisting is the only way out. 'Rather be broken jade than be a finished tile.'" And I understand why he wanted to fight against Japan.

He knew how and why the Japanese Samurai had refurbished the old feudal clan loyalty, the knightly code of Bushido, into loyalty to the new state of which the Emperor was the head. How fantastic is the use made of Shinto by the Japanese, when this primitive cult, with a mythology in which gods and super-men and heroes are hardly distinguishable, and in which Japan is the whole universe, is declared to be the official cult of the country, with priest officers, graded as civil servants, with its principles of patriotism and reverence for the spirits, the rule of Heaven and the worship of the Emperor, heaven-descended, divine and pre-eminent! How openly the Barons of Japan have thrown dust into the eyes of the world and their own people with their Shinto religion! Can such a monstrous fabrication offer any solace to the human soul, even if it bludgeon men into becoming good patriots and faithful subjects? Is there anyone who does not know that this Bushido, this love of country cum loyalty to the Ruling House is deliberately cultivated to hold in check the poor peasants shorn of land and the factory workers, whole families of whom are kept as slaves from generation to generation? Or else what is the meaning of the Peace Preservation Law, which came into effect in 1925 and of which the first article says: "That those who have organised an association or fraternity with the object of altering the national constitution, or of repudiating the private property system, or those who have joined such an organisation with full knowledge of its objects are to be punished with penalty, ranging from death to servitude of over five years." Does not this Draconian severity betray the fear of a cleavage in Japan?

You and Shelley had no illusions about the defects of the old Confucian morality either. Neither you nor I had much

patience with those in our respective countries in whose arteries the blood-stream seemed to be congealed or seemed to be running slow, whose pulse was faint, and who yet kept a hungry grip on our young lives. We were on the side of history. This was not because, as some Europeans said, we were half-baked modernists going through the chaos of adolescence and crying for the moon, but because we had seen in the darkened classroom of the life about us the clear lessons of history and the lessons of time.

We knew the philosophy of those who have been saying to us :

Whatever happens
We have got
The Maxim gun
And " you " have not !

We wanted more than anything else unity in our respective countries ; and we well understood the reasons of our moral and material frustration ; we were anxious to abolish foot-binding in your country and early marriage in mine ; we wanted a reformed education, and we were essaying cultural and literary revaluations ; we believed in the sovereignty of our respective peoples ; and above all, we knew those who regarded our modern impulses as " dangerous thoughts." Do you remember that cutting you gave me of a Press interview by the head of the Student Bureau of the Department of Education in Tokyo, which ran : " So called ' dangerous thoughts ' admit of various definitions. A general definition would be the present unrest exhibited by the student mind of the nation, etc. . . ." I remember how we laughed over this, and the various articles of the Nazi creed which we used to discuss together : the State is absolute, man is " a part of zoology," the ultimate ideal being race and blood and Fichte's Herrenvolk. . . .

Now, it is no laughing matter. Your chief enemy, Japan, has also become our enemy too. And the Nazis, the Fascist and militarist hordes are sweeping across country after country,

while the defences of those who stand for human values are as yet inadequate.

Only I am certain that these destroyers cannot build merely on destruction, for nothing can be built on murder, and more murder, and yet more murder. I know that as certainly as you do, because we know that once the mind of the oppressed is free it can never be conquered. And if anyone ever needed confirmation of how unconquerable the human mind is, the corner of Japanese-occupied China where you are now will supply it—as also every patch of the vast territories of Soviet Russia overrun by the Wehrmacht where guerrillas carry on their unspectacular and silent but heroic struggle against the aggressor.

I am not unmindful of the fact that guerrillas alone, whether in China, or Russia, or in India, cannot carry out a giant offensive against the enemy, or completely destroy his military power. But apart from the practical work of cutting communications and harassing the enemy, they supply inspiration and faith which the complacent need, that there can be new men in the world, free and disinterested and strong and with deep understanding of the causes of great disasters and therefore with the ability to overcome them and take the corners of history.

Such a man was Shelley Wang, who sang defiance to the Fascist eagles :

> After the autumn showers have washed the far hills,
> Wisps of thin mist float low like scarves of lawn,
> Where the tall trees rise up to the clean washed sky.
> As though to pierce it, a fluttering eagle is borne
> High in the dump air ; he spreads wide his wings ;
> Wind whistles through his angry claws and sings ;
> " Lank firs are high too, and the world is wide :
> You little thing, you will fall in your pride."

Let me congratulate you on the passing of a man who has left us such gifts of faith and courage.

WHAT TO DO IN AN AIR RAID

By I. B. Sarin

I am speaking to you as an Indian who was in London all through the great German air raids between September 1940 and May 1941, during the period when there was hardly such a thing as a night without a raid, and when people hurrying home from their work at night did not say—as we should say normally—" I must get home before dark," but " I must get home before the Blitz." I do not lay claim to any special knowledge of air warfare or Air Raid Protection work. I am simply speaking to you as a private individual whose experience may be useful to other private individuals in India and the Far East.

The first thing that is necessary, I think, is to know just what to expect when an air raid happens. Probably the first thing you will hear are the sirens, which are not necessarily telling you that the raiders are overhead, only that they are somewhere in the neighbourhood. Then after a few minutes you may actually hear the aeroplanes. They make a deep droning noise, just like a mosquito, only much louder. But remember that the loudness of that noise does not necessarily mean that the aeroplane is at all close to you. Even if it is twenty thousand feet up, and a mile or more to one side of you, you will probably hear it. And then after another minute or two you will hear the anti-aircraft guns firing. But here I want to stop and emphasise something that is the outstanding fact about air raids—something that you ought to keep steadily in mind all the time that an air raid is happening.

This is, that the chief feature of an air raid is Noise. There is far more noise than real destruction. At some moments the noise is terrific, enough to be actually frightening to inexperienced people; but remember always that noise hurts

nobody. More than this, by far the greater amount of the noise you hear in an air raid is made by your own side. Probably nine out of ten of the bangs you hear are made by the anti-aircraft guns firing in your protection. The reason for this is very simple. The number of aeroplanes taking part in a raid is never very great, and one aeroplane cannot carry many bombs. Even if there were three hundred aeroplanes taking part, and each of them carried three bombs, that would only make nine hundred explosions in all, whereas the anti-aircraft guns will probably fire thousands of times during the night. When you hear a loud bang, therefore, it is usually a gun. But before long you will find that it is possible to distinguish between the sound of guns and bombs.

A bomb makes a loud whistling sound as it comes down. Often you can hear this whistle when the bomb is going to drop as much as a mile away from you. But if it sounds very loud, almost like a blast blown on a police whistle, this means that the bomb is somewhere near, and it is wise to take cover before it lands. In this way the whistle of the bomb acts as a valuable warning. It must be remembered that no matter what height a bomb is dropping from, it never travels faster than sound. You can always hear it coming, and you are likely to have at least five seconds in which to take cover. At the end of the whistle comes the crash of the explosion, and once you have heard that, you know that there is no more danger from that particular bomb.

But you may ask, how can it help me to get a few seconds' notice before the bomb drops? What can I do to protect myself in such a short time? Well, let me just tell you one or two facts about bombs which may act as a general guide.

First of all, no bomb which drops more than two hundred yards away from you is likely to do you any harm at all, unless you happen to be standing near a window, in which case the glass may shatter and you may be cut by splinters.

Secondly, bombs make very little impression on large concrete buildings, or large brick buildings which have a steel

framework. Even when such a building gets a direct hit most of the people in it are unaffected.

Thirdly, a bomb can hurt you in two ways, by the direct blast of the explosion, and by splinters. Almost any kind of wall, such as the wall of an ordinary house, is enough to stop the splinters.

Fourthly, the blast of a bomb tends to travel upwards. If you happen to be in the open when a bomb is dropping, LIE DOWN. In that case you will almost certainly be safe unless something falls on top of you. In London plenty of people have been within fifty yards of a bursting bomb and have saved themselves by lying down.

Fifthly, I should add that there is another danger which does not come directly from the bombs, and that is the shrapnel falling from the anti-aircraft guns. It is not a very great danger, but you might be hit by a fragment if you are out of doors while the guns are firing. But even a thin roof will stop shrapnel, so you can avoid this danger by staying indoors during raids.

To sum up, therefore—stay indoors unless you have some duty that takes you outside: keep away from the windows, especially from glass windows: and if you are in the open *lie down* when you hear the whistle of a bomb. If you do that much you will at any rate be safe from any bomb that does not drop within a stone's throw of you.

Sometimes you will hear the whistle of a bomb with no crash at the end. That may be a dud, or it may be a delayed-action bomb, which is fused so as to go off some hours after it falls. Dealing with these is a matter for the police and the military. They have caused very few deaths in Britain, and they are not very dangerous so long as you take care to keep out of the neighbourhood until the bomb has been removed.

Sometimes you may hear a series of six or a dozen whistles with no explosion at the end. These are usually incendiary bombs. We are going to have another talk on how to deal with incendiary bombs, because they are a subject to themselves,

and I will only say here that fire bombs are more dangerous to property than to human life, and that the principal thing is to mark the spot where they drop as quickly as possible.

The Germans have made thousands of raids upon Britain, and thousands more upon every corner of Europe, and as far into Russia as their bombers could reach. The Japanese also have made thousands of raids on the defenceless cities of China. In every case the fundamental object of these raids has been the same, whether they have been directed against London, Warsaw, Madrid, Canton, Manila or Rangoon. The idea is always to terrorise the civilian population, to create panic which will disorganise industry and transport, and thus make national defence more difficult. They always strike first at the poorest quarters of any city they are attacking, first, because Fascism is the enemy of the working class, secondly, because they calculate that those who have profited least from the society they live in will have the poorest morale when it comes to being bombed. In Madrid in 1936, just as in London in 1940, they bombed the working class districts first. And in both cases they failed, because the common people refused to panic, and their anger turned against the Fascist attackers, and not against their own government. If we panic we are doing what the enemy wants us to do; if we keep calm we are defeating him. And the best way to keep calm is to remember the few simple hints I have given above, which show that an air raid is a terrible experience enough, but not nearly so dangerous as our enemies want us to believe.

OPEN LETTER TO A NAZI

By R. R. Desai

Dear Kurt,

I have often turned my thoughts towards you since we met last, though, I must say, I have no idea whether you are alive, or went to the other world by a Russian bomb or an Indian bayonet. But it has long been my intention to address a few candid words to you, and I do hope they reach you.

For quite some time you have found yourself in the headlines of our papers. You and your compatriots have been the focus of all attention. Numerous books have been written about you. Some have attempted to find out how the German mind works; some have sought to prove, from history, that the only good German is a dead one. You will violently disagree with these psychoanalytical and historical views. You might say you have been misunderstood, you might protest against the flood of indignation let loose against your country by the progressive world. You might complain of interested argumentation and of hypocritical rhetoric. Now I will not venture into waters that are too deep. I will mention not theories but facts, all of them known or obvious, most of them self-advertised. And I will try to use a direct language.

But let me begin at the beginning. We met in a lecture-room in London some time before the war, and you were attending a vacation course at my college. I was, in a way, interested in you. I helped to enlarge your knowledge of English and of English ways. I did not know much about Europe, and I asked you many questions about your country. I was interested, all Indians were interested, in the New Germany. There was a dramatic quality about its rise. To us, and to all the world, it seemed to collect its strength like

a giant refreshed with new wine. Your new discipline, your efficiency, your feats of organisation, your self-confidence, appeared highly impressive. And we were dazzled by your Hitler's hypnotic oratory. India and the world looked on Nazi Germany then with admiration and awe.

That was in the placid days before appeasement. But soon there was a change. Nazi Germany seemed to have become drunk with power, and began to throw its weight about. She started on a conquest of Europe by seizing Austria, the sweetest land in all Europe, and followed it up by a series of aggressions, all of which were unprovoked. And we began to wonder. Then news began to arrive in India about the internal conditions of Germany, about the life of the citizens, the peculiar processes of law, the propagandist education, the abhorrence of all principles of morality and religion. We didn't quite know what to make of it. We also heard about the systematic brutality with which the Jews were treated, for the Jews were an inferior race. We were hurt. Do not some of the greatest brains belong to that race? And was not Christ himself a Jew? There have been racial and religious differences in India too, we said, but atrocious practices like Jew-baiting have never been known. But there was little time to arrange our ideas. Europe was in flames: World War II had begun. Hitler, with great cunning, eliminated his enemies one by one. He was soon sprawling all over Europe. We admired his efficiency, his military prowess, but we were very suspicious of his intentions. We did not know whether he would stretch out his hand beyond Europe. His propaganda specialists have been, and still are, very sympathetic towards us, and declared their great horror of Imperialism. We have our grievances against Britain, and a few Indians even made up their minds to take the side of Nazi Germany. For did not Kautilya say, long before Machiavelli, that our enemy's enemy is our friend? But the vast masses of India, don't forget, were not sure. For though Germany's promises were tempting, were not her actions in blatant contradiction to them? No, we desired to

be left out of all the mess ; we wanted to be neutral ; we were confused, bewildered and perplexed.

That, Kurt, is a rough sketch of the general situation. I am only giving a *personal* view—are you surprised ?—which is not dictated by the authorities. But I must add that India soon modified her opinion about the German war-machine. Right up to the Battle of France Hitler seemed to rush like an avalanche, sweeping everything before him. Indeed, he indulged in predictions about the exact time at which he would be in the capital city of each enemy country. There was something uncanny about it all. But then came the Battle of Britain. The cold and dogged fury with which the British defended their homes and fields was inspiring. Soon it was evident that the flood was stemmed : Hitler was frustrated : his plans and predictions went wrong. And no honest man can deny that the Battle of Britain was a turning-point in human history. Then Hitler turned his forces towards the east, towards Russia, with whom he had signed a pact of non-aggression. He openly boasted that Russia would be crushed that very Spring. Judging from the confident statements of his ministers, his military experts and his Press, it was clear that plans for the defeat of Russia had been made with the usual Nazi thoroughness. But he failed. Though he made a considerable advance, he could not achieve that triumph of which he had loudly boasted. His plans went wrong again. We were inspired by the supreme courage of Russia, and noted that she had a devastating answer in the newly developed technique of defence in depth. Germany's armies were not only not invincible, but, in time, could easily be encircled and annihilated. We realised, and you ought to realise, that after the first spring in Russia the prestige of the German war-machine suffered all over the world. Hitler didn't deliver the goods.

This recapitulation is helpful as it gives some material for thought and discussion to both of us. You might want to say a lot to support and justify Hitler. You may argue : " Oh,

well, Germany is playing the usual European game of Power Politics. She is powerful, and she must get all that she can. Why shouldn't she?" Or, "Well, other Powers have their Empires, and Germany wants one for herself. Quite right." In saying so you little realise that you are asking us, in effect, to accept the old and outworn framework of Power Politics and Empires, which all sane people are trying to smash out of existence. For it inevitably leads to exploitation, jealousy, agitation, strife, and ultimately war between nations, while the soldiers on our side of this war are fighting with the hope of removing these very attributes.

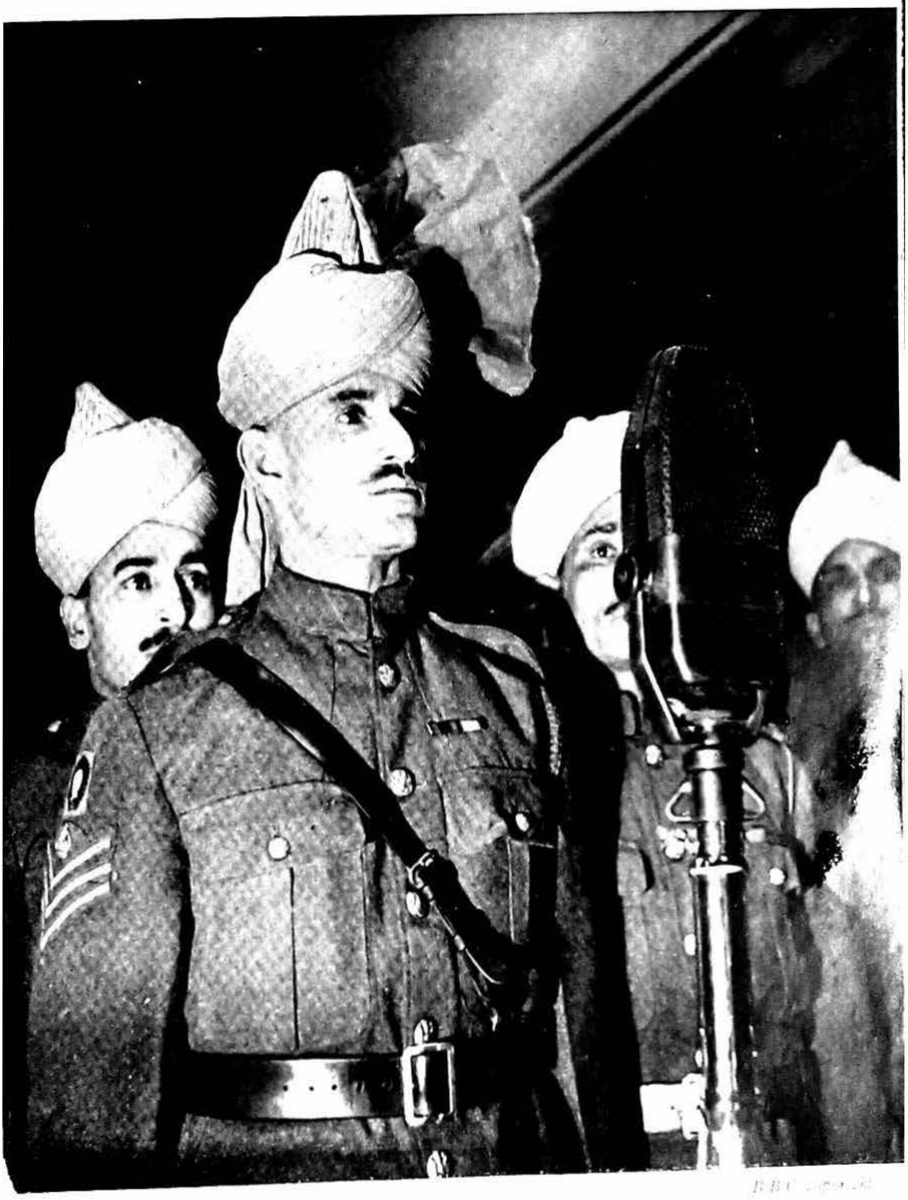
You had questioned me about the reactions in India. If it makes you happy, I will tell you the secret that some Indians cannot easily accept reports of Nazi brutality. Perhaps they believe that no human being can fall so low as to perpetrate such beastly crimes; perhaps they think it's all propaganda by the British. For instance, when it was reported that the Nazis had levelled to the ground a whole village in Czechoslovakia as punishment for aiding the assassins of Heydrich, there were many who said that this report was a fabrication, or that the account was perhaps just partly true. Of course, at a distance of six thousand miles things look different; the reaction would have been different if this massacre of the menfolk and the wholesale deportation of women and children had taken place in the village not of Lidice, but shall we say of "Lalpur." In any case, the fact is that this atrocity was given full advertisement by the Nazis themselves, in the Press, through the Radio, and in public speeches, their intention being to cow down the Czech people in their struggle to rid their homeland of the Nazi thugs. About the imprisonment without trial and beating up of citizens, those who are unconvinced and sceptical can look up the newspapers published in Germany itself. Or talk to the refugees who had to flee from Nazi terror. Then he will learn facts about concentration camps that will make his blood boil, facts about how much devilish ingenuity has been used to break the body and the spirit of

prisoners, how their methods of torture can put those of the Middle Ages to shame. India has had dark periods in her history as well, but never were reached such depths of inhumanity, of calculated and systematic brutality. All these are cold, hard facts which anyone can verify, for instance, by talking to refugees, and has nothing to do with propaganda by the British.

In the course of our conversations you took care not to mention a word about the Nazi theories of race, especially about the Nazi attitude towards the dark peoples of Asia and Africa. This attitude is very simple. The Germans alone are the most cultured "race," and the peoples of the rest of the world are all below it, the dark races, which include Indians, being at the very lowest level. This view the Nazis have tried to drive, by the simple technique of repetition, into the head of every German subject; every means of influencing public opinion has been utilised; the Press, the Radio, the pulpit have echoed it; historians, psychologists, politicians, race theorists have, in all seriousness, discussed it. Nor has this assertion been concealed from the world. On the contrary, it has been flaunted on a million occasions, in all broadcast services to which there was no likelihood of dark peoples listening. They refuse to see the simple fact, known to every child learning history, that European culture is ultimately a product of the peoples who lived in the Mediterranean, peoples who were racially quite distinct from the Germans. But they don't want to face either history, or the sciences of physiology and psychology, or even logic; they would rather cling to their haughty superiority. Yes, even in spite of the lessons from mighty Russia, an Asiatic country.

But that will change. The time is not far off when all these despised dark races will raise themselves and join the armies for the destruction of the Nazis and the mentality they represent, and to protect civilisation at its crises, in its hour of gravest peril. And there will be poetic justice in this. For has not civilisation received many gifts from the people of Africa who

dwelt in the valley of the Nile, and from those of Asia who live on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris? And what can be more fitting than their taking up arms, as saviours, in the desperate battle to protect the fruits which their ancestors cultivated, and bequeathed to mankind? In this struggle against the forces of darkness and evil India will not lag behind. India will take her place beside Russia and China, and throw in, without stint, her immense resources, present and potential, and her vast man-power, in what is, after all, the common fight. India, no doubt, has her differences with Britain, some of which will have to be settled now, some only after the war, but let no one under-estimate her hatred and repugnance of all for which Fascism stands. Given time and opportunity she will rise like a gigantic wave, and wash out and obliterate all traces of Nazis, and their like, from the face of the earth.



"HELLO, PUNJAB"—A soldier of the Indian contingent in Britain broadcasting to his family in India in this weekly programme from a B.B.C. studio.

B.B.C. copyright.

A soldier of the Indian contingent in Britain broadcasting [illegible] to his family in India. With him is Balraj Shani, B.B.C. Indian Programme Assistant.

TALK IN ENGLISH

By Subhas Chandra Bose

(Berlin, May 1942)

Sisters and brothers, on the last occasion when I addressed you a few weeks ago I reminded you again of the deceit and hypocrisy underlying the policy of the British Government which culminated in the journey of Sir Stafford Cripps to India. Sir Stafford, on the one hand, offered independence in the future, and on the other, demanded the immediate co-operation of India in Britain's war effort. Strangely enough, the Indian people were apparently expected to accept the proposition. The contemptible offer was, however, rejected. This was a matter for joy and pride to Indians in all parts of the world.

It was a painful surprise to me to find that after the departure of Sir Stafford Cripps from India, and despite the refusal of the British Government to concede India's demands, some Congressmen have been publicly advocating a policy which amounts to unconditional co-operation with Britain in her war effort. These gentlemen must have forgotten the resolutions of the Indian National Congress from 1927 to 1938. Was it not reaffirmed that when the next war came, India should resist every attempt on the part of the British Government to trap her into fighting? In September 1939, when the present war broke out, did not the Indian National Congress deliberately refuse unconditional co-operation with the Government? And did it not take disciplinary action against prominent leaders for co-operating with the British Government?

I know that the new converts to the creed of co-operation will perhaps aver that they have altered their principles and policy in order to meet a new menace to Britain from without.

But I would like to ask them (? how they think) British aggression, which the Indian people have been fighting so long, can be destroyed. In spite of all that British propaganda has been saying, or may say in future, it should be clear to all right-thinking Indians that in this wide world, India has but one enemy, the enemy who has exploited her for over a hundred years, the enemy who sucks the life-blood of Mother India, British Imperialism. It is a moral tragedy that some of my countrymen have been so doped by propaganda that they forget who is the real enemy and think it is Japan, Germany or Italy, without enquiring what these Powers' policies towards India really are. Friends, I know something about those Powers and their foreign policies. I can tell you with all seriousness that these three Powers want to see India free and independent and mistress of her own destiny. They are determined to defeat and destroy the enemy of India. It is therefore the task of the rising generation of Indians to utilise the present international crisis to bring about the downfall of the British Empire and the rise of a free and united India.

I am not an apologist of the Tripartite Powers; that is not my task. It is a task which falls to the Powers themselves, and they are quite able to deal with it. My concern is with India, and it is my duty, as a patriotic Indian, to inform my countrymen that before we can achieve liberty for India, we (? must trust Powers like those who will not) meddle with the internal affairs of other countries. In the present international crisis we cannot be (? particular). (Unintelligible sentence.) When British Imperialism is defeated, India will get her freedom. If, on the other hand, British Imperialism should somehow win the war—which is quite impossible—then India's slavery would be perpetuated for ever. India is therefore presented with the choice between freedom and slavery. She must make her choice.

Britain's paid propagandists have been calling me an enemy agent. I need no credentials when I speak to my own people. My whole life is one long persistent, uncompromising struggle

against British Imperialism, and is the best guarantee of my *bona fides*. Perhaps better than any other leading Indian of to-day I know foreigners and foreign politics. I have known Britishers from my very childhood. They are past-masters in the art of diplomacy, and if in spite of their best efforts they have been unable to prevent (us striving for our freedom), no other power on earth can do so.

All my life I have been the servant of India. Until the last hour of my life I shall remain one. My allegiance and loyalty have ever been, and will ever be to India alone, no matter in which part of the world I may live. British propagandists have now fallen back on their last idea, and are shouting from the housetops, "See what the Japanese have done in China," instead of, "India for the Indians." When I was President of the Indian National Congress, I was responsible for giving effect to the Congress decision to send a goodwill mission to China. Then Chiang Kai-shek was fighting for international . . . But the Marshal who came to India the other day to ask the Indians to fight for England was quite a different man. The Japan the Democracies are now fighting is quite a different Japan—a Japan determined to annihilate Anglo-American Imperialism, a Japan who has often (? wished to help China) emancipate herself from the grip of Anglo-American mastery.

If you make a dispassionate and objective study of the different theatres of war to-day, you will come to the same conclusion as myself—that nothing on earth can prevent the rapid collapse of the British Empire. It had its days of pomp and glory, and it is high time that it should now disappear from the face of the earth, so that five hundred million human beings may once again enjoy life and freedom. Already . . . of the Indian Ocean have passed out of the hands of British sea-power, and despite the efforts of the Chinese to hold Burma for the British, Mandalay has fallen and Allied troops are practically expelled from Burmese soil. We must, therefore, consider where India stands.

Do you want to dig your political grave by still hanging on to a Power that is suffering defeat? Is it not far better and wiser to accept the hand of friendship offered by the Tripartite Powers and expressed in the Declaration of the Prime Minister of Japan? I have studied very closely foreign history for the last two hundred years—in particular the history of all fights for freedom. I have not yet found one single instance where freedom has been won without foreign aid. And Britain herself has been asking for help, not only from the free nations of the world, but also from enslaved countries like India. If there is nothing wrong in Britain begging for help, there can be nothing wrong in India accepting an offer of assistance which she needs. And . . . we shall welcome any help in India's last struggle against British Imperialism.

Friends, since I spoke to you last, you will have noticed how the British Government, under the plea of fighting Japanese aggression, have opened the door to American aggression. American diplomats, business men, and army units are now in India, and if this process is not stopped, we shall soon have a new Imperialism. The British have been ousted from their position by Wall Street and the White House. The Viceroy in his broadcast of the 3rd May appealed to you to form a national war front. He has given you wholesome advice—to forget your difference and put up a common front against your enemies! For the coming struggle you must also strengthen public morale and eliminate all those who undermine it by thoughts of compromise. The arms will reach your hands. Be wise: get everything ready, for there is not a minute to lose! And here is a word of good cheer to all our comrades in Britain. We are thinking of them day and night. They will be the first to taste the joy of freedom when the hour arrives. Friends and countrymen, when the British Empire is disappearing, and the day of India's deliverance approaches, I want to remind you that in the year 1857 began India's first war of independence. In May 1942 has begun her last war of independence. Gird up your loins! The hour of India's salvation is at hand.

We have been preparing not only for the last struggle, but also for the solving of post-war reconstruction problems in India. Azad Hind ! To fight and win India's liberty, and then build up an India with full freedom to determine her own future with no interference. Free India will have a social order based on the eternal principles of justice, equality and hope. Last but not least, Free India, Azad Hind, will have free, happy and prosperous men and women who will take their proper place in the comity of free Nations.

FIVE SPECIMENS OF PROPAGANDA (EXTRACT)

November 1941

DURING the past week the Nazi Government has made every attempt to focus the attention of the world on the Anti-Comintern Conference which it has been holding in Berlin. This conference and its pronouncements deserve close attention, because their object is to deceive public opinion in outside countries and to foreshadow the peace plan which Hitler will almost certainly put forward this winter.

From the speeches which Ribbentrop, Hitler's Foreign Minister, and others have made, it is beginning to be clear what sort of picture the Germans intend to put forward in hopes of persuading the world that there is no longer any reason for resisting them. First of all, all those speeches began with the assumption that the Russian resistance is at an end. They say that the whole territory west of Moscow and down to the Caspian Sea has been effectively conquered, and that the Ukraine, with its immense wealth of corn and oil, is now ready to be exploited for the benefit of the German people. They say, therefore, that Germany, or as they call it, Europe, does not need any longer to import goods from across the sea, that it can go on fighting if necessary for thirty years, and consequently that the British air attacks are simply a senseless continuation of a war which is already finished. This, of course, is aimed at the peoples of America who hate war, desire friendly relations with the rest of the world, and might possibly be induced to keep out of the war if they were really convinced that Russia and Britain were defeated, and that Germany intended no further harm.

Together with this picture of a self-sufficient Europe organising itself against Bolshevism and against British air attacks, there goes, of course, a huge flood of lies about the

benevolent intentions of Germany towards the conquered peoples. Germany, we are told, does not really wish to rule over subject races, but merely to accept the natural wealth of Europe and Asia for the benefit of everybody. For the time being, the familiar talk about German racial superiority is dropped. Not only are Czechs and other Slavs spoken of as though they were almost the equals of Germans, but the Nazi propagandists even utter high-sounding promises of their intention of liberating the various coloured peoples now under British rule. This comes, it should be noticed, from men who only yesterday were openly describing the coloured races as the natural slaves of the white, and who described negroes, for example, in Hitler's own words as "Semi-apes." And even while the German wireless woos its Indian listeners with promises of independence, it woos the British public by declaring that Germany has no wish to break up the British Empire, and praises the British for the civilising work they have done in India. It thus speaks with many voices at the same moment, caring nothing for inconsistencies, provided that it can sow a little confusion in the ranks of its enemies.

When we turn from the speeches of the Nazi propagandists to the actual facts of the European scene, we see that the whole picture of a rich, happy and united European continent under German rule is built upon lies and delusions. To name first the fact which is most important of all, Russia is not conquered, and the Russian resistance is as strong as ever before. At least twice during the progress of the campaign, the Nazi spokesman—on the second occasion no less a person than Hitler himself—had declared that the Red Army has for all practical purposes ceased to exist. We may wonder then why it is, if no Red Army exists any longer, that the Germans do not simply march into Moscow and down to the oil wells of Baku. The truth is, of course, that the Russian Army is still in being, and that neither Moscow nor Leningrad have yet fallen. Even if they should fall, the Germans are hardly any nearer to victory, for the Russian Army will still be there,

ready to attack them in the spring. When we read these pronouncements which say that Bolshevism has only a few weeks or days of life before it, we should remember the German announcements of a year ago, which stated in just the same way that Great Britain could not possibly continue to resist for more than a few weeks longer. In both cases, the idea was the same, to make the outside world give up all hope of escaping Fascism by spreading the idea that the German Army was invincible.

Hardly less important than the failure to conquer Russia is the failure to win over the peoples of Europe to collaboration in the New Order. The resistance is particularly strong in the Balkan States. All the efforts of the German wireless have failed to conceal the fact that open civil war is now raging in Yugoslavia, where the people have risen against the tyranny of the German and Italian invaders. In France, in Holland and, above all, in Norway, the traitors whom the Germans have set up as puppet rulers have failed to secure the allegiance of their people, and the people themselves are beginning to see more and more clearly that the Germans come not only as conquerors, but as robbers. France, the Low Countries, Eastern Europe and even Italy, are being systematically stripped of grain, potatoes and other foodstuffs which are sent to Germany, little or nothing being sent in return. In Denmark, once one of the most prosperous countries in Europe, the peasants have had to kill most of their cattle because there is no longer fodder for them. In Spain the population is not far from starvation, and even in Italy—the so-called Ally of Germany—the bread ration has been reduced so low that the ordinary citizen now receives only 7 ounces of bread a day. The Germans are well aware that, though Europe when it is at peace is just capable of feeding itself, it cannot do so while most of its population is working to supply goods for the German war-machine. Therefore, while making speeches about the benefits of the New Order and the wealth of European resources, they also warn their people not to expect any increase in rations because of

the conquest of the Ukraine, giving as an excuse the fact that this territory has been too much devastated by the war to produce much food during the next year.

So much for the Anti-Comintern Conference, and the pictures of the New Order which the Germans will try to present when, during the winter months, they begin to talk about peace.

February 1942

At this moment of speaking, the struggle for Singapore is still going on, and the vital reservoirs which hold the island's water are still in the hands of the defenders. But we must face the fact that the situation in Singapore is precarious. This is a very serious piece of news, and even more serious for Asia than for the West. It is worth, therefore, trying to predict as fully as possible the strategic consequences which this loss is likely to entail. If they can get possession of Singapore, the Japanese surface ships as well as submarines can enter the Indian Ocean. If their forthcoming attacks on the Dutch Islands of Sumatra and more particularly Java should also succeed, then they are in entire possession of the main route across the Pacific, leading from America to Africa. If you look at the map, you will see that communications between the United States and India and Africa are not indeed cut off, but that American ships have to travel by a roundabout route southward to Australia, or New Zealand, and then north again over immense distances, which confer a great strategical advantage on the Japanese, who are in a more central position, and will, if they can overrun the Dutch East Indies, possess airfields and naval bases covering the whole of this area.

Supposing that the Japanese can succeed to the extent which we have imagined, what will their next step be? In the first place, they are likely to intensify their attack on Burma, in hopes of capturing Rangoon, the only port through which the Burma Road can be easily supplied. They are also likely to

make air and naval attacks against the islands in the Indian Ocean, probably beginning with the Andaman Islands, and they may attempt an invasion of Ceylon, or of some area in Southern India. Could they get control of Ceylon, they would command the Bay of Bengal sufficiently to prevent any Allied shipping crossing it, and though they would not have complete control of the Western part of the Indian Ocean, they would at least be able to make damaging attacks on British shipping which has passed round the Cape and is on its way to supply the British armies in the Middle East, and our Allies in Russia.

We have deliberately imagined the situation at its worst, in order to get a realistic and unvarnished view of the situation. We may even go a step further and consider what the consequences would be if the grandiose Axis offensive of which the Japanese naval offensive is only a part, were totally successful.

It is becoming clearer and clearer, as we have emphasised in earlier news reviews, that the general plan is for the Germans to break through by land, so as to reach the Persian Gulf, while the Japanese gain mastery of the Indian Ocean. If this were successful, three objects would be achieved at the same time. In the first place, Germany and Japan would be in direct communication with one another, though perhaps only rather precariously so. In the second place, the Burma Road would have ceased to be of much value as a supply route to China, and in the third place, the best supply route to Russia, that is, through the Persian Gulf and Iran, would have been cut. The Germans and Japanese have evidently staked everything on this manœuvre, in the confidence that if they can bring it off, it will have won them the war. Their belief evidently is that if cut off from Western supplies, China will stop fighting, or at least China's armies will be reduced to guerrilla activity, and the Russian Army will have to retreat behind the Ural mountains. Simultaneously, the eastward sea-routes of the British Empire will have been cut, and both Australia and the British dependencies in Africa can be attacked at leisure.

This is the strategic plan of the Axis Powers, and during

the coming months they will make tremendous efforts to bring it about, by renewed offensives in Southern Russia, in North Africa, in Burma, and in the Indian Ocean. But it should be emphasised that even should this grandiose plan succeed in its entirety, it would not give the Axis Powers victory, unless the Allied peoples of America, Soviet Russia, Britain and China lost heart. It still remains true that the balance of power, both in men, materials and industrial plant, is heavily against the Axis Powers, and that the main manufacturing centres of the Allied Powers are in places where neither the Germans nor the Japanese can get at them. These main centres where aeroplanes, tanks, ships and guns are being forged, are in North America, which for practical purposes is outside the sphere of war, in equally inaccessible parts of Central Russia and Siberia, and in Britain, which is much nearer the scene of danger, but which the Germans have failed to invade or even to damage seriously by air bombing. The Allied Powers, therefore, are able immensely to outbuild the Axis Powers, and in a year or two years bring together a force which will be all but irresistible. But they have undoubtedly a difficult time ahead, and they may have a period when they are almost in conditions of siege, and when resolution, calmness and faith in final victory, will be at least as important as physical weapons of war.

Meanwhile the immediate effect of events in the Western Pacific is to make the position of India more dangerous, and also immensely more important. If Singapore is lost, India becomes for the time being the centre of the war, one might say, the centre of the world. With its central position, and its wealth in man-power and raw materials, India will become a more and more important source of supply for China on the one hand and Russia and the Middle East on the other. It should be emphasised that even if Rangoon is lost, with the consequence that the Burma Road ceases to be usable, that does not mean that communications between China and her Allies becomes impossible. There are several other routes into

China, both actual and potential. In the first place, there exists the route through Soviet Russia and Sinkiang in Central Asia; secondly, the route already projected, through Assam; thirdly, there is the possibility of a Northern route through Alaska and Manchuria; and fourthly, it may be possible to establish American naval control of the Pacific at some time within the next year. But at the moment, India's position is of vital importance, and Chinese-Indian solidarity will be one of the foremost factors in the war. It is therefore most encouraging news that General Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of Republican China, has already visited India, and had an interview both with the Viceroy and with Mr. Nehru. We do not yet know the results of these interviews, but we can at least safely prophesy that if the great peoples of China and India stand together, they cannot be overwhelmed even by the most powerful and ruthless aggressor.

Extract

April 1942

Let us imagine that the Japanese can gain undisputed possession of the whole of Burma. Let us also suppose that the conquered Burmese are more or less on their side, having believed in the Japanese promise to make Burma independent after the war, and having also believed that Japan is going to enrich Burma by gifts of manufactured goods and by stimulating Burmese industries. Now, in these circumstances, what will actually happen? The first thing is that the Japanese will take away from the Burmese most of their rice, not only the surplus which they usually export to India, but also a good deal of what they usually eat themselves. The Japanese are bound to do this, because they must have rice for their armies and for their home population. But, it may be said, this does not matter if they pay the Burmese for their rice. The only difficulty is, what are they to pay with? In the first place, they will pay

in money which they will print off in exactly such quantities as they think necessary. The Burmese peasant whose rice has been taken from him will get paper notes in return, and it will be two or three months before he will fully grasp that these notes are worthless, because they cannot buy anything. Necessarily they cannot buy anything because, with a great war on their hands, the Japanese cannot manufacture goods for export, even if they had any wish to do so, for the benefit of the people they have conquered. The money which they print will therefore be a painless way of plundering the peoples of Burma, Siam, Malaya and the other territories they have overrun. The Germans have done exactly the same in Europe, using what are called "Occupation Marks," that is to say, money specially printed for the use of the army of occupation. This money has to be accepted by the conquered peoples in return for goods, but in practice it will not buy anything. We may assume, therefore, that should the Japanese get possession of the whole of Burma, it will be only a few months before the Burmese discover that, so far from being liberated and enriched by their Japanese friends, they are being systematically robbed. Probably even the most ignorant Burmese will have grasped this fact by the middle of this winter, when the 1942 rice crop is cut.

If the swindle of the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere is so simple as this, why is it that Japanese propaganda should have any success? To answer this question, one should look at Europe, where the same story has been enacted a year or two earlier. There you had the same essential situation. The Germans made promises very similar to the Japanese, they divided and weakened their victims with very similar propaganda, then they invaded and conquered them, and then they proceeded systematically to plunder them by means of worthless money, holding them down with a military occupation and a ruthless police force. When it was too late, the conquered peoples learned the truth about Hitler's New Order. Something very similar has happened in Siam, and is happening, or

may be happening, in Burma. We see, therefore, the immense importance of political consciousness and of a sceptical attitude towards tempting propaganda. Just as in Europe, so in Asia, certain peoples have fallen into the clutch of the Fascists because they listened to what the Fascists said, instead of observing what they had actually done. The words which the Japanese are now pouring out towards Burma and will soon be pouring out towards India, are extremely inviting, but their deeds in Korea, in China, in Manchukuo, in Formosa, are less inviting. In all these countries they have held the peoples down with the club and the machine-gun, they have robbed them of their crops and of their raw materials, they have crushed their national movements, interfered with the education of their children, and have failed entirely to develop their resources except in the interests of Japan itself. They have been doing that to Formosa for fifty years, to Korea for forty years, to Manchukuo for ten years, and to the occupied parts of China for five years. To-morrow they hope to do the same to India, to Australia, and possibly even to parts of Africa. Very much, therefore, depends on the steadfastness and common sense of the people to whom the Fascist propaganda is addressed, for it is better to fight back and be free, even though one suffers like the Chinese, than to submit and discover too late that one has been deceived like the people of Siam. To those who say that Japan will set Burma or India free, the best answer is: Why then have they not set free Korea and Formosa, which they have had in their power for so long? To those who say that the Japanese are fighting for the liberation of India, the best answer is: Why then are they fighting against the liberation of China? To those who say that the cause of Japan is the cause of Asia as against the European races, the best answer is: Why then do the Japanese constantly make war against other races who are Asiatics no less than themselves?

Extract

April 1942

Sir Stafford Cripps is expected to reach Britain shortly. . .

It is clear from the reports that have come in from many countries that only the supporters of Fascism are pleased by the failure of Sir Stafford Cripps' mission. On the other hand, there is a general feeling that the failure was not complete, in so much that the negotiations have clarified the issue and did not end in such a way as to make further advances impossible. However deep the disagreement, there was no ill-feeling on either side, and no suggestion that either Sir Stafford Cripps or the Indian political leaders were acting other than in good faith. In Britain and the United States Sir Stafford has actually enhanced his already high reputation. He undertook a difficult job in which he risked being personally discredited, and his obvious sincerity has impressed the whole world. The Axis propagandists are attempting to represent the breakdown as a refusal on the part of India to defend herself, and an actual Indian desire to pass under Japanese rule. This is a direct lie, and the Axis broadcasters are only able to support it by deliberately not quoting from the speeches of Mr. Nehru and the other political leaders. Even Mr. Gandhi, though remaining faithful to his programme of non-violence, has not suggested that he wishes to see the Japanese in India, merely that he believes that they should be resisted by spiritual rather than material weapons. Mr. Nehru has not ceased to be anti-British, but he is even more emphatically anti-Japanese. He has asserted in the most vigorous terms possible that Indian resistance will continue, and that the Congress party will do nothing to hamper the British war effort, although the failure to alter the political *status quo* will prevent their taking a very direct part in it. He has said, as on many other occasions, that however deep his own objections to the British Government may be, the fact remains that the cause of Britain,

of Soviet Russia and China, represents progress, while the cause of Germany and Japan represents reaction, barbarism and oppression. In spite of the difficulty, therefore, of collaborating directly with the British forces, he will do all in his power to raise popular Indian feeling against the aggressor, and to make Indians realise that their liberty is inextricably bound up with an Allied victory. For even at the worst, India *may* get its independence from Britain, whereas the idea of India or any other subject nation winning its liberty in a Fascist-ruled world is laughable.

These are not empty words, and the attitude of the mass of the Indian people, and also of the leading political parties such as the Congress movement, can undoubtedly make a very great difference to the outcome of the war. Even the fact that it would be difficult for India to equip every Indian with modern weapons does not alter this. Back in 1935 or 1936, when it became clear that a Japanese invasion of China was imminent, many outside observers considered that nothing could be done to stop the Japanese, because the Chinese peasants had little sense of nationality and modern armaments hardly existed on the Chinese side. As it turned out, these predictions were quite false. Ever since 1937, the Japanese have been engaged in an exhausting war in which they have gained very little material benefit, lost great numbers of men, reduced the standard of living of their own working-class, and alienated millions of Orientals who might otherwise have been on their side. The reason was that there existed in China a strong popular political movement which could fire the peasants and the town working-class and make them ready to struggle against the invader, putting their numbers and their courage against superior armaments. Against very heavily mechanised armies, such as the German Army, mere popular resistance with rifles and hand grenades may perhaps be ineffective, though the success of the Russian guerrillas makes even this doubtful. But against the sort of army that the Japanese have employed in China, or the sort of army that they are likely to

be able to use for the invasion of India—that is, an army mainly of infantry—guerrilla methods can be highly successful, and the "scorched earth" policy can immensely hamper the invader. Very much, therefore, turns upon Indian popular enthusiasm and the efforts of Mr. Nehru may turn out to be a thorn in the Japanese side. There is no doubt that the Axis propagandists are well aware that Mr. Nehru, Mr. Azad and the other leading Congress personalities are heart and soul against them, and it will not be very long before they once again begin libelling them as the agents of British imperialism.

EXTRACT

July 1942

Here are a few notes on the nature of current Axis propaganda. . . .

If we look at the Axis propaganda specially directed towards India at this moment, we find that it all boils down to the pretence of fighting against Imperialism. The Japanese slogan is "Asia for the Asiatics," and very similar phrases are a daily occurrence in German and Italian propaganda. The world picture presented by Axis propagandists is something like this. Britain and America are in possession of nearly the whole world, and are using their power in order to exploit the greater part of humanity and make hundreds of millions of human beings live lives of toil and misery in order to pour money into the pockets of the few hundred millionaires in London and New York. Germany, Italy and Japan are fighting against this unjust oppression, not in any way for their own interests, but simply in order to set the enslaved peoples free. When they have achieved their object, they will retire from any countries they may have had to occupy, freely granting the previously subject peoples full independence. Thus the Japanese assure the Indians that if they invaded India, it would be with no intention of settling there, but merely in order to drive the

British out, after which they will retire again. Simultaneously, the Germans and Italians are assuring the Egyptians that they have no designs whatever upon Egyptian territory, but are merely invading Egypt in order to expel the British, after which they, too, will retire to their own territories. Similar promises are made all over the world, to any inhabitants of Allied countries who may be supposed to be discontented with their present lot.

Needless to say, these promises are, on the face of it, absurd. It is clear that if the Germans, Italians and Japanese were really the enemies of Imperialism, they would start by liberating their own subject peoples. The Japanese would liberate Korea, Manchuria and Formosa, and would retire from the parts of China which they have overrun since 1937. The Italians, instead of making promises to the Egyptians, would set free the Arabs of Libya, and in any case, would never have committed the aggression against the Abyssinians, which was justly avenged last year. As for the Germans, in order to make good their promises, they would have to liberate the whole of Europe.

These facts are self-evident. For Germany to call Britain Imperialistic is at best the pot calling the kettle black. Nevertheless, the Axis propagandists are not so silly as this may seem to imply. They go upon two principles, both of them sound in the short run, though probably not in the long run. The first principle is that if you promise people what they want, they will always believe you. The second is that very few people either know or are interested in knowing what is being done or said in other parts of the world than their own. The Axis propagandists know, therefore, that in their propaganda to various countries they can contradict themselves grossly without much danger of being detected. Here, for example, is one instance of such self-contradiction. At the same moment that the Axis broadcasts are assuring India that they are the friends of the coloured peoples, as against the British, they are assuring the Dutch of South Africa that they are the friends

of the white race as against the black. Indeed, this conviction is inherent in the whole of Axis propaganda, since the central thesis of Nazi theory is the superiority of the white races over the Asiatic and African races and the Jews. The Germans go even further than their Italian colleagues by claiming that all that is worth while in human history has been achieved by people with blue eyes. Naturally this doctrine is left out when Berlin is broadcasting to India or Africa. The Japanese might seem to be debarred from holding any such theory, but in fact they have, and for centuries have had, a racial theory even more extreme than that of the Germans. They believe the Japanese race to be divine, all other races being hereditarily inferior; and they have incidentally a contemptuous nickname ("KORUMBA") for the negroes and other darker-skinned races. Both of these peoples, the Germans and the Japanese, and perhaps also the Italians, commit their aggressions upon the theory firmly believed in by many of them that since they are superior races, they have a divine right to govern the earth. These ideas are mentioned quite freely in their home Press and broadcasts, and even for outside consumption when they consider it suitable. A good many German broadcasts addressed to Britain, for example, have suggested fairly openly that the German and Anglo-Saxon peoples, as the principal members of the white race, have a common interest, and ought to get together for the combined exploitation of the world. Needless to say, neither India nor Africa are supposed to hear anything of this, and since, in fact, those people have not access to the Press or Radio outside their own countries, these flagrant contradictions do generally go unnoticed.

We have made this the subject of our talk this week, because we are well aware of the nature of the Axis propaganda now being addressed to India, and we think it wise to answer it from time to time, not for the sake of exposing individual falsehoods, which would take too long, and is not worth while, but merely to issue a general warning which may help our listeners to see the world situation in perspective. Next time,

therefore, that you come across a piece of plausible Axis propaganda, it is worth asking yourself this question—"If they say this to me, what are they likely to be saying to Europe, to America, to Africa, to Britain, or to China?"

A NOTE ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

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