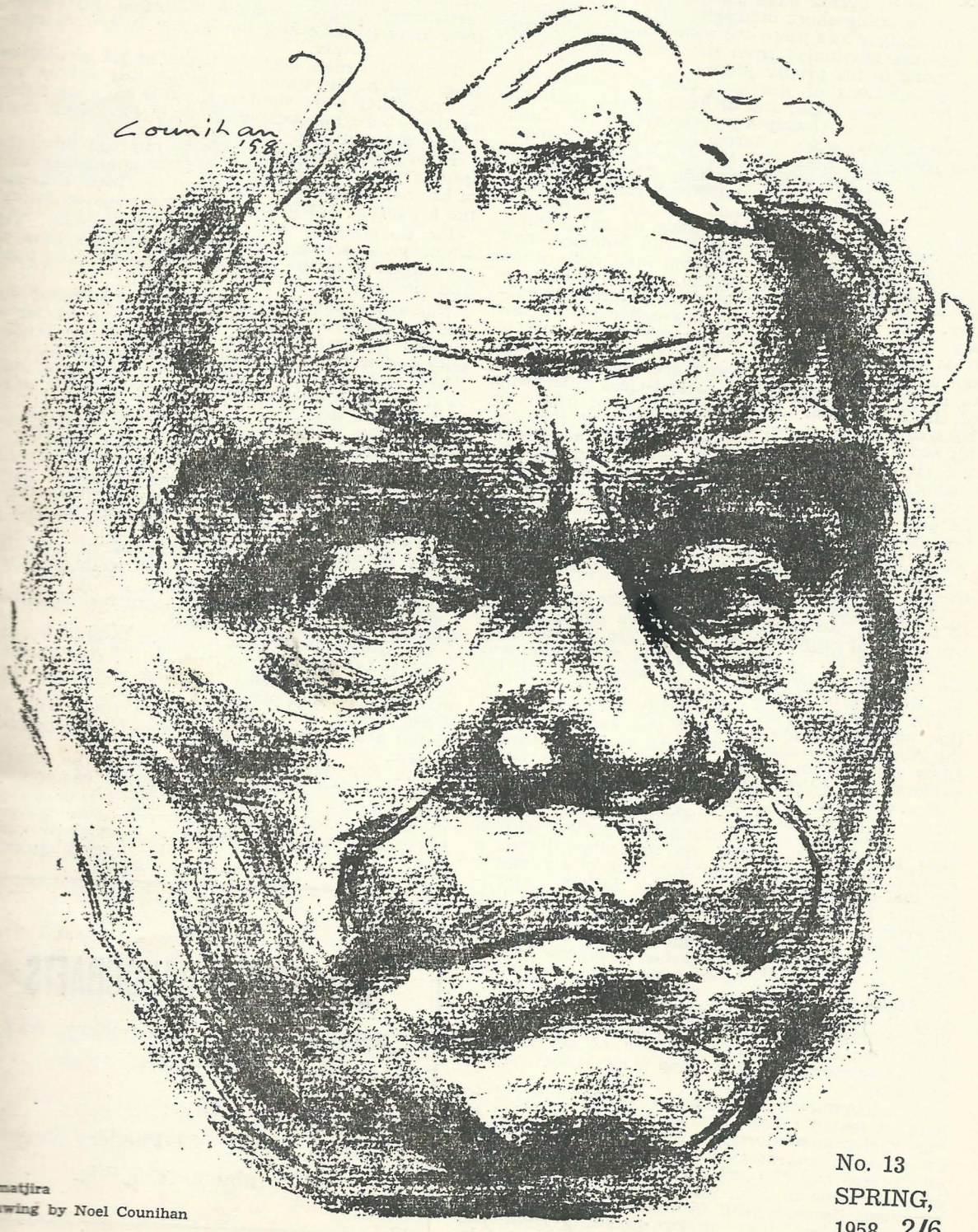
Inside: Professor Oliphant on the A-bomb; "Bill Harney's War."

OVERLAND



Namatjira
Drawing by Noel Counihan

No. 13
SPRING,
1958 2/6

Overland, October 1958. Registered in Australia for trans-mission by post as a periodical.

THE TRAGEDY OF ALBERT NAMATJIRA

ALBERT Namatjira has long been the victim of both exploitation and of humbug and, as recent events have shown, his conditions of life are nothing short of tragic. His citizenship is now in danger and there are some who would like to see him eliminated from the artistic scene and "put back in his proper place".

The questions of the condition of Namatjira's life on the one hand, and of his painting itself on the other, are obviously very closely linked. And, of course, both aspects throw light on much more than Namatjira himself.

First then, the drink question. There has been a great deal of cant about Namatjira's drinking. Numbers of celebrated—and not so celebrated—painters drink to excess, but they do so in clubs and comfortable homes, and not in humpies, and they stand in no danger of losing their citizenship.

The question of liquor regulations and the Aboriginals are a classic example of smokescreen hypocrisy. The defenders of the dog-collar regulations say that they are designed to protect the native from the machinations of evil white men. What the regulations really do, and are really intended to do, is to emphasise the second-class citizenship of the Aboriginal, underline his lack of fitness to be treated like a white Australian, and increase his sense of isolation and defeat when faced with the civilisation of the white man. "Behind the Namatjira case," writes the Rev. Stan Davey, Victorian Secretary of the Aboriginal Advancement League, in a letter to the Melbourne Herald, "stands the Northern Territory Welfare Ordinance, under which all but six of the 16,000 full-blood Aboriginals are 'wards of the State', deprived of normal citizenship rights."

These wards of the State provide the labor force of northern Australia, at wages from ten to fifteen per cent. of white wages. They are a source of great profit to the station owners who dominate the Territory, and they can be moved at will by the Director of Native Welfare.

The Namatjira case has already focussed attention on the appalling neglect and exploitation of the Aboriginal people. But in the study of Namatjira's place as an artist we can find just as much evidence of neglect and exploitation.

For we have had, on the one hand, a position where many people have rushed to buy a Namatjira water-color as a fashionable oddity with a high market value; and, on the other hand, a position where many, including some of the painters and critics who wrote to Mr. Hasluck appealing for Namatjira's release, do not consider him an artist at all.

The key to the latter point of view lies in the way in which dealers have cashed in on the Aranda bonanza. Namatjira's income, soon after he started painting, was said to be £1,000 a year; and last year it was claimed to have been £7,000. Obviously large sums in commission and agents' fees have been made—and a number of professional white water-colorists have had their noses put out of joint.

Such commercial success has proved harmful to many talented artists in the past. It has led to the wholesale production of potboilers, repetitions of previous successes. Eminent names like those of Streeton and Herbert come to mind as examples of talent gone to seed, through the exploitation of commercially successful formulae.

It is evident that, under pressure from the agents and dealers, such factors have operated in the case of the Aranda artists—just as it is equally evident that among them is very much talent, which it is our responsibility to nurture.

Namatjira has been criticised for not painting in the vigorous primitive traditions of his ancestors. In my opinion such criticism is quite unreal. The primitive traditions embodied in the fascinating cave and rock paintings, the decoration of weapons and utensils, arose from specific social conditions, their content a profound mythology, their fantasy reflecting the tribes' primitive relations with nature.

The white man destroyed the social conditions from which the whole fabric of this lovely art sprang. They were shattered, along with the rights of the Aboriginal people to their land and their tribal ways of life.

How can Namatjira, who is familiar with the internal combustion engine, and whose whole way of life has been transformed and confused, continue the art forms which had validity for his ancestors?

For no great art has risen from a vacuum. The whole great western tradition of art has been at the fingertips of the greatest exponents of that art, and similarly in the east.

Namatjira obviously possesses a wonderful eye and a sensitive, disciplined hand. In a matter of months he mastered the methods of the English school of water-color painting, methods which had taken centuries to develop. Given the opportunity to study the masterpieces of world art, what might he not have done?

Namatjira appears to me a highly-gifted, sensitive man, occupying the unenviable position of the artist of transition, a bridge between two cultures. He is the pioneer of a new school of painting, and has opened the way for the flowering of a school of black artists in no way inferior to others in the Commonwealth.

The responsibility for the creation of conditions which would enable such a school to develop rests not on his shoulders but on ours.

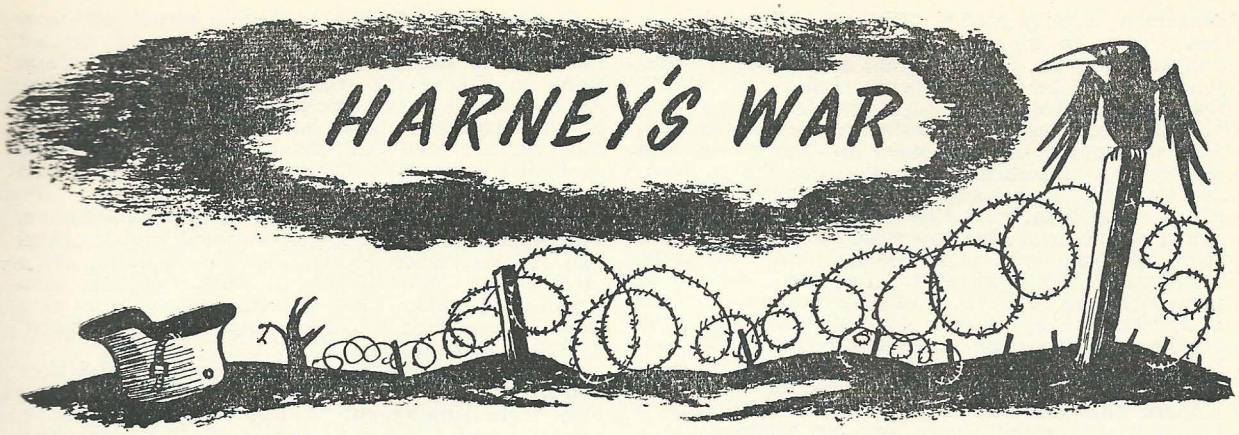
Albert Namatjira must be fought for, his citizenship and freedom safeguarded.

The Government must be asked to grant scholarships to talented Aboriginals, with living grants to enable them to study original works by great masters, past and present.

But firstly, and above all, the cause and base of the dereliction must be removed—the inequality in law.

The N.T. Welfare Ordinance must be scrapped and, as a first step in the long and complex task of raising the Aboriginal people to terms of equality with the white, full citizenship should immediately be granted to the whole Aboriginal population.

NOEL COUNIHAN



Overland wishes to thank Mr. Bill Harney, Mr. John Thompson and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, to all of whom acknowledgements are due for permission to print, for the first time in full, the following remarkable script, which was recently broadcast by the ABC. Vane Lindesay, of course, did the drawings.

THOMPSON: When the first World War began my friend Bill Harney was a young man of military age. He was short and nuggetty (he still is) with blue eyes and a very humorous very expressive face. He was brought up to the hard open-air life of the cattle country of Northern Australia, and he had no idea that he would someday become quite a famous personality, a broadcaster, an anthropologist, the author of several books. He says himself that he never had much schooling, and some people, in listening to this programme, may feel that Bill Harney was too uneducated to appreciate military life at its true worth. He was only an ordinary soldier. Some listeners may feel that although he was twenty-two times in action the estimation of military genius was beyond him. Bill observed only the results. Up till 1914 he had lived far away from the great world, with unsophisticated cattlemen, rough bushworkers and primitive aborigines. He had never been to a city. One day, however, in the course of his work, he called at a cattle station not very far from Cloncurry. Quite a big place, he says.

Harney: It's undulating country, with timber here and there, and big channels of the river and billabongs, and there we were. And I'll never forget the day the mailman came along. The mailman used to come along about once every two weeks. He had a buggy and when he come along he told us that war had been declared. And actually I didn't know what they were talking about. He mentioned about there was a big war on, with Britain and Germany fighting one another. I remember the Manager bloke said: "We'll beat 'em in a week". And we said, "What do you mean?" "Oh", he said, "when the British Navy gets on to 'em it'll blow 'em out of the sea." Finally the mailman went away and we went back to cattle work. We used to go and do the mustering and bring in the cattle, branding, and all that business.

And then, after I was there for some time, we naturally all got paid off. They used to call it "hobbling out". That's when they used to pay off the stockmen, and away we went on our horses. We had pack-horses and we'd go along with these pack-horses all over the place, looking for a job. We'd go around to the bosses at various stations and ask them did they want men. If they didn't, well, we'd have to keep going. They'd give us a hand-out of tucker to keep us happy, in meat. So finally I got round to Bourketown. Bourketown is on the Albert River. It flows into the Gulf of Carpentaria, two-hundred and forty miles from Cloncurry. Oh boy! Was it dry when I was there! The grass was dry, and we had our horses and they were weak. And Andy (my mate) and I, we was camped out on the Nicholson River. And we had to take our horses out about four or five miles to hobble them to the grass. You've got to hobble them by the legs. And there we were and we were pretty miserable and we had no money, and then a crocodile pinched one of our horses, pulled it into the river and ate it, and this made us more worried about everything. And while we were in these real doldrums, a bloke come along to me and he said, "How's the war going?" and Andy and I said, "What do you mean, war? What war?" He said, "You remember the war that was on when we were all together on the run." He was a mate of ours. And he said, "Yes blimey there's a war on." "What, is it still on?" "Yes. It's been going on there, fighting on." I said, "I thought it would be over in a fortnight." "Not on your life," he said. "They're still going." He said, "These Germans are tough guys. They're giving us a go." "Oh blimey," we said, "what about this?" "Well," he said, "why don't you go to the war?" We said, "Why, do they want us?" "Yes," he said, "they'll take you to the war." "How do you get to it?" "Oh," he said, "you just go up to the doctor and you get him to look at you, and if you're healthy and all that there they'll take you away." So Andy said, "Listen, it would be a good idea to get away from these poor horses." You know, our horses were as poor as anything and they get covered in cattle ticks over there, and—oh, it's a terrible place.

And so we got on our horses and up we rode to Bourketown and went around and saw the Doctor and he said, "Yes, let me have a look at you." So he took off our clothes and had a look at us and he said, "There's nothing wrong with you blokes." And I said, "Yes. Any chance of going——?" We were kind of excited now. We thought he might turn us down and we'd have to go back to the cattle game. So—"Oh, no," he said, "we'll take you away to the war." He said, "Now what would you like to be in? With the light horse? You're

horsemen aren't you?" "Oh yes. But—oh, we don't want to be with horses, we've just had a bellyful of them. No we want to be—what other job?" "Oh," he said, "there's infantry." "Well, that'll do us, we like to walk about." So he said, "Right! We'll make you infantry men." Oh boy, was we happy! So we went up the place and there was a chap in the town who was the publican and he said, "You going to the war boys?" "Well, it's good to hear." And he said, "Have a drink." And I didn't drink, but my mate did. And he said, "Now, do you want to sell your plant?" That is, our horses. "Oh!" we said, "Yes, we'll get rid of them." So he said, "I can't give you much." He said, "They're a bit poor and all that, and your pack-horses and your packs and saddles." So, we brought 'em into his place and he had a look at them. Well, he give us a few bob for them, and I heard afterwards he used to do that with quite a lot of blokes round there, and he made quite a packet of money. When I come back from the war, he had a big place out there. A station! And by golly I woke up afterwards that the way to get on was to stop behind. But however—there we are laying back in the Hotel. First time I was ever in a Hotel in my life. Laying back in a bed in sheets. You know, we never have them in the bush. We'd only just the blanket and the swag. And there we were laying back in the sheets and my mate's having a booze or two. And sitting up at the table, getting waited on with tablecloths. And I thought, blimey!—this war'll do me.

However, the time come that we had to go away to the war. So there was a boat—every month there was a ship, about a four-hundred tonner, used to anchor at the mouth of the Albert River. It was called the Musgrove. So they decided they'd give us a party to go away. There was four of us. And we all got there and they had a welcome-place in a bit of a hall that they had. And they had cakes and tea. I didn't drink grog and I was eating cakes and drinking tea, with milk in it, too. That was a great thing. In those days you very rarely got milk. And I was drinking this and I thought "Well, what a wonderful job!" And everybody's hitting me on the back and saying, "You're going for a good tour. I'd like to be with you only I'm too old and I've got to look after my place." They had an excuse, apparently they were a bit too cunning. I worked it out after. Well, they all sung. They get us all down to a bit of a jetty that was on the wharf to that creek. A mangrove-lined creek, and there was muddy banks on it, and there was a few old crocs. You could see them lying in the moonlight. Nobody in those days shot at them. Then finally, as the boat was throwing off the hawser, they all start singing. You know that song (they call it "We Don't Want to Lose You"). It goes, "We don't want to lose you, but we think you ought to go." Anyhow, away we went down the river. I looked back and here's all the people waving to me on the river in the moonlit night in old Bourketown—it was really a good sight—with their hurricane lanterns. And we swept round the river and we were outside. Out we headed, out to sea, and there was a bit of a head wind or something. There was some seas rocking in, and next thing the boat's lifting to this thing, and all these cakes in me and all the tea in me, boy, was I crook! Sick as a dog! I thought, "Blimey!—this is no good to me. First time I get off I'm getting out." A bloke said to me, "You can't get off, you know: you've enlisted for the war." And he said, "if you run away now they might shoot you." I said, "Shoot me?" "Oh, well," he said, "they'll put you in jail." I said, "Blimey!—this is no good to me."

Thompson: Well, the cattlemen sailed off to a career of possible glory. The Musgrove carried them across the Gulf of Carpentaria, round Cape York to Townsville—roughly a thousand miles. At Townsville they were sworn in, and from then on they received their shillings a day, seven days a week, all found. From Townsville they went on to Brisbane. Now they were beginning to learn what a massive adventure the war was.

The Australian army was an army of volunteers. The Australians were unconventional soldiers. And Bill Harney, when he entered the training camp at Brisbane, glowing with warlike ambition, soon began to discover what a free people's army was like. He marched into the camp, and was greeted by other recruits.

Harney: And there were all the chaps, and they had little calico hats on and dungaree trousers. And they were singing out "You'll be sorry, you'll be sorry!" And I put my chest out, and they were all saying, "March, lads." And the next day of course was parade.

There was a corporal bloke there and he reckons that he was an old soldier, apparently in the Boer War, and he's there and he's telling us how he's going to make men of us, and everything like that. However, I got into the general trend of the thing, and I used to get out and we used to have our physical jerks in the morning. You know "Hands Up. Down. Up. Down." And all this. And then the next thing we'd have marching parade. We'd go out and march and they put a pack on our backs. And a trenching tool they had in those days, and they'd tell us how to attack. And we'd attack hard ground and we'd have to dig in with this flaming awful trenching tool, and the officer bloke was roaring his head off and having rows with us and—oh, they were tough! They'd push you around. "Oh," I thought, "this is—blimey," I said, "this is a terrible turnout." And a mate of mine said, "I'm heading out of this, this is no good to me." And I said, "Oh, if you get away they might do something to you." "Oh," he said, "blast them all." So he headed off and they collected **him**, and they brought him back and they frightened the heck out of us. I said, "Blimey, it's a prison this is." However, then we went to the —er—what do they call the places where they shoot? Rifle ranges, that's right. And we went there and this is where we had to pass our rifle test. One lot would be behind in the rifle butts and the other would be shooting. One particularly hard one was "fifteen rounds application fire rapid," or something. So they'd tell you all about what you had to do and you'd be waiting there and you'd put in your clip ready, and they'd say, "Now Fire," and away you'd go. Boop, boop, boop, like that. And of course I wasn't sighting down the rifle; the main thing I was concerned with was getting these 15 rounds off as quick as I could, and where the bullets went I don't know. And then, blow me, when we looked there was a chap on the rifle range about two hundred yards away and he puts up a round bit of tin with a stick on the end of it. And the next thing there's one went up and it was a bull's-eye and another went up and it was a maggy and then another bull's-eye, and I'm looking at this thing, and I got a terrific mark. We come back so I said to my mate there, Andy, I said, "My God, did you see me today?' And I'm telling blokes there what a wonderful shot I was. And then he said to me, "Now listen, mate," he said, "draw your horns in." He said, "I was over there, I was the bloke who was looking after your target,' and he said to me, "Now it's quite simple, now when I get over for goodness sake get in my position if you can.' And I said, "What'd you do?" "Oh," he

said, "it's simple." He said, "The main thing is to get you through. We got to get to this war as quick as we can, and I can shoot, and I want to get you through." So he said, "What I did was get a lead pencil and just stuck it through the hole and it's quite a good idea." And I thought, blimey! I said, "How many did I get?" And he said, "You never hit it at all with the whole fifteen." I said, "Crickey!" I said, "Blimey, that's no good to me."

Well, however, they didn't know about that, and then suddenly we all got word that we had to go on our embarkation. And next thing we all gets in this here boat, and we're all crowding up on the rigging; there's a chap there, and there's a band playing, sending us off. And there is a chap singing some song about "Boys of the Dardanelles. They face the shots and shells." It went on, and everybody singing, and girls were crying, and mothers. You know, it's a terrible thing, you begin to realise they'll quite likely never see their sons again. It's only when I was over there that I saw the whole picture there that was in that turnout. How women grow up their children, educate them and look after them, and they get educated and everything, and then they're swept up in this here business and they go away, and for what? However, away went the Itonus. We went on: we picked up more troops in Sydney and more in Melbourne and then we headed straight across the Bight. And boy! was it rough in the Bight. Here we were rolling backwards and forwards and we were inside, underneath, and they battened us down. And they had big hammocks; they were hung on hooks and as the boat would roll these hooks would go mmmm, ooooh—mmmm ooooh. And the smell! However, in one part where we were she went over some way. Something happened to her. A big wave, and she went over, and one of the portholes came open, and the water squirted in through the portholes, and here's all us heroes, you know, we're down there, and the water squirted in and we thought the boat was going down and we roared and rushed up the steps. And everybody got up the stairway and the next thing the stairs broke. Down we fell—the whole lot of us, God! Boomp!—on the ground. I think three blokes got hurt and everybody got jarred and we're screaming and laughing. An officer come down. He was right up on the top. Quite likely he was fortified with a bit of grog and everything. And he's coming down and giving us a lecture on discipline and how we want to behave like British soldiers and all that there. And we thought "Blast this!"

THOMPSON: Well, the troopship took them to Egypt, Harney and all his mates. By that time Australian manhood had already been tried out at the Dardanelles. What was left of the Dardanelles force was in hospital, or on the Western Front. The new supply of manhood was all bound for the Western Front. Egypt was used as a training ground, and the troops were there for three months, marching around in the desert, learning to take shelter in a regimental manner, and going on leave to Cairo. Then, by ship and rail, they were transported to Flanders. They were held in reserve for a while, billetted in farms and villages. They drilled in the daytime and went to the estaminets at night. They were taught to wear gasmasks, and a German aircraft sometimes came over and dropped iron darts on them. But they saw very little of the war until one day, finally—

Harney: Finally our band, the Battalion Band, it was practising behind one of the big barns. There it's going on, and all the instruments are shined because that's part of the job. They got to have them looking clean. They woke up after that, that the thing to do was to let them go a bit tarnished. But whatever happened, a German must have got a spot on them from one of their great blimps, their observation balloons; and he directed fire on to them and over she come. A big shell. And it dropped right in among them and cleaned up quite a mob of them. And then that night we had to go and bury them. I think we buried about fifty to sixty blokes. The first experience I ever got was burying them men. Here we are in the night burying them, and I thought "Blimey, blow this business." You know, I was wishing to God I was back on the old Nicholson River with my poor horses again. I reckon that was paradise.

Blimey, by this time if they'd shunted me back to Australia barefooted, and a mob of bindi-eyes on the ground, I'd have been happy, and no tucker.

The background of it all is how frightened you become yourself. This fear! The only thing that overcomes it is the cheerfulness of your mates. You get a great hinge with mateship in the thing, and then, as I tell you, you think of the bloke on the other side. The enemy becomes an all-efficient machine. Powerful, and everything. You don't look upon him as a fool or anything. He's a mighty man.

And I was talking to a mate of mine and I said, "By golly, I don't like these Germans on the other side, they seem to be a fairly efficient mob, by golly it makes a man frightened on this side." He said, "Always remember, Bill, that the bloke on the other side is just as frightened as you." And he kind of give me a bit of consolation. But, however, we finally went up into the line at a place called Fleur Bay. It was trenches, but they were great big breastworks, and we used to go behind these breastworks and then we'd look through periscopes and we'd see the big German lines on the other side, and that's how we were the first time I went in the line.

It was about April. A wonderful time of the year. All the trees was in bloom. The grass was lovely. The birds were chirping. And the bells used to ring on a Sunday in these big steeples. Oh, it was a strange place. You'd never dream—a bonzer place. We was there quite awhile. The only thing I found out about Fleur Bay was that the officers somehow told us we hadn't to take off our clothes, we had to always be at the ready. And I'll never forget I slept in my boots and in my clothes for about twenty days without taking them off. Slept and walked in them, and I just can't imagine what it's all about, but there you are. They work according to orders and it's passed on to us. And we just do what we're told. I found that all initiative is gone by this time. The old days of the cattle station when a man rounded up the cattle and used his own initiative—that's all gone. You're just a big cog in the machine and you're just moving ahead, the whole heap of us—you're part of a big mob.

Thompson: It must have been a terrible life on that Western Front.

Harney: Oh, it was terrible down in Fleurs. We were down there in 1916. Oh the whole lot was a bog. We were bogged. We were out in what they call listening-trenches. The water couldn't get away and it'd be raining all the time and the water would be in and we'd have to bale out the water to keep the water out of those trenches. The officer chaps, they had stoves, and here they were all with about half-a-dozen primus stoves all round them. And here we couldn't get a primus stove at all. So I promptly waited till they went to sleep one night and then turned them all off and they very nearly froze to death.

Thompson: And what was it like the first time you went into action, Bill?

Harney: Black as ink, couldn't see anything. They issued us a bar of chocolate and I said to a bloke "What do we do, eat it or leave it?" He said, "No, scoff it while the going's good." He said, "There's plenty of people fool enough to leave theirs and we'll get theirs when they get knocked over." I said, "Blimey, that's a good idea, you know." So we goes into the line and there we're all waiting and then presently we had to creep ahead and we're creeping up over shell holes and we got a little pack on and we got the gun, and I—by this time I was a signaller. I woke up to one fact, that if you're an infantryman you got to stand in one place, like them old Roman soldiers that you read about, that stood to their post when the lava went over their heads. Well, I wasn't going to be in that business. I thought "Blow it, I'm going to be a runner so that if anything gets too hot in one place I'm going on an urgent message somewhere else." You see, you want to be mobile: I was always mobile all my life. So I'm going ahead, and we are creeping up and didn't know where we're going, and black as ink, and then presently the big bombardment started. Boy, everything let go, the whole universe seemed to waken up. Germans was bombarding, machine guns was roaring their heads off, and bullets was flying over our heads, and I'm flat down on the ground, and next thing over come a big shell and plonk—right down. Over blokes went. Knocked a lot of them out. Naturally, when it went, the bloke sang out "Charge". As he did I got up—you know—in the night, especially when you're falling down trenches, shell holes and everything like that, you don't know where you are—and then they say "Charge". You don't know where to charge, so I got up and galloped one way, and somebody's galloping another. Just like when you throw a kerosene tin among a lot of fowls, they're just heading in all directions, and this is us. The great charge! You've often heard the story, you see pictures of the great lines where they advance in a long line. Well that might be all right by daylight, but in the night you just don't know where you are.

So I headed back, and finally, about daylight, I got a mob of our men and we went on and we got to the trench. It was a great big trench, and we're digging in.

The officer bloke sang out "Dig in, dig in, the day's won! Dig in, the day's won," and every now and then he'd get a big water bottle he had. And he had a chain on it. Apparently he didn't trust it with the leather, and we knew by that there was something good in the bottle. So Peter (that was a mate of mine) he rushed behind this bloke as he was doing this, and he had a big pair of chain-cutters like we had in the Signallers, and he put his hand under the bottle and poof poof, straight through the thing. And he took it away and pulled out the cork and had one.

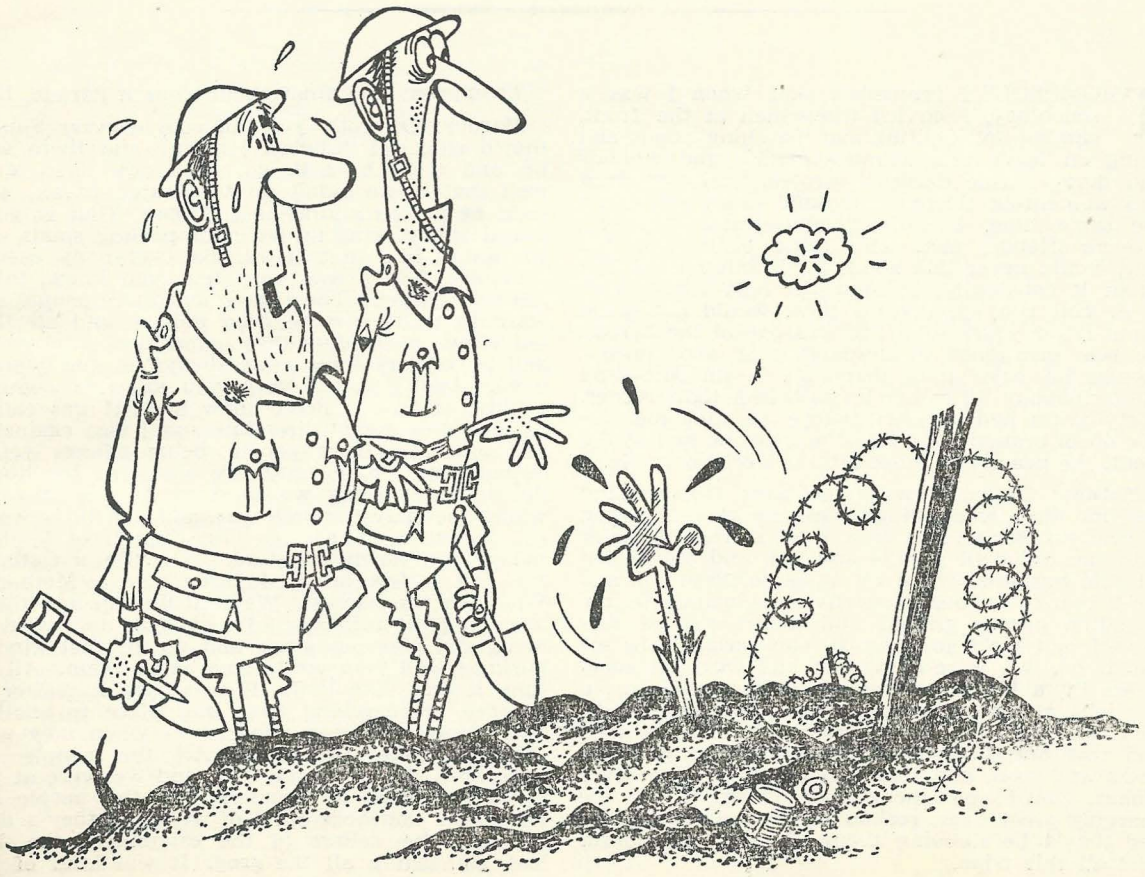
Thompson: What was it?

Harney: Rum. We all got stuck into this rum and finished it up in no time and threw the bottle away. So afterwards the officer was yelling out up the road, and we saw him fumble round and look for this thing and it was gone. He give a kind of a squawk out of him. And the next day I said to a bloke, "What's happened to so and so?" And they said, "Didn't you hear? He went behind the line with shell-shock." I said, "Oh golly, did he?" He said, "Yes." And I often thought of it after when a mate of mine back in the Territory said to me about a chap that was going away. "He had a nervous breakdown." And I said, "What's wrong with him?" "Oh," he said, "when you're a head, Bill, they call it a nervous breakdown. But when you're a common working man, it's just the plain old dingbats." So I thought to myself, "Blimey! there might have been something in that too."

However, we gets in and I'm in this great big trench. And we had our headquarters here. We gradually sorted ourselves out, and we had headquarters. And it's a big deep trench. It's about eight feet deep and it's all little alcoves cut out where the Germans used to sleep, and I was sitting there. And they had a great big rum jar, I'll never forget that, and they left it there. There was about five or six gallons. S.R.D. they called it. And every now and then a bloke would take a nip out of it and go away, and there was two or three getting around and they're talking, and I got tired. Funny thing, I found that there was three kinds of fear in the line. There was one chap that'd laugh, and we always suspected **him**. He was just bordering between the line of shell-shock and normal stability. Then there was the crying bloke. If a man cried, somehow he didn't worry what other people thought about him. He was relieving himself, and strange enough that bloke—he'd be always there. But I was a type that had a sleeping fear. I had a strange thing. If I got very, very frightened I'd go to sleep. It was kind of nature to kind of knock me out, as much as to say, "Poor coot, we don't want to let him go ratty, so we'll send him to sleep." So this time I laid in one of these little alcoves. And there I am laying. Sleeping away. And the German is shelling us with an enormous big Navy gun. Terrific thing. And there was three blokes sitting in front of me. And they're drinking this rum and I was there for a while. And suddenly I woke up. Everything was quiet. I didn't know what was happening. Complete darkness. And I felt around and it suddenly dawned on me that I'd been buried. I found out afterwards that one of these big naval shells had hit the trench and folded it right in on us. Eight feet down. And it never exploded. If it had exploded it'd have blown the lot of us up. However, there we were. So I shouted and yelled and kicked and bellowed and bawled and nobody—suddenly I could hear 'em. They couldn't hear me. I could hear them say, "Hello, there's a voice under there." And I bellowed again, and presently there's a round hole and the air come through, and I poked my hand out of this hole. I was terrified by this time. I poked my hand out, they had a shake-hands with me, and then I started digging myself out like a mallee-hen getting out of a nest when it's born. And I'm digging myself out and presently I poked my head out and as I did a bloke poured water on my head and I said, "What's the gag? What's the gag?" He said, "Get him out. Get him out. He'll know." And these other blokes that were in front of me, they were dead. The thing had folded right in their faces and killed them. But I was all right. There was about seven of them smothered and here am I. And they said, "He knows where it is." I said, "What are you

talking about? What's the joke?" And he said, "Isn't this headquarters?" I said, "Yes, it was headquarters. Well, it was a kind of a semi-headquarters." "Well," he said, "these blokes—where was that bottle—where's that big jar of rum?" "Oh," I said, "they were drinking it here when I went to sleep. Just down here." "Righto, mates. Come on, here she is." And they left me and started digging round. So they gets it and presently they drug it up, and they give a whoopee over it, and I thought to myself. "My God, it's a good job the bottle of—the big old jar of rum was buried there. If it hadn't been for that, if it hadn't been that they knew the jar of rum was buried with us, I'd have been still there."

So I come out and from then on I got a kind of claustrophobia. I wouldn't go into a little alcove. Even today I'm frightened of enclosed spaces. So I used to get out in a little shell hole behind. And there I'd sit. And the blokes would say to me, "You don't want to sit there, you're likely to get shot at," and I said, "Blimey, I'd sooner be shot at than buried alive. I've had enough of that." And there I sat outside. So. however, finally we went back behind the line. Oh the three days was just unadulterated horror. You're got no idea. There were blokes getting wounded and killed and the enemy was attacking. It was just terrific. No sleep. And so finally we goes back behind the line. When we go back we're marching back—our Battalion, our Company. There was about, oh fully, I'd say, half of them had been destroyed, you know, or killed or wounded. Terrible turnout! And we're going back and the officer blokes, they used to—the company commander, our company bloke, he was a short fellow—and they used to have batmen behind the line. And they used to bring up horses, if you please. For them! But we could walk. We were, you know, the footwalkers. We were getting—by crikey we were getting what I reckoned when I decided I wouldn't become a light horseman and I'd be an infantry man. And I was copping it. I was copping infantry all the way. So he got on to his horse and he's riding along in front, and he's got no pack on. And there is us, three days without sleep and as tired as you can make them, and we're going back behind the line. So he gets off his horse after a long time, this bloke, and he's leading it. Next thing I could hear (I was in the Signallers of course; we was in the front of the company) and I heard "Signaller Harney, Signaller Harney." And I sung out, "Yes sir," and I come up and he said, "Lead my horse." And I couldn't make out what he was talking about. I said, "Lead your horse?" "Yes," he said, "lead my horse." I said "No! I won't lead your horse." He said "Why?" "Because," I said, "I won't lead it. I won't be a flunkey for anybody." I said, "It's your horse, you lead it." "Well," he said, "ride my horse." I said, "I'll neither ride your horse nor lead your horse." I said, "I'm an infantry man and that's why I didn't join the light horse, because I want to be an infantry man." "Oh," he said, "is that what you mean? You refuse the order of a superior officer?" I said, "Yes!" So he said, "Right. Put him under arrest." So the Sergeant bloke tapped me, he said, "You're under open arrest." Open arrest that's it. So I still kept marching except that I never led his damned horse. I wouldn't lead his horse. I kept on going and we come to the billet that night, and when we got to this billet we went in and at last I heard



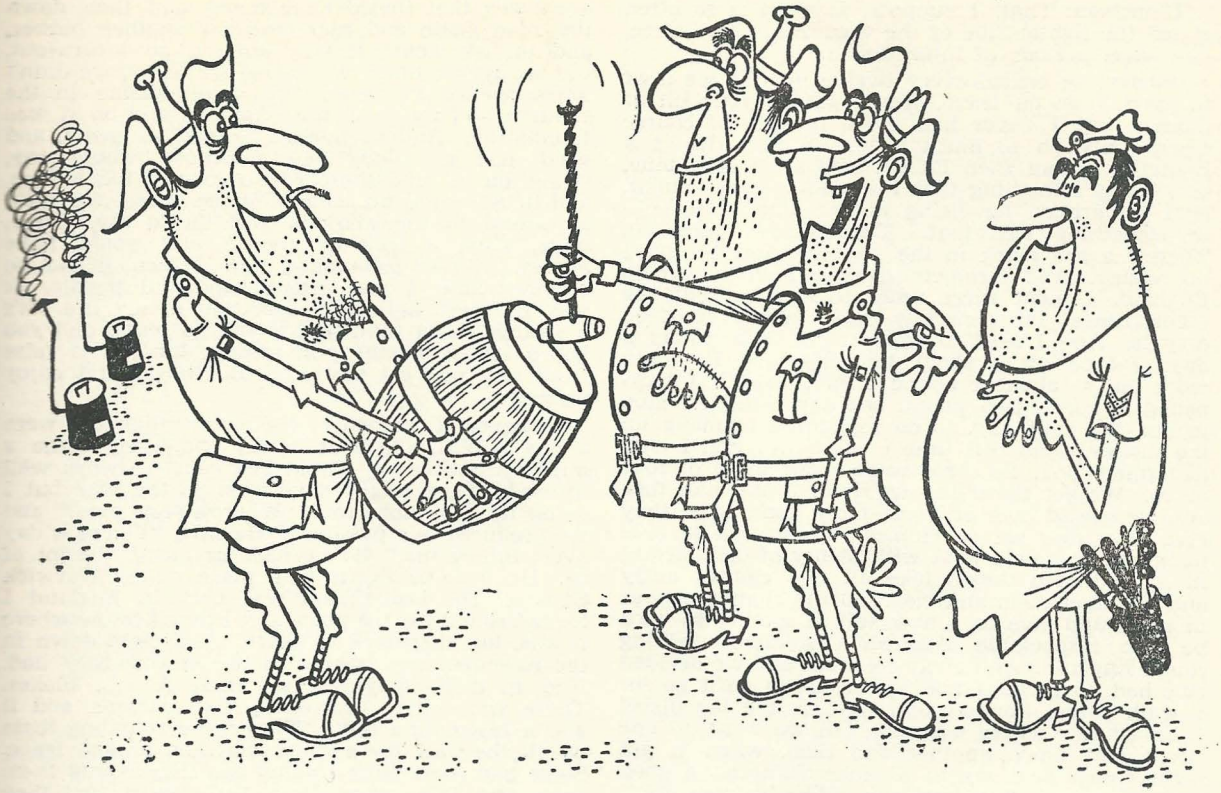
a bloke say, "Signaller Harney!" "Oh," I said, "she's on." My mate said, "She's on." So out I goes and we comes to a little place where this officer was billeted. "Take off your hat. Stand by. Quick March." Bump, bump, bump. In we go and the officer bloke—I knew his brother. I knew this officer bloke's brother. He was a jackeroo on a cattle station where I was. And he knew I knew his brother and, you know, we all knew one another. And he said: "You know what you did." You know, they read out all this tripe: "You know that you did. That you did, you know, blah blah blah, you know, refused to do this," and "How do you plead?" I said "Guilty. Guilty. But I'd like to say that I still don't want to lead the horse." He said, "No, don't talk." And he said, "Well, leave him with me, sergeant." And the Sergeant went and threw a salute and shot outside. He said to me, "Now listen. Why didn't you lead the horse?" "Well," I said, "It's like this." I said "I come from the cattle stations and we don't lead people's horses and we don't hold other people's horses and it's against the principles in the cattle station to do that." And I said "I'm an infantryman. Well, I'll be an infantryman, but I will not lead the horses." I said "I can't, on principle." I said "It would make me ashamed." He said "Well, I can see your point. I can see your point." "Yes," he said, "I think I was wrong in doing it," he said. "But why didn't you ride the horse?" I said "For the same reason. It was your horse," I said. "You were riding it. You're entitled to lead it. Either that or your batman, but not me." "Oh," he said, "I can see that." "Well," he said, "how are you and the lads getting on?" He said "You've had a big time in the war and you've done a good job" and all this here. "Well," he said, "I'd like to show an appreciation. Now," he said, "we'll forget about the lead for the horse." "Well," I said, "thanks very much, Sir"—you know, I threw him a Sir. "Well," he said, "how are you off for money?" I said, "Well, we got no money at all." "Well," he said, "here's forty francs." Handed me forty francs! That's be about —oh it'd be about thirty-two bob. And out I shot —oh it might have been a bit more—out I shot and a bloke said, "How did you get on?" Oh I said, "I got forty francs." He said "Forty francs! You'll never pay that off in a month." See, I'd allotted three bob of my money to my mother, and a shilling was deferred pay, and I was only getting two bob, and a bob of that I'd keep aside for holidays when we went to England. He said, "You'll never pay it off." "But he give me the forty fancs." "What?" he said, "wait a minute, get this right." And I explained. "Well," he said, "what do you make of that?" "Oh, he's not such a bad fellow after all." "No. Well that's what he did. There it is." And he said, "What did he say?" "He said to take all my friends of the Signallers down to the estaminet and give them a drink." "Boy! is he a wonder! Come on, quick march." Away we went down to the estaminet telling what a great fellow he was. After that when we'd go in the line we reckoned he was Christmas. And when we'd come back, although he wouldn't let us lead his horse (he was a bit touchy about that) we'd sing our heads off. Funny how a bit of psychology works.

THOMPSON: I remember that when I was a schoolboy, I envied those men at the front, singing and fighting and marching about and going on leave and winning medals and ribbons and doing heroic deeds to protect their children and womenfolk thirteen thousand miles away. At the same time, I couldn't understand why my father's friends, men who came back from the war, would never talk about it. Public men talked about it constantly, but not the men who'd been in it. Bill Harney, I know now, would not speak about it for years—and Bill was one of the heroes. He was mentioned in despatches at least once—though he says that that was a mistake—and there's nobody I'd rather be with in a tight corner. Forty years had elapsed before he told me this tale of an ordinary soldier—the fears he had at the front, the peace and quiet after a week in battle.

Harney: Oh when we come back from behind the line they wouldn't give us any rest. As soon as we got behind the line they started us back onto the old drill parade and lick and polish and all this business. We'd all have to form up and we'd march in our respective companies to the Battalion parade ground and then we'd be dismissed and we'd go away to our various jobs we had to do. We were Signallers, and we'd get away down by a bit of a hedge (we were cunning in our job) and when we saw the officer on parade, we'd all start diddle-ee-umpty on the old key, and sing out "READ" and everybody would get down and read, and that was the way. The other blokes, you'd see them over there, they'd be charging great bags, reckon they were the enemy, and they'd be stabbing them. In, out, on guard! And all this tripe.

Thompson: And what about Church Parade, Bill?

Harney: Oh golly yes. Of course every Sunday they'd sing out "Church Parade" and there we'd be, and we'd have to go. Well, we knew quite well that if we didn't go to Church at all, well, we'd be put on a kind of a fatigue. That is, going round and picking up paper or peeling spuds, and we didn't like that at all. So everybody become religious. There was very few, you know, interested in church. The padres and those people that were in it, they were good fellows and all that, but somehow or other they made them into officers and as officers they were always in the officers' mess. And I had a very, you know, a complex against officers. I don't know what it was caused by, but they meant discipline and I was against it, and naturally these people being officers represented that too, so naturally we went to church. So the next thing we used to do was find out where the closest church was, and somebody would get around and he'd say "Be Church of England today, just down the road." Or "Be a Catholic, it's just a few hundred yards," or a Methodist. Whatever was closest. We'd all line up and they'd have a great roll-up of the devout, and we'd go along and sing our songs and do all that kind of business, and then we'd come home again. All the time it was like that. It was just a matter of parades or marching from one place to another, or scrounging. I remember once when they were attacking, the Germans. All the people got evacuated. Up went the lads, and we were at this particular place in Flanders, and the people had left. And somebody kind of woke up they'd done over all the cellars of the estaminets, the lads had, and drunk all the grog. It was kind of left



there. If we hadn't got it somebody else would have. Then somebody discovered that there was great big cellars below the churches. These big churches. They had wine there that they used to keep, altar wine or something, I forget what it was. Somebody had discovered it was there and boy! we were on that. We were sneaking along these underground passages of these great big massive churches and getting through. When they'd come to a door that was hard to get through, they'd get the old mills bomb and pull out the thing and just stick the detonator in and light it and just blow the lock out. And in we'd go, down these places, and often when you'd go under them big churches you'd find the whole place full of skulls. Well, we go along and we come to this great big cellar, and of course the lads had been in there and they're drinking up and we got a few into us. It was good wine too. And one of my mates he grabbed a great big cask. Oh! it was about a ten-gallon cask. It weighed about a hundred pounds. "Blimey!" he said, "this will do us." He said, "We don't want the bottles if we can get away with this." So we staggered up along the hallways and up some stairs and we got out onto the road. We couldn't lift it so we rolled it up the road, and everybody's following, all my mates, all the Signallers, and stretcher bearers, and cooks. And we're there, talking of a wonderful time, and we're going up the road. Oh, we must have rolled it about half a mile or more, and we got it into our billet. And we tipped it up and one bloke said "Righto!" He said "Get the augers." So we got some augers and ground a hole in and then another hole and tipped it, and it wouldn't come out. And he said, "Hello, what's going on here?" And at last one bloke he smelt it and he said, "Blimey! do you know what it is? It's salt pork." And we opened it up and it was salt pork. Blimey, we rushed back again to the cellars and it had all gone.

We were forever on the scrounging you know. There was the big dumps. The Mules they used, in the night time, they used to bring up great big panniers and packs, and on these packs was the food and everything for behind the lines. And of course we knew they were there and one of our scroungers knew where the S.R.D. (they called it the Service Rum Delivery) was coming, and he said, "I'm after one of these." So he went around and he grabbed one of these great five-gallon jars —it's all wicker work outside—and he sneaked away like a wraith through the night and got away with it, and here we all are stealing through the night. It was up just behind the lines, and the old shells are going and the Very lights are going up in the air and this bloke is going and another bloke is helping him, and they whizzed away into our dugout. And it was a fairly big dugout and it was cold and had a fire in it. So old Robbo, he was a stretcher bearer, and he was a good old fellow, and apparently he come from Canada, and he used to say to us "follow me and you'll wear diamonds." That's when he got drunk. "Every time you spit it rolls marbles across the deck." Apparently he came from away up in Alaska or somewhere. Well, however, old Robbo, he was the one. He opened the cork out and as soon as he did he put it up to his mouth and he had a great big swig, and boy! As soon as he did he dropped it down again and he squirted it all out over the fire—it lit up the fire—and he said "What the heck is all this you got?" And it was whale oil they'd pinched. They used to get whale oil in those days and they'd put it in these five-gallon jars to rub on their feet for trench feet. Apparently it was a remedy they had. Whether it was any good or not I don't know, but—

Thompson: That, I suppose, is what is so often called the lighter side of the war. And there were, of course, periods of intermission.

Harney: Of course every twelve months we used to have to go on leave. You'd gather your bit of money (but I never had much money—of course I was only on so much a day. I was always a Signaller.) And then I'd get into a bit of a blue, or I'd buy something that I shouldn't have bought, or I got crimed for being absent without leave—or something like that. That always goes on. There's a red mark in the paybook and I'd have no money. And I remember once I went over to England. I went three times to England but the other times I'd generally have about fourteen pounds. And I used to work it out at a pound a day. I'd be away about ten days and it would work out at about a pound a day. And if I happened to spend two pound one day, well, I'd stop in bed the next day, to do something to make up the money. And this time I went over and I only had thirty bob. So there were about three or four of us. We got there and we're all broke like this, and we landed over at Horse-ferry Road. And they give us a new set of clothes. They used to take us in and give us a bath with plenty of disinfectant in it, and then they'd take all our clothes away and disinfect them and clean all the chats that was in them and give us a new suit of clothes so we'd be like respectable Australian soldiers walking round England. And away we went and we decided (we had no money) and we reckoned we'd go for a walk round London, and boy! is it a big place! I don't know where we went, but we went up one street and down another and then, when it got night time, we'd say to a bloke "Where's a good place to stop!" And he'd say ,"What've you got?" "Oh," we'd say, "we got no money, mate." And he'd say, "Well, over there you can get in for a sprat," you know, a sixpence. And we'd have to line up and they'd open the doors at a certain time and in we'd go with all the old dossers and everybody, the old blokes that were drinking wine. They'd give us a feed of soup and things like that. And then we'd sleep in a bunk. One bloke we met he was a kind of a loafer. He knew all the rackets, and he said, "I'll get in with you." Well we said, "Don't expect nothing out of it." He said, "I'll expect nothing out of it." He said, "You're Australian soldiers that are coming over here and **I've** got no money," he said, "but I'll take you round and show you how to live cheap. I've been doing it all me life." So he took us up and we go along to these barber blokes. There was a place where they used to have apprentice barbers. Any barber that had a young lad he'd take him along to this place and they'd shave all the beggars, us included, anybody that'd go there. You'd give 'em thruppence or tuppence, or whatever you could spare like, and they'd shave you. They were quite good shaves.

And I remember one night we goes along and the bloke says, "Well, here's a doss house," and I says, "What's that?" "Oh," he says, "a place where everybody dosses," he said, "but they won't have a supply of beds." There was a great big room and it had a wooden bench right round it, and running along just in front of the bench was a rope. And I said, "What's all this about?" "Well," he said, "you sit on the bench and lay your hands over the rope and go to sleep." "Well," I said, "Blimey! this will do me." So I did that, and it was quite a good sleep. You were sitting up with your head over this here rope and early in the morning they used to sing out and then they'd undo the rope and let it down on the floor. Well of course you're dead asleep, you'd just flop on your face. So we'd gather up and go in and have a shower that they'd have there, and then down the road again and searching for another barber, and on we went. It was quite a good turn-out, but we forgot time. We got so far away, we didn't know where we were. We were outside in the suburbs and round in the commons and oh it was fascinating. And no money we had to spend, and we'd just go along and somebody would say, "come on in" and there'd be a counter lunch here, and there would be something else there, and we'd go round to the markets and they'd say, "Here, mate, have a feed of these," and you'd have apples. It was astounding how (when I had no money) how I met some wonderful people. It was the best holiday I ever had in my life. It's a strange thing that, that if you go round and you got a lot of money you meet a kind of a false front and you get nowhere. But boy! did I enjoy myself!

However, I suddenly discovered that we were a day A.W.L. (without leave) and along come a military policeman. Great red caps. Always well dressed. They might have been to the war but I doubt it. One bloke said, "Where's your pass?" and we produced our passbook. He said, "You're a day over; follow me." So he took us along, the lot of us. He took us down to a place called Warwick Square. The last time I was back in England I looked round for the place and I didn't know where it was, but they took us there. And right down in the basement was a kind of prison that they had. And in there they had all these A.W.L. blokes. There were chaps dressed up like parsons, and it was a fascinating thing. They were rounding them up all the time these chaps that had broken leave. Some had come from Ireland and they'd drug them back, and they were all in their garbs that they had. Well, we was in there, and the next morning they took us along the road. I'll never forget that there. When they took us along the road, they marched us, and to stop us from running away they handcuffed us. And here we are all handcuffed. I thought "Blimey! Is this all I left Bourketown for, to blooming well starve for ten days and then get marched out of the city in handcuffs?" However, we got back to the Victoria Station and they put us on a train like and back we went down the line, so home I go. And I thought I was right. I come back to my Battalion and got in, and there was nothing said. At last we were going to a place called Polygon Wood. Oh, terrific turn-out! It was one of the big battles on the Ypres Front. Right up on the front. And we were marching along the road and just about the day before we go into the battle I heard my name called. A bloke said, "Hello, what's this?" However, I went along and he said, "Parade before the Colonel." And I said, "What's going?" "Oh," he said, "you're A.W.L." I said, "I thought they'd forgotten about that." He said, "Not on your life. They don't forget about that." He said, "There's a paper been sent over about you." I said, "Right." So in I went. There's the Colonel bloke and he reads out a long rigmarole, "that you did . . . you know, blah, blah, blah, about you being absent without leave in His Majesty's . . . and so on. He said, "How do you plead?" "Guilty." "Right!" "Twenty-one days." I could have fell down flat on my face. Twenty-one days! And I said, "Is that going to prison because I'll dodge this next stunt?" "No," he said, "they dock your pay for that time." "Blimey," I said, "do you mean to tell me I got to go into this next stunt and the next one after that without pay?" He said, "That's how it is, mate. Your pay's stopped." I said, "Hells Bells! this is no good to me." So, however, we went along the line, and I was talking to a bloke after. I said, "Why did they do that just before I went

into this stunt?" "Oh," he said, "I believe if you went into the stunt they can't go you when you come out." Whether it was right or not I don't know.

But, however, I got docked the money, and in I went, and that stunt, by God, talk about a stunt! One of these great massed attacks the British was having against the Germans. Something similar to the Pozieree and all them turnouts and Moquet Farm and all them places down there. So we got going, oh it was about twelve, yes about twelve o'clock in the night. It was raining and it was black as ink. I said to a bloke, "Why do they want to have these?" We had to walk about seven or eight miles. So we gets out on the road and we starts and we got our ground sheets over our rifles and all the paraphernalia of war stuck around us. Steel helmets on our nuts. And away we go. So we'd go along, stop, then we'd go along a bit further and alongside of us you'd see the ammunition trains going up. There was big Spanish mules. They're carting great panniers of ammunition up into the lines. And we went on down through Menon. I remember that quite well. We used to shell hell out of it. And every now and then they'd rock a big 'un in. And it was night, and we're just moving ahead slowly, and you couldn't hurry. And I remember getting up close to the line and we're still moving ahead and we're on big duckboards. These are great big logs laid across a swamp for about three quarters of a mile. And just as we're all on it, packed, the whole lot of us are slowly moving up into the front line, the German somehow or another got our range and he started pouring a big bombardment into this thing. There's shells landing in, and there were men going up, and great shells, and the thing I was on was rocking from side to side, and there was an officer bloke alongside. He said, "By Crikey, what do you think of this?" I said, "It's all right for you to talk—I don't like it at all." And he said, "Neither do I," and he said, "I'm heading." And I said, "It's all right for you to head," I said. You know, you're all level there. I notice when there's no war on or anything like that everybody is in his appointed place, but when you get down in the big box-ons like that, everybody's level, they all talk free. And he said, "Well I'm not like that and I'm heading." I said, "It's all right for you, you'll get cashiered. If I do it I'll go to prison." He said, "I'm going to get cashiered." He said, "I'm not stopping here. My life's too important for this." However, by that time one of the great big shells lifted under a duckboard and threw us all over the side. And there was blokes—you never heard anything like it—there was shouting, you know, it was terrible—blokes getting wounded—so we rushed off the road, five or six of us, and we got in a shell-hole, and we was up to our waist in water. There was a big log there and we're sitting under this log and hypnotising ourselves that the shell couldn't hit us because this log was too important. You know, when you get in a dugout or anything like that you try to hypnotise yourself that you're in a safe place, and you're not at all. Well we waited there and after 2 or 3 days, well, everything got mixed up. Everything was a tangle. And then we got back, back behind the lines, and all the Germans were coming back. And I said to a bloke, "Hello, where did you get the watch?" He said, "I get them off the German prisoners as they come out." He said, "You can sell them to the people." I said, "Blimey, this is where I can make a few bob," so I started, and as the prisoners would come back I'd just go over to them and they were quite satisfied to give you anything. They were happy to get out of this business on the other side of the line. They'd give you watches and I collected quite a few watches and various things like that, and when I looked up a bloke said, "Hello, here's a beauty coming." He said, "Keep your eye on him, Bill." And I said, "Right!" And a bloke come along—a very important looking chap, like a German General—and I looked at him and I said, "Here's me." So I had a Very pistol and I held it up and I said, "Hands up." I was going to get a great haul off him. Blimey! he told me off. I was an English Colonel or something, one of these real pucka English Colonels, and he'd got wounded in the arm and he was coming back and he'd put on a great big German overcoat. And here's me bailing him up. So I said, "Oh I'm off." I didn't wait to hear any more about this. When he opened the coat and I found his uniform I beat it flat out. He said, "I've seen you." And I beat it and ducked round in another place. And he come over to where our officer bloke was and he said to him, "One of your men held me up with a revolver." Our Captain bloke said, "Well, it couldn't be one of my men," he said, they don't do that kind of thing." "Well," he said, "he's somewhere here." He said, "I'd know him again." I thought to meself, "Will you know me?" I said, "Well, I'm out of this," so I hid away and my mates all chucked some old bags over me. And they said, "Well he's not here, sir." He went on, and the Captain said, "How did you get on?" I said, "I got 16 watches." "Blimey," he said, "any good 'uns?" I said, "Yes." Well, I held one out. He said, "That's a good one." He said, "I'll give you forty francs for that." He was after watches, too. And that's how we all got back. We were quite happy behind the lines, but I'll never forget this here bloke in disguise. Blimey, you know, he clocked me in big.

THOMPSON: The war was nearly over, and soon, in a year or so, Bill Harney would go back home to the peace of Northern Australia. He would return for a while to the cattle country, the horses, the lonely plains. Later, with

one of his mates and an aboriginal crew, he would sail the coasts of the north in a lugger, the Iolanthe, fishing for beche de mer. He would become a friend of the aboriginal people, the ancient Australian race, until he would understand them as very few men have done. Meanwhile, he would write bush-ballads, anthropological essays, a novel, and a series of books about his life in the north. He would get quite a name as a talker, too. And from time to time, years later, he would revisit cities like Melbourne, Sydney, and London; but his chosen home would always be a big white simple house on the shore of the Arafura Sea, in a land of tropical plenty, a land of lagoons and banyan trees, wild geese, wild cattle, crocodiles, and black men, far away from it all.

In 1918, though, the ordinary soldier, plain Signaller Harney, saw nothing but horrors around him when the news came through of an Armistice.

Harney: I remember that, and just before it come we were on a big last attack down in the Bullecourt Line. The Americans were just coming in then. They were taking over and I had to stop behind to help the Americans. And there we attacked. And that's when I saw the whole thing of war. The—well, to me, the stupidity of it. And here was the Germans all along the line. Some of them wandering about with dazed looks on their faces, these people that I'd always reckoned were supermen, laying on the ground they'd be with their legs broken, and I'd shout out to some of the chaps "Any of you chaps know English? Come and pick up your mates. We can't carry them back." And they'd come and they'd salute me, you know. Blimey! I'd never been saluted in my life. And they'd pick up these chaps and take 'em back. And then I saw one thing. A most terrific thing. There was a chap, a big tall man, and he had his jaw shot away. And he's got another bloke with a broken arm, and he's got this chap on his back and he's staggering back along the road. And when they saw me they had to put up one hand. Made me very near cry to think of it. And I used to go up and pat them on their backs and then they'd point to their big bottle that they had and it was full of coffee and cognac. And I'd have a drink of this cognac and give them some, and then they'd sit down and pull out their postcards and they'd show you photos of their wives and their children and the farms they were in. And when I saw all these things I thought, "Well, blimey! what's it all about?" You know there it was. I thought to myself, "What's it all about?" It's a terrible thing, war. It's all right for people to be victorious and to march in, but think of the defeated people going back, the horror of it all. It makes you think, you know. The kindliness of people in the war, the horror of war, the sorrow for the afflicted, the vanished. The people that were vanquished. How great they fought and yet how much they lost. I used to see them there, marching back with a slow dogged march. Old men and young men with haggard looks on their faces. Hardly any food. And they all carried their riffles, but no ammunition, going back to a place where their currency is broken down and their women folk is looking for the men that is dead, lying in the fields. And there's the whole thing. Disorganisation. It's a ghastly thing, that.

So gradually I felt a hatred for war and what it stood for. A hatred for discipline and what it stood for. So when I come back to Australia I got off at Melbourne and went straight through. Blokes said to me at Brisbane. "We'll give you an overcoat if you'll become a reserve." And I said, "I don't want an overcoat. I don't want to be a reserve." And I went straight out and I met some mates of mine on the Georgina River right back to where I'd started. And old Andy was there, and all of them, and we had horses, and away I went. I rode 800 miles to Boorooloola on a horse. To forget about it all. I'd only had my deferred pay and that went. And I'd say to them, "What about some tucker?" There was no work. And they'd say, "A young fellow like you! Why didn't you go to the war?" I'd say, "Because that's my business." I'd never crack on that I'd been to the war. Somehow or another I was ashamed of the war. You know, to me it was a job, and when I thought of some people back behind the lines in the German armies and the friends that I had in the war and the men that had died and all that, I thought to myself, "Well, blow it, no more of it for me." And the medals that I had to send for I never sent for. And I often get a message from the 9th Infantry Battalion, where they ask after me, and I think a lot of them because they were good fellows, but I could never get away from the hatred that I had for war and all it stood for. The destruction of people's hopes. Their children that have been educated, then slaughtered. I've seen them die. And you think, Goodness gracious me. It don't sound right . . .

Thompson: It must have been good to get back home.

Harney: When I got back to Boorooloola I saw the blacks there. They were having a tribal war themselves, and I thought to myself, "Good God, here's a man leaving the war overseas behind, and it's still here." And I said to a chap that was there, "Look! I don't see any wounded laying about in this place and they're all fighting with spears." "Oh, no," he said, "they've got a different way." He said, "when two men fight among the aborigines," he said, "they have umpires. Their umpires are their godfathers. They pump in between and they talk and explain the whole thing to one another." And I said, "Blimey!" I said, "that's a good way, it's like a top-level talk. It's a form of arbitration." He adds, "That's it." And I said, "Well, here are the primitive people doing the very thing that we should be doing." "Oh well," he said, "war is a strange thing. It's passed down through the ages and one day we'll overcome it. We'll just get like the old black-fellow, I suppose, and talk things over and everything will be fixed, but until then we've got to educate ourselves." And I thought, "Well, I've already educated myself. Me for the beaches and the quiet places that's around me." And that's why I go back and sit on my beaches out from Darwin, and listen to the sea coming in, and get the crabs and the fish. And my mates come in. And we talk. And everybody's happy.

Editorial

Political Action Needed

AT a time when we hoped we would be able to bring out an issue of Overland in time for the elections we drew up and distributed to many prominent people in the cultural world a draft questionnaire to the political parties.

It was our intention, having received suggestions for the alteration of the questionnaire, to submit it to the parties for their answers, to be published in Overland in time for the elections.

Unfortunately, financial worries have made this impossible. Our publication date was delayed too long.

The questionnaire, however, would have asked the parties to state their policies on the revival of Australian cultural life, now deeper in the mire of neglect than it has ever been. "The artists, who have so much to give in making Australia a richer country, have received little support from successive governments," it read. "Manufacturers, farmers, many other groups have had the ready ear of governments, and generous assistance in meeting their problems, but Australia remains one of the least advanced of the world's major countries in terms of governmental support for the arts."

The suggestions we received were interesting and valuable ones. We found the most widely-based support for a program calling for the following:

In literature, an increased Commonwealth Literary Fund and the establishment of Chairs of Australian literature in Sydney and Melbourne.

In music, for the setting up of a Commonwealth Musical Fund.

In art, for assistance to travelling exhibitions, travelling scholarships, a percentage of art work in public buildings, a claims fund for contemporary Australian works of art, and many similar proposals.

In drama, for greater support for the extension of the work of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, and for an investigation into the part entertainments tax plays in the prohibitive costs of drama and opera tickets.

In film, for a complete survey of the field in order to revive a dead industry.

In television, for the imposition of a quota system to protect Australian writers and artists, and for an examination of the standards of programs.

In other fields, for attention to ballet, folk-music, architecture, cultural exchange and many other aspects of our cultural life, and the allocation of ministerial responsibility for the arts.

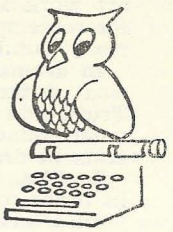
While we did not have time to put this program before the parties, we did conclusively prove, by correspondence with leading personalities in all these fields, the mounting anger and frustration that exists and which future governments will continue to ignore only to their own detriment.

We urge all readers of Overland, and supporters of the magazine, to make it their immediate and continual business to see that these proposals, and all allied to them, are kept in the forefront of the Australian political field for good, and that politicians should be made continually conscious of them as live and popular issues.

The very record of the Menzies Government in this field makes the achievement of the above aims unlikely if it is returned to office, but it goes without saying that the struggle must go on whatever government is returned.

Surely books are worth as much political attention as butter, and music as minerals? Surely "Australian culture unfettered" is an integral part of "Australia Unlimited"?

★ COMMENT



Jack Lindsay (U.K.) writes:

I had just read Vance Palmer's "Golconda" and "Seedtime" when I came on Judah Waten's review of these books in your columns, and feel that I must protest. I admire Waten's own work very much and was therefore all the more surprised at what seems to me very superficial criticism. Palmer in his two novels has created a magnificent character who powerfully embodies in something like fullness the Australian labor movement; that anyone could see him as a defeated man, a reformist, left me baffled. I look forward very much to the third volume. If Palmer succeeds further in developing Donovan, not as proletarian dummy of the kind that would apparently please some people, nor as a defeated conformist as he has been so insensitively taken, but as a real person gathering up the strengths and weaknesses of the Australian working class, the trilogy will be a tremendous achievement. In any event the first two volumes are a landmark in the Australian novel.

Katharine Susannah Prichard (W.A.) writes:

After reading "Voss" by Patrick White, Vance Palmer's "Seedtime" is like a breath of fresh air. It gives a sense of something vital, belonging to our country and people.

I disagree with a critic some covere who suggested that "Seedtime" does not "add to Vance Palmer's reputation as a novelist". I think "Seedtime" does add to Vance Palmer's reputation as a novelist—although that reputation needs no addition.

"Seedtime", in my opinion, is mature in conception. It shows all Vance Palmer's skill and artistry in construction, as well as intimacy with his characters and the realities of situations with which they are involved. There is nothing strained, sentimental or fantastic in his telling of how men and women live, love and work within the setting of "Seedtime".

Simplicity and sincerity are the hallmark of a work of art: that simplicity which is attained by an author's care to use words so that they may give a clear and vivid impression: and the sincerity which comes of expressing the truth as it is found—with or without powerful emotion.

"Seedtime" has these qualities of simplicity and sincerity. The poet in Vance Palmer has infused them with the glow of sensitive interpretation. Somewhere Gorky has said only a lie needs specious; smothering phrases.

In comparison with "Seedtime", "Voss" seems to me anaemic and completely out of tune with an Australian atmosphere and environment.

Comparison of the two books arises because "Voss" has been awarded the Miles Franklin prize for the best novel published during 1957, and "Seedtime" was mentioned in this connection.

While it is true that "Voss" has a style and tricks in the use of words which appeal to sophisticated readers, also the negative attitude towards people fashionable in the U.S.A. and Great Britain, just now, the novel fails to stir our minds to joyous recognition of something true and beautiful, either as a human document, or a weaving of the creative imagination.

Three readers to whom I lent both books have remarked that "Voss" was "heavy going", and that they "thoroughly enjoyed 'Seedtime'."

Why did they enjoy "Seedtime"? I think it was because the descriptions of places and people are written with love and sympathy, giving a vision of experiences true to life and an Australian environment.

R. H. Morrison (S.A.) writes:

Anyone who knows Adam Lindsay Gordon's home near Port MacDonnell, S.A., is struck by a contrast when he calls at Penola, where John Shaw Neilson was born on 22nd February 1872. "Dingley Dell" is kept up at State expense. It houses many of Gordon's possessions, and souvenir booklets dealing with him are on sale there. The Visitors' Book records the names of the hundreds of people who call at the house either out of admiration or curiosity. But at Penola it is not easy even to find the Neilson cottage, and no-one has troubled to put up so much as a plaque to mark the birth-place of the author of "Heart of Spring!", "The Magpie in the Moonlight", and "Native Companions Dancing".

Shaw Neilson's old home was once a four-roomed cottage built of red-gum slabs. It stood not far from the Penola racecourse, but was later moved a mile or so to its present site in Racecourse Road.

After the cottage had been moved it was occupied by more than one generation of the Marks family, and thirty years ago it passed into the hands of a mail contractor, Mr. J. J. Fennell, who lived there with his wife until two years ago, when they moved into a new home built only a short distance away on the same property.

Mrs. Fennell, whom I met on my last visit to Penola and who kindly permitted me to take photographs of the cottage and its garden for my own collection and for presentation to the Archives Department of the Public Library of S.A., was interested in my suggestion that efforts should be made for the continued upkeep of her cottage as a memorial to Shaw Neilson, a suggestion which was followed up with letters to the Penola "Pennant" and Adelaide "Advertiser" and a communication with the National Trust of S.A. The subject was considered by the District Council of Penola, and the Historical Memorials Committee of the Royal Geographical Society approached the Council to ask whether it or district residents would be interested in buying the cottage and moving it to a site on District Council or Crown land. Nothing seems to have come of this project, though recent enquiries showed that the house was still on offer for as little as £300.

It's a moot point whether the tradition of literary monuments and other memorials is of much value. The preservation of "Dingley Dell" adds nothing to Gordon's stature, nor could the belated saving of Neilson's birthplace from demolition or decay alter his reputation. However, it would no doubt give pleasure to many Australians of the present and later generations to be able to see through the old home of a man admired for his poetry and his personal qualities, and this alone would justify action to save the cottage before the chance had passed.

Petition

At Hiroshima
A hundred thousand people were being
Good and bad and all the mixtures that are people:
Then someone dropped a bomb
And the whole hundred thousand
Stopped being.
Some hundreds survived:
The mutilations are on view in several hospitals
And two-headed progeny may be expected.
That was some years ago
And in Japan.
I wasn't responsible.
I signed a petition once,
Asking I know not who
That the bomb happen again nowhere ever.
Today my Gwen and five hundred thousand others
Are being good and bad and all the mixtures that are people
In Brisbane.
I hope someone read my petition.

R. G. HAY

★

Poem About War

What do we ask for, with our knives and guns,
A victory over Japs. or Gauls or Huns
Or just ourselves?
The burning buildings always burn too high;
The flames must always burn the reason why.
There are no halves
In war, for those who kill become the killed,
And what is left is what the dead have willed,
Not just ourselves.
When peace illumines the sky, war is not done;
The victor and the vanquished have not won,
Nor we ourselves.
Each war, like love, will only emphasise
That you and I are all that lives and dies:
Death is ourselves.

R. A. SIMPSON

★

War

After the carnage, butt and trigger wet
With perspiration, could a man forget
The men he'd killed; men he hadn't met
And didn't really hate? And his homecoming;
Plodding round those hollow roads with the numbing
Certainty that bombs had been there first,
Leaving heaven by pointing chimneys cursed.
Never again!
Triumph ran every street
With bands, victory cheers and pounding feet:
Sounds of embarrassed conscience in retreat.
But I, in name the enemy, am dead:
Fleet limbs by the fleeter shot outspread.
A formless gasp drowned as my gouged face
Siphoned blood through the greedy earth's embrace.
To reach an older enemy's remains.
Now I, in turn, wait till a Next War rains
Hot blood that will revitalise these veins!

RODNEY HALL

For Peter Shearwin Chapman

Envy the young artist: all the bright worlds are his—
Their colors and forms, their laughter and their fruit—
Are his, all his, to handle and transmute.
And, being human, he—like other blokes—
Cherishes women, sunlight, beer and jokes.

Love the young artist: through his agency
The lonely find their kin; the cold grow kind.
He is an ear for the deaf, an eye for the blind.
His touch is the soul of courage, and by his powers
Death too shall die . . . and all the bright worlds be ours.

MUIR HOLBURN

★

Prayer From A Point Of View

I thank Thee Lord, that I shall never come
To thank Thee I am very much the same
As other men, apprentice angels who
Embracing Love leave all the loving to
You as Your job. Which frees them to contrive
The easy ways by which a man must live;
And still rejoicing they are much the same
As others are, to get the best of them.
Who harken while the Morning Herald tells
Christ is risen with Imperials.

BRIAN MEDLIN

★

Inspecting The Drains

He felt dank and lonely in the drains,
Following his lamp down the trickling slopes,
Where the cavernous dark, for speech,
Gave only the rumble of far-off trains
Like sullen beasts deprived of their hopes.

And far above he imagined the heels
Knocking on the sun-lit pavement of town
But the head of wet clay was far too thick
For any pausing to see how it feels
When a confirmation of man comes down.

So he plodded, a mite in a tube,
A gaoler or a Christ bringing a light
Or any fool or saint fancy conceived
Or merely an object, a sphere or a cube,
With an onus to see that the drains were right.

And he grew to the light piped through the bars
That guarded the world at his journey's end
And caught how his footsteps grew from the dark,
Went firm like the gaoler or Christ or the stars
With satisfaction that the drain had a trend.

He saw the grass weighted with dazzling rain,
Felt the immense blue too strident for sight,
Unlocked the bars that returned with a clang
Then wryly noted his fetish again—
That he had tunnelled history and found the light.

NOEL MACAINSH

THE STOCKING and the CROSS

by Eunice Hanger

Hark the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn king,
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled . . .

THE gramophone chorus penetrates the steady confusion of backwards and forwards trudging feet, the rustling of wrapping paper, the clink of coins and the tinkle of tinsel decorations rampant.

With the angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Three and eight please. Check five pounds. Die-Ann! Check five pounds . . . Check.

The money-changers work day and night—time and a half at night—to bring peace and goodwill to Woolworth's, especially goodwill.

Squeakers and rattles rampant.

A great cardboard manger stands out in stage-relief above the smarter end of Queen Street. Who was it said it was a Christian's duty to live up to his position? Whatever that is. The over-heated girls behind the hanky counters on Christmas Eve, selling last-minute afterthoughts for Auntie Gert who nearly got forgotten just like last year—they're living right down to their position. Sevenpence madam. Yes they'll boil. I have some myself. Never use anything else. (She sniffs. She has a cold but no time to use one of the sevenpenny handkerchiefs.) And above in the manger the cardboard cows and Virgin and the Child, disproportionately large in accordance with tradition, smile benignantly on a milling street crowd pushing, yelling greetings, laughing fatly and thinly, counting change, waiting for corner lights, dodging a big Ford in tones of mastic and red.

By day the manger is tawdry—bright like a sideshow montage. At night it has a spuriously theatrical effect due to floodlighting. The angels come up rather less like an advertisement for someone's nylon nighties. The Virgin's smile has more of the mysterious complacency of Mona Lisa, and less of dowager possessiveness.

For the love of Christ, Mabel, make up your mind what you're going to give the boy.

Above the counters, toys work continuously and defy the law against perpetual motion. A mighty Father Christmas automatically nods and beckons forever. A clown tumbles and turns on a stick, and an elongated dog falls to pieces and picks himself up in one and does it again. Strong men glue their noses to the window and watch for hours. But they turn away embarrassed by the appeal below the belt—

Can you bear your boy's silent reproach, his quietly-concealed disappointment, when he wakes up on Christmas morning and doesn't find that bicycle by his bed? Hark the herald angels sing.

Grown-up toys in the washing-machine windows turn piles of sheets over and over, bubble and froth, switch off, drain away the suds, pour in fresh water, rinse and blue and wring—and start it up again all over—that washing never gets hung out! A girl walks about a refrigerator window in a garden of snowflakes to show how cool it is, and tells everybody over the public address system how good these refrigerators are and—make mother happy this Christmas with one of them.

Did you finish your presents? I made aprons for the women and hankies for the young ones and boot-tidies for the men. Wasn't I sick of it? I just sat at it till my back ached. I was determined. They can say what they like—presents should be what you make yourself—there's no real feeling in giving things you've just bought, however much they cost. So I said it's dogged that does it and I stuck at it. But didn't I hate the lot of them before I was through! Just as well Christmas only comes once a year, isn't it? I must be getting on. Haven't made my stuffing and we have to go to Church. It's always a terribly rushed morning, isn't it? And the kids next door wake you at five. Harry shouts at them but he might as well save his breath. Yes thanks love, same to you, and a Happy New Year.

In the music-shop, if you push past the refrigerators and washing-machines that they have to sell to make music pay, and go on into the gramophone department, the crooners and sob-sisters are offering you a white Christmas with good king Wenceslas, a silent night broken only by syncopation and Wurlitzer accompaniment, and love, love, love.

The monster raffles are drawn. Someone goes home with a fantastically large cellophane-glittering ham in his arms: it was too late to deliver it so he'll bump home with it on the tram, amid jovial envy of the other passengers. The monster baskets, the cakes, the solitary turkeys and the pairs of ducks and fowls, in the city and the suburbs, in aid of this or that or just in aid of somebody and Co. Ltd.—they're all drawn and won and sent or carried home. The prizes given in aid of the churches which don't believe in raffles but have a hidden number—they're all won and taken home. The Monster Christmas Art Unions have been won and have begun their work of the joyful demoralisation of an honest citizen.

In loving memory of English carol-singers, or not, the Salvation Army belts away at

O come, all ye faithful,

ignorant or uncaring that many of the listeners are mentally putting popish Latin words to the tune—

Adeste fideles, laeti, triomphantes.

Down the South Coast, even the pretence of the carol-singing atmosphere is abandoned. Manger and shepherds and star and wise men and angels and Virgin and Babe fade out behind the enormous champagne bottles and the arty cafes and the lights, lights, lights. The smell of petrol takes the salt tang out of the sea-air. Brown backs and shoulders and legs are unidentifiable below unidentifiable faces masked by sun-glasses. Yards of bright cotton stuff stand out from girls' waists,

and two snips of the same stuff just cope, but brightly, with the censorship above decks. Men playfully put on the girls' Chinese hats, wear bright shirts loosely over bright shorts or swimming trunks, or expose brown torsos hoping that the tan conceals the rolls of paunch-any-day-now. The girls change their swim-suits and skirts and half-mast pants five or six times a day to give a little variety to what threatens to be a colossal bore. Photographers take pictures of them relaxing for the Sunday papers. They drink without gusto and eat without appetite. Their other occupation is to stare the newcomer out of countenance until he produces his certificate of social register—or his Customline. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

The great-lettered signs gawd the streets of the town which is so much more crowded than even the beach. The big cars honk, and the buses weave in and out to take the poorer folk to the less expensive beaches. Pedestrians cross regardless and are not quite run down by the cars moving inch-by-inch in low synchromesh. Children scream for more and more ice-creams and suckers and whistles and sweets and peaches and cherries and fancy hats and jackets and belts and toy cars and planes which do all the things real cars and planes do and aren't much smaller. In shop windows electric trains whizz round and round rails through stations over subways under overhead bridges through level crossings, with signals whirling and lights and crossing-warnings dashing on and off. Exciting. It might almost as well be life.

The sharp faces of the shopkeepers at the beach towns are hungrier than ever at this time of the year. This is harvest time, if only your ulcer doesn't play up. Which it well might. But they aren't going to do this many years more. A couple of seasons now, and they'll retire—buy a block of flats and live on the rents. There'll be enough saved for that and a bit over—saved out of the painless extraction from this careless, over-salaried crowd that has gone on and on for years. Saved from the wreck of health and what price freedom?

Late parties are beginning now. Start at Alex's and go on to Mavis' and that's just drinks and savouries—crab-supper at Diane's but get your beer at Les' and take it on with you to Diane's. Dance? Well, if there's room in that tiny flat when about sixty get in—oh I know she only asked thirty but you know what happens. I thought I'd change at Mavis'. Too long to stay in one thing. Well someone's car'll be available, I suppose. Always is. Don't always know the driver but you get there, and sometimes he turns out to be someone presentable. You can ask him to your place when you have to give your parties. Towards the end you're often short of men—quite a lot go back to town—yes my dear, to work. Grim, isn't it?

Crackers go off. Midnight. Enormous pretty-wrapped parcels are stuck beside the bed where the stocking—purely token, these days—no presents go **in** it—hangs in silence. Rockets go up. Lights and cars and bottles and change your clothes again for the next party.

Remembering a wine shortage, once, at Bethany, "Keep the beer cold," we say. "Remember to keep the beer cold, for the love of Christ."

SWAG

IN a forthcoming Overland article re-assessing "Power Without Glory" ten years after it was published, David Martin says: "There is a stream in art which is no less valid because it is primitive." His remark interested me, because it is a point I have been trying to make to a group of Queensland writers. My point is this. Overland always has been, and always will be, misunderstood and denigrated by many critics because we have set out to do something that few if any other magazines are now doing—we are trying to emphasise that there is "literary" literature and "unliterary" literature, or if you like the more scientific folk-lore term better, "low culture" and "high culture" writing, both of which may be equally valid as "literature". The importance of the mingling of the two traditions in any country is not widely understood in the English-speaking world today, and I was interested to note S. E. Lee, in a review in the latest Southerly of the Stewart and Keesing "Old Bush Songs", saying: "Folklore has been relatively neglected in the History and English departments of our universities (where even today its existence is sometimes denied) at a time when there is a growing interest in the subject overseas."

In Overland we have laid ourselves open to strong criticism, often by critics who praise the tone of the early Bulletin, by trying to do precisely what the early Bulletin did: draw the two streams of "literature" together, and hence strengthen both.

Thus readers find in this issue of Overland authentic "first-hand" material like Harney's script and Dave Smith's "job" ballad, side by side with John Manifold's polished translations.

The point I find myself at issue about with the Queensland writers' group I mention is twofold. Firstly, they misunderstand the terms "low culture" and "high culture", and apparently think there is some kind of patronage in talking of "low culture", where none, of course, is intended; and secondly, while they presumably agree with me that, "high" or "low", the material must be of good literary standard, they disagree with assessments of what is a good literary standard in a given case.

★

"Harney's War", those who were lucky enough to hear it agree, surely one of the most remarkable radio scripts ever broadcasts in this country, and it was a distinct stroke of imagination on the part of the A.B.C. to enter it for the Italia Prize.

A friend who heard the broadcast in Tasmania writes: "I've never met Bill Harney, but I have a couple of friends who know him well, and I read one of his books way back in 1945. I knew he was of all Australians one of the most fair-dinkum, and, as that implies, one of the most radical. But this effort of his, reminiscing about his 1914-1918 war experiences so vividly, was a prodigy of broadcasting. The national program, though I listen to no other, is the natural milieu for hypocrisy and cant, and the elevation of the Establishment. And now comes Harney in unmistakeable Australian accents and attitudes and shows just what a fake the Establishment is—its class distinctions, its religious props, its imperial dreams and its gross betrayal of human hopes and aspirations. This is the most powerful anti-war message that has crossed my consciousness in years."

And the same friend tells me a story of the day the news came about Hiroshima, when the wireless said that if the Japanese didn't surrender the Americans would drop another bomb. "I was serving at the time in a bridge HQ, and I overheard a staff-captain say: "Hope they don't surrender". Overcome with nausea I turned away, and thought involuntarily of those lines Wilfred Owen wrote in 1918:

> But cursed are dullards whom no cannon stuns,
> That they should be as stones;
> Wretched are they, and mean
> With paucity that never was simplicity.
> By choice they made themselves immune
> To pity and whatever moans in man
> Before the last sea and the hapless stars;
> Whatever mourns when many leave these shores;
> Whatever shares
> The eternal reciprocity of tears.

Written 27 years before the first atom bomb, this verse speaks directly to the heart of the matter."

★

The most important pacifistic influences on me, growing out of adolescence in the late 1930's, were Wilfred Owen's magnificent verse. Sassoon's bitter cynicism on war, C. E. Montague's "Disenchantment". Even though I only became (to use the cant phrase) "politically conscious" at the end of the Thirties, the Spanish Civil War was the event which persuaded me to depart from earlier adolescent pacifist convictions and accept the Second World War when it came. It is still a cause of occasional amazement to me that others, only a few years younger, have no conception of the tremendous emotional and political impact the Spanish Civil War had on so many of my generation. But then even the Second World War means nothing to anyone under the age of about 20—which, as many have discovered, makes some kinds of teaching difficult! I was reminded of this not long ago in advising a novelist, who has entered what I feel is a fine war novel in the Mary Gilmore novel competition, to insert a note in the front as to what phrases like "choco" meant.

★

I can't say much about the Mary Gilmore competition yet, as the judging isn't finished, but one most cheering factor was the surprisingly high standard of about a fifth of the entries—which, I should imagine, would be a high proportion of reasonably competent novels or stories to find in any competition. Judging of the competition should be finished by the end of November which, considering there were 40 novels submitted for three judges to read, isn't bad going. Unfortunately the results will just miss this issue of Overland.

★

Reverting to C. E. Montague (a neglected author) for a moment, I was interested to learn from New Statesman Editor Kingsley Martin, when he was out here recently, that C. P. Scott persuaded Martin to leave his London School of Economics job in order to take over leader writing for the Manchester Guardian when Montague retired or died. When Martin got to Manchester Scott wouldn't trust him to do the job, although he did recognise

that he was qualified to write about Kenya. The upshot was—and this is just one of Martin's many funny stories—that Kenya got a terrific bashing in the Manchester Guardian for some years.

I thought that Kingsley Martin's public lectures were rather more disappointing than his more intimate talks, which seemed far less superficial and more hard-hitting—though certainly his A.B.C. Guest of Honor talk was a very fine and percipient one. The New Statesman, with its 80,000 circulation, must be easily the most influential review of opinion in the world today, and certainly some of its material is of an extraordinarily high standard. I have been so impressed by John Berger's art reviews ("The Venice Banale" etc.) that I asked the NS for permission to reprint one, to give Overland readers a taste of really fine art criticism, which doesn't exist in Australia. The NS was kind enough to agree that we could reprint, as was the US journal Mainstream when I asked for permission to reprint one of John Howard Lawson's trenchant analyses of the Hollywood scene. Unfortunately, in our present financial position, it has proved impossible to print these after all.

★

This issue of Overland is being produced well under cost. It's almost certainly the cheapest "ideas" magazine in the world, I should think, taking into account the Australian cost structure, the amount of words contained in the magazine and the quality of the original material we print. I see no prospect of any further issues of the size of this one unless we get more support from readers—which means donations, increased subscriptions, etc.

The Commonwealth Literary Fund has again rejected all the claims of the little magazines except for the two which are already getting grants—Meanjin and Southerly. We don't begrudge these magazines their grants, but it is surely time to point out that there is a literary establishment in Australia, and that the more obstreperous youngsters on the scene, like Overland and Australian Letters, are not wanted. Indeed, it's a fair bet that they are saying all the same kind of things about us that the literary bureaucrats and snobs were saying about Lawson and the Bulletin in the 1890's, when the professors were writing histories of Australian literature which, so far off beam were they in the assessment of the most significant literary developments of the time, have long been relegated to the dustiest stacks of the public libraries and the most woebegone shelves of the secondhand booksellers.

It's certainly true that the Commonwealth Government is most to blame. Maybe it's only continued the neglect of its predecessors on questions of Australian spiritual life, but the difference is that a falling object descends at the rate of 32 feet per second, squared, and the position for films, writers, artists and many more has become catastrophic. We have more to say on this elsewhere in this issue.

Meanwhile, apologies to both readers and writers for Overland's inability to print many fine short stories and poems already accepted; for our inability to print regularly new articles in series such as Vance Palmer's "Writers I Remember"; to review all the books we'd like to review, at the length they deserve; to cover the host of topics we feel we should be tackling.

For instance, we are discussing the possibility of making our next issue a short story issue, cutting out or reducing other features; making the issue after that a "State of Australian Literature" issue, and making the issue after that a Queensland issue in tribute to the centenary of Bananaland and to the writers who live north of the Macintyre. But all these plans depend on increasing support for the magazine.

And, last but not least, we are sure that readers would like to get their copies every three months on the dot—which they're not doing now. The explanation again is—money.

We will of course continue to struggle for recognition by the C.L.F., even though the political philistines in the Commonwealth Parliament will be considerably strengthened by the return, as seems likely at the time of writing, of the Menzies Government. The bush telegraph already suggests that next year could, under the circumstances, see a new excrudescence of the kind of cultural McCarthyism which disgraced the Commonwealth Parliament in the earlier part of this decade.

★

Well over a quarter of a million Australians saw the Hiroshima Panels while they were in this country, and there's a good chance many more will also see them when they stop off here for further Australian showings on their way back to Europe.

This phenomenal public response was at least three times the number that the exhibition organisers thought likely would visit the exhibition.

I received an interesting letter the other day from Iri Maruki and Toshiko Akamatsu, the artists who drew the Panels. They saw how the news of the success of the exhibition in Australia reminds them of the several years they put in taking the exhibition around Japan, to make known to the Japanese people the facts about the bombs. "We collected signatures against nuclear bombs and organised peace groups," they write. "We had to struggle extremely hard."

It is interesting to note their comment that the success of the exhibition in Australia has been reported in a number of Japanese papers.

But the most interesting aspect of the letter is the news of the use to which the Marukis intend to put the £200 royalty sent to them from Australia. "We hope you will allow us to put it into the Nuclear Weapons Art Museum Building Fund," they write with their charming humility. "At the moment the main job is to help the victims of the atom bombs, and this has delayed our work on the museum. However, we are hoping that the museum will be built soon, because we want the people of later generations to see what twentieth century artists have done in the struggle against nuclear weapons."

The artists point out that in the USSR, China and in other countries there are sculptures and other works of art protesting against the bomb. "Although we have not yet approached him, we hope to be able to ask Picasso and others to create works along the same line. Then we hope to gather together all these works of art in the museum, as a great monument to the struggle of artists for peace. We feel this will help to prevent war. What can you do for us regarding this particular idea?"

The Marukis add that they are extremely happy that the first substantial sum of money for the museum has come from Australia. They also state that they have looked at possible sites for the museum, in Hiroshima and elsewhere, but have not yet made a decision. "Perhaps some of you have a suggestion?" they ask.

Well, I don't think there's much doubt that we are as happy as the Marukis that Australian money is going into the museum. But how else can we all, Australian artists and others, help? It was in our name that the bomb was dropped, and we are a wealthy country. I'd like to have any suggestions, and any money sent in will be passed on to the Marukis for the museum.

★

The committee appointed by the Government to consider the Australian copyright law includes a judge, a solicitor, a publisher and a musician—but no writer. And yet writers are as much concerned as anybody. The Australian Journalists' Association protest on this has been rejected by the Government. The AJA has now set up a sub-committee to study the question and has communicated its protest to various writers' organisations, several of which have also protested. The AJA will be presenting its views to the committee; and no doubt other bodies representing writers, artists, photographers and so on will be taking a look at our copyright law (and recent amendments to the British one) with the same object in mind.

Readers will remember that in our last issue I mentioned the "heartburnings" of many writers over the refusal of the USSR to recognise international copyright agreements, stated that I believed this to be unfair, and said that I did not think the Soviet stand could be or should be continued indefinitely. I raised the question because of the forthcoming (at that time) Stockholm Congress for Disarmament and International Co-operation, at which the subject was due to be raised.

Rather to my surprise I was assailed by several people on the grounds of an "implied attack on the USSR". The main point of my critics was that the Russian authorities have paid Australian writers generously in recent years for books, stories and articles printed in the Soviet Union.

This point is, of course, true. The royalties paid by the Russians for the stories they printed in their recent collection of forty Australian stories were extraordinarily generous by any standards—in one case at any rate some fifty times as much as "Coast to Coast" paid for a story when they re-printed it. And to my knowledge no Australian writer in recent years has not been generously dealt with by the Russians.

And not only Australian writers. Robert Graves, in a recent Times Literary Supplement, quite savagely makes the point that he gets more money in royalties from countries like Poland, Yugoslavia and the USSR than from all the Western European countries combined, including his homeland.

So, while we may note that the recommendations of the Stockholm Peace Congress state, inter alia, that "existing conventions regulating international payment of copyright and artists' fees should be unified and made of universal application," and while the Russians continue to take a rather happy-go-lucky attitude to questions of contracts and consultations, we should at least give them credit for a generous tendency to accept the spirit, if not the letter, of copyright requirements.

★

The new edition of Bill Wannan's remarkable book of Australian folk-lore "The Australian" has just appeared, and seems to presage that the book is going to be in the same kind of steady demand for years and years that the famous "Bulletin Reciter" has been.

Probably no-one has done more for our social historians of the future than Wannan, mainly through his weekly article in the Australasian Post. This article, always on some topic more-or-less directly connected with Australian folk-lore, has been read by hundreds of thousands of people every week since its inception three and a half years ago. Bill Wannan tells me he has received over this time 2,500 letters from readers, many containing material of great value to the student of society. He also meets many fascinating people—when I last saw him he was taking some professional buck-jump rider from western N.S.W. home to tea, no doubt to worm some exotic information out of him.

Incidentally, Wannan's other collection of folk-tales, collected from his Post articles, is still available. It's called "Tales from Back o' Bourke" and is published by Bronzewing Books, price 7/6.

★

Kingsley Martin was drawing attention to the fact that I think a lot of critics do agree on, that Nevil Shute is a most capable writer. In nearly all his books there is ample evidence of his masterly ability to tell a story, just as there is, unfortunately, ample evidence of a pot-boiling, formulistic approach to his writing. But then I've never seen any particular reason why a writer shouldn't, if he wishes, view writing books much as a farmer might raising pigs—simply as a means of making money.

The one recent book of Shute's which does stand out as a work of real conviction (although it's not without its pot-boiling overtones) is "On the Beach". I've wanted to have this reviewed in Overland, but have never got round to it. The reason I mention it here is that it is, of course, closely linked to the question I've been talking about—the atom bomb and the future of humanity. I haven't been able to forget the terrible picture that Shute draws of the human race stepping quietly out of existence. Now the famous U.S. director Stanley Kramer has arrived in Melbourne to direct the film of the book. It was good to see his statement in the Melbourne press that he hoped the film would help the world realise more fully the danger of atomic fallout. "I feel very strongly about this," he said. "If it's the right kind of film it will make a big contribution to humanity.

"You will have seen," he said, "that we had a great victory at the recent elections in the States. The American people are ripe for an objective look at the dangers that face them and face the world."

The film, like the book, will be set in and about Frankston, close to my own home. Hereabouts Mr. Shute, who lives in the area, is known of course by his real name, Nevil Shute Norway.

★

Would any Overland reader who has typing they want done consider contacting Miss Helen McKeon, of 122 King Street, Bendigo, Victoria? Miss McKeon, a friend of this magazine, is a polio victim and relies on her typing for a livelihood. She has been provided with an electric typewriter by the Red Cross and types with her arms in slings. Miss McKeon guarantees work of professional standard.

—S. Murray-Smith

Overland Supplement

Science and the Future of Humanity

M. L. Oliphant, F.R.S.

Overland is proud to have the honor of publishing, for the first time, Professor Marcus Oliphant's recent presidential address to the Congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Adelaide. For permission to publish this speech we are grateful to Professor Oliphant and to the Publications Committee of ANZAAS. We are also indebted to the generosity of those who gave money to make the publication of the speech possible. Professor Oliphant is Director of the Research School of Physical Sciences, Australian National University.

AMONG men of science, as among most other men, there persists a concept of science as a detached and dispassionate activity of man. The observer of any event is thought of as outside the event in the sense that what is observed is not influenced by the observer and would go on in just the same way were no observation made. Professor Polanyi[1] has thrown grave doubts upon this view of scientific investigation which he regards as a personal activity. In this address, I fear that I shall depart widely from a detached and impersonal attitude and will imply that unless science becomes **of** humanity and is **felt** as well as appreciated with the intellect, it may well provide the means for mankind to destroy his civilisation, and possibly all life on this planet.

When the first atomic weapon exploded in the desert of New Mexico it blew away the walls which separated the pursuit of natural knowledge from other works of man and changed completely the old concepts of war. A little earlier, when Sir Howard Florey, one of Adelaide's greatest sons, made penicillin available to medicine, a less noisy but equally important part of the present revolution which faces mankind was initiated. Weapons which could destroy mankind, and antibiotics which prevent death from infectious diseases, may appear strange collaborators in producing the dilemma which must be solved before man again controls his own affairs or enjoys the freedoms which he cherishes. Sir Winston Churchill has described the situation in these words: "Man, in this moment in his history, has emerged with greater supremacy over the forces of nature than he had ever dreamed of before. He has it in his power to solve quite easily the problems of material existence. He has conquered the wild beasts, he has even conquered the insects and microbes. There lies before him if he wishes, a golden age of peace and progress. There only remains for him to conquer his last and worst enemy—himself."

"Conquer" is the right word, for there is no evidence that during recorded history man has made any progress whatever in morality. The communal life of today has placed restrictions upon the cruelties which he may practice in public, but he is free to kill, to maim, and to destroy, to suppress and to pervert, in ways and on a scale unknown to even the most bestial of the tyrants of history. What is more, he can do these things impersonally by pushing buttons and using machines which are the products of science. Is it more horrible to kill women and children with the sword than to kill or maim all mankind with radioactive dust? Recent statements by leaders of both sides in the cold war have emphasised the grave effects which will follow war with nuclear weapons, but each has reiterated that such weapons would be used if the other made any military aggression. This insane attitude—perhaps I should say this gigantic bluff—springs from mutual fear and a strange determination to preserve war, or threat of war, as an instrument of international policy.

General Macarthur, speaking of a relatively small war fought with conventional weapons, has said:

> The outstanding impression emerging from the Korean scene is the utter uselessness of the enormous sacrifice . . . A nation has been gutted and we stand today where we stood before it all started . . . This experience again emphasises the utter futility of modern war and its complete failure as an arbiter of international discussions. Those who lack the enterprise, vision and courage to try a new approach, fail completely in the most simple test of leadership.

The introduction of modern hygiene and medicine into the underdeveloped countries has resulted in such a rapid increase in population that the food supplies of the world may prove insufficient, leading to wars of desperation in an attempt to survive. These same people are awakening to recognition of their rights, as human beings, to share the standard of living of the Western world. If they do demand expenditures of metals, petroleum products, and other natural resources on a per capita scale comparable with that which holds in the United States or Australia, there will be nothing like enough to go around. The rate of advance of mankind, demanded in the future by all, may produce conflicts of a most dangerous kind. When this is added to the policies of nationalism and self-interest so rampant in the world, the causes of war are seen to be growing and the self-restraints required to prevent it seem to be weakening.

It is necessary to realise that the world-wide unrest and turbulence in the human family is the result of advances in science and technology. Perhaps the development of rapid methods of communication is the major factor in making the present situation possible. Without radio and modern propaganda methods Russia could not be the colossus she has become. India would still be a colony and extensive nationalism would be unknown in the Middle East or in South East Asia. Without the aircraft America's influence in European affairs would be extremely small and Geneva

would still be the centre of international activity. The hankering of Asian nations to possess motor cars and aircraft is one of the major factors in promoting jealousies between nations.

There was a time when Europeans were amused by the importance of "face" among certain eastern peoples. With the emergence of Russia and America as the two most powerful nations, those nations of Europe who formerly enjoyed great power are preoccupied with the preservation of their dignities. England has felt impelled to become an atomic power, with her own arsenal of nuclear weapons. France makes desperate efforts to preserve French as the language of international negotiation and has announced that she will shortly test her first nuclear weapons. West Germany has demanded nuclear armaments as a price of her continued adhesion to the Western bloc. Smaller European nations have expressed the desire to own their own nuclear weapons. No nation now regards itself as reputable unless it has established an Atomic Energy Commission, even when there are no scientists or technologists to man it and no resources to back it.

These are all part of the mad race which technical advance has initiated and which further advance intensifies. There exists an international instability due to science which is far more dangerous than any lack of equilibrium in the past and for which no precedents are to be found in history. It seems possible that the chaos which science has created can be sorted out only by methods applicable to a scientific age. Can anything be said about what these methods should be?

A great deal has been written and said about the contributions of science to human welfare. It is not necessary to demonstrate again that the positive good which knowledge of nature produces is at least as important as the misuse of that same knowledge for evil purposes. Advances in medical science which lead to the conquest of disease contribute at the same time to the horrors of bacteriological and chemical warfare. Nuclear energy can give unlimited power for industry and to relieve man of the burdens of existence, as well as providing nuclear weapons. The study of human behaviour can lead to methods of treating mental illness or for improving the efficacy of advertising, but it can yield also the techniques of brainwashing and of subversion.

I would like to examine some aspects of scientific activity today to indicate how the social results of the pursuit of knowledge are reacting upon science itself and how men of science are being forced more and more to give thought to the implications of their work for human survival and welfare.

Science and Government

NO body of educated people, least of all those present at a presidential address to ANZAAS needs to be persuaded that a nation cannot survive economically or militarily, which does not recognise the over-riding importance of science and technology in the world today. Nevertheless, the extent of the public recognition of science, and the role which it plays in formulating national policies, are utterly inadequate for the smooth and proper development of a country and a nation such as Australia.

In his remarkable Haldane Lecture[2] for 1955, Sir Henry Tizard, that great administrator, scientist and civil servant, wrote of his own experiences as "A Scientist in and out of the Public Service." He discloses the great part played by Lord Haldane, and later by Lord Balfour, in the establishment in Britain of scientific activities under government auspices. He discusses the extraordinary difficulties confronting those who sought to implement the courses of action urged in the national interest by the Royal Society in the early years of this century. Early in the 1920's Lord Haldane proposed a scheme for a "Committee which would serve the field of Civil Policy in the same way as the Imperial Defence Committee in the field of Military Policy." The Prime Minister of the time, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, was not interested and no action was taken till Lord Balfour resuscitated the proposal in the succeeding Conservative administration. A Committee of Civil Research was set up in 1925 to implement Haldane's "vision of the need of the Cabinet in a scientific era for expert scientific advice." However, this Committee proved singularly ineffective as did the succeeding Economic Advisory Council with its Standing Committee of Scientific Research.

Tizard goes on to ask why economic and scientific advice was so ineffective before the war and concludes that Sir Edward Bridges had put his finger on the real difficulty when he said in his Stamp Memorial Iecture for 1950: "If the full benefit is to be derived from . . . advisers, it is no use putting them in a separate department from those who are engaged on the day to day work of administration in those fields in which advice is needed. Advisers must be given access to the same sources of material as those on which the administrators are working. They must live cheek by jowl with them and share their anxieties and aspirations. Only so can advisers make their influence felt at the early stages when facts are being sorted out, theories are beginning to emerge and the first pointers to future policy are being formulated."

There was a further attempt made in 1940, on the initiative of the Royal Society, to supply the British Government with advice on the scientific aspects of general policy. This ad hoc Committee was successful enough to persuade the Government to create in 1946 the present Advisory Council of Scientific Policy, which includes senior representatives of the Civil Service and which enjoys full access to any confidential information needed for its work. Tizard speaks of the success of this combined committee of which he was Chairman and goes on to say:

"But it is still in a state of evolution, and I shall not be happy about its permanency as a recognised organ of Government unless certain difficulties have been faced and removed. I may seem to be flippant in referring to one difficulty, but as I have experienced it, on occasion with most unfortunate results, I shall not hesitate to mention it. Most scientists of distinction are highly individualistic in character. Now, in 'pure' science there is little room for compromise. There is often room for differences of opinion which can be acute as in any other branch of human endeavour; but in the end these differences are settled by experiment. I remember an occasion when someone was bold enough to differ violently from Lord Rutherford in print. I asked him if he was going to reply. He laughed and said, 'What's the point of it? We shall know the truth in ten years' time'. But compromise is the rule rather than the exception in the grossly inexact science of politics: an appeal to experiment is usually impossible, and the need

for action may be imperative. So when there is room for much genuine variety of opinion on matters of policy, scientists are apt to behave, in the Gilbertian phrase, like party leaders in each street maintaining with no little heat their various opinions, especially if they are physicists. I have not been free from this failing myself in the past, but I have naturally been more acutely conscious of it in others. It was this characteristic that was largely responsible for the delay in settling a policy of Higher Education in Technology. And it is for this reason that I think that a committee consisting solely of scientists is an ineffective instrument of policy: they need to be leavened by hardened administrators, or their like.

"A much more serious difficulty is caused by the deplorable intellectual gap that exists between those who have had a scientific education and those who have not. Practically all Ministers and members of the administrative civil service belong to the latter class. Every scientist who has been concerned directly or indirectly with the formulation or execution of policy must have experienced the baffling difficulty of conveying his thoughts to someone who does not know the a b c of the subject. It is different with economics. Many civil servants have had a university education in economics, and even a classically educated Treasury official acquires much knowledge of economics in the ordinary course of his business. He can argue intelligently with economists on their own ground, and can appreciate the reasons for their advice even if he deprecates the jargon in which they are clothed. I do not want to make too much of this, or to imply that there is a lack of sympathy between scientists and administrators. There is not, as a rule; but there is a lack of understanding, which will continue until far more administrators have had a scientific education. At present the number of scientifically educated men entering the administrative civil service by competition averages one a year, which is not enough. No criticism of the Civil Service Commission is impled here: I simply state a fact."

Tizard was concerned in his address with science and government in Great Britain. Here in Australia we have not yet begun to create instruments of policy which take care of the basic science and technology on which our long-term future depends. Advisory Committees on all sorts of problems of economics, industry, trade and immigration have been established to advise on short-term policies of economic expansion and survival. It is true that CSIRO has an enviable record of achievement in the application of science to Australia's problems and that it has largely replaced the universities as the home of pure scientific research. It is true also that there is well directed activity in defence research, that the Department of Development has a Bureau of Mineral Resources and that an Atomic Energy Commission is now at work in this country. But these are peripheral activities of Government and the Chairmen or Chief Scientists are merely available for discussion and are not participants in the foundation of all general policies, almost all of which now involve many elements of science and technology.

Sir Winston Churchill is credited with two statements concerning the place of men of science in government, each of which contains a great element of truth, but of truth distorted in a thoroughly Churchillian manner. He said of a proposal that scientists take part in the actual processes of government: "We want scientific, not scientistic government!" and again: "Scientists should be on tap, but not on top!" These remarks are altogether too sweeping, or they ignore the fact that the body of men trained in science and its applications is now large enough to include a general cross-section of the population. Among scientists there must be now the same likelihood of finding a leader of note as there is among lawyers, industrialists or professional politicians. The concept of the specialist as always the servant is strange in a world which depends increasingly upon the knowledge of the expert in every field.

It may well be that one of the most significant actions of the President of the United States in recent years will prove to be the appointment of Dr. Killian as his adviser in scientific matters. Already there are signs that a more balanced picture of the meaning of the scientific aspects of peace-making is influencing American policy. As disinterested scientific advice becomes more directly available to those responsible for vital national and international decisions, the prospects of disaster through the misapplication of science are lessened.

One of the gravest tasks of government of the future will be to guide nations through the increasing number of social and economic changes all of which are brought about by the advance of science and technology. Adaptation of industry and of national policies of finance and development, to the rapid changes due to increasing scientific knowledge, will become the primary task of statesmen when the international conflicts of the cold war are resolved. The reactionary instincts of both right and left in politics, will need to be swept away by a new liberalism, which can preserve the cherished freedoms of democracy in the ever changing social patterns which lie ahead. The men of science who create new concepts, the technologists who make them practically useful and the economists and sociologists who must fit them into the social structure—all must play an important and increasing part in the formulation of policy, if disaster is to be avoided. No one kind of wisdom can be sufficient in the future.

The creation of an Australian equivalent of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee in Britain could lead gradually to a new awareness in the Commonwealth Parliament and Government of the social significance of science.

Secrecy in Science

ONE of the grave difficulties faced by a large section of the scientific community today is the need to work under conditions of secrecy. These men cannot discuss their work with scientists outside their own particular activity and their only medium of publication may be the secret or restricted report. They are cut off very effectively even from their fellow scientists in other secret establishments, by the policy of 'compartmentalisation" thought to be essential for security, and from scientists in non-secret work because their publications are not freely available. They rapidly become forgotten men. Despite the possession of resources and facilities for their work which are on a lavish scale unknown to ordinary scientists, the results of their investigations do not lead to recognition within the world of science. They are seldom elected to academies of science or to the Royal Society, and they have little opportunity to qualify for higher degrees, to receive honorary degrees, or to become Nobel Prizemen.

As a result of this relative professional isolation, few men of science of high calibre, and with an interest in fundamental science, are content to remain in secret work. Such men will serve cheerfully in a conflict, as in the last war, but they soon move back to academic or industrial employment when fighting ends. Behind the screens of security there is apt to accumulate a body of men of average ability, unleavened by the independent minds upon which real advances always depend. Secret work tends to be unattractive to men with the background and originality able to "deal with circumstances for which there is no direct precedent". For instance, the development of methods of generating and detecting centimetre radio wavelengths for radar was not carried out by the staff of the radar establishments, nor even by the radio industry, but by basic scientists from universities who were undeterred by the precedents of established electronics and were able to break completely with existing practice.

This situation is serious and could well threaten the efficacy of the defences of the free world. I am one of those who believes that the quality of the scientific and technological effort in a non-secret defence system would more than counterbalance the knowledge which an enemy would have of our developments, but I recognise that while secrecy is the normal condition in which defence science operates we must conform. Here, in Australia, the problem of security in scientific matters is approached in a much more sensible manner than in some other countries. However, defence science would be healthier still if ways could be found to counterbalance the grave disadvantages which prevent general recognition of the quality of men engaged upon such work. Why should ANZAAS not have a section of Defence Science?

Changing Attitudes in Science

THE entry of the state into science and applied science on an ever-growing scale is influencing these activities in several ways. In the first place, realisation of the over-riding importance of science in defence, in promoting health and industrial well-being, and in increasing the standard of living, has meant that the amount of money provided for scientific work has increased very rapidly. This has produced a greater demand for men of science, engineers and technologists, better conditions for their work, and, above all, a greater appreciation of the part which science plays in modern living.

However, this very flowering of science under government auspices has produced several disturbing results. In most countries, the rapid expansion of official scientific activity and the consequent shortages of trained men have meant that staff can be made available only by robbing essential institutions, such as schools and universities, of teachers and research workers. In some underdeveloped areas of the world this removal of science teachers has had a catastrophic effect on teaching and even in the United States, Britain and Australia, teaching has suffered drastic reductions in recruitment and in the standards of instruction in both schools and universities.

A more serious result has been the deterioration of that basis of science which has guided the search for natural knowledge and its applications for the last 300 years or more. The rigid discipline of science has insisted upon the most searching enquiry into every experiment or theoretical investigation, and has demanded that a paramount duty is to publish all results. Modern science is the fruit of ruthless checking and sifting of all facts and theories. There has been no room for complacency or for the covering up of errors.

Now, however, this insistence upon complete honesty and openness is challenged and the challenge comes primarily from government establishments and especially from those activities which are associated with defence or with national prestige. It has long been an axiom that government policy is always good, and that the actions of government servants in promoting that policy are always right. Like bank clerks, bureaucrats must never be wrong, and if a mistake is made the institution concerned must never admit it. This concept is invading the field of science, particularly in those branches where secrecy plays a part. I want to give illustrations of this perversion of the integrity of science by half truths and downright lies.

The controversy which rages about the question of the effects of fall-out of radioactive substances, following tests of nuclear weapons, has brought to light the difference between scientific truth and scientific facts colored or distorted to accord with some particular political or emotional belief. Those who believe that atomic bomb tests should cease are apt to exaggerate the effects of radiation due to fall-out from tests, thereby destroying the very solid reasons which exist for a halt to tests. Such emotional scientific dishonesty is deplorable, but it is less reprehensible than is the distortion of facts by some of those most intimately concerned with the development and testing of nuclear weapons. These scientists, who have vested interests in bomb manufacture, or who wish for the approval of a particular section of political opinion, claim that radioactive fall-out causes no ill-effects whatsoever. Recently, evidence was given in a television program[3] in the United States that testing of atomic weapons must continue because, while the United States would respect any ban on testing, Russia was bound to cheat. The statement went on to say that underground explosions could not be detected with certainty, at almost the same time that it became known that detection was practicable and the President's special adviser on scientific matters was declaring that a ban on tests could be policed. The full facts have never been revealed, but those who oppose the official view are told that they cannot speak with any authority because they are not familiar with secret information. There is a growing tendency for both government officials and scientists to make ex cathedra statements, often in glaring contradiction with the facts, and when criticised to hide behind the cloak of "security".

There is evidence that publication of experimental results, or conclusions drawn from known facts, which are at variance with an officially proclaimed opinion, has been deliberately prevented when the scientists carrying out the work are public servants. Such muzzling of criticism is a new and disturbing ingredient in science. Strangely enough, it is apt to be practised most extensively by those who are most vocal in their opposition to the undoubted lack of democratic freedom in the Soviet countries.

A further disturbing feature of present-day science is the growing tendency to boast blatantly

of alleged achievements in science or technology. This is done sometimes by, or with the full connivance of governments, in order to impress other nations with their technical supremacy. On both sides of the iron curtain this type of boasting has surrounded the whole program of satellite launchings. The pretence that these were scientific projects, carried out at great expense in order to contribute to the work of the International Geophysical Year, has largely disappeared. The satellite programs are now admitted to be offshoots of the development of long-range missiles, capable of carrying nuclear weapons. The very excellent scientific work carried out at Harwell, in an endeavour to achieve controlled thermonuclear reactions, was exploited by the British press in a campaign of national jubilation that Britain had been successful in this great international competition. The claims made by the scientists concerned, and published in "Nature"[4] were tentative and in accord with the traditions of science. The highly exaggerated statements made by government spokesmen and by the press created an atmosphere in which the subsequent discovery that the neutrons were not thermonuclear in origin received either very little notice or created an exaggerated depression.

Sir Brian Matthews, Professor of Physiology in University of Cambridge, has written[5] trenchantly of this trend towards exaggeration of national achievement in science and technology, but unfortunately he is critical of only Soviet offences. He believes that it is a disease of the mind in the present social order, and that it needs study and treatment now that it has been recognised. The surprising feature of this blatant national advertising of exaggerated achievement is that it is so successful.

Australians may feel that in these things they are but spectators, somewhat amused by the gymnastics of the colossi in the fields of defence and offence. However, a little thought will reveal that in our own way we subscribe to these new doctrines. "Public relations" in scientific matters has sometimes become "public exaggeration". Many of us have been tempted into emulation of the antics which are so foreign to the search for truth.

One of the reasons for the development of this attitude is the almost total absence of scientific journalism in Australia. It is true that some men of science have written for the newspapers and that some reporters make an endeavour to write correctly about scientific matters, but newspaper reporting of science and tchnology is, in general, insufficient, unreliable and poor in quality. This is surprising in a country where scientific activity is so strongly developed under government auspices, and where the future is so critically dependent upon the expanding application of scientific knowledge.

A primary purpose of ANZAAS is to improve the public appreciation of science and of its effects upon society. I fear that its congresses are becoming gatherings of specialists and that we are in danger of losing sight of our obligation to make science known to the people. ANZAAS publishes the Australian Journal of Science, but can it claim that this is other than a journal for scientists? It may well be that in these critical days we should change our course and place greatest emphasis upon the very difficult task of informing the layman of the true significance of the scientific method, of the power of its application to human problems and of the dangers of its misuse. I shall refer to this again later.

The Threat of Annihilation

A FEW days ago the United States nuclear-powered submarine "Nautilus" made an extended voyage beneath the ice of the north polar regions. This significant feat has been hailed primarily as an achievement extending the bastions of Western defence by providing indestructible moving launching bases, virtually in Soviet territory, from which ballistic missiles could be hurled upon Russian bases, industries and centres of population. A new era of travel beneath the sea, perhaps as significant as that of travel by air, has been initiated, but this great technological triumph is viewed primarily as an incident in the war of nerves offering some slight advantage to the West in a military stalemate—always supposing that Russia has no nuclear-powered submarines!

This incident is symptomatic of a state of affairs where military policy is passing out of the hands of the three military services and becomes part of the work of the United States Atomic Energy Commission, the British Atomic Energy Authority and the corresponding body in the U.S.S.R., or of the establishments for the development of ballistic missiles, all of which are predominantly civilian organisations consisting effectively of scientists and technologists. Each major technical advance made in these institutions determines the direction of development of military policy and planning of a far greater extent than does the strategic planning of the defence staff. Of the total expenditure in the world upon scientific and technological developments of all kinds, some 70 per cent. is devoted directly to the war effort. If the scientific effort indirectly related to defence and offence is added, a surprisingly large proportion of the world's scientific and technical resources is spent upon preparation for war. Of course not all of this work is wasted—for instance, improvements in military aircraft and tanks are often applied to passenger aircraft or vehicles of various kinds, while radar gives greater safety in civilian flying or in the navigation of ships. However, from the point of view of this discussion, we recognise that over 70 per cent. of the world's scientists and technologists are employed directly, or indirectly, in the development of weapons of war. High salaries and excellent facilities for work ensure that defence science recruits adequate numbers of men, even though the best brains remain outside the restrictive barriers of security. The sheer weight of effort and the lavish expenditure of money ensures that results are achieved, while many acadmic scientists of high standing are employed part time as consultants and keep the quality of the work at a reasonable level.

The results of these efforts in the major countries are enormous and the world now stands on the brink of catastrophe. The two major factors responsible for this state of affairs are nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles.

The ordinary fission (Nagasaki type) weapon releases energy equivalent to the explosion of 20,000-100,000 tons of ordinary high explosive. When detonated, it produces temperatures of tens of millions of degrees centigrade and pressures of millions of atmospheres. At such temperatures and pressures fusion reactions can be initiated in a surrounding blanket of deuterium. Under special conditions the amount of deuterium undergoing fusion before the whole flies apart can be large,

in which case the explosive force is due mainly to the fusion reaction. The weapon is then said to be "clean" because it produces little more radioactivity than is due to the fission detonator. However, it is easier and cheaper to produce a more compact and lighter weapon if a relatively small fusion boosting blanket is surrounded in turn by natural uranium in which the neutrons from the deuterium reaction produce an enormous release of fission energy. Such a weapon is known as a "dirty" bomb. Both types can be made without limit to explosive power other than that imposed by capacity of the carrying vehicle. Weapons have been tested, and are now in the armouries of the nuclear powers, which release energy equivalent to the detonation of 20 million tons or more of high explosive. Such weapons have a radius of destruction such that the largest of the world's cities can be destroyed completely by a single weapon, even if it falls several miles from target centre. A recent official estimate made in the United States estimates that 160 million people within the United States would be killed in a major attack with these weapons upon the centres of population and industry. This is the majority of people in North America.

Up till the present time nuclear weapons would be delivered by fast, high flying aircraft. Against these, an efficient radar screen giving early warning and accurate location of invading bombers, and guided missiles fired from intercepting aircraft or from the ground, can give some degree of protection. However, the successful launching of artifical satellites gave visual evidence of the advanced stage of development of new vehicles for carrying nuclear weapons—the so-called ballistic missiles. Initially, following the German V2 rockets, the long range versions of these missiles have used liquid fuels and liquid oxygen as propellants and the preparation period has been many hours. Hence, even following an alert, liquid-fuelled rockets could be launched only after a period of time and the dangers of immediate retaliation, without reflection, were avoided automatically. Now, solid fuels are replacing the liquid fuels and the era of true push-button warfare across the oceans is at hand. By making launching platforms mobile, or by locating them deep underground, rocket bases can survive any degree of surprise attack and retaliation becomes certain, immediate and effective. Methods of guiding missiles to their targets over distances of 5,000 miles or more have been worked out.

The two great nuclear powers now stand armed with H-bombs deliverable at a moment's notice and sufficient in number and power to destroy completely the whole of North America and of Western Europe, and to do great genetic harm to the remainder of mankind. Bertrand Russell, the British philosopher, stated dramatically in the House of Lords[6]: "You are faced with this simple situation: Do you wish the human race to continue? If so, you can never have another World War." He went on to say: "I hope most profoundly that men will care enough about their own species and about what it can achieve, to forego the rather futile old games of power which men have played for centuries and which now are no use. I do not feel confident of it. I think it quite possible that before the end of the present century no human beings will exist." In the earlier part of his speech he supported a move for world government, saying: "The reason why world government has become so much more necessary than ever before is entirely connected with nuclear weapons . . . safety through strength is now no longer a possible thing."

These are solemn words, calling attention to a state of the world which arises from developments in science. I believe that the majority of men of science agree with Lord Russell. Those who disagree are those politicians and opportunists who will allow their personal or national interests to outweigh all thought for humanity. They are not yet convinced that they can no longer bluff through an international situation which is beyond their full comprehension. They merit the words of General Macarthur which I quoted earlier in this address.

There is a growing awareness among scientists that they cannot divorce themselves from the social consequences of their work. If the misuse of science in warfare leads to serious harm to the human race the pursuit of science will undoubtedly come to an end. Even if the worst does not happen, but the world remains for a long time on the brink of disaster, there could be a wholesale reaction against science and scientists. The ability of man to apprehend nature and to speculate about matter, the universe and existence itself, is one of his noblest attributes. It leads to social and economic progress at an accelerating rate, but it can also exterminate mankind. I believe passionately in the scientific method and all that it can achieve to raise the stature of men, but I share Bertrand Russell's fears that wisdom in the use of science may not prevail.

The Future of ANZAAS

I WOULD like to end with a plea for the reorganisation and reorientation of ANZAAS to make it better as an instrument for advancing the understanding of science by the people.

At the present time we are in grave danger of fogetting the purpose for which ANZAAS was formed. As I have remarked already, it has become a cloak for the meetings of specialist societies, for the reading of specialist papers or for discussions of a specialised character. It is becoming difficult even for the scientist to be able to attend with any profit meetings of other than his own section. The ordinary man with an interest in science is left out in the cold except for a certain number of public lectures of a more general character. The concept of ANZAAS as an organ of the relation of science with the society in which it is carried on has virtually disappeared.

The present situation arises from the attitudes of scientists themselves and of scientific institutions, including the universities. It is a pernicious practice to make a contribution towards the expenses only of those who will read papers. So, sessions become cluttered up with unrelated and often trivial papers which are rattled off at a pace which prevents proper presentation or discussion. Even when a symposium is arranged it is often merely a presentation of rather irrelevant snippets. Sections vary greatly in the suitability of their proceedings for ANZAAS and the same section will show marked differences in quality from congress to congress. This last is due largely to the habit of appointing young and inexperienced men as sectional secretaries, this inconsiderable but rewarding task being avoided by the senior scientists whose job it should be.

Between congresses ANZAAS virtually dies. I wonder the more, now that as President I have seen something of its workings, how ANZAAS continues to command the devoted efforts of its

Secretary and its other continuing officers? To serve Australia properly, ANZAAS must be revitalised. It should mean for men of science more than a joy-ride at fairly regular intervals. It should concern itself with the all important questions of science and its reactions upon society and of the way science fits into our society. It should be concerned to tell the ordinary man something of the significance of recent advances in science and should make him aware of the basic nature and meaning of scientific activity. It should also enable scientists to learn of advances in related disciplines. It should not be an occasion for specialist meetings. These belong with the specialist societies.

The Association contains already sections concerned with many of the social sciences. I believe that we could with profit widen its scope still further so that it became a common meeting place for scientists, social scientists and those professing the humanities. Discussion between these groups and between them and the public, could do much to mend existing rifts and make of science what it should be—one of the greatest of the humanities. Congresses should not shirk discussion of really controversial questions such as population control, morality in a technological age or the relations between science and religion.

To this end, perhaps the Association should become one for the advancement of learning rather than of science—ANZAAL instead of ANZAAS. Its members might well have duties between congresses, for instance on committees to study some of the vital questions I have cited and to report to subsequent congresses. The Australian Journal of Science might become an organ of relationship with society as well as between scientists. I have in mind something along the lines of The New Scientist in England, but with a greater emphasis on sociology and the humanities. It is already financed and so would not need to pay its way for some time to come. The last number includes a very technical paper on radioactive fall-out which would be unintelligible to the ordinary man though of the utmost importance for the future of his race, and five specialised letters to the editor. There are specialised reports of meetings of three scientific societies and reviews of books, most of which are for professional scientists. Obviously, a great deal of this could be eliminated in favor of the more general discussions which are essential if science is to survive as a free activity of man.

I am not diffident about these suggestions. I put them forward with all the emphasis I can command, not because I believe them to be precisely the pattern which should be followed, but because I am convinced that something along these lines must be done, and quickly, if this country is to be governed by men alert to the problems of the time, elected by informed and intelligent citizens.

REFERENCES

(1) M. Polyani, "Personal Knowledge," London, 1958.
(2) Sir Henry Tizard, "A Scientist in and out of the Civil Service," 22nd Haldane Memorial Lecture, London, 1955.
(3) Quoted in The Free Spirit for May 1958.
(4) Nature.
(5) "Sputniks and Cold War," The English Speaking World, London, 1958.
(6) See ABC Weekly, June 18, 1958.

Aileen Palmer

THE CHANGING FACE OF AUSTRALIA

Notes on the Creative Writing of Katharine Susannah Prichard

II

IN an article on Katharine Susannah Prichard (Meanjin, Spring, 1951), Muir Holburn says:

> It is hard to think of any English-speaking novelist in whose work is felt so constantly the struggle, the tension, the active relationship between man and nature, with man's arts, his physical and intellectual powers being developed and strengthened in the combat.

In "Working Bullocks" this active relationship is felt at nearly all stages of the story, in which it is almost as though trees can speak. Nowhere perhaps is the beauty of the bush more finely evoked—as a pervasive presence, part of the complicated substance of life, the medium people work in that influences the pattern of their thoughts. The unity behind all the forms in which natural forces move is suggested in the picture of midday heat in the forest:

> Yellow leaves fell down and fluttered through the air as though they were butterflies. The butterflies fluttered and fell as though they were yellow leaves, so hot and still the air was.

The shock of his mate's death, drawing half-paralysis over Red Burke's mind, is impressed on us indirectly, through the images that surge unobserved around him:

> The trees lisped and swayed lightly as they had been doing all the morning, a little warbler went over his lilting melody. But quiet surviving that faint murmur of wind in the trees, insects and the calling notes of the birds, was ominous for the lack of men's voices and the noises of men and beasts working together, which had resounded a few moments before. Trees were black in the sunshine and threw black shadows, though the sky was still blue as wildflowers straying out from the forest across the station yard. The bullocks lowed uneasily, sensing death in the air.

Red's need to abandon his unfinished contract and disappear into the forest for some time is something natural and well understood by the other people working among the timber. One of the best bullock-drivers in the south-west where "Bullock-drivers don't grow on gooseberry-bushes —leastways not men who can handle a team and haul karri off stiff hillsides", Red is a man of immense vitality and physical courage.

His recovery from the feeling of rage and anguish at Chris Colburn's death that drives him blindly along up the course of a creek, oblivious to the diversity of continuing life in the forest through which he moves, begins when he is able to enjoy the spectacle of a chestnut brumby stallion coming down to drink at a waterhole with his mob:

> Every nerve and muscle in the stallion's splendid form was strung to the need for instant flight, as he paused where he had stood before, head thrown back, sniffing the wind, scarlet nostrils, white foreleg raised . . . Red laughed, a queer, crazy laugh of breaking grief and joyousness. Mind, body and soul threw off their burden. He began to see lights in the forest, the luminous green of the budding sapplings. A wild-fire passion of admiration, of lust for possession, took hold of him.

The skill and patience Red shows in capturing and taming his chosen stallion, and later on the delight he finds in accepting the mortal challenge of a river in flood, are expressions of the same sureness he always shows in combat with natural things. The regard in which he is held among workers who know him is expressed not only in the eagerness of their welcome when he reappears in the township, but in the apprehensive concern of Billy, when a "pommy" engine-driver pauses in his loading of logs to yarn with Red:

> "Thought you was through with bullock-driving, Red", Bob Carewe, the engine-driver said. Billy cursed, kicking the hook which held a log on the whim, so that the log and chain fell with a deafening clatter. "If you're born and bred to a thing, you can't get away from it, seems to me, though," Bob continued philosophically. "It follows you, hangs on to you . . ." "Too right," Red agreed. "Remember," Bob said, "how I tried to chuck engine-driving when a pal of mine was killed, shunting." "Look here, Bob, those bloody logs've been lying since Gord knows when, and if you don't get a move on shiftin' them, the boys'll . . ." Billy's wrath burst violently . . . "Sort of thing he would say" he told the men at crib-time, when Red was out of hearing. "And Red just beginning to look as if he could stand the sight of me . . . not being Chris."

Resentful, moody, generous and compassionate, Red Burke is sympathetically seen at each stage of the story. The strength and weakness making up his character are suggested early through the critical gaze of Mary Ann Colburn, mother of his mate, who, meeting him on the road and watching him work, wonders how she could disapprove of a man so robust and fit for his job, till she studies his features, immature and unhardened: "A motherless foal!" she concludes.

The Blue Flowers rare, which Red had counted on winning with the brumby he had encouraged his friends to back, is a turning-point in his life that sets him apart in his mind from the other men. When at the last moment he feels compelled to arrange for his own horse to be disqualified after winning the race, the confused emotions that led him into this action are something that a mixture of pride and diffidence won't let him explain. He avoids any further contact with Deb Colburn, whom he had counted on marrying once he was able to get together a bullock-team of his own—his basis of independence.

Now, feeling that he has forfeited Deb's confidence as well as that of her family and the others who had backed his horse, he takes to drinking himself blind every week-end, nursing a bitter grievance against life that he takes out on his mate and his bullock-team. Ruthless and evil-tempered

on the job, he becomes a man whom other men fear to work with, till Mark Smith arrives, a man from outside the district, who doesn't know the first thing about handling bullocks but has played his part in struggles on ship and shore, and has no fear of Red Burke.

In a world nearly enclosed by the tall timber, where men work singly or in pairs or in small groups, and meet few others on an ordinary day, the beginning of another pattern of living is seen around the sawmill at Karri Creek:

> Whether you reached it by winding roads through the bush, on a day of blue sky when the road had gay fringes; or whether you came on it by the rake, travelling along steep grades of the hills, and could see the forests stretching away in a sea, with hills and dales for waves, Karri Creek township was a shock to you.
>
> It might have been any little factory town in an industrial district, there were so few gardens about the small boxes of houses. They were rammed so close together, looking all the same, or nearly all the same, built of waste timber from the mills, ruddy-brown, with roofs of corrugated iron . . .

After a fatal accident at the sawmill, involving Mary Ann Colburn's only remaining son, a strike breaks out among the timber-workers and continues for some time, but collapses finally with nothing gained. To Mark Smith, who has taken an active part in organising it, this is a bitter defeat.

> "I've never seen finer men to look at than you men, down here in the Karri," Mark said. "Strapping young chaps! But what's inside of you all? You're no more than children—and you haven't got the guts of children who sell papers on the streets."

Mark leaves the district then—a figure of courage, who has won the heart of tough old Mary Ann Colburn. His notions on the class-struggle are strange to the others, who have never thought in terms of a larger world than "the south-west".

In the eyes of Mark, who watches him with sympathy and interest in the weight he would probably carry if he flung himself wholeheartedly into a struggle, Red Burke is strangely pathetic, afraid as he is of opening his mind up to further blows.

The conflicts in this story are various as the sounds of life in the forest. For Red Burke one stage of conflict ends when Deb Colburn breaks through his barrier of silence, defying her mother's disapproval of Red.

> "Nice team you got there, Red!" Mrs. Colburn's derision was eerie as the cry of a bird. Red turned, gay in his triumph. "Not me own," he flung back at her. "Taking 'em into Marritown for Peter Moody!" The bitterness of defeat whipped Mary Ann Colburn. "I'm too long in the tooth to make terms with you, Red Burke . . . It's what Mark said . . . You're no better than the beasts you're driving—the pair of you. You'll be driven—worked like them." . . . The team moved slowly along the road into distances of the trees, sun-dappled, flecked with shadows. Red and Deb moved with it, and the forest flowed on, over them, with its silences, whisper of leaves, murmur of small birds, flung through by the laughter of the butcher-bird, melodious and cruel.

THE poetic symbolism in Katharine Prichard's writing is not insistent but gently pervasive, like the soft whisper of leaves. So, in the opening pages of "Intimate Strangers", a long silence between Elodie and Greg Blackwood, husband and wife, sunbathing on the beach, is broken by Elodie's statement:

"The mirage is breaking up."

The mirage at which Elodie has been staring is a bank of clouds, appearing over the sea like white cliffs; but the image also suggests the theme of the book—the dissolving contours of accepted illusions in the early 'thirties.

"Mirage" was the name chosen by Katharine Prichard for the first novel in the goldfields trilogy, that was finally published under the more jovial title "The Roaring Nineties". In that novel the word had its particular content—the dream of golden wealth and independence that lured men into the remote wilds of Kalgoorlie—but in other works it recurs and hovers lightly, with its glitter of an imagined happiness, unreal in its foundations.

The poetic element felt in "Coonardoo" and "Working Bullocks" is less in evidence in "Intimate Strangers", where human activity and natural surroundings are less interwoven, as the story moves between Perth and nearby holiday resort. The detail of everyday life is precise and exact, from the color of the scones that Elodie bakes to the fish the Italian Tony brings to the door; but this is essentially a story of separate people, held by the same conventional bonds and moving in the same surroundings, but whose work and inner preoccupations are different. The separate, inner worlds of their imagining are apt to be more real than the links that hold them together, but it is on the understanding of these links, and their relation to a larger world, that the story turns.

At the holiday resort some barriers are relaxed, while giving time for Elodie and Greg to ponder on the meaning of their harassed and arduous lives, and the lives of others they meet.

> If you saw Dirk and Tony in swim suits on the beach you would think they were made for each other . . . So hard and strong and confident, each in a different way, though they complemented each other curiously. But in their clothes what a mass of prejudices, superstitions separated them . . . like a backwater filled with decaying seaweed. They could hardly recognise each other across it.

Dirk, the young girl of upper-class origin, and Tony, the young Italian fisherman with the beautiful voice, are subsidiary characters, mainly seen through the musings and prejudices of Elodie and Greg.

> Greg's resent veered to her. He disliked the familiar friendliness of her manner with this damned Dago.

Greg is a man inclined to unquestioning acceptance of attitudes current in his social sphere, though war has sapped his confidence in life and the disillusioning years since his return have colored his vision with a lingering bitterness.

To Katharine Prichard, who felt profoundly the tragic impacts of war on those nearest to her, war is the result of man's failure to recognise the needs and possibilities of his age and throw off bonds that continue to make war an instrument of national policy. This theme is more fully developed in "Golden Miles" and "Winged Seeds" which give something like a cross-section of the experiences common to Australian people generally. In "Intimate Strangers", though, Greg is a man who does not probe for reasons, till the break-up of his mirage, dissolving as the book proceeds, forces him

Katharine Susannah Prichard—Reproduction of Noel Counihan's well-known portrait.

to a more real assessment of the forces at work in his world and a new attitude to his own part in their future.

The economic depression sweeping Australia deprives Greg of his job, but at first he refuses to see any connection between himself and the masses of unemployed, who are turning to socialism as an alternative to a system liable to plunge them into such unforeseen hardships. Elodie, his wife, supporting the family while Greg looks round for other sources of income, is compelled to think by the many-sidedness of her own slavery.

The actual conditions of women's lives, their attitudes and feelings are shown in this novel with a frankness and perception still very rare in a society given to envisaging women (as the comment of Hugh Watt's daughter earlier indicates) as either servants of men's physical needs or figures of fantasy. Elodie and Dirk are not figures of fantasy (though alternately occupying that place in Greg's mind) nor are they content to be drudges.

"Intimate Strangers" is an important novel, particularly as, in an increasingly urban community, the complaint is often made that our writers are still too much concerned with the remote outback, and fail to depict the world in which most of us now spend our everyday lives. In view of the comparative neglect shown to "Intimate Strangers", which has been long out of print, it is worth noting here that books by Australian writers which have given real pictures of life in our cities in our own time (such as Leonard Mann's "The Gogetter", Vance Palmer's "The Swayne Family", Barnard Eldershaw's "Tomorrow and Tomorrow . . .") are among the most neglected of these authors' works, though by no means the least perceptive.

★

WE might then ask what do people look for in writing—the unfamiliar and exotic milieu, or a deeper penetration into human character and motives? Or alternatively are we less likely to recognise our own deeper experience of life in the story of a bullock-driver or station-hand than in that of a city-dweller?

Life in our frenzied and fragmented cities appears at times to have an elusiveness, a lack of cohesion that may defy an exact, authentic presentation, such as Katharine Prichard was able to give to the life of smaller communities. Her last trilogy, though, may suggest some of the ways in which writers can combine a sufficient unity with a sufficient breadth of experience and variety of ideas.

The gold-mining industry around Kalgoorlie, founded on the efforts of separate, struggling men who pursued a mirage of wealth and security that began to break up when large companies gained control of their means of existence, is a centre of movement and change in which men and women are seen in terms of their whole vision of life, their contribution to its forward movement, or to each others' further enslavement. In the three periods the novels depict, three stages of human ideas have their influence on the Goughs, the family whose fortunes are followed, and the people they mix among.

"The Roaring Nineties" opens with an Aboriginal's eye view of the early fossickers in that region, whom "neither their wits nor their magic taught to find water in dry seasons." The eventual degradation of the blacks, to whose help many of the early settlers owe their lives, is a bitter commentary on the inhumanity that governs the growing city of the later "Golden Miles".

"Winged Seeds", the last book of the trilogy, ends in the middle of the 'forties, after the two courageous and kindly old-timers, Dinny Quin and Sally Gough, have been called out into the night to help bury Kalgoorla, the last of the original goldfields tribe, to whom Sally owed her life when they were young. High-spirited, generous, and full of humor, tenacious of her rights and those of her children, Sally Gough is one of the really courageous figures who battle through the hardships and uncertainties of the early days into the more perplexing and heartbreaking world of "Golden Miles"

Looking back over her life and all she has lost, Sally feels that the fate of Kalgoorla's people has much in common with her own. Cheated of their good fortune in the early days by the now wealthy go-getter Paddy Cavan, the Gough family has a proud history of loyalty to mates and dogged perseverance in the struggle for human rights; but now two world wars and diseases resulting from work in the mines have deprived Sally of her most loved sons and grandsons. She feels for a moment like the shaft over an old mine they had passed in the night near the deserted rush: "Derelict and stranded, it had stood in the moonlight as if forgotten by time."

Her courage begins to return with the sense of the continuing, sturdy devotion of her old friend Dinny and the memory of her grandson Bill and the way he had explained things:

> The life force strives towards perfection. What other imperative was there in living? The struggle had gone on through the ages. The vital germ in a seed attained its fine flowering and full fruit. How then could the great ideas and ideals of human progress be denied and annihilated? They could not . . .

The winged seeds of the kalgurluh nut, bursting out in the morning heat, appear as a symbolic confirmation of her confidence.

Interwoven with the story of Sally Gough, her descendants and her mates and enemies, is a picture of our social history to which there is nothing

THE LIFE AROUND US

A Tribute by Victor Williams

THE midday sun was hot on the orchard where I was spending my school holidays, so I scratched through the loft of the old stone barn for something to read until the heat died down. I found Katharine Susannah Prichard's "Working Bullocks" and read here and there in it, until it gripped me and I had to finish it.

Up to that day I had thought books were about other people and other countries than the one I knew, and that adventure only happened overseas. But now I had found a book so close to the life I knew that I half expected the mother and leader of the farm family I lived with to walk into the book, and I could see my own father again among the huge trees cutting and carting the sleepers.

Other writers, especially Shelley, Stevenson and Bacon have influenced me, have taught me how and what to write, but Katharine Prichard's example showed me that the life around me could be the source if I wanted to write.

I have re-read "Working Bullocks" often, and today can better judge the historic value of this book. For the first time in Australian literature a strike became the core and theme of a novel. This struggle is not only convincing because of the realistic treatment of the working and living conditions of the timber-getters, but also strikes a new note by the integration of socialist ideas and literature. The development of the character and social consciousness of the mother make her a new and revolutionary character in Australian art.

In "Coonardoo", the same writer dealt with the problem of the semi-tribalised native working on the sheep stations, the economic slavery of doubly oppressed people. For the first time Aboriginals became fully-drawn, major characters in an Australian novel; and their abilities to work, that in the end will help them to solve their own problems, were shown clearly and decisively. To read "Coonardoo" is to understand in terms of the 1920's how these people would be able to carry out the 1946 strike twenty years later and then go forward to organise co-operative labor.

The trilogy of the goldfields again ran very close to my early life, for I had heard so much of it from my father. He had been a prospector and miner for twenty years from the roaring days of 1890 onwards.

This trilogy, the story on the one hand of huge accumulations of wealth by a few, and on the other of poverty for those who produced this wealth, is a decisive step towards a socialist art. In the social nature of the theme, the development towards a socialist solution, the interweaving of national and world history, Katharine Prichard set herself a task never before attempted in Australia. To fully realise the extent of her achievement it must be realised that she was denied the experience of the collective labor of underground mining. But she did share in and help to lead the struggle against war and fascism in the thirties. No doubt this is why, of all Australian writing I have read, including Eric Lambert's two war novels, "Winged Seeds" brings out most clearly and humanly the feelings and thoughts behind Australia's great national effort in the war against Japan. And that struggle is one of the great peaks of our living history, perhaps the greatest.

The source of the power of K.S.P's. writing is her closeness to the life of the people, as one would expect from a woman who has been a Communist since that party was founded. She has worked with people and watched and has selected what is significant for her writing. One of her great achievements is the full-grown character of her leading women, such as the mother in "Working Bullocks", Sally in "Golden Miles" and again, Coonardoo. They are women that have faced life and have not been sheltered from its harshness.

The coming generation of writers may not all see the full stature of Katharine Susannah Prichard, but as they recognise that her achievements are starting points for their own growth, so will they see her as one of the really great landmarks of our young Australian literature.

---

comparable in our literature. The roundness of its picture of changing conditions on the mines, and the struggles they bring forth, is drawn from the yarns of old-timers on the fields, combined with long years of patient research among the surviving records and literature of the various periods. After its publication, the "West Australian" (daily newspaper) remarked: "We can't fault the goldfields chronicle—perhaps someone else can." No one accepted the challenge.

Katharine Prichard has always welcomed criticism regarding matters of factual accuracy, if it came from people who knew the conditions referred to as well as she knew them herself. As to questions of artistic presentation, she has always insisted the writer should be his own most severe critic, and she says with Keats: "I have done the best I could in the time."

Giving her view of the writer's function in a talk to the Fellowship of Writers in Melbourne a few years ago, she quoted Rodin's definition: "Art is the joy of the intelligence which sees the universe clearly and recreates by illumination of the consciousness. Art is the most sublime mission of man, since it is the exercise of thought which seeks to understand the world and to make others understand it."

The symbol of winged seeds may describe the influence of any truly creative writer, which may travel any distance but whose full effect may not be felt within any predictable time. With all her consistent Australianism, Katharine Prichard is the most highly regarded overseas among writers this country has produced. The distinguished American critic, C. Hartley Grattan, described her as "unquestionably the most important living fiction writer in Australia", and her translated works include "Coonardoo" (into French), "Working Bullocks" (Russian), "The Pioneers" (Africaans), "Haxby's Circus" (Hungarian), "The Roaring Nineties" (into eight languages), "Golden Miles" (seven), and "Winged Seeds (five). Her short stories have been translated into Chinese and Italian, and a Chinese translation of her goldfields trilogy is projected.

The short story "The Cooboo" and the novel "Coonardoo" stand out as pieces of writing unique in our literature, and probably in any; but the remarkable qualities of these two stories are present in parts of the goldfields trilogy, and noth-

Pelicans

He came to this town and judged us
By what he knew; reef, sunlight and islands
Clean and bright, fresh as the breeze that fanned
them.

He stayed a while. He used to lean
On the rail near the riverbank and watch pelicans
Gobble unsavory guts from the oily water
Or rest, wingspread, upon the ebb-tide mud.
"Look", he said, one winter morning,
Up where I've been I've seen them like silver
clouds,

Feeding on fish as bright as shillings,
Not taking what was flung in charity ——"
Now he's gone homing to the Barrier
Maybe the pelicans will follow him ——
Birds and men like that aren't meant for cities.
There's too much dust around. It soils their
plumage.

W. N. SCOTT

---

ing is gained by signalling any particular one of Katharine Prichard's works as her "greatest achievement". Her achievement is a devotion to artistic truth, of which her whole work is a reflection.

The power of her writing is more strongly felt if it is perceived as a whole, its main threads gathered up and woven into the immense tapestry of the goldfields trilogy, in which themes of her earlier work re-emerge and take their place in a larger pattern. While each of the stories prior to the trilogy is an entity in itself, a picture of how life went within a certain frame of circumstance, the image of truth it contains is not a final statement on an isolated episode but, seen in the context of the author's whole work, part of a larger process of change that moves to its own rhythm.

The reader who has felt the poignancy of Coonardoo's ordeal and steadfast devotion to all that she loves comes with an added awareness to the story of Kalgoorla and other of the dwindling tribe of goldfields blacks, who return like an accusing chorus as the story of "The Roaring Nineties" is taken over by "Golden Miles" and then "Winged Seeds".

This chronicle of human achievement, suffering and courage does not end on any note of finality, but rather with a reminder that at every moment life is in the process of change and renewal, as the kalgurluh nut breaks open in the rising heat of morning and scatters over the recent grave of the black gin Kalgoorla its shower of gossamery, winged seeds.

★

DONATIONS

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the most heartening list of donors we have ever achieved: R.C. £5; Overland party W.A. 44/6; G.H. 32/-; C.G. 21/-; L.S., G.B., N.B. £1; K.McC. A.W. 11/-; E.M.E., R.G., B.Z., J.S., L.B., R.G.S., W.W.M., H.J.H.C,, D,S.A., J.L., L.J.C., J.R., N.McK., M.H., D.H.F., D.R., J.D.K., B.B., P.K., T.J., E.M.A., G.E., A.M., A.M.C., K.C., M.S., 10/-; R.V.C. 9/6; V.D. 6/-; J.L., N.A.C., J.F.O., R.J.D., N.M., V.H.V., F.K. 5/-; J.S. 3/-; D.R. 2/6. We also thank the following who donated towards the expenses of printing the speech of Professor Oliphant's: J.McD. £5; T.E. £5; D.F.L. £5; R.M. £5; K.F. £5; G.F.A. £3/5/0; H. and I.H. £2; R.B. £2; L.S. £2; E.W. £2; W.S.B. £1.

There's A Mob Goes Off Tonight

When the wall is hanging sloppy
And the setting stuff won't set
Or you're running out of mortar
Though the laborer's in a sweat,
When the floor is clogged with rubbish,
Not a bloody thing goes right
Comes a whisper from you're cobber:
"There's a mob goes off tonight."

When production's gone to blazes
And the yardage graph is down,
And the foreman panics badly
As he trips upon his frown,
When the supervisor supers
And the boss is on the site
Then there's bound to be the rumor
There's a mob goes off tonight.

For the lack of builders' laborers
You go wheeling sand about
You take a shift at scaffolding
And cleaning up—and out,
But production takes a tumble
From the boss's line of sight,
And the foreman gets a lecture,
And a mob goes off tonight.

Then they measure up production,
Organise and calculate,
And they hold a staff convention
(There are men outside the gate).
Though you bust your bloody boiler
As you spread, with all your might,
Still the rumor comes repeated:
"There's a mob goes off tonight."

You bemoan the lack of system,
Claim the jobs aren't properly run,
As you sight a brand new straightedge,
With a wave-length like the sun;
Though the overhead's terrific,
With the bludgers sitting tight
You can bet THEY won't be seeded
When the mob goes off tonight.

And you're working on a scaffold
That would beat Old Nick for nuts
And you "overlook" your safety—
Claim your recklessness is "guts";
But if you're ever crossed the foreman
Spoke of unions or your right,
Then you'll fall out first as marker
When the mob goes off tonight.

And they set you with a foreman
Who is very hard to toss—
And his chest is like a skin rash,
Crawling round behind the boss;
And he slogs the hawk and mortar
Till he gives his trowel a fright—
He's a pitiful example why
The mob goes off tonight.

For it stands to simple reason
If we're working ALL the day
Then their pricing must be chronic
If they don't rake in the hay.
If they want a cut in wages
Then a work-cut puts it right
But they'll find their putty curdled
If the mob walks out one night.

DAVE SMITH

Colonials in Paris —

A Retrospect on "Le Parnasse"

Overland is privileged here to publish a selection of recent translations, with notes, by J. S. Manifold.

LECONTE de Lisle, born 1818 in Reunion, travelled widely in the Indies before coming to France. He loathed the Europe of Louis Napoleon, viewing it through eyes tuned to the grandeurs of patriarchal barbarian societies, but would not leave it. His poems are not "an escape" so much as an attempt to shame the 19th century into virility and paganism. He published "Poems of Antiquity", "Barbarian Poems", "Last Poems", and many translations, also pamphlets against slavery. Died in 1894.

Jose-Maria de Heredia, born 1842 in Santiago de Cuba, was the youngest of the group that rallied around Leconte de Lisle in the periodical anthology "Le Parnasse Contemporain". A brilliant "camera-man" in the film sense, he captures scenes from pagan antiquity and wild nature in splendid verse. He writes with special love of the Caribbean where his forebears founded cities. His one volume, "Trophies", consisting mainly of sonnets, came out in 1893, and he died in 1905.

Georges Fourest is an outlier. He carries over the style of the Parnasse into satiric vignettes of the jazz age. He published "The Blonde Negress" in 1934.

The Parnassians were deliberately anti-romantic and impersonal, doing in verse what Flaubert and Stendhal (in their very different ways) sought to do in prose. They let a breath of wider horizons into the stuffy drawingroom of 19th-century literature. They influenced Baudelaire, Mallarme and Paul Valery, among their French contemporaries and successors.

Naturally, however, their main influence was on other colonials. By conquering Europe, they gave us our self-respect. Ruben Dario in South America, and Roy Campbell in South Africa, owe much to their liberating and stimulating influence. Vincent Buckley points out a resemblance I am proud to own between my own early verse and Roy Campbell's. The fact is that Campbell and I watered our Pegasi at the same spring.

It is pleasant to find the editors of "The Penguin Book of Australian Verse" using the word "Parnassian" to describe the salient qualities of J. A. R. McKellar and A. D. Hope. I think the old chief would be pleased to know his latest-born tribesmen.

J. S. MANIFOLD

The Sleeping Condor

Above the Cordillera's jagged coils,
Above the fogbound heights where eagles play,
Above the summits where the lava boils
In adamantine cauldrons night and day,
His hanging wings speckled with red and dun,
The vast and mournful bird with lazy grace
Contemplates all America and space,
While his cold eyes reflect the dying sun.
Up from the East the shades of nightfall roll,
Engulfing Chile and the boundless plain,
Submerging the Pacific, till the whole
Mute continent is in their dark domain.
Uphill the night comes surging now; it swallows
Foothills and rises, cleft and mountainside,
Swamping the lesser crags, drowning the hollows
In the exuberance of its high tide.
He, a lone spectre on the topmost peak,
Bathed in a light that bleeds upon the snow,
Awaits the darkness; now, with one oblique
Swirl, it is over him, and he can go.
In bottomless night the Southern Cross illumes
Its beacon on the brink of heaven's moat.
He croaks with pleasure, ruffles up his plumes,
And undulates his bare voracious throat.
Whipping the bitter snow, he lifts, he soars,
Climbing beyond the highest wind that sings;
Between the dark earth and the living stars
He sleeps all night on outspread tireless wings.

LECONTE DE LISLE

The Showmen

It's vile to live like you; to drag along
Senile, decrepit as the infertile earth,
Castrated by this murderous age, from birth,
Of every passion that is deep and strong.
Your heads secrete no plan, your hearts no song;
You pullulate, soiling the round world's girth
With mere corruption, so Disease and Dearth
May batten well and decimate the throng.
You have outlived your Gods—and what shall save
You, wallowing in gold in some dark cave,
When you have sucked the good soil bare and dry?
The day draws on when time and space shall press
Down with an awful weight of emptiness,
And you, stuffing your money-bags, shall die.

LECONTE DE LISLE

★

Contemporaries

Much like a bruised and filthy dancing bear
Howling in chains, lurching on broken paws,
Appears the man who seeks this mob's applause
By offering it his hopes and fears to share.
To light some glimmer in its brutish stare,
To win its pity or its harsh guffaws,
A man must rip away the robe of gauze
His heart is meant, in decency, to wear.
I can be proud and dumb, though I should go
Uncrowned for ever to the dark below;
My dreams and drunkenness are mine to keep.
My life is not for whistles or salutes;
On public platforms I decline to leap
With bloody charlatans and prostitutes.

LECONTE DE LISLE

To a Dead Town

Cartagena de Indias
1532—1583—1697

Sad city, once the Caribbean's pride!
In peace today the shark pursues a shoal,
And shadows of the clouds alone patrol
Your harbour where the galleons used to ride.
Since Drake's assault, so stubbornly defied,
Your walls have crumbled; and each bullet-hole
Shines in a dark historic aureole
Where Pointis' charge swept your defence aside.
Between a hot sky and a sea that croons
Through a long somnolence of afternoons,
You dream, old town, of the Conquistadors;
Or in the warm luxurious night you lie,
Nursing those warrior memories of yours,
While all your palm-trees whisper lullaby.

J. M. DE HEREDIA

A Man!

Justum et tenacem propositi virum
—Horace.

Gemir, pleurer, prier, est egalement lache.
—Alfred de Vigny.

When it was proved his ailment was the pox,
He did not speak; and even when he found
His wife's fidelity had been unsound,
He murmured not against these cruel knocks.
When he discovered that his orthodox
Blue pants had grown too threadbare to surround
His buttocks; and his bank-book showed one pound
(One single pound!) betwixt him and the rocks,
He did not tear his hair out—he was bald!
He did not curse the gods for what they sent,
Nor stab himself as Romans did when galled;
He barely gave a sign of discontent,
Save that in urgent simple tones he called
Upon the name of human excrement.

GEORGES FOUREST

Record Review

THE OLD BUSH SINGERS

Previous recordings of Australians singing their own folksongs have all featured singers whose style owes more to commercial than to traditional influence.

Wattle Records have now thrown onto the other side of the scales their first archive recording, "Australian Traditional Singers and Musicians" (10" l.p., 42/-). No-one could fail to notice the lack of professional training and commercial influence which distinguishes the artists on this record.

This is not a record for the casual listener to Australian ballads—Wattle's earlier "Banks of the Condamine" (Overland No. 11) is better for that purpose. But it's definitely one for anybody who has more than a passing interest in the brief currency of folk-song and music in Australia. It's the first time traditional Australian singers and musicians have been recorded; the songs and dance tunes are interesting; the recordings (made in the field, largely by John Meredith of Sydney), although uneven, are generally adequate.

Edgar Waters' twelve pages of record notes are fascinating. On the basis of not much evidence, he makes enough shrewd guesses about the development of folk-songs in Australia to keep interested parties arguing for the next three or four years.

If you saw the recent film of "Moby Dick", and were struck by the (unfortunately brief) appearance of the shanty-man (who led the singing), you'll like two recent releases by the same man, A. L. Lloyd—"Singing Sailors" and "Shanties and Fo'c'sle Songs" (Wattle, 10" l.p., 42/-).

Lloyd sings them rough, presumably as sailors did. He is savage, sad or staccato, as occasion demands. It's a long way from the drawing-room baritone rollicking his way through "The Drunken Sailor".

Best of the songs are those associated with the jobs aboard ship—the halyard, capstan and short-drag shanties, and especially "The Blood Red Roses", a bitter, dragging song, and "Sally Racket", a light-hearted piece which contains the delightful verse:

> Little Susie Skinner
> She said she's a beginner,
> But she prefers it to her dinner,
> So up, lads, and win her.

These two records are the best (because closest to the real thing, and well performed) recordings of shanties that Australians are likely to have a chance of buying. The twelve pages of notes with each disc add a great deal to the value and interest of the records. I wish other recording companies would do a quarter as well by their customers with notes.

A.H.

Miscellany

LOUIS GOLDING

IT was on a winter's morning early in 1932 that Louis Golding awoke to find himself famous with the publication of "Magnolia Street". Golding, who died in London recently at the age of 62, had written half a dozen novels, a book of short stories, three books of verse and three of travel before "Magnolia Street" made his name a household word, and "Doomington" achieved public recognition as a synonym for Manchester. At any rate, I remember a postcard addressed to a Golding relative in "Doomington" being delivered without delay to the correct address.

I first met Golding in 1931, shortly before "Magnolia Street" was published. He told us—I was with a friend, Ivan Goff—that he had painfully reconstructed and rewritten the entire novel of 250,000 words. Previously, it had been far more than 300,000. But Heinemann's turned it down; and, to rub acid in the wound, they required Golding to pay back their advance. Golding took the bulky, handwritten MS. to Victor Gollancz, who persuaded him to rewrite the huge novel, cutting it and giving it some form.

By publication day, Goff was Golding's secretary. When Goff was off duty for one reason or another, I filled in. It was a break for two young, unemployed Australian journalists on Fleet Street in the depths of the depression.

Golding's previous books had given him a reputation among writers (with Zangwill insisting he should remain a poet). They had a loyal but small readership, and a minor cult had grown around the Miracle Boy. "Magnolia Street", however, was an explosion. "Louis Golding Arrives!" proclaimed Humbert Wolfe in the Observer. In the Morning Post the reviewer wrote in awe: "Criticism falters before the epochal concept and achievement . . ." Other reviewers were, for the most part, hardly less enthusiastic; and the little house in Cambridge Street, with its decorations of cherubs, became a storm centre of activity.

The Daily Express, after skilful publicity (including a cartoon by Strube) serialised the novel, reduced to 70,000 words for the purpose. Hollywood bought it for £5,000—then thought to be a record sum. C. B. Cochran had it on the stage at Drury Lane. Editors who, only a short time previously, were not keenly interested in Golding's short stories and articles, now begged for them at ten times the price . . .

Golding was never again to touch those heights of acclaim, though some of his many later works were, perhaps, better than "Magnolia Street". He was not only a storyteller and poet but a scholar with a profound love for the classical world. He was a sensitive interpreter of British Jewry; and his Penguin book, "The Jewish Problem", was a most valuable contribution to the fight, then already desperate (1938), against anti-Semitism.

After the Second World War, Golding went to the Wroclaw gathering of intellectuals, and he was subsequently denied entrance to the United States on that account. A kindy man, he detested persecution. Going through an old notebook recently, I painfully deciphered some ancient shorthand, a letter dictated by Golding, which read:

"Dear Henri Barbusse: I would be proud to be a member of the Committee to free Ernst Thaelmann . . ."

BILL IRWIN

PIONEER VENTURE IN FILMS

AN extraordinary degree of initiative, organisation and talent has been shown by a small co-operative film group in Eltham (V.) who have recently made a 60-minute feature film "The Prize".

The main figures in the centure are Tim Burstall, a young Melbourne public servant, who scripted and directed the film, and Gerard Vandenberg, who handled the photography. The film is now in the final stages of editing, and the producers hope to exhibit it at the next Cannes film festival.

Mr. Burstall recently made available to Overland his files, showing the full development of the project, and they tell an extraordinary story.

The original film-script was written by Burstall in three weeks late last year and shot on weekends and holidays during our summer. It is a simple story with very little dialogue. The music will be written by Dorian le Gallienne, the well-known Melbourne composer and critic. Mr. Burstall's own two children, and the children of his colleagues, are the mainstay of the cast.

The main character is the six-year-old Snowy, who wins a goat at a country show. On his way home two bad boys steal it from him, but a friendly rabbiter offers to help Snowy track it down. A whole series of thrilling adventures, including a chase down a river in which the children ride in tubs, leads to Snowy's eventual recovery of his prize.

Up to date the film has cost about £1,700 using professional equipment (hired), 35 mm. film (black and white), and a great deal of unpaid time and talent. It is hoped to finish it for about £2,500. If the film is successful the co-operative syndicate who made it will benefit by percentages of the profit, determined not by money invested but by work performed.

The unorthodox devices used by the group to get the shots they wanted are said to have been against all the rules of the film-making game, but the film critic of the Melbourne Age, Colin Bennett, who has seen an advance print, says that the film is "possibly the most promising film experiment to be made by Australians since the war . . . a genuine Australian fairy-tale."

Tim Burstall emphasises strongly that the film is imaginative rather than documentary, and aims to get away from what he feels to be the "well-worn Australian cliches." "One of the cliches about Australia," he told me, "is that of the 'sun-burnt' land. Actually millions of Australians in the southern States live in a comparatively lush environment of trees and grass and water. We have made a film which we hope is deliberately romantic in tone and which, incidentally, hardly has a single sun-lit shot in it, as far as I can remember."

The full story of the making of this film is a fascinating one, and it makes me wonder why some of the profuse energies that have for decades gone into the thousands of amateur dramatic companies in Australia have never found this sort of creative outlet. For there has been no capital of any kind behind the venture. To get the money required to start production, Burstall had to mortgage his house and land.

There would be no point in laboring the fact that, even if the group produces the world's best film for 1958, they will still have a fearful battle to get it exhibited overseas and in Australia, and will be lucky to get more than their money back.

This kind of activity is no final solution to the appalling crisis that film-workers in this country find themselves in. But it does show that there is an alternative to just plain whinging about the situation; and it's certainly no accident that, in communities like that of Eltham, where the film was made there has always been a healthy tradition of "do-it-yourself" and whether it is house-building, handicrafts or what have you.

S.M.S.

ETHEL TURNER

I HAVE never met Ethel Turner. I have, now I come to think of it, no memory of a single photograph, yet when I read of her death in Sydney on April 8 I was filled with a rush of grief —grief not only for the passing of a writer outstanding in her own genre, but grief for a time that is gone forever.

I belong, of course, to the generation that was brought up on Ethel Turner books. Those books —lively, warm, human, their characters moving against the familiar backgrounds of Sydney and the bush—marked a new era in children's writing. The starchy, "goody-goody" little heroine was out —the ordinary, recognisable child playing its part in the pattern of family life was here to stay. Those stories appearing with a blessed regularity, how acutely I remember them! Fat, solid volumes, mostly green or red, with pages almost as thick and porous as blotting-paper, bold black print, and an exciting inky smell of their own! The small sketchy illustrations were a joy—real period pictures, now—the little boys in sailor suits, the girls in pinafores (those inevitable bunchy white muslin pinafores with frills at neck and shoulders) —the young ladies wasp-waisted with decorated hats and flowing hair.

More than forty books were written by Ethel Turner during her long life—she was 86 when she died—but she will be best remembered by her early sequence of "Misrule" books—"Seven Little Australians", "The Family at Misrule" and "Little Mother Meg." There in the crowded pages the people came instantly to life—the sparkling, quicksilver Judy doomed to an early death, Bunty full of greed and self-pity, the sweet girl-step-mother, and Captain Woolcot the harassed and tyrannical father, his fingers forever itching to clutch a riding-whip.

Odd though it may seem, the children of today, brought up on a heady diet of Enid Blyton and space-literature, tend to approach Ethel Turner's books with a certain caution and reserve. The reason for this I have discovered is that the modern young reader finds Ethel Turner's idiom rather old-fashioned. There are too many "asides", too much moralising, too many "sloppy" love-affairs and illnesses. The wind blows too often over the graves of pallid babes and long-mourned mothers.

Harrowing Ethel Turner can be, her pathos too long-drawn, but the tragedy of Judy's death is told with so much tenderness and feeling that I imagine no child could read it unmoved, or having read it, forget. A tree has fallen across Judy and she lies with a broken spine watched by her stricken family. It is sunset.

> "And such a sunset! Down at the foot of the grass hill there was a flame-colored sky with purple, soft clouds massed in banks high up where the dying glory met the paling blue . . . All the wind had died and the air hung hot and still, freighted with the strange silence of the bush.
>
> "And at the top of the hill just within the doorway of the little brown hut, Judy lay dying. She was very quiet now, though she had been talking—talking of all sorts of things. She told them she had no pain at all.
>
> " 'Only I shall die when they move me,' she said . . .
>
> "She kissed him (Pip) with pale lips, once, twice; she gave him both her hands and her last smile.
>
> "Then the wind blew over them all, and with a little shudder she slipped away."

This is the much-loved book that will go on living—"Seven Little Australians", already in our own time a children's classic.

MYRA MORRIS

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

THE Museum of Modern Art, recently founded in Melbourne, is fortunate in having acquired as a nucleus for its permanent collection the paintings gathered together over many years by Sunday and John Reed.

Many patrons approach a contemporary painting fearfull. "Will this painting **last**?" (i.e. will posterity approve their choice?), they ask themselves. Sometimes the question is more direct: "If I buy this painting will I be making a fool of myself?"

Sunday and John Reed never entertained such thoughts. At a time when the critics and many current patrons were sneering at Nolan, Tucker, and Arthur Boyd, they bought Nolan, Tucker and Boyd. The paintings they collected were the paintings they enjoyed—in the fullest sense of the word. Their reactions were, I would hazard, primarily intuitive. They were not interested in rationalising their choices. Unlike some apologists for contemporary art they have never, as far as I know, been pretentious or dogmatic; they have never insisted that their acquisitions should fit into rigid philosophical or aesthetic schemes. In other words, they have adjusted their beliefs to the artist—they have never forced the artist to pander to theirs.

The collection is a reason for pride, and the Musuem of Modern Art is probably the most pleasant gallery in Melbourne in which to hang it. The Museum may be proud too of its first publication, "Modern Australian Art" (though I consider the title far too comprehensive for the actual contents). The book is designed beautifully by Peter Burns, and responsibly edited by Barrie Reid. My only reservation about the Museum is the "social jottings" atmosphere that is beginning to pervade its activities—I hope that the present campaign for financial security will not eventually subvert the spontaneous and stimulating iconoclasm that is, I believe, the essence of creative art.

Such an event, however, seems happily remote when one gazes at the works that form this permanent collection. Here are paintings that are no less relevant to contemporary life than the daily political news or earning a living. Here are Blackman, Perceval, Hope, Dickerson, and Brack—I name only my own preferences—and as long as the Museum of Modern Art encourages artists of such strength, feeling, and originality, that long may the Museum thrive!

LAURENCE COLLINSON

Our Writers: VII

DAVID MARTIN

"THE Abominable Snowman" I once called him, in the days when he lived on a precipitous hillside in the foothills of the Dandenongs, and it amused him. But for all that we didn't hit it off too well for a start. I had heard of this poet living up there in the bush, and wrote to him for a contribution. David Martin was startled by the Royal Command tone of the letter; and relations subsequently didn't improve when, wrestling with copy like an editorial Laocoon, I more-or-less offered to re-write some of his poetry. For Martin is deeply conscious not only of the responsibility, but also of the dignity, of the writer's labor. And while he will suffer fools gladly, as any teacher must, he doesn't like meddlers: for he is so deeply committed himself.

Committed to what? He's a hard man to label, though many have tried. I think he's best summed up in a phrase of Furphy's: "Committed to no usages of petrified injustice." He makes the point implicity in all his poems, yet some critics have accused Martin of recently becoming less partisan in his writing. Martin has not become less partisan or committed. He simply takes the dialectical view: that while at some times it serves a historically useful purpose to simplify the issues—

> Call the never conquered masses
> Forward to the final fight,
> To the last great war of classes—
> Workers of the world, unite!

At other times the issues to be usefully simplified change. Hence in his recent poetry there has emerged a note, no less optimistic or committed, but less simplified—

> I want a world that's truly free
> To seek and think and feel,
> A world that knows a manly law,
> But none to make men kneel;
> In short, a world in which no fool
> May force us to frequent his school.

★

When they thought of "petrified injustice" Furphy and his generation mainly thought of Europe. It has been Martin's strength that he not only came to Australia from the torn and riven background of Europe, but he came as a mature man, an experienced observer, a practised writer.

He was born Ludwig Detsinyi, in Hungary, of a Jewish family, in 1915. He was only a few years old when the Bela Kun Communist republic was overthrown and Europe's first post-war dictatorship took its place. He was born into the prosperous, large German-speaking strata of the Hungarian Jewish bourgeoisie which has played a big part in Hungarian cultural and political life. He was educated in Berlin; saw the great traditions of

German cultural life submerged by the Brown wave; fought for the Spanish Republic like the cream of Europe's young intellectuals of the Thirties—but, unlike many of them, and many of his friends, lived to write of the struggle.

By the time he landed in England just before the war Martin was already a man of experience. His German poetry of the period is still remembered and printed. In England, during the war years, he showed his uncanny gift for the empathetic understanding of other people, of other countries than those of his youth. Part of the reason for this gift he explains himself, when he writes that he came to the English classics (and hence to an understanding of the springs of English life) not as a schoolboy, but in early manhood. And he came with an intensely inquisitive, searching and generalising kind of mind. Like Egon Kisch, the "roving reporter" of an earlier generation who came from a similar background, all has been grist to his mill. Thus a poem like "Jack Underwood" is redolent of the Australian scene as few poems by Australians are, and his writing (stories, poems, a novel, a play) of Scotland, Wales, England, Israel, Holland, India all show this same perception, this same intuitive understanding of what is close

to the heart of the land and the people, of the bones of the national myth.

David Martin came to Australia, via India, about ten years ago. He came partly because of his curiosity about all countries, partly because at that time a play of his was being produced in Sydney. He has stayed here longer than in any other country of his migration. He calls himself a man of "many roots", and he seems to have found here a soil he likes. Not only his poems, but his often brilliant critical work (a good example is his Miles Franklin obituary in Overland No. 2), his reportage and his lecturing, all show a particular love, in the fullest and profoundest meaning of the word, for this country. Perhaps he has indeed found here something of the great Australian fata morgana, that furphy of the Furphies and the O'Dowds, a country and a people free from some of the bonds of petrified injustice and with a sense of the "great Australia yet to be".

But he is a restless man. No matter how much you respect his understanding, admire his grasp, you feel he is not content with one country; he wants the whole world. The secret of his understanding of the countries he has lived in is that he has not only been an observer of life, but a participant in it. For all that, he sees us not as we see ourselves, but as a part of something bigger.

This sense of responsibility to the whole of humanity is one of Martin's weaknesses. He cannot shelter behind the defences of any particular national identification. The circumstances of his birth, upbringing and political experience have forced him to become a citizen of the world before the world is ready for him. So he can admire Australian attitudes but he cannot, without self-deception, act himself into any of the parts; and, in a world where mild self-deception is part of the shelter-belt of life, he is exposed and eroded.

A drawing of his sensitive and awkward face is on the previous page. As well as intelligence and humor, it shows lines of strain. He has not had an easy time in Australia; worse than that, he feels that, while he's given of his best as a poet, he hasn't been taken seriously as one.

In one sense it's true. The simplicity and directness and open-facedness of his verse has counted against him in a day when to many academic and middle-class critics and poets these things hardly seem compatible with "poetry" at all. Not to speak of his political committedness. On the other hand, in quite a short space of time he has become more read and loved for his verse than any other Australian poet of his generation that I know of. You will find engine-drivers in Bowen and seamen in the Tasman and fruitgrowers in Mildura and housewives in Camberwell all interested to talk about Martin and his poems. They know Martin well, though they haven't met him. He has given them something to know him by, and to know themselves by.

In trying to lead poetry back to people, and what moves them, and what should move them, Martin has done important work. Perhaps his occasional despair, his inability to see the significance of his own achievement, is the one good example he does display of self-deception. But this kind of self-deception is a tragic thing, if it removes from us the help and guidance of such a good man.

Martin admires Don Quixote above all characters in literature. "There were no wrongs he was not prepared to right," he once said to me. If it could be so, I'd like all poets to feel like that.

S. MURRAY-SMITH

For David Martin

Within the crucible of darkness there is light,
Within this moment there is mutability,
Within the pit of sadness there is joy
And life itself destroys infinity.
So I will join you in the age-old song,
That ancient fusion of reality and dream,
To wander in the realms where poets belong
Of mills and men, of men and the machines—
Man supreme.

ROGER MILLISS

Timber Town

Here life's all in the making. Everything's new:
That semi-trailer loaded with cases there,
The petrol-serving roadhouse girl in blue,
Fresh as the tang of resin in the air.
Must you poetically think of these pines
As forest giants? It won't be long before
The new sawmill, with decrescendo whines,
Must deal with them; they represent someone's floor.
The Australian workers are new, both New and Old,
Like their houses of wood or Mount Gambier stone.
They drink wine rather warm, and beer very cold,
And even office-boys have cars of their own.
Everything here's so fresh that years and years
Must pass before a ghost would haunt these streets,
This bank or Post Office still unwet by tears,
These homes where on Saturdays everyone meets.
It's strange then that one person driving through,
And stopping here for tea and a hot pie,
Perversely sees it as no longer new
But marked by time after generations die,
And foretells the ancient pines forgotten there,
Inevitable graves and monuments,
And the sharp tang of resin in the air,
The most poignant of all nostalgic scents.

R. H. MORRISON

The Country Fisherman

This man, long fashioned of the sea and soil,
Was born where paddocks lean toward the shore.
The tides down creek beds of his arteries coil
Calling the blood that went these ways before.
A spar-limbed figure, like a dipping mast,
Stayed by his will, deep rooted in the rocks,
Grips the driving sail and flings life past,
Inured, yet never yielding to its shocks.
He walks the fallow like a sloping sea,
The deck as firmly as his kitchen hearth,
And tracks of home call no more urgently
Than does the wake, his ship's unfailing path.
His passion sleeps beneath the summer sun,
Like pulse of ocean, harnessed to its need,
Yet leaps with subterranean power when one
Excites his love or anger to the deed.
And then, when earth and sky and sea combine
To crash on man their dragonnades of storm,
His gathered strength and skill seem near divine,
A striving god for whom the gales conform.
He is no god, but one with fish and hares.
His mounting strength so owns the soil and sea
That, like the garment of their green, he wears
Their perfection and their symmetry.

ROBERT CLARK

BOOKS

Lindsay's Autobiography

We have had very few good autobiographies, and this makes Jack Lindsay's "Life Rarely Tells" (The Bodley Head, 26/-) doubly interesting. It is much more than its sub-title "An Australian Boyhood" suggests; it is a study of deep inner conflicts. For the author was not a typical boy, following the excitements of the moment thoughtlessly with his fellows and taking delight in his Australian background. He was something of a solitary, eager for human companionship but shy, gifted with a keen intelligence, not very deeply-rooted anywhere, living in his imagination rather than in the dusty realities of every day.

It is plain that some of these characteristics were due to accidents of upbringing. He was born of parents who had little in common—his, father, Norman Lindsay, a restless young artist not attuned to domestic life; his mother a gentle, vague woman who never seemed to know whether it was Monday or Tuesday. The parents parted finally when the boy was eleven or twelve, and Jack, with his two younger brothers, was taken up to Brisbane. There they lived a sketchy life, mainly in boarding-houses, though behind them were the solid figures of an uncle, Dr. Elkington, and his practical, ambitious wife.

"Life Rarely Tells" really begins with that migration to Brisbane, for the lumpish opening chapter introducing Australia to overseas readers looks like a false start. It is quite out of place in such a personal book. With the arrival at Brisbane, the narrative moves into a more confident stride. The disturbing but stimulating air of this brash, northern capital impels the boy's mind to turn both outward and inward, but principally inward.

"In our unstable situation, without school or friends, I was turning more and more to reading. A clear inner world, opposed to the outer world, was forming."

This conflict between the outer world of his daily routines and the inner world of his dreaming and imagination runs right through the book. It was the difficulty of harmonizing them that provides most of Jack Lindsay's tensions, especially when he began to write. As a student he went on from success to success, winning scholarships, acquiring lauguages, sailing along on a brilliant career at the Queensland University; but the contrast between the poetic world to which he had given himself and the social one around him ruled by rich drapers and warehousemen was continually pulling him up with a jerk. Society was symbolized by Aunt Mary, practical and ambitious, urging him to make a secure position for himself, either in scholarship or business. Then there were the bright young fellows of his own age, like the glib believer in wool, who offered to get him a job at Dalgety's when he had finished his university career. In resistance he made an oath.

"Crossing in the Kangaroo Point ferry, I looked across the dim, sliding waters and saw the building of successful sin. I won't ever compromise with the world of money, I told myself. I won't ever have anything to do with the buying and selling of commodities, even if I die for it. I'll be a poet, and if that doesn't keep me somehow alive, to hell with the earth."

But the drama in "Life Rarely Tells" doesn't merely lie in the determination of a youth to pit his poetic daemon against a money-crazy world; it is much more subtle and far-reaching than that: it is wrapped up with the whole business of communication. While at the university Jack Lindsay became aware of great human conflicts. The First War was in progress: Conscription was one of its immediate issues: class-tensions were growing acute. Jack Lindsay found himself on the working-class side, though the workers talked a language as remote from him as that of the people he met in boarding-houses. His own natural literary idiom was that of Blake or Nietzsche. How to create a form and language for the feelings awakened in him by his new contacts and discoveries!

That was more a problem for the young democratic writers of Jack Lindsay's generation than it is for those of the present one who can easily hitch their cars to the Lawson and Furphy tradition. In the early twenties that tradition was not so clear. There was a deeper gulf than now between social classes, and the universities were on the secure side of it. Lindsay admits that he knew almost nothing of Australian history and this is quite apparent in his account of his early life in Brisbane. To him Brisbane was merely a frontier-town swollen into something like a city: he had no awareness that a quarter-of-a-century before journals like the Boomerang had led a short, iconoclastic life there; that men like Lawson, A. G. Stephens and the radical judge, Charles Lilley, had trodden streets familiar to him, and that William Lane's ghost could easily be imagined flitting round the waterfront at Petrie's Bight and calling the workers there "to come out of the body of this death."

Yet even if he had had a sense of the Brisbane past, there would still have been a problem of communication before Jack Lindsay. For he was committed to the belief that what was significant and profound in life could only be expressed in the grand manner, through images and abstract concepts. This is implicit in most of the pages of "Life Rarely Tells", but it comes out clearly in some remarks about the novel when Lindsay was making contact with W.E.A. students who read Jack London and Dreiser.

"I still found it difficult," he says, "to concern myself much with the novel, and I did not read with any thoroughness the authors which my new friends were ready to lend me. But I read enough to get the feeling of their world. Certain aspects repelled me or did not interest me in my absorption with the poetic process. I wanted the lyrically revealing image, the drama that cuts to the bone and brings out the essence of good and evil: I shied off from the elaboration of everyday detail in novels, feeling that it muffled the contours of the clear choice, the poetic image."

This well expresses the impatience that poets, particularly in English-speaking countries, have shown with the novel. They would like to believe that all the varied detail of life is merely stage-furniture, that life itself is only revealed in essences, in the abstract concept, the "dynamic" image, the soul of the prophet-hero.

Yet some of the most moving and profound pages of this book are to be found in a chapter "Popularity", which has to do with the relation of a group of boys to their teacher and is alive with small detail. In a way this chapter stands by itself: it is a perfect short story, a little masterpiece.

And it shows what revealing fiction the author might have written if he had concentrated upon this form.

Altogether "Life Rarely Tells" has so many aspects that it is hard to cover them all. Some of the best writing Jack Lindsay has ever done is contained in it, precise descriptions and phrases that unfold in the mind like buds opening. Then there are the character-sketches, some tossed off with a comic breadth, some done with feeling and penetration; the picture of his mother, for instance. His relations with his father, a mixture of attraction and resentment, are hardly more than summarised in this book, but are likely to form a basic theme for the text—"if I write it," he says in a note.

I sincerely hope he will. For one's final impression of "Life Rarely Tells" is that behind it stands a warm, generous, and peculiarly honest figure—one driven by an impulse to give himself to his readers and equipped with the means to do it in a frank, unselfconscious way.

VANCE PALMER

★

Kokoda

Raymond Paull's "Retreat from Kokoda" (Heinemann, 30/-) deals with the New Guinea campaign in 1942, when the Japanese pushed over the Owen Stanley Ranges, almost to Port Moresby.

Under-equipped, ill-trained for jungle warfare, out-numbered and short of all vital supplies, the Australian troops were forced back by the Japanese, over the narrow native footpad that was known as the Kokoda Trail which, at its highest point, rose to 7,000 feet.

Men fought under indescribable conditions. Paull records one incident of many—how a man whose leg had been blown off ligatured the stump, applied dressings, wrapped the remainder of the leg in an old copra sack, and crawled along the track for days.

Shortage of stretcher-bearers made acute the problem of getting the wounded out of the mountains. But the book pays tribute to the magnificent efforts of the native stretcher-bearers without whose help, according to General Vasey, the Australians could not have fought the Owen Stanley campaign.

The Japanese soldier emerges clearly as a tough, efficiently-led opponent—who, like the Australian, also suffered through the squabbling and incompetence of his country's High Command.

The final chapter is a long and pathetic extract from the diary of Japanese Private Wada, whom Paull describes as a good soldier and one who never lost his self-respect and loyalty to his comrades. Writing at the end of the campaign, at the moment of Japanese defeat, Wada speaks of anticipated evacuation, and writes: "Heavy rain is falling tonight. Reinforcements have not come. There are no provisions . . . It is a difficult situation but I don't think Wakaichi will leave us behind . . ."

Wada's diary was found on his corpse in a common grave near Buna.

"Retreat from Kokoda" quotes facts which reveal sections of the Australian and US Command in an extremely unfavorable light, and guilty of actions which caused unnecessary death and suffering to Australian fighting men.

For instance, the insistence of Marcarthur and Blamey that the Australian advance should be speeded up, irrespective of cost, led to increased Australian casualties and the sacking of those officers, leading the fighting troops, who were not prepared to incur immoderate casualties.

And the US airforce leaders who, at a critical stage in the fighting, left a row of loaded supply planes as a sitting target on the drome near Moresby, so that Japanese bombers were able to blow them to bits, thus disastrously worsening the already bad supply position.

And the failure of the High Command to make planes available to fly the wounded down from the mountains. The consequence of this was that the wounded had to be carried through the mountains for a week—instead of being flown out in twenty minutes.

Paull's book is an outstanding account of a very critical few months in the history of the Australian people.

W. H. TREGEAR

Mr. Tregear took part in the fighting on the Kokoda Trial described in Raymond Paull's book.

★

David Martin

I have never met David Martin but I once heard him speak, briefly, at a celebration in honor of one of Dame Mary Gilmore's birthdays. A young man from a university gave it as his opinion that three-quarters of what Mary Gilmore had written was not poetry at all, and that the rest perhaps included some genuine poetry, though of an untutored and odd sort upon which cultivated persons could bestow only a modicum of approval. There may have been something in what the speaker meant to mean, but the time, the place and the manner of his saying it seemed to me deplorable.

Then Martin spoke for three or four minutes. Quietly, and in such a way that even the previous speaker was not embarrassed, Martin restored Mary Gilmore to her place and a sense of humanity, proportion and decency to the discussion.

I was strongly reminded, as I had often previously been by reading Martin's poetry, of a scene in Samuel Butler's "Way of All Flesh".

The youthful narrator in the novel disagrees with his father's opinion that old Mr. Pontifex, the village carpenter, is a great man.

> "I tell you, Edward," said my father, with some severity, "we must judge men not so much by what they do, as by what they make us feel that they have it in them to do . . . . It is not by what a man has actually put upon his canvas, nor yet by the acts which he has set down, so to speak, upon the canvas of his life that I will judge him, but by what he makes me feel that he thought and aimed at. If he makes me feel that he felt those things to be lovable which I hold lovable myself I ask no more: . . . and I say again, Edward, that old Pontifex was not only an able man, but one of the very ablest men I ever knew."
>
> Against this there was no more to be said, and my sisters eyed me to silence.

David Martin is unlike Mr. Pontifex in that he has set down some notable acts upon the canvas of his life, but like him in making others feel that the man is greater than his work. And I do not say this to damn his work with queasily qualified approval.

In spite of the disclaimer in the preface to "Poems of David Martin" (Edwards & Shaw, 18/9) it remains to me amazing that anyone can write poetry at all in a language that is not his native tongue—poetry that is poetry, that is to say. I am not thinking of academic exercises in verse-writing or of an occasional, **tour-de-force.** Conrad wrote great English prose but poetry is another thing.

In this volume there are some ninety poems, ranging in subject from elegies for soldiers killed in Spain to love lyrics and a short poem on chess. With such an output it would not be surprising, even if English were the poet's native language, to find some unevenness in quality and some whole poems which are unsuccessful: but if a poet were to be judged by his failures Wordsworth would have been forgotten long ago.

And David Martin's successes are magnificent. I don't think any Australian poet, be he dyed in the greasy wool for five generations, has caught more truly the exact flavor friendly, casual, laconic folk tradition—as, for instance, in the poem beginning:

Jack Underwood I'm writing on,
A bushman. He is dead and gone;
Jack Underwood is gone.
At Putty Hill he was shot dead
By some mischance, straight through the head,
That's how his death was won.
At Putty Hill, straight through the head.
Down by the creek they made his bed,
And there he sleeps alone,
But still he's more alive than most
Who ride the bush with their own ghost
Following close upon.

And ending:

There is a ring, a special ring,
About this word, this **everything**
That Jack, they say, could do:
As if the spirit of the place
Had suddenly assumed a face,
The cheerful dial of our race,
Indomitably new!
And so in Putty to this day
Jack Underwood still makes his way
As if he had not died,
And Tom, his son, takes after him,
A bush boy, soft of speech and slim,
And bold, and steady-eyed.

Or in his "In Memoriam Ambrose Dyson", or his "Bush Christmas", which begins:'

Stuffed with pudding to his gizzard
Uncle James lets out a snore,
Auntie Flo sprawls like a lizard
On the back verandah floor . . .

It is now usually considered incorrect, if not downright indecent, to consider the poet in conjunction with his poetry. I hope David Martin will forgive my breach of protocol.

It seems to me that his poetry is not remarkable for any brilliance of technique, but simply because it enables the reader to share something of the sensitive and all-embracing love for humanity which inspires the poet's lines. And it is this same quality in the man which enables him, almost at once, to be more truly at home in our country than many of its native sons. There ought to be more like him.

RUSSEL WARD

★

Color Prejudice

Down to earth as Gavin Casey's writing always is, in his latest novel "Snowball" (Angus & Robertson, 17/-) he really gets down to fundamentals with its theme, which is color prejudice in Australia.

Casey knows the atmosphere and make-up of the small marginal towns where groups of mixed-blood Aboriginals live on the outskirts in sub-standard dwellings, while beyond the town's limits there may be an Aboriginal settlement for those natives who come under the provisions (but not the protection) of the law. Such a place is his Gibberton, a town that might be anywhere on the perimeter of the agricultural areas of this country. There are, in fact, many Gibbertons in W.A. where, of the 22,000 persons legally classed as Aboriginals, 16,000 are in touch with "civilisation". Just how little these unfortunates penetrate into the "civilised" way of life or share its blessings, this novel exposes with clarity. His Charles family, of which the patriach is old Snowball, is a group symbol of a depressed minority within our midst, outcasts in the land of their birth.

Old Snowball, the only one of the vast brood who remembers the north and their tribal heritage, dreams of the past and his heyday as a tracker. His daughter Myrtle has hopes of a better future for her large family, especially for the kiddies, so clean, pretty, clever at school and fleet of foot. "Big Jack" almost white, who has known the mateship of men of the AIF in the Islands, wants only to be left alone to develop his welding business with his mate Greg. Stapleton, who loves Jack's sister, Josie. Yet he has troubled and restless longings that grow wilder as the schoolteacher Lorrie Welch seeks to plant in him those ambitions she feels to be rightly his. And young Benny, a promising pugilist, wants only what he can earn by his fists in clean fights, just a decent home and a sweet-smelling wife to make it attractive like the houses the white folk live in.

Ironically, it is Benny who sets the spark to the explosive situation that has been smouldering as the result of the Charles' growing prosperity, when, after the ball in his honor as a local champion, he tries to get too fresh with the local white waitress. In the flare-up that follows some cleansing is done, tragedy is averted, and there is a promise of a happier life within the community for all.

In his handling of his white characters Casey uses an equally sure touch. There are the reformers, the parson, headmaster, woman school-teacher who knows that sex-prejudice and racial prejudice have much in common. At the other end of the scale come the bigots and "nigger-haters" led by the vicious road board secretary, and supported by the brutal head of the native settlement. Somewhere in between come the ordinary townsfolk who tolerate the "boongs" so long as they know their place and don't try to overstep the bounds set by the white citizens. The local head of police is a good tolerant type, and one wonders why no doctor came into the picture to give the medical help that members of that profession so often voluntarily perform. It is the publican who provides the liquor that old Snowball has to wait till dark for on the woodpile in the hotel backyard, as Jack is too proud to apply for "exemption" although entitled to it, or as Casey savagely called it "permission to join the human race".

When Gavin Casey a couple of years ago took time off from his full-time occupation as a journalist to write this novel under a C.L.F. Fellowship, he could not have foreseen that within a month or two of its publication national attention would be drawn to the truth of the picture he paints by the celebrated case of artist Albert Namatjira, who stands charged with supplying drink to members of his own family on the outskirts of Alice Springs, with his "citizenship rights" threatened.

Nor (on the brighter side) could he have known that the novel would come out while a parliamentary committee of enquiry was sitting taking evidence on native matters, to discover what best means could be used to educate southern mixed-bloods to take their full place in or alongside the

white community. In the North a new technical school at Derby is being built that now takes more colored students than white to bring them into the new industrial openings there. And, for the second time, the Government of the state where Casey has come back to live has brought down a Bill to give those full citizenship rights without which all the rest is ephemeral and doomed to failure.

But, in the field of white prejudice, progress is apt to be slower than anywhere else, and it is here that such a novel as "Snowball" is likely to have its greatest influence. Every reader who shares the hopes and sorrows of his Charles family must shed any prejudice and replace it with belief that they and all their kind are indeed human beings like themselves with the same claims and rights to a fuller life.

IRENE GREENWOOD

★

Wild Turkey

In 1951 I was shooting a modest Australian western called "Captain Thunderbolt" up in Armidale, N.S.W. I had engaged Max Brown, whom I had not met, as the publicity officer. He had just finished working in this capacity with a very large American film unit that had been in Australia for some months. Brown was also, I knew, the author of a good biography "Australian Son", a study of the Ned Kelly legend. When he arrived in Armidale he recounted fantastic stories about the American film unit, and blandly announced he was going to write a novel about all this. Now the novel, seven years later, is with us. It is called "Wild Turkey" (Georgian House, 18/-). I know, as many others will who read this remarkable book, which film company and what people are referred to in spite of fictional varnishings; but it seems unfair both to the novelist and the public to make such facts open, for it merely leads to the silly game of name-spotting which so bedevilled "Power Without Glory". In many other respects "Wild Turkey" resembles Hardy's book. It is an expose, it is blunt and unsubtle, it frequently collapses into purple prose. Yet it is also a book of considerable courage, the more so in this conformist Australian society of ours where it can mean a loss of one's job and victimisation if you step out of line with the status quo.

The plot itself is simple to the point of being commonplace—the infatuation of the Australian assistant director for the American film star. This affair is recounted in lip-licking detail and should certainly help to lift the book into the best selling class. More broadly, however, this is an examination of the production of an Hollywood film, allegedly based on an Australian story. There is the impact these Americans make upon Australians they meet and work with and vice versa.

The Americans are viewed with either contempt or pity. The Australians are intelligent or well meaning. Unfortunately here the author lays himself open to charges of chauvinism. Yet anyone who has had anything to do with Americans in the post-war years, usually reacts sharply. The Herrenvolk attitude is unmistakably there. It was once the quiet arrogance of the English that irritated, now it is the noisy pushfulness of the "Yank". I remember meeting an American Fulbright scholar in Paris a couple of years ago, a pleasant young lady, who said: "Honestly you're the first person I've met who hasn't been nasty to me. Why does everyone hate us, do all Europeans think we support McCarthy and vote for Eisenhower?" She was a pitiful but inevitable casualty of her time. The Americans in "Wild Turkey" prove to be an unpleasant lot, largely because the author, through working with them, obviously became sick and tired of their bad manners, their boastfulness, the way they threw money around and above all their contemptuous attitude towards anyone not an American. It is all too true.

Certainly there is an electrician—"The Swede"—who is a simple good-hearted fellow beset with homesickness and tired of the world. There is no harm in him. The director, Humphrey Wolfe, a once-great artist, is now a commercial hack who seeks recourse in liquor and occasionally women. Brown clearly liked and respected this man, who knew his job but had sold his soul for a mess of footage. There is a terrible scene in which a certain famous Australian woman novelist visits the Location. Humph has her thrown off ("Get rid of that old bag"), but she returns daintily holding her parasol and addresses the director thus: "'. . . I am told I must not ask questions on the script. I should have known better. You know, hundreds of thousands of Australians who love their country dearly, hope every year that a director will come along and put down in film the beauty and courage they see in it.

" 'I don't think one has done it properly yet, but all the people who saw your "Valley Into Dust" are looking to you. I would be very proud to be in your shoes. Good luck!'

"Humph mumbled as she shook hands with him. His eyes were suddenly the hopeless eyes of a caged animal. As the Onslows left, his face turned grey, and he had to sit down and rest for a moment.

"She had dealt him a terrible blow.

"Then he jumped up and swore and told Don he was a tactless sonofabitch and to finish the shot if he could, and drove back to Glitzburg. Shooting was over by 3.30 by which time Humph was properly plastered . . ."

On the other hand the Australians we meet are almost all pleasant, and even progressive in their political attitudes. I must admit from my own experience of Australian film technicians that they are usually good blokes and a pleasure to be with. But occasionally you strike a bad egg and it might have helped in rendering a more convincing impression if those who appear in this tale did not **all** appear to be so intellectually and morally superior to their American counterparts.

Max Brown is a wonderful observer. He is blessed—some people might say cursed—with a tape recorder ear and a photographic eye. He does not miss much. It may be a description of the party given by the local minions of the American film industry for the newly arrived unit in Sydney where the audience ranges from female charity workers, after free publicity, to the tough boys who run the baccarat schools and are interested in fresh women and not at all in publicity. Or it may be a most moving account of the participation of the Aboriginals in the film, performing some of their strange ancient and awesome dances. Humor, especially of the rough, sardonic kind abounds.

But whatever the glaring weaknesses and considerable qualities of this valiant novel the reader will certainly be left with the extremely disturbing impression—How much longer, he must ask, will this process of cultural colonisation by America be allowed to go on? The appalling thing is

that the mass media—radio, films and television—are so completely dominated by the American material of the worst kind that we have gradually drifted into an acceptance of this state of affairs. Brown specifically states the case, through his characters, for the existence of an indigenous film industry, making use of information already published in Overland, Meanjin and the Melbourne Age. At this moment, as his novel appears, things have never been worse for Australian film makers, and certainly the author cannot be accused of overstating the case.

CECIL HOLMES

★

Tranquil Penguin

An anthology of Australian poetry issued under the Penguin imprint has long been awaited. The Penguin organisation, like the O.U.P., confers a special order of legitimacy on whatever it publishes. Admirers of Australian poetic achievement, which has received more brush-offs than praise from English literary know-alls in the past century, just can't help feeling delighted when a little of this valuable legitimacy is shoved in our direction.

"The Penguin Book of Australian Verse", edited by John Thompson, Kenneth Slessor and R. G. Howarth (5/6), is an attractive and readable addition to the Penguin library. The poems included vary from good to splendid, and the editing is crisp and scholarly. The total effect, however, leaves one a little uneasy. There is, as always in books of this nature, some underlying flaw, some element of unbalance in editorial perspectives.

Had the volume appeared as an "anthology", it would certainly have been mis-titled, but it is, after all, only a **Book** of Australian Verse, and a Book can mean anything at all, from a scrupulously representative assemblage of poems to a small, highly personal selection. Yet, because of the authority inherent in the name "Penguin Book", the "general English-speaking public", for whom this book has been primarily designed, might easily assume that "The Penguin Book of Australian Verse" is a broadly representative anthology, where it neither is nor was intended to be anything of the sort.

It is true that many previous Australian anthologies have carried a heavy freight of lifeless poetastry, from the nineteenth century, but does this mean (as our editors seem to believe) that we can afford to jettison everything written in Australia before 1901? Surely this is literary iconoclasm run riot.

By all means let us away with Dr. Moloney and his horrid sonnets, with J. Lister Cuthbertson and George Essex Evans, and others of the same pedestrian stamp, but have Harpur and Kendall nothing whatever to tell us? What of Ada Cambridge and her courageous "Unspoken Thoughts" and of Paterson and Ned Brady and Victor Daley and their whole richly creative and colorful era? And what, especially, of Henry Lawson, whom the editors, in an otherwise useful glossary, wave aside as a writer of "popular verse"? Well, this **is** a book of verse, isn't it? So why snub the verse that happens to be "popular" as well as quite unique and outstanding in itself? Isn't this rather a significant example of denying the knotted hands that set us high?

Containing little that was written before 1901, the book might more appositely have been titled "The Penguin Book of Twentieth Century Australian Verse", but, even had it emerged under this label, there would still have been some quite extraordinary omissions. It is astonishing that the editors should have discarded Frank Wilmot, one of the real makers of our contemporary verse idiom and a most honest and original poet, to say nothing of Lesbia Harford, a minor figure admittedly, but the author of some of our most exquisitely personal lyrics. Where, too, are Leonard Mann, Norma Davis, Nancy Keesing, Elisabeth Lambert, David Martin, Val Wallis and Laurence Collinson, a writer who stands head and shoulders above many of our younger poets? Could it be seriously claimed that none of these deserves to mix in the company of Donovan Clarke, Max Dunn, Edgar Holt, M. B. MacCallum, D. P. McGuire, J. A. R. McKellar, T. Inglis Moore or R. D. Murphy?

The editors are to be commended for having made a real effort to think out afresh the whole pattern and substance of an Australian anthology. They have presented us with what they genuinely consider to be the essence of the best of our verse. This is all to the good, but one cannot but suspect some reluctance to acknowledge the accomplishments of certain mainland writers living south of the Murray. Further, there is an evident editorial unwillingness to confront poems in which there are social references and implications. Much of the book has a rather cool, uncommitted quality, which masks the often passionate social interest and involvement of so many Australian poets past and present.

Tendencies of this sort must inevitably affect the perspective of the entire volume to some degree.

The brief biographical sketch cum critical evaluation preceding each poet's work makes an interesting innovation, but a large proportion of the near-gossip about wives, husbands, hobbies, education and social origins seems to consume an unfair amount of the limited space available for poetry. The critical tone is usually objective and sensible, although there is something a little amusing in the idea, faintly but repeatedly suggested, that certain poets (like David Campbell and John Manifold) have some particular value because they sprang from "pioneer stock." It recalls the (we hope) antiquated "blood tells" theory championed by T. Inglis Moore in his "Six Australian Poets."

It would be cavalier, indeed, to dismiss this book as summarily as its editors have written off some of our finest and most rewarding writers. It furnishes us with the full text of Brennan's "The Wanderer", a poem that has never before been fully accessible to the ordinary reader. It provides a new and pleasing selection from the works of Hugh McCrae, Shaw Neilson and R. D. FitzGerald. It grants due space to the sardonic urban humor of Ronald McCuaig. It reprints Rosemary Dobson's delightful "Country Press" and Max Harris' excellent recent poems, "The Tantanoola Tiger" and "Incident at the Alice", and it gives a well-deserved prominence to the work of highly competent younger writers like Ray Mathew, Vivian Smith, Hal Porter, Eric Rolls and Lex Banning. These are substantial gifts, and one's critical reservations, one's disappointment at the limitations apparent in the over-all picture, should not be allowed to impair one's enjoyment of individual poems.

STEWART RAVELL

★

Though Poppies Grow

F. B. Vickers showed himself in his first book, "The Mirage", to be competent and courageous. This courage is well to the fore in his new book "Though Poppies Grow" (Australasian Book Society, 17/6), for Vickers has tackled that thorniest

of all subject material of the contemporary novelist—political man.

Man as god, man as beast, man as husband, father, lover, social man, warring man, inhuman man—novelists have reproduced them all, the best with shattering artistry. But political man? In literature as yet he is a mere foetus, though clamoring to be born. We have of course had important political novels; but this is a different proposition.

"Though Poppies Grow" is a case in point. Here is a book devoted to pertinent contemporary material—Australian traditions, translations of wartime ideals into reality, social improvement, McCarthyism, co-operative effort, housing, treatment of Aboriginals—a whole plethora of problems. Each is well-stated, each has its appropriate mouthpiece, often with appropriate human feeling and relationships. In short, we have a book about current politics, moderately well handled in its human aspects.

But that spark of greatness, that illuminating flash on an aspect of life that Vickers gave in "The Mirage", is missing. There we believed as absolutely credible the fantastic spectable of an Aboriginal girl trekking through the desert in high-heeled shoes and a satin dress. But here, suspension of disbelief is difficult—not in the problems, but in the people. Would a well-balanced, experienced social worker collapse into a permanent nervous breakdown because someone called her a Communist? Would a man, weak as he might be, accept with an almost happy resignation news of his wife's pregnancy to his hated brother-in-law?

Nevertheless, if not failure, but aiming low, is the crime, Vickers emerges honorably from his encounter with the facts of political life. He has not succeeded in extracting from them their human essence, the fundamental task of the novelist, but his failure must be added to the literary experience from which success will ultimately emerge.

It is urgent that it does. Pretty soon, man must understand himself, so that, loving his children, he does not will them poverty, oppression and atom war. This is politics. Where is the writer to cry havoc, to rend our hearts, illumine our lives so that we master our reality?

RIVKAH MATHEWS

★

Boldrewood

Most comprehensive of the bibliographies published by Walter Stone to date is Keast Burke's annotated bibliography, check-list and chronology to Thomas Alexander Browne (Rolf Boldrewood).

Issued by the Stone Copying Company, 64 Young Street, Cremorne, N.S.W., as the fifth of the Studies in Australian Bibliography, Keast Burke's is as complete a record of the work of a writer as anyone could wish.

Boldrewood's fame rests solely on his one masterpiece, "Robbery Under Arms". This monumental bibliography, rather than making us wonder why so much time has been lavished on a writer of such uncertain reputation as Boldrewood, should make us mourn that more money and time is not available for the enriching activities of the bibliographer in many other fields of our national literature.

Walter Stone has also published recently a Bibliography of the Roy Bridges Collection in the University of Tasmania. This consists of numerous manuscripts and fragments left by this Tasmanian writer after his death in 1952, and has been compiled by D. H. Borchardt and B. Tilley.

—B.M.

Goldrush Songster

Mr. Hugh Anderson has again performed a public service, this time by making available to the public a cheap edition of the most important songs of Charles Thatcher, the colorful balladeer of the Victorian and New Zealanud goldfields in the middle of last century.

Most attractively produced by the Rams Skull Press at 7/6, this book contains a valuable introductory essay by Anderson and a reproduction of the only known portrait of Thatcher.

Ron Edwards' illustrations are in harmony with the songs themselves, which illustrate most vividly the attitudes of mind of the diggers. But, as well as their historical importance, they are breezy and amusing to read for their own sake. This valuable book should be in the library of everyone who seeks to understand his or her Australian background.

S.M.S.

★

Other Notices

"Fernfire" (2/-) is a well-produced, duplicated magazine published by Unity Writers, 21 Clifford Street, Mt. Roskill, Auckland, N.Z. Two issues have so far appeared, containing stories by Murray Gittos, Brian Fox, Ngawha, C. Fireur, Frank Dodd, Joyce Ewen, and Des Stout. This is a vigorous and interesting publication.

"Singabout", Vol. 2, No. 4. The journal of the Bush Music Club continues to grow in interest. This issue contains nine old and new folk-songs and a great deal of related material. It costs 8/- a year from the Editor, John Meredith, 47 Chelsea Street, Redfern, N.S.W.

Ramajerri

Clair White's "Ramajerri" (privately published, 4/6) is a long ballad in Hiawatha metre on an Aboriginal theme, specially published for the 1958 Moomba Festival in Melbourne.

For a duplicated publication this is attractively produced, with an arresting cover. The poem is a tale of everyday Aboriginal life told with an often striking imagery. For those who object to the Hiawatha metre for Australian poetry, the authoress suggests that long Aboriginal names will not lend themselves readily to any other metre (cf. "Hiawatha" and "Alcheringa"!). E.D.

★

Books Received

(Mention here does not preclude subsequent review.)

"Rascals in Paradise" by James A. Michener and A. Grove Day. (Martin Secker and Warburg, 31/-.) Bullies, blowhards and buccaneers in the South Seas.

"Catalan Incident" by Dagmar Edqvist (Ian Novak, 17/6). A Swedish novel about a group of Swedish expatriates in Spain.

"Sandy's Selection" and "Back at Our Selection" by Steele Rudd (Angus & Robertson, 17/6). The less successful sequels to "On Our Selection" and "Our New Selection".

"The Doors are Closing" by Gyorgy Sebestyen (Ivan Novak, 17/6). Budapest in the 1956 uprising.

"Henry Handel Richardson—Some Personal Impressions" (Angus & Robertson, 25/-). Edited by Edna Purdie and Olga Roncoroni (H.H.R's. companion-secretary), this book comprises nine personal memoirs of the great writer. Miss Roncoroni's is the longest and most important.

"Fair Girls and Gray Horses" by Will Ogilvie (Angus & Robertson, 17/6). A new edition of the classic bush ballads, with a brief introductory essay by Douglas Stewart.

"Selected Stories" by Henry James (O.U.P., 12/9). Sixteen of Henry James' shorter pieces, containing much of his best work.

"The Sunlit Plain" by H. D. Williamson (Angus & Robertson, 18/9). Outback life in N.S.W. A Sydney Morning Herald prize-winning novel.

"Hooded Falcon" by P. Brian Cox. No publisher or price given. This is an interesting bi-lingual book of verse, in English and French, both versions being by the author, a Melbourne poet.

"The Wonderful Age" by Beryl Halinbourg. A small booklet of verse privately published by a Melbourne poetess.

"The Eternal Flame" by R. Brasch (Angus & Robertson, 30/-). Rabbi Brasch continues his clear and interesting exposition of aspects of the Hebrew faith.

"Adams of the Bounty" by Erle Wilson (Angus & Robertson, 17/6). The gifted author of "Coorinna" in a historical novel on the Bounty.

OVERLAND

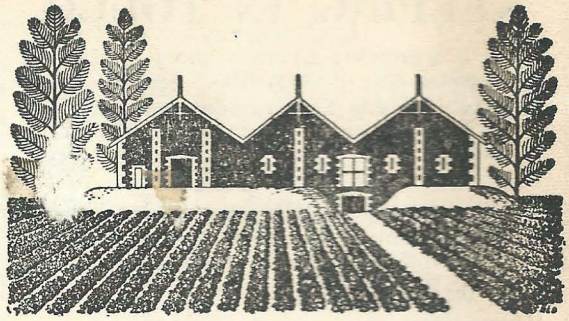
"Temper democratic, bias Australian"

Edited by S. Murray-Smith.

Overland is a quarterly Australian literary magazine, Price 2/6 posted. Subscriptions (10/- year, posted) and MSS. to the Editor at G.P.O., Box 98A, Melbourne, C.1. Manuscripts, which are welcomed, will only be returned if a stamped addressed envelope is attached. Please add exchange to cheques.

Published by S. Murray-Smith, Mt. Eliza, Victoria; printed by "Richmond Chronicle," Shakespeare Street, Richmond, E.1.

Australia's famous claret



WHAT MAKES a really great claret? A combination of many things—a relatively cool climate and unique soil conditions, the never ending vigilance of expert wine growers who coax the best out of the rare Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz (or Hermitage) grapes, and ideal maturing facilities where the wine is laid down to leisurely age over the years. These are the things which give us the great clarets of France . . . they also give us Australia's greatest clarets, Coonawarra *Estate* Cabernet and Coonawarra *Estate* Claret.

At Coonawarra Estate, the southernmost vineyard in Australia, conditions are ideal for the production of the highest quality red table wines and S. Wynn & Co. have planted the largest area of Cabernet Sauvignon in Australia. If the season is good, these vines, which are the shyest of bearers, produce a truly great claret savoured by wine lovers both here and overseas.

In the cool dark recesses of Coonawarra's stone cellars, row upon row of old oak casks hold the vintages, which after three years in the wood, are then bottled for further ageing in S. Wynn & Co.'s special storage under their St. Kilda Road cellars. Only one straight Cabernet, the currently available 1954 Vintage, has so far been bottled (the 1955 and 1956 vintages were too small in yield and were vintaged with the claret) but now maturing in the cask are the 1957 and 1958 vintages which will be available in 1962 and 1963. These wines are distinguished by a special label "Coonawarra *Estate* Cabernet" instead of the usual Coonawarra *Estate* Claret. Of all the vintages bottled, the youngest, namely the 1955 Vintage Claret, is considered to be the best after the 1954 Cabernet, whereas the 1952 Claret which is the oldest (supplies are still available) is the lightest in character. The 1953 Vintage Claret sold out during the Olympic Games in Melbourne when the total remaining stock was reserved for official functions and the 1954 Claret is expected to be sold out during the currency of this notice.

It cannot be said therefore, that there is a lack of appreciation for a good claret in Australia, nor does a good claret escape recognition, as the following list of more recent tributes in the form of show awards testify:

1954 VINTAGE - - - *1st Melbourne, 1954*
1954 VINTAGE - - - *1st Adelaide, 1955*
1955 VINTAGE - - - *1st Adelaide, 1955*
1956 VINTAGE - - - *1st Melbourne, 1956*
1956 VINTAGE - - - *1st Sydney, 1958*

COONAWARRA ESTATE CLARET

An ESTATE Wine of S. Wynn & Co. Pty. Ltd., 348 St. Kilda Road, Melbourne.

Distributors: S.A.: A. E. & F. Tolley Limited, 82 Waymouth St., Adelaide. LA 1401.—N.S.W.: Swift & Moore Pty. Ltd., 32 Clarence St., Sydney. BX 2302. — Queensland : Swift & Moore Pty. Ltd., 294 St. Paul's Terrace, Brisbane. L 4537. W.A. : Charles Edmonds & Co. Pty. Ltd., 112 Brisbane St., Perth. BW 2684, BW 1344. — Tasmania : Importers Pty. Ltd., 140 Campbell St., Hobart. B 6356.

WC120