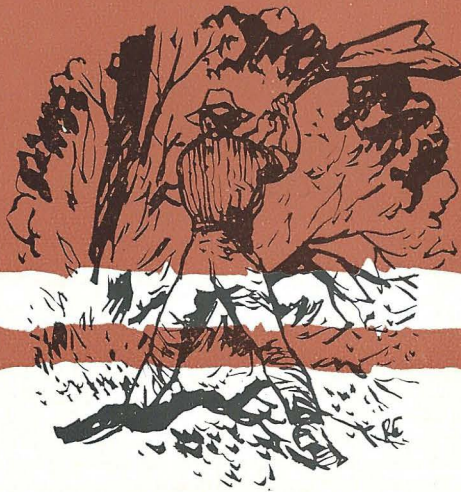


Overland

NUMBER 14

TWO AND SIX



THIS ISSUE

DAVID MARTIN—MORAL PERSUASION

DAME MARY GILMORE—

BILL BEACH THE SCULLER

A PROGRAM FOR AUSTRALIAN ARTS

TWO VIEWS ON DR. ZHIVAGO

**STORIES
FEATURES
POETRY
REVIEWS**

Overland, March 1959. Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a periodical.

CARL ANDREW

Temper democratic, bias Australian

PUBLISHED
QUARTERLY

Edited by S. Murray-Smith

NUMBER 14
AUTUMN, 1959

OVERLAND

CONTENTS

STORIES	Page
MORAL PERSUASION: <i>David Martin</i>	3
RUN-OUT: <i>E. Lewis Henry</i>	7
THE RELIGIOUS PERIOD: <i>Eric la Motte</i>	21
THE JARS OF APRICOT JAM: <i>Nancy Cato</i>	27
POETRY	
ASPECTS OF MODERN EDUCATION: <i>Laurence Collinson</i> 15 <i>and poetry by J. S. Manifold, Donald Maynard, Richard Meredith, Irene Gough, Geoffrey Dutton and Keith J. Free.</i>	
FEATURES	
A PROGRAM FOR AUSTRALIAN ARTS	11
BILL BEACH THE SCULLER: <i>Mary Gilmore</i>	13
A GENERAL DEMAND FOR ART	19
SWAG	25
TWO VIEWS ON DOCTOR ZHIVAGO	30
MARY GILMORE NOVEL AWARD	33
MISCELLANY	35
REVIEWS	40

Overland is a quarterly Australian literary magazine. The subscription rate is ten shillings a year (four issues), and the price of each copy is two shillings and sixpence. Manuscripts are welcomed, but will only be returned if a stamped, addressed envelope is attached. Please add exchange to cheques. All correspondence should be addressed :

EDITOR, OVERLAND, G.P.O. BOX 98a, MELBOURNE, C.I.

MORAL PERSUASION

"JESSIE! Jes—sie!"

Mrs. Andrews turned in mock despair to Mrs. McEachern. "I wonder where the girl can have got to? Aren't they plaguey? Oh, dear! And it doesn't look at all as if it wants to get cooler . . ."

Mrs. McEachern fanned herself with a program and let her eyes wander over the emptying lawn to where, a good hundred yards from the parsonage, it sloped down towards the pond. From a cluster of bushes the voices of children could be heard like the indistinct buzz of an aviary.

"Down there they are. I think my Pamela is hiding from me. She doesn't want to go home. Pam loves a Sunday School treat. I used to love them myself at her age."

Mrs. Andrews smiled. She had never cared much for Sunday School treats but it was in her nature to agree with everybody. In eleven years of married life she had not given her husband a cross word—nor received one from him. As he was fond of saying, "they left it to God to raise His voice."

Millie McEachern was a tall, slightly florid woman, a few years older than Mrs. Andrews who, at thirty-two, still had the fair skin and apple cheeks of a girl. Jessie was the Andrews' only child, whereas Pamela was the youngest but one in a mixed brood of five brothers and sisters. The two families had been neighbors for some years and Mrs. McEachern had often wished to ask Mrs. Andrews whether she did not want more children or could not have them. But, although Edna Andrews was very sweet and probably would not have minded, you did not ask her about such things. Her husband was manager of a paint factory and earned £1,800 a year. McEachern, who had his own electrical goods shop, made more than that and owned a better car, but he remained essentially a tradesman and there was hardly a book in his house.

"Jessie has done very well for herself," Mrs. McEachern said pleasantly. "Second place in the egg race, and I think she got a prize the other day, too?"

"Yes, for scripture. Though I don't think it means much for eight-year-olds, do you?"

"Well . . . I couldn't recite the names of the twelve apostles if my life depended on it. Never could and never shall, I suppose. And poor Pam is taking after me." Mrs. McEachern was being very handsome about it. Pamela not only had won no prizes for scripture, but had not covered herself with glory in the races, and when it came to pinning a tail on a donkey she had giggled so much that, with all the assistance of the parson's good lady, she had not won a place in that either. This

did not worry Mrs. McEachern unduly nor did it upset Pam.

The two women started strolling towards the water. Most people had already left and only a few mothers were still about, helping to carry in the chairs and packing away the croquet mallets. Mrs. Andrews was looking forward to getting out of the heat, and home. Millie would give them a lift. Sometimes it was annoying, not being able to drive, but Nubert did not favor the idea and, truth to tell, she was a bit nervous of it herself. But Jessie, businesslike little creature that she was, enjoyed nothing more than sitting next to Millie and watching her handle the car. Edna Andrews experienced that sharp surge of love she so often felt when thinking of Jessie or looking at her, and which reminded her of what she used to feel in her courting days when Nubert, as he had sometimes done, would unexpectedly walk into the library where she was working.

A little boy materialised on the lawn before them. His face was pleasurably eager. "Mrs. Andrews," he stammered joyfully, "Mrs. Andrews! Pam and Jessie's fighting! They're fighting over a doll! Pam and Jessie's fighting by the lake!"

"Lordy, are they really?" Millie McEachern responded, patting his sweaty hair. "Fighting over a doll in this heat?" And, turning to her friend, "It's been a tiring day for them. A meal and a cool shower's what is needed." But Edna was thinking of the pond. She was often tortured by visions of Jessie drowning or being run over by a car. She started towards the water, not quite, but almost, at a run, preceded by the boy herald.

Pam and Jessie were no longer fighting, but it was evident that they had been. Jessie's bright yellow hair ribbon had come undone and was fluttering behind her like a pennon. With tears in her large, unusually expressive eyes she was circling Pamela who was seated on the ground, cross-legged like a tailor, guarding the corpse of a plastic shilling doll whose cranium had been severed from the rest of its small head. Without getting up, Pamela would shift her bottom in such a way that her plump form interposed every time Jessie darted forward to make a grab. The seated girl seemed unruffled, with a smile, half malicious and half triumphant, flickering over her lips and eyes. Jessie, in a voice that was both an appeal and a scream, pleaded with her: "Let me have it . . . let me have it . . . let me have it!"

Pamela's back was turned and Jessie was the first to become aware of the grown-ups' presence. She immediately stopped shouting. Her moist lips parted and her face assumed a look of guilt. She stared fixedly at her mother and her hands went up to grasp the free-flying ends of the ribbon. Slowly she blushed.

"What on earth is going on here?" Edna asked incredulously. "What's all the fuss about?"

"She won't let me play with her doll," Pam explained, scrambling to her feet and leaving the object lying where it was. "She just won't."

"It's Jessie's doll," Millie, who had now come up, said peaceably. "She's won it fair and square. You pick it up and give it to her and then get ready to come home, young lady."

"Jessie, really!" Mrs. Andrews said, trying to be firm, and actually feeling angry. "What's got into you? Behaving like a baby! Why won't you let her play with it? One would think . . ."

She wanted to say that one would think Jessie had no dolls of her own at home, but she remembered, and it made her confused, that in fact Jessie had none. But that was only because she did not like playing with dolls.

Nubert had taught her to read at five, and ever since he had been stocking the nursery with suitable books. It was hard, sometimes, to make the child out. Normally she did not care about running and jumping, but today, under her mother's eyes, she had battled through the races as if the world were at stake. In the sack race, too, she might have won a place had she not fallen at the last moment.

Jessie's mouth closed and she looked away. But as soon as Pamela made to pick up the doll she forestalled her, bending down quickly and putting it in the pocket of her pink apron dress.

Edna was not satisfied. "I think you are being rather spiteful. I really think you ought to give

IN the car Jessie refused her accustomed place at Mrs. McEachern's side. Instead she huddled close to her mother in the back seat, her hot hand snuggling into Edna's. Poor child, she's upset, the woman thought. But another part of her objected that, to do as Millie did and by-pass every bother, was not doing the children a good turn. Young creatures needed love but, as Nubert had taught her, they also needed firmness. Still, it wasn't easy to be firm—Nubert would know how to help. What a blessing that theirs was a family in which the father did not shirk his responsibility in small things! Frequently, as a joke, he would compare the Andrews' household to the partnership of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, in which Sidney decided all big issues and Beatrice all minor ones—with Beatrice determining which were the big and which the minor. The only difference was that Edna could safely leave it to Nubert to make that decision as well, and also, as far as she knew, the Webbs' had not been a Christian home, as theirs was. She folded her hand comfortingly over her daughter's and felt the outlines of the battered doll pressing against her.

Nubert was already in when they arrived. He had gone out to play a round of golf but the sun had driven him home; he felt he owed it to his family to watch his health. They found him sitting in the lounge, with an open book beside him but engaged in solving a cross-word puzzle. He enquired whether Jessie had enjoyed herself, and Edna replied that they both had; the whole affair had been rather fun. The business about the doll could wait, and Nubert looked tired. Once again she was struck by the physical likeness of father and child, particularly around the eyes. Nubert's, too, were large, and some might call them a little protruding. When he was weary, as now, the lines

it now to Pam. Have you never learned about sharing?"

"Ah, that's all right," Mrs. McEachern said, a little embarrassed.

"It's not the way we are trying to bring her up, though," Edna insisted half-heartedly. "And at a Sunday School party of all things! Jessie, Miss Baker wouldn't be too pleased with you." Miss Baker took the younger ones for scripture and Bible stories.

The little boy thought it time he was heard: "She hit Pam," he announced.

Pamela rounded on him with venom. "Tell-tale-tit! Tell-tale-tit! She never did."

Edna frowned: "Did you, Jessie?"

Jessie still did not speak. She had wiped her eyes dry but now two large tears were forming. She gazed at her mother with a strange, heavy expression in which pain mingled with defiance.

"She couldn't have hit her very hard," Millie said conclusively. Knowing Pamela she was sure that, if there had been any blows, her girl had struck first. But she did not want an inquest there and then, and she was anxious to get into the shade. She felt like boxing the ears of the little boy.

Edna sensed her impatience and, inwardly, felt sorry for her daughter. A treat must not be allowed to end on an unhappy note. "Right," she said, brightening up; "incident closed. Last one to the car is a duckling!"

Pamela raced off, up the slope and heading across the lawn. Jessie followed more slowly. After a while, however, she put on a spurt and had nearly caught up with the other girl by the time they shot past the manse and out on to the drive.

about his mouth and chin showed up strongly, making him appear older than his years . . .

Mrs. Andrews was clearing away the dishes and Jessie was upstairs, washing before going to bed, when Edna broached the subject of the fight over the doll. Her husband heard her out without interruption. When she had finished he asked:

"And do you believe Jessie actually struck Pamela?"

"I didn't try very hard to find out."

"Hm."

"Should I have?"

"Maybe not in front of Millie. On the other hand . . . it's no use indulging their sensibilities too much. She's a big girl to fight over a doll, and it's not as if she were a poor child with no toys. I must say, she surprises me. Jessie isn't naturally selfish."

"No, that's right."

"She's not selfish and she has everything she wants to be happy. She wins enough prizes. And she is big enough to tell truth from untruth."

"I've never caught her telling a fib."

"I should hope not—why should she lie? She knows quite well she doesn't have to be afraid of us. Truth is a habit with children, just as lying is. And habits are the result of upbringing."

"What shall I do then; let it go by? I forgot to tell you I told her the incident was closed."

"I think that would be unfair to Jessie, just letting it slip. It would simply leave her with a bad conscience. If a child is being brought up the way she is, she knows when she has done wrong and wants things cleared up. Jessie's like a flower; she knows when a petal is bruised. I'll speak to her when I say good night. 'Let not the sun go down', you know."

FIVE minutes later Jessie's voice rang out from upstairs: "Ready!" It was the family signal that she was in bed, prepared for her prayers and awaiting the goodnight kisses.

Nubert followed Edna into the airy, white-painted nursery. Jessie was covered only with a sheet, her large eyes turned to the door. Mr. Andrews drew up a chair and his wife seated herself on the end of the bed. The child's clothes lay folded on her toy box, in the corner.

"Story?" her father suggested.

Jessie shook her head. Her oval face, framed by her soft, blonde-brown hair, lay restfully on the pillow.

"We're a bit tired tonight," Edna said understandingly. "So we'll just say our prayers, shall we?"

Jessie closed her eyes and folded her hands. Not monotonously, but with feeling, she recited:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child.
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.
For Jesus Christ's sake—
Amen."

Then she opened her eyes wide and, after a pause, went on in a lower voice:

"Dear Jesus, please bless Mummy and Daddy and Grandpa and Granny Andrews and Granny Huppert and Auntie May and Uncle Norm and Auntie Clemence and Uncle Peter and Auntie Sue and Uncle Ian and Cousin Fred and Cousin Hubert and Cousin Ivon and Cousin Melissa and Cousin Joy and Cousin Helena, and please bless Guy and Martin and Lily and Marje and Audrey and Jaqueline."

She stopped, and her mother prompted:

"And please help me . . ."

"And please help me to be a good girl."

Mr. Andrews nodded. "Yes, we haven't left any one out. But what about Pamela? I think you would like the Lord Jesus to bless Pamela too?"

Jessie shut her lips firmly and closed her eyes again. Her lashes trembled.

For the best part of a minute there was silence in the room. Mrs. Andrews glanced at her husband, smiling tenderly. When Jessie still made no move, her father spoke earnestly:

"Yes, I'm quite sure it would please the Lord Jesus if you asked Him to bless little Pamela. 'Specially tonight it would."

Jessie looked at the ceiling.

"Well, Jessica?" Nubert said.

She shook her head imperceptibly.

"Come now, dear," Edna urged gently. "Haven't you just asked Jesus to make you a good girl? Daddy is only trying to help you to sleep tight."

Nubert made a slight motion, indicating that he preferred her to leave it to him.

"There seems to be a little problem. Jessie, is there anything wrong between you and Pam? Did you have a scrape?"

She moved her head from left to right and held her lower lip with her teeth.

"If there isn't anything wrong, why not pray for her? And if there is—you ought to pray even more. Any girl can understand that. And a girl who's won a prize for scripture . . ."

Still no answer.

Nubert spoke up again: "Look here, Jessie, I'd like you to promise me something. It's not a big thing."

"What is it?" she whispered.

"I'd rather you promised me before I tell you what it is."

She gazed at him, rubbing the bridge of her nose. It was a trick she had when she was thoughtful or somehow preoccupied.

Edna shifted on the bed. "We can trust our Daddy, can't we Jess?"

"Let her decide for herself, Mother. What do you say, my dear? Will you promise me in advance?"

Edna thought she could detect the child's eyes growing moist. Suddenly she wished she had not mentioned the matter of the doll to Nubert.

Almost inaudibly Jessie agreed. "All right . . . if you like . . ."

"It's only this, girlie. I want you to tell me the truth. That's all I ask—the truth. That's not so terrible, is it? The truth can never hurt you, and when you ask Jesus to help you, you really want Him to make you a truthful girl, you see? Then, when you are big, you will always speak the truth and then people will like you and you can help people who weren't as lucky as you were. Of course, you do want to help people. Remember what you promised Dad. What have you promised him?"

"To tell the truth."

"Good! Now this is what I want to know: Did you try to stop Pamela playing with your doll, and if you did try to stop her, why didn't you want her to play with it? And did you hit her?"

"No," Jessie replied.

"No what? Did you not stop her playing with your doll or did you not hit her?"

"No," she said again.

He frowned. It was an involuntary movement of the face, very much like Jessie's rubbing of her nose. Edna, seeing it, had the strange and inexplicable feeling that Nubert loved Jessie more than he loved her, that he wanted her more.

"I think you don't understand," he went on. "You say no. Do you mean that you didn't stop her playing or that you didn't hit her? Which is it?"

Jessie did a surprising thing then. She began to move her head from side to side in a quick, rolling motion, a motion that became faster and faster. The rest of her body remained altogether still, only the head was moving, as by itself, with eyes tightly shut. She did this perhaps twenty times. Then she lay quiet, facing the wall, and put her hand over her mouth.

"Jessie!" Edna and Nubert exclaimed together.

THE child broke into terrible weeping. Still with her back to the room, she brought out heavy, staccato sobs that shook her whole form under the sheet. She would stop for a moment, with a great effort at control, only to go on as before. This was the most terrifying part of it—the way she tried to bring it to an end, to stop herself, and not being able to halt the sobbing and the shame. Her hand muffled the sound a little but that only made it more appalling. Edna leaned forward across the bed and touched the back of Jessie's head. The weeping girl made no attempt to remove her mother's hand. She simply went on crying against the wall as if she would never cease and as if she wanted to drain a river of grief.

But finally she succeeded in mastering it. The interval between the waves of sobbing became longer. Several times more she broke out, almost as if she wanted to bring up something that was constricting her chest and refused to be expelled. One more, and once again, and then, with a deep gulp, it was over. She turned round.

"Girlie! What in heaven's name . . . ?" Mr. Andrews had risen and was bending over her. "Is it really so terrible to speak the truth? It's not such a great thing to have hit Pam . . . if you did hit her. It doesn't matter, don't you see, you little sausage? It's speaking the truth that matters, not what you've done! Now you be good, and Mum and Dad will kiss you better and then you'll sleep as snug as a bug in a rug. And the dear Lord Jesus will watch over you, and your guardian angel . . ."

Jessie said: "She took away my doll and I hit her. I hit her hard. I had got it for the egg race."

"Well, so you bonked her," Edna said. "It was silly of you but I'm sure you didn't mean to hurt and Jesus can see you're sorry. Go to sleep now." She bent down and kissed the wet face.

"That's all right now?" Nubert asked, bending down for his own kiss.

"God bless Pamela," Jessie murmured.

"Amen," added her father.

Suddenly Jessie began to cry again, but more softly. "God bless Pamela, God bless Pamela, God bless Pamela, God bless Pamela," she managed to bring out at the same time, and went on with the invocation until her tears also stopped flowing.

"What a water works!" Mr. Andrews commented. "Really, my girl, anybody would think you'd rather I whacked you than be mates with you, the way we two are. Wouldn't one, Mother?"

"Does it hurt to get whacked?"

"You bet it does. I often was, at your age, but nobody's going to whack you."

"Does it hurt very much?" Jessie asked. She had sat up and was looking past her father in her serious way, her chin cupped in her hand.

"That's enough for one day," Edna, with finality, interposed. "You shut your eyes now and dream about the egg race; there's a good girl. I'll leave the door ajar and the lamp on in the passage." She switched off the light and both parents went out.

MR. Andrews faced his wife in the lounge. "Did you ever see such a performance? What do you make of it?"

"Maybe the heat," said Edna, after a moment's hesitation.

"Maybe. It's possible, I suppose. I could understand her howling like this if someone had made her ask Jesus to forgive her for hitting that Pam. But you know I wouldn't do that—it would be bad, psychologically. It's not done nowadays; it's quite wrong. I always try to get her to pray in a positive way."

"I know you do."

"And of course the truth is the truth. There's no getting round that. Not even for a child with all the advantages Jessie has."

POTPOURRI OF SCORE RELEASES

THE SENTIMENTAL BLOKE—C. J. Dennis. Spoken by Peter O'Shaughnessy. The Intro.; Doreen; The Play; The Stror 'At Coot; The Siren; Hitched; The Kid; The Mooch O' Life.

POL 001 10" 33½ r.p.m.—42/6.

LUISILLO & HIS SPANISH DANCE THEATRE "To the music of voice and instruments, the dancer adds the precise staccato of heels and castanets."

POL 012 12" 33½ r.p.m.—57/6.

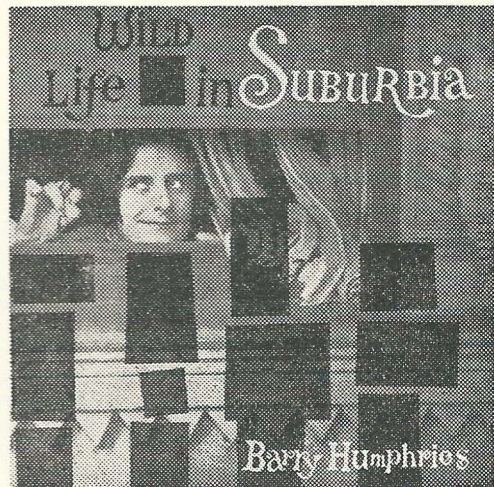
OBOE RECITAL—Jiri Tancibudeck, accompanied by Vera Tancibudeck. Internationally famous musician Jiri Tancibudeck plays, with sensitivity and understanding, pieces ideally suited to display the quality of the oboe.

POL 009 10" 33½ r.p.m.—42/6.

AUSTRALIAN FOLK SONGS—Joan & Miles Maxwell. Botany Bay; Moreton Bay; Travellin' Down the Castlereagh; Banks of the Condamine; Andy's Gone with Cattle; The Old Bark Hut.

READINGS FROM THE BIBLE—Brin Newton-John. Selections from the old and New Testaments displaying the great wealth of literature of the most important book of Western World.

POL 011 12" 33½ r.p.m.—57/6.



POL 014 7" 33½ r.p.m.—19/6.

COMING RELEASES

TALKABOUT with Bill Harney and Alan Marshall.

WILD LIFE IN SUBURBIA (Vol. 2). Written, directed and told by Barry Humphries.

POR FIESTA—Maria Vivo and Jose Romero (of Luisillo's Spanish Dance Theatre).

BALLADS OF BLUES AND LOVE—American Folksinger Pete Seeger.

PETER MANN RECORDINGS

**3 ESTELLA ST., GLEN IRIS,
VIC. BL 2461**

R U N - O U T

"YOU work with Mil, Monday."

"Aw, crikey," I groaned and Terry Peterson grinned. When the foreman disappeared behind the core-bench and out of sight, Terry roared with sham laughter, stretching his arm and pointing with a forefinger, derisively. He called: "Hey, Jack!" When Jack Marks stopped ramming and looked up, Terry added: "Didja hear what Herb said to Eddie?" Without waiting for an answer, he continued: "He's gotta start with Old Milburn, Monday."

"Huh. Thank criss it's not me that's got to work with that old bastard."

I was first year apprentice, awkward, ignorant of the moulding craft, and taciturn. Terry and Jack were second and third year apprentices. The other apprentice was Joe Bull, with only a few months to complete his time.

Joe worked on the retort-seat with Harry Kemple. Old Mil and Harry were like two sharp-toothed dogs always snapping at each other. Some said they would never live to be friends.

Milburn Jones was without doubt the most unpopular man in the foundry. That is to say, he was embroiled in a greater number of arguments with his workmates than any other man. His capacity for trouble was unlimited. Still, he was a "character" and exercised a strange attraction for other foundrymen.

At sixty-four and six feet three, he was a mountain of anxiety.

Rush! I've never known a man to worry over the quality of his work or number of boxes he made each day like Old Mil. His face was red, smooth and plump with deep creases like a pumpkin.

He wore a dirty, felt hat with crown punched up and rim pulled down only when casting. Most of the day his short fingers were scratching at lank, grey hair.

"Damn good moulder though. Forgotten more about the trade than any man in this foundry knew," and no man disputed Harry Kemple.

"What're you crawling after him for?" asked someone.

"I give credit where it's due . . . even to that old bastard": Kemple was no mean tradesman himself.

"Watch out Monday, young Reddie," said a voice from the crowd in the shower room.

"Old Mil'll make or break you," laughed Terry, adding maliciously, "And I've never known him to make anybody yet." A symphony of laughter rolled through the room.

Although I was ribbed in the shower room, I did not retort with much back-chat. But I was becoming scared. I knew the other apprentices hated working with him for—among other things—because he was a severe teacher and expected a lad to work as hard as he drove himself.

I remembered the argument—close to a fight—between Jack Marks and Old Mil.

It was over an iron moulding box.

"This's too heavy. Get the crane," complained Jack, a big lad of seventeen with muscles like Hercules.

"Crane, be damned. While you're working with me you'll lift what I lift. Now get hold o' the box."

"Who th' hell d'you think you're ordin' around? You go t'hell. You tear-arse bastard."

"I'll see Herbie if you don't lift it," warned Old Mil, his face livid with rage.

"Yair. Run to the foreman, you crawler . . ."

"I'll go see Herbie . . ." Jack stepped quickly in front of Mil.

"You take another step an' I'll drop yer."

Whether Mil really intended to report Jack to the foreman or was merely bluffing will never be known. But Jack, who had been rebuked by the apprenticeship commission for refusing to attend night school—before the day classes—and been threatened by the management for disobedience and carelessness with his work, could not risk another black mark against his name.

Herbie suddenly stepped out of his office at that moment. He quickly sized up the crisis and strode over heaps of black moulding sand and around stacks of steel moulding boxes, demanding: "What's up! What's going on here."

There was a spontaneous slowing up of work. We stared, wondering at the reactions of the crotchety old man and belligerent, unpredictable lad.

Tenseness snapped when Mil burst with: "I asked him to lift that box. He says, it's a crane job."

Jack snarled abuse.

"You crawler"—Herbie cut him off. "That is enough o' that talk . . ." he said, and continued to tell Jack what a "useless big lout" he was, and that the sooner he left the trade the better. Herbie was all for Mil.

"Now lift that box . . ." But Jack was a lad of courage.

"Like hell I will. I'll get the shop steward . . ." Cuthy Dickins, aware of the case, immediately stated his decision.

"Too big. The box's too big," he reiterated when Herbie snorted.

"For a man, yes, he could lift it. But for a lad of seventeen, definitely, no." Jack grinned triumphantly. Old Mil cursed like an enraged demon.

"A man of his size . . .?" Herbie pointed at Jack, significantly.

"He's still only a boy." Cuthy was not an unreasonable man. He could be relied on to understand an intelligent argument, even one put forward by the employer, and be glad to compromise. He upheld union rules and allowed for the human element before stating his decision. He was firm when certain the cause of truth and humanity was being served.

"He wouldn't give me a fair go if it was the last good turn he could do before dying," Jack later remarked bitterly of the foreman.

"You ain't no angel yourself," remarked someone, and all, including Jack, laughed.

"You be bright and early, Monday, Eddie," said Mil, as he left the dressing room, swinging his small lunch bag by his side. His voice sounded like a growl but the twinkle in his eyes told me he was joking.

"Not a bad old cow to have a drink with at the rubbity, yer know. It's just that he worries about his work too much," said Boozer Beldon, and several grunted agreement.

On Monday morning I was on the job early, nervously anticipating a torrid day. Although I was early, I did not precede Mil. He unlocked the change-room and was on the job first, always.

On warm summer mornings, as men dawdled in before the whistle, they automatically veered to where Mil sat reading the paper. Soon a large circle of chatting men would be present.

On cold mornings they would hurry to the large kettle Mil always had alight.

"You bastards know where to get warm. It's a pity yous didn't chop a bit o' wood or bring in some coke," he'd growl. Some of the characters would bait him:

"You do nothing all day . . . you get all the easy jobs . . . you're the bosses' pink-eye . . ." and it amazed me how angry he became, not realising they were "getting him in".

It was less than an hour after the whistle when he swore at me.

The split pattern was bedded half in the foundry floor. A moulding box was rammed up over it and four lengths of angle-iron stakes hammered into the floor.

These stakes, one at each corner of the box, guided the box when the crane lifted it. The pattern was then taken out and the moulding—half in the floor and half in the box—finished with moulders tools. Black plumbago was then dusted on the surface of the mould and "sleeked". The action of smooth-faced tools brought up a smooth, bright surface on the face of the mould.

After the core was placed in the bottom half of the mould in the floor, the crane lowered the box

between the stakes which guided it into the exact position to be cast . . . or poured.

I, in my inexperience, let the box swing around. The core touched the underside of the mould and part of it fell.

"You fool! Didn't I tell you to hold the box steady?"

"I tried . . ." I started to protest but left it at that when Mil went red in the face and began frantically yelling and waving his arms at the crane driver.

"Up! up . . . turn it over . . . damn it man, be careful. Don't jolt it. Do you want the whole bloody lot to fall out?"

"I don't care a . . ." yelled the grinning crane-driver and just to annoy Mil further, he added, "You should use the small crane for that small job."

"When I want advice from . . ." the remark sent Mil mad—literally mad—screaming mad. I was ready to run. Not long later, he apologised. I nodded without saying a word.

Poor old cow, I thought and when I observed him slip behind a stack of moulding boxes every so many hours for a pill or sip of green liquid from a medicine bottle, I wondered if work was the only thing causing him anxiety.

One day he told me, "Blow out the mould." I used the bellows vigorously. The nozzle of the bellows nudged a large portion of the mould up into the air like an exploding fountain of sand.

I stood immobile, not daring to look at him, waiting for the blast. I felt a little cheated—perhaps disappointed when he calmly told me,

"There now. See what you've done." His voice was so mild I looked up with surprise. He was smiling.

"I knew you'd do that. I let you because you learn by your mistakes." Whether he did "know" and "let me", I don't know. But it was bonzer of him to say so.

When I remember Milburn Jones, crotchety, cranky and angry, I cannot but feel appreciation of what he did one Christmas. Other men, those who reviled him for being mean, mad and a "bosses' man"—a reputation he earned and never lost by the incident with Jack Marks—never thought to supplement my first-year apprenticeship wages with a gift of ten shillings. A lot those days.

"A little something to spend over Christmas." He pressed the crumpled note into my palm as if afraid he might be seen.

MEN have breathed foundry dust and sweated through a decade of stifling heat and smarting fumes, and still they talk of "the day Old Mil and Harry had the blue."

Harry Kemple and apprentice, Joe Bull, worked on the retort-seat. A three-day job. First day, ramming; second day, finishing, painting with "blacking" and sleeking. A blaze of wood and coke dried the mould—too large to move into the stove—overnight.

The retort-seat was "cored-up" with about twenty-four carefully placed cores, and cast on the third day.

As often happened, two men wanted one crane instantaneously. Neither Mil nor Harry would wait. The big crane was occupied at the dispatch gate loading a motor truck. They battled over the small crane.

This light crane was manually propelled along the foundry on overhead rails by pulling a chain.

A manually operated "travel" moved the electric hoist across to where needed.

"Look at this! Look at them!" I heard Jack Marks exclaim. He stood, hand on shovel handle, laughing.

Old Mil and Harry each gripped the chain, one pulling against the other.

"Gimme the crane. I won't be a minute." Had it been another moulder, Harry would have submitted . . . but not to Mil.

"I've gotta try on the top. I'm late. It's half past eleven . . ." argued Harry.

"You'll need the crane for an hour . . ."

"I won't . . ." and these few words were civil compared with the obscenity which followed.

"Don't let him have it, Harry. Punch 'im on the nose." Jack Marks was always telling someone to punch Old Mil on the nose. He threw a small

knob of sand which hit the overhead steel girder and disintegrated in a shower over Mil. The elderly man shot a glance of hate over his shoulder.

"You watch yourself, young Marks," and Harry, heavy, young and vigorous, pulled sharply and the crane rolled his way. In spite of Old Mil's frantic efforts to stop it, he failed. Harry threatened to "drop ya if ya don't leave it alone."

Harry was not yet thirty but Old Mil evened the threat by flinging a two-pound hammer. Harry instinctively ducked his head, striking it a cruel blow on a shelf.

"You old bastard, I'll kill ya." Harry charged, arms swinging well before he became within reach of his antagonist.

The Australian man has a strong sense of fair-play. He may approve of an evenly matched fist fight. But when one man uses a weapon, be it hammer, iron bar or knife, he is instantly condemned.

A howl of disapproval rose when the hammer flew. A roar of horror and disgust thundered when Old Mil picked up a rammer—a length of half inch round steel with a knob on one end.

"Come closer and I'll belt yer brains out," warned Old Mil, his face on fire with anger.

Herbie, whether roused by the noise or by chance, came out of his office in a stumbling hurry. Everyone began working furiously. Harry ran the crane to his job cursing and swearing to "make the old fool wait."

Mil's anger was rumbling indistinctly in his scrawny throat. I grabbed a shovel and used it fearing he would yell at me for doing nothing.

Throughout the foundry the men's resentment was being expressed among small groups which whispered conspiratorially, flinging hard-eyed and tight-lipped glances in Old Mil's direction.

"He might 'ave killed Harry," I heard someone growl.

"Cowardly old bugger. Can't fight fair."

"Like a lot o' bullies; got a yellin' streak up his back." They reviled Mil. No one mentioned he was provoked or that he had an age disadvantage.

The big ladle was full, hanging steadily from the crane.

"Ready Joe?"

"Yep!"

"Let 'er go," called Harry Kemple, tilting the ladle.

White-hot metal oozed over the lip of the ladle and dropped with a small splash into the runner—a basin-like depression in the sand connected to the casting by two vertical holes through which the metal flows.

Air gushed and whistled up the "risers"—holes in the top of the mould. Then the gas ignited and a yellow-blue flame roared, gradually changing in size, color and sound as the mould filled.

Just as the metal hit the top and started to fill the risers, the pressure in the mould is greatest. Someone yelled: "Look out. She's out."

"Run out!"

After the bottom half of the mould is rammed, it is set on a bed—a flat area of sand, not too hard but with no depression or soft-spots. If there is a soft-spot or depression in the bed, the pressure of the metal will force part of the bottom of the mould down. Metal then runs out from under the box.

A run-out from the top or half way up the side of the box is comparatively easy to stop. Quite often, particularly with a large mould, a run-out from the bottom is impossible to stop.

OVERLAND

THE CHEAPEST GOOD READING
IN AUSTRALIA!

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

- () Please send me Overland for..... years, at ten shillings a year. I wish to start with issue number..... I enclose payment.
- () Please send Overland to the enclosed addresses as a gift from me. I enclose ten shillings for each sub. Please notify the recipients of my gift immediately/ at Christmas time.
- () I enclose a list of names and addresses to whom I suggest you send a specimen copy of Overland at no charge, in the hope that they will subscribe.

My name and address is:

.....
.....

Post to:

Editor, Overland, G.P.O. Box 98a, Melb., C.1

Harry's language was as foul as the vile, eye-and-nose-smarting gases thrown off by certain types of burning coes.

He stopped pouring—to ease pressure. Joe grabbed a shovel and frantically threw sand on the metal which snaked out like a dull, red river. A reptile nosing around for a victim.

It began to solidify, dull red and viscous, then stopped.

By now, a number of men stood around watching. Mil stood, hands in pockets, face set inscrutably.

"You should be more careful making the bed," growled Herb.

Harry was furious. He clenched his lips to prevent himself being uncivil to the foreman.

"What're you looking so worried about?" asked someone, jocosely. Most men cannot resist a friendly jibe at another whose work goes wrong. Most men pretend they don't care. They laugh with their taunters. At present Harry was a volcano of rage close to eruption. Herbie, like a busy blow-fly buzzing around carrion, was not alleviating Harry's anxiety. A three-day job carrying two men is a big responsibility; a big loss.

Joe steadied one end of the ladle-shank and Harry began to pour—both looking grim.

When the metal fell into the runner, it flowed through the mould and out of the bottom, unimpeded. It came out with great force, hitting a rusty, damp moulding box. The metal shot up with a sparkling bang!

Men scattered, spreading out just ahead of the sparks. Joe Bull muttered "Bugger this," and left Harry alone holding the ladle.

Harry hunched his shoulders and pulled his head down on his shoulders as protection. He was on the opposite side of the run-out, and consequently did not get the full blast of sparks as Joe did.

"She's a goner," yelled someone. Harry cursed volubly.

Old Mil was not one to let a job be a "waster" without a battle. Personal antagonism was forgotten; a casting was in jeopardy. He pulled his hat down on his eye-brows, grabbed a pair of leather gloves out of the hand of a watching laborer and darted into the showering sparks careless that his clothes would soon ignite.

He acted spontaneously, instantaneously, before protests of "He's mad! Let the old fool burn . . . Hasn't got a hope of stopping it. . ."

Mil shovelled sand, banged it hard with the back of the shovel-blade and threw more sand onto the metal. The sparks eased and he came dashing into the open where willing hands patted out countless smouldering spots on shirt and trousers.

"Let it go! Shove it in, Harry," he yelled, voice free of resentment. One would find it hard to believe there had been the bitter altercation only hours earlier.

Old Mil's shirt was beyond repair. He received only minor burns.

Some men reckoned him "a game old devil". Others, more bitter and obstinate, growled, "Mad as a rabbit. Only a rabbit would be fool enough to run into danger like that."

After the retort casting was knocked-out the following day, a lump was found on the bottom flange. Some heavy-hammer chiselling removed that.

Harry approached Old Mil and offered to shake and forget. Jack Marks snarled, resentfully, "Kemple crawling after the old bastard, now."

The men howled him down.

"Give 'im a go, Jack."

"Yer, he's a game old bloke. Yer gotta grant him that."

"Game as Ned Kelly."

Jack made no answer. He grunted, disgusted. He turned and walked away, alone.

"Let's drink on it," laughed Mil, adding, "after work."

13½ Hours

Dark by 7
indicates we're travelling N.

Moss Vale compares pretty well
with the Western District
for pasturage.

firm no thanks
to Miss Liver and her
Jehovah's Witness pamphlet.

Christ the fog here
can't clothe more fully
a figure-fitting shirt.

you young man
does your Psychology of Insanity
make a mention of
legs!

DONALD MAYNARD

FREE—To all lovers of
Australian Literature

CESHIRE'S GUIDE TO AUSTRALIAN BOOKS

This colorful 16-page news-sheet gives information on hundreds of recent and forthcoming Australian books, and contains a select list of Australian books in print.

★

Call, phone or write
for your free copy to—

CESHIRE'S
338 LITTLE COLLINS STREET,
MELBOURNE—MU 9532

WHAT'S GOING ON
AMONG THE "NEW LEFT"?

OUTLOOK

an Australian Socialist Review

pioneers the field of independent socialist thinking in this country. It brings you objective reporting of developments in the socialist countries, and its contributors examine Australian society as it really is today, and look for socialist paths forward.

OUTLOOK invites every Australian socialist to become a reader and contributor.

Current issue: Ian Turner, D. W. Rawson, James Jupp on Labor since the Elections.
March issue: Brian Fitzpatrick on Australian Labor and Australian Liberty.

Annual Subscription: 15/- for 6 bi-monthly issues to: The Editor, OUTLOOK, Box 368, Post Office, Haymarket, Sydney.

OUTLOOK Discussion Pamphlets: Now ready—Ken Kemshead on "Nationalisation" (with a foreword by E. J. Ward).

OUTLOOK—An Australian Socialist Review
Editor: Helen G. Palmer.

A PROGRAM FOR AUSTRALIAN ARTS

LATE last year Overland drew up in draft form a questionnaire, which it was our intention to circulate to all political parties, prior to election day, asking them to outline their programs for Australian cultural life.

Unfortunately there was not time to present the questionnaire to the parties in the way intended. However, in the course of its preparation, we sent the draft to a number of distinguished Australians in the theatre, in the literary world, the art world and in similar spheres.

Nearly all who were approached welcomed the initiative and readily agreed to support such a move. In fact, the support received indicated that a properly organised campaign on the lines suggested could have had, and can still have, a most effective political influence.

We believe that this campaign is today more timely than ever. The program outlined below is not considered to be a comprehensive or definitive one, but at least it presents a beginning. Thinking Australians must work for pressure to be brought to bear on Government and Opposition through every possible channel for the immediate implementation of policies such as these.

Below we give the preamble to the questionnaire, a summary of the clauses it contained, and a few of the many comments received.

S.M.S.

Preamble

THE richness of a country's spiritual life depends on the quality of its creative artists, and the opportunities they have for expression.

In Australia today we are aware of the real and potential talent we have in all fields of art; we are aware of a considerable and increasing interest in the contributions our writers, artists, musicians, playwrights, actors, etc., can make to our own understanding of our community life and the place Australia occupies in the world.

The time has, however, arrived when, throughout the community, awareness and concern at the lack of government support to the arts is being strongly expressed.

The artists, who have so much to give in making Australia a richer country, have received little support from successive governments. 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.

Aware of the deep interest of tens of thousands of voters in these issues, we respectfully ask the Australian political parties to state their policies.

Among the policies it was proposed to ask the Government and Opposition to do all in their power to implement were the following:

Literature

An increase in the £12,000 a year granted to the Commonwealth Literary Fund, which includes Fellowships, pensions, publication subsidies and aid to magazines.

The establishment of Chairs of Australian Literature at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne, and eventually at all Australian universities.

Music

The establishment of a Commonwealth Music Fund, to operate on the same lines as the Commonwealth Literary Fund.

An investigation into the effect on public appreciation of music of the high admission charges now generally made to concerts.

Art

An investigation into the possibility of Commonwealth aid to State art galleries.

Support for international travelling exhibitions, both of overseas art in Australia and of Australian art overseas.

The establishment of a national portrait gallery in Canberra.

The establishment of travelling art scholarships, as in New Zealand.

The establishment of a claims fund, to which galleries could apply for funds for the acquisition of contemporary Australian works of art.

Drama

An increase in financial support to enable broadening and improvement of the work of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

An investigation into the prohibitive charges made for drama and opera tickets, the role Entertainments Tax plays in these charges, and the deleterious effect they have on public support for these arts.

Film

A comprehensive program to revive the Australian film industry as one of the most urgent political tasks of any government.

(Continued over)

Television

An investigation to see if the standards as laid down by the Australian Broadcasting Board of Control are being maintained.

An investigation of the degree of encouragement that would be given to Australian actors, writers, film-workers and others by the imposition of a quota system, as recommended by Actors' Equity and other bodies.

The consideration of special means (such as the South African duty on imported TV films) to support the making of TV films in Australia.

Other Fields

Investigation into such fields as folk-music, ballet, architecture, where government assistance or encouragement is or could be necessary.

An investigation into the lack of facilities at the Australian National University for research in the humanities, including Australian art, literature, folk-lore, etc.

Consideration to the establishment of a ministry—or the allocation of ministerial responsibility—for the arts and cultural affairs.

Consideration to the subsidising of cultural exchanges with other countries, as a two-way traffic.

SOME COMMENTS:

Katharine Susannah Prichard: "What is particularly needed in the drama is encouragement for the production of Australian plays, and a workshop theatre in which playwrights will have opportunities for testing their techniques."

A distinguished Sydney novelist: "I think Chairs of Australian Literature are absurd, I'm keener on getting some Australian literature than creating a cosy position for some pundit to lecture on the little we have. But I am willing to sponsor the questions. I think it is a good idea to remind these men that even writers have votes."

A former Vice-Chancellor: "I agree that politicians should be kept awake to the significance of cultural interests. You are at liberty to include my name in support of the questionnaire."

A well-known playwright: "I am not altogether behind giving the present set-up of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust more money . . . for the time being I suggest that any proposed increase be sought not as a general increase but for specific reasons—the founding of schools of opera and ballet, bursaries for promising theatrical writers, travelling scholarships for actors, etc. . . . I think, too, the matter of admission prices could be made clearer. Prices are as high as they are because of the burden of Entertainment Tax. Admission prices in this country are high, but in point of fact they are lower than in England (where wages are likewise lower) and certainly much less than American prices. The questionnaire is an excellent idea and timely and of course I'll go with you."

Gavin Casey: "The only change I'd like to see made is the addition to the literature section of a point on the restoration of a third Literary Fund Fellowship each year. It was a mean way to do things to give an extra £400 to two writers mostly by taking £600 away from another. And perhaps something on the inadequacy of Australian literary pensions."

A leading architect: "I think it is an excellent idea for the magazine to quiz the parties and to publish the results. They should make an exciting article."

An art historian: "I like the document very much and I think it may do some good."

BRISBANE READERS OF OVERLAND AND OF A.B.S. BOOKS

Three "Readers' Nights" are on this year's program of the Brisbane Realist Writers' Group. These are for you, an opportunity to come and join the writers in discussing Overland and the books of the Australasian Book Society.

Indeed, the writers take the back seat for a change, and you have the floor. When you've got it, hang on to it, because you'll only have the opportunity three times this year. The writers will be the better for you having had your say, and you'll be the better for having had your revenge.

The decision of the readers will be final and binding.

Anyone running dead will be swabbed by order of the stewards.

If you're still reading this, the particulars are in the advertisement below this one.

★

BRISBANE REALIST WRITERS' GROUP

1959 PROGRAM

Meetings: On alternate Wednesdays, as listed.

Place: Second Floor, Hubbard's Academy, Charlotte Street, City, opposite the new Festival Hall (the Brisbane Stadium). From Queen Street, proceed along Albert Street towards the Botanical Gardens for TWO blocks. Turn right into Charlotte Street. The Academy is about fifty yards from the corner.

Hours: 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Dates and Program:

15/4/59	Mss. night (related to poetry lectures).
29/4/59	READERS' NIGHT.
13/5/59	Mss. night.
27/5/59	Lecture—Henry Lawson's short stories.
10/6/59	Mss. night.
24/6/59	Lecture—Vance Palmer's short stories.
8/7/59	Mss. night.
22/7/59	Gavin Casey's short stories—Lecture.
5/8/59	Mss. night.
19/8/59	READERS' NIGHT.
2/9/59	Mss. night.
16/9/59	Lecture—The Asian Novel.
30/9/59	Mss. night.
14/10/59	Lecture—The French Novel.
28/10/59	Mss. night.
11/11/59	Lecture—The Queensland Novel.
25/11/59	READERS' NIGHT.
9/12/59	Annual General Meeting.

Some features of the third term are still tentative. If necessary, a later Overland will carry a suitable advertisement in this respect.

For inquiries, contact the Secretary, Mr. J. Skea, 65 Old Cleveland Road, Stones Corner, Brisbane.

BILL BEACH THE SCULLER

READING of Searle the other day I thought of his predecessor, Bill Beach, the man who was never beaten and who named Kemp as his successor.

Beach was the grandson of "The Blacksmith of Ulladulla". This man, who was a friend of father's, had been in charge of his officer's horses in India before and during what we call the Indian Mutiny. Trained in his work, he could make steel for horse-shoes so fine that, as father used to say, it was no thicker than half-a-crown, yet it neither broke away from the nails nor cracked, no matter what stones it struck.

Australia was full of horses in those days, when every farmer had his own forge and anvil, and did his own repairs and shod his own horses. But the blacksmith of Ulladulla was a master at his work, and it was from him that father learned farriery for his own use.

Having been faithful to the British in the Mutiny this man, and hundreds of others, were sent to Australia where they could live in safety. I remember him well, with his long grizzled beard, his kind, courteous manner, and his straight, strong look of sincerity. We were travelling somewhere on the South Coast and father swerved to Ulladulla because, he said, he could not pass his old friend, and he wanted him to see me (I was then about seven).

Bill Beach, the blacksmith's grandson, was a little older than I was when I first saw him. This was, I think, in about 1876, he then being apprenticed to August Meneke, the famous North Wagga Wagga blacksmith of that day.

Meneke was another genius like Beach's grandfather, but his speciality was bells, the land then being opened up for settlement by horse or bullock teams. Meneke's bells had so pure and clear a tone that they could be heard further than those of other makers and were known and sought for all over Australia. He used a special copper alloy which he imported from Germany—whence it still took months by sea to come to Australia.

Meneke had his own way of testing the tone of his bells so that the sound never varied. In those days men wore a broad-brimmed felt hat with a flexible steel tape or band round the edge to keep the rim out. Meneke would take one of these, turn it upside down (as I have seen him do), and ring the bell over the empty crown. If the edge of the brim did not quiver the note was not true, and the bell went back to the forge as scrap.

As this story is a loose run of recollections I would digress here to say that Alan Marshall, who wrote "I Can Jump Puddles" and other books, hearing there was a Meneke bell twenty or thirty miles from Wagga Wagga, travelled all that distance to buy it. When telling me of this he also said that, when in the Northern Territory, everywhere he went a constant question was "Who was the man who rode the white bull through Wagga Wagga?" and no-one could find the answer.

The white bull was in the first circus that came to Wagga Wagga, and it threw everyone who tried to ride it—and that in a time when any man would ride a buckjumper for fun, the land being full of horses.

The circus came to Wagga Wagga in about 1873, and was owned by Tinker Brown and his son-in-law, Harry Moxham, who afterwards had a store in the old town. The local auctioneer, Mr. Buffrey, with whose daughter I later on went to school, declared that the riding in the circus was a trick, and that once out of the ring anyone could ride the bull. Buffrey made a bet that he would ride from the circus through Gurwood Street (where Arthur Orton's—the Tichbourne Claimant's— butcher's shop still stood) and on through Fitzmaurice Street, then only "the main road". For Buffrey the bull went as quiet as a lamb and he won his bet.

To return to Meneke and Bill Beach: apprentices in those days were held under cruel and iron-bound laws. They could be kicked, beaten, overworked and only half-taught, yet their indentures had to be kept or they would be punished if taken to court for any kind of breach. Meneke was a good master when sober, but he was cruel when drunk. So the boy suffered.

The Murrumbidgee, in those days, was thickly timbered along its banks, with dense scrub down to the stream in the bands. It ran past North Wagga Wagga and was only a few hundred yards from the forge. The boy was crazy over water, so at dusk he would slip away unseen and he would go for a swim. In the water he was like an otter; he made neither splash nor sound. The river was dangerous because the current was sometimes near one bank or the other. Meneke forbade the boy to go near the river.

Forbidden to swim, Bill secretly made himself a little half-canoe, half-boat, of bark and scraps of wood, fastened together by bits of wire and with nails. This he hid where the undergrowth was thick, and in stolen moments would paddle along the stream. Father knew of this. But of course he said nothing beyond warning the boy to be careful of eddies and change of current. But in the end Meneke, going to the river to look for the boy, found the boat. He jumped the bottom out of it, and then smashed every other part of it. When he came home he mercilessly flogged the boy for disobedience.

The result of this, and other things we had seen, was that father went into South Wagga Wagga, to the Police Magistrate, Mr. Bayliss (who had been shot by Morgan the bushranger and was lame) and asked could he have the articles of apprenticeship broken, and gave his reasons for doing so, saying that the boy was cruelly treated and was not even properly taught his trade.

Mr. Bayliss said that only the court could break the indentures, but that if father would sign an affidavit that he would be guarantor for the boy

★ COMMENT



Jean Devanny (Q.) writes:

Jack Lindsay (Overland No. 13) protests against Judah Waten's review of Vance Palmer's novel "Seedtime". He feels that in naming Macy Donovan, Palmer's central character (who has graduated from an A.W.U. organiser to a labor seat in the Queensland Parliament), a defeated man and reformist, Waten has been guilty of "superficial criticism" which leaves him, Lindsay, baffled. In Lindsay's opinion Palmer, in his two novels "Golconda" and "Seedtime" has created in Macy Donovan "a magnificent character who powerfully embodies in something like fullness the Australian Labor Movement."

Coming from Lindsay, reputedly an adherent of the political Left, the above statement leaves me baffled.

What are the facts? Donovan starts out in Golconda an integral—and self-confessed—careerist and opportunist, with "fine notions of making a name for himself". He exudes the "strong man" ideology. To the new school teacher he boasts: "Don't worry about those jokers (the school committee). I'm the only one you need trouble about. Macy Donovan, the chairman; that's saying the whole show." And that statement is typical of his thoughts and actions throughout.

So sharply is Donovan revealed as opportunist-reformist that I unquestionably assumed that the author's intention was to portray him as such. In addition, he is a thoroughly repellent and unpleasant personality.

Elected to Parliament he goes on the booze. "From now on," he says, "I'm sitting pretty." Leaving Golconda, he saw himself "headed, he felt, for somewhere nearer life's centre."

In "Seedtime", Donovan continues his subjective reformist-defeatist line. The Labor Movement remains an expedient to him. He is still boastful, still proud of his illiteracy and ignorance of everything appertaining to political economy and the history of the working class. He covets a "dago girl".

When his Party leader, Lambert, throws the forces of the state against striking workers Donovan takes issue with him in true demagogic style, but failure finds him once more concerned basically

(Continued from previous page)

till he was twenty-one, and that he would make himself responsible for the boy's moral and other training, he would take it upon himself to release the lad and hand him over to father.

This was done. Father sent Bill to one of his friends in Sydney. There he lived, helped by father till he got work. Meanwhile as he grew older he trained more and more as an oarsman.

There were no seats for onlookers along the Parramatta when Bill Beach won his championship. We had to sit on the grass, and when he came up the river bank looking for friends, and caught sight of me standing up to be seen, I believe that had he been delayed he would have walked over the heads of the people to reach me because I was my father's daughter. Then he saw father.

with the effect upon his own career. Re-elected to Parliament, he absolutely justifies Judah Waten's contention that he seems to have absorbed Lambert's opportunist teachings on how to "get on" in the political world, and might shortly qualify for a ministerial post. Donovan's reservations re Lambert contain no suggestion whatever of qualms and dissatisfaction with his own defeatist line. No hint is given of potentialities for development away from reformism in the future.

If, as Jack Lindsay seems to think, Mr. Palmer was not consciously aiming at an exposure of reformism in "Golconda" and "Seedtime", then the significance of the two novels lies in that they clearly reveal the danger and futility of selecting unrealised social and political conditions to serve as a medium of expression.

Jack Lindsay (U.K.) writes:

It is hard to comment on Jenny Devanny's letter since its account of the novels seems to me a mere parody, the sort of reduction to absurdity that can bleach the meaning out of any work, from Shakespeare downwards. The Australian Labor Movement has hardly yet achieved socialism; in calling Donovan's typical I meant that he expresses both the good and the bad qualities that characterise that movement. To use a blanketing term like reformist is simply to kill him off as a character and to miss the complex mixture of good and bad elements that constitute the reality of struggle. Both Judah Waten and Jenny Devanny (the creative work of both of whom I respect) seem to me to be unable to read a book, at least where political issues are involved, except in terms of oversimplified slogans. The "significance" of the book is not "an exposure of reformism" or a revelation of "the danger and futility, etc." It is simply that of telling the truth. However, I shall say no more here, as I am at work on a full-length study of Vance Palmer's novels for Meanjin.

"There are no conceivable circumstances . . . in which the world can peacefully exist half-privileged, and half-pauper . . . Information gets around the world now: the Asians and Africans have seen that others are not hungry and dying before their time: they are not going to wait a hundred years before they get the same elemental things . . . Granted a truce in the cold war, the whole human race could have these elemental needs fulfilled in quite a short time. That is, there is no technical reason why by the end of the century most Asians and Africans should not be living as most Western Europeans are now. There is only one way to do it—by the West helping in a gigantic world-wide industrialisation, making complete use of the scientific industrial revolution, i.e. atomic energy and automation . . .

Industrialisation is now, as it always has been, the one hope of the poor. It is the failure to comprehend that insight which has made so much of our contemporary artistic culture false, unintellectual and in the long run antihuman . . . Of course, there is a great deal wrong with industrial society as we now know it. The thing to do is to find ways to put that right, not dream ourselves into a myth of an eighteenth century which never existed. Except in lucky pockets, the social condition of men down to our own times does not bear much thinking of. That is still true with two-thirds of the world today."

C. P. Snow, reviewing J. D. Bernal's "World Without War" in the New Statesman.

ASPECTS OF MODERN EDUCATION

Or, Double Standards in Search of a Schoolboy



Drawings by Rosemary Beedles.

DEMURE as a laundered pinny, obedient as a broom, Elsie one: innocence in ringlets. O see her saunter down the suburban hill ezemic with brick veneers on Mummy's messages, to the bantering butcher, the neon self-service, the meek greengrocer still lost in Italy, who calls her signorina and smiles without meaning. O see her with her icestick licking to school, the contemporary virgin, upright and painful with veracity, in grey and pleated chastity, beaming honour to herself, her school, her team, her nation, and all her wise environment. O see her teachers jubilant: Elsie conforms like mud to the tide, does what she must and a little more; and in the staffroom—rejoicing; Elsie is such a good girl!



But Elsie two's demure as a ballet whore, all hips and shudders, and her innocence creaks like a sexbed when she entertains where adults cannot hear. O see her at the flicks with her particular girlfriends matured and lipsticked up the lane, snubbing the whistling adolescent males, or at some crewest cut and tightest jeans simpering, or in the dream's reverberating glow hold hands and more with her milkbar swain whose jaw, a pendulum, chews subtly from the times. O see her in the toilets of the school scrawling brief essays on the wall in her best English, though words that she has never seen in print are incorrectly spelt.



And her pencil drawings here would startle with delight her art master who groaned several years away in urging lines so purposeful, such an honest flow, expressive sweep of wrist—though her subject matter mightn't be approved.

Meet Tom, the hero-villain of these verses, whose father, victor-vanquished of the war, gropes through the adagio of his life in the amber currents of the local pub, and whose gaudy little mother daily and wryly manacles her soul to the chainstore counter. So Tom has freedom-plus, and discovers he can adjust unhappiness like his belt—without much thinking, not even having to know what his misery is, except that it's there with his breath, and few things can usurp it: a couple of bob in his pocket, hot pies and sauce, cigarettes, and a bit of bullying.

NOW Tom is six months adolescent. Often his thoughts twitch through the sparse black forest of his sex and pause, uncertain of their track. The signs are manifold; each one points to a strange future of fear, bewilderment, and pride; to a hot masturbial landscape blobbed by ghosts whose speech brings trepidation to the ear though they're silent, and whose touch stabs though it's as tenuous as a mist.

This furtive earth glows with a queer excitement.

“What am I growing to?” Tom never asks but feels; the weird curriculum of blood drenches and drains his hours; the red landscape spins in his eye. What tugs at his dreams? Why does the sun enrage him, and the stars scratch every cell of his seditious frame?



Elsie likes Tom but he's inferior because he's in the form below; young, the promises of manhood yet pervade those who move near him. Elsie as they pass giggles boldly to her friends, yet in her flesh there tweaks the angry mischief of desire. “Wonder what he'd be like?” a girl propounds. “How dja mean?” asks Elsie, then guffaws: “O you!” “Well, wouldn'tya like it?” Jane persists. “I don't rob cradles,” disdainful Elsie squeals. “Bet he's a kingsize baby,” gurgles May. Elsie argues with laughter, surrenders and shrieks: “Bet he is too . . . shhh . . . here comes damn Miss Smith.”

Since acquiescence nods within her eyes tentative Tom learns boldness, brushes by Elsie often in the corridor, stares at her in the playground, hangs around as she comes and goes, and from eyes to eyes pierce filaments transmitting her yes yes yes across the loneliness. Yet static stings the message absolute and makes it partial, for she wants what she dare not want, and he accepts impossibility as truth, and dies, somewhere dies, and goes on wanting. Wanting the sky he found that it was air and wouldn't be hugged though his embrace was huge: his arms enfolded his own breast, nothing. Nothing and something, the air toughens with promise, but promises compliant with the wind shatter and fall, and whisperingly fall, and youth is life deranged a little time.

And then one night, audacious in the dark, he halts her near her home, enacts a scene unconscious hollywood: "Gimme a break, b-baby. H-h-how about a date?" Tactical error in this war of love: to be valorous when respectability is so adjacent. Elsie's mother calls: "Elsie, come in to tea." The affirmation that danced on Elsie's tongue suddenly stills. "With you?" she sneers. "Ask me when you grow up."

SO indignation slapped him, but Elsie meant only to skirmish with his heart, but hurt, and thought it fun to gossip of next day, to add a touch, a kiss, to make a legend and a laugh. But Tom crept into his own wound, the blood that beat with adoration now stifled and blackened to a scab, the nerves it dried on were a thoroughfare of hate. He loved and hated and didn't know which was which, and in the rankling silence of his night scowled out a letter anonymous and lewd, told her a time and a place, and said that **there**, away from light, away from eyes, and by the trickling pathos of the creek, behold! the oracular invasion of her flesh.

Which Elsie fluttered to mother with the post? the demure one, surely, swooning in crinoline cliches like she sees at the pitchers. Or did the spectacular bitch boil to the brim with power, savage, yet seeming gentle in her iron modesty.

Outraged mamma! O how convention trusses our thoughts to a trite delirium. O how she responds with a passionate newspaper heart.

But mother isn't my interest. It's papa finding in Tom's sad note a green departure from the bleak arrogance of his urban days. "O my daughter!" so we suppose his thoughts.

Still reading those mass circulation papers . . . ?

have you, too, switched to

NATION

The Independent Fortnightly

News: Readers remember the Pearl-Norton correspondence; the exposure of the Melbourne Sun-Herald's Council Election campaign; the Davis Hughes degree claims.

Comment: Billy Graham did not dazzle Nation; Sir Macfarlane Burnet did not shock us; we were impressed by neither Casey nor Evatt on Indonesia . . .

Features: Controversial features recently were a study on Hostility among Manual workers . . . An Inquiry into the Press Gallery in Canberra . . . and now: The Space-grabbers—A Two-Part Examination of the Role of Public Relations in Australia.

Order your Copy from your Bookseller or Newsagent 1/6

If you live in an outlying area, write to us for a sample copy free of charge.

Nation, Box 112, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W.
Annual Subscription, 35/-.

Recent Books from the Soviet Union

ABAI, by Mukhtar Auezov, is the translation of the first Uzbekian novel ever seen in Australia. Two vols. at 15/- (2/-).

TOWARDS NEW SHORES, by the foremost Latvian novelist, Vilis Lacis. A powerful novel in two vols. tells of the old life and the new in his country. 15/- the set. (2/-).

ONE THOUSAND SOULS, by A. Pisemsky (1821-1881), whose writing Chekhov highly praised. 11/6 (1/4).

THE ENCHANTED PRINCE, a novel about a legendary figure, wag, wit, vagabond, who for centuries roams the romantic lands of Central Asia. Author, Leonid Solovyou. 10/- (1/3).

THE FORTY-FIRST. Lavrenov's novel on which the film of that name was based. A powerful, dramatic novel of the Civil War. 5/9 (9d.).

THE ZALOMOV FAMILY. The authors of this book are members of the family, whose revolutionary experiences before the 1905 Revolution makes heroism really live. 4/- (10d.).

Postage shown thus: ().

INTERNATIONAL BOOKSHOP PTY. LTD.

57 Little Bourke St., Melbourne, C.1

"O girlish innocence! O purity of youth! O fiend!" And then elaborates from this zero of words an epic drama of most septic imaginings. "I am a father," we suppose his thoughts, and so ferments into a paternal enthusiastic paroxysm. "Vengeance against this unknown lout! Vengeance against this filth! Vengeance for my child's contamination—my poor besmirched maiden . . ." so we suppose his thoughts. The climax murder. Sees Tom wearing the face of Modern Youth, the sunday-press delinquent, the cigarette, the leer, the wicked younger generation. O Tom-without-your-face, strangled, dead. That teaches him to be (the epithets banal and blind bark bow-wow in his brain) unmanly, coward, bodge, gutter-brat, the trivia of a mind that crouches at home close to the dim fire of complacency and never knows the uncertain desperate world that bowls beyond his door and agitates death, laughter, truth, untidily.

Father's a business man. How is it poets deride the type, or find them often

bitter to the mind? It's because their friends are money and their trade is men and profit is their hearty aspiration.

Investigation of papa provoked proves his success with fate. A man like him, a condemnatory man, a moralist and judge, an offsider of God indeed (though self-appointed), such a man, we say, must be a blameless man, a man whose life unwound like a long white frigid sheet of time on the bench of a universal drapery must be unstained and radiant with the Good, no, more!—a fluorescent virtue slung, a halo, round this dark degenerate sphere, a galaxy of sparkling ethics yielding a most significant fall-out, and radiation.

So in the mirror of his eye, his own benevolent eye, he sees the citizen self, himself, and O the pleasure of it! Surveys that impregnable white past with satisfaction, finding no crimes, for he has forgotten them, nor finding crimes in his delightful present—who can know evil who calls it commonsense?

NO need for detail—a few facts here and there evoke the pattern: his tiny typist has an abortive holiday or two, and there have been girls stretching back like flower chains even to his Tom-old schooldays when he slit the petals of more than one man's schoolgirl daughter. Now, happy with wife and happier with whore (he has a regular) his sensual life and social clip to one, as two cold shapes of a wire puzzle join in a cold steel peace, and he may now, in undistracted grace, press down the flabby hillocks of his mind to force eruption of a father's rage.

To the police then with this foulest missive which, ink on paper, has no morality save that which minds scrawl on it; even so, a meaning to each mind, and if there were compassion rustling with the everyday mind that curls the shallows, could discernment fail to find, under the slick bravado, the cry, the falling tortured bird, for love? But who philosophises? Policeman stare

at the wretched sheet, as serious as if their sister Justice were debauched before their very eyes. Horrified they peer, and the phrases of revenge flame on their lips to ease themselves and Elsie's pouting papa. Pull off the mask of usage—what remains? Not law, not mercy, just the random ego groping for a pliant satisfaction in the tactile society of money, sex, and the thrills of the attainable daydream.

So to the hunt. A game for these. They may pursue their fox through the shrubbery of Law with all the chivalry of gentlemen immaculately conscienced—what they do, man in pursuit of man, is legally done, is Law. They may return triumphantly to homes, wives, children, friends, and mistresses, unblemished. Law confining others is himself confined; Law the flagellator scourges himself; Law the executioner assassinates himself. Justice is unjust, yet sleeps in evening's warm serenity.

TOM is discovered soon. Despite the hints of a hundred malefactors of the screen he's too young to calculate the end of all the minor errors of his act. He keeps his surly assignation at the creek whose bubbling parables are muffled by bumping blood; its warnings drift unheard. No beauteous maiden glides among the bushes: the ugly witch stays witch; rather the tale regurgitates itself; the hideous hag (most hideous transformed to two detectives, tall chaperones in greatcoat earnestness) is vomited from the moon. For further proof his spindly copperplate encircles him in cursive metal curbs. And Law, his hackneyed finger trembling with success,

points him, grabs him with gleeful lust. Society wins out, hurrah! The beast, the fourteen-year-old criminal is caught.

The culprit apprehended, anxiety assuaged, parents appeased, Law replete, the story should be done. Innocence seems to be saved, society revenges sin. All as it should be, nod those moralists (defining good and evil easily, to live smugly ever after). But Tom exists, and Tom is incomplete until his death, and this story dares no ending until then. So though her's my poem's final scene it isn't Tom's, nor anyone's who lives.

(Continued over)

Behold Tom's headmaster: the homely potentate, a prince in shining pinstripe, a heart of homespun, and a mind no less material. The ruler of a country without land, the province of a thousand growing unkempt minds of children from whose insubstance might yet spring the real cities of the dream, philosophy's emancipated gardens, and the harvest of accurate and loving humankind; or may seed drably, split by topical erosion, television culture, war, and the hushed famine of truth. A man who owns this acreage, though he be bound no less by those above than he binds those below, yet has a certain honorable freedom. But this man's maudlin sophistry hangs high, an avalanche above the innocence of all the small explorers. Arid of soul, he dries with fluent mouth the meaning of even the platitudes that slide his tongue: his speech weeps at its tenderness; so sage, he seems to his own brain intelligence made flesh. Conviction without qualms convinces others: he's a respected man. And rightly so if words and acts are sole criteria, if the motive isn't known, if the end isn't foreseen; the community is no sceptic to itself, it sees itself within its children and fails to fear—we love ourselves too much. Picture him then, brave at his overtime; the unrelenting public servant; at the telephone embraces parents and councils with his zealous voice; knows the Department's literature by rote

(but finds no time for other reading). Therefore "O" for Outstanding is his mark, though he will never gain diplomas of the heart.

Tom is commanded to the presence of this leading educationist, this man of imperturbable ambition. O Tom, still in the integrity of childhood, the naive sinner and the guilty angel, hypocrisy sits before you while your thoughts like senseless gulls clamoring for food dart for evasions that they cannot find. The despot hides his thin-lipped ecstasy beneath a paper anger. "Monstrous boy!" the monster shouts, "I have no choice. Such dirt as you have proved yourself to be will taint my school." (Tom cries.) Persistently the monster mouths—expulsion, parents, shame, his words. (Tom cries.) The monster talks . . . and talks . . .

Defeated Tom goes home; life is defeat forever and forever.

The headmaster wearing his gown of raven rectitude strolls through his school. At sight of him the teachers hush their forms. He smirks a death that doesn't mean the flesh; when shall we stop murdering our children?

LAURENCE COLLINSON

KEEPING IN TOUCH

There is a growing diversity about Australia's intellectual and literary life. It costs you very little to keep in touch with what is going on in every field of literary activity.

£4 PER YEAR

Three quarterlies, with different values, and of complementary character have joined together to offer you a £4 group subscription.

YOU WILL RECEIVE—

MEANJIN—The oldest and most famous of the nation's literary magazines.

OVERLAND—The quarterly which expresses the Australian democratic temper in verse, story, and criticism.

AUSTRALIAN LETTERS—The lively illustrated review, which presents Australian thought to a wider reading public.

So send £4 to any of these magazines, and the group subscription will be arranged for you automatically. You'll find it entertaining and important, to acquire a wide conspectus of Australian literary life for such a small annual sum.

SEND £4 AND ASK FOR A
GROUP SUBSCRIPTION

Can you take criticism? DAVID MARTIN

Whose C.A.E. classes in Creative Writing are usually booked out in advance, can now accept private students for intensive individual tuition by correspondence.

This is not a "course" based on some generalised syllabus, but a completely personal, writer-to-writer method of guidance, to help each student to develop his own talent—whether for prose or verse—at a price ordinary people can afford.

Perhaps "writing can't be taught"—but writers can be helped. Full details from . . .

DAVID MARTIN

Suite I., Naytura, 300 Lit. Collins St.,
Melbourne, C.I.

Telephones: MF 4467, FM 1300

A GENERAL DEMAND FOR ART

“Liberality! We want not Liberality. We want a Fair Price and Proportionate Value and a General Demand for Art.”

—William Blake.

OVERLAND's slogan has always been, in part at any rate, “Bias Australian”. But this doesn't mean that we are “little Australians”, puerile isolationists or nationalists with an ingrown complacency about our own traditions and life. The corrective, if one is needed, lies in the other half of our slogan: “Temper Democratic”. No culture exists in a vacuum, and for the culture we want to develop there must be links both with what is happening elsewhere and with the broad democratic movement in our own country.

The democratic movement? What the hell is the democratic movement? And, specifically, how do you link a literary magazine with it?

These are necessary questions for anyone to ask. They'd be a lot harder to answer if we hadn't already published fourteen issues. If you look back through them you'll find many examples of bad writing and bad editorship, bad reasoning and dishonest ratiocination. But you'll also find that we have tried to say that the proudest claim of the Australian is that he has built a country where the dominant conviction has never died that authority must be challenged, oppression and discrimination opposed; a country where it has been assumed that progress is based on the sacrifices, example and aspirations of the common people; a country whose social dynamic is plebeian in origin and is, or should be, egalitarian in operation.

Therefore Overland has always sought to link itself with the labor movement. We have tried to find readers and subscribers among working people, and contributors too. We have tried to promote a kind of two-way traffic, between the labor movement on the one hand and “intellectuals” and middle-class people on the other, to the mutual advantage of both.

Put crudely, we would like to show trade unionists and politicians and rank-and-filers and ordinary people who just want a better deal how vastly their struggles can be aided, how richer life can become, by enlisting the processes of art.

“The labor movement is a mere machine unless it is concerned with the quality of our social life”, the brilliant English working-class critic John Berger wrote recently. “As a matter of mere survival, the labor movement must fight for the priorities of life and against those of waste, competition and destruction. It should fight more stubbornly, engendering a mood which sees it as intolerable that beautiful cities and adequate education and

accessible art-values should be regarded as utopian luxuries, while nuclear weapons and Black Knight rockets and advertising wars are regarded as necessities . . .”*

One has only to turn to the record of the sacrifices made by working-men in Australia a hundred years ago in the establishment of the mechanics' institutes (see Janet Howard: “The Urban Tradition”, Overland No. 9) to see that the men who pioneered the Australian labor movement regarded the arts as one of the most urgent and vital goals which they and their class had to attain, even if today their standards seem to have often been naive and uncritical.

How tragically different today! All sections of the labor movement are gasping for new ideas, but no section is grasping for them. The intellectual, be he from the ranks of the working class or not, is generally despised and rejected; and, what is worse, mistrusted. Probably no labor movement in the world has spurned ideas, particularly new ideas, as the Australian labor movement has.

The situation is vastly aggravated in this country by many factors. Some of them are Australian factors, such as the historical evolution of the labor movement and the fact that we are a small country into which is poured an overwhelming mass of canned and crated “culture” from abroad, thus preventing the development of creative artists and creative thought.

But some of the factors are common to many countries. With the steady automation and monopoly-tendencies of the means of mass-communication has gone what Berger calls a “debased Philistinism which has pervaded the labor movement at every level.” The enormous excitement of the creative urge, the enormous impact of the creative act, is missing just where it is most needed.

* * *

This is no exhaustive analysis. There's much more to be said and many qualifications to be made, no doubt, of the position as outlined. Solutions will never be found without discussions and forums for discussion.

So, since we're not complacent and self-satisfied, and since we're not frightened of discussion, let's

* See Berger's important article “Art and the Community” in *The New Reasoner*, No. 6.

discuss these problems in terms of what is happening in Australia today.

What about the hostility of the labor movement to the intellectual. Who is at fault where, and what can be done about it?

What concrete ways are there to break down the hostility between the labor movement and the artist? And, since this is no alternative to direct support for art and artists from public bodies and governments outside the labor movement, how to achieve this as well? Some interesting ideas came from the questionnaire this magazine circulated to significant figures in the arts last year.

How can we promote good design and good taste in everyday life and in the schools? How to help people to see beauty in their life and in their living? What more powerful instrument of counter-attack against the dreadful cult of unreality and barbarous distortion of values represented by so many books, films, radio and TV programs, newspapers, furniture designers, house builders, and pap-merchants generally!

And when we ask for commitment for the artists, what does this mean? If you start asking for "commitment" in literature, where do you end up? What is the real significance for us of the vast and real cultural upsurge in the Soviet Union, to which Professor Manning Clark has drawn attention in his recent articles? What is "reality" and what is "truth", in a given social and political situation?

To what extent can our writers and artists adequately grapple with this new country of ours? How much and how little should they seek to

adopt and manipulate from overseas? What is the current reality in this country, anyway? In its history, its traditions, its attitudes, its present relative prosperity, it is a country and society quite unlike any seen before. But **how** different is it? To what extent are artists, whether of left, right or centre, seeing it through distorting mirrors because of shibboleths, laziness, or plain lack of contact and sensitivity?

These questions, and the many more like them that could be asked, aren't high-faluting. On the level of an "engaged" art, the way forward lies in trying to answer them. And Overland exists to help that process.

"The strongest argument against modern mass entertainments is not that they debase taste—debasement can be alive and active—but that they over-excite it, eventually dull it, and finally kill it; that they "enervate" rather than "corrupt", in de Tocqueville's phrase. They kill it at the nerve, and yet so bemuse and persuade their audience that the audience is almost entirely unable to look up and say, "But in fact this cake is made of sawdust."

Richard Hoggart: "The Uses of Literacy."

THE NEW REASONER

UNIVERSITIES AND LEFT REVIEW

The two new magazines published in Great Britain which have transformed left-wing discussion into new, vital and contemporary channels. For the first time in twenty years young and dynamic writers are examining today's problems in terms of today.

IN CURRENT ISSUES:

Universities and Left Review—

The Habit of Violence: Notting Hill Documents;
An Open Letter to the Congress of Cultural Freedom;
Alienation and Community;
and material on Planning for Human Needs, Mass Communications, the Welfare State, etc.

The New Reasoner—

A Dogmavisionist in Warsaw.
Pu-240, U-235 and Homo Sap.
Kenya Reviewed;
and material on the Middle Classes, Nationalisation, Imre Nagy, Wordsworth, etc.

JOINT SUBSCRIPTION for one year (three issues U.L.R., four issues N.R.): 30/-.

SUBSCRIPTION to U.L.R. only: 13/6.

SUBSCRIPTION to N.R. only: £1.

Send Subscriptions to: Group Subscriptions, Box 1386M, G.P.O., Melbourne, C.1.

THE RELIGIOUS PERIOD

WHETHER or not it was compulsory at all schools I don't know, but at my school, Bright Hill Commercial, we had once a week what was called "the religious period." During this period, which lasted forty minutes, we divided up into groups and went along to be preached at by the ministers of our respective denominations.

I began the year off by attending the Church of England class. This was by far the largest denomination of all and was accordingly held in the school hall.

The minister spoke in a solemn, dragging voice which never failed to please the ladies at his funerals. But, after less than ten minutes of him, we always began to suffer from severe attacks of the itch and shuffles of the feet. His special forte was prayers, and his record was seven minutes forty seconds by the watches of the boys in front of me. They used to bet on him. He did not prepare special talks for us, giving instead, for the sake of economy, his last Sunday's prayer and sermon served up cold, like a Sunday dinner's leftovers.

Those of us in his class were all at an age when girls were becoming exciting creatures about which we talked amongst ourselves with great knowledge backed by little experience, and when we filed in for our weekly religion the seats along the street side of the room were always filled first. Eventually, each religious period, there came a time when the boys sitting there, previously slouched, would straighten up, suddenly, as it were coming to life. Like a flash the whisper would fly across the room—"Shielas!"

From long experience those sitting next the windows were able to goggle at these passers by out of the corner of their eyes whilst still keeping their heads facing the minister. Those a little further away had to crane their necks, a risky business, and most of the boys who were sent to the headmaster's office for punishment came from this group. Those on the far side of the room were in an even worse predicament but, nevertheless, there was nearly always some game soul prepared to run the risk of having a "dekko".

One religious period we found ourselves being attacked in the rear by the history teacher, Mr. Wallace, who, as a result of a complaint from the minister, had started standing on a chair behind the hall door and watching us through the glass partition above. Twenty boys got sixers that day and a new element of risk began to hinder the distraction which we employed to while away what we considered to be a free period.

About May or June of this particular year, the Methodists got a new minister who liked singing of the old revival variety and, shortly after, I became a Methodist. Because of the way in which the school divided up for religious instruction

(after morning tea break each Wednesday we formed up on the playground according to our denomination and marched in), it was possible to change from group to group fairly easily.

The Methodists had always been a small group but they soon had to bring in extra forms to accommodate all those who had now found Methodism.

He was a likeable minister who had once played competition football. He had carrotty hair and was one of those men who looked as if he might've been a boy himself once.

He let us nominate the choruses we wanted to sing, our favourite being "Build on the Rock", because when you got to the bit about "Then you need not fear the earthquake's crash" it was traditional to clap your hands together in imitation of an earthquake crashing. We, of course, improved the effect by stamping our feet as well.

Several schools of thought evolved as to how you could make the most noise. One group favored clapping its hands and stamping, and a second group varied this by clenching their fists and thumping on the desk. Personally I favored the second group with the variation that I used to stand, poised behind my desk, in the belief that, standing up, I could stamp more heavily. Soon the minister had to ration us to one "Build on the Rock" a period, giving it to us at the end and using the promise of it beforehand to keep us under reasonable control.

He knew how to interest us, this man, though perhaps not in the way he intended, and interspersed the singing with stories. One was about a missionary, who was saved from the stewing pot because God caused his alarm clock to go off an hour early, just at the crucial moment.

He also told us about some man in the Old Testament (I forget his name) who was, so he said, the world's first commando. This man used to pray to God and then, his strength having been increased a hundred fold, he would rush into battle swinging his axe and slicing enemy heads off right and left, with as little effort (so it seemed to us) as we would use in cutting the top off a boiled egg. This story made quite an impression on me and, as he told it, I saw, in my mind's eye, blood spurting up, fountain-like, from headless necks everywhere. One was left with a general impression that God was above, watching, his face wearing the same satisfied expression that filled mine when I was watching a cowboy picture at the local.

The popularity of the Methodist minister brought protests from some of those denominations who were losing members to him, but the headmaster never did much about it. For as long as anyone could remember the boys at Bright Hill Commercial had been allowed to gravitate from one

PENGUIN BOOKS

Announce some forthcoming publications of outstanding merit.

APRIL

Room At The Top	John Braine	4/-
Geography Of World Affairs	J. P. Cole	5/6
Leonardo Da Vinci	Kenneth Clarke	8/6
French Country Cooking	Elizabeth David	5/6

MAY

Where Angels Fear To Tread	E. M. Forster	4/-
Pottery Through The Ages	George Savage	10/6
Langland: Piers The Ploughman		5/6
A new translation by J. F. Goodridge		
Noblesse Oblige	Nancy Mitford	4/-

JUNE

Roman Tales	Alberto Moravia	4/-
The Daffodil Sky	H. E. Bates	4/-
Poets In A Landscape	Gilbert Highet	8/6
The Wrong Set	Angus Wilson	4/-

And for July

MY FAIR LADY

THE BOOK OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MUSICAL COMEDY OF THE POST WAR YEARS BY A. J. LERNER, based on G. B. Shaw's Pygmalion.

PENGUIN BOOKS PTY. LTD.

762 WHITEHORSE ROAD, MITCHAM, VICTORIA

religious class to another and, as long as they were quiet about it, and obedient, he didn't seem to care what happened.

The only thing that made me sorry I no longer attended the C.O.E. class was the fact that one of the boys who previously had only asked questions intermittently now began to do so regularly and, indeed, seemed to spend a good deal of his spare time thinking them up. This was a surprising quirk on his part because, from the point of view of scholarship, he was the worst in his year.

One of his questions began: "Sir, there's a boy in our street who says there's no God. I told him it was wrong to say such a thing. He said, go on, prove there is one. Sir, how can I prove it?"

"My son," replied the minister, "ask him, 'When you get on a train do you have to look in the driver's compartment to know the driver's there?' No, of course he doesn't! He has faith. Don't you think, boys," he said to them all in general, "that this person should show just as much faith when he's riding in God's great train of life?"

"But sir," continued the boy, "he's got an uncle who drives a train so he knows there's someone there."

This flustered the minister for a moment.

"Tell him," he said at a loss for words, "tell him—he must have faith—yes, faith."

"But sir," he continued in a voice which intimated that he found the whole business very perplexing.

"I'd like to continue this question," interrupted the minister, "but it's time for prayers now. I'll continue with your question some other time."

This boy had sense enough to keep his manner serious as befitted someone eager to have a difficult point cleared up and he backed his questions up with a well thought-out logic that must have rudely shaken the minister. Eventually, however, he overstepped the mark with a question which earned him a "sixer" from the headmaster.

This was: "Sir, if it's true Jesus said 'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor' why does the Archbishop get paid about five times as much as my father?"

It was about this time that I received something of a surprise. One Wednesday morning down at the tuck shop I had become so engrossed in some discussion that the commencing bell clanged while I was still there. Much to my surprise I was not trampled beneath the feet of a dozen boys rushing back to school; instead they continued as they were.

I was tempted to follow their example in future and, like them, at the end of each religious period make my way back to my classroom as if coming from the lavatory. But I did not, mainly because I would have been frightened all the time that a teacher or one of the prefects might walk in unexpectedly and catch us.

The religious periods at our school had always been an institution mutually satisfactory to all parties; the teachers got a free period out of it, the ministers got an audience which, unlike their Sunday ones, couldn't get away from them, and we got a free period in which we didn't have to learn anything.

Later this particular year two things happened. Firstly, the school got its first library, and a very well equipped one at that. Secondly, two brothers, who were Jewish, brought notes from their parents saying they thought their children should be exempt from Christian religious teaching. The headmaster agreed and allowed them to read in the library for that period.

The Fun Fair

Under a dome the dusk of evening smooths,
Where squeals resound and flaring lanterns lurch,
The fun-fair crowd eddies between the booths
Of World, Flesh, Devil & Co., and Holy Church.

Now one and now the other's all the go:
The bumpkin gazers find it wildly funny
Till some malcontent cries, "The other show
Gives people better value for their money!"

Then off they stream once more. The mountebanks
Abandoned mop their brows and cease to squirm
In their accustomed postures, giving thanks
That both the shows are owned by the same firm.

J. S. MANIFOLD

The ice having been broken, the Congregationalists, who for some reason or other had no minister attending the school either, shortly received the same permission.

My mind being filled with envy at the thought of all these boys passing the period in such splendid surroundings, the next week I reverted to my Sunday religion, a group called "The Churches of Christ," and lined up with those going to the library.

As knowledge of this "lurk" spread, the number of Congregationalists and members of the Churches of Christ at my school increased proportionately, at the expense of other religions. The library was, as a result of this latest ebb and flow of events, packed. Even the Jewish religion had found for itself three hitherto unsuspected followers.

Eventually so many availed themselves of the idea that the whole thing became too willing even for the teacher in charge, easy going though he was, and he clamped down.

He began asking those present so many searching questions about what they were studying (and he indicated that everyone should study and not just read idly) that many drifted back to the religious classes as being the lesser of two evils.

I stayed and, being an avid devotee of astronomy, spent the rest of that year's religious periods studying a heaven of another sort.

Defence Fund For Aboriginals

A fund has been established to assist in a further appeal against the sentence of Albert Namatjira (see Overland No. 13), and to challenge the validity of the Welfare Ordinance on behalf of four other Aboriginal artists. The object is to show that these men, with the other full-blood Aboriginals of the Northern Territory, are free citizens. Donations may be sent to Pastor Doug. Nicholls, M.B.E., 46 Russell Street, Melbourne.

S W A G

"THE popular Press—though it makes a speciality of safe or pseudo-controversy—hates genuine controversy, since that alienates and separates the mass-audience, the buyers."

Richard Hoggart says this in his brilliant study of the working-class in Britain, "The Uses of Literacy", recently issued as a Pelican.

Hoggart meant it primary as a criticism of the flabby concept of "freedom" to be found in our society: the concept that "freedom" means liberty to contract out of the complexities and demands of life today: "a deep refusal to be committed outside the small known-area of life."

But it struck me as particularly appropriate to the press treatment of Dr. John Burton's recent "Meet the Press" TV interview in Melbourne.

In an attempt to trip him up the spokesman for the daily press fired a series of leading—not to say misleading—questions at Dr. Burton, who, with considerable sang-froid, parried and deflected them and turned them back.

Of Melbourne's three dailies, the following day, the Age (presumably because the program emanated from a rival station) and the Herald (presumably because it had been "covered" in the Sun) ignored Dr. Burton's interview. The Sun, however, gave the interview some coverage. It cut down the report of Dr. Burton's answers on the significance of the Petrov Affair to the minimum, and completely suppressed the most sensational aspect of the whole telecast—when Dr. Burton gave, in some detail, an account of illegal espionage activities undertaken by Australian missions in foreign countries.

I would have thought that these important revelations of Dr. Burton's (which he adduced to support his argument that we might expect to be done unto as we do to others) would have been national news. Here was the real meat of sensation and controversy. But no. As far as I am aware this is the first report of that part of Dr. Burton's interview which has appeared in print.

★

The first Overland-Meanjin Test was held at the Eltham Cricket Ground near Melbourne early in February, on a day of blistering heat which so dehydrated the players that not even the niners under an adjacent tree made much difference to their sufferings. Those who think that this is hyperbole should try fielding, bowling or batting in a sun temperature of 120 or 130 degrees for a few hours. In response to numerous enquiries we print a brief resume of the game:

Meanjin won the toss and put Overland in, and the teams took the field only an hour late. A remarkable second wicket partnership for Over-

land by Dr. Jack Gregory (historian) and Mr. Jack Stevenson (teacher and Secretary of the Fellowship of Australian Writers) built Overland's score to 77. Dr. Gregory was retired just before lunch, and the opportunities for refreshment provided by the luncheon break were at least partly responsible for a disastrous Overland rout immediately following. The Editor made 6 (the third highest score) and the total Overland score was 94.

It should perhaps be mentioned that Mr. David Martin, the poet (many felt he should stick to it) made cricketing history by going out stumped, stepped on wicket and run out, all on the one ball. However Mr. Martin, dressed in spotless whites and a real cricket cap (as distinct from sombreros, fezzes, coolie hats, berets and bowlers sported by other sports) looked every inch a Marylebone man and an adornment to his side.

Meanjin opening batsman, Associate Professor Bill Rawlinson, made a magnificent 42, and then, according to the scorebook, "retired thirsty". Mr. Ian Wilson, a political scientist, made 13, and during his innings Mr. Vance Palmer, temporarily and gallantly seconded from his employment as umpire, added one to Meanjin's score. Meanjin's tail-end then suffered the same disastrous course as Overland's, but tension mounted as Professor Sidney Rubbo knocked up 14 and looked like averting a Meanjin defeat.

The end result . . . I'm sorry to descend to an anti-climax, but nobody really knows. It wasn't the fault of the beer, because that ran out far too early. Anyway, batsman succeeded batsman in the Meanjin team with monotonous regularity, and it was finally agreed that no mathematical formula exists by which the disparate scores and the uneven number of batsmen could be regularised.

Anyway, by that time nobody cared . . . for cricket, for Overland, for Meanjin, for honor, or for anything except shelter and wetness. A veil is best drawn over the whimperish end; but another contest will take place next year!

★

Who are Australia's greatest raconteurs? Who, in this country that coined the term "ear-basher", are best qualified to wear the blue riband of that award? Everyone would have their favorite entries, and I could imagine the contest a world-beater at the next Royal Show, say, or Moomba book fair. For myself I'd nominate four really top-class entries: Alan Marshall, Bert Vickers, Frank Hardy and Bill Harney.

"Ear-bashers" is an unkind work, for these men are not ear-bashers in the derogatory sense. They are the modern epitomes of the minstrels and Voegelsaenger of old: poets in speech, who can weave an enchanted ribbon of anecdote, reminiscence, narrative around any audience they speak to. And the charming thing about them is their disparate virtues; each has a different way of getting you in.

They are all writers today, and good writers too. But I can't help thinking that in an earlier time they'd have been the honored song-men and handers-down of tradition of their people, and that they have come to writing simply because history has put these special speech-talents of theirs in the deep-freeze.

This earthy, democratic quality is the outstanding characteristic of the four I've mentioned; it represents what someone has called "the strong traditional urge of working-class people to make life intensely human, to humanise it in spite of everything and so to make it, not simply bearable, but positively interesting . . ."

With the idea of encouraging the appreciation of the lost art of the yarn-spinner I have recently, in conjunction with Score records, engineered the making of a long-play record of Bill Harney and Alan Marshall swapping stories to each other: stories about the outback, stories about fights and bush cooks, tall stories, stories about Aboriginal life, stories of bush lore. The record is called "Talkabout" and should be on sale shortly. I think it's of considerable literary interest and it's certainly magnificent entertainment.

★

All who believe in the necessity of international cultural contacts will be pleased at the decision to re-open diplomatic connections with the U.S.S.R. One of the outcomes of last year's Fellowship of Australian Writers' delegation to the Soviet Union has been a vastly increased awareness in Australia of the enormous breadth of popular cultural appreciation there. The dislocation between working people and the "high culture" seems to be less in Russia than anywhere else in the world. Of course there are differing views on the extent and the significance of this, but before we can start discussing we have to know some facts, and diplomatic contact will make the flow of information—both ways, we hope—much easier. And now, Mr. Menzies—what about China?

★

I got rather tired recently of conflicting claims about Australian best-sellers, and decided I'd find out just what Australian books have sold most widely. I thought it would be a few day's job, but instead it's taken me about nine months, and I'm sure that I haven't got the full story yet.

There have been a number of problems of definition, for a start. What is an Australian book? Books like the "Home Carpentry" book put out as a newspaper's privilege offer have totted up phenomenal sales figures, of course. But even if we confine the field to fiction, there's still the question of whether it's fair to include the work of Australians who are living abroad and get their books published abroad. But if you exclude these what about Australians who write in Australia but have their books published in London? Is it fair to exclude them?

It's impossible, of course, to sort this out. But here are some figures of sales of individual books that may interest readers. In all cases the figures are the most recent reliable estimates to hand.

Paul Brickhill's "Dambusters": 1,350,000 copies.
 Russell Braddon's "The Naked Island": 1,010,000 copies.
 Russell Braddon's "Cheshire VC": 630,000 copies.
 Paul Brickhill's "Escape or Die": 600,000 copies.
 Fergus Hume's "Mystery of a Hansom Cab": 500,000 copies.
 Eric Lambert's "The Twenty Thousand Thieves": 384,000 copies.

Do You Want To Help?

One of the main reasons that Overland's been able to keep going so long, giving so much for so little, has been our system of voluntary agents.

Will YOU join them? You can do so very simply, by asking us to send you 2, 4, 6 or any number of copies of each issue for sale to your friends and workmates. An invoice is sent with each bundle and you pay at your convenience.

To Editor, Overland,
 G.P.O. Box 98A, Melbourne.

Please send me.....copies of each issue of Overland, with invoice, for sale to people I know and meet.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Mrs. Aeneas Gunn's "We of the Never-Never": 365,000 copies.
 Russell Braddon's "Nancy Wake": 350,000 copies.
 Frank Hardy's "Power Without Glory": 310,000 copies.
 Steele Rudd's "On Our Selection": 283,000 copies.
 C. J. Dennis' "The Sentimental Bloke": 183,000 copies.
 Nino Culotta's "They're a Weird Mob": 170,000 copies.
 Ethel Turner's "Seven Little Australians": 100,000 copies.
 Ion Idriess' "Flynn of the Inland": 84,000 copies.

These figures can be misleading, of course. The enormous sales of books by Russell Braddon, Paul Brickhill and Eric Lambert, for instance, are largely due to their cracking the paperback market, which of course is a post-war phenomenon. And books like "The Sentimental Bloke" and "They're a Weird Mob" have been restricted almost solely to Australia while, for instance (though it had large Australian sales), "Power Without Glory" owes most of its circulation to foreign-language editions.

Russell Braddon, in a recent letter, makes the interesting point about the Australian writers who have done so well abroad: "If you lump together the sales of the Australians Moorehead, Brickhill, Stranks, Braddon, Patrick White, Chester Wilmot, D'Arcy Niland and a few others you have lumped together by far the largest portion of the past-six-years Empire book-selling market."

I suppose I'd better protect my own skin by emphasising that large sales are **not** necessarily any

yardstick of literary merit. They are, however, a measure of what people read, and that has a significance all its own.

★

I've always held the sneaking, heretical view that readers of magazines like *Overland* are at least as much interested in feature articles and reviews as they are in stories and poetry. The poets and writers naturally enough hotly deny this.

Since these writers have had a bit of a raw deal lately in *Overland* this issue is much more heavily weighted on the side of what is sometimes called "imaginative" writing than previous issues.

It would be very helpful to have readers' views on this.

The next *Overland*, No. 15, will be a Queensland Centenary issue. Queensland writers have satisfied us that they can put together an impressive body of material for the purpose, and, again as an experiment, we are therefore going to publish an issue which, for the first time, will be largely a regional one.

★

Some competitions and an appeal:

- ★ Mary Gilmore Play and Novel Competition—see elsewhere in this issue.
- ★ Queensland Centenary Novel Competition. Prize: £1,000. Closing date: December 1, 1959. Details: Editor, Brisbane Courier-Mail.
- ★ Alec Bookluck Short Story Competition. Prize: £10/10/0. Closing date: June 30, 1959. Details: Fellowship of Australian Writers, G.P.O. Box 3448, Sydney.
- ★ Luxaflex Literary Quest for a novel for radio adaptation. Prize: £500. Closing date: May 31, 1959. Details: Macquarie Broadcasting Network, G.P.O. Box 4290, Sydney, N.S.W.
- ★ Appeal for a Henry Lawson Memorial in Melbourne. A bust on a monumental base is planned. Donations to: Mr. J. White, Hon. Treasurer, Henry Lawson Memorial Appeal, 33 Smart Street, Hawthorn, Victoria.

—S. Murray-Smith

Donations

We're still as hard pressed as ever, and that pile of manuscripts that deserve to be printed keeps getting higher and higher. More money means more issues, more satisfied readers—and writers, too. We acknowledge with thanks: *Overland* party, Sydney, £9/3/0; M.M. £6; N.M. £5; J.M. £2/10/0; J.R.L. £2/2/0; H.J.H.C. £1; R.D.B. £1; P.C. £1; A.E.B. 15/-; W.W. 11/-; E.M.M. 11/-; J.B. 11/-; K.D.G. 10/-; J.K. 10/-; J.H. 10/-; C.B. 10/-; N.C. 10/-; M.F. 10/-; A.J.M. 10/-; S.B. 10/-; A.M.C. 10/-; P.W. 10/-; N.S. 10/-; L.D. 10/-; C.R.P. 10/-; J.T. 10/-; F.T.C. 10/-; C.S. 10/-; G.D. 10/-; S.McC. 10/-; E.K. 7/6; N.A.C. 6/-; T.C.W. 5/-; C.H.C. 5/-; E.V.S. 2/6; J.B. 2/-; A.B. 2/-.

On The Boundary

Young McIvor jackarooing
on his uncle's western run
Found it lonely riding boundaries
lonelier still at set of sun,
By the creek he found a lubra
baiting yabbies on a line:
"Come along o' me, I'll give you
tucker, baccy, drink of wine."
"I'll be no worse off by staying,
here I've all the food I need;
"I don't want your wine or baccy,
thank you very much indeed".
"Come along and don't be cheeky,
you shall have a yellow dress".
But she shook her head in silence
and it nettled him no less.
"I don't have to give you presents,
if you scorn 'em that's your loss.
"I could tow you on a halter
just to show you who's the boss".
"Who's the boss, you boundary-rider?
I'm of better blood than you!
"I was sired when Boss McIvor's
brother was the jackaroo".
Young McIvor stared his sister out of sight,
and off he rode
Muttering, "The damned old lecher!
Who'd have thought it? I'll be blowed!"

J. S. MANIFOLD

★

Bakerman

If driving a baker's cart, I remarked to Freda,
Doesn't make of a man a prime philosopher,
Nothing this side of Saturn's rings can fix it.
You bring your bread to every house that's hungry:
Your round, from Erina Street to Opossum Road,
Pure paradigm of the seven continents.
With the wind and the rain and the sun you live
in communion.
Daily fresh Being; the loaf with the man con-
substantial;
Small logic of money—"Madam, your change from
a florin";
Body of dough and procession of soul of the yeast.
Look! "Buttered not Bettered" comes rounding the
corner jog-trot,
George in his chariot throned and Ned Kelly pull-
ing it.
Gaze on this face—Aristotle, Aquinas in person:
"Brown or white?" he asks; the voice Plotinus-
cum-Plato.

RICHARD MEREDITH

Overland, March 1959

THE JARS OF APRICOT JAM

A SCENT of summer, compounded of bleached grass and eucalyptus scrub, filled the dry air. Summer sounds—the loud and unreturning hum of errant blowflies, the steady chirr of crickets—were all that could be heard by Mrs. McGillicuddy, standing at the door of her lean-to kitchen. She sniffed, and then looked carefully round the horizon. No smoke anywhere.

Her hand, cracked and grained with hard work and too much immersion in hot water, rested on the paintless doorpost. The wood was cracked and brown to, and hot and tinder-dry to the touch. "A high fire risk," they had just said over the wireless.

They didn't need to tell her. A north wind blowing, and the sun blazing in a cloudless sky—no, there was a little cloud, almost overhead, and of a startling whiteness against the blue.

Even as she watched, its edges frayed out and were lost, the whole thing dissolved and disappeared like a chip of ice in warm water.

She went back inside and stirred the jam on top of the wood stove, keeping to one side to avoid the heat of the fire. Then she sat down and cut out rounds of white tissue-paper. The jars were washed and ready on the table. As the scissors cut the doubled paper, her jaws with their wrinkled dewlaps moved in sympathy.

The apricot trees were on the south side of the house. They would make a fire-break if a fire came from that direction. But it wouldn't; it would come from the north, racing before the dry breath of the wind.

Down on the bitumen, the main road that went through the township, the big colored warning-sign would have its indicator pointing to the red band in the spectrum. It moved automatically with the rise in temperature, and although it was only eleven in the morning the wireless had said the century was passed already.

She got up and stirred the jam again. It was about ready; too much boiling and it would darken in color. The fruit had been exactly right this year, and the jam was a lovely color, if she said it herself. It should take a prize at the local show this time. She couldn't understand why the judge had passed hers by last year, and wondered darkly if it had anything to do with Mrs. Carlson, the winner, being his wife's cousin's sister-in-law.

As she was lifting the heavy stewpan on to the wooden stand on the table, a man's voice cut across

the musical programme of hymn-singing from a city church.

"We interrupt this programme to tell listeners that a bushfire has broken out to the north-east of the township of Mybunga. All emergency fire services in the hills district are asked to stand by. Residents are warned that they may have to evacuate their homes."

She stopped with the heavy pan suspended in her hands; then her arms began to tremble and she set it carefully down on the table. Wiping her hands on her apron—a nervous gesture, for the handles had not been sticky—she hurried out the back door and looked towards the north.

A great cloud of yellowish-brown smoke stained the blue sky in that direction, and there came the scent of burning scrub, which every summer she dreaded to smell upon the wind. The house was all she had now that Jim was gone—that and the pension, but who could live on the pension and pay rent as well, without the bit of land that provided so much of her needs?

Forty years ago they had come here. It wasn't anything very special, and it had gone back a lot since Jim died, but it was her own. For forty years she had seen the sun rise over those tree-covered hills to the east (for she liked to be up with the dawn) and set behind the bare, grassy hills to the west. She looked at the dry yellow grass that covered them, blown flat and sleek by the wind. They had been company to her, those hills, in the last, lonely year since the old dog died. Like friendly animals covered in tawny fur, they crouched along the horizon.

How could they lie there so calmly, with that warning breath upon the wind? But she was beginning to wander. The jam would be cooling; she must get it into the jars.

But first she went to the well with every bucket and basin and jug that she owned, and stood them filled and ready round the back door. The precious rainwater in the tank she would keep until last. She never even considered the possibility that they might stop the fire; nor did she think for a moment of leaving the jam unbottled.

She kept the wireless on, and heard them call for emergency fire fighters from the city. "The fire is on a five-mile front, sweeping before the north wind, and has already entered the township of Mybunga. Tooberang will next be in danger unless the wind changes." Mrs. McGillicuddy compressed

her lips and dipped up another cup of jam. Her home was on the northern outskirts of Tooberang.

The jam was a lovely old-gold color, and not too thick—just right, in the sample she had cooled in a saucer. She dipped another cup of the hot mass and poured it into a wide-necked jar, dollop-dollop-dollop, hearing the note rising as the liquid neared the top. She could almost fill jars of jam blindfold.

When they were all filled she wiped the jars clean with a damp cloth. She smelled the hot glass, the sweet, sharp, fruity smell of the jam, and forgot for the moment that other ominous smell of burning forest.

She dipped the double rounds of tissue-paper into a saucer of milk, one by one, and smoothed them down over the hot jars. In a few minutes they were dry and firm as parchment, and the jam was sealed. Then she fetched the thick greeny-

blue ink that she rarely used, and the quill-pen cut from a hen's tail-feather that she kept for marking jam. Once more her jaw moved carefully as she wrote, APRICOT, Jan. '55.

Funny it looked when written, as if it ought to have two P's. But she knew she had spelt it right.

January the second—Black Sunday, it was called afterwards. She was to wonder, later on, whether it hadn't been a judgment on her for making jam on a Sunday—but the fruit had been just right, and all days were much the same to her now. And surely the Lord wouldn't have killed several men, and all those poor sheep and cattle, just to punish an ordinary sinner like herself?

As she wrote on the last of the jars and looked up, she noticed that it had got much darker. The sun was veiled. She dropped the quill and hurried to the back door.

THE sky was filled with clouds of yellow smoke, through which the sun showed dull, small and shrunken. Above the hills to the north-east the smoke was dark, almost black; and beneath it was a wavering line of reddish-orange, following the line of the hills. Her mouth went suddenly dry. She dipped a handful of water from the nearest bucket.

If she had a man to help her . . . if she had been able to clear all that long grass between the fence and the pine-tree that stood near the house . . . she thought of burning a break, but looking at the dryness of the grass, feeling the strength of the wind, she quailed. It would get out of hand in no time; she couldn't do it single-handed.

The front, with its little green garden, bright with petunias and phlox, would be all right, and the south with its green fruit-trees; but to the north and west the dry, grassy paddocks, the patches of inflammable scrub stretched right to her fence.

The wavering orange line, shooting up now and then in a geyser of vermilion as some tree burst into flame, was moving rapidly down a gully towards the wide floor of the valley in which lay the township of Tooberang. An improvised fire-truck, with a square grey tank slopping water on to the tray, rattled past along the road. Men with knapsack-sprays clung to it; she could not see how many for the cloud of white dust that streamed out behind the wheels. She looked after them with a sense of comfort. She would not be fighting the enemy alone. She soaked two old sacks and laid them ready by the back door. Then she went in and moved the kettle to the centre of the stove. She might as well have a cup of tea.

Over the wireless they were now singing "O God Our Help in Ages Past". She turned it off. She had to help herself, for there was no-one else. She threw three of the buckets of water over the woodwork at the back, and filled them again from the well. If she turned on the tap of the tank the rainwater would flood out and make a sodden patch about the back door, but then the water would be gone. She decided to turn it on for a little while. The water as it came from the tap almost burnt her hand.

Before she realised it the fire was upon her. A patch of grass by the side fence began to burn.

She thrashed it out with a wet sack, and the savage strength of one who is defending all she has in the world. But one of the posts further along was burning now. She carried a bucket and flung the water over it; no time to refill it now. She re-soaked her sack at the tank and turned off the tap, rushed back to beat out new flames. Her eyes stung and watered from the smoke, the backs of her hands were scorched.

But the grass was fairly alight now, and the flames, fanned by the wind, raced towards her. She retreated to the house, and despairingly threw some more water on it, while the fire, coming to the cleared back yard, circled to the west and approached the pine-tree. She felt a burning sting on her right shoulder-blade, and twisting her neck saw that the back of her dress was alight from a red coal. She threw a bucket of water in the air so that it fell over her.

A fire-truck stopped at the front fence, and half-a-dozen blackened, devilish figures leaped out. Mrs. McGillicuddy saw two strange shapes, like men from Mars, with swathed faces and knapsack-sprays on their back, appear from the smoke.

"Come on, Missus;" they shouted urgently. "You'll have to leave the house. We're trying to hold the fire along the road."

But she shook her head obstinately and picked up another bucket.

"Quick, Joe, grab her other arm." And they hustled her towards the road, one on each side, just as the flames reached the pine-tree and ran up to the top with a roar.

"But me things! Me jam! Let me . . ."

"You should have got them out earlier, Mum. We thought everyone would be well out of it be now. Haven't you got a wireless?"

But she still struggled to go back, a wild figure with soot-streaked face and red eyes, damp grey hair hanging down to the shoulders of her burnt and torn dress. They put her in the truck and two of them drove her to the church hall where there were a lot of other evacuated people, and someone gave her a cup of tea that she drank without tasting.

Listen

Listen . . .
the warning . . .
and the mind cries:
Find where it is. The dying
wind brings smoke
out of the hills, the choking
acrid smell of leaves.
And the birds weaving
high on the pulsing grey
of sky, grieving,
cry for early morning
when reluctant day
burnt night away.

Listen . . .
the warning . . .
and now the trees
flare to the sky, and seeding
grasses flame.
Cicadas, bravely drumming,
dying of heat they craved
in the live grave,
lying under the fern's
root cave
cry for early morning.

Listen . . .
The dying and the dead
each, each has said:
After the burning
there can be no returning.

IRENE GOUGH

Bushfire Warning

"Hey, silly man, how can you light
A fire here in December?
The pale grass shimmers out of sight,
The wind waits for an ember."

"The land is mine, the burning leaves
By which your tears are scented,
The sheep are mine, the tindery sheaves.
Look! They are still contented."

"However many fires you may
Have lit before I came here,
Put this one out. When flames obey
You, maybe I'll remain here."

"The meat is grilled, the billy boiled,
See, earth will always smother
A little fire. The ground's not spoiled
By traces of many another."

"So appetite is all you own,
No care for laws or dangers.
I see that I am not alone
But I think that we are strangers."

"Hey, silly girl, don't run away,
The coals that you discover
Will drown in deep green grass by May,
And I will be your lover."

GEOFFREY DUTTON

THAT night the wind dropped, and clouds came up quietly and covered the sky. The air was moist and mild, though no rain fell. The fire was brought under control, although it leaped the white road to Tooberang, and many other roads, and thousands of incinerated sheep lay in grisly piles in the corners of paddocks, where they had climbed over each other in their desperate, panic efforts to escape.

The tree-trunks glowed all over the dark hills like the lights of a city, amber and red, and half the horizon was ringed with a lurid glow reflected upwards on the clouds. It was very quiet and still after the hot violence of the day. Several fire-fighters lay in hospital, and some were dead.

In the morning the sun rose in a clear sky. There was no menace in its heat; it was mild and golden, and the air was soft and moist. But the grassy hills behind Tooberang were black instead of gold; the hills to the north-east, yesterday green and blue with eucalypt-scrub, looked like burned scalps covered with singed hair.

"Mother Mac" McGillicuddy, trying not to think of her own loss, helped in the emergency tents put up for the homeless. She comforted children who had lost favorite dolls, and wives whose husbands had been injured in the fire-fighting. They had all

lost something, some more, some less, and they tried to cheer each other. She still couldn't quite believe that her home was gone.

Even the following day, when she went back to look among the ruins for anything that might have survived, the full sense of loss had not struck her. The pine-tree had turned brown, the garden was withered, the tank gone from its stand; even the apricot-trees were scorched on one side. But she felt like a sightseer looking at someone else's place. This could not be her home!

There was nothing left but a heap of twisted iron, charcoal, and ash. She poked among the still-warm ashes, and found the remains of the kitchen clock, a black iron saucepan still intact.

Then she noticed a queer, flat, shiny mass, it looked like pale green glass, melted and fused by the great heat. With a piece of wire she poked it out of the ashes, and suddenly realised what it was.

She turned away heavily, and sat on the cement edge of the tank-stand. She stared at the ground. Two tears formed and fell slowly down her lined cheeks.

"Me jam!" she muttered. "Me beautiful jars of jam . . . The best lot of apricot I ever made!"

TWO VIEWS ON DR. ZHIVAGO

“. . . there arose before the eyes of the world the immeasurably vast figure of Russia, bursting into flames like a light of redemption for all the sorrows and misfortunes of mankind.”—Boris Pasternak.

IN the Soviet “thaw” of 1955-56 Boris Pasternak, long recognised as Russia’s greatest living poet, completed a novel which he considered his masterpiece. Conscious of its controversial nature and of calculated risk, he submitted the manuscript to Goslitizdat, the official Soviet state publishing house. Goslitizdat announced their intention of publishing the novel; poems from the manuscript were published in the Soviet magazine *Zamnia* (extracted from “a forthcoming novel”). At that time, when it appeared that the novel would actually be published in the Soviet Union, a copy of the manuscript was passed on (via Goslitizdat) to a friend of Pasternak’s, the Italian Communist publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, so that it might also be published in translation in Italy.

But preparations for publication of the novel in Moscow came to a stop. Alexei Surkov, secretary of the Soviet Writers’ Union, travelled to Italy in an attempt to retrieve the manuscript which had reached the West. But Feltrinelli was adamant, despite all pleas for return of the manuscript. He would publish Pasternak’s novel in Italian; he would, moreover, also see that it was published in French and English. It had, apparently, become a matter of principle for Feltrinelli: and Surkov did not turn him aside from his course.

And because of his stand we now have the privilege of reading and judging for ourselves Pasternak’s novel “Doctor Zhivago”, one of the most astonishing and remarkable novels ever written in the Russian language; and one which towers like a giant over most other novels, written in Russian or any other language, of this tremendous century.

★

Pasternak was born in 1890; his earliest poetry was published in the revolutionary years. From the first he revealed himself as a poet of originality and enormous power. Unlike his friend Mayakovsky, he was not a writer who could unburden himself freely, simply and directly; yet, for all the difficulty of his verse, he was a writer striving towards simplicity with images of explosive profundity.

And yet Pasternak, as a poet, has had the appearance of being almost silent a good many years now,

No literary magazine, let alone one which numbers among its readers many of the “left”, can afford to ignore the issues raised by Boris Pasternak’s “Dr. Zhivago”.

Around this event one of the most complex and fascinating debates of contemporary intellectual life has developed throughout the world. At the most shallow level, the well-handled blunderbusses of the Cold War have been brought into play. At another level, the debate has sparked off a great deal of valuable thinking and discussion on the role of the artist, on “responsibility” and “committedness”, on the very nature of “truth” and “reality” itself in given social and political settings.

Here are two views on the book. Katharine Susannah Prichard needs no introduction. Maurice Shadbolt is a New Zealand Literary Fund Fellow now working in London. His interesting impressions of literary life in communist countries, gained in his recent travels, have been published in *Landfall* (New Zealand).

for the reason that little of his work has been accepted for publication in Soviet magazines. To the Soviet public he is best known for his brilliant translations of Shakespeare and Goethe. At the same time, however, it is now known that his poetry has circulated widely among Russian poetry-lovers in pale carbon copies of the original manuscripts.

He is not a Communist; not strictly a Marxist (though many Marxist insights may illuminate his work); not a socialist realist. He is a humanist, imaginatively tied to the best in the Christian tradition and emotionally tied to the best in the socialist tradition; a Russian, as passages in “Doctor Zhivago” so movingly reveal, who loves his country and his people and feels for them in suffering and triumph.

Yet there was no room for a Pasternak in the literature of “the new Soviet man” which the Zhdanovs and Fadeyevs were trying to create. Or, to state the issue more plainly, Pasternak did not join in the literary chorus of praise for Stalin.

And there is, it seems, still no room for a Pasternak in the Soviet Union today.

If it is impossible, in a few lines, to summarise the story and achievement of "Zhivago", it is also impossible to estimate the liberating effect that this novel must have on anyone seriously considering the nature of the Soviet Union; or on any socialist or writer considering the relationship between literature and politics. The essence of "Zhivago" is its richness in ideas; the power of its vision.

For in the end it is not to the political thinker, not to the historian or philosopher, but to the poet, the visionary, to whom we must turn for understanding. As a novelist Pasternak remains a poet. Consider, for example his symbolic vision of approaching revolution after a massacre of demonstrating workers by Tsarist troops:

. . . Then the sun, setting behind the houses, poked a finger round the corner and picked out everything red in the street—the red tops of the dragoons' caps, a red flag trailing on the ground and the red specks and threads of blood on the snow.

As we might expect from a novel in the grand Russian manner, Pasternak strings together a multitude of characters with coincidence in a richly-written narrative which spans some fifty years (between 1900 and about 1950). On the other hand, though, it is not the panorama of a "War and Peace"; the great ones, the Lenins, Trozskys and Stalins, never appear and are scarcely mentioned. They do not concern Pasternak; his concern is with the Russian people, as people, and not as political beings, as people capable of love and hate, good and evil; and above all—with their capacity for suffering.

Yet curiously, with that said, it must be added that Pasternak's vision is not a tragic one; there it takes its departure from that one other great novel of the Revolution, Sholokov's "And Quiet Flows the Don". It is an optimistic book, an affirmation of life. We are carried, at the end, as if along a clear sunlit stream winding out of the dark forest of war and revolution; when all is over, and the tumult gone, man and the children of man endure and prevail.

At a time when those words "commitment" and "engagement" are once again becoming fashionable in contemporary literature, Pasternak reveals himself as the most intensely and tenaciously committed writer of the age; and brings us sharply to the realisation of how tritely and shallowly most of us have been using these terms. He is committed not to say any one version of history, not to any specific version of political thought; but to humanity, in the vast sense, and to the classic (as opposed to ephemeral political) human virtues and values. He is a voice reminding humanity of its greatness out of a past half-forgotten; a voice calling to us across a landscape of time war-torn, sickened and soured, and smoky with cynicism and despair.

Perhaps only a Russian, with insight into the conflicting loyalties of our time, still at one with Russia's giant humanist literary past, could have given us this message. At one with his country and era Pasternak speaks to us in a voice in which, for so long, most of us have been too timid to speak.

One knows in advance how some critics (I think particularly of Soviet critics, some of whom I respect as personal friends) will dismiss this novel.

It will be said (as if this could damn it) that Pasternak is subjective. Of course he is; and it is no use pretending that any artist's vision is, in the end, other than subjective. Surely one of the lessons Pasternak teaches us again (and we needed to be reminded) is that we must learn to respect the still, small voice speaking in the storm. "The first disaster," says Lara, "the root of future evil, was the loss of faith in one's own opinion. They imagined that the time had passed for them to pay attention to the promptings of moral feeling, that now one had to sing with the general voice and live by general notions . . ."

Already the character of Yuri Zhivago has been twisted out of recognition by critics determined to use the book for their own purposes; and who refuse to come to it on its own terms. (In the West, out of the sickening sludge of cold-war mentality, we have had him portrayed as a martyr to Bolshevism; in the East he has been condemned, through lack of understanding, as a despicable representative of the old order, by critics still trapped in the prison of dogma.)

Yet Pasternak's message is clear: Yuri Zhivago, as an unsocial being, is a man of a kind condemned in advance by history; unable to cope with the rise of a class with values which seem alien to his own, he is flung aside by history, and dies. (Here, surely, is an object lesson in the Marxist theory of alienation.) Vaguely sentimental revolutionary liberalism, Pasternak recognises, is not enough. Only those with the will and power to make the pact with history—with the new class and new society—can hope to carry forward those great ideals which Zhivago cherishes, and which turn empty in his hands. For, at the end of the book, a freedom of the spirit is "almost tangible" in the streets of Moscow: the Yuri Zhivagos of revolutionary Russia did not place that freedom of the spirit there; it was won by those who made the necessary pact with history, with their time (though many of them may have perished in that act).

If Zhivago is portrayed with sympathy, it is simply because he is a well-meaning human being of the tragic kind, and worthy of sympathy. It would be a mistake to identify Zhivago too closely with Pasternak (though it is not difficult to detect an obvious strain of autobiography); Pasternak has stressed that Zhivago's views must not always be taken for his own. Pasternak merely demonstrates that, in a revolutionary upheaval, a great deal of good must also perish with the evil; and that some of the evil will persist in the new.

It will also certainly be said (again, as if this could damn it) that Pasternak does not tell the whole truth about the 1917 revolutions; or about Soviet society. Of course he doesn't. He doesn't attempt to tell the truth; but he does tell a very profound kind of truth about all revolution and all society, which is an altogether different thing; and he does tell a truth which enlarges our view of all human life and endeavor—for Pasternak, as a cool artist, sees the Russian Revolution as but another chapter in the marvellous history of mankind.

MAURICE SHADBOLT

★

(Continued overleaf)

Two Views . . .

(Continued from previous page)

IS "Dr. Zhivago" by Boris Pasternak a work of art, comparable with the literary masterpieces of Tolstoy, as has been suggested?

I think not, if we accept Rodin's exposition of art as "the joy of the intelligence which sees the universe clearly and which recreates by illumination of the consciousness."

First of all the author's conception is ego-centric, his characters are not fully developed, the episodic form and *deus ex machina* device deprive the novel of the intensity and strength in design which a story of the tragic futility of an individual confronted by world-shaking events, beyond his sympathy or comprehension, could have had.

"Great events are for great minds, and only those on a level with such events understand them."

We get no impression of a great mind reflecting those tumultuous years of the revolutionary upsurge in Russia from "Dr. Zhivago". Rather the impression is of a querulous individualist concerned more about personal hardships and satisfactions than of a man seeing beyond the chaos of the revolutionary situation "the vision glorious" which was inspiring his countrymen to miracles of heroism and self-sacrifice for the accomplishment of an objective which would, and did, serve the ultimate welfare of the nation.

Pasternak indicates his own attitude when Zhivago says to the partisan leader: "I'll admit you are Russia's liberators, her shining lights, that without you she would be lost, sunk in misery and ignorance, but still I don't give a damn for any of you, I don't like you and you can all go to hell."

Zhivago prefers the religious maundering of a superstitious girl to Marxism which gave a practical basis, and direction for triumph, to the revolution.

Again, in the Epilogue, writing after he had seen what Soviet administration had done to improve the living and working conditions of millions of men and women, giving them education and health services, scientific and sporting facilities, opportunities for the appreciation of music, art and literature, unknown in pre-revolutionary days, Pasternak can refer to the Nazi invasion as "a purifying storm".

To me, Dr. Zhivago's philosophy is illogical and sentimentally puerile. His vague humanism ignores fundamental human needs. His mental confusion is exposed in contradictory statements about "unfreedom" and attachments to rituals

It is not enough that a poet should ecstasise about the scenery, for his writing as a novelist to be regarded as of supreme importance. Indeed Pasternak's frequent lyrical outbursts, with simile piled on simile, struck me as a diversionary tactic to show that he could write about things, if not people.

We expect from a great poet profound understanding, some vivid originality of expression, or a vision and passion for all that is finest in human nature, not merely a moaning and wailing about deficiencies and misfortunes. In the poems of Dr. Zhivago do we find these qualities? Most of us

have to judge them in translation, as we did the poems of Blok and Mayakovsky. Of course, they lose something of their original beauty in another language, yet the poems of Blok and Mayakovsky delight and stir while the poems of Pasternak remain decorative pieces in a minor key.

It has to be remembered that publishing in the U.S.S.R. has a different basis to publishing in capitalist countries. In capitalist countries books are published with a view to the profit to be derived from them by individual publishers. In the U.S.S.R. books are published by the people's publishing houses to improve the standards of readers, to interest, delight and educate through the national and international literature.

Why should the people pay for the publication of books which betray their interests, disregard their achievements, and vilify the revolutionary struggle which made it possible for these publishing houses to exist?

When I was in Siberia in 1933, I talked to partisans and can imagine their bitter resentment of Pasternak's short-sighted and mean-spirited account of their struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces of Wrangel and Kolchak, reinforced by foreign troops and equipment. I heard peasants as they came from the harvest fields singing:

So in the steppes
And in the mountains,
This day will never be forgotten.
Ever in our memory will be
The little parties of fighting peasants
Who tried with plenty of success
To overcome great armies.

All over Siberia I heard this "Song of the Red Partisans". It was a folk song, I was told.

That "Dr. Zhivago" has not been published in the Soviet Union, it seems to me, has protected him from the wrath of the people.

Sholokov in "And Quiet Flows The Don" and "The Don Flows To The Sea" gives a full-bodied and vivid account of the same period, not glossing over mistakes made, inevitable horrors and hardships of the revolutionary situation, but taking an objective view of its realisation and the driving force behind its purpose. Some of us wondered whether Sholokov was for or against when we read these novels. The same may be said of Alexei Tolstoy's "Ordeal" or "Road to Calvary". But these books were published because they were honest and objective treatments of reality in the upheavals of the time.

Compared to the work of these writers, how flimsy and ineffectual is "Dr. Zhivago"! I remember Mayakovsky's appeal to writers:

Put on brass knuckles,
We have to crack the world's skull.
Don't cheep like quail
And take the meek name of poet.

Pasternak cheeps like a quail—a not very significant quail at that—and takes refuge in personal grouches.

KATHARINE SUSANNAH PRICHARD

"THE LAST BLUE SEA" WINS FIRST TRADE UNION NOVEL AWARD

— Competition Results

THE first Dame Mary Gilmore Novel Competition, of which the results were announced in January, was won by Queensland writer David Forrest with his war novel "The Last Blue Sea". The award was worth £200.

Forrest's story "The Keeper of the Night" was published some time ago in *Overland*. It was highly praised at the time, and has recently been reprinted in the Australian-Asian anthology "Span".

The Mary Gilmore Competition is held annually, and is sponsored by the May Day Committees of the Trades Halls of Newcastle, Sydney and Melbourne.

Although previous awards have been made for short stories and poetry, the 1958 novel competition was the first in that medium. It is the first time in Australia—and as far as is known in any country—that the trade union movement has promoted a novel competition.

About forty novels were entered in the competition. "Honorable mentions" were made of the novels "Tansy" by Margaret Trist, of Sydney, and "Bobbin Up" by Dorothy Hewett, also of Sydney.

JUDGES' REPORT

Of the novels entered, the three award winners, the judges stated, best expressed the finest in the Australian social and literary tradition.

Judges were Mr. Robert King, Secretary of the Sydney Trades and Labor Council; Mr. Alan Marshall, author; and Mr. S. Murray-Smith, Editor of *Overland*.

On the three novels, the judges comment:

"The Last Blue Sea" is a novel, written with imagination and skill, about a militia battalion in action in New Guinea in the Second World War. The novel shows great literary promise. Its capacity to depict the reactions, varying one from the other, of men under the cruellest kind of stress; the continual movement and development of the action, and the ability of the writer to write compassionately of a series of situations the essence of which is that men should kill each other; the balanced pace and organisation of the book—all combine to achieve a literary level that marks it as a book of outstanding quality.

"This is a book which rises above the tragedy and the beastliness with which it deals and which, by means of writing that is thoughtful, free of the banal, informed with wit and observation, and in the best tradition of humanism, provides an unforgettable picture not only of Australian soldiers in New Guinea, but of war itself.

"In the opinion of the judges the appearance of this book alone would have been more than ample justification for the competition.

THE DARLING DOWNS

"Tansy" is a quite delightful novel depicting the growing-up of a young girl on the Darling Downs in the twenties. It is an authentic piece

of Australian folk-lore and, with its wit and insight and humanity is one of the most delightful books written on the Australian family. In many ways this is a hard book to characterise, for it has elements of a historical novel, of a humorous book, of a family saga, of a regional study. In all its aspects it shows true understanding and delicious observation of the human comedy, detached and yet intensely sympathetic.

"'Bobbin Up' is a most skilfully told story of the interlocking home and factory lives of a group of Sydney women who work in a textile mill.

"In its sensitive delineation of the problems and the setting of a section of working class life, this book breaks new ground and marks the writer as a skilled craftsman and a sensitive observer of the human scene.

"We single the book out for special mention, not only as an outstanding work in its own right, but also as a novel of the militant labor movement, and by far the most successful in this genre that we have read.

"Scenes and people of working class districts in Sydney are drawn with a ringing clarity, and the dialogue is natural and colorful. Although there is some lack of contrast in the book, a real sense of the interdependence of human beings in the struggle for a better life is built up and developed to the end.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT'S ROLE

"The actions of sections of the trade union movement in sponsoring such a competition as this," say the judges, "is a sign of the rapidly growing maturity of the Australian labor movement, and a sign that it recognises the interdependence of the struggle of all sections of the Australian people for a better and richer life, materially and spiritually. It is precedent that should be both publicised and emulated."

Already the Australasian Book Society has announced "The Last Blue Sea" and "Bobbin Up" in its publication lists, and "Tansy" has already been published in the U.S.A.—under the title "Morning in Queensland"—by the J. B. Lippincott Co. It is to be published in England by W. H. Allen this year.

Meanwhile the May Day Committee have announced that the Mary Gilmore Award for 1959 will be for a full-length play and for 1960 will again be for a novel. Details may be obtained from the Secretary, Dame Mary Gilmore Award, Trades Hall, Newcastle, N.S.W.

Continued over

THE WINNERS

DAVID FORREST was born in Maryborough (Q.) in 1924. He lived in various parts of south-east Queensland until he came to Brisbane in 1938. He began work after passing his Junior Certificate and is a bank officer, at present stationed in Brisbane.



Forrest made his first attempt at serious writing about 1952, and he has had several short stories published. Although completion of "The Last Blue Sea" took some years, creative writing remains primarily a recreation, and there are no present plans for a new novel.

David Forrest is interested in music and likes to go shooting when he can. He is a member of the Queensland section of the Fellowship of Australian Writers and Chairman of the Brisbane Realist Writers' Group.

★

DOROTHY HEWETT was born in Perth in 1923 and spent her childhood on a farm in Westralia's wheatbelt. She has been a university student, journalist, textile worker, housewife and advertising copywriter. She has lived in Sydney for the past nine years and has three young sons.



Miss Hewett has had her poetry widely published in magazines and anthologies, and won the narrative poem section of the A.B.C.'s national literary competition in 1945. Her poems and stories are well known in the labor movement in Australia, but have achieved recognition in wider circles too.

The material for "Bobbin Up", her first novel, was gathered in twelve months working in a big Sydney spinning mills and in nine years as the wife of a Sydney boilermaker, living in working-class suburbs like Redfern, Rosebery and Rockdale.

The novel was written in eight weeks while on holiday from her last job, and on the dole!

Until recently Miss Hewett was President of the Sydney Realist Writers' Group.



MARGARET TRIST was born in Dalby (Q.) in 1914 and has been publishing stories since 1934, her work having appeared in a number of anthologies. She has also published two volumes of short stories, "In the Sun" (1943) and "What Else is There?" (1946) as well as two novels, "Now That We're Laughing" (1945) and "Daddy" (1947).

Margaret Trist is married with two children, one a teacher and the other a librarian. She is a committee member of the English Association (Sydney) and of International P.E.N.

LANDFALL

A New Zealand Quarterly

★ LITERATURE

★ THE ARTS

★ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

★ ILLUSTRATIONS

The Caxton Press, P.O. Box 363,
Christchurch, N.Z.

N.Z. 20/- a year, 5/- a copy.

NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DRAMA— DREAM OR REALITY?

FEBRUARY in the Sydney suburb of Kensington saw the start of a unique experiment in Australian theatre, known as NIDA. Actually it will most likely be called AIDA overseas, which, you will agree, is suitably theatrical.

This National Institute of Dramatic Art is being established by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust at the University of New South Wales. It is to be part and parcel of the University's proposed Arts faculty, but the instructing and lecturing staff will be supplied chiefly by the Trust and the A.B.C.

According to the prospectus of NIDA its aims are "to encourage the knowledge and appreciation of drama, opera, music and all the arts of the theatre, and, in particular, to train students who wish to make a career in the theatre, television, radio or films."

At the commencement of such a scheme it may be permitted to surmise a little concerning its prospects. We've wanted, for years since the War, some kind of acting academy for our talented youngsters. We've depended for so long on avowedly workshop but horribly mediocre schools run on a part-time basis—usually "for business boys and girls"—by the various little theatres. It is to their credit that most of the thirty students at NIDA this year will be graduates of such after-work training schools. For this is obviously the time when we need actors and actresses trained according to the very best overseas precepts, not those of the reigning queen of the local amateur theatre. Our theatre-going public is growing, but our live theatres are not keeping pace with it.

Next, I dream of a time when theatres of professional and semi-professional status all over the country will receive competently trained producers to enable them to broaden the scope of their work. The dearth of producers who really know what the art of production entails constantly moves critics and reviewers to exclaim, but until now nothing has been done to remedy the shortage.

Then of course this should lead to a properly national theatre. A theatre in which a national style can be worked out at leisure, and thereafter fully interpreted. That such a style is inevitable should be fairly evident. Consider the Method School in America, and Ireland's poetic Abbey players in the years of the Irish drama movement. We await only national maturity. Our theatre deserves the opportunity to mature, and to catch Australia's character as a nation.

Of course a national style of acting, producing and staging demands playwrights as well. This seems to be a likely and happy outcome of an experiment such as NIDA. Our budding playwrights like Peter Kenna, together with established people like Lawler, Beynon, Douglas Stewart, Ray Mathew, must be encouraged to work in with the Institute. Let them use the stage at the University theatre, and all the resources a government-sponsored institute can offer them.

Acting cannot be learned as a hobby, after school or after work. It is a profession which requires rigorous full-time training. So too the playwright needs to learn the techniques of his craft, how and when to use them; and the critic the techniques of both the theatre and criticism. As Hugh Hunt stated recently: "The greater part of theatre work is achieved by hard-working artist-craftsmen, and craftsmen must learn their craft."

Genius does not fall suddenly from the skies. It needs to develop slowly and carefully in a stimulating environment. I suppose out of ten or twenty playwrights to emerge in these next years after Lawler we have a right to expect no more than one of true genius. It is high time semi-government arts bodies in Australia showed their willingness to tutor the many in order to improve the few.

The prospects of this new Institute are, in fact, even more far-reaching. It should improve not only urban and suburban standards of acting, but eventually country standards also. Hugh Hunt says that: "From this school I hope will stem new professional repertory companies in our towns and cities, somewhat on the same lines as I have found worthy of study in Russia."

Perhaps in terms of individual talent we may look for a Chayefsky in Australian TV production one of these days—if we train him well first. Or, in terms of our culture, perhaps NIDA is a step towards the overall planning academy for the arts (to compare with the newly-constituted Canada Council) which Australia badly needs.

At any rate, as one of our playwrights says, "We have our dreams."

DONALD MAYNARD

★

EXPLAINING MAN TO MAN

"THE Family of Man" (a collection of 503 pictures from 68 countries), created by Edward Steichen for the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and now being exhibited in Australia is a tremendous work of art, majestic in conception, superb in quality and vast in scale. The claim on the catalogue that it is "the greatest photographic exhibition of all time", is not, I think, extravagant. It is a triumph of creative imagination, of selective aesthetics and advanced technology, as a whole and in its every part.

Edward Steichen and his staff have performed the task of selecting these 503 photographs from over two million, with high seriousness and splendid clarity of purpose, with faultless artistic taste, in a passionate spirit of devoted faith in man and in the worthwhileness of the project of "explaining man to man."

The exhibition was conceived, he says, "as a mirror of the essential oneness of mankind throughout the world. We sought and selected photographs, made in all parts of the world, of the gamut of life from birth to death with emphasis on the daily relationships of man to himself, to his family, to the community and to the world we live in."

SEVEN SEAS BOOKS and PANTHER BOOKS

A collection of works by authors in the English language.

SOFT COVERS. WELL BOUND.

AUSTRALIAN AUTHORS

POWER WITHOUT GLORY—Frank Hardy. In two volumes	12/6	(13/8 posted)
THE MIRAGE—F. B. Vickers	6/6	(7/2 ")
CROWN JEWEL—Ralph de Boissiere	7/6	(8/4 ")

CLASSICS

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE—Jane Austen	5/6	(6/2 posted)
JANE EYRE—Charlotte Bronte	7/6	(8/4 ")
WUTHERING HEIGHTS—Emily Bronte	6/6	(7/2 ")
THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN—Mark Twain	6/6	(7/2 ")
A CONNECTICUT YANKEE AT KING ARTHUR'S COURT—Mark Twain	6/-	(6/8 ")
THREE CHRISTMAS TALES—Charles Dickens	6/6	(7/2 ")
POETRY AND PROSE OF WALT WHITMAN	7/6	(8/4 ")
SILAS MARNER—George Eliot	4/6	(5/- ")
A DREAM OF JOHN BALL—William Morris	3/6	(3/10 ")
JACK LONDON: AMERICAN REBEL—Phillip S. Foner	7/6	(8/4 ")

CONTEMPORARY

GOLDSBOROUGH—Stephan Heym	7/6	(8/4 posted)
THE CRUSADERS—Stephan Heym. In two volumes	12/6	(13/10 ")
CANNIBALS and Other Stories—Stephan Heym	4/-	(4/6 ")
MORNING NOON AND NIGHT—Lars Lawrence	7/6	(8/2 ")
OUT OF THE DUST—Lars Lawrence	7/6	(8/4 ")
THE GREAT MIDLAND—Alexander Saxton	7/6	(8/2 ")
THE CROSS AND THE ARROW—Albert Maltz	7/6	(8/8 ")
THE SCALPEL, THE SWORD—Ted Allan and Sidney Gordon	6/-	(6/8 ")
THE AMERICAN CENTURY—American Short Stories	7/6	(8/4 ")
MAGGIE: A GIRL OF THE STREETS AND OTHER STORIES—American Short Stories	6/-	(6/8 ")
THE GENTLE BUSH—Barbara Giles	7/6	(8/4 ")
THE PROUD AND THE FREE—Howard Fast	4/6	(5/2 ")
THE SCARLET LETTER—Nathaniel Hawthorne	4/6	(5/2 ")
ALL THINGS BETRAY THEE—Gwyn Thomas	5/6	(6/2 ")
THE 13th JUROR—Steve Nelson	5/6	(6/2 ")
THE VOLUNTEERS—Steve Nelson	4/6	(5/- ")
IRON CITY—Lloyd Brown	5/6	(6/2 ")
COOLIE—Mulk Raj Anand	6/6	(7/2 ")
A LANTERN FOR JEREMY—V. J. Jerome	5/6	(6/2 ")

On the Press: SAY NO TO DEATH—Dymphna Cusack.

A SEASON OF FEAR—Abraham Polonsky.

Available from:—

PIONEER BOOKSHOP, 40 Market Street, Sydney.

INTERNATIONAL BOOKSHOP, 57 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne.

PEOPLES BOOKSHOP, 205 Brunswick Street, Valley, Brisbane.

PEOPLES BOOKSHOP, 182 Hindley Street, Adelaide.

PIONEER BOOKSHOP, 75 Bulwer Street, Perth.

Wholesale enquiries:—

CURRENT BOOK DISTRIBUTORS, 40 Market Street, Sydney.

The exhibition does embody a deep and broad insight into the human situation of today. It depicts man as being in a situation of historical responsibility and choice, and one of unique importance and urgency. And shows the conditions of wholeness within the individual and solidarity between men which are needed in this situation.

Moreover, there are lessons for everybody concerning the artistic means by which its effects are achieved. It could have been all too easy, with such a theme, to fall into stereotyped responses of one kind or another, with excessive sermonising or ill-measured sentiment. There is not one lapse of taste in such respects. There is no slushiness and no toughness either: sentiment is not inhibited, it is properly apportioned. There is no preaching, not a word of politics or of direct propaganda. Yet the social and political moral is unmistakably there.

Here indeed is a fruitful artistic road for the future and one which is really adequate for our situation today. Here is realism of a truthfulness and power; at the same time here is a mastery of the use of symbol and of all aesthetic devices for a noble purpose which makes the usual run of abstract works look empty and poverty-stricken. Here are all the artistic refinements to be found in the most rarefied orders of cubism, expressionism, tachism and the rest, together with the substance of humanistic thought and feeling that is lacking in those styles. Here is good taste **plus**: plus intellect, heart and imagination. Here are good morals **minus**: minus intolerance, smugness and pettiness.

The whole exhibition is informed by a brave, magnanimous kind of humanism, an attitude which takes due account of the non-rational as well as the rational elements of human experience, equally in art and in life, and seeks to make proper allowance for and use of them.

★

The opening series on love and lovemaking boldly brings out the dualistic pain-pleasure character of this experience, and the brutal, compulsive aspects of sexual passion as well as its ennobling tender ones. The marriage series depicts the serious element in happiness and the happy element of being serious. The agony of child-bearing is shown as well as the fulfilment; and the battles of child-rearing, as well as the devotions. We see children with their fun and games and pets, quarrelling, being angelical and demoniacal; and pitiful children with no fun or games, children of fear and loneliness.

There is a wonderful series of family groups, from two to four generations, taken in their home environments: Italians, Sicilians, Japanese, Bechuanalanders and Americans, all farming people, all living in conditions of evident hardship, all typical, ordinary, decent, upright, laboring families facing typical problems.

There is a most moving series of studies of individual men at work; the ineffably tragic figure of a furnace-stoker in the Belgian Congo; a Bolivian Indian woman sitting on a heap of rubble pausing in her work of breaking up stones with a hammer to breast-feed her baby; the strained bewilderment in the sensitive face of a Welsh miner-lad, a mere child; the staunchness in the stand of a Bolivian miner, and of a youthful German mason carrying on his shoulders an enormous load of bricks.

There are studies of women at work, from all over the world, in their common patience, persistence and humility, sewing, washing, polishing, scrubbing, gardening; the eloquent gnarled, knotted, veined, wrinkled, stumpy hands of an old woman, and the tired exasperation on the face of a Negro mother crawling to drag out a child's shoes from under a dilapidated bed.

And suddenly, our attention is focussed on a series of studies of modern civilised western mankind at work: politicians, scientists, technicians, draughtsmen, a whole New York building full of offices with people going about their business. What business? It is left to us to decide. They are ourselves. Theirs is our business. Nuclear destruction? Or the application of atomic power for good and great purposes of peace?

There follows a series of studies from underdeveloped countries: a procession of French Equatorial women, in silhouette, porters, some pregnant, bearing great bundles on their heads; the paradisaical natural surroundings alongside the pitiful poverty of life for such peoples. And groups of underprivileged European peoples, eating and drinking frugally if not poorly in cafes, homes and open-air, bang against a festive crowded American hamburger joint plastered with ads. for hamburgers, hot chocolate pie, beans, soup, cheeseburgers, beef bouillon and stuffed with an air of well-being.

There is a fascinating photograph of a peasant family in the U.S.S.R. at table on some celebration, almost smothered in lace curtains and embroidered hangings, exquisite decorated icons and wall-plaques, photo of a family hero (died in the war?), indoor rubber-plants, pots of leaf-greenery and trails of flowers. And on the table a bronze figure in heavy socialist-realist style of a peasant with his dog, and a plain meal of soup and black bread. It tells more of human truth than a ton of tracts.

Passing from material to cultural needs of humankind, there is a brilliantly chosen series depicting all sorts of musical activities, expressing the universality of the orgiastic and ritualistic as well as the aesthetically uplifting aspects of music and rhythm.

There follows, in dramatic dialectic, a series on education, on the human capacity to reason, and to learn from theory and practice, to choose, to explore, to imagine, to dare. Some of these photographs are deeply touching, especially those of underprivileged peoples of all ages striving after learning in most primitive conditions.

Photographs of students of physics in discussion with their tutor, blackboards covered with mathematical equations and formulae, research students in protecting clothing in radiation laboratories, compel us to ask ourselves "What are they thinking and doing? What is it all for?" And as though to answer "Surely not for this?" there is the German photograph of a little schoolboy, satchel on back, making his way in early morning sunlight through ruins of a bombed city.

The destructive elements in human nature, the follies and vices large and small, are shown in a wonderful series of shot of couples quarrelling, unhappy, angry, uncertain, accusing, indignant, envious, pleading, flirting, teasing, sulking, showing off, taking each other for granted; and people rushing, arguing, gossiping, gambling, being vulgar, pompous, stiff and starched, sour, lewd and hilarious.

Death is shown to us in many forms, as the great, final universal fact: deaths of babies, of soldiers, of men and women in the prime of life, of all ranks and colors.

Still the onward current of life is not to be denied, and we see images of more new-born babies, grandmas holding them; the teeming pavement of Fifth Avenue, New York.

And all the while, the individual basic human consciousness faces the same problems. There are all kinds of sufferings. There is essential loneliness, and the compassion, mercy and pity that bridges it. And worse, there are the photographs of shocking experiences, captioned from Virgil, "What region of the earth is not full of our calamities?"; depicting the haggard, desperate faces of farm-workers, of the unemployed, the starving, the beggars, the diseased people, the displaced people, the victims of fire, flood, famine, pestilence and war from all corners of the earth.

In the teeth of such calamities, mankind yet has the capacity to dream of knowing that the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty really exists, and aspires to find it. The attitude informing the series on religion is specially instructive. Steicher explains, in a word: "We sought photographs concerned with the religious, rather than religions." They sought to show the existence in man of "flaming creative forces of love and truth, and the corrosive evil inherent in the lie."

So we have a series of images of men, women and children at all kinds of religious devotions and rituals: French and Portuguese Catholics, Swedish Lutherans, Soviet Orthodox Russians, Burmese and Korean Buddhists, Jewish boy-students of the Talmud, American Negro spiritualists.

What chiefly matters in all this, the lesson of tolerance, is abundantly clear and wholly admirable. The intensity and the varieties of religious experience are depicted as the matters of fact that they are. The beholder may choose for himself what to make of them. Only two things he can scarcely do after seeing such images and reflecting on them: first, to deny them, or depreciate their importance as aspects of human experience; second to claim an exclusive monopoly of virtue and truth for any particular religion or sect.

Which is to say that here, in this exhibition, is the answer of enlightened minds to the megalomaniacal sectarian claims of, for instance, such as a Billy Graham, who would assert a monopoly of truth and virtue for the religion of Christianity. The answer is simply that it makes no difference if God exists and whether or not the Christian God: the human situation remains the same; man needs to find himself and nothing other can save him from himself, not even a valid proof of the existence of God.

Two paths lie before humankind, two attitudes are possible: on the one hand the assertion of faith in people's capacity for goodness, their dignity and worth, in the vital energy of the **Family of Man**, in the potential even of the bodgies, the widgees, the tramps, the crims, the beats of the world, in the human capacity for moral indignation, rebellion, struggle, in the concept of justice and freedom for all in this world now; on the other hand, contempt for the Family of Man, historical pessimism, resignation to evil, and abdication of respon-

sibility, leading to universal death from a war with nuclear weapons.

This magnificent exhibition leaves no room for doubt as to which is the better part, and provides a dynamic model for an art of today and the future.

ELIZABETH VASSILIEFF

★

SYDNEY DANCE-DRAMA GROUP

WATCHING Margaret Barr rehearse some of the members of her Sydney Dance-Drama Group, one is reminded of how much we owe to the pioneers in any art form—drama, music, dance—who labor with complete devotion in little dusty halls and back rooms to give form to some creative vision.

Margaret Barr, who studied in New York and has done work in this field in New Zealand, is unmistakably a creative person. She has already presented three separate annual programs in Sydney, receiving appreciative reviews and small audiences. Those who saw it will not forget her most completely successful vignette, "The Fence"—a duo between the confident, arrogant Australian and the black-shawled, tentative New Australian (for so one must see it, though the theme is universal), eyeing one another at first across a stringy-bark railing, then slowly drawing closer together through a mutual tribute of dancing. The music of Arnold Butcher, wharfie-musician, was memorable too. So was the last scene of her stark "Bush-fire", in which the burn-out house is rebuilt by the neighbors in a burst of companionable joie de vivre of the kind made familiar by some of the folk dances of the Chinese theatre.

She has tried, it is true, themes more difficult to comprehend. Such was "Strange Children", based on an Elaine Haxton painting—a rather wicked interpretation of the impulses of childhood, leaning perhaps more heavily than the medium will support on psychological ideas, which rather over-weighted the visual images. How much can the creator risk having his audience in doubt as to what each gesture, movement or grouping means? One can see that this must be a recurring problem for Margaret Barr, whose idiom rejects equally the stylised movements of classical ballet and the more arty-crafty cliches one associates with the term "expressive dancing".

Undeniably there is a language of movement, and it has to be studied, absorbed and learned, as does the language of music or painting. Australians are beginning to develop a feeling for the language of ballet. "Dance-drama", in Margaret Barr's sense, calls for a response to movement and grouping together with a sense of mime—whether, as with the young housewife in the joyful "Anniversary", crystal-clear direct mime, or something more abstract and complex. One's feeling for it can only come slowly, with experience.

The Group's latest venture combines words with music and movement—a daring step forward, perhaps, but Margaret Barr herself is confident that

she has the right medium here for what she wants to express. An Australian theme again—"Colonial Portraits", variations on the theme of the tradition on which our settlement is based and what happens to it under southern skies. The climax comes with the portrait of Eric Lambert's character, Mary Shanahan, giving up her proud squatter's life to sew five silver stars on the silk of her blue ball dress. But most unforgettable is the figure of Daisy Bates, rigid in Victorian white blouse and busseled skirt, pulling on her long white gloves to cope with unimaginable diseases as her people of the Nullarbor Plains bring her their sick and dying.

Rehearsal over, the group members gather round for a postmortem. Would the average audience "get" the implication of this or that gesture? How much has to be left to the words, to carry the story? How much knowledge of the characters would the audience have in common? This is uncharted ground, and the creator will always be in despair as to how much to expect, how much to take for granted. Yet undoubtedly this is how new forms are born, and the Sydney Dance-Drama Group has already demonstrated one way in which dance and drama can express themes arising from the contemporary world, and can evoke feeling. The medium will find sureness and freedom as an audience grows around it—as it assuredly will. Margaret Barr's own recent appointment as teacher of movement in the new drama course at the University of New South Wales is perhaps a first step in recognition of her special contribution.

HELEN PALMER

★

A NEW SATIRIST

A COMPLETELY new element has been introduced to Australian theatre by the work of Barry Humphries, whose series of satirical sketches of lower middle-class life in Melbourne, seen on stage and TV in the last six months, have been a bombshell to much suburban complacency.

It is quite possible that in Humphries we have the first great new comic to develop in Australia since the hey-day of Mo. His cracked and zany voice, the maniacal gleam in his eye, the long, lank hair and the magnificent capacity he has for recasting his character into any one of numerous roles: these can't be forgotten by those who have seen his shows, which have been put on in conjunction with Peter O'Shaughnessy.

Two questions at least should be asked about Barry Humphries before we can say too much about his future. Firstly, how will he go outside Melbourne? That city is supposed by its numerous enemies to have a corner in middle-class hypocrisy and deadly bourgeois values, and it would be interesting to know how firmly Humphries' shafts will strike home elsewhere. Secondly, the petit-bourgeoisie isn't the only enemy. There are plenty of working-class and upper middle-class philistines as well. Can Humphries "feel" himself into their skins too, the better to ridicule false and phoney values? To reach the top in his field he will need to try—even if he does lose some of his present admirers in the process.

His talent is clearly maturing, however. The element of pathos which seems to mark the greatest comics has been present in his work from the beginning, and seems to have reached a new peak of artistry in a sketch like "Nights in the Gardens of Melbourne", a dead-beat's monologue, presented at the recent O'Shaughnessy-Humphries Testimonial Performance.

It's unfortunate that, before the rest of Australia can get to know him, he and his colleague O'Shaughnessy (who has fought hard for professional theatre and professional standards in theatre) are off to Europe. Perhaps, as one observer suggested, Humphries hopes that Australia House will pay large sums to them, to keep such unflattering advertisements for the-Australian-way-of-life as Humphries' sketches are off the British TV screens. In the meantime there is some vintage Humphries available on records ("Wild Life in Suburbia", Vols. 1 and 2, Score, 7 inch, 19/3 each), and if you can't see him then these are the next best thing.

S.M.S.

★

Siding Siesta

The buildings creak with molecular thunder.
Nothing is in residence here. The sere haze
Mutes all color and troubles all contour
Into the glaring waves of mid day.

It's noon, and the clerk is still
To gaze over the petrified sill
Chewing on a lunch of pie and carbon
Given daily by the shunting engine.
The other assistant, prone on the floor
Leafing through a dead issue of "Man"
Drawls he c'n stand ordinary heat.
The boss, ticking off thirty years or more
Finds none extraordinary as this one.
Thus a lifetime gone before
Has now a kind of perfection.

The station master survives at his door
On the implacable packing case, and dreams
A new fashion for the privet screen
Guarding the lavatory; beyond
That bodeful grey mass are peppercorns; the shine
Beneath are parked cars; while that bare space
there
Leads to a hotel, just visible
Trembling in the line of unsteady iron hills.

This is the Riverina's summertime.
A yard, workmen sprawling in the shade
A tan kelpie, scuffling up puffs of lime
For their scraps, then snapping in air
Where flies officiate for thirty years.

KEITH J. FREE

BOOKS

Australia's Outlook On Asia

It has taken an American, albeit German-born, to survey the entire history of Australian attitudes to Asia, and produce a well-documented book on this thesis. Werner Levi, Professor of Political Science at Minnesota, author of "Australia's Outlook on Asia" (Angus & Robertson, 27/6), has read voluminously, of writings tangential to his topic, of newspapers over the whole political spectrum from "News-Weekly" to "Tribune" with the dailies crowded in between, and through the often turgid pages of the Federal Hansard.

Briefly summed Levi's findings are these. During the 19th Century the Australians perpetuated attitudes to Asians which the white colonists or their forebears had brought from the Homelands, the view that never the twain should meet, the Asians being of inferior race and cross-grained culture. Such contacts as did occur hardened this view, the Chinese immigrants of the gold-rush days and the next decades prompting the revulsion which crystallised as the White Australia Policy. With the emergence of Japan as a modern power at the end of the century fears of a Yellow Peril to the continent developed, only partly allayed by confidence in the far-called British Navy, and later in the Singapore Base. The Japanese southward lunge in 1941 was a vindication in Australian eyes of long entertained fears. Singapore's guns were soon outflanked and captured and Britain's pre-occupations elsewhere forced this country into closer dependence on the U.S.A., both during the War and ever since. The ambivalence of U.S. policy, however, particularly as expressed in the "soft" peace for Japan, has obliged Australia to make some ingratiating gestures towards the newly emancipated nations of nearer Asia—the Colombo Plan being a comparatively cheap but effective one—meanwhile under the guise of "collective security" helping to conjure into existence such a military alliance as SEATO, regarded by the majority of Asians as an imperialist rearguard.

Ultimately, Australia's influence over her neighbors is negligible; national policy has to be reaction more often than action in world affairs. But the desire for separateness from Asia still runs deep and cannot be disregarded even by those who believe the country has no future unless the first principle of its foreign policy is the cultivation of friendly and close relations with Asia.

If Levi's conclusions are sound, as this reviewer believes, many of the pronouncements of Australia's statesmen on Asian questions, from Henry Parkes to Casey and Kent Hughes, may have been fit for the hustings at home but must sound merely laughable abroad, and to none more so than the leaders of the new Asian nations, to Nehru, Mao Tse-tung, Sukarno or Ho Chi Minh. Australia's thin piping voice will be a still smaller voice as in both population and economic power the Asian revival accelerates. It is not the spectre of inva-

sion that should be troubling Mr. Casey's slumbers, but the realisation that colonialism is finished, and that in Malaya and New Guinea the attempt to perpetuate the plantation system is making far more enemies than the Colombo Plan makes us friends. As for the ignominious role of terrier, yapping from behind Mr. Dulles' ankles at the most populous and potentially puissant nation on earth, which the Menzies-Casey "policy" on China amounts to, it is pertinent to ask whether it will even survive the exigencies of our shrinking trade in wool and base metals? Mr. McEwan evidently has his doubts, and so does the N.S.W. graziers' journal, "Muster", scarcely a pinkish organ.

Levi, let us be clear, does not presume, as a patriotic Australian well may, to draw these policy inferences. Weighing very judiciously the evidence from various quarters he is content to trace the development of the national sentiment towards Asians generally, and of government policy towards specific sectors of the S.E. Asia sphere. His sector-by-sector approach is probably the most orderly way to deal with such a large area, but it forfeits some of the advantages of a strictly chronological treatment of post-war external relations, and it is disconcerting to come right up to 1956 on China, for example, only to be plunged back into 1945/46 in the next chapter with the Australian wharfies' "contraception" of the first Dutch attempt at a comeback in their Indian Empire. This method is bound to obscure such differences as existed between the attitudes of the Chifley and Menzies Governments on foreign affairs. Levi tends to the view that the differences were not fundamental, but rather on points of emphasis, e.g. not whether to join the U.N. forces in Korea but with what aims that war should be fought. Unpopular as the idea may be on the Left, this reviewer backs Levi's judgment here. The A.L.P., except over Japan, has brought no effective criticism to bear on the policies of Menzies, Spender and Casey. Even with the incubus of the clerical right removed by the Hobart Conference of 1955 the A.L.P. leadership has failed to develop a confident policy of its own on external affairs, even appearing at times, as over West Irian, to the right of the Government. But in this it faithfully reflects the prejudices and confusions of the rank and file.

It could be maintained that Levi's assessments of public opinion are based largely on the editorials of anti-Labor newspapers. On the other hand the weight of at least one editor (Rohan Rivett) and at least one star commentator (Peter Russo) has been thrown consistently **against** the Government on such crucial issues as recognition of China, without producing any appreciable public challenge to the Menzies' foreign policy, the assiduous campaigning of the Communist Party and the left-wing unions notwithstanding. Levi barely alludes to radio commentaries, which are too seldom printed in this country for him to have the opportunity of conning them. Consequently he may not know of the circumstance that most of the competent broadcasters on Asian affairs have been critical of Menzies' policy in this field; and of the Government's guillotining, in the early 'fifties, of a national series called "Australia in the Pacific" so that it could displace these troublesome snipers with tame commentators inclined to skirt away from controversy or faithfully echo their Master's Voice.

On the origins of "White Australia" however, Levi's reading of the newspapers and speeches of

the era when the term was coined leads him to favour a racialist motive for the hallowed phrase. Labor agitators firstly, and political demagogues and journalists with less justification undoubtedly played on this theme (and not only in Australia, as witness the white chauvinism of Jack London or Blatchford), painting in extravagant colors the supposed inherent vices of the Chinese, whose misfortune however was that they competed with locally-born workers in an over-supplied labor market. The entrepreneurs who sponsored this immigration, inspired as their successors in later decades have been when bringing in Italians, "Balts", Germans and Greeks with the purpose of cheapening the price of labor services, were the real targets of the "White Australia" agitation. In the 19th century the two main sources of this scab labor force happened to be South China and the Pacific Islands, and consequently the native-born whites—workers, artisans, or small traders—raised the slogan in this fashion, defensively. Let us recall, though, that vicious names have been applied by workers everywhere to imported strike-breakers (themselves ignorant of the part they are playing), for instance by the English to the flood of Irish navvies in the mid-19th century.

With the transformation of Australia from a plantation economy with a mercantile fringe, into a semi-autonomous capitalist state, the inefficiency of this cheap Asian labor was realised by the native bourgeoisie, and it suited their book to take over the slogan of "White Australia", giving it legislative form in the first years after Federation. Nowadays, it is, beyond a doubt, a rallying-cry of reaction, in the name of which Namatjira may be jailed for doing what any bodgie over 21 can do with impunity, and a head-tax is levied on New Guinea natives to make them work for the blessings of White Civilisation.

The failure to examine Australia's record in New Guinea is a curious lacuna in Levi's otherwise thorough survey, for in this territory Australia has had its closest continuous contact with an Asian people, even if one of the least advanced, for upwards of half a century. Here the superiority of Labor's post-war policy must be acknowledged. In the School of Anthropology created by Elkin in Sydney and publishing its quarterly "Oceania", Australia has trained a generation of social scientists well qualified to study the area and dispel the prejudices of their countrymen. Elkin's little book "Wanted—a Charter for the Native Peoples of the South West Pacific", published in 1943, may not have had a mass readership, but its programme was one which would have been endorsed in the democratic forum of the 2nd A.I.F. Responding to this sentiment the Labor government installed the enlightened Murray regime in the Territory and abolished the indenture system. This showed the promise of that unlikely phenomenon, imperialism in process of abdication, but of course it was soon a casualty to the returning Menzies, and another Mau-Mau movement is now in the making.

What lessons can social progressives draw from these none too reassuring annals, for which we are in debt to Levi for his sober-sided survey? It looks as though the leftwing unions still must impart the drive towards decent—"Panch Shila"—relations with Asia. But it is up to the socialist intellectuals to define the policy, to preach internationalism in the Labor movement (with domestic implications, such as the immediate conferment of full citizen rights on the Aborigines and half-

castes). An obvious tack is to press the A.L.P. into making contacts with kindred parties in Asia, e.g. the Japanese Socialists, the leftwing of the Indian Congress and the Indonesian Nationalists, all of whom profess similar aims. Support for this positive Asian policy will be forthcoming from many quarters, conspicuously from the Free Churches, and the less disinterested but not less welcome lobby of the graziers and the metallurgists who want to do business farther North.

If granted good generalship a campaign of this nature could still revise radically the pattern and tone of Australia's relations with her awakened Northern neighbors.

TOM ERREY

★

Span

"Span, An Adventure in Asian and Australian Writing," ed. by Lionel Wigmore. (Cheshire, 25/-.)

I suppose this was a good idea. I suppose gestures of this kind impress our Asian neighbors. I suppose they appreciate the notice we pink-skinned take of their culture. I could go on supposing . . . I don't know and you don't know whether this kind of thing really does do any good. I doubt, in fact, every time I hear some well-meaning friend say beamingly, "Of course, Australia, is really a part of Asia geographically . . ." (or, worse, culturally).

As I see it, Australia is still worlds removed from Asia. True, we are all human beings. True, as the Asian products in this book well show, modern European and American literary influences are just as strong in Asia as they are here. But we are a predominantly pink-skinned people and we do consciously cultivate a pink-skinned cultural tradition. Let us by all means set out to learn to like the culture of our neighbors, in the first place, by getting to know it. But don't let's kid ourselves that we get anywhere by pretending that a fondness for chop suey and Han Suyin cuts any ice politically.

This interesting collection, produced with the usual unobtrusive good taste by the Cheshire cultural machine, underlines the difficulties of Australian-Asian understanding. Obviously the selective process was a feat in itself. If one merely abides by the Australians included, the acuity and good taste of the editors is obvious. There is a splendid story by David Forrest about a bodgie-type lad who yet devotes his nights to driving a bush ambulance at break-neck speeds, the story as brittle and hair-triggered as the mind of the bodgie it catches. And there is a (in the best sense) typical story by the great Alan Marshall, as perceptive as it is humane (and also Australian). And there is a well known union story by John Morrison which may not be everybody's cup of tea but which I can remember (when it first appeared in Meanjin, which first sponsored so many of these works, unacknowledged) as one of the few Australian stories really to excite me. Other critics

praise my Adelaide colleague Geoff Dutton's "The Wedge-Tailed Eagle"; with all due deference to a cherished friend, this economically written story strikes me as what the Germans call *Kraftmeierei*—showing off of muscles (even if sentimentally inverted at the end). The sentimental self-deprecatory gesture is not the native Australian one.

And there are representative, if not exciting, stories by Palmer and Stevens and a swathe of short poems. The point is that this is well chosen—but just think of how much has had to be left out. And if this is the case in little Australia, think of the task which faced the associate editors of this co-operative venture in making a representative selection from India and Indonesia, to name only two of the countries which contribute authors to the collection. Perhaps it was as well for the authors that they followed the line of another distinguished Canberra institution and failed to include mainland China.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that some of the brightest contributions come from a neighbor whom we tend to ignore, the Philippines. The contribution of Spanish and the all-pervading influence of U.S. culture must almost be overpowering in that part of the world. When Lindsay or Birker presented Asian music on the A.B.C., the only country whose works were easy of access (and damnably kitschig) was the Philippines—the mixture of flamenco and Sousa was unmistakable. But the writers, if this is a representative selection, are poised and even self-critical. Note especially a story by F. Sionil Jose, a very professional literary "figure", aged only 35 (there is a neat and useful biographical section at the end of the collection). The simple and sophisticated plot shows a native-descended city intellectual impelled to seek out the back-blocks village from which his ancestor migrated. And it sets this search for tradition against the ill-bred comment and crass materialism of the man's aristocratic and totally self-centred young wife. This is self-revelation of a high order.

The cultural traditions are most elegantly outlined, Topolski-wise, in a stylishly complicated flashback story by Nick Joaquin, who can also write poetry that intrigues in translation. Whilst Alejandro R. Roces contributes one of the few gay and witty pieces, the plaint of a nose-led school-boy against his quick-witted and unscrupulous cock-fighting brother.

I must at this point make one theoretical digression. All peoples tell stories. Three of the neatest contributions to "Span" are age-old legends included merely because modern writers have re-fashioned the words (Australia's is an Aboriginal tale by Roland Robinson). But the non-specialist doesn't know how or if the actual short-story form has maintained itself as a literary genre. I have heard about Chinese novels and Hindu and Indonesian epics. But I have never heard of any Asian country cultivating short stories. The fortunes of the genre might, in my opinion, have been at least touched on in the collection's foreword. As it is, this reviewer, at least, is left with the assumption that most of these works are the output of consciously "Westernising" writers.

I say this because most of them have one thing in common—gloom. And Asians, God wot, are less gloomy than pink-skins. Our existentialist religiosity is based on a declining world-prestige (re-deemed only by *Kraftmeierei* about our sporting

achievements). But the Asians have the world at their feet. This is made clear in certain of these tales—though they strike me as artistically less significant than the gloomy ones. Thus Mulk Raj Anand (a Communist once, if not still) shows how simple village-folk learn the value of a dam which is to lose them their homes; this is welcome—but the figures of the wicked kulaks are the stock ones out of Soviet novels. More successful is another well known novelist's simple design, delightfully called "The Cartman and the Steel Hawk". Yet neither of these seems to me as artistically realised as Thandaveswara's watchful sermon on the corroding power of money, which has, however, implicitly, a pessimistic conclusion.

The Indian contribution does shine, however, by the inclusion of the only really farcical story in the book. K. A. Abbas' "The Maharaja's Elephant" is a classic. It is a classic because the sprightly wit covers a wealth of social criticism. I don't even begin to outline the beautifully spiral plot for fear of spoiling a treat in store for the reader. But I do wonder wistfully why Abbas can entertain us in this way whilst the other contributors mainly contribute to spiritual and political malaise.

There are some points of repose: a flash detective-story in the traditional Conan Doyle mode by Ceylon's Prime Minister; a seemingly traditional wife-outwits-husband arabesque with quaint local color from Burma; and a poorly-developed Balzac cameo from Thailand, sketching in the misfortunes of a suburban "good citizen" evacuated to a tightly-knit country community. But the rest are gloomy, ranging from the deviations of a gross political hypocrite (from Indonesia) to the obligatory Italian neo-realist brothel scene, from, oddly enough (or is it?), Pakistan. Two stories from Singapore are so full of local color and precise psychological motivation that they drop dead at the post. Over-Europeanisation?

The stories are interspersed with verse. I am inclined to agree with Rohan Rivett who, in an Adelaide review, suggested that the verse would have meant more if the editors had at least given a latinised transcription of the original so that we could have felt the music. Ten-line poems mean little or nothing to most of us (even where we know the author's conventions); from the selection offered I was most impressed by the work of an Indonesian Sidney Keyes called Chairil Anwar. J. Moeljono was obviously under Western influence but in a very intelligent fashion. So, too, in a very brief sample, a Pakistani, A. Rashid Khan.

If I were introduced to Albert Schweitzer I really wouldn't know where to start the conversation. We should probably discuss the weather. All I can usefully say about "Span", therefore, falls into much the same category. But it could be a valuable pioneer if this kind of thing really is of value. If it was worth doing, it has been well done.

DEREK VAN ABBE

★

Naked Under Capricorn

Since Olaf Ruhen some four years ago decided to write professional short stories for the fat latter-day dollar instead of part-time ones for the old-fashioned pound, we haven't been able to read much of his work here in Australia, unless we could afford to subscribe to American magazines.

But he did finally bring out "Land of Dahori", his tales of New Guinea, and while in New York he wrote a few clubby articles for the Sydney Bulletin by which we could assume he was doing very well and was again on speaking terms with editors.

Now he has published his first novel, "Naked Under Capricorn" (Macdonald, 18/9)—its arrival in Australia must have just about coincided with his own return for more literary subject-matter—and it abundantly illustrates that his story-telling capacity is an abiding one, despite his occasional inclination in it to talk of the Great Australian Solitude with an occult largiloquence—

“. . . the loneliness and the immensity of the plain seemed to be transmuted into a metaphysical force compressing Marriner's ego, restraining whatever endeavors suggested themselves to him, limiting his horizons inversely as his physical bounds were illimitable."

Swaddling passages like this belie the actual starkness and the branding national significance of the novel's theme. Through Marriner, Ruhen demonstrates how a man of no particular application or conscious direction could become a prosperous, respected and legendary pioneer, disfiguring—again, virtually by the accident of his presence—the order of the primitive around him.

The setting is Central Australia, from 1901 to 1940, and by the time Marriner has emerged, in spite of himself, as the indifferent king of a cattle empire, the white civilisation he introduced, evil to the native way of life, has degraded an entire tribe. The corruption is manifest in ill-health, half-castes, uncleanness, rape, murder, the black man's loss of social strength and pride.

Exercising a virtue unusual in authors who write of black-and-white discords, Ruhen doesn't preach. The eventual awakening of conscience in Marriner is sufficient general indictment. It is at this point, though, that Marriner, for once, acts specifically; he packs his conscience into his saddle-bag, and, abandoning both the ruin and the riches, sets out farther across the illimitable plain.

And here, only at the last, does the story present misgivings. The ending is either too Russian or too Indian: reminding us of Dostoyevsky's Ras-kolnikov in "Crime and Punishment" acknowledging his crime and going to Siberia in an ecstasy of bliss; or of Guatama Buddha, forsaking wife, child and wealth, and riding off into the world in search of serenity of soul. Marriner's Noble Path leads him to disaster; the desert holds no Nirvana, nor opportunity for perverse angelic penance or salvation. Ruhen shouldn't have sent him off like that: whatever it is, it isn't Australian!

DAVID ROWBOTHAM

★

Dutton's Books

Geoffrey Dutton is one of the most interesting and capable Australian writers. Not everyone realises this because he is such a thoroughly normal and unobtrusive fellow. In both prose and verse there is nothing avant-garde or obstreperous about his work. His writing is sensitive without being precious, contemporary but never shrill, sensible and uninhibited but not particularly fashionable or shocking. And he has quietly, almost apologetically, written six good books onto his shelf.

His first collection of poetry, "Night-Flight and Sunrise," appeared in 1944. His first novel, "The Mortal and the Marble," came out in 1950. Then came two travel books, "A Long Way South" (1953) the record of a car journey from England to Australia, and "Africa in Black and White" (1956). These were followed a few months ago by another book of verse, "Antipodes in Shoes" (Edward and Shaw, 17/6) and another travel book, "States of the Union" (Chapman and Hall, 31/9). Soon to be published is what promises to be a very lively biography of Colonel William Light, founding father of South Australia.

The strain of growing up causes a great many people to break into verse. "Night-Flight and Sunrise" might conceivably have been no more than a very good "sport" of this kind, but "Antipodes in Shoes" exhibits the development and the staying-power of the true poet. It also shows in a pre-eminent degree a quality that has been too rare in Australian poetry of past generations—the rigorous self-criticism, economy, and hard work that conceals itself, of the true craftsman. Inspiration, like patriotism, is not enough, though it was too long accepted here as though it were.

"The Moral and the Marble" might have caused more noise in the world than it did, if only because it dealt with the theme of "Richard Mahony" and of Martin Boyd's novels—but dealt with it in a refreshingly different way. Like H. H. Richardson and Boyd, Dutton was brought up in the squatter's house rather than the men's huts and then went to spend a good many years in England and abroad. Unlike them he does not seem to have been much troubled by his divided heritage.

Richard Mahony went mad because he could never feel really at home either in England or Australia. Martin Boyd's heroes wrestle through the pages of a score of books with the problem of their divided allegiance. The hero-narrator of "The Mortal and the Marble," on the other hand, is attracted by a character who symbolises the values commonly ascribed to educated Europeans—poise, charm, sensitivity, "culture", and so on: but this chap turns out to be a phony. The narrator quickly wakes up to him and goes off to Kangaroo Island for a bit of clean air. So much for the "tragic fate"—as some critics have called it—of the artist in a new country like ours.

Nevertheless Dutton is far from protesting too much his nationality in the late Jindyworobak manner. Still less does he dissipate energy, as the Hope-McAuley school sometimes do, on needless denunciations of the nationalist or "bush" tradition. Since writing his first novel he has been able to take his Australianness for granted, and thereby to be a better Australian as well as a better citizen of the world.

This is well illustrated in his latest book As he writes:

There are several advantages in being an Australian when travelling through the U.S.A. You speak much the same language, you have much the same views on getting along with strangers, and you are not too distressed by protocol or the lack of it.

"States of the Union" is one of the most thought-provoking travel-books I have ever read. Dutton has a hawk-like eye for colorful detail and amusing incident, but he also gives a penetrating and well-mannered appraisal of the whole American way of life.

American ways are important to us because, he observes, we and the whole western world seem certainly to be following along in the direction already taken by the U.S. This gives us a preview of our own future and so a chance of modifying it, in some details at any rate. And in many important ways American life is not, Dutton suggests, the opposite of life in Soviet Russia but rather a mirror-image of it. The two huge, expanding, industrial societies may have more in common than either would like to think.

In an interesting chapter on "Emotional Communism" he shows how U.S. pressures towards conformity in thought and deed are far more intense than anything we have yet known here, though perhaps not as intense, he believes, as those obtaining in the U.S.S.R.

The difference between the hustling American spirit of "Get up and Go!" and our own more casual outlook is happily illustrated by the following anecdote (there are dozens of others quite as good). An American business man stayed for some weeks with an Australian couple. On the night of his departure his hosts were incautious enough to ask him what he really thought of Australia and the Australians.

"If you want me to be honest," he answered, "I think Australians are a no-hope bunch of bums. You've got no idea of get-up-and-go, your workers are lazy and your executives half-hearted and your production methods are way out of date; you've got no hustle, you don't know how to make the best of life." At this moment his analysis was cut short by the ringing of a small alarm bell in his wrist-watch. Turning it off, he drew a small bottle and eye-dropper from his top pocket, took off his glasses, tilted his head back and squeezed a couple of drops into each eye. "I have to do this every three hours," he explained. "Nervous strain. It affects my eyes." No further comment was necessary.

One other story to balance the picture. Millions of Americans, writes Dutton,

are like one who stopped his car alongside ours at a traffic light in Poughkeepsie in New York State. He had noticed our number plate, and called out, "Where are you from in Australia?" "Adelaide," I replied. We moved on to the next traffic light. "Yeah. I've been there. I was running a mine-sweeper out of Perth and Brisbane during the war." The traffic light turned green, and at the next red he finished his sentence: "I like Australia. But I was there at the wrong time. The place was lousy with Yanks. Goodbye and good luck."

RUSSEL WARD

★

Dancing Bough

Nancy Cato's latest book of poems, "The Dancing Bough" (Angus & Robertson, 16/-), might well be compared with the art of ballet. If ballet can be said to be a fusion of music, dancing, painting and literature, then Miss Cato's verse has music, color-imagery, and, often, a lyrical dancing quality.

One of the essential requirements of the dancer's art is control, Jetes, arabesques, attitudes, pirouettes, fouettes, etc., must all be performed with control, with ballon, commenced in position and finished cleanly in position. Miss Cato, as a poetic ballerina, passes all these tests.

Of course, poetry is no more a precious art than is ballet. One requires a mastery of technique, but one also must have something important or significant to say through this technique. Ballet purists will contend that a pure arabesque is justified by its own aesthetic quality. But then, if we admire beauty, elegance and nobility, we cannot be resigned to ugliness or that which is ignoble or inhuman.

This, I feel, is the true justification of Miss Cato's poetry. If her poetry is most often in praise of beauty, it is also in revolt against monstrous, inhuman forces in the world today which seek to destroy the loveliness and order of humanity existing in harmony with Nature or the Mother-Earth.

These monstrous, inhuman forces with which Miss Cato's poetry is concerned are not only those which modern science has unleashed on the world today, expressed in the poems, "After the Atom-bomb Test", "This will be the Hour" and "War and Peace". Miss Cato is also concerned with the inexorable passage of time and beauty and with often a conception of Nature itself as a blind, inhuman force.

Here is the last stanza of a poem on snow-drops, swaying, dancing with a muted poetry in the wind of time.

Here, feel, life . . .
Pure, frail, shell . . .
joy, pain, grief . . .
Ding, dong, bell.

If one sought to criticise the spirit of Miss Cato's poetry, one might say that there is in it often an obsession with time and death. This strain is reiterated in the poems, "Time Passing", "The lost Seagull", "The Old Garden", "A Game of Hide and Seek", "A Grecian Urn", and "Now Sounds the Thrush". But this strain is an essentially human strain and, to continue the initial comparison with ballet, the poems sometimes reach a human poignancy comparable to that which this critic recently saw in the Soviet ballerina Ulanova's performance of "Le Mort Cygne".

In three poems at least, and to this reviewer these poems are the most satisfying in the collection, Miss Cato throws off her preoccupation with the themes of time and death.

In the poem "Arcoona", the poet reaches a deep, mystical love and faith in the solitude of one of our inland regions. "Willy-Wag and Sparrow" is a lyrical and significant series of conversational exchanges between two birds, or their human counterparts, the poet and the materialist. The last poem in the book, "The Dead Swagman", is a pantheistic, yet most satisfying concept of a metamorphosis, or a continuation of life in another form.

In these days when it is fashionable for poets to disown their parents, I speak of those "aggressively nationalistic" parent poets who taught us to accept, love and find a language for this unique and challenging land of ours, Miss Cato is proving the axiom that literature is first nationally created but internationally appreciated.

ROLAND ROBINSON

Overland, March 1959

Australian Verse

"Verse in Australia 1958."—A yearly collection edited by Robert Clark, Geoffrey Dutton, Max Harris and Ian Mudie. (Australian Letters, Adelaide, 15/.)

"Australian poets published a thousand poems . . . in 1958" says the editors' preface. Probably the figure should be higher, since so much verse appears in country papers unknown outside their own localities. Still, a thousand poems! . . . You would think that the figure implied the existence of a public for poetry.

Yet, in order to show a profit, the publishers have to charge fifteen shillings for thirty-eight poems. The price sternly implies a very small public indeed.

This simply was not true fifty years ago. The public bought Gordon, Paterson, Lawson, the balladists in general, and it goes on buying them. The big Stewart-and-Keesing ballad-anthology, ten times the bulk of this one, sells economically at only twice the price.

Since that time, the split developed and widened between "popular" poetry and "literary" poetry. At one time, this split was so pronounced that the literary poets gloried in being intelligible only to the chosen few. However, the archpriest of the cult of obscurity, Ezra Pound, has now been received into the academic fold; so we can assume that his reign is over.

The editors of "Verse in Australia 1958" are poets, not academicians. They have dared to select verse which the general public would enjoy.

I don't mean to imply that standards are low. Everything here is well written. But the characteristic smell of *literature*, falsity excused by cleverness; emotional and stylistic posturing; worthy dullness and brilliant idiocy—that's all left out.

There is a wide variety of styles in the collection: no editorial straight-jacket has been applied. There is lyrical and charming verse in the ballad tradition by Kathleen Dalziel and Nancy Cato; nuggetty conversational lines, teetering on the edge of prose, by Ian Mudie and John Blight; a translation of an Aboriginal lament that really sounds right, by Stuart Scougall, and characteristically delicate and vivid work by Kenneth Slessor and Roland Robinson.

In fact it's a collection well worth reading. Whether you think it's worth owning depends on how much of your income is normally spent on books.

We come back to the same old paradox. This ought to have a wide appeal; it ought to sell well; so it needn't cost fifteen bob. But it costs fifteen bob; so very few people are going to buy it; so it hasn't got a wide appeal after all.

J.S.M.

Donald Maynard (Q.) adds:

This attractive book aims at catholicity, but it is not so catholic when we notice that all but a handful of the poems are on country themes. Even the city poets seem to have forsaken urban poetry. We can have too many pleasant bush lyrics even from "the school of poetry's top class".

This last quotation is Ray Mathew's way of referring to his Australian rivals. In "Of Some

Poetry", probably the most significant poem to appear in our journals lately (it was in Meanjin), Mathew decries the group of Melburnians who have become, he says, imprisoned in "cagy verbal zoos", and who spurn the day to day life of the senses in their writings. He makes this sustained plea:

O Muse, give them the Bacchic wine,
Give them the life to match their skill,
Return them to the mighty line
That vaulted the Olympian Hill,
And let them drink the gay despair
Of one successful love affair.

There are some prosaic pieces in this collection, and a number of distinction. However in the final review one can't help feeling that most Australian poets of today are like Chris Wallace-Crabbe (represented by "Citizen"): technicians who describe their home districts well, but who seldom get angry and persuasive about anything of value.

★

Coast To Coast

My main complaint about Dal Stivens' selection of stories for the 1957-58 "Coast to Coast" (Angus & Robertson, 21/-) is the under-representation of stories reflecting the democratic tradition in Australia.

They are there of course and grandly represented in John Morrison's "To Margaret", K. S. Prichard's "Yoirimba" and Flexmore Hudson's "I Don't Blame You Ernie" (reprinted from *Overland*). E. O. Schlunke earns a cheer with "Carnival", another well-aimed shot in his untiring war against the provincial parasite.

Frank Bryning, too, strikes a blow for peace and freedom in his rather improbable legend of Woomera, "Place of the Throwing Stick".

Frank Hardy's "Good as Ever" disappoint a little. It is saved from being just another fist-fight story by the drawing of the character Darcy. I felt that the constant discovery of fresh reserves of strength in the battered Darcy was a little unconvincing.

In fairness one should concede that there is only one patently anti-democratic story in the anthology—Roy Theodore's "The Greek". Tom Collins would have loved this character, who, as the proprietor of a steak and eggs joint, swears at his staff, exploits his children, employs a scab, breaks the Award, abuses the union organiser, and victimises a worker who sticks up for the union. One of the devices Theodore employs to evoke sympathy and understanding for the Greek is to endow him with a nagging intestinal pain. For myself, that's what the story did to me.

There are a number of what I would call misanthropic stories—Lyndall Hadow's "Freedom for Laura", J. M. Rosen's "Fair Game", Bernard Helling's "Game", E. A. Gollschewski's "Clear Case of Self Defence".

It is a pity about the first two of these because they are so well told. The sensuousness of J. M. Rosen's Sonia and her mounting hunger for the adolescent boy she is about to seduce is electrifying and evocative of the most delightfully wicked thoughts. That lad is in for a great deal more

fun than he deserves, fauna-slaying little philistine that he is. The competing greeds of her four characters are most skilfully counterposed but there is no intrinsic contrast to their cupidity, no-one, nothing, is on the side of the angels. True, the speculating husband is going to get the worst of a land deal and is going to be cuckolded into the bargain, but not through any triumph of virtue, merely from a surfeit of sin.

I do not quarrel with Lyndall Hadow because she wishes to write about a lesbian. A sympathetic and analytical study of a homosexual can be as valid and important a piece of literature as the study of any other person. But Miss Hadow does not do this.

We are given a picture of a young woman who has thrown off the mental bondage of a possessive mother, lamenting yet rejecting the beauty of her Gippsland home in a dull suburban apartment house (her frustrated landlady is a gem of a study)—then suddenly in the last paragraph we are told she is a lesbian.

The effect is that of a "break-away-from-the-farm-my-girl-and-look-what-happens-to-you" sort of moral. The shock ending destroys rather than creates sympathy and understanding.

Messrs. Gollschewski and Hesling contribute murder stories. They undoubtedly have punch (one of Mr. Stevens' essentials for a short story) and anyone who is fond of violence and insanity per se would get his money's worth from either.

Ethel Anderson's "A Question of Habit" is also about murder, but in it is a clever portrayal of an adventuress which redeems the melodramatic incident.

It is significant that a number of the stories dealt with migrants and the problem of assimilation. N. K. Abdullah's "Grandfather Tiger" is a delightfully sensitive example and contrasts interestingly with the inexorable parent-rejection of Clive Morton's "Walnut Bed".

On the other hand only Chris Gardiner's "Conflict" is concerned with the problem of the Aborigines. Not very well done in my opinion, because the parent-rejection there is so untypical of a people whose faithfulness to their own is so much a part of their tragedy—witness the Namatjira affair.

Poetry is another attribute that Mr. Stevens values in a story. We do not need the dust-jacket blurb to tell us that. Many of these stories almost sing. This quality distinguishes G. McG. Webb's "Lost" from the thousands of pathetic "babes-in-the-wood" stories which have to be good to say anything left unsaid by Furphy and Marcus Clark so many years ago.

Judith Wright, too, sings sadly of childhood and death in her rather too subjective "Color of Death".

There could, I think, have been a little more humor, though Hugh Atkinson, L. J. Blake and S. Stedman do their best.

I admire the restraint with which Mr. Stevens limited fantasy to two short pieces by Les Robinson. Both left me quite cold, but this may well be my own fault as fantasy never was my pot of beer.

Despite the above complaints, this is a stimulating selection, underlining, like its predecessors, the need for an annual "Coast to Coast".

LLOYD DAVIES.

Books Received

(Mention here does not preclude subsequent review.)

"Selected Letters of Thomas Wolfe", edited with an introduction by Elizabeth Nowell (Heinemann, 31/-). The impetuous, stormy and revealing letters of the U.S. writer of genius who died in 1938 at the age of 37.

"Checklist of Royal Commissions, Select Committees of Parliament and Boards of Enquiry," by D. H. Borchardt (Stone Copying Co., 15/-). A valuable guide to "the numerous reports which are hidden in the unwieldy tomes of the Australian Parliamentary papers."

"Charles Percy Mountford, An Annotated Bibliography" (Stone Copying Co., 15/-). This bibliography, though valuable in its way, is too personal and restricted to be of great use to anyone but a biographer of Charles Mountford, the ethnologist.

"The Present Age from 1920" by David Daiches (Cresset, 26/-). Dr. Daiches' introduction to English literature of the last twenty years includes an extensive bibliography.

"Three Plays" by Thornton Wilder (Longmans Green, 22/6). Three classics of the modern theatre in one volume; "Our Town", "The Skin of Our Teeth" and "The Matchmaker".

"The Underground City" by H. L. Humes (Heinemann, 25/-). Though too long and unwieldy, this ambitious melodrama of a book, set in France during the war, shows considerable narrative skill.

"Short Stories" by Lev Tolstoi (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 10/-). Six important Tolstoi stories, including "The Kreutzer Sonata", in a strongly-bound volume at a low price.

"Resurrection" by Lev Tolstoi (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 15/-). This famous novel is reprinted in an illustrated edition with an attractive dust-jacket.

"The Enemy" by Tibor Meray (Secker and Warburg, 13/3). A novel by the former secretary of the Hungarian Writers' Union.

"The Industrial Muse" compiled by Jeremy Warburg (Oxford University Press, 25/-). Though the price is high for a small book, this is an important and delightful collection of the poetry, from Chartist to Poet Laureate, inspired by the Industrial Revolution in England. The compiler wishes to make at least two points: to give us an insight into the period, and to point up the similarity of human problems of the time with those of today, gently suggesting the difficulty writers of both periods have in taking a broad enough view to grapple with the processes of change.

"The Magic Shell", photographed and written by Nadine Amadio (Ure Smith, 19/6). This is a delightful narrative of a child's adventures, set in Sydney—a welcome change to have such an urban setting. There are excellent photographs and a simple, flowing narrative. Like all Ure Smith books, this is a craftsman's production job.

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

50 years—

AUSTRALIA holds no author in higher esteem than Katharine Susannah Prichard, our senior novelist. • To mark the fiftieth year of her career as a writer, and to pay tribute to her qualities as a great Australian, the Australasian Book Society is publishing a special edition of her latest work **N'GOOLA**.

- Bound in morocco, printed on de luxe paper, autographed and numbered, the edition will be limited to 100 copies and be available to the first hundred applicants at ten pounds each.
- At Katharine Susannah's request, proceeds will be devoted to the work of the Society in promoting the interests of Australian writing and writers.



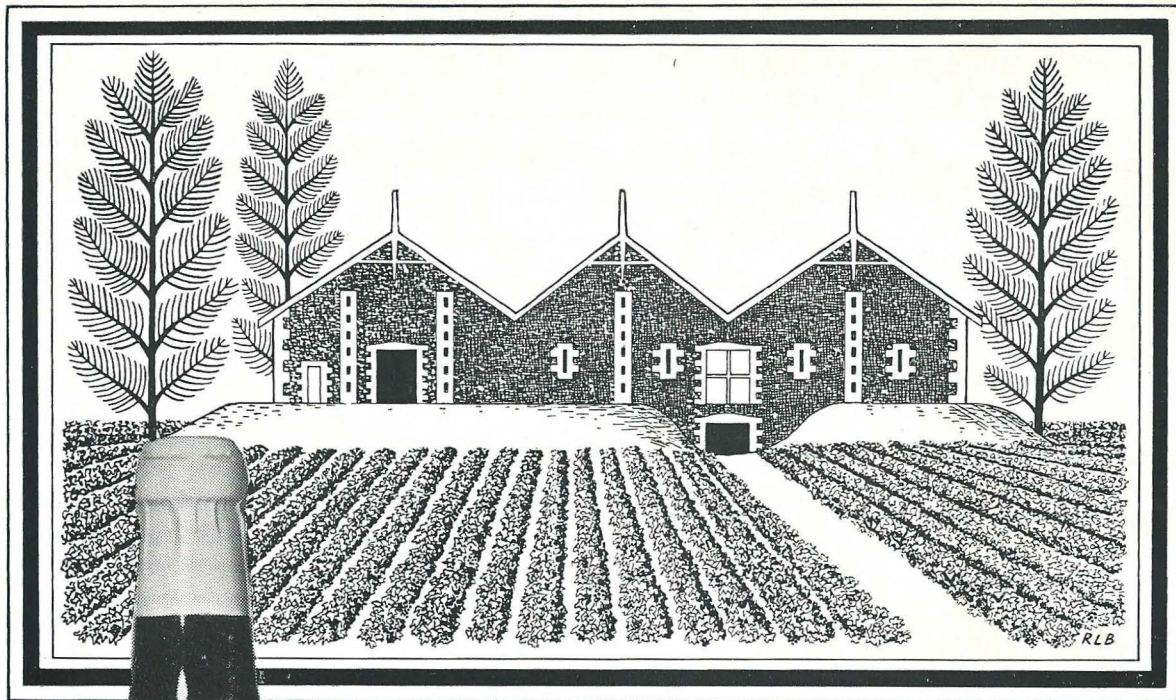
If you desire to add your tribute to this great Australian writer and to further the aims of the A.B.C., please forward your name and address (see below) together with your remittance. Your copy will be delivered to you in April 1959.

To the Australasian Book Society, 17 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne, C.1.

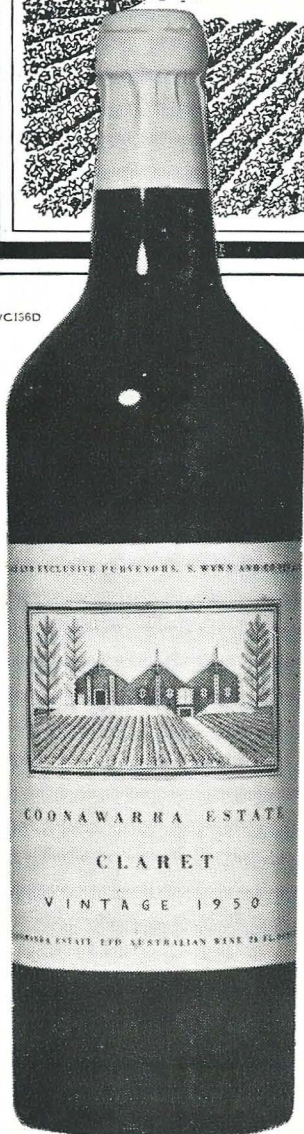
Mr./Mrs./Miss.....

Address.....

.....State



WC156D



It cannot be said 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 testifies :

- 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

AUSTRALIA'S FAMOUS

CLARET

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

Distributors: N.S.W.: Swift & Moore Pty. Ltd., 32 Clarence Street, Sydney, S.A.: A. E. & F. Tolley Ltd., 82 Waymouth Street, Adelaide. QLD.: Swift & Moore Pty. Ltd., 294 St. Paul's Terrace, Brisbane, W.A.: Charles Edmonds & Co. Pty. Ltd., 112 Brisbane Street, Perth. TAS.: Importers Pty. Ltd., 140 Campbell Street, Hobart.