

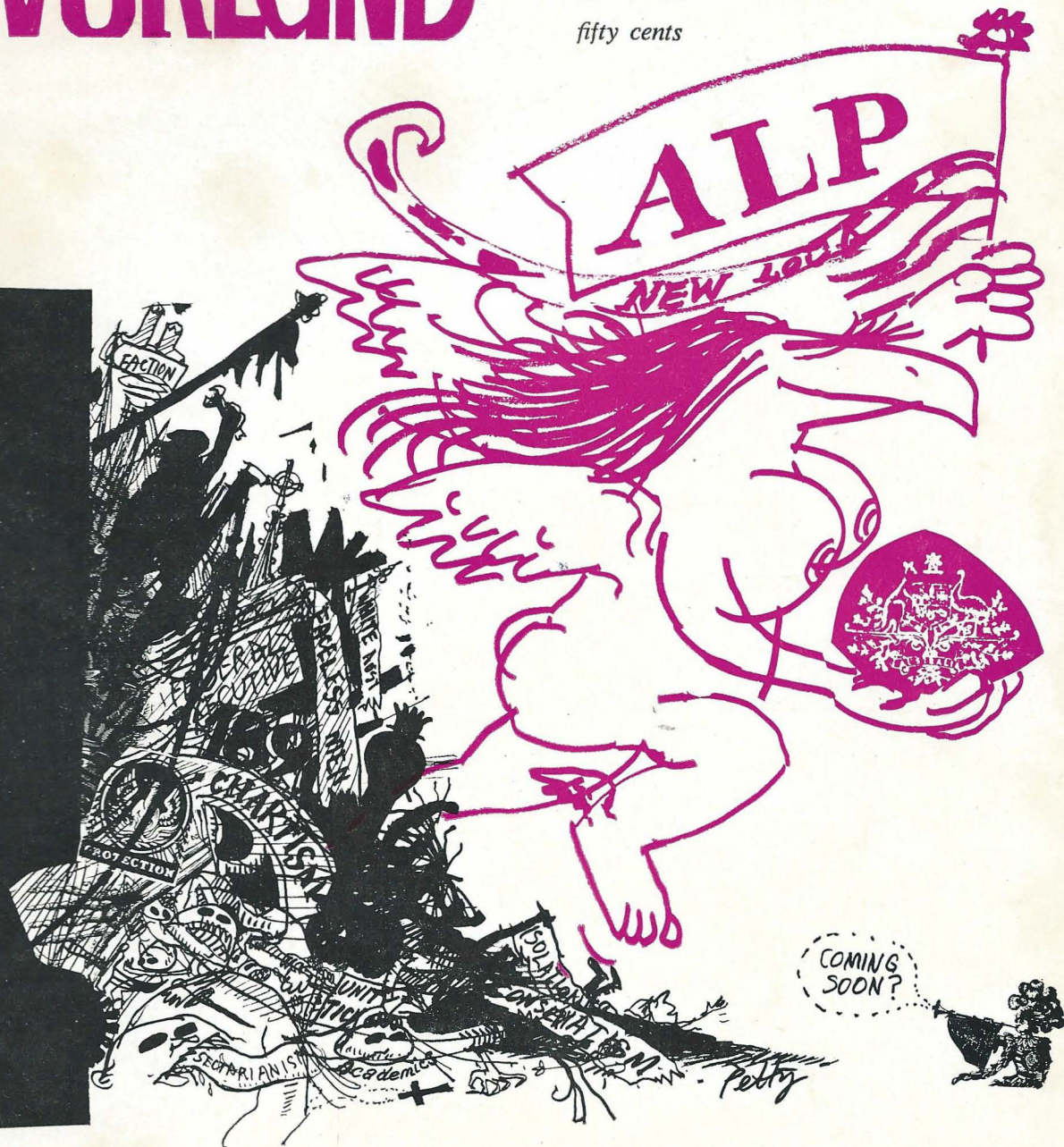
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Overland is a quarterly Australian literary magazine. The subscription rate is two dollars a year (four issues), and the price of each copy is fifty cents. Manuscripts are welcomed, but will be returned only if a stamped, addressed envelope is attached.

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OVERLAND

Temper democratic, bias Australian



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CASSELL AUSTRALIA

MANUSCRIPTS ABOUT AUSTRALIA OR BY AUSTRALIANS ARE WELCOME

WE THINK THAT PETER MATHERS' NOVEL "TRAP" IS THE FIRST FRESH NOTE IN AUSTRALIAN RADICAL WRITING FOR MANY YEARS. WE WROTE TO MATHERS FOR AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT—AND THIS IS WHAT WE GOT!

!!The Cinematic, Televisionic, Radiophonic and Literary Scoop!!

THE STUPENDOUS ADVENTURES OF WONDERMATH!!

WM!

WM!

WM!

Music: Bizarre—alternately sad and gay—from an instrument like the long lost Jew's harpsichord of the dark ages and the contemporary electronic piperina.

Darkness then a slow change into a soft rosy light in which a number of indistinct shapes are noticed.

Voices: A variety—mild gruff, petulant bestial, etc.

Mather, or plural'd, is: the stinking camomile, wild camomile, May weed, and other too tedious to relate. Sufficient to say that it is a weed of waste places.

Math: a mowing, the amount of crop mowed, so, Mather, one who mows, a peasant, and Mathers—the ough the saintly 2-in-1!

SOMEONE HAWKS & SPITS SIZZLINGLY INTO THE GLOW IN THE CENTRE OF THE SCENE.

MORE LIGHT BUT FIGURES STILL VAGUE.

Everything can be got from his name, Mathews—

GENERAL LOW MOAN SUGGESTS THAT THE DISCIPLE'S NAME IS RECEIVED IN BAD TASTE.

A GREAT ARM INDICATES WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY THE SIGN OF THE BEAST.

It is not Math-ews . . .

MORE LIGHT. FIGURES ALMOST PLAIN. PLAIN SUITS OR ROBES. OGRES SIT CROSS-LEGGED OR RECLINE GRACEFULLY ON DIVANS.

It is so, says 4, an elegant figure in off the shoulder white. I well remember my malignant father crying, as he fell, hamstrung on what was probably the string of a harp: Ma Thews is done! this his utterance and prediction a moment before his ultimate fall.

SCENE IS A TIMELESS OFFICE TASTEFULLY DECORATED AS A CAVE PEACEFUL INDOOR PLANTS IN CLUMPS OF VARIOUSLY COLORED EARTH CONTRAST WITH A GAWKY STRIDENT MANDRAKE THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED GLOW COMES AN EXQUISITE BRONZE BOWL OF BRIMSTONE SET ON A STRIKING MING/ART NOUVEAU STAND OF IVORY AND CEDAR.

Mathesis is—begins a shaven-headed saffron-robed one sitting sagely in a corner lit only by the reflected light of a stalactite—is a brat who bodes ill, hisses the earlier, thew, speaker. The shaven-headed one resumes (with the infinite patience which is his): Mathesis is learning or science or mental discipline, as in the words of Pope—Mad Mathesis alone was unconfined/Too mad for mere material chains to bind . . .

MUSIC OF A LEARNED OR MATHEMATICAL KIND.

I tell you, says elderly plumpish green-robed 1, that Mather is camomile etc.

Tiny lascivious 6 adjusts his suggestive robe and murmurs: Math, a monastery of the Hindu persuasion wherein reside celibate mendicants.

Says sepulchral 7 winding tight his covering and flashing his somewhat cadaverous eyes: Mathe—a grub, maggot or worm as in Yonder lyeth a dede hare full of mathes and wormes (Caxton). At least we're all agreed he's a creep, says someone, so what'll we do with him?

Expose him on a hillside? simpers lascivious 6.

CRIES OF: GROW UP! ALL YOU THINK OF, EXPOSURE! I THINK YOU SHOULD GO.

So lewd 6 shoots suggestively away. Before he vanishes he assumes the persona of someone of respectability and eminence, a commissioner of constabulary **THE PREDECESSOR OF HE WHO IS TO HARRY WM!! UNMERCIFULLY!**

Why not, booms a Great Voice, let him ruin himself? Fill him with aversions, have him seek the temporary, distrust money—hic—grant him a tiny brain and a big head, set him a ridiculous task—remember Pandie?—well, let this person seek a **BOX . . .**

AS THE ECHOES DIE THE OGRES WHISPER. Sober or not he's wise, brilliant as ever, splendid idea . . .

CUT TO

An ocean liner cutting through a green calm preceded by flying fish and other odd denizens of the deep. WM lies in a cream cane crib attended by his parents. They gorge on biscuits and other table odds and ends for they have heard that the promised land to which they are returning is now less than promising. Suddenly a small black box is seen to alight on M's undersized belly. His parents stare at it. WM sneezes and the box vanishes over the railing.

CUT TO

WM as a three year old boy in the rented suburban house. He is seated on a chair, silhouette against a window, turning the pp of a one volume War and Peace.

CLOSE UP

WM's head, big and fair-haired. X-ray of head shows skull an inch thick.

VOICE: Wadset alla bout?

BLACK BOX FLIES ROUND ROOM ONCE, DISAPPEARS.

CAPTION: Has The Ogres' Plot Succeeded?

CUT TO

WM's father, FM, wearily enters kitchen, shakes head, sits heavily on kitchen chair. The dole, he says. Never, snaps his wife. He gestures, towards WM in the next room. Maybe he'll save us, he says. If we last, she says, and anyway Jack's offered us the farm until things get better. God bless your brother, he murmurs. FM stands beside WM and gently suggests that he leave the book for five minutes and practise cricket for how else will he qualify for a Test side?—surely M wants to better himself?

MONTAGE. FM's life: 14 year old sailor on HMS, marine cataclysms, peace—but not for long for Russia is to be blanched—sailors' unrest, and

soldiers'. He is a new man, has foresworn gambling.

CAPTION: Obviously a Seditious Household, God Save The King and Epsom Stands for Whoever is A Gambling Man. is Ever A Loyal Man.

FM demobilised, in Yorkshire, fells, stone walls, sheep, woollen mills, wild plants of foreign origin, factories, slag heaps, stone villages, the survivors of his family. He goes into a pub. Father had one a while in Kent, he says. The publican stands him a drink.

CAPTION: God Save The King, He Who Exemplified Martial Sobriety and Abstained From Drink For The Duration.

FM as a happy AB, sailing the oceans of the world. Stepping ashore in the Antipodes he sees a familiar plant (stinking roger), stoops, examines, bruises a leaf, sniffs fingers, sighs, murmurs. This is the place for me—Yorkshire blooms here! So he joins a coastal vessel. Several years later he meets the woman who is to become his wife! **MM.**

HER STORY.

MONTAGE EDWARDIAN GARDEN PARTIES, EPSOM, PICNICS, CIGARS, CHAMPAGNE.

With her parents she leaves the overcrowded small holding in Herefordshire (glorious Herefordshire, orchards, herefields, cattle and downs, nudging the Marches . . .) she goes to East Anglia, the flat country of her mother and soon there are 17 in the family (one absent, a step-brother, in India, Mackay & Cooktown and the wealth of the gold-fields and finally the fellowship of the iron rails, time observed and fondly noted on his father's gift, a silver turnip watch), and John T, big, walrus-moustached Victorian gardener, who feed from his garden and allotment 8 fine boys meant for cannons primed for the late 30's.

MID 20's and two of the boys see an ad. LADS! GREAT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EMPIRE. FARES PAID, LIVING ALLOWANCES WHILE YOU TRAIN WITH EXPERIENCED FARMERS. ADVENTURE HO!

So they set off with turnipy watches.

Their mother weeps—but not with sorrow, no—hers aer tears of pride and joy for her sons are going to a grand country.

Two years later MM herself goes to a sheep station in New Zealand. Her brothers disappear into the Australian void so she crosses the stormy Tasman. She finds one, and eventually the other in a humpy on the slopes of the Divide. Tubercular and poorly—but so is his employer for this is a democratic land.

She meets the seaman, FM. They marry, a benefactor gives them money so they return Home where the scoundrel MacDonald rules amid poverty and peace. A child is born WM.

SEE OPENING SCENE.

Through the 30's.

Father has a shore job. War. Yellow Peril. Father goes north on ships. Postwar gets a steady job in the navy dockyard readying ships for the next war. He does his bit not to help the Dutch in their Indies. Labor and troops for the coal-fields almost put him off. Late 50's and he is retired so he takes job with an Erskine Street sail loft making boat covers and fancy rope knots.

FLASHBACK TO THE 30's.

WM, His Mother and Brother Venture Into The Mallee Where Her Brother Has Wrested A Farm From The Dire Scrub . . . M and his brother ride rams, tracked Fordsons and once a week or so a Model A into the township of wooden houses and stores, liquorice mannikins, carbide lamps and wide dirt road. One day WM, walking through the scrub, comes upon the humpies of the Aboriginal itinerants. They recognise him as one of the Elect.

THE ANARCHIST'S VILLANELLE

"You just don't think that I can break the bars
having once used your prosperous idioms—
you don't know I can step upon the stars.

Watch out on your balconies—stub your cigars!
I stand ten miles, with H-bombs in my thumbs
and don't you think that I can break the bars?

Rely on generators, engines of cars—
but there'll be darkness when my power-cut comes—
you will know when I step upon the stars.

The flickering penthouse cocktails all make scars
over cities where they're waiting in the slums . . .
and you don't think how I can break the bars.

Financial grammarians, the incomes you can parse
used to include my own. There's blood on all your sums—
you should know I can step upon the stars.

You think you'll hide when nothing shines but Mars
to highlight all your vulnerable bums—
but there'll be no comfort when I break the bars
when at the end I step upon the stars."

NORMAN TALBOT.

BRIEF FLASHBACK TO OPENING SCENE.
SOUNDS OF IMPOTENT RAGE. THEY KNOW
WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

WM is given a pair of grey-kangaroo hide shoes
with genuine Harley tyre soles.

Thus Equipped He is Indefatigable!!!

Ten furlongs a stride, faster than the murdered
Phar Lap and Darcy, gamier than the Ned, higher
flying than Hargrave's boxes. He goes here and
there blessing crops but overdoes it and the ears
are too much for the stems. He empties his lungs
into the sails of the ships at Port Lincoln and
Venus Bay—again his zeal is excessive for the
ships are pointed shorewards. But M's heart is
in the right place.

CHORUS OGRES: HIS HORRIBLE SHOES
HE'LL OFTEN LOSE.

So that WM, back in Sydney, is unable to arrest
the perfidious De Groot on the bridge. Nor is he
able to complete the demoralisation of the martial
New Guard. And when it comes to war, the Ogres
and their Master are supreme.

FM urges him on to greater athletic achieve-
ments. At trials and heats he is with the best,
wondershoed or not, but in finals he is a spectacu-
lar early pacemaker who soon wilts.

Into wild mountain country he goes alone, seek-
ing guidance from whom he knows not. As a
boy scout he refuses to be rubbed with another
to raise fire; a Magpie stave wielder, he defends
the rights of the oppressed Cubs, and fights down
the temptations of Brownies and Guides. He walks

beaches seeking mines and other lethal paraphern-
alia. From garden shrubs he hoses the vomit of
festive warriors; he farewells them and occasion-
ally sees their names in newspapers. On Palm
Sundays he is one of those who gather fruit rather
than fronds, and he is a fair shot, and scavenges
for bicycle tubes for shanghaiis.

Only rarely has he both shoes. He finds them
smaller so that now and then he journeys to the
acres of oppression where live relatives of the
mallee donors. He generally gets replacements,
but they lack sturdiness. Asked his ambitions he
replies: sea, earth, geology or chemistry, news-
paper. So his mother makes enquiries about com-
posing and setting. And she likes the idea of a
bank or insurance company, wherein one is safe
and steady. At school the early order has given
way to chaos, 92 elements are not enough. The
causes of events cannot be summarised under A
& B. Even the result of 2+2 is open to suspicion.
In classrooms cramped because of air-raid baulks
and beams strained teachers shout or whisper or
weep. He observes surreptitiously the girls he
loves and those who love him are scorned, and
things are in rather a mess. As an athlete of
promise he sometimes sleeps on a knot to preserve
vitality, and a shifty old man tells of boys he's
known go mad . . .

After school and Saturday mornings he works
for a pharmacist, collects, delivers, sweeps, washes
bottles, weighs paradichlobenzene, as a privilege
measures basic fluids, pestles lumps to powder in

a mortar, assists the boss's short fat blackmarket-eering associate, the eternal ball scratcher, who daily moans about Negroes and our girls, unfaithful wives, the insatiable demand for contraceptives and the anguish it causes his Catholic conscience. M moves on to a florist where he collects, delivers, sweeps, trims, wires ferns and flowers onto straw wreath rings, and roses when his boss's friend seats him beside her on the chaise longue in the painted leaves corner and tells him he has wonderful ears.

With a wild friend he approaches Americans, says: Got any gum, mate? or, Pardon me—but do you have any gum—comics? His friend sometimes packs a gat, a Colt borrowed from a lax relative, and now and then juggles grenades until his distraught mother comes and begs WM take her son in hand. But the boy is an able southpaw and WM's stupendous ju-jitsu (from Superman and the like) is more than matched. On Sunday afternoon WM, his brother and mother tram to the Cathedral stop, eat peanuts and fruit, walk through the crowded Domain and spend an hour or so in the Public Library where WM polishes his splendid wits.

In the streets are heard crutches and sticks and metal legs. Atebrin'd men walk slowly by. Patriotic songs are less joyful. At Christmas he steals flowers from big gardens and sells them door to door. The Maid of the Mountains lives at the Theatre Royal. Hellzapoppin shows him that sanity still exists. Coco Cola with aspirin or benzidrene uplifts the feeble and kills one or two. Coco Cola and rum is everybody's aphro, the universal leg opener. Paradise is at hand.

Then the bombs are dropped. Papers fill with complicated technical explanations. WM realises that his list of elements is done for and not worth reviving for only a murderous crook would wish to delve into such things.

He leaves school. For several months he works in the office of an asbestos company. He reads reports on their diseased miners. One of his duties is the unpacking of asbestos samples in a small room. He breaths deep deadly draughts of the murderous fibres. One day he hears the managing director, a plump epicene with the fingers of a miner and the eyes of authority shout! What's M doing with those bloody samples? And WM, suddenly enraged, dashes into the man's sumptuous office, reels in the cognac air, coughs—and sends billions of the deadly fibres into the man's face!!! and he slumps lifeless as though struck from a great height by a wad of his own asbestos lagging.

THE FRANTIC OGRES NOW GIVE WM THEIR MARK—

THE UNDERLING'S SIGN OF THE BEAST!!!

Nervous eyes.

BLACK BOX APPEARS A MOMENT.

In the lab of a great chemical combine a fantastic drug is developed. A beast plus 2 injections of CC+ doubles its size. Follow with a dose of Flavoriser BX (developed from a favorite carcinogen) and the beast is edible, raw or charred. The board of directors is to be vaccinated against mortality and a-satyriasis. WM assists a brilliant doctor who mistakenly injects them with CC+!!

WHOOSH WIK BAM!!!

The directors balloon, rise to ceiling, edge towards the windows, a door is opened, the terrific draught sucks the balloon men out—OUT INTO THE VOID WHERE THEY ORBIT WITH UFOS!

M is sacked because of his nervous eyes.

VOICES OGRES: He keeps this up our work'll cut out.

POWIE: ZAM!

M works hard at part-time studies. He deliberately fails so that his classmates, who need the academic honors, will succeed.

He travels the land picking grapes, cherries, oranges, medlars, blackberries, lily-pillies, gum-nuts, passion fruit, paw-paw, honeydews and the sacred snow apple, and so forth, bringing prosperity and a little joy to all.

He enters a military establishment (officers) in a sporting capacity, is mistaken for a general in mufti, orders all to Sassoon and sees many mortally stricken. To an aerial establishment he orders Jarrell's Ball Turret Gunner and training crashes decimate the cream of the corps. At the navy place he sings Blood Red Roses and there is general desertion.

POWIE CRACK ZOWIE!

He walks beaches seeking ambergris, pearls and other fruits of the sea.

He wanders pastures with dogs, ferrets, polecats, nets, traps and frames living off the fecund rabbit. He collects dead wool from fences and skeletons, the harvest of disease, age, starvation, dehydration and unnatural acts.

MUSIC PASTORAL PANPIPES MOUTHORGAN GUMLEAF BUSHBASS ETC.

He joins a band of pacifist vagrants and camps in an unknown ravine on a military range, collects vehicles of all kinds, melts them down and manufactures machinery for Pax Implements.

MUSIC OMINOUS.

BRIEF DARKNESS.

Canberra smells a rat! What has happened to 333 tanks, 77 carriers, 10,000 assorted firearms and 77,777 tyres? General Staff has overstepped itself!

The band disperses and flees.

MUSIC SUBURBAN PASTORAL SMALL ENGINES UNDER.

He gardens for Sir Bert Doze, the lawnmower tycoon. A fantastic tudorranch on split seven levels. Sir Bert is designing a JUNGLE CHOPPER! for removing cover from murderous insurgents. The machine is 90' x 40' x 150' high.

90x40x150!! CRACK! UGH!!

ONE EVENING SIR BERT BRINGS HIS MACHINE HOME!!!!

WM, fascinated, enters the computerised control cabin and FALLS AGAINST BUTTON ON! & BUTTON BLADES BOWLING GREEN TRIM!!

Horrified he watches the machine deal with the tudorranch and the surrounding acres. As it topples over a cliff (hungry for kelp etc.) he leaps to safety and goes into hiding.

He meets Peng Chu the ravishing 17 YO daughter of the ancient purveyor of CHU'S ORGAN REJUVENATOR, and is given shelter. 5 weeks later he leaves with her love and her own TRANSMOGRIFICATION FORMULA!!

Within a week he looks 60, weighs 15 stone, is almost bald, is jowly and

HE RULES CANBERRA CABINET WITH AN IRON HAND!

He meets royalty, generals, tycoons and similar people and delights all with his wit eg. I put it to you, Sir, that you are soft-headed. Meanwhile, the original Cabinet manipulator cowers in the cellar of the aged osteopath & quasi-dowager society hostess Sybil Snatch. WM persuades the British to test nuclear devices in his beloved desert hoping that kangaroos etc. will become raging carnivores and eat the officials and scientists. The failure of this scheme so depresses him he recommends many fellows be knighted or bemedalled.

He regains his normal self.

MUSIC SAD WITH CHORUSES OF SUBTLE BITTERNESS.

He meets Peng in the street, they embrace, retire to a nearby dingy hallway and couple ecstatically on the stairs.

MUSIC WILD PASSIONATE DISCREETLY ORGIASTIC COSMIC ORGASMIC MASS CHOIR SINGS INSPIRED BY WHITE GODDESS.

When they leave they push through an immense crowd of dazed bystanders, police and military. Unmolested, they go to a nearby hotel, are served by entranced attendants, drink a farewell toast, depart.

He is befriended by a Mr. J. Trap in a low wine cellar.

MONTAGE LIGHTNING POWS! STARS HORSEMAN OF APOCALYPSE TROOP COLORS OF CHAOS.

SOUND MEDLEY OF B'S 9TH GREGORIAN SHOSTAKOVITCH BLOOD RED ROSES BRITTEN RAILROAD BILL OGRES' WHINES GOD SAVE ETC.

AMUSING RENDITION OF ADVANCE AUSTR. ETC BY 3 CONDITIONED MICE.

Mr. T takes WM home introduces him to his family circle. Mrs T quickly runs up a pair of moccassins on her sewing machine. As WM leaves he is accosted on the bottom landing by a comely woman who sings in dulcet tones suggestive snatches of Sol's Song. She is Miss Maisie, Mr. T's niece. They retire to an untenanted room and discuss problems of a general nature.

CAPTION: THE OGRES ARE WORRIED; WHERE WILL IT ALL END?

He decides to retire to the wilderness, to make a modest income from the earth and his sweat. He lives in a 500 gallon tank (generally empty), carries water pails on a yoke, eats cheese and marmite sandwiches, becomes a nitro fume addict, resists the blandishments of the surrounding vegetarian Christians and terrifies their community by carrying off its buxom radiant virgins to his tank and returning them later, ever more radiant, with flesh corduroyed.

MONTAGE OF OGRES' FACES PALE WITH TERROR.

Disaster!

One cyclonic autumn, as he swims a raging river, he loses his shoes. He barely makes the bank.

He ranges the 1+ million square miles of the continent but is unable to find anyone with the proper shoes. Numerous attempts to forge copies fail. On a station in western N.S.W. he is knocked to the ground by an irate station hand and called a foot pervert. Wandering dazed across the plains he falls into a gouger's abandoned shaft, is trapped, lives on insects, worms, grubs, lizards and drips of water—and

GRADUALLY HE OPALIZES!!!!

Transformed by the hard mineral crust he is barely able to believe the reflection he sees in the water. What is to become of me? he shouts.

And the terrible noise rushes up into the air. The dense column of sound pierces all: atmosphere, ionosphere, stratosphere, oosphere, all spheres ruptured by his cri de coeur.

5 SECONDS OF SUBLIMINAL BLACK BOXES.

For several weeks he meditates on the nature of his predicament. One day he decides to get out. He scratches fruitlessly through his shoulder length hair. He searches his beard and finds several seeds and these he plants over his dung hole. Within 3 days he is able to climb to freedom via the twisted stems. He sheds his opal crust, sells it locally, runs to the nearest mining town, plays the popular local game of Chance until knee deep in paper currency, has himself fitted with a suit of the sort favored by the local squattocracy, gets

a widebrimmed hat, buys a reconditioned Tiger Moth from the local dealer, flies towards the great metropolis of Melbourne and eventually after many adventures crash lands on the low flats of an unseemly inner suburban stream, the Mari-byrnong.

Burying the wreckage of the faithful craft he walks into a nearby wool manufactory, and is granted employment. Because of his dark skin he is variously taken for: a Greek, an Arunta, a surfing champion named Smee, a Cornishman, an Aleutian, a Darwiner, a Cooktownner. Nights he sleeps in a selection of nearby railway carriages. Daily he toils for his master and whenever able gleans from the local dumps pages of encyclopaedias, technical manuals, romances, thrillers, novels and poems. At work his hands soften with woolfat and moons rise undeterred by burr and thistle spines. Steaming pleasurably he pushes locks and skirts, bellies and crutchings through a hole in the floor into the hot water below. He lunches in Footscray or at the bloodhouse Dynon Road or on crusts and peelings beside the fore-mentioned oiled and garbaged, rail and road crossed industrial creek, bounded by saline bush, and burrs noogoora bathurst and bindi, trefoil, and the curse of paterson and salvation of jane.

AND ONE DAY IN THE MUD OF LOW TIDE HE COMMENCES A SAGA!! He writes with a blunted 80x3x4 cedar . . .

Short at first, it becomes longer, lengthens into a **HISTORY OF MAN!** its people begin here, depart, return, they change, the location changes. The new boxy city skyline, the spired and rounded old one, towards the bay cranes eat ships, diesel locos hum and roar in the yards (he knows them all, has worked with them, here and there, he wants to work everywhere), in the sun in the mud beneath the road bridge dead rats grow, a giant's capless boot awaits the tide why is it there? discarded as too small? how big's he now? does he live on the flats? is he someone to worry about?

!!! THE GIANT OF THE SALEYARDS. AN EPISODE OF HIS WAR AGAINST CRIME!!!

Does he graze or does he live off the stock yards? the shape in the night, against the mercury lamps—that giant silhouette with a steer across its shoulders . . . he eats a beast a night, he moves quietly but blood plops, drovers' dogs howl, watchmen growl, their dogs howl and the authorities state in a confidential memo

We do not regard the loss of 365 (or 6) animals a year as serious. The number is easily covered by our Incidental Losses entry. We regard it, in one sense, as a propitiatory sum. The matter should be dropped. If we fully investigate the matter we feel that incidental advantages will be lost i.e. the unexplained repair of equipment and yards and the lack of veterinary assistance needed. Chicago is not nearly so well off. Thorough investigation of the phenomena would require an enlarged security force, complete floodlighting, thorough computer analysis and a ten-fold increase in public relations effort. Also, farmers and agents would be enraged by the disclosure that their animals disappear.

And the Giant digs holes in the soft soil and buries therein unconsumed offal and bones and the hides he does not need for clothing and the soil is rich with the blood and bone.

Near the boot is a barely covered skeleton. Traffic thumps over the bridge, a bird sweeps under it. Noise dies. Then crows caw. WM, with trembling foot exposes the ribcage, of wood, branches bleached, a freed twig springs up **THE DEAD ARISE** kyrie, kyrie, walpurgis, the ground

shakes, hoofbeats of the horses of the apocalypse . . . across the bridge horse and bottle-oh lead a convoy of tank transporters, and WM relaxes, no kyrie, kyrie is yet to come.

SOUND UNDER: OGRE CACKLE.

And then there will be tanks fused and silent with dead geigers. Dag, woolgrease, wool and slime buskin'd he moves from the embracing mud. He hears the hooter he should hear 30 minutes after the end of his lunch break.

SOUND UNDER: SINISTER CHUCKLE VOICE: NOW HE'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH DREADFUL CHARLIE THE WOOLMAD FOREMAN.

But WM heads away from the manufactory, goes to a patch of recently turned soil, rabbits into it, seeking a midden of the Giant, hoping for scraps of sanctified hide. On the bridge a pedestrian stops, stares, is joined by others, vehicles are abandoned, the jam grows, a cry from many throats: It is a devious sexual practitioner! drivers come running from far off and just as WM disappears from sight the first policeman forces his way onto the bridge. But WM has gone and all that marks the spot is a fountain of muddy water, for he is deep. The policeman tries to force his way off the bridge so as to arrest the disturber of the peace, but those who watch and those who grope and who are groped are enraged, and hurl him over the side, down into the lethal waters of the Maribyrnong. The gravely overloaded bridge creaks, sags. As the policeman falls he draws his pistol and fires at the crowd, and misses, but hits the supremely important pre-stressed reversible underlay pins.

CR-ACK!!

Into the turbid stream fall the massed voyeurs, glad for they have erred like lecherous goats, they feel the need of baptismal rejuvenation.

SOUND OVER: DIABOLICAL RETCHING.

As one, the victims recall—sh!

PIRANYA.

SOUND: FEARSOME FLYING DUTCHMAN THEME.

FISH MOTIF POPE'S RING ETC 40 FISHES. MUSIC HYMNIC NOTE OF PRAISE.

For the dread piranya, added long ago by the crazed Colonel Sidebottom, of the Port Philip Lancers, have gone.

SMOTHERED AND POISONED BY WASTES FROM FACTORIES GARDENS STREETS ETC. MUSIC JOYOUS SOUND UNDER LATHES CAR-WASHING GARDEN SPRAYING.

The policeman surfaces, shoots 4 offenders as they clamber ashore, batters 3 unconscious, is finally himself decapitated by the brim of a flung plastic safety helmet. Police reinforcements on

the bridge fire on the mob. Some escape, pursue the tank transporters, clank back in their **METAL MONSTERS AND SLAUGHTER SCORES OF THE LAWYERS.**

Suddenly they remember the mud fountain of WM!

It has stopped. They stealthily stalk the hole. A policeman shouts: Come on up you down there! and fires 3 times and shouts over his shoulder— He tried to escape, I aimed high. But there is no reply. He calls again. A wet echo replies. He fires. A foul lethal gas, miraculously liberated by the significant 4 reports, gushes up, instantly extirpating him and all others within 30'.

DISTANT SHOT OF CADAVER CRATER ZOOM TO STARING LECHY EYEBALLS.

The Commissioner declares life is impossible below, calls for bulldozer to fill hole.

RATIONAL DISCOURSE OFF SCENE: But was it a man? perhaps it was a meteor? maybe a big rabbit?

Deeper and deeper goes WM. He feels the wakes of the bullets. He doubles his efforts, drives under the river, ascends and finally emerges in a quiet corner in the yard of the factory. Nearby an acid tanker discharges its cargo into a vat. WM carefully uncouples the hose, rinses himself in the cleansing fluid then enters the building. 5 seconds later

DISASTER!

His clothes fall from him as acid-eaten rags! He dashes along a secret passage and reaches a contemporary office wherein sit 2 beautiful confidential secretaries. They quickly yield to his acid-flushed charms then present him with a selection of executive clothes and a smart white coat.

Back at work his bearing so impresses a visiting Japanese woolbuyer

MUSIC JAPANESE GONGS ETC

MONTAGE CHERRY BLOSSOM BUTTERFLIES TEA HOUSES

That he is offered a position of considerable importance, and so WM is able to spend much time in mysterious Asia.

One day he is found to be psychologically disturbed.

CAPTION: SHEEPSHIT ON THE BRAIN HAS RUINED YET ANOTHER WOOLMAN!

After treatment with Zen, tea & femininity he returns to AUSTRALIA ADVANCE AUSTR. ETC TIE ME KANGA. ETC.

MONTAGE SIR ROBT GORD MENZIES IN ADMIRAL'S RIG BRIDGE JOY SUN.

He is a new man. Sober, restrained but given to bouts of hilarity ETC ETC ETC ETC ETC.

FEELING THEN THAT MATHERS WAS BEING LESS THAN HONEST WITH US,
WE ASKED OUR MAN IN LONDON TO FILL OUT THE PICTURE—

SEEING MATHERS SUBJECTIVELY

Laurence Collinson

THE first time the name of Peter Mathers became significant to me was when he submitted a short story to *Overland*. "Something touchy and delicate" was what, in the light of the later "Trap," may be regarded as a typical piece of Mathers prose: inconsistent, confused in intention, flabby in plot and uncertain in characterisation; with all its faults, however, it revealed an imaginative mind trying to force the language to yield an original style, a delightful irreverence for convention (the subject-matter was the syphilitic infection of one of the characters), and, above all, vitality. It provided a strong contrast to most of the stories that were being submitted to *Overland* at the time (and apparently still are!); and I seem to remember that I was the only one, of the then editorial committee, who considered it worth publishing. I stuck out for my choice, and as Stephen Murray-Smith also saw evidence of a new and unusual talent in the story (he had published "These Poets" in a previous issue), it eventually formed part of the contents of *Overland* number 25.

I can't remember the first time I met Peter. It may have been at one of the Murray-Smiths' cosmopolitan parties at Mount Eliza, or at a poetry reading of the 8 by 8 group, or at a literary gathering. Muriel, Peter's wife, thinks that we first made contact at the new-defunct Muse Theatre Club one night during the season of my play "The Zelda Trio." Wherever or whenever it was, our acquaintance ripened, as they say, into friendship, and I recollect many occasions—it must have been around 1961-62—when Peter and I lunched or had coffee together.

He worked at that time for the Department of Agriculture (he has a Diploma of Agriculture, and is a wool-classer by trade) in some fairly menial clerical capacity, and was only a few moments' walk from my quarters at the Publications Branch of the Victorian Education Department at the top (the "Paris end") of Collins Street. We'd talk mainly about local writers and writing, the latest books, the plays we'd seen, the new films (he hadn't yet developed his consuming interest—which I share—in the contemporary cinema), and the desperate absurdity of having to earn a depressing living when our main ambition was to have freedom to write. (Looking back now, I find it strange that we spoke hardly at all about our personal affairs; but it is one of Peter's traits not to speak of his own emotions or feelings.)

We were both disgusted with society's philistine attitude towards artists, but could see no solution short of some kind of socialist-anarchist utopia. Peter, however, was much more of an immediate anarchist than ever I dared to be: he would think nothing of just walking out of his section for an

hour or two, or sometimes for a whole morning or afternoon, in order to stroll through the park, or visit a gallery, or come and visit me in my little office; after which he'd try to insinuate himself back among his co-workers. Sometimes his re-appearance went unnoticed; at other times he'd be forced to invent some incredible excuse. Any reader of "Trap" will be able to imagine the type of reasons he would give, and will also have more than a vague idea of his attitude to the bureaucratic idiocies that prevail in some parts of the public service.

Peter, like myself, is not a native. We were both born in England, he in London in 1931, and I in Yorkshire, which was, in fact, the home of his father. Peter's mother, who was born in Suffolk, is a strongly independent woman who recently retired from a job in the canteen of a Sydney bank. His father, who died in 1961, was a ship's rigger, a likeable and easy-going man, according to reports. He has a younger brother, David, for whom he cares deeply, and who has published some poetry.

The Mathers left Melbourne in 1962. Like many writers, Peter could see no prospect of ever achieving his ambitions within the physically free, semi-affluent, and—to artists—almost totally unresponsive society of Australia. There does now seem to be some slight improvement in the situation, but up till only a year or two ago it was as obvious to Peter as to so many writers, singers, artists, musicians, and actors that acceptance by the Australian public (so sure of itself in some ways; so unsure in others) depended on receiving a seal of approval in London or New York or other respected foreign parts. In becoming an

expatriate he was merely following in the footsteps of Sumner Locke-Elliot, Patrick White, Ray Lawler, Ray Mathew, and Alan Seymour, to name only a few among writers alone.

The process of absorbing a new culture becomes more difficult the older one gets, and Peter was now in his early thirties. He had lived in Australia since childhood; he had wandered all over the country; he knew the two largest cities intimately; he had even farmed a small block of land at Port Macquarie. In London he would be a "bloody colonial" as far as the literary establishment was concerned (the expression is used discreetly but the value-judgment it implies is often manifest). To become a full-time creative writer in London is just as difficult of achievement as it is in Australia—unless one has a private income, in which case it hardly matters where one lives.

What I find most disturbing here is the failure of many London critics to recognise that "Trap" is an important literary work; many of them may not even be aware of its existence, despite—or perhaps because of—its success in Australia. While dozens of novels are reviewed every week, most of them blatantly inferior to the Mathers work, "Trap" has been, for the most part, either ignored or facetiously dismissed. Only in several provincial journals, and in the Sunday Times and the Tribune in London, has the novel been treated with nearly the seriousness it deserves. There is a strong establishment network in this country, and—this is a hard fact-of-life—penetrating it depends as much on luck and who-you-know as it does on talent, even when that talent is, as Peter's is, a very great one.

I have been talking about literary scene here; "living" is another matter. The differences between Australia and "overseas" are greater than one supposes until one has actually experienced them: the people, the institutions, the mores, the art galleries, the cinemas, the landscapes—all are tremendously stimulating to the newcomer to Europe. (Though of course so much depends on the amount of money one has; it seems to me that it is cheaper to live in Australia than in London: food and rents here are scandalously high.)

*

When Peter and Muriel first arrived in London they inhabited a damp and dingy basement flat in Camden Town; from there they moved to a near-slum in Kentish Town, which allowed Peter access to two of his favorite London pastimes: wild Irishmen and Guinness; and now, after over three years away, they are installed in a two-roomed haphazard sort of flat in a Swiss Cottage terrace, with scarcely enough space to rear their two daughters, Sarah and Zoe, and have to tramp down three flights of stairs to hang out the continual round of laundered nappies. Certainly the space is too small for Peter to be able to concentrate on his second novel; that is, when he has the time in between his half-week working as a cataloguer at the local library and his various odd jobs to make a few extra shillings. Fortunately he has a pass to what has become one of his most congenial haunts, the British Museum, where, following a not unfamiliar literary tradition, he does a large proportion of his writing. The money the Mathers have paid out in rent has always, I might add, amounted to at least half of whatever were Peter's current earnings. The failure of his recent application to the Commonwealth Literary Fund for a grant is, to my mind,

an indictment of that organisation's policies. Does the Fund draw no distinction between imaginative writers and journalists-cum-historians? Or was "Trap" too outspoken for the Government to encourage a second nasty and irreverent book?

There have been several trips across to Europe—to France, Italy and Greece—where the Mathers have lived very frugally, and where, I suspect, given a sufficient income, they would like to settle and bring up their family and write for at least a good part of each year. Perhaps they could be induced to return home by a grant or a fellowship, but I gather that Europe and London have spoiled them for wanting to live in Australia again permanently.

Peter and Muriel have become my very good friends—more so in London than they were in Melbourne. The innumerable instances of their goodness and generosity to me would be embarrassing both to them and to me to recapitulate. When I first arrived in London, I knew no one else and was constantly in their company; and as time advanced and my neuroses expanded in the isolation of a strange land, in cramped bed-sitters, and in literary failures, it was Peter and/or Muriel who bore the brunt of my suffering and resentful ego. If I annoyed or bored them, they never said so; and I have sought refuge with them more often than I think I had the right to expect.

Muriel believes that Peter has changed since coming abroad: that he has become tougher. I'm sure that this is so. It always struck me that he was pretty resilient, but day-by-day life in Australia carries fewer anxieties and tensions than in this cold, class-ridden, and often heartless country. Despite Peter's many frustrations he is, for most of the time, good-natured, good-humored, intensely inquisitive about people and places, art and ideas. He dabbles in philosophical anarchy, tries to read every new book that might hold something of interest to him, attends every major drama production, and chases after films by Jean-Luc Godard. His toughness is now more obvious; though I'd prefer to describe his personality as rugged, to match his newly-bearded face. In Peter Mathers ruggedness and sensitivity share a fine partnership.

To fill out this portrait, there are a number of points I would like to make about Peter, about Muriel, and about their relationship with each other and with the world at large. But anything I could say would be an invasion of privacy and an impertinence. I must nevertheless conclude with a comment on one aspect of Peter's personality, as I see it. That is, his stubbornness. Stubbornness can be both vice and virtue, as the word's many synonyms testify: obstinacy, determination, taciturnity, tenacity, implacability, and so on.

Stubbornness will cause Peter to go on writing exactly the way he wants, regardless of criticism; he is secure in his belief in his own creative power. It also reveals itself as a form of modesty, because writers convinced of their own ability do not usually need to assert themselves. And it also reveals itself in indignation against corruption and pomposity in high or not-quite-so-high places; the underdog is always right; if Peter thinks that he is being "done down" in a pub or a restaurant, he will "remove" a piece of glassware or cutlery as an act of useful vengeance. He is, in a sense, the insistent underdog, the non-passive nonconformist, constantly berating society for its adherence to platitudes and conventional values. His outrage carries itself over into his writing; and indeed it is this with which "Trap" is concerned.

Behind the Picture

H.M.S. RATTLESNAKE'S
AUSTRALIA-NEW GUINEA CRUISE 1846-1850

Marnie Bassett

Writing in London in 1850 Thomas Huxley, then an unknown young naturalist lately returned with the survey ship H.M.S. **Rattlesnake**, reminded his readers that in time of peace the only vessels engaged in services involving any real hardship or danger were those employed in surveying. Records of the professional work of the **Rattlesnake** are in the archives of the Admiralty: something of the purely personal story is told in **Behind the Picture**, an account of the experiences and feelings of her Commander, Captain Owen Stanley, and his officers, including the junior surgeon Thomas Huxley and **Rattlesnake's** guest artist Oswald Brierly, during the **Rattlesnake's** survey cruise off the coasts of Australia and New Guinea and among the islands of Torres Strait between 1846 and 1850. There are two maps and many illustrations, including a colored lithograph of the "Picture" of the title. \$5.75.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Floating Fund

For various obscure historical reasons, and we're not sure why ourselves, on some quarters fewer subscriptions come up for renewal than on others. This means that fewer people respond to our touching touches . . . and this happened on the last quarter, to our regrets. All the same, we have to thank the following for the not unimpressive total of \$190.06.

BR NM \$10; JB WW AB NMcP \$8; DD \$6; DD \$5; HG I&CMcI AC \$4; HH FB JP FI HD \$3; WS ML KD CH DM MM JP AL Eff MM CE TB WM NG HW JB DL BS LB FI BM ED AH JMCL AH CT-S FL KM \$2; RD \$1.56; DC \$1.40; BM BE RL BE KL LD EH TR PF MM DT AK GB-M DM BM RS WMcR-R PF MB OL WD PMcC EH CR RS DW DH JS LG BR DC AB \$1; JB \$1.10; LP GS GS IC FR 50c; NC CB 25c.

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THE JACARANDA PRESS

Head of a Boy

In it there is a space-ship
and a project
for doing away with piano lessons.

And there is
Noah's ark,
the first of all.

And there is
an entirely new bird,
an entirely new hare,
an entirely new bumble-bee.

There is a river
that flows upwards.

There is a multiplication table.

There is anti-matter.

And it just can't be trimmed.

I believe
that a head is
only what cannot be trimmed.

There is much promise
in the circumstance
that so many people have heads.

Fairy Tale

He built himself a house,
his foundations,
his stones,
his walls,
his roof overhead,
his chimney and smoke,
his view from the window.

He made himself a garden,
his fence,
his thyme,
his earthworm,
his evening dew.

He cut out his bit of sky above.

And he wrapped the garden in the sky
and the house in the garden
packed the lot in a handkerchief

and went off
lone as a polar fox
through the cold
unending
rain
into the world.

Planning

Around the table,
from hand to hand,
from file to file,
from column to column,
march

the refrigerators that are and
the refrigerators that will be,
white and gleaming
as an antarctic flotilla,

the preserves that are and
the preserves that will be,
red and green,
splendid as the pages
of the king of the glass castle,

the excavators that are and
the excavators that will be,
black and heroic
as a storm in a teacup,

the new-born that are and
the new-born that will be,
with bulging eyes
and a temporary shortage
of dummies,

march
fluorescent lamps,
books of poetry,
telescopes,
overcoats,
moulds,

megawatts
precise as a surgical needle,
megatons
certain as the coming spring,

march
around the table
in the cold dry glow
of cigarettes,
and the slow welding
of fantasy
with the steel bars of numbers.

The future
to three decimal points
exactly.

MIROSLAV HOLUB, born in 1923, is a Czechoslovak pathologist in an institute of microbiology in Prague, though at the moment he is working on leave at the Public Health Research Institute in New York. A prose reportage on an earlier visit to the U.S.A. has gone into three editions in Czechoslovakia. In addition Dr. Holub has published eight volumes of poetry, and is the editor of a magazine devoted to the popularisation of science. Ian Milner, who has translated these poems for *Overland*, is a New Zealander who worked in Australian academic and diplomatic circles and is now lecturing in English and Australian literature at the Charles University in Prague. Poems by Miroslav Holub, also in Ian Milner's translation, have been published in the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *London Observer* and other journals, and will shortly appear in a Penguin book of Czechoslovak poetry, being edited by Mr. Milner.

But sometimes,
when all's done and signed,
the excavators,
the new-born,
the apples,
the books,
the refrigerators
pipe up
just for the heck of it,
without a serial number,
in quiet urgent voices—

and what about yourselves, friends,
what about yourselves,
to how many decimal points exactly,

your goodselves today,
your goodselves tomorrow,
to how many points exactly
at home

and in the street
and with your wife
and your friends,
and morning

and evening,
and on the way up
and on the way down,
to how many decimal points exactly
you yourselves, friends?

And we should have an answer to that
in this year's plan.

FIVE WAYS TO SAY MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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by Hal Porter

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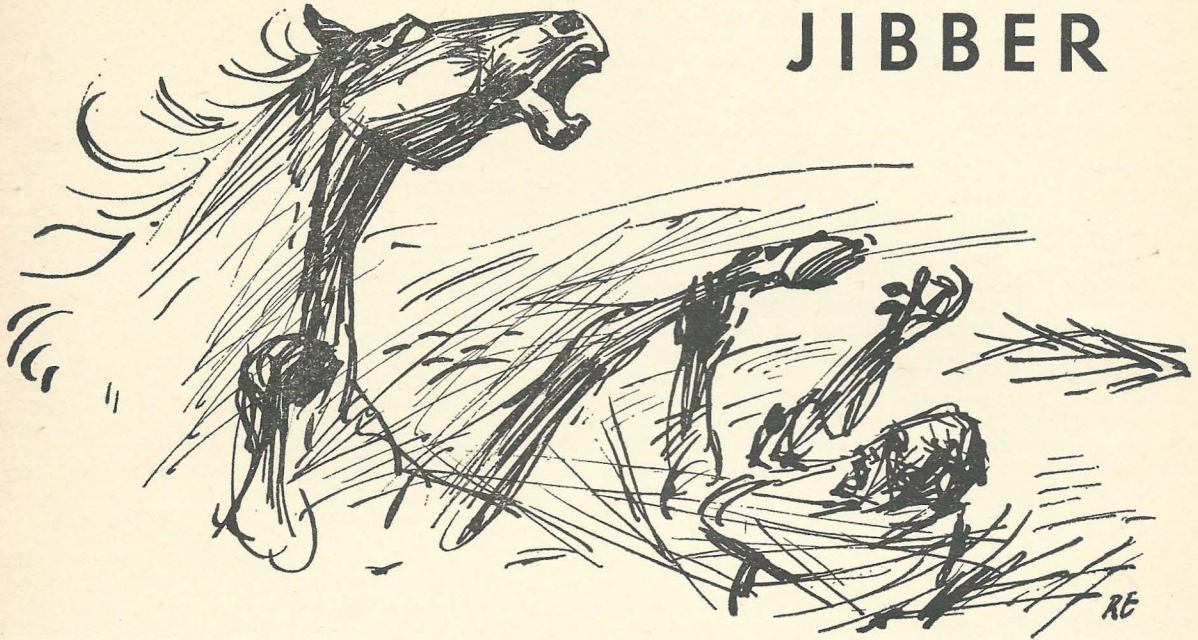
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AT ALL BOOKSELLERS

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JIBBER



E. A. Gollschewsky

TODAY, no doubt, my father would be known as a veterinary psychologist. But in the 'twenties, living on the outskirts of a country town, his reading confined to the *Producer's Review* and books brought home from the school of arts for him by my mother, he'd never heard of Freud. He liked Zane Grey and P. G. Wodehouse. The latter he read with serious concentration, no flicker of amusement disturbing the craggy physiognomy of his weather-beaten face.

"A jibber is made, not born," he'd proclaim, his one vivid blue eye blazing at thought of the heinous crime. "Ill-treatment in the horse's early life is responsible. Wipe that out of the memory and you can start to teach him how to be a horse."

He was, I suppose, what used to be called a squatter. Horse breeder and show judge cattleman, veterinary surgeon, landowner—you could almost call him a professional countryman. His speciality was reforming—or what he would have called re-educating—jibbers.

When we had a bay gelding who harried and excited the mares without being able to satisfy their noisily anguished demands, he said regretfully: "Badly cut. Not much you can do about that now. He doesn't know if he's a stallion or a gelding. With a jibber it's different. You can repair the damage."

This being contrary, of course, to what any knowledgeable horseman will tell you: "Once a jibber, always a jibber." Pa never accepted that. He regarded a confirmed jib as a challenge to his craft. Or was it art? A challenge he usually won.

Jobson's black was one of the few to defeat him.

Perc Jobson brought him to Maudsleigh in a horsebox built in the back of a Chev. 4 truck, his head lolling over the back rails where his tail should have been. Clearly, it wasn't the time to ask Perc why he'd been put in the box back to front—the horse had lifted his tail on the drive over and the driving seat was splayed with manure. Not only the seat. No wonder Perc was moody.

When nothing would induce the black to descend the ramp before dark, Perc rode one of our horses home and left the truck.

Next morning the black's head still hung wearily down over the ramp, though the rails had been removed, of course. One back hoof rested on an iron-shod tip, one hip stuck disjointedly up into the air, the other hung listlessly unsupported. Flies crawled unmolested over nostrils wet with mucus.

"Jet," Pa said consideringly: "That's his name." He climbed into the truck with the horse, getting him used to the touch and smell and sound of his own body.

He began to coax, to fondle and reason with a gentleness he never showed his own children. Fed him apples, sugar and handfuls of corn. Jet ate everything, straightening up, ears alert enough when there was food around. When it was gone he spread his forelegs implacably and let his head droop once more. Pa swore.

He coaxed some more. He pushed from behind and pulled from before. Then he grew impatient and jumped on the bars of the box, leaning over and down to cut the dusty rump with a quirt. Jet lashed out with heavy, hairy heels and broke a board off the box but his front hooves didn't budge.

"I wonder how they got him in backwards?" I puzzled aloud, through a stick of sugar cane I was crunching.

Pa's temper had been under control long enough. With a fury he'd never allow himself to unleash against the horse he turned on me.

"By God, you ugly looking little bastard, if you can't ask sensible questions don't ask any," he bellowed, throwing his hat on the ground and stamping about the yard in the high-heeled riding boots that kicked up a cloud of dust. His thick mop of greying curls was wet with sweat.

"No language, now, Thomas," called my mother from under the house where she was looking for hens' nests amongst stacks of old harness, broken beds, meat casks, barrels of potatoes and swinging open-mesh bags of onions. "Not in front of that child."

"Then git!" Pa spat at me, "for there's gonna be bloody language around here, you can make up your bloody mind on that."

It was time for school, anyway. The others were coming out with hats and bags on. I joined them, setting my face and shoulders with indifference as I turned away. It would be useless to beg to stay home and watch Pa's progress with Jet. There was left only pretended lack of interest.

It was two days before Pa got Jet out of his self-imposed imprisonment. Then the goad was thirsty. He set a full bucket of water a few paces in front of the ramp and splashed in it with his hands. Jet turned his head away. But it kept coming back, and in the end his ears pricked, and stiffly, awkwardly, he put one forefoot down the slope of the ramp and clacketted to the ground.

Pa regarded him frowningly as he drank. "This bugger's gonna give a lot of trouble before he's done," he pronounced with certainty.

*

Sunday afternoon at Maudsleigh, towards the end of summer. Sailing boats skidding over the silvery flatness of the Burnett River. Plop of a tennis ball and twang of racquet from the tennis court where the rotting wire of the high fence-guards was festooned with brilliant blue of morning glory, creamy, scented profusion of honey-suckle, and antigonon, flaring coral pink amongst passionfruit vines that grew wild. And all about the grounds the vivid splashes of color that marked frangipanni, hibiscus, poinsettia, croton and bird of paradise shrubs.

There was a magnolia, moon-flowered, and acacia, golden wattle and scarlet poinciana, creamy spikes of bottle-brush, the fire of red ones . . . drenched with a thousand scents, ablaze with a myriad of colors, the air in that garden made even the bees drunk. Heavily they droned through the bright sunshine, weaving an unsteady way from bush to bush, from flower to flower.

Further back, over the cowbails, the stables, the barn, the dairy and the fowl-houses ran the purple extravagance of bougainvillea. Over every fallen tree, every old stump, every derelict dray and piece of abandoned farm machinery, the dripping, rioting splendor of color.

I was reading in a persimmon tree, reaching out for a sun-warmed, golden-orange fruit when I wanted it, spitting out the seeds with a blurring sound. I was never a refined child.

White-clad figures moving across the court; sitting under the grapevines that held up the derelict little shed which provided shelter for players between games; my mother buttering fluffy, hot scones in the enormous kitchen, passing before the window with a jug of cream, a teapot, a tray . . . old Banta, descendant of kanakas from a forgotten age, attending to the horses our visitors had ridden over, pretending he didn't see the B.S.A. leaning against the fence, nor the Indian Scout on its own prop.

Into this idyllic peace and serenity broke Pa's voice, loud and irate enough to blast the leaves from the gum trees. "By cripes, a man oughta break your bloody, stubborn neck, you bastard you! Sired by a crazy mongrel-bred jack donkey on an effin' brumby! By all that's effin' well holy, I'll break your back, so help me! —! —! —!" No need to write every word he used. Some I'd never heard before, even from him.

There was a sudden hush from the tennis court, followed by an hysterical outburst of voices, laughter, shouted advice and thwacking of balls. Anything to drown that ringing cascade of curses.

I saw my mother run down the high back steps leading from the kitchen, the kangaroo dog Fly leaping ahead of her in thin, silvery bounds. Her distressed voice preceded her.

"Oh, Thomas, how could you? Think of the girls—they've got visitors—some of them from town. Oh, how could you do this to them? Shame them like this!"

The persimmon I'd been about to bite into was seething with maggots. I threw it away and climbed down. Banta was going to the court with a message, and returning with a bunch of sweaty-faced young men. Pa was never short of helpers while his daughters had admirers.

Pa had Jet harnessed into the brake, a strongly-built breaking-in cart with iron-rimmed wheels, massive braking system, its timbers stout and swung high enough to withstand the fiercest onslaught from back-lashing hooves. As soon as he climbed up to the plain wooden seat—cushioned only by a folded cornsack—I was after him, settled beside him, tossing my thin plaits over my shoulders. His hat was gone again, his one blue eye blazing with sapphire brilliance. He didn't acknowledge my presence, but then he was as used to it as to his own shadow.

Jet stood like a rock between the shafts, his tail full of burrs splayed out over the dashboard.

"You blokes git behind there and push," Pa instructed.

They gathered at the tailboard, and I looked back down over a heaving mass of snowy tennis shirts streaked with sweat, of white flannelled behinds and the backs of pomaded heads as they strained.

"Push, blast yers!" yelled Pa, brandishing the long stockwhip threateningly about the animal's shrinking hide. "Where the hell's yer guts? Push, can't yers?"

The tennis shoes dug in desperately, the shoulders swelled, the heads bent still lower with effort.

Jovial Hands

"Listen, darling, there's the wind outside," she said, stepping out of a bit of lace. He helped her pull a snapper out of place. "It's blowing just for us so we can hide, here in the darkness, waiting for the rain." He pulled the covers over. "Kiss me hard." He kissed her. Leaves were scattering the yard, but sky was beating on the window pane.

It tuned the chimney, stormed the sheltered lands. "It's cosy here." The lightning sought his brow, but they were no quick leaves to tumble. Now? The restless earth lay swept by Jovial hands.

When lightning, rain, and wind at last were spent, he lay awake and wondered where they went.

KNUTE SKINNER

Jet stood immovable.

"By Christ, you're a pack of lily-livered, useless, thumb-sucking, self-loving bitches! Push the bloody thing! Get it on the move—no guts! No guts at all —"

And they pushed. They strained and puffed and sweated. I thought once Pa was going to use the whip on them. But he only cracked it, with expert ease, in mid-air.

Whether they were too strong for Jet, or whether he just felt like a gallop is hard to say.

Suddenly he threw up his foolish, ugly head and careered off at a mad, bolting gallop, tail streaming, harness jingling, iron-rimmed wheels thundering, woodwork of the brake screeching and groaning as it lumbered wildly on in the wake of those flying hooves.

"Like Ben Hur," I shrieked into the wind, hanging on tight. Pa was too busy applying the brake and trying to guide Jet to answer. Banta had the outside gate open and we flew through, then between two flame trees which were a flash of crimson, down the avenue of old Norfolk pines, out on the dirt road which led clear across Maudsleigh acres.

There was no holding Jet. He left the road and dashed through bush, dodging boughs, through small herds of Herefords and Polled Angus and grazing horses, down a hill at headlong pace, and through a ti-tree swamp in which knee-deep water lay rank and dark, dotted with grass tussocks and patches of hyacinth. Jet's foundering hooves tossed water all over us, it sprayed out from the wheels and was flung over his back. Some ran down Pa's lined cheeks like tears of joy. He laughed uproariously, keeping the horse from disaster by some miracle of strength and guidance in his hands, and perhaps of secret communion.

Ibis, water hens and wild duck flapped in startled haste from their feeding ground as we

splashed past. But at lessened speed now. Jet was tiring, froth floated in great gobs from his reeking hide.

"We've done it, girl," Pa cried exultantly. "We've got him now, you'll see. He'll be like a charm after this. Like a sweet dream. Your mother will be driving him to town in that spanking little sulky of hers before the week's out. Can you picture it?"

I could. Mother's varnish-shiny, rubber-tyred, twinkling turnout was the smartest on the road. Poor Jet would bring it little credit, clumsy, splay-footed, ugly-headed animal that he was. I hung on to the seat with desperate hands, hair loose from its braids flying behind like Jet's tail. Pa wiped the water from his face but it still dripped from his grey hair and from his moustache.

"Oh, you little beauty, you," he crooned to Jet, blinded love, laughing triumphantly at me from the side of his face. "Oh, you little racing beauty. There's a rise coming up now—that'll take the mustard outa you my sweet pearl . . ."

Jet's speed slackened considerably as we began to climb. It dropped to a labored trot, then, before we reached the summit, he was plodding at a walk. Blown, he stood at last on top of the rise, sides heaving, head hanging.

Pa lit his pipe. His small, booted foot resting on the braking step, his face sweet with contentment. I looked down at the main road running black through red soil. A Buick was travelling townwards. It was 1929.

"There goes Uncle Hubert," I cried, recognising it. "Isn't it a beautiful car? All the kids at school say their parents are getting cars. Some day, even, there mightn't be any need for cart horses any more."

"God strike me dead, I dunno why I let you come," he hissed at me with hatred. "Cars! Shit!" He jerked the reins and Jet turned, moving off quietly enough to trot back downhill, this time

finding the cattle tracks that made the going easier. Pa wouldn't speak to me. I began to sing A Gallant Young Stockman to myself hoping he'd join in, but he was too angry.

When we passed the lagoon where mauve and white water lilies covered the surface, he pulled Jet in. "Hop out and get your mother an armful of those things," he ordered. "A big armful, mind. To celebrate."

*

But next morning Jet jibbed again. When night fell Pa left him harnessed in the brake for punishment, but it made no difference. Nothing would budge him the day following. Or the day after that. At the end of three weeks Jet was as stubborn a jib as had ever sojourned at Maudsleigh.

Once more Pa led him out with the harness dangling around him, buckled him between the shafts of the brake, patted his head with infinite patience that never broke (waiver though it might at times) and tiredly prepared to try him out again. He had lost weight, and appeared thinner and gaunter, like the horse, but his relentlessness of purpose also matched the horse's. He'd had tough ones before.

Jet had been fed and watered, curry-combed and brushed. But his coat was still dusty-looking, his eyes lacked lustre, even as Pa's blue one did. I perched on the top rail watching, ready for school, my cream pony tied to a post behind me. The tussle between man and beast would go on intermittently all day while I was away, but when I was home I never missed a move of either.

Pa would be paid—and expected—nothing for his weeks of work, unless you counted a presentation bottle of rum, sucking pig, bag of potatoes or cattle pup, any of which he might receive when the horse was returned to its owner. But except for mother nobody seemed to think this strange. We went without dancing lessons, the trips to Brisbane, the music lessons, parties and pretty dresses that our neighbors and relations took for granted. Only mother, through love and loyalty to her own, complained.

"You should make a charge, Thomas," she would cry, stung by the sight of the Simpson kids' new schoolbags. Pa had spent all day Saturday castrating Hereford calves for Simpson and not been paid a penny. Simpson told him warmly he did a better job than any other bugger in the district and that satisfied Pa. But we needed new books for school, there would be a wedding in the family soon and where was the money to come from? "They don't appreciate work done for nothing. Any vet. or horsebreaker charges for his work. Why can't you?"

Nobody listened. He'd been born into All That Swagger and the idea of accepting money from someone he knew for a service was abominable to him.

Now he glanced about the yard to make sure no stray coils of barbed wire, rocks or nails lay about. He picked up a short, thick stake and weighed it experimentally in his hand preparatory to throwing it away. In the same instant Jet screamed, flung himself upward with forefeet pawing the air, winkered head flung backwards.

Pa froze. The brake was designed to forestall rearing and minimise kicking. But when Jet dropped his front legs it was only to kick madly with his back ones, hooves crashing at the underpart of the dray. Then once more he reared, rising higher and higher, until he stood upright, trembling and frantic between the shafts.

"Jet, you crazy bastard," Pa said with the soothing intonation a frightened animal always

heard from him, "just settle down, will you? Settle now. Nobody's going to hurt you—" Behind his back he dropped the stake through the rails of the fence. Then moved forward to take the dangling reins, still talking calmly. I could see the shining arcs of horseshoes as the threshing hooves cut the air inches from Pa's grey head. One plunging shoulder pushed him off-balance and I thought for a second he was down.

But he wasn't. He was hanging to the reins, being dragged through a heap of steaming fresh manure; a tip of the shaft caught in his shirt and ripped it open, revealing the thinly-covered ribs. Jet gave a final, piercing scream—of terror? rage? defiance?—then seemed to stagger in mid-air. Pa leapt backwards free of the falling body. There was a clank of harness, a crunching sound as one shaft spanned like a stick of sugar cane, the sound of enormous breaths bellowing in and out of laboring lungs.

"Get my bag!" Pa had dropped to his knees beside the horse, unbuckling him from the harness which held him in the brake. "And scoot—"

I fed. The sound of a blacksmith's bellows following my flying feet. The old canvas bag containing his instruments and drugs hung from a nail under the house. When I got back with it Pa was sitting in the dust of the yard holding Jet's head.

The eyes were open, flecks of mucus drifted earthwards from the shining nostrils, and the lips were no longer drawn savagely back over greenish-yellow teeth. They hung loose, velvety soft, rubbery. The ears were quite still.

Pa stood up.

"Not often a horse does that. Heart failure, musta been. Or fright. Sometime in his life he'd been belted unmercifully with a beam just like that stake. Poor bugger."

I said nothing. Pa never needed advice, and opinions were unasked for.

"Course, he was the kind of horse would never have rightly fitted in anywhere. Too heavy for a hack, not heavy enough for a plough or dray. And would he ever have willingly pulled a sulky or springcart? Not him. To turn him loose would be to expose him to God knows what—and he'd had his share of ill-treatment, I reckon. But to go and die on a man—who'da thought that?"

Then, to my astonishment (for he rarely caressed any of us) he put an arm round my skinny shoulders. I was too young to know that the embrace was a salve to his own suffering.

"Come on, Tommy. You'll be late—the others have all gone to school. Don't worry about this—there are born jibs who would rather die than submit to any form of control—they prefer to die, because there's just nowhere they can fit in—I want you to understand this."

I nodded. He gave the plait nearest to him a tug, then hoisted me up on the cream pony's back, detached the bridle rein from the post and slapped the pony's rump. My legs hung down each side of the hairy, distended belly. No saddle until I was twelve, a rule made by mother after one of her brothers was killed when he was thrown from a horse and dragged along by a boot caught in a stirrup.

The cream pony ambled off at the rocking gait Pa had taught her for the benefit of his younger children. I looked back, wishing I'd kissed him. I'd forgotten. But he was stamping up the high, wide front steps and I heard him calling "Rose! Rose!"

And mother's voice answering him from inside the big, crumbling house: "Yes, Thomas? What is it now?"

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C O N S C R I P T

Agnes Millrose

They've shipped my son Johnnie off to Viet-
nam.
He didn't want to go; he had no say,
He'd just come out of his time; he's a trades-
man now,
A tiler, only just starting to keep himself
And put a bit by—towards a home of his
own, maybe;
But not just yet. For a start he'd promised
me
He'd tile the bathroom—his way of saying
thanks.
It was tough at times for us, as for him;
but we thought
By putting him to a trade we'd care for
his future.
It won't be tiles he'll be laying, but bodies
in graves.

He looked just a little boy in his uniform,
With his pack and his bag and his gun too
heavy a load.
And when the streamers tore and he waved
from the rail,
It was like the time he got lost, or his first
day at school.

I've read some books in my time. Enough
to know
It was always the virgin youth, the un-
spotted calf,
Who laid down their lives to appease the
gods or the weather,
So the Old Men didn't hunger or get wet.
The wisest of men, the Greeks, put babies
out
To be taken by wolves. That was for the
Good of the State.
And weren't there Arab tribes who stole
young boys,
Maimed them and stood them in sand till
they healed or died?
No doubt they had Right and Reason on
their side!

And mediaeval wizards, I hear they brewed
Rejuvenating elixirs from infants' blood.
Those tales were only tales. I never thought
A son of mine would be exposed to wolves,
Be pirated into slavery in his youth,
Suffer castration of the heart or mind,
While the Old Men, flipped up with new
witch-brews,
Wrested from baby bees and embryo lambs,
Make their sad mockery of propagation
Behind a barricade of virgin corpses.

Suppose he does come through? Suppose
he does
Come home alive, with all his limbs and
senses!
How will he be in himself after years of
doing
The kind of things his nature cries out
against,
One victim acting as lord of life and death
Over bewildered fellow human victims?
Don't get me wrong! It's not that John lacks
spirit,
Or isn't prepared to help where help is due.
He'd punch any man in the face who threat-
ened me;
He'd never stand by and watch a kid being
bullied.
But this is no fight he has any heart to
buy into.
It's too much like helping the big boy batter
the small.

We've never had much, though we were
content. We have
A bit of a yard to grow lettuce and beans.
They taste
Better than shop ones. Or so we believe.
John's had
His share of weeding and watering. Enough
To appreciate that food doesn't grow by
itself.
Now they will have him setting fire to crops
That aren't merely people's hobby, but all
their food.
Our house isn't much, but it is dry and warm
And we have good times when we're all
home together.
Now he'll be burning down homes and send-
ing folk
Out of their place, their shelter, away from
their things.
How will he feel, then, doing these things
he hates?
And if he stops feeling, what will he be like?

I know that kind of thing must be done in
a war.
At least, I've been told, and I'm prepared to
believe it.
If we're fighting a foe, we've got to learn
to be tough.
But who is the enemy? Who is threatening
us?

There always have been wars, the Old Men
say.
It's human nature, it's history, it's fate.
I know! I know! You've only to put a drum
In an idiot's hands, there'll be a marching
host.
A drum! A drum! A beating, throbbing drum
Will draw men off to brainless self-destruc-
tion.
A word! A word! Men will follow a word.
A dinned-in word. It doesn't have to make
sense,
Nor does the following justify the word,
Although the safe Old Men would have it so.
"A pledge of friendship!"—But who redeems
the pledge?
"A warning to the aggressor!"—a finger-
waggle
Under the nose of a giant! "It's got to come.
Let's get it over and done with, then we'll
have peace!"—
As if war ever yet led to anything
But cold and ruin and death and cruelty,
The things that happen in the hearts of the
young!
Oh, yes! You have a lot to answer for,
You old makers of drums, old bangers of
words.

WE HAVE BEEN TRYING, FOR TWELVE YEARS, TO ESTABLISH IN OVERLAND SOME CONTINUITY IN THE AUSTRALIAN RADICAL TRADITION. THESE SEEM BAD DAYS FOR THAT TRADITION. WE HAVE ASKED SOME YOUNGER PEOPLE TO TELL US WHY. JOHN PATERSON WAS, UNTIL RECENTLY, RESEARCH OFFICER FOR ACSPA, THE WHITE-COLLAR ACTU.

OUT OF THE ABYSS

John Paterson

The Australian Labor Party seeks to secure ". . . a rising standard of living, and social security, the cultivation of Australian national sentiment, democratic principles of freedom and equality to give all individuals positive inducements to achieve the realisation of their own capabilities, participation in the struggle of the people of the world for economic development, social security, self government and defence to ensure territorial security."

ALP Federal Platform, 1965

THE 26th November election is still in the future as I write. The outcome is likely to make the Johnson-Goldwater contest look like a close fight. The Labor Party, and in fact anyone who feels more comfortable under a system of two-party Government, must ask: "What's wrong, and where to from here?"

I want to take a fairly abstract view. There are some useful propositions about the relationship between attitudes and action which can help sort out doctrinal differences in the party. A number of things can also be said about the relation of organisational structure. This kind of approach produces better generalisations than the approach "I don't like his face," "He lacks principle," and "You're just an alternative-Liberal."

POLITICS AND PRINCIPLES

There are two main classes of reasons for the ALP's current disarray. The organisational structure is unstable and not closely related to our political goals. I'll talk about this later. The other main class revolves around the differences of interpretation of what our goals actually are. I'll deal with this first.

The above quote from the Federal Platform collects the more important of the ALP's ultimate goals. It reflects the basic values which underlie the day-to-day activities of the Party. It is important to distinguish value judgments like these from "factual" statements. Value judgments cannot be proved, they cannot be demonstrated to be right or wrong. It is a matter for the individual whether he accepts a certain value or not. When

the individual becomes a member of a political party this signifies his acceptance of the basic values of the party.

Individual members of the party may disagree about the relative importance of the various ultimate goals. If these disagreements become too large then the party cannot easily contain the differences of opinion; different values are things over which men fight—there is no **rational** accommodation. "Factual" statements **can** be proven right or wrong, on the basis of logic and evidence. "Fat people are happiest," is an example.

The Party should be able to accommodate large differences over the **factual** aspects of the platform. The factual propositions contained in the platform relate to what the party **will do**; the value statements state what the party **ultimately** seeks to achieve.

You can't pass a bill declaring "Henceforth the standard of living will rise"; you simply can't enact a value judgment. What you do is legislate for certain intermediate changes which you believe to be factually related to your ultimate values. Thus you might introduce a thirty-five hour week because you believe that this will raise the standard of living.

This may all seem like a very elaborate statement of the obvious. The lesson to be drawn from it may also seem obvious. The wild re-accrimination between party factions, accusations of "opportunist," "conservative," "alternative-Liberal," "communist stooge" and so on suggest that, obvious or not, the lesson has not been learned.

So I'll take the risk of elaborating the commonplace and say that I believe that one can never trade one's ultimate (value-based) goals for electoral success, without legitimately attracting the charge of opportunism. On the other hand the intermediate (factually-based) steps should be negotiable for political advantage. After all, introduction of a thirty-five hour working week can only contribute to a rising standard of living if we are in a position to actually introduce it. This means that electoral success **must** be one of the facts to be borne in mind when we are deciding on the factual steps which are to lead to our achievement of our ultimate goals.

To be absolutely honest with ourselves, there are already many components of the platform which were inserted not because they were clearly related to our ultimate goals, but rather to appease some noisy faction inside or outside the party. This is inevitable, and it is certainly not scandalous, because the ALP functions in the real world, not some tidy, ideologically-clean fantasy-land.

I am sick of being told about "principles" by people in the Party whose principles have somehow never taken them on to the losing side in internal party disputes. A "man of principle" is supposed to be one who adopts a position and sticks to it, whether it is a winner or a loser. This is fine so long as the position he sticks to is properly shown to be a basic social value. It is nonsense if the position is simply a tool which is supposed to help achieve a basic goal. It is sheer dishonesty to oppose changes in the factual content of the Party platform simply on the basis of "principle." Debate on the factual aspects of the platform must be based on facts, not values. The party should be able to conduct such debate without accusations of "sell-out" and what have you. At issue in such debate is not moral virtue but the electoral success which alone will permit the achievement of the Party's ultimate goals.

WHOM DO YOU READ?

There is another reason why members of the Labor Party often have such radically-different views of the factual world. This is related to their "authority beliefs." Apart from the narrow field of our immediate knowledge and experience we all have to rely on some form of authority for our data. We go to the Commonwealth Statistician, for instance, for information on the gross national product, to our medical practitioner on the state of our health. In less value-free fields we are more carefully selective. On the question of Vietnam, for instance, we choose carefully the people whose information we are prepared to accept as correct, or whose leadership on what should be

done we will follow. And generally we accept the authority of people who we believe see the world much as we do ourselves.

When a person whose authority we accept changes his position, we are thrown into the situation where we either have to follow his views and change our own position too, or reject his new views and claim that he has sold out or been misled. We have had an interesting example of this recently when Dr. Jim Cairns returned from South-East Asia, apparently holding a less clear-cut attitude than he had previously held on a number of questions. Some of Dr. Cairns' friends publicly questioned his good faith; others claimed that his statements were ambiguous or misquoted; some who had previously opposed Cairns now started to lend him their support.

This question of 'authority' is relevant to questions of 'image' and the pre-selection of candidates. The voting public lives with the political parties for three years between elections, and although no one remembers the details of parliamentary debate or individual statements, everyone does make cumulative judgments, everyone does say "Smith seems to know what he's talking about," "I wonder how the government's going to get round that one," and so on. This adds up to a political image which is far more important than a policy statement handed out a few weeks before an election.

We should also note that it seems likely that the characteristics making a person 'authoritative' are changing. Educational achievement and technical competence are becoming more important, and increasingly appeal to the individual aspirations of a large part of the electorate. Look at Harold Wilson—a grey individual, but with a heavy stamp of professional competence. The same thing applies to the Whitlam-Patterson-Menadue type of ALP parliamentarian. Bob Hawke of the ACTU projects ruthless competence. None of these can make a speech with the skill of Calwell at his best, and none can compete with Cairns for moral uplift: yet all can commend the support of an audience with an ingrained respect for technical excellence. Thus I support a political style which has this image of excellence as well as its human goals, rather than one which asks for acts of faith and emotional dedication. Only in this way can we go about re-creating the electoral appeal which has been dribbling away over the last ten years.

WINNING IS IMPORTANT

Menzies has often been ridiculed in Labor circles for doing nothing in his sixteen years in office. Nonsense. The social changes in this period reflected Menzies' political norms in a fundamental way. Australia now has a mass, property-owning bourgeoisie. There is a stronger (conservative) consensus of belief than ever before, the Australian traditions of radical innovation in the fields of social welfare and economic organisation have disappeared. Political opposition has been reduced to irrelevance, there is a general acceptance of authoritarian control in public life, there is a measurable trend to increased inequality of incomes and a regressive government fiscal structure.

This has come about because the ALP has offered no credible alternative to the government. This is the price paid by the nation for factional skirmishing and tolerance of electoral failure in the ALP.

It is a basic rule of organisational theory that once you know the goals you wish to reach, and measure your resources, then the correct structure of your organisation is specified. The overwhelming goal of the ALP at present must be to win power. Every year out of power progressively weakens the Party.

WHAT THEN CAN BE DONE?

Firstly, the ALP must adopt rational criteria for its internal operations. Appointments and pre-selections must cease to be—as they too often are—counters in private tactical games or rewards for services rendered. They must be seen as resources that can be used to win elections. Functioning as it does in a hostile environment, the ALP needs a highly sophisticated perception. Mistakes in staffing itself cannot be tolerated. The only safe criterion for selecting personnel for Party and political positions is demonstrated capacity.

But to get the right people into the right positions is the organisational problem. It can only be done by setting up a structure which provides a rational framework of operation for the individuals in it. Rewards and promotions, in other words, must automatically go to those who succeed. Others must be as speedily removed.

Any properly run business operates this way. Any such business or government department would fail if run any other way. Factionalism is no part of a rational structure, for factions look for the success of the faction before the success of the organisation. The "Trades Union Defence Committee" in the Victorian ALP is a good example of a faction which stifles discussion, makes inappropriate appointments and has a record of electoral failure. It should be regarded, on a managerial basis alone, as subversive of the goals of the Party.

The results of this kind of approach can be seen in the dead-weight of the trade union bloc at the state conferences, especially in Victoria. The rational basis for allocating places at such conferences should be "who has something to offer," not "who has the legal right to attend." The same kind of deficiency can be seen in the federal conference of the Party, where delegates normally represent the majority faction from each state—not the people who can contribute to electoral success.

STAYING SANE

Electoral success brings its own benefits. Above all it maintains organisational 'sanity.' Organisations, like living organisms, must continually test themselves out on their environment, monitoring perceptions and responses. They must 'learn' their environment and develop a functionally-oriented image of themselves. If organisations do not work in a real environment they have to manufacture a fantasy-environment

to give meaning to their existence. An organisation which does this is effectively insane.

The ALP is in this state. It regards seventeen years in the wilderness as a tribute to its moral virtue, to its adherence to 'principle.' This, of course, is simple a rationalisation designed to exonerate our leaders from personal responsibility for their failures. In fact, the Party is now stuffed with 'leaders' whose habits of mind and whose political future are geared to electoral failure. Such persons are to be found in the machine, satisfied with the power they wield over parliamentarians in opposition. They are to be found in the parliaments, aged beyond capacity for active service, and marooned because a party in opposition has only got a parliamentary seat to offer its pensioners.

How far can fantasy go? A long way, judging from a recent editorial in Fact (organ of the Victorian ALP), which blamed on the CIA the assassinations of Kennedy, Verwoerd and Ngo Dinh Diem, and attempts on the lives of Sukarno and Calwell. Meanwhile, basic policy decisions are evaded in order to avoid upsetting the balance of factional power. Jim Cairns is on record as saying that Australia has no real social problems and that our major differences with the government lie in foreign policy. He has also taken the opposite view. In government he would have to make up his mind.

THE STRONG-MAN SOLUTION

We cannot expect that dead-heads in the ALP will voluntarily relinquish their positions and make way for others. In addition the present organisational structure of the Labor Party prevents rational organisational decisions from being taken where they could have some effect.

How then can changes come? It would seem that the best we can hope for is that they will come from the top, at the hands of a ruthless federal leader, hell-bent for electoral success and recognising no loyalties other than the capacity to win. Organisationally speaking it doesn't matter whether such a leader comes from the "Right" or the "Left," though someone from the "Right" would probably have more chance of electoral success. In any case, the "Right-Left" distinction has no meaning other than that of denoting factional alliances within the ALP. The so-called "Left" in the ALP today consists in large part of men who represent the most conservative thinkers in the Party.

Above all, faced with the defeat in the November elections, the new Parliamentary caucus must avoid a compromise choice for leader. Such a choice would be a death warrant for the Party, and a bitter blow for democracy in Australia. Only by a strong mandate to the new leader, whoever he may be, can we even think of the Labor Party winning its way back to a position in which it can make a plausible bid for government.

RACE MATHEWS, WHO HERE REVIEWS DON RAWSON'S RECENT BOOK ON THE LABOR PARTY, IS AN EXPERIENCED ACTIVIST IN LABOR POLITICS AND IS SECRETARY OF THE FABIAN SOCIETY IN VICTORIA.

CONFRONTING PSEUDO-RADICALISM

Race Mathews

WHEN thinking about the ALP and its problems, it is worth keeping in mind some remarks made by Dennis Healey at the 1959 conference of the British Labour Party:

There are far too many people who have spoken from this rostrum in these last two days who seem to think that it is all right to do without votes. Some have even said so: it is better to lose elections, they say, than to win them, so long as we know we are fighting on the Socialist policy. And they seem to face with equanimity the idea of staying in Opposition—an Opposition that gets smaller and smaller at every election.

If they want to luxuriate complacently in moral righteousness in Opposition they can do it—but who is going to pay the price for their complacency? You can take the view that it is better to give up half a loaf if you cannot get the whole loaf—but the point is that it is not we who are giving up the half loaf. It is the people whom we are trying to help, in the country and in the world—they are the people who suffer if we lose elections. In Britain it is the unemployed and old-age pensioners; and outside Britain there are thousands and millions in Asia and Africa who desperately need a Labour Government in this country to help them. If you take the view that it is all right to stay in Opposition as long as your socialist heart is pure, you'll be all right Jack. You'll have your TV set, your motor-car and your summer holidays on the Continent—and still keep your socialist soul intact. The people who pay the price for your sense of moral satisfaction are the Africans—hundreds of thousands, millions, of them—being slowly forced into racial slavery; the Indians and Indonesians dying of starvation.

If you are prepared for them to pay the price of your sense of moral superiority, all right. But don't come to this conference and say that because of that you are better socialists than those who want to get a Labour Government in Britain. We are not just a Socialist Sunday School. We are not just a debating society. We are a great movement that wants to help real people living on this earth at the present time. We shall never be able to help them unless we get power.

Mr. Healey's views make an apt introduction to "Labor in Vain?" (Longmans, \$2.75), a new account by political scientist and sometime ALP member Don Rawson of the paths which have brought Labor in Australia to its current predicament.

"In the mid-course of our national life," writes Dr. Rawson, "the A.L.P. finds itself, like Dante at the beginning of the Inferno, in a dark wood. Its future, both in the short and the long term, is not so much gloomy as obscure. It does not seem, on the whole, to be faced with immediate prospects of decline, dissolution or replacement, but it has been reduced to its lowest level of influence since its earliest years."

If this description errs, it is on the side of generosity. Nevertheless, there are professional optimists within the Party who will think it harsh, or claim to, and Dr. Rawson should not be too surprised to find himself damned as a Grouper in some living rooms to which hitherto he has had ready access.

Moreover, not content to describe, he goes on to assign responsibility, and to talk of "the need to moderate the peculiar and deadly pseudo-radicalism of many Australian trade union officials, which has been almost equally productive of disruption and stagnation." For the orthodox, it will all seem rather like wearing army boots into the Great Mosque at Mecca, and then urinating on the Kaaba.

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Rawson's "pseudo-radicalism" and the brand of socialism assailed by Healey have shared a common rhetoric within their respective parties. Healey's opponents, however—and they included his future leader, Harold Wilson—were entrenched in defence of the proposition that principles should not be sacrificed for electoral advantage; once their point was won, they emerged as inspired modernisers to play their part in preparation for the great victory of 1964. By contrast, Australian pseudo-radicals call themselves the "Left" neither knowing nor caring what this vaguely agreeable term involves, and exhibit attitudes ranging from indifference through hosti-

lity towards innovations which might put the Party in a position to implement its platform.

This is clearly evident in the case of the Victorian Branch of the ALP, which has been administered for more than ten years by a group of trade unionists noisily dedicated to socialism. Over this period, the branch has built up an unenviable record of declining membership, repeated electoral disasters, failure to modernise out-dated organisational structures and techniques, neglect to the point of sabotage of effective policy-making and indifference towards all forms of political education. Nor is there evidence to suggest that the controllers of the Party would have had it otherwise. Information on the state of the Party has been suppressed, intra-Party communication discouraged and honest criticism stigmatised as disloyalty.

This is not the showing of a group which can be described in any meaningful sense as "Left," or of individuals for whom radicalism is anything more than a convenient pose. The fact is that, among the small group of union officials who control the Victorian branch, a serious interest in politics is atypical. For most, the ALP is simply an asset in union in-fighting too valuable to be allowed to pass into the hands of factions other than their own; their concern for the Party is vocational rather than ideological, and their free-flowing socialist rhetoric should be seen purely as a means of saving the faces of allies without whom it would be difficult to maintain even the pretence of conducting a real political operation.

These allies are branch members and parliamentarians who hold seats on the Central Executive. While some serve for ambition's sake and some to preserve a base—however wretched and inadequate—from which to address the nation on matters of high policy, most simply carry on in the hope that from time to time they may exert a marginal influence in favor of politically sensible conduct. All hold their places on sufferance, and the state of the Party is a measure of their impotence.

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This impotence springs from the lack of an independent power base within the Party, itself a function of an internal gerrymander which accords actual members of the ALP less say in the affairs of their Party than members of the Liberal Party, the D.L.P. and the Communist Party who happen to belong to an affiliated union. For every delegate to the ruling State Conference who represents Party members, there are three delegates representing trade unionists who may in some sense be described as Labor and two delegates credentialled on the strength of unionists who do not even vote for the Party. The inflated union majorities produced under this system dominate the Conference and dictate the composition of the Central Executive; the branch member who secures office does so because he is acceptable to the dominant union faction, and retains it on good behavior.

In these circumstances, it is understandable that radicals and socialists within the ALP should feel that they are faced with a dilemma—how to choose between a "Left" whose administration of the Party has been characterised by massive incompetence and whose radicalism is a fraud, and a "Right" not necessarily any better at organisation and ideologically repugnant. In fact, the situation is both better and worse than this; stripped of their labels, "Left" and "Right" within the ALP as at present constituted turn out to

be the same sort of people, mouthing slogans divergent in form but identical in vacuity.

Viewed in this perspective, Dr. Rawson's "need to moderate the peculiar and deadly pseudo-radicalism of many Australian trade union officials" becomes rather a need to re-politicise the Labor Party. The means by which this goal might be attained are worth considering.

As a pre-requisite for successful action, Labor radicals (the term can serve for socialists as well) must break themselves of the habit of accepting or rejecting other groups within the Party according to the labels they wear. It is no good appreciating intellectually that the "Left" is as indifferent as the "Right" to radical values and acting as if the situation is otherwise. Proposals from either faction should be isolated from their source, subjected to an objective analysis of potential for advancing radical goals and supported or opposed accordingly. Once such a state of mind is established, mistakes like accepting the abolition of direct representation of State Electoral Councils on the Central Executive because it was "Left" policy, or opposing the Wyndham proposals for organisational reform because their source was "Right," may be avoided.

The potential of existing institutions within the Party should be exploited to the full. Policy revision and restatement is an obvious field for radical activity. When the pseudo-radicals abolished the Standing Policy Committee and initiated their policy of studied neglect of the specialist committees, many radicals simply abandoned the whole project in disgust. A more appropriate response would have been to step up policy-making activity, elect a new co-ordinating committee of representatives from the specialist bodies and see that specific, thoroughly researched proposals were produced in greater numbers than ever. If these proposals seemed simply to be accumulating in head office pigeon holes, unofficial channels could be opened up for their circulation to local branches, affiliated unions and the parliamentary Labor parties. In this way, the destructive attitude of the pseudo-radicals would be simultaneously confronted and by-passed.

Every instance of official inertia, indifference or incompetence influencing the performance of the Party as a political organisation should be subjected to systematic exposure, with a factual account spread throughout the Party, probing questions raised at every opportunity and a positive alternate line of action indicated. When the pseudo-radicals try to excuse the scandalous membership position by claiming that the ALP in Victoria is a cadre party, their contention should not pass unchallenged. What percentage of members attend branch meetings? What percentage participate in other Party activities? What measures are taken to familiarise members with the Party's history, philosophy and policies? How are members trained for their responsibilities within the Party? In view of the answers to these questions, how can they apply to the Party a term descriptive of the highest political literacy and intense activism?

*

More constructive use should be made of individual radicals who happen to secure election to the Central Executive. Instead of being wiped off as hopeless sell-outs, these members should become the object of unremitting moral pressure for organisational innovation, and consistently be reminded of their obligation to raise the organisational problems of local branches, electorate councils and electorate assemblies at the Execu-

Recollections

The student returned through town
returned all down that windbare avenue
where dryness flittered past him
(dust, and bus tickets for completed jour-
neys,
dead leaves, having given up providing food
for trees,
the soot and ash of burnt possessions)
the dry things of the world where he moved.

Eyes avoiding his, yet meeting his, sug-
gested
they were privy to some guilt. And wrapped
about the people,
clothes experimented with their flesh.
He rested when he reached the river;
a phrase of music shrank his head
with its tremendous silence, one perpetual
cadence
over and over, trombones again again.

But he himself was rising up
while whole mythologies of death
unrolled their carpets of human hair on
cobbled crowns.
And suddenly the night
lifted its shaggy face from the city,
a face held only by the sticking ends of
beard;
and hypnotized him with its eyes.

All things were shown
to have no need of explanation.
The eyebrows of the old bridge marked no
surprise
as he slid his myriad recollections
like semen out along the worming tide;
nor even quivered when he stood there on
the parapet
and did not jump.

The student shook that face back under-
ground;
and cursed the music for unbalancing his
senses.
He had no room for art or death this night;
soon he'd try the polish learnt from later
loves
upon his first and most-resented mistress.
Dust blew past, dead leaves and tickets.
He wandered on, returning, hands in pockets.

RODNEY HALL

tive table. Has the Executive taken note of the tactics employed by the Young Republicans of California in the 1964 presidential election campaign? Does it feel that there is an application for similar tactics in Australia? If so, what arrangements have been made to familiarise electorate councils and assemblies with them?

Again, such Executive members should be encouraged not to sell themselves too short. Although their places are held at the pleasure of the ruling union faction, this group's distaste for publicity gives them a weapon of sorts. Skilfully employed, resignations and threats of resignation may secure action on such crucial matters as membership campaigns and programs of political education where simple logic and common sense are unavailing.

These suggestions are indicative rather than exhaustive. The point to be grasped is that, while the gerrymander may perpetuate pseudo-radicalism's stranglehold on the Party for a very long

time, this need not mean complete stagnation. Ways can be devised to by-pass obstructionism, and there are techniques to wring constructive actions from the most unexpected quarters. Party members who are serious about their politics will regard involvement in these efforts not simply as permissible but as obligatory.

For those so involved, "Labor in Vain?" offers a useful historical corrective to notions that present difficulties are of recent origin or attributable to particular individuals within the Party hierarchy. It is an index of the low level of political dispute within the ALP that issues are invariably personalised; radicals who fall into this trap risk repeated disappointments, for a change in leadership or the removal of this or that individual from an executive can solve little or nothing. It is a class and an institution which must be dragged—screaming, no doubt—into the real world of contemporary Australian politics.

THE TWO PREVIOUS STATEMENTS ARE BY THOSE ACTIVELY INTERESTED IN POLITICS. HERE ONE OF THE UNENCHANTED SPEAKS.

CONTRACTING OUT

Richard Zoeller

I THINK it was Walter Bagehot, writing in his classic "The English Constitution," who quoted the remark of a severe institutional critic that the only cure for admiring the House of Lords was to go and have a look at it. I feel the same way about our Parliament here. Masochism sometimes compels me to enter the Victorian House, and disillusionment very soon drives me out again. It's this acute frustration with our parliament, with our elected representatives, that stops me from casting my vote for any party, or anyone, in the coming federal elections.

All right. Already I hear the demonstrators at my door, the cries of wilful neglect of my democratic rights, of traitor to my birthright. Immediately I have become the butt for the joke whose caption reads: "Well you can't blame me if the Liberals got in for another term, I didn't vote." Yet, I am not a traitor to democracy; for surely in a democracy I have a right not to exert my right to vote.

You all no doubt have your favorite symptoms for the ills of the parliamentary system. Let me list mine. There's the "political man," the man seeking preselection, the man already sitting on one of the far benches. He's too often egocentric, in politics to make a name for himself, in search of power and respect, too often motivated by self-interest rather than by the most necessary qualities that a representative of the people should have: altruism, understanding and humility. He's given his chance of pursuing his goals by a local selection committee, interested in finding a good party man, and he stands for an electorate that he knows he has a good chance of winning because an electoral officer's hand twitched at the moment when he was drawing the boundary through the industrial suburb, and that suburb is no longer in the electorate. In this last circumstance, I know that my vote will not help to elect the man that I want to see in the House.

Even if my choice reaches Parliament without a blemish on his skin, the power and the discipline of the party will corrupt him, will cripple his initiative. He is then left trying to resolve a trioka, between himself, his electorate, and his party. Because of the type attracted to politics

and the discipline of the party, debates have become almost meaningless. The only purpose that the debates now serve is a sounding board for party or ministerial promotion, to secure goodwill, to air personal grievances, to make news (preferably spectacular, so that one can become a press figure), since the outcome of the debate is well-nigh certain. Debates therefore lapse into the general rather than the particular; they are about issues that in all likelihood are the whim of a public servant. What is most unlikely is that it will be about an issue that the electorate concerns itself with. It's certainly not likely to be about an issue like the White Australia Policy, which would embarrass both parties: these topics have tacitly been approved by parties as undebatable. More than likely, though, it will be on a subject that some small pressure group is interested in; and to appease this group, parliament goes through the motions. Then at Question Time, the hub of the democratic parliamentary system, the intelligent questions are lost amongst the unintelligent, and the Dorothy Dixers. The answers are often not to the point (unfortunately this is taken too often as a sign of political prowess, rather than of the answerer's complete inability to know what the questioner wants—something that reflects badly on both people) or they are prepared, thus dispelling the illusion that a Question Without Notice has been asked.

Like it, or not, this is our parliamentary system, with all its imperfections. Most people acquiesce in them, I don't. This is not even to hint that I don't want democracy, I do. What I don't want is democracy in this form.

In its present form it is ineffective as a guide to the earnestness of the people. What it is a guide to is the influence of the pressure groups, the party, the individual member, a public servant. That a McCarthy could live just ten years ago and, in the name of democracy, permit and carry out such a vindictive witch hunt, is indeed symptomatic of the ineffectiveness of democracy to counter the influence of one man. But although I'm fascinated by this tragi-comedy of politics and unable to accept the necessity of the power that the politicians wield, since it is often expressed by obtuse, self-seeking zealots to the detriment of individual freedom, I do not, repeat not, favor the anarchist's, the Guy Fawkes' remedy.

Clearly such a solution will not make parliament and the democratic system more effective. Just how it is to be made more effective, I'm not

sure. After all I am no political scientist. But I do favor higher salaries for members, in the hope that suitable men, from groups up until now not interested in parliamentary government, will be attracted to nominate. It's quite arguable that this would attract an even more inferior candidate into the political ring. But my point is that something has to be tried to attract more suitable, altruistic candidates, so why not try this? If it doesn't work, then try something else. But since in the final analysis it is the party that holds the absolute power, and much power corrupts absolutely, then clearly the party must be re-formed.

More initiative and scope must be given to the parliamentary members, or more positively, the party's power must be diluted. Just how this is

done is open to question. Perhaps more 'conscience' votes should be allowed, perhaps there should be less emphasis on Whipping, perhaps a complete revision of the party bureaucracy, and party structure, which will give more responsibility and more emphasis to the parliamentary member.

If the way is made clear for more individual thought, less emphasis placed upon personal and party power, then more approachable candidates may offer themselves for election. It's a vicious circle, but a start has to be made somewhere if parliament is to become more effective. It has to become more effective if I am to cast a vote for a candidate, and if it becomes more effective then I will have more confidence that it is a worthy barometer, capable of reflecting the pressure of the electorate.

And here John McLaren reviews a new book which seeks to diagnose the Australian malaise . . .

Affluent Materialists

Craig McGregor: "Profile of Australia" (Hodder and Stoughton, \$6.00).

The attempt to define a national identity has become a major industry in Australia in recent years. The big joint-stock enterprises, like Peter Coleman's "Australian Civilisation," or Davies' and Encel's "Australian Society," have ranged broadly and deeply through the facts, figures and expert opinions on the market, but there is still room for the agile independent like Donald Horne, whose "Lucky Country" remains a masterpiece of invective disguised as information. Now, however, Horne is being challenged in his corner of the market by a sharp-shooting competitor in the person of Craig McGregor, who pits against Horne's Muggeridge-like cynicism and mandarin radicalism, packaged in a vulgarly proletarian style, a new, fact-filled, Carnaby Street-tailored, Bondi-and Beatle-styled product aimed at the young and the coolly uncommitted.

McGregor's product, however, is not based on as thorough market-research as was Mr. Horne's. While "The Lucky Country" was slanted towards the radical conservatives of the Bulletin school, with their impatience of both the idealism of the older Left and the stupidity of the ruling Right, Mr. McGregor's "Profile of Australia" is aimed uncertainly somewhere between the surfer clique and the young businessman who is considering leaving his home in England or Canada to set up house on these sunny shores. The tightly packed facts will certainly be of interest to the latter, but they somewhat blur the image of affluent hedonism calculated to appeal to the former, while the prevailing tone of radical dissent which gives the book its unity may give offence to both.

It is unfortunate that Craig McGregor has allowed his book to suffer from this uncertainty, for its pages are most refreshingly free from the myths of both Left and Right. While he himself is committed, it is a commitment to common sense rather than to ideology, to people as they are rather than as we might wish them to be.

His two examples of the Australian legend are Midge Farrelly, world surfing champion, and Kevin Sarre, world champion shearer and co-developer of the "tally-hi" methods of shearing, a method which he characteristically developed as much through study as through practice. These young men represent for McGregor the new type of Australian—world-beaters in their own field, "cool, introspective, intelligent," pragmatists who respect ability. They are as far from the horny-handed mateship of yesterday as they are from the party rooms and board tables of today—although they are not so far from the dangerous young men of the Liberal Party.

Yet although the author concentrates on the hard facts of today's world, his book gives the impression of description rather than analysis. There is no attempt to discriminate between the youngsters who crowd to the surf beaches and those who queue for tickets to youth concerts. We do not know whether the patrons of the teenage passion parties are the same as those who march to ban the bomb or send Holt to Vietnam. In fact, the meagre paragraph given to dissent suggests that it is very much a fringe activity, whereas the tenor of the book as a whole suggests that, beneath the surface of affluence and conformity, there is an impatience with the older inhibiting norms which could nourish a far-reaching radical protest and progress. The chapter on politics, with its detailed analysis of ten years of irrelevant charades by selfish old men, strengthens the impression of an unknown generation waiting, not in the wings but in the pits. Unfortunately, McGregor does not explore the implications of the fact that the only young men attracted to politics today are the well-groomed opportunists of the Liberal Party and the fanatical idealists of the D.L.P.

This dichotomy of generations runs as a constant theme through McGregor's account. On the one hand there are the beer-soaked diggers, on the station and on the bench, and on the other the impatient youngsters, committed to the beach or the brick veneer. If McGregor is on the side of the latter, it is not because he rejects the ideals of an older Australia, but because he sees the new generation as preserving the best of them as rele-

vant to today. We may no longer as a nation be egalitarian, but then we never were, and the myth has become an excuse for every form of indifference and injustice. Today's youngsters may be meritocratic in their own style of life, but they are more concerned with pleasure than status, and still respect a man for what he is rather than for what he was.

"Profile of Australia" does an excellent demolition job on the influences which cramp our style of living—the pressures of conformity, the authoritarian streak in our nature which believes that a spell of national service "makes a man of him,"

and contradicts our distrust of any formal authority such as the police, the philistinism of public life, an education system designed to perpetuate a social elite, the distrust which still persists of the unusual. It shows how we are faced with the alternatives of developing the possibilities of individual freedom or selling out for a mess of stereotyped affluence. But it does not succeed in giving the feel of living in this country at this stage of its history. I hope that in his next book Craig McGregor will throw away his facts and let us have a data-free analysis of what it means to live in this society he has so well documented.

BAGMAN'S BALLAD

The boozy ballads are all sung,
The deeds are done, the ghosts are laid,
But look! around that river bend
Some bagman stretches in the shade.

And the immortal swagman goes
Singing down the centuries,
His jumbuck in his tucker bag,
His shadow on the blue-gum trees.

The low grey curtain of the scrub
Shakes to the mythic bunyip's scream,
In burn of sun, in frost, in rum,
The hatter spins his dazzling dream.

Where is he running through the bush,
Tolling his bell of billycan?
The ballad, like a Bathurst burr,
Sticks to his back, poor witless man.

And when he drops that dusty swag
Stands up and fights him on the road.
Where can he go? Matilda is
An awkward archetypal load.

We see him sometimes, just at dusk,
And know him now for what he is,
Hiding in stolen overcoat
Nightmare and dream that once were his.

The shadow of himself grows big,
Big as Mephistopheles,
He dodges through the stringybarks,
Playing Ned Kelly in the trees.

Do not disturb him, let him go,
He'll build a campfire by the creek,
The ashes of his glory will
Be cold and desolate next week.

Some ghostly town, some spindly pub,
Will quiet the torment in his brain,
Sweeney by the verandah post,
Tipping his bottle at the rain.

There's Jimmy Woodsers in the bar,
And whisky, beer, and shearers' rums,
While Kelly's ghostly armor gleams
Like sunlight, sliding through the gums.

And the immortal swagman goes
Singing down the centuries,
He hangs a sheepskin on the fence,
A shadow on the bluegum trees.

DOROTHY HEWETT

"The reform of the A.L.P., however, is a long and tedious task; and it is significant that in the last few years the left has turned to other ways of influencing the community. It has been the driving force behind most of the reform movements in the country. It has provided the backbone for such groups as the Humanist Society, the Council for Civil Liberties and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. It has inspired most of the protest activities, from teach-ins to mass demonstrations to peace conferences, which are virtually the only counterbalance to the lopsided approach of the mass media to public affairs. And, most important of all, it has played the traditional role of supplying the ideas and new initiatives upon which, eventually, the political parties and other power groups are forced to act."

Craig McGregor: "Profile of Australia"

THREE YEARS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

Ken Buckley

A young man in a public lavatory is seized and charged with wilful and indecent exposure; Aborigines in northern Queensland are forcibly moved from their homes by officials; a man is beaten up in a police station because he is cheeky; a boy finds himself charged with carnal knowledge because, although the girl does not wish to lay charges, the Registrar-General automatically gives the police details of births to unmarried mothers under the age of seventeen—the existence of issues like these, and the failure of the organised forces of the legislature and administration to ensure justice in all cases, led three years ago to the formation of the Council for Civil Liberties (C.C.L.) in Sydney.

The idea of forming such a body had been discussed frequently by the Left in previous years, but action had been deferred for two reasons. One was a feeling that an immediate incident was needed to launch the organisation. The other reason was the desirability of finding a competent secretary willing to devote a lot of time to the work.

A solution to both problems came in 1963, when there was a series of incidents which caused public disquiet about police behavior in Sydney. One of those incidents concerned myself, and I was so infuriated by the official stone-wall I encountered when I made a complaint about Detective-Sergeant H. Giles that I took on the job of secretary of the C.C.L. (This policeman, chief of the vice squad in Darlinghurst, resigned suddenly from the force in 1965 in a well-publicised upset.)

In its first two years the C.C.L., as the only body in the field, tried to cope with issues of civil liberties outside as well as inside New South Wales. Then independent bodies were established, on local initiative, in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. South Australians apparently feel that with Don Dunstan as Attorney-General all is well, while Tasmania remains inert. The C.C.L. has been glad to see these developments, where they have taken place, and has aided the newer bodies. Nevertheless there is of course room for more interstate co-operation on such matters as censorship.

It is too early to assess the work of the newer bodies. This survey is concerned only with the C.C.L. After three years, it is time to take stock of that organisation, to consider its achievements and failings and its future.

First, the achievements. On censorship, the highlight was the publication in New South Wales of "The Trial of Lady Chatterley," which was made possible by the C.C.L. guaranteeing responsibility for the legal defence if any prosecution were launched. Following this successful challenge to the federal censorship system, some other books were taken off the list of prohibited imports—notably Baldwin's "Another Country," for which the C.C.L. had been planning a similar challenge. The C.C.L. also arranged for legal counsel to defend (successfully) the magazine Oz against a charge of publishing obscene material.

In relation to police behavior, the C.C.L. has undertaken the defence in a number of prosecutions. The right to demonstrate was supported by defending 24 students arrested in the course of a political demonstration in Sydney in 1964: of these, 10 were fully acquitted and the other fourteen had the charges against them dismissed under the first offender's section of the Crimes Act. Mr. K. Brindle, an Aboriginal, was backed through court-hearings which first acquitted him of a charge of using insulting words to policeman and then awarded him £400 damages for malicious prosecution. In 1966, C.C.L. lawyers acting for the father of a 17-year-old boy shot

dead by a policeman demanded a jury for the inquest—the first time there has been an inquest jury in N.S.W. for about a century. The jury, in its findings, recommended that police regulations concerning the use of firearms should be amended.

More generally, the C.C.L. advocates the setting up of an independent tribunal to investigate complaints by members of the public against police; the establishment of an Ombudsman; and the payment of costs, in appropriate cases, to persons acquitted of criminal charges. There are fair prospects of success on these points in N.S.W. Other matters taken up with varying degrees of success range from questions of naturalisation—e.g. successful advocacy of abolition of the discriminatory 15-year residence rule for non-Europeans—to land-resumption procedure and the legal ban on marijuana.

The record is a good one. The achievements, of which the above is not an exhaustive list, have been so demonstrable that there is no longer any straining, natural to a new body, to justify its existence. Indeed, the C.C.L. is now so well established that it can afford to be self-critical in public.

The membership of the C.C.L. is now about 750, and it is still growing. Most of its members are middle-class people, especially from the professions—academics, lawyers, doctors, architects, etc. It is a highly 'respectable' body of people, including for example a lieutenant-colonel and a regimental sergeant-major! Support in the form of membership from working-class people and trade unionists has been disappointingly poor. In part, this has resulted from the fact that membership is open only to individuals. The N.C.C.L. in Britain provides for affiliation by such bodies as trade unions (which incidentally means more income, the subscription being based on the membership of the affiliated body), but the C.C.L. decided against such a policy, on the ground that outside organisations should be given no opportunity to dominate it. In fact, some trade unions maintain liaison by paying for the membership of one of their officers, who is then simply an ordinary member.

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The C.C.L. considers that it has learnt from one mistake made by some of its predecessors in Australia and elsewhere: it has strictly adhered to the requirement in its constitution to be non-party and non-sectarian. This has not been as easy as it may seem, for the views of members of the committee of the organisation range over almost the whole political spectrum (though this is not so of their religious views). In the common interest, those members with strong political views have had to resist the temptation to allow their instincts to color policy, especially when the question at issue is whether civil liberties are really involved.

This question of definition crops up repeatedly, sometimes in relatively minor matters such as fluoridation or whether a man is telling the truth in saying that he was assaulted by a policeman, sometimes in more serious form. Thus, by general agreement of members, no stand has been taken in relation to Australia's involvement in Vietnam—though this neutrality certainly does not preclude support for the rights of people to demonstrate about the matter. But what of conscription? Or, more specifically, the sending of conscripts to Vietnam? Conscription is obviously an interference with individual liberty but so, in a less important way, are traffic laws. There are

no absolutes where freedom is concerned. The C.C.L. does not oppose conscription per se, though it supports the rights of conscientious objectors.

As may be seen from these examples, the C.C.L. view of what constitutes civil liberty tends to be restricted. To a considerable extent, this is due to a conscious attempt to find a consensus of opinion amongst members and to create a certain image in the public mind. That image is one of an organisation which is not ratbag, not given to making wild public statements, but which can be relied upon to act independently where principles of civil liberties are involved—and which therefore must be treated with respect by politicians and others. Perhaps partly for this reason, few M.P.s of any party have become members of the C.C.L. On the whole, this image has been projected successfully, though not by advertising methods. For example, it is clear from the pains taken by a number of government Ministers to deal with points raised that they do not regard the C.C.L. as a body which can be conveniently ignored or brushed aside.

This policy of the C.C.L., as evolved in practice, entails certain drawbacks and limitations. Radicals may well feel a degree of impatience with the organisation: it is slow to come to conclusions (except on individual cases where a decision is urgently needed), it is rather shy of publicity or public protest (the officers have to refer to the committee before making a public statement), and it is essentially defensive. These criticisms are valid. Publicity should be the lifeblood of an organisation such as the C.C.L., yet it has never held a press conference or even a public meeting (as distinct from meetings for members). The C.C.L. takes the offensive in some ways—e.g. by urging change in such laws as those relating to vagrancy and immigration—but it has never considered doing the sort of job that Student Action for Aborigines does (though students and Aborigines who fall foul of the police in such action are given legal assistance by the C.C.L.).

On the other hand, it may reasonably be claimed that this lack of full effectiveness in methods has probably been a necessary price for building up an organisation which is demonstrably independent and non-party. There must be give and take amongst members, especially those with pronounced views—and many of the matters dealt with by C.C.L. are necessarily political in a broad sense. Initially, there was some degree of suspicion amongst members of the committee: lawyers wondered whether radicals would not try to dominate the organisation for political purposes, whilst the latter wondered whether such a middle-class and cautious body could really be effective. Both sides took a chance, and it has worked out very well. Mutual confidence has been established on the basis of conviction as to the genuineness of the other's concern for civil liberties.

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The work of lawyers in the C.C.L. is particularly important. It has been a surprising development; nobody, including the few lawyers interested from the start, expected that so many lawyers, especially barristers of first-class calibre, would join the C.C.L. This probably stems partly from the absence of a Haldane Society and the relative ineffectiveness of the Australian section of the International Commission of Justice. More important has been the work amongst their colleagues of the initial few lawyers who believed that the C.C.L. would be an independent body—the law is a notoriously conservative profession.

The C.C.L. could not have achieved what it has without the aid of these lawyers. Quite apart from the legal advice freely given, there is the matter of legal fees in court cases. The C.C.L.'s financial resources consist of subscriptions of \$2 per year per member, plus donations—a paltry sum which could be swallowed up in a few legal cases. What happens in fact is that when a lawyer who is on the committee (and nearly half the 21-man committee are lawyers) agrees to take a case, no fees are charged by him; in other cases, taken by lawyers who are not members of the committee, a reduced fee is negotiated. These are all cases where the person concerned is unable to bear the cost of legal fees.

The influence of lawyers is partly responsible for the C.C.L.'s shyness of publicity, especially in individual cases. Reasonably enough, the lawyers' prime concern is to win such cases as the C.C.L. decides to support; and they believe that public knowledge that the C.C.L. is backing the case might well prejudice it in the eyes of some magistrates and judges. Consequently, the C.C.L.'s interest is generally not revealed until court action is over—by which time it is often too late for the C.C.L. to claim credit for the part it has played.

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It may be that this cautiousness has been pushed too far in some cases. For instance, in 1965 the C.C.L. gave full support to a group of students and Aborigines who were arrested in the course of an attempt to de-segregate a cinema at Walgett. The case was fought hard in court, with the defending Q.C. arguing that there was no *prima facie* case against the accused: a color bar operated in the upstairs part of the cinema which was therefore not a public place, and the claim that the events occurred in a public place was an essential element in the charges laid. It was a brilliant defence, but the case was lost eventually—though, under the first offender's section of the Crimes Act, no convictions were recorded. It must be admitted, however, that the C.C.L., in its efforts to secure an acquittal in court, lost sight of the fact that where a principle is at stake the person charged may prefer a full airing of his grievance irrespective of whether he is convicted. The student who was principally concerned in this case was an idealist fighting for Aboriginal rights; he would probably have welcomed full publicity and not worried much if this had lessened his chance of acquittal.

Leaving aside particular victories, what has the C.C.L. achieved broadly in the field of civil liberties? Anyone who reads the recent publication, "Freedom in Australia," by Enid Campbell and H. Whitmore, will see that there is a great deal that needs to be done to preserve and extend civil liberties. In some matters the C.C.L. has found itself up against a blank wall of officialdom. Thus the Minister for Immigration, in cases where his Department rejects applications for naturalisation (from people who have lived in

Australia for the requisite number of years), has been urged to give the applicants reasons for rejection and to provide a right of appeal to an independent tribunal, thus avoiding any suggestion of discrimination on political or other arbitrary grounds. The minister has refused to do this, relying on the threadbare argument of "long established policy." What next?

Even in relation to its two main spheres of activity, censorship and the police, the C.C.L. cannot claim any revolutionary change in the system: books are still banned, films are still cut; arbitrary police behavior of various kinds is still common. But as against this, there are intangible improvements to be taken into account. The Customs Department did not relish being made to look foolish over "The Trial of Lady Chatterley," and it is well aware that similar action could be sprung upon it in future. It is likely that some books which we have been allowed to read would have been prohibited imports a year or so ago. Similarly, the Vice Squad in Sydney has been remarkably reluctant to prosecute for alleged obscenity since the Oz case.

Since their big failure over the student demonstration in 1964, the police in Sydney have been very circumspect in dealing with demonstrations—except on the occasion when demonstrators deliberately invited arrest by a sit-down in a street. Policemen do not like being put in the position of having to justify (or lie about) their arbitrary behavior; hence their tendency to pick on members of minority groups, such as Aborigines and beatniks, who cannot be expected to fight back. But an indefinable element of caution is induced in police ranks by news of a Q.C. appearing at a country town (Walgett) and three barristers turning up to secure the acquittal of six youths on vagrancy charges (Sydney, June 1966).

The secretary of the C.C.L., who has said rude things about some policemen from time to time, was from the start warned by friends, including lawyers, that he was likely to be "framed." It has not happened. (In fact, he was arrested—and acquitted—on a charge of offensive behavior in 1965, but this was not a frame-up.) The omnipresent bogey of the police force to the ordinary citizen is not what it was since the C.C.L. was established, and that alone has been worth working for.

In a sense, the Council for Civil Liberties now stands at a crossroads. It can go on quite comfortably in its established but limited ways, and it will continue to do much good work. Or it can stake out fresh paths (the right to go on strike? homosexuality?), with invigorated methods. It can go for more publicity and speed of action, more general educational work through publications and public meetings, more pressure-group activity amongst politicians and others—and, essential to all this and interacting upon it, many more members and greater financial resources. A solid base has been built in the past three years.

Civil Liberties Addresses

Secretary, Council for Civil Liberties, G.P.O. Box 930, Sydney, N.S.W.

Secretary, Council for Civil Liberties, Box 33, University Post Office, St. Lucia, Brisbane, Q.

Secretary, Victorian Council for Civil Liberties, P.O. Box 167, South Yarra, Victoria.

Secretary, Council for Civil Liberties, G.P.O. Box T1816, Perth, W.A.

CIVIL LIBERTIES...

In Victoria

THE Victorian Council for Civil Liberties was formed in April 1966, and now has a membership of 350. The Victorian body was initially formed by various members of the New South Wales Council who were resident in Melbourne, and the two organisations work closely together. At the same time there is some continuity between the present Victorian Council and the old Australian Council for Civil Liberties who was for so long identified with the name of Brian Fitzpatrick, for several members of our committee were formerly associated with the ACL.

Our aims are the same as those of the N.S.W. body. We seek to act as a pressure group on issues of civil liberty, to provide legal representation, and to educate the public by the publication of such pamphlets as "If you are Arrested." We have active sub-committees on police conduct, legislative reform, administrative justice, freedom of expression, racial discrimination and publications. Among specific matters in which we are interested are reform of the Police Offences Act, Commonwealth censorship legislation, invasions of privacy, abortion, vagrancy legislation, and the appointments of an ombudsman and administrative appeals tribunals. We plan an active publishing program, we correspond frequently with government departments, and we have provided legal aid in the Farrago "obscenity" case and in a case involving a man being shot by the police.

We have arranged for observers to be present at demonstrations and we are currently investigating complaints arising from the visit of President Johnson to Melbourne. We have recently held a forum on censorship.

Both the N.S.W. and the Victorian civil liberties organisations are representative of Liberal, Labor and political thinking, and proceed on the assumption that civil liberties issues are not essentially Left/Right issues. Such evidence as exists suggests that there are as many authoritarians on the political Left as on the Right, if indeed these terms are meaningful. There is little to choose between the Liberal Party and the Labor Party in terms of legislative action on civil liberties issues. Neither party has outlawed the use of electronic bugging devices, provided for the presence of an independent person during police interrogations, liberalised the law in relation to such issues as vagrancy, homosexuality, abortion and Indian hemp smoking, or taken any effective action on a whole variety of associated issues.

Enid Campbell's and Harry Whitmore's recently published "Freedom in Australia" makes the valid point that government inactivity in these matters largely reflects the apathy of the people. A survey conducted in Melbourne this year by the Fabian Society showed that there was little difference between Liberal and Labor voters on such issues as aid for Asia, treatment of Aborigines and book censorship. But Liberal

voters were rather more likely to favor capital punishment (61% to 52%), whereas A.L.P. voters were more likely to favor placing orderly demonstrations against conscription under greater restrictions, or banning them altogether (34% to 29%), although many of these A.L.P. voters were against conscription!

JOHN BENNETT

In Queensland

IN Queensland the police now demand that every member of a group which wishes to demonstrate on some issue apply to have permits which will permit them to carry placards or distribute leaflets. Each permit—if it is granted—costs one dollar! This new regulation is of recent origin. It is not, of course, applied all the time or to all groups. In fact when a deputation recently interviewed the responsible Minister on this matter, he expressed disbelief. He hadn't been told!

So much for the state of civil liberties in the sunshine state. In a climate like this it will come as no surprise to report that the politicians and the mass media have not rushed to the support of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties. Earlier this year, at the initial attempt to form this Council, the meeting was taken over by a number of fire-eating anti-Communists and an 'Association' for Civil Liberties formed. (The word 'Council' was deemed to have sinister echoes of an earlier organisation.) In view of the partisan nature of the 'Association' resignations were numerous, and subsequently a genuine Council for Civil Liberties was formed, with a widely-based committee. This body includes three university staff members, an Anglican Canon, a prominent Quaker, a theological professor and a well-known member of the Australian Labor Party. We expect to be joined shortly by a leading member of the Liberal Party and a lawyer. On our Legal Advisory Panel we have, among others, a senior lecturer in law and a prominent Queensland barrister.

One of our sub-committees at the moment is investigating censorship in Queensland, and working closely with the University Dramatic Society here. Another group is preparing a legal aid booklet on the police power of arrest, with special attention to Aborigines. We are also preparing to conduct a test case over police interference with demonstrations.

The Council seems set for a steady growth both in its own strength and its public acceptance from now on. It is certainly desperately needed. As Ken Knight, senior lecturer in public administration at the University of Queensland, has said recently: "It is not enough to pay lip-service to the citizen's right to protest—dissent should be actively encouraged. In Brisbane it is not even tolerated."

L. R. SMITH

WE ILLUSTRATE SOME ISSUES OF CIVIL LIBERTIES WITH A STORY BY LLOYD DAVIES, A FREMANTLE SOLICITOR, AND AN ARTICLE BY DAWN WALLACE.

THE MILK ROUND

Lloyd Davies

BAILEY drove into the courtyard alongside the C.I.B. Office.

It was early morning. A smell of breakfast bacon came from the police quarters, a clatter of sluiced sanitary pails from the lock-up.

He could have been taken for a detective as he manoeuvred his large body out of the car. But his slightly baggy suit belied this, as did the Penguin edition of Freud's "Psychopathology" poking out of a coat pocket, the pocket flap shoved untidily in behind it.

Anyway his crinkly brown hair was too long and his genial hazel eyes too soft.

Bailey walked towards the office with the casual slouch of a big man trying to minimise his bulk.

Detective Rowell raised his crew-cut head from the typewriter he was jabbing, and greeted him.

"Goodday Bert. What's the matter, can't you sleep or something?"

"Morning Pete. Keen, that's me," Bailey drawled back at him. "Matter of fact I've got twenty kids to contact before next court and I'm stuffed if I'm going to chase 'em round at night."

"Fair enough. Anyway you'd never catch the little buggers then, they're all too busy knocking off sheilas and smashing up cars. Early bird's the shot with juveniles. Drag 'em out of bed," Rowell tapped the paper in his typewriter. "Like this young bludger here."

Bailey held up a hand in mock defence.

"Hey, fair go! Don't tell me you've got another one for me to process?"

The detective smiled all over his big overgrown schoolboy's face—even the pale blue eyes with the pouches under them.

"Just bashing out the complaint now. Kid called Forsythe, Patrick Joseph Forsythe, fourteen years old. Stealing as a servant. Knocking off dough from the milko he worked for."

"Name doesn't ring a bell. Has he got any form?"

"No. He's a clean-skin. Still there's always a first time to get caught."

"Where's he now then?"

"Upstairs with Neddie. They'll be down in a minute. Neddy was taking the thumbscrews off when I left."

They chuckled together at the old joke and Bailey asked: "Who else is with 'em?"

"No one else. Just the two of them."

"No parents?" Bailey queried with some surprise.

"Well, there isn't any father and mum was too busy getting the younger kids ready for school."

Bailey's face toughened and the fun went out of his eyes.

"You mean to say you drag a kid that age out of bed at seven o'clock in the morning and wheel him in here and grill him on his pat malone? You're a bit bloody hard aren't you?"

Rowell looked uncomfortable. "Well, don't go crook at me. I'm just the Indian. Have a burl at Neddie. He's the chief."

"Too right I'll have a go at him."

Bailey thudded up the wooden staircase and knocked on the closed door of the interviewing room.

"Hold on a minute," an official angry voice commanded through the door.

"Is that you, Sergeant Parker?" Bailey shouted back, "Bailey here. Child Welfare Department. I have reason to believe you are questioning a juvenile in there. I insist on being present."

A pause, footsteps, and the door was wrenched open truculently.

Behind the thin, cross, turkey-like face of Detective-Sergeant Parker, with its crest of bristling black hair, Bailey could see the boy. He was hunched at a table, his thin shoulders shaking. The collar of a pyjama jacket stuck up from under an old high-school jumper. His faded, tattered jeans accentuated his skinny legs and stopped well short of his feet and ankles pink with cold in a pair of rubber thongs. He rubbed the back of his hand futilely against the tears that streamed down his face.

Parker glared out for a moment, then smiled with his mouth.

"Come in Bert. What's all the trouble?"

"No trouble. I just want to be around while you're interviewing this lad and when he goes to bail I'll take him home."

"The interview's over, I was just clearing up a couple of points. Pat—" Parker turned his head towards the boy—"this is Mr. Bailey, a probation officer from the Child Welfare Department. He's here to help you—like we all are, of course."

Bailey winked and held out his hand. "How are you Pat?"

The boy stood up, tried to stop sobbing, wiped his eyes with his sleeve and held out a clammy small hand for Bailey to shake.

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By the time the bail formalities had been fixed the boy had recovered, apart from redness under his eyes and an occasional sniff.

He was quite a nice-looking child with a fawn-like quality about his delicate nose and high cheekbones. His eyes had a permanently-startled look which was accentuated by his pushed-back reddish hair. In movement he seemed permanently on tip-toe, as though poised to dart away in flight.

"Righto, Pat, what's your side of the story?" Bailey asked as they drove off from the police station. "Did you pinch any money?"

"Well—like—I didn't really pinch anything. I just kinda got some mixed up like."

How did this come about. I mean you'd know if you'd pinched something, wouldn't you?"

"It's sorta different when you're on the milk. Specially with a joker like old Adams. You're flat out all the time, see. You know, pelting off to the joints with the bottles and back again with the empties and, er, there's money too, see—specially Sa'dies and Mondies—you know after he's put their bills out see and, er, you got to scribble a receipt, like, on their part of the bill and tear that off and shove it down with their bottles and sometimes you got to give change, see, and if they've left a note changin' their order you sometimes got to belt off to the cart and get more milk or some cream or yogurt or stuff and you're flat out all the time see—you got to run everywhere and, er . . ."

"All right, I've got the picture. I've come home with the milkman myself once or twice. But how did this stealing charge come about?"

"Well, when you're flat out like this, you sometimes shove the dough in your wrong pocket."

"Wrong pocket?"

"Aw, see if you got dough of your own on you before you go out you got to remember what pocket it's in so you don't get it mixed like. But sometimes you forget and get it mixed like and then when you get back to the car you got to make a guess and toss into the money tin what you think's about it."

"And sometimes you make a blue, eh?"

"Yeah, that's right. Because it's dark, see, and, er, like I said, you're flat out and sometimes you might've gone up a side street and have the dough from about twenty joints."

"Maybe you robbed yourself sometimes?" Bailey suggested brightly, grinning broadly at the lad and hoping the mood would catch.

But Pat frowned in concentration.

"No, I wouldn't 've done that." He was very definite.

"What makes you so certain?"

"Aw well, you'd have a pretty fair idea how much you started off with yourself, and if you wasn't all that sure you'd hang on to a bit extra just in case."

Bailey hung on to the next question a moment to quell the laugh.

"Don't you think perhaps you should have slanted it the other way and tossed him a few cents?"

He sneaked a glance from the road ahead at the wrinkles on the high round forehead and the grey eyes narrowed in thought.

"Aw, gee. Old Adams got more dough than me."

Bailey laughed out loud. "Fair enough, Pat. You've certainly got a point there."

He drew the car over to the kerb and stopped. They were not far from Pat's home, and he didn't want to front the mother just yet.

He was sorry about the laugh, Pat was getting that hurt uncertain look of the child who has been ridiculed. Bailey swung around so he could face the boy squarely, one arm on the steering wheel, the other draped over the back seat.

"But this could hardly add up to more than a dollar or so could it?"

"I know, that's what I told the demon."

"Yes, we'll come to that in a minute. What I'm getting at is, he must have some other reason for complaining. He wouldn't even notice that little bit."

"Aw, there's been stuff going off all right. Because customers have been complaining. See, anyone can knock off milk money. I mean like the customer sticks it out with the bottles and the bill outside his front gate at 9 o'clock in the evening. I don't come along till four in the morning and like I say anyone could knock it off. No one knows till next week when the customer gets a double bill."

"Why didn't you tell all this to the detectives?"

"Well, I tried to like, but the thin red-faced joker kept saying, 'Come on, don't give us that bull' and shaking me by the shoulders like and saying 'How much did you knock off?' and he got me all mixed up, and then the other joker, the big one, says quite decent like 'Pat we're just trying to help you, the sooner we get this cleaned up the sooner you can go back home to bed,' and you know him talking like that got me that way that I started to sort of—you know—cry like, and then the other joker starts again, 'Come on you know you've been fiddling. How much did you knock off?' And, like I told you, I thought it could have been about a dollar so I said 'about a dollar.' And then the big joker goes downstairs and the other one starts asking a few more questions and then you come in."

The boy's head hung down on his chest. Bailey pried the tears that splashed down on to the bleached, blue-denimed knees. He resisted the urge to soothe him with clucking noises.

"Pat, there's a packet of tissues in the glove box. I keep 'em for my own kids. And look, there's no need to get so worked up. If that's all there's to it, you're in the clear. It's not a crime to make a mistake."

The boy looked up at him over a face full of tissues.

"You're not kidding are you? You mean they'll drop the case?"

"Oh, they won't drop the case but you'll beat 'em if you get a lawyer and plead not guilty."

"Mum can't afford to pay no lawyer. I mean that's why she couldn't go on against old Adams for me wages."

"What wages?"

"You see the joker up the street works down the wharf. And mum and him got talking the other day about things and when he heard what I was getting he looked up some award or something and it turns out old Adams been paying me about two-thirds what he oughter. They reckon he owes me about two hundred dollars."

"Two hundred? He'd be having you on there a bit wouldn't he?"

"That's what they work it out at. It's about a year's back pay."

"If it's a year I suppose they'd be right. You must have started working under age, then?"

"A couple of months. Old Adams talked mum into it. He reckoned no one'd find out."

*

Mrs. Forsythe was still shrilling the younger children off to school when they arrived.

"Have you kids cleaned yer teeth and done yer hair? Whose school bag's this in the kitchen? Get a move on can't yer?"

They could hear it through the fibro-walls of the Housing Commission flat as they neared the front door. Pat moved to open the door but Bailey restrained him, knocked loudly and then stood on the little wooden porch, one arm around the boy's shoulder.

Bailey could see at once where Pat got his red hair and the high rounded forehead. The mother's nose, however, was longer and thinner. If there ever had been any spark in her grey eyes it had long been stubbed. Bailey couldn't see her mouth at first. She had the back of one hand over it, removing breakfast leavings, while the other tugged at her dressing gown collar.

Bailey got in first before she could collect herself.

"I'm Bailey, Child Welfare, Mrs. Forsythe. I've had a yarn with young Pat and I'm pretty certain he's in the clear. I want to talk to you about his defence."

As he spoke Bailey was pleased to see her face relax. Pat obviously saw it too because he suddenly dived forward and threw his arms around her, burying his face in her bosom.

The woman blinked a little, massaged his shoulder blades and made vague gestures at Bailey.

"Do you mind if I give him his breakfast first?"

"Go ahead. Big lad like this needs feeding. I'll bot a cuppa tea meself if you don't mind. I usually have one with the C.I.B., but I don't think my alley's too good there just now."

After Pat had been fed and sent back to bed, Bailey put the boy's story to his mother for her opinion. She didn't know much about the milk round except that old Adams worked him pretty hard, which didn't do him any harm and kept him out of trouble like.

"We'll let that one pass," Bailey suggested. "Has he ever stolen money before?"

"No, he's very good that way. Even as a little chap he always brought back the right change from the shop and that."

"Right, he's entitled to a pretty big chunk of presumption of innocence. He's got to plead not guilty."

"But I'm on the pension. I can't afford a lawyer. It took me years to pay for me separation."

"Didn't you get costs against your husband?"

"Yeah, but he went inside and cut it out. My lawyer said not to worry, but I don't believe in owing money."

"But you'd get legal aid in a case like this. Even if the Law Society knocked you back—which I'm pretty sure they wouldn't—the Department would brief someone for you."

They brewed another pot of tea while Bailey explained the procedure. As they drank it they discussed the problems of the "D Class" widow and Bailey listened to, and advised on, the scholastic careers of Pat's four younger brothers and sisters.

By the time he left, Bailey no longer thought of her as the hard, cold-eyed bitch who'd driven a 13-year-old boy out to work. He even allowed himself a wallow in the "mankind is basically good" sort of sentiment until he looked at his watch and thought: "Ten o'clock and there's twenty more to do by tomorrow."

*

"Frank bloody Wilson. You would have to get that bastard assigned to you," Parker complained to Bailey on the morning of the trial. "Boots and all Wilson. I'm in for a nice old morning. Hates the police—thinks all his clients are Jesus Christ."

Parker's voice trailed off as the swinging doors burst inwards admitting Mr. Wilson the counsel, clutching a brief case across his thin chest to allow more forcible penetration of the portals. Wilson's chin was prominent but not massive, it was sharp and jutting and, immediately on top of it, projected a brace of trap-like lips. Dark jutting brows almost concealed a glint of eyes.

Wilson attacked from the start. To poor, streaky, cadaverous Adams, half asleep, still loping his way through last night's milk round and worrying about the takings, he immediately put the unlawful employment of Pat under age and his breach of the industrial award.

These charges Adams first tried to evade, which annoyed the magistrate, and then admitted, which annoyed him even more.

To a quick-fire quiz on his accounting and auditing procedure Adams could only stammer and say: "Sorry I'm not with you."

The next three witnesses, customers who'd left money out and got no credit for it, had to admit that anyone could have taken their money.

Detective Sergeant Parker was so assailed for dragging the boy out of bed and interrogating him alone that he lost his temper and was reprimanded for being insolent to counsel.

Detective Rowell, pleasant and affable, began to retrieve the situation until Wilson shot the question: "And did you tell Probation-Officer Bailey that you and Sergeant Parker were using thumbscrews on this child?"

This, Bailey thought, was a bit below the belt and he blushed as Rowell looked appealingly at him.

"Yes, but it was only a joke."

Wilson left it to the magistrate to gasp, "Really Constable. What sort of a joke is that?" and, there being no more Crown evidence, submitted "No case to answer" almost before the gasp died down. In this he was upheld and the Magistrate swept from the Court leaving Parker more turkey-faced than ever. "What's all that mean?" asked Mrs. Forsythe, still on her feet from the rising of the court.

"It means we've won," grinned Bailey, beckoning to Pat, who was dazedly picking his way out of the dock.

"Well what about Pat's two hundred dollars then? You know what Adams underpaid him?"

"The court's risen. Anyway this court couldn't adjudicate on that."

"Yeah, but won't the police make him cough up?"

"No harm in asking I suppose."

Bailey went up to the bar table where Wilson was still arguing with the police as he shoved his papers in his brief case.

"Oh Sergeant Parker, what about the back money Adams owes young Pat?"

"That's a civil matter Mr. Bailey, it's nothing to do with us."

"Come now Sergeant," Wilson broke in. "You prosecute our boy for a dollar, and your bloke's admitted breaking the law and touching us for two hundred. Surely you can do something about that?"

Parker bunched up his papers and pouted back at him, ears aflame: "You ought to know better than that, Mr. Wilson. It's not an offence against property. It's not a police matter."

As he left, Rowell turned to Bailey with a jovial smile and a little shrug.

"Well, don't blame me."

"I know," Bailey answered him. "You're just the Indian."

ABORTION—THE PHONY SILENCE

A comment by Dawn Wallace

IN the last Overland Cecil Edwards mentioned our national habit of regarding as political dynamite what has long since become a damp squib. He instanced state aid, conscription, White Australia. I suggest that the whole abortion question may be just such another innocuous asp in our national bosom.

Whilst politicians cower and others seriously believe that aborting a fourteen year old rape victim will lead to a further spread of immorality, the cures and the knitting needles fly and a steady stream of money changes hands. Admittedly, it is not so dramatic to talk about "terminating the existence of the non-viable foetus" as it is to chant "abortion is murder," but however you decide to describe it, thousands of women do it each year, legally and illegally.

Law is a tool of society and it must change to meet changing needs. The abortion law is neither respected nor obeyed; it is freely disregarded among women of all types and classes, often with subsequent misery and ill-health. A degree of persuasion and an ability to pay are usually the only qualifications required to avoid the "back-yard" abortionist. This "law for the rich" is no more than humbug for most, yet looms into sheer menace for those least able to defend themselves. For a law which is enforced half-heartedly lends itself to blackmail and narrow political purposes.

Perhaps the most curious shortcoming of the official attitude to abortion is the blind neglect of how natural a process abortion itself is. A live child is the result of a very rigorous selection process in the uterus. Biologists now reckon that probably thirty per cent. of all human eggs fail to develop correctly and so die in the uterus, about half before the fourth or fifth week.

Official and Christian ethics base their answers on the assumption that somewhere between the fertilised egg and the new-born baby there is a change in the quality of "livingness"—the heart beats, the soul enters or whatever. But where does such an argument stand when developmental biology convinces everyone that reproduction and growth are part of a continual process? The germ cells, the fertilised egg, the implanted ovum and the developing embryo all elude exact legal or theological definition.

Abortion would be murder if a foetus were both innocent and an independent living human being with interests, beliefs and desires of its own. But a foetus is neither innocent nor not innocent. And it is not an independent living human being, at least up to the stage at which it could live if born. Therefore, abortion before that stage is not murder. To characterise it in that way would be quite inappropriate.

Furthermore, abortion is a moral problem, not merely one of national or individual expediency. It is difficult not to be filled with despair when one contemplates the blindness of statesmanship on the issues with which modern man is faced. The leading powers of the world spend enormous sums and devote their best brains to the production of methods of killing each other. Eminent moral leaders give their blessings to such efforts, and at the same time tell us it is wicked to prevent the births which, by their excessive number, drive the nations on to the invention of super weapons.

The stern limits of the earth's fertility in the face of an exploding world population will see to it before long that the balance between births and deaths is restored. It will see to it with an arithmetical inevitability which is independent of human wisdom or folly. But if the balance is restored by human folly, immense suffering throughout the world will be involved. If it is restored in accordance with the dictates of good sense and humanity, there can be an end to poverty and an end to the vast hopelessness of female lives devoted to the production of children who ought not to exist, and whose existence must almost be filled with misery.

As things are now, in this country, the skilled abortionist has the unenviable role of being the scapegoat for public indecision and conflict. For doctors, generally, are a timorous group. They do not wish to be responsible for an abortion that does not comply with the law, even if they are morally convinced that such an abortion should be done. In fact, their unfamiliarity with the law tends to even greater stringency than necessary.

But it is the law which is the basic problem of the psychological aspect of abortion. It creates a shroud of mystery, subterfuge, fear and guilt. The root of the general unreality has been a reluctance to admit publicly that abortions are performed on a large scale. All the more reason, then, to hail the new British legislation pending on this matter. A bill for limited abortion law reform, similar to those passed in Sweden (1938) and Finland (1950), has now passed its second reading in the House of Commons. Today both Sweden and Finland find this limited reform inadequate and there is much agitation for more liberal laws, designed perhaps on those in the U.S.S.R. and Japan.

Today sexual mores are more relaxed than they were. Those who abstain from intercourse in fear of pregnancy do not abstain on moral grounds. People morally convinced of the virtue of chastity are unlikely to be affected by liberal abortion laws. What we have now is not, in fact, in any consistent ethical sense a morality at all. It is essentially a hodge-podge of attitudes derived from the past, upon which is erected a shaky and inconsistent system of laws and social prohibitions. Some of these fragments from the past date from before the introduction of Christianity; some are magical in origin; others are based on faulty science; others have grown up by reinterpretation of old laws originally passed with quite a different purpose. 'Public' opinion is always more conservative than the sum of 'private' opinion. The law moves with even greater slowness than does 'public' opinion. Because of this time lag the past affects the present, creating needless frustration and misery.

Legal abortion simply offers freedom of choice to the individual. We cannot prove statements about morality as we can prove statements of fact: the whole logic of moral arguments is different, and has to be different, from arguments about facts. Yet there are large numbers of people who display the utmost confidence in telling other people what to do, and who show little hesitation in laying down rules and principles about how they should conduct their private lives. We may feel strongly: but feeling is not the same as knowing.

RETROSPECT ON TWO FESTIVALS

THE MELBOURNE FILM FESTIVAL

Bernard Rechter

SUFFICIENT time has now elapsed since the last, alas poorly projected, images of Melbourne's fifteenth film festival have disappeared, to take stock of what remains in the memory. The round gross of films, some lasting a few short minutes, others stretching to two long hours, taxes the resources, patience and wakefulness of even the most insatiable filmgoer.

The festival is not built around any unifying theme—instead, we are promised in the publicity the best of current film production available to the organisers. In the brochure, the arrival of which sometime in April heralds the new festival, there are three short columns listing with very brief descriptions the delights to come. Unfortunately it is difficult to match promise and fulfilment, for one of the columns contains on its other side the application form which must be sent back. A count of the remaining columns reveals that of the twenty-two films listed, thirteen actually made an appearance. Not perhaps a very important or significant point except that it raises some unanswered questions and thus aptly symbolises the relation between those who organise the festival and those who only sit, watch and listen.

The Melbourne festival is the lineal descendant of the cosy gatherings of enthusiasts who shivered in the cold at Olinda years ago, and those who took part still speak with pride of the time when the festival was not yet a social status symbol. Currently, after a number of attempts at different formats, the festival has settled for a membership of four thousand, with the major screenings divided into two sets of sessions each for two thousand viewers. Screenings are at the Palais Theatre which, whatever its faults, has plenty of room. The festival is now a **public** event, not the private property of its devotees—yet there is no public accounting, either financial or cinematic. The upshot is a long list of unanswered questions. Subscribers grumble and there is a general consensus that this year the standard was below that of previous festivals. But there is no redress—there isn't a better 'ole to go to, although Sydney is seeing the initiation of an alternative if the advertisements are to be believed.

The festival is formally under the sponsorship of the Federation of Film Societies, the Australian Film Institute and the Melbourne University Film Society. The organising committee is drawn from the committee of the Federation and the M.U.F.S., but it is no secret that the real power lies with

Mr. Erwin Rado, the Festival director; and, grateful as all Melbourne's film fans must be to the remarkable work of Mr. Rado, a nagging doubt remains and the questions keep popping into the mind. On what basis are the films chosen? Is the agreement with the commercial distributors, which limits the number of subscribers, necessary and in the best interest of film goers? Are too many films shown? (Of course one can ration oneself—but, particularly when some films turn out to be disappointing, the next always beckon with the possibility, however remote, of providing that exciting surprise.)

The point is not that obviously wrong decisions have been made, but that the subscriber has no information on which to base any critical discussion of policy and choice of films. The obvious place, one imagines, to obtain such information would be from the Federation of Film Societies. The 1965-6 Annual Report is in front of me, hot from the printer, as I write. It devotes some six column-inches to the festival. We are informed that many items such as "a new ticket format to cut down intrusion of non-members to screenings" were the subjects of lengthy discussion at the council meeting and that there was "better 16 mm. projection"—the latter point, one of a number of self-congratulatory ones, would only be fully appreciated by those exposed to it. The continuing patronage (though not visibly in evidence in 1966) of the Governor of Victoria is duly noted. To be fair, the critical comments of Mr. Robin Boyd on censorship are also mentioned with approval.

Several years ago I attended the annual meeting of the Federation as a delegate from an affiliated society, with a vague intention of raising from the floor some of my questions about the festival. It was a cosy "in" meeting, lots of platitudes, many thanks for services freely rendered, an interesting short screening and a sumptuous supper. To have breathed a doubt would have smacked of bad taste and rank ingratitude. So the questions remain, the grumblings continue sotto voce ("The 1966 festival . . . as usual was the subject of much praise and some criticism," says the Annual Report) and we can look forward to another scramble for seats in 1967, wishing Mr. Rado godspeed in his hunt for masterpieces in the intervening months.

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What of his offerings in 1966? It is tempting to play a game of cinematic kremlinology so beloved of the professional China watchers. Statistically it is highly unreliable, but the intellectual and social climate in a number of countries can be roughly estimated from a careful look at their export films.

Kremlinology is perhaps the wrong word, for Moscow provided no feature film this year, although one was promised. A delightful short, "Marriage," came from the Gruzia studios in Soviet Georgia. This was a slight tale of a boy falling in love, getting to the point of beginning a formal courtship, only to see, as he stands in front of her door, flowers in hand and dressed in his best suit, his beloved ascending the stairs in her bridal

gown, the newly-wed groom at her side. Overseas film journals have commented on several new interesting Soviet feature films—why none at Melbourne in 1966? The absence is certainly not due to a prejudice against films “from the other shore,” or against film of social commitment.

One of the most positive sides of Melbourne festivals has been the showing of films mirroring the preoccupation of producers and audiences alike with war and peace, social injustice and liberty. Indeed the major prize went to a compilation film, “The Inheritance”, directed by Harold Mayer with a script by Millard Lampell, the latter making a comeback after years in the cold. Old stills and film footage are here put to superb use in retelling the story of the growth of unionism in twentieth century U.S.A.—the Palmer raids, the depression, the migrant sweatshops in the garment trade, the rise of the C.I.O., are all vividly remembered to the accompaniment of music and folk song. Several of the bloody battles with the “forces of law and order,” which featured so often in American labor history, are seen in contemporary newsreels.

“The Inheritance” was in marked contrast to “Zero in the Universe,” also from the U.S.A.—a film described as a parody and spoof whose merits I for one failed to detect, though the photography (by Gerard Vandenberg ex-Melbourne) was often striking.

At earlier festivals we had several films from West Germany reflecting efforts to come to terms with the recent past and the “economic miracle” of Erhard (“The Bread of Our Former Years” in 1964, “The Devil’s General” in 1958). This source seems to have dried up. This year East Germany provided “The Adventures of Werner Holt,” portraying the slow disillusionment of a young patriot as the Wehrmacht begins to crumble under the hammer of the last Russian offensives. Flashbacks build a rounded picture of Werner Holt, and, despite some pat cliché scenes—the promising, physically unfit young pianist conscripted into a defeated army and dying needlessly—the fine acting and firm direction makes for a convincing film. Yet fulsome praise stops before a nagging doubt. All one reads of the current scene in the D.D.R. makes one long for an essay in film showing some of that country’s present problems—one can’t help a feeling that the making of “Werner Holt” twenty years after the end of the third Reich represents the same kind of escape, the same inability (or fear) to face life which the film depicts in wartime Germany.

In marked contrast was Hungary’s “The Age of Daydreaming,” which tackles the clash between generations among the technologists in Budapest. The ostensible clash is that between the young electronics engineers, newly graduated, brimming with new ideas, and the dead-heads occupying the key positions to which they aspire. In fact, Istvan Szabos’ film (he is only twenty-six himself) probes sharply into the Rakosi past. Two young people, who fall in love but in the end find nothing to hold them together, go to a screening of old film—of the 1956 uprising and its Russian tanks and street combat, and even of the Young Pioneers’ Railway, symbol of the regimented pre-1956 era. The disillusion of the young with the politics of their elders could not be more explicit as the two lovers, sitting in front of the screen, discuss and argue as their own youth flashes by. The techniques of the French nouvelle vague are rather belatedly on show and we are a long way indeed from the positive message of “Werner Holt.” Mood and technique are

very derivative, owing much to the French and Italians, yet the film mirrors most effectively some of the realities of life under Kadar.

In 1965 Czechoslovakia provided a most interesting and underrated film, “Josef Kilian,” a far better essay in the style of Kafka than Welles’ adaptation of “The Trial.” This year several films reflected the liveliness of Czech cinema. Jiri Trnka, no stranger to film festivals, has made in “The Hand” a pessimistic short on the fate of the free artist in, presumably, his own country. A potter is prevented from creating freely by a large hand, omnipresent and interfering constantly. The fable ends with the death and burial of the potter. The film depressed particularly because there have been any number of recent signs of fresher winds blowing in Prague. Perhaps its very distribution by Czechoslovak Film Export is a sign that the situation it describes is not, as they used to say, “typical.”

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The war of 1939-45 has been refought many times on the festival screens and not a little war weariness has set in. Ditto Nazi brutality. Yet for me the most memorable film in 1966 was “Diamonds on the Night,” a first film by Jan Nemeč, produced in the Barandov Studios in 1964 from a novel “Darkness Has no Shadows,” by Arnost Lustig. Two boys escape from a Nazi transport and run through a forest. The handheld camera follows their desperate flight through the eerie quiet of the forest. In brief, episodic, almost subliminal flashbacks we learn something of where they come from, their hopes, desires and how they reached their present plight. In one nightmarish episode they are captured by a band of old men hunting game. The old men play a cat and a mouse game with their helpless victims. The unearthly silence is broken only by the obscene toothless munching of the old men as they eat, drink and cavort, the boys meanwhile cowering beaten and starving in a corner. The usually bad projecting was at its worst for the 16 mm. film, and it is to be hoped that the Czech consulate, the source of the film, keeps a print in this country for further screenings.

Rather ironically one of the few films which showed the working class in situ as it were, in a metal refinery and foundry, came from Yugoslavia—“Man is not a Bird.” A skilled engineer arrives at a provincial industrial centre to supervise the assembling of a complex machine. This task he completes in record time and the award of a medal follows. In his leisure time he has become involved with the landlord’s daughter. During the presentation ceremony (of the medal) the film is enlivened by the arrival of a symphony orchestra complete with soloists and chorus to perform the last movement of the Beethoven Ninth Symphony. This work apparently so moved our usually vigilant censors that we were treated to fulsome glimpses of an erotic love scene as the engineer’s fickle girl friend sought solace with a truck driver.

Ray’s “Charulata,” Visconti’s “Sandra,” Ichikawa’s “Fires on the Plain” and “Alone on the Pacific” and Franjus’ “Thomas the Imposter” were among the major films by established directors screened at the festival. There was also a revival of Carl Dryer’s “Ordet,” now ten years old, heavily laced with fundamentalism and the need for faith. Faith results in the revival of an apparently dead woman in the midst of her funeral rites. It is a tribute to the director that the film

held one's attention even as the mind boggled at its assumptions.

Only the briefest mention is possible of other interesting fare—the two Italian films, "Before the Revolution" and "Fists in the Pocket"; the French "Les Abysses," from Genet's novel "The Servants," Forman's "Loves of a Blonde," with its devastating vignette of a trio of ageing privates in the Czech People's Army on the loose at a provincial dance, and the very moving "Raven's End," the story of a writer's escape from a Swedish small-town slum—all these come crowding back into the mind.

The short films, usually a highlight, were, with a few exceptions, more easily forgotten. Too evident was a striving for effect, a determination to be clever at any cost, even that of interest. One felt that many of the supporting programs to the features could have been ruthlessly pruned.

THE ADELAIDE FESTIVAL—TWO VIEWS

1. By Joseph Waters

THE sound of revelry was not the only sound to be heard in the warmish air of Adelaide's Fourth Festival of Arts, 1966. Clearly above the rustle of faille and flowered silk and the rasp of the back-scratching of cultural scroungers there could be heard the shrill, sharp and rather sour note of re-appraisal. So shrill and sharp, in fact, that not all the eruptive poetic demagoguery of Yevtushenko could blanket it out.

In the Sunday edition of one Sydney newspaper the critic, Roger Covell, freshly home from a look at Europe, described the Adelaide efforts as resembling "a second-rate jumble sale." He felt it needed an artistic director. An even stronger note of criticism was struck by Manager Fleischmann of the London Symphony Orchestra, who spoke of the Festival as including "third-rate professionals and first-rate amateurs." In a huffy sort of way this was sensed as criticism by all those good people who before the promulgation of that indictment had not been able to distinguish between those two varieties of festival performers. "Who," they were asking everywhere, "are the good amateurs and who those awful professionals?" Unhappily, it was a question Mr. Fleischmann did not offer to deal with in detail. But he did join voice with critic Covell on the issue of artistic direction. "There doesn't," he said, "seem to be any focal point or solid core of organisation."

Was the Festival really as bad as that? It was bloodiest in just those parts that Covell's and Fleischmann's social color-blindness prevented them from seeing properly. It was that special Adelaide-flavored heap of ersatz haute-couture which swamped over every aspect of the Festival. The Advertiser summed it up in its social columns with "Brocades and satins were popular favorites among women at the L.S.O. concert." And, by God, were there satins and brocades! Long, short and dowdy they were, hanging on the arms of dinner jackets—straight, bent and bandy. Every concert, play, or art show was secondary to the sherry and crackers of socialite Adelaide. Receptions were endless, as were the writers' get-togethers, barbecue luncheons, book launchings,

Melbourne's festival boasts of its standing as one of the world's recognised festivals. Each one of these, like Cannes and Venice, offers special gimmicks, but above all they are the places where the directors and producers put their latest wares on display for critical applause or disdain for the first time. Melbourne's major features have usually been previewed elsewhere. They come with reputations already made or unmade. I myself saw several of the 1965 and 1966 films while overseas in the summer of 1964-5. This slightly secondhand air of our festival is understandable in the context of Australia's physical isolation from the film producing centres and in view of the absence of a local feature film industry. But would it be too much to ask that Melbourne also develop a unique feature—a close rapport between those who choose the films and organise their screening and those whose \$8 makes the whole business possible?

after-show parties. Invitations in the end became more important than performances.

That any genuine art could survive this flood of food, drink and matey get-togetherness would be miraculous. To the first Yevtushenko recital the Advertiser gave eleven inches of what might generously be described as criticism, but to list the notabilities attending the social pages used 13½ inches. For the first concert of the London Symphony Orchestra its music critic was allowed 10½ inches and the social pages used 13 inches. We learnt that Lady Bastyan's dress was of deep powder blue duchesse satin and that after the concert a supper party was held at the Australia Hotel, sponsored by the Stuyvesant Trust.

Did anything come out of this cultural Gomorrah? Miraculously, yes—quite a bit. For example, there was the wind quintet of the Adelaide Conservatorium, which played so beautifully to small audiences. There were the exhibitions in the Art Gallery where Goya horrified with his "Disasters of War" and Stanley Spencer kidded with the his mosaics of jolly English family life. There were the Turner landscapes and the Merz collection of modern Australian artists filling the room with myths and symbols. And, not to be overlooked, the well-prepared comprehensive catalogue.

There was also Peter O'Shaughnessy. His skilful direction of a handful of amateurs in two nineteenth-century fragments of drama—"Off to the Diggings" and "Jemmy Green in Australia"—gave an evening of pleasure. What is more, it gave us perhaps the best theatre program ever printed and sold in an Australian theatre. It was O'Shaughnessy's Festival not only for that but for his lunch-hour recital "Shaw on Love and War." There he established himself as an actor of genuine stature and provided a commentary on our times that could not have been apter. In his spare time he read publicly with Yevtushenko—and some thought even better.

For the rest there was Colin Ballantyne's production of Chekov's "The Three Sisters"; a miniature revue, "On the Fringe 1966"; and another small group peering through the semi-darkness of an underground coffee bar, giving some acute comment on the Adelaide scene.

Not much, perhaps, for two weeks and two years of planning and performing. Was it worth

HEARING YEVTUSHENKO, MARCH 1966

All my best poems were never written down,
they sing in my skull and will not let me sleep.
They do not move as marks across white paper.

Once in grey weather, howling out of hell
in the aseptic south, we raised a lifeboat
over the rim of sea, and in it, locked in ice
three dead men. One had wrapped his coat
around his friend, who froze nevertheless
but took a minute longer in his dying
because of love and comradeship. That is a poem.

Once in the desert, at the copper mines
I helped to bury one who fell and died
eight hundred screaming feet to jagged rock.
We drank cold beer to his memory, then forgot him,
laughing like brazen bells under a sky
molten copper over hills of slag. That was a poem.

Once at a wedding among brown-skinned people
saw how the bridegroom's eyes embraced his bride
and could not tell them how I loved them both,
could only smile, and nod, and hold my peace
not comprehending the rich jokes of my companions.

Then, in that great gilded theatre
one of a turmoil of dim oval faces
heard a young man accusing in his anger
the cruelty of man to man, and knew
that brotherhood is good, compassion good,
bravery and laughter, love and birth are good
and language is no wall when eyes can meet.
How lies and hatred vanish when two men
clasp hands in friendship with no other link
than hate of evil things and cruel things.

All my best poems were never written down
but courage drives the fear from my throat
to know another man has felt the same
and put our words to march in solemn order
across white paper. That is a poem, too.

W. N. SCOTT

it? Yes. It was worth it, for instance, for the thousands who took rugs to Elder Park and with dogs, young lovers, larrikins, hamburgers, ice-cream and Coca Cola listened to something that sounded like "Trial by Jury" and "Come Back to Sorrento" from a gondola on the Torrens: better and more wholesome than all that "brocade and satin" stuff.

But the warning note of re-appraisal should be heeded by openly admitting the need for radical and drastic changes in the whole Festival set-up. Right at the outset it should be appreciated that the greater part of Europe's festival success is due to the spring and summer circuit which en-

ables the best of the arts and their executants to spread their excessive costs over a number of cities and not heap them all on one—as in Adelaide's case. The idea of an Australasian circuit—Perth, Adelaide, Christchurch and Auckland—is not wide enough. Make, instead, an Australian circuit with all the mainland capital cities taking part. The five cities should among them provide cash enough and audiences to support the very best from overseas for two weeks every two years. Don't worry about the possibility of Adelaide losing its ten thousand visitors—there are enough people in each state to keep the cultural exercises going.

Give each city an artistic director linked with another operating from a London office who would book for all Australia those talents and properties needed to form that hard core of the festivals about which Mr. Fleischmann worried himself. Round this let each state capital weave its own fabric of local artistic effort.

When best is mentioned let it be clearly established as the best. If it is theatre we want, then bring us the Berliner Ensemble and the Bristol Old Vic; music—Fischer-Dieskau, the Vienna Philharmonic and the Prague Opera; art—exhibitions of, let us say, Bonnard, Leger, Delacroix or Munch which the European centres have all seen.

Let us have the new buildings to show off the arts. Then cut out all writers' corroborations—if there is anything really obscene in art it is the sight of grown men and women chatting about the books they have written, are about to write or will never write. If writers want to meet let them assemble like trade unionists or members of political parties in properly constituted conferences where through the due process of motion and resolution they can make up their minds where they are and what they want to do.

2. By Wilma Hedley

ANGUS WILSON stood beneath the Adelaide sun and cried: "We should never allow ourselves to seem satisfactory to those who wear stuffed shirts." Yet, looking back I think Yevtushenko was the more appealing humanist, the one least afraid of any establishment. Some dubbed him "the screeching parrot of the Kremlin"—a hilarious bit of dingbat Australiana. Others hailed Yevtushenko as the new Messiah. This, perhaps, is understandable, as the silk lining of the sometimes cosy womb of Writers' Week contained natural flaws. The Australian poetical voice (with a few exceptions) raised no great issues, no passionate offensive for, nor defence of, our national identity. The ear of our poets was not attuned to the complexities of our era. Certain spoken verses were almost anachronistic in relation to the turbulence of the times, others were slightly anaemic. If "the wizard, the magician," as Angus Wilson called the writer, can assist man to understand his emotions, reality, the unfathomable world around him, surely there must be at least some cognition of man and his complex world here today, and a desire to develop that man to a higher form of cognition?

After the Festival I asked myself: "Are our writers becoming literary inbreds? Does the acceptance of academic canons prevent them from searching for newness of content, form, performance?" There was such an enormous difference at the Festival between the art of the Australian poets—art for the elite, and the art of Yevtushenko—art for the people. Could this be due possibly to the subterranean censorship of establishment sponsors, an expression of the whole climate of our country? Where was the recog-

If writers want to appear in Festivals of Arts let them do so as playwrights by writing plays for theatres empty for lack of good ones. If they are poets let them show it by reciting their work like Yevtushenko boldly and dramatically and to the point. If writers want to write them let them become critics for the duration of the Festival. There is an empty spot to be filled here if ever there was one. Patronage, good living and an Australia-First stance effectively combines in Adelaide to prevent criticism performing its proper function. Perhaps once or twice Hince and Evers brought it to the surface, but a concert review which included this gem was not exceptional: "Side on, Mr. Davis, has an impressively protruding jaw; it symbolises unremitting authority and drive."

And it's some good honest vulgarity we want in our festivals alongside the best. If we want spectacle, street decorations, fun for the masses and all that mullarkey, then let us have it big, bold and vulgar. There is little hope at this stage of making good mass art but we can bring good gaudy color, plenty of noise and carnival madness into our streets. It's the big-beat we want and to hell with refinement. We want, as Groucho Marx once put it: "Dancing in the streets and necking in the parlor."

inition of human or inhuman conflict? "There'll always be injustice," a secretary of a literary group told me, "you can't be worried about that." Which I translated as meaning, "I'm all right Jack and there'll always be the poor and war." Our democratic traditions!

It was noticeable that a distinct passivity emanated from the audiences at the Festival poetry readings: that very same passivity which is expressed by parents in their acceptance of Australia's educational crisis; the same docility which is found in acceptance of sub-cultural television programs; the apathy of many in the face of Vietnam and of conscription.

Yet Writers' Week was crammed with interesting seminars, vital personal discussion and an insight into how other writers live. Wine, tucker, glorious weather, who could not respond? The writer's natural habitat is solitude, thus it is enjoyable to come together for an exchange of views, to hear how each one tackles the problems of his trade, to learn from experience. Further, on basic issues concerning writing freedoms there was agreement: "To hell with censorship, give the non-conformist a go." Overseas visitors brought new and invigorating ideas; and possibly at future festivals we may be enriched by the ideas of Asian visitors also.

Festivals like Adelaide's can assist us in exploring and assessing how far we've travelled along the highway to national identity. Such gatherings can play a constructive and leading role in advancing the Australian arts. We need a variety of ideas and work, and the continued infusion of youthful, fresh purpose.

MISCELLANY

Communicate Man

You supply your own comma mate

Roderick Opie

SO I said to this young homosexual, what method do you use? The bearded lecturer had told us that we ought to ask questions like that. He was an expert: sexual relationships; most of the students didn't go—said it was too disgusting. But he was married and had several children—used to tell us about psychological experiments he'd guinea-pigged them into. Anyway, I asked this young homo, and he just looked at me. I draw the line at queer parsons, he said. Me! And I'm married, and I've got no beard, and not much hair, and two children. Perhaps that's the trouble. How could I know about methods? And why should he tell me if I don't?

Get beside them; show them that you're not shocked; take a calm interest in what interests them most. That's what the bearded bloke had said; and he was an expert, and could do it. Here we are again. Lack of communication. And what does that mean? Well, getting down to grass roots. What are they? It's a phrase, a new one, that we've invented to use when we're talking about the problem of communication.

You could get a leather jacket and ride a motor-bike, like that English bloke who, you know; they wouldn't see the top of your head when you had your crash helmet on, suggested one of my old teaching mates. Perhaps I'd come up with a new cure for piles. Benefit humanity; vaguer and safer than dealing with people.

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I expect you to get on well with the young people, the rector said. He didn't mean it. He meant, I demand that you get on well with the young people. It frees the rector for other duties—like going into court with an open mind to plead on behalf of young people whom he doesn't know—and it provides a lack of continuity, as assistants come and go, that is consistent with the current ethos. I did try. I was telling them about the time when I worked in London as a cinema usher. We were advertising this film called "Wife for a Night"—Italian, AO—and an African stu-

dent came in and asked me where; but the rector said that wasn't the sort of thing he had in mind. Whose mind?

There's too little real compassion in the world; and you're out of touch with reality, the matron said. She'd just been shaking the starched bosom of her disapproval on to the flaccid blush of a young male patient who had reacted suddenly, involuntarily, reflexively, physically to the untrained intimacy of touch of a new probationer. Filthy beast, the young male patient. Hospitals. So hygienic now, for the body. But what about the death of Queely Shiell in early Hobart? "The Tilted Cross"—Hal Porter—characters frankly themselves, sexual, and as unjust as life; tremendous verbosity. No compassion? Screaming pain under and in the calm words. Crucifixion.

Maybe they haven't read that one; or Lawrence Durrell; or Armand Lanoux—prix Goncourt; or G. W. Target; or—perhaps they read Ian Fleming; 007—the number of the suave disillusioned beast; licensed to kill. Yes, but they understand the style mate—a touch of the best in trans-Atlantic advertising; put in Punch or Saturday Evening Post and you've got a winner; the best bourbon and the sort of fags you can't afford enough of to give you lung cancer; and then there's a sort of forgiveness in it; better than we can get from the Church; cheaper, too; although the price of these damn paperbacks keeps going up; we're licensed to hate, Dr. No and all that crowd; and we learn to accept our own little foibles—you know, lust, murder, hatred, laying heroines, and thank God we're an English-speaking country—as prize for being us. Where the swiftest karate blow is found there will the Good Guys be gathered together. All very satisfying; theology and the bullet corkscrew together down the same rifled barrel; and we can't imagine ourselves on the wrong side; and there's an understanding that we're all too sophisticated to mention God. Good escapist stuff; but pathos and bathos bubble together under the same scarred, handsome, desirable skin. Cynicism?

You're far too cynical, said one of my colleagues. When I said that Mothers' Day left me as a bankrupt orphan, and Anzac Day made me wonder what my father had died for. And the teenagers were reading Mad magazine during Religious Instruction; well, some of the serious-minded ones were doing their physics homework; and the syllabus said we were doing the journeys of S. Paul; and Christ was wanting to stir up the truth that was bubbling under the skull; and was closer than breathing; and the headmaster sided with us by telling them that he knew most of them never went inside a church anyway, and they

weren't to give us any trouble! so get in there and communicate—something; the meaning of eternity; theology based on theology, backed up by more theology; bored for ever and ever.

What communicates? Who does? The words and publishing whimsies of B. S. Johnson with his Travelling People his Angelo; and it all ends in the canal, if we must have the fulfilment of an end between stiff covers. A wonderful teller of tales, if he cares to, who burns up words more rapidly and effectively than I can form an ash on the best Christmas gift ex-Havana cigars; but he doesn't usually care to. He communicates a queasy, ribald death with possibilities of ignorance, but not innocence; and no likelihood of resurrection. But, mate, he can use words; and then there are many who ask, what's he getting at? What's it all about? He's getting at you, mate.

Reds Slaughtered in Allied Trap. Headline in today's paper. That communicates; and it's the right color. As long as you're sure who's who in a one-newspaper town. Blood and Guts. That communicates. Bread and wine. Tea and biscuits. Instant coffee advertised in old back-number blitz copies of English magazines, black thumb-printed by distant fire-watchers. Before the advent of pressure advertising and the planned obsolescence of man in the world scale arms race which Australia, being a small but sporting nation, will join or bust, and win gold medals.

Innocence is dead; but the innocent death; that still communicates.

Anna Akhmatova

Nina Christesen

WHEN Yevgeny Yevtushenko visited Australia earlier this year he spoke of Anna Akhmatova's death, then fresh in his mind, and particularly of her hands; folded in death, her hands fascinated him, the hands of the "high born lady" which were also those of a working woman. ("This woman of the boudoir and the convent," as Zhdanov had described her in his notorious indictment of 1946.)

There is something typically Russian in Yevtushenko's observation. Anna Akhmatova was a great poet—one of the greatest produced in this century—but to her Russian contemporaries, in and out of Soviet Russia, it is important first to establish how she had lived her life, how she had labored and what was her personal commitment. To the Russians a poet is not only an artist and a creator, he is a prophet, a scapegoat, a spiritual leader.

"Writing briefly about herself" in an introduction to a collection of her poems brought out in Moscow in 1961, Akhmatova singled out the following landmarks in her life: she was born in 1889 in Bolshoi Fontan, near Odessa; she spent her childhood in Tsarskoe Selo (now Pushkino), learnt to read from a Leo Tolstoy primer, and wrote her first verse at the age of eleven; studied law at the University of Kiev and history and

literature at St. Petersburg; was inspired by the poet Innokenty Annensky and in 1910 became an "acmeist." She visited Paris in 1910-1911 when she witnessed the "first triumphs of the Russian ballet" and in 1912 travelled in northern Italy. The impression produced on her by Italian art and architecture was "like a dream one remembers throughout one's life." Three hundred copies of her first book of verse, "Vecher," appeared in 1912; "Chetki" was published in 1914 and "Belaiia Staia" in 1917. After the October Revolution she worked in a library of the Institute of Agriculture. In 1921 "Podorozhnik" appeared, to be followed by "Anno Domini" (1922). The middle 'twenties she devoted to the study of St. Petersburg's architecture and to the works of Pushkin. The second world war found her in Leningrad. During the blockade she was evacuated to Tashkent where she became very ill and "learned the meaning of human kindness." In June 1944 she returned to Leningrad. She had always been interested in problems of translation and was drawn to Korean poetry and Serbian epics. She had "never stopped writing verse," finding in it a link with the new life of her people. She concludes the brief autobiography with the words: "I lived the rhythm that resounded in the heroic history of my country. I am happy to have lived in these years and seen events that have never been equalled."

It was perhaps natural that Akhmatova should omit to mention in a Soviet publication her marriage to the poet Gumilev (their divorce in 1918 and her two subsequent marriages were of no literary interest and her failure to note these things is consistent with Russian reticence about such matters where artists or other public figures are concerned.) Gumilev was shot by the Bolsheviks in 1921 for complicity in an anti-Soviet plot. Akhmatova's only son, Lev Gumilev, was arrested in the 'thirties and spent fifteen years in a labor camp. Akhmatova's anguish on that occasion, and the sufferings of millions of other mothers during the Yezhov terror, are immortalised in her long poem "The Requiem."

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Akhmatova's early poetry was characterised by her preoccupation with personal themes, with unrequited and requited love, with partings and meetings against the background of her beloved St. Petersburg, Peterhof and Tsarskoe Selo. Her images were vividly concrete, her statements simple, fresh and precise, her vocabulary enriched by Church Slavonic and folk reference. The revolution made no change in her orientation or her modes of expression. To those writers who left the country and invited her to follow them she responded with a passionate rebuttal. She would not be parted from her native country in its time of trial. And so Akhmatova lived through the Civil War and the famine, through the Stalin Terror and German invasion. During the second world war she wrote some of the most moving and dignified patriotic poetry ever written, but on the whole she remained a lyrical poet of the personal theme, undaunted by government persecution, ostracism and neglect.

But there has never been lack of appreciation among her fellow writers. Alexander Blok, Boris Pasternak, Ossip Mandelstam all dedicated poems to her, and Mandelstam wrote most perceptively on her art. She, in return, gave encouragement and help to those who were persecuted by the Soviet establishment, and among her inheritors today are such rebel poets as Brodsky and Voznesensky.

Outside the Soviet Union, Akhmatova's achievements were rewarded with the International Etna-Taormina prize in 1964 and an honorary Oxford doctorate in 1965.

In the Epilogue to "The Requiem" Anna Akhmatova anticipates the possibility of someone, some day, wishing to erect a monument in her memory. She would not have it placed by the sea where she was born, nor in Tsarskoe Selo where she had loved, but in front of the prison where she stood for some three hundred hours waiting vainly for news of her son.

The Indonesian Massacres

Frank Palmos

HOW many were killed in the Indonesian massacres of 1965-6? Most of the estimates have been guesswork, but there has been one source of special importance. Last December senior students from the teachers' college in Bandung and the University of Indonesia in Jakarta sent small teams into the country side to determine the consequences of the attempted October 1 coup on education.

After some weeks the students moved into a study of the killings in general, not just the killings of teachers. Their report, tabled piece by piece until mid-June this year, indicates that 800,000 were killed in East and Central Java, and that the killing continued until April. The Indonesian foreign office has settled for the figure of "some two to three hundred thousand" as the estimate suitable for the outside world.

The following is a unique Indonesian comment on the killings by a young army officer who spent several weeks in the Banjumas residency and privately investigated the killings in several villages. It is a translation of part of a short story which it proved impossible to get published in Indonesia. In the Banjumas area nearly all the killing was done at night in the canefields. The killers were Moslem youths in "a state of semi-amuk" who, when PKI members had been disposed of, started operations on "suspects." In this story the canefields speak to the people.

"People of Banjumas, pay attention.

"Take care not to look away as you go slowly past on the red roads between your picturesque villages in your Banjumas home.

"Gaze long at the volcanoes rising from the plains and reflect that your ancestors also enjoyed the beauty and drew peace from them, in our golden years of Modjapahit.

"Look long at the rice fields with their golden grain and network of channels carrying crystal-clear water gently along. Follow with your eyes fellow villagers in the fields as they do their duty to feed our people. Go with them as they carry the produce into the quiet villages.

"Yes, the villages are outwardly peaceful. Busy until noon, quiet in the afternoons as you rest in the shade away from the blazing sun.

"If a visitor should enter he would wait for the people to emerge in the cool evening, when men gather to smoke kreteks and children play.

"He will wait, and wait, as I have waited for them, unrewarded, to resume the normal lives which our ancestors patterned for them.

"Why do your people stay sullenly inside, afraid to show their noses?

"Return to my field, and learn the secrets of these past harrowing months.

"The very canes and rice who gave life to millions by day have seen that life taken away by night.

"Our secrets are many. If we could speak your language you would lower your heads and cringe in shame for your crimes against humanity!

"You, young man, who worked with your father in my field, gathering our fruits. You dared to steal in by night with your associates and spill blood into the canals we drink from. Worse, you use your father's knife for the bloody deeds!

"We may never know peace again. The spirits of Mataram and Modjapahit will return and make you uneasy—and the spirits of the dead both guilty and innocent will fight among themselves to place curses upon you. Confusion!

"We removed those who deviated from Pantja Sila,' the youths reply to me. 'We killed in order not to be killed.'

"Is this true? Perhaps. But a certainty is: the children of the countless dead will seek revenge and our land will never be the same.

"Yes, upon reflection the blame is not all your own. Youth is youthful. Youth acts without thinking. Where was the guidance of Pantja Sila then? Did you have Pantja Sila on your mind in those heated moments?

"The godless ones had to be removed from society . . . and there are still more,' replies the youth.

"The canes are confused by justifications. Confused. Dizzy. The new world is not to our liking.

"Oh, to return to the peace of the golden era. To the peaceful ways where family harmony was foremost, kampong harmony essential. What's that? The wind whispers through the crowded cane: 'Cane, cane, the youths do not hear. They are spurning the old ways, their elders. They now fight among themselves.'

"Is this New Java?"

New Music in Australia

James Murdoch

THE 1960s have seen some dramatic developments in the creative musical world in Australia, which ten years ago would have seemed most improbable.

Until then, the musical life in general, and composers in particular, had been firmly conditioned by the English conservatives whose voice, while unmistakable and individual, always man-

HOSPITAL LAWN

A ball tossed through the light comes down to him
to be caught a while and thrown to the garden. He's
better today, his steel brain not so grim,
and yet, as always, he's too eager to please

and worried about the way his testicles shrink
and his face seems different every time he looks.
I watch him on the lawn in a sudden wink
of sunlight. Hours later among my books

I'll remember the pang of light upon his cheek,
that absurd radiance that is lost soon after,
yet the hostile mouth is screwed to a kind of laughter,
a splintered cackle just to show how glad
he feels. But his true voice cannot speak
even to mumble, "Watch while I grow mad."

CRAIG POWELL.

aged to sound like that of the club bore. The breakthrough has come from the new generations of composers, led by those now in their thirties, and followed and confirmed by those still in their early twenties.

Until ten years ago Australian composers were writing in idioms which largely ignored the astonishing developments in music which have occurred in this century. Stravinsky, Bartok, Hindemith, let alone the second Viennese school of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg might not have lived at all when one listened to this music. The ABC dutifully broadcast its five per cent. of air-time devoted to Australian compositions, and occasionally there could be heard the odd work by members of the older, serious generation (but I would like to know just how many times W. G. James' "By Candlelight" ballet music has been broadcast). None of it made one wish that the percentage of Australian music broadcast be increased. Mostly it was boring, and, even when presented with some professionalism of orchestration or performance, it was not enough to cover the fact that we had composers of mere talent at best and tiresome pretension at worst, and to whom the sensibilities of a twentieth century world meant nothing.

The country's training ground for musicians, the conservatoria, resolutely turned their back on modern music, admitting only the popular works of the twentieth century's enfants terribles, Prokofiev, Shostakovich and perhaps Hindemith. Schoenberg's atonalism and serial technique of composition were ridiculed and scorned.

With live and even broadcast performances of fifty years' avant-garde music extremely rare, allowing little opportunity for musicians, not to mention the general public, to become aware and familiar with it, the arrival in Australia of the

LP recording about 1951 broke the hold of the establishment. As the fifties progressed a great part of the post-Schoenberg repertoire became available. In one decade this effectively killed the possibility of works written with the viewpoint of the nineteenth century being seriously accepted here.

The fifties also saw a partial but momentary attention to the older and more interesting group of composers such as Margaret Sutherland, Robert Hughes and Clive Douglas, whose works were more frequently heard from the concert hall and radio. But with the formation of an Australian branch of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1958, based in Sydney, the pace quickened and in a few years it seemed as if twenty-five years of development had been swallowed up. The focus of attention passed quickly to the younger generation, and this is the tragedy of the older group—to have had the laurel snatched from its hand just as it appeared to be bestowed. New names began to appear and works by Australian composers began to be accepted for ISCM International Festivals, a circumstance inadmissible before simply because the compositions by our previous composers displayed no awareness of contemporary idioms.

In 1960 Richard Meale's "Flute Sonata" appeared. Considering the time and the place, it is an astonishing work, and it was performed at the 1963 ISCM Festival in Amsterdam. It was followed in the same year with his "Las Alboradas," a strikingly original work which enjoyed considerable local success. It seemed as if these works, and their acceptance, acted as a catalyst on composers and public alike. Peter Sculthorpe, George Dreyfus, Nigel Butterley, Larry Sitsky and others emerged with works which set everyone by their ears.

The year 1965 saw two composers (Peter Sculthorpe with Faber and Faber, Richard Meale with Boosey and Hawkes) gain contracts with important overseas publishers, and in 1966 George Dreyfus, who is the first musician to be awarded the ANU Fellowship in the creative arts, as well as the UNESCO Fellowship, signed with Schott. Sculthorpe, Meale and Werder (and not the older generation) had compositions performed at the Commonwealth Festival in London. The first recording of its kind, "Australian Music Today"—a joint project of the ABC, UNESCO and World Record Club—was issued in a two-record set and contained works by Meale, Sculthorpe, Dreyfus, Butterley, Werder, Le Gallienne and Antill. Over two thousand copies were sold. In November 1966 the first issue of World Record Club's Foundation for the Recording of Australian Music came out with considerable acclaim—a first-rate recording in stereo of the M.S.O. under John Hopkins playing two works by Sculthorpe and one by Le Gallienne. One of the works—Sculthorpe's "Sun Music I"—is boldly avant-garde. In 1960 people walked out of Stravinsky's concert. It seems a long time ago.

In August 1966 the Federal Government announced what amounts to a Commonwealth Music Fund, initially of \$10,000, "to promote assistance to enable Australian composers to make their works known." The Fund would "have composers' original music scores copied or printed in numbers sufficient for them to be played by orchestras. The money would also be used to have scores recorded on tape for audition purposes, but not for commercial use." So far it has not been decided how the aid will be administered, or by whom.

The announcement of the Fund—so long awaited and lobbied for—has been received with some cynicism by the younger composers. To print scores "to be played by orchestras" sounds hopeful, but a glance at the ABC's orchestral programs for 1967 shows (for Melbourne) only one Australian work scheduled, and that by Robert Hughes. When all the major orchestras in Australia are controlled by the ABC, it becomes apparent that to print scores is only partly an answer. Very few composers are writing orchestral music, mainly because of the unlikelihood of it being performed, although recently Dean Dixon personally invited a number from the younger generation to submit orchestral works to him for possible performance. No orchestral work by Sculthorpe, Meale, Dreyfus or Butterley (who recently won the prestigious Italia Prize) has been publicly performed in the ABC's orchestral series in Melbourne. The award allows no provision for commissioned works. Our composers are still virtually forced to be week-end artists. It is part of the Australian complex that insists that culture comes cheaply.

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Two existing awards make the point. Helen Gifford won the Dorian Le Gallienne Award, and Peter Sculthorpe the Alfred Hill Award which carry \$80 and \$100 respectively. Both works took over three months to compose. To engage a quartet to prepare the works would cost from \$160 to \$200 for one performance! To subsidise the publication of compositions without following it up with assured live and commercially recorded performances will mean that the printed scores are going to sit on library shelves for the study of some more enlightened era.

We live in the age of the gramophone recording. The concert hall already has become what Peter Maxwell Davies calls the "museum culture" and

Colin Wilson called the "classical juke-box." The single performance of a new and difficult work is not going to basically bridge the gap between the public and the composer, especially when it is accompanied by the shameful and irresponsible attitude of Australian music critics (there are a few exceptions).

Nevertheless, the pervading atmosphere amongst the composers is vital and healthy. With teachers of the calibre and vision of Peter Maxwell Davies (Adelaide), Keith Humble (Melbourne) and Peter Sculthorpe (Sydney) working with young composers, we can expect a continuing creative activity out of which will come significant and valuable compositions. There is a great deal of activity—lively, intelligent and committed—and it is this amount and degree of activity which is so exciting in Australia today. It was Virginia Woolf who wrote: "Masterpieces are not single and solitary births, they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that the experience of the mass is behind the single voice."

Talking to Ted

L. J. Blake

HE'S gone now, the small man, and the lilting rhymes will come no more. The epitaph he wrote for Shaw Neilson belongs equally to himself:

Pen him no mournful rhyme,
Ring him no dismal knell,
Now he is one with Time,
Weaver of Dreams farewell!

His last poem, which John Lynch printed in the April issue of *Bohema*, was, typically, "The Kelly Country," a lyric of the land that Harrington knew as a youth. He hailed from Colbinabbin by Cornella Creek just south of Lake Cooper. Born the year after Banjo Paterson published "The Man From Snowy River", born to take his place as a lyricist and balladist who kept alive traditions of the nineties, he fell heavily under the influence of Paterson, Lawson and Brady.

I went seeking him in the summer of '62.

"You'll find him, most likely, in Jack Titus' pub," Neilson's nephew Jack McKimm advised. So I met Ted Harrington for the first time and he looked spry enough but the dreadful cough was with him then. A tiny man with a coat too long and legs so short, but one could see him with emu feather jauntily in his hat and those legs in breeches, a light horseman of the first A.I.F. who fought once at Beersheba. And made that tragic poem "Guinan" about the failure who soldiered on, and also "The Dead Come Home" fashioned after "The Faces In The Street" that Lawson wrote.

"It was Uncle Jim O'Brien who wrote ballads—indeed he has one labelled Anon in Stewart and Keesing's book—that started me writing poetry," Ted explained.

Not that he had much formal education to help him. Did he once attend nearby Wanalta school? He never mentioned it but spoke only of Shepparton Central; his parents were too poor to edu-

cate him further. One suspects that Uncle Jim's influence was strong in the man who dubbed himself "a penniless peddler of rhymes," for the Brino yarns Bohemia has been printing since 1962 are long-remembered tales of the O'Briens' bushmanship and mendacity.

Ted Harrington grew to manhood at his father's place by Boundary Bend. "Dad was a cockie. Scratch cockie, scratch it was in those days," he said. But when asked about the Bend his thoughts drew inwards, for this place, to a man who had wandered the eastern states after the war years as a drover, meant home. It's along the Murray, west of Robinvale and not so far from Speewa, though "miles from a township and miles from the law." There stood a crazy old shanty where "stockmen and drovers and shearers and cooks" with a squatter or two mustered once a year for the bush races on the flat. Guinan went back to Boundary Bend to die. Near to it was O'Bree's with its tragic little bush story that Ted wove into a ballad.

"I began writing ballads for the Bulletin in the twenties," he mused. We were drinking Scotch on the rocks and standing in a corner of the bar where surely a glass of Three Star should have also been. I came back to Melbourne in '36, the year 'Boundary Bend and Other Ballads' appeared. My second book.

"But you asked me about Shaw Neilson. We were very good friends."

I suggested to Ted that he and Neilson had been foundation members of the Bread and Cheese Club in 1938 but his thoughts had drifted back beyond that.

"During the depression he and I met here in the city every two months in a cafe. He would order two sherries, two packets of papers, two lots of tobacco and we would sit and talk for hours. He'd have a drink but never much.

"Interesting it was about Jim. He always called me Ted but I always spoke to him as Mr. Neilson. He wasn't the kind of man you called easily by his first name. I could call you Les straight away but John was always Mr. Neilson to me. He was very reserved.

"Masefield, after spending a day with him, described John as 'the most spiritual man he had ever met.' John, you understand, was a mystic. He agreed that he had more of an affinity with William Blake than with Keats. He had been compared with Keats. He knew some of Blake's work but of course he could read little then. He had bi-focals—which gave him a habit of looking downwards while he spoke."

Ted considered favorably my suggestion that Neilson's poem, "The Orange Tree," held an element of mysticism and that, with a poet, images and ideas may spring unbidden from the subconscious.

"John told me he wrote 'The Orange Tree' in part then put it away for a year or so. 'Y'know Ted,' he said to me, 'when you write a poem you're sure it's a masterpiece. But you put it away then later come back to it and it's not nearly as good as you thought it was.' When I asked him the meaning of it he said the same as Robert Browning did—'Now only God knows.' The explanations that others made of his poems often surprised him. As for Max Dunn's interpretation—that amazed him. 'They know much more about it than I do' he exclaimed."

Ted paused to refresh his memory.

"John knew a great deal about poetry. He had read a bit. He remembered the many poems his father used to recite. A great deal that he wrote in the nineties hasn't been recovered. He wrote

a lot for the Weekly Times and the Leader. I found one piece—a lovely ballad—'Minnie's Story'. He wrote for country newspapers too, as I did, for no payment. He wanted to be a balladist and he wrote some fine ones like 'The Ballad of Remembrance'. But he said: 'I'm no good at ballads. Lyrics suit me. I can say a lot in a short poem. A ballad has to be long to tell the story.'

I mentioned "Old Granny Sullivan".

"Ah, she was a Scots woman who lived in Penola where John was born. She had several children. Her husband—a good fellow—went off to work in the bush and was never seen again. Granny was a fine woman, John said, but Sullivan wasn't her name.

"You know, I don't think John was ever interested in women except in an idealised sort of way. He was too withdrawn. Spiritual as Masefield said. He idealised women."

Ted went on to speak of the help that Mrs. Louise Dyer had given to Shaw Neilson and to praise her. She it was who proposed to publish in London a de luxe edition of the poems. As A. G. Stephens in Sydney held the copyright for a number of these, Neilson wrote to the ageing critic to seek permission to print.

"John told me what happened. When Stephens' reply came John was with his brother Frank. 'The letter was full of abuse,' he said, 'a terrible letter. I didn't want Frank to see it. I didn't want anyone to know Stephens would write such a letter. When Frank left the room I burnt it in the fire.' Mind you Stephens was an old man then."

He spoke of Neilson's last days after returning from Queensland to Melbourne. He was dying in Epworth Hospital when Frank brought to him a copy of Tom Inglis Moore's "Six Australian Poets."

"John was one of the six. A major poet. He held the book in his hands and looked at me. 'It's too late now Ted, too late,' he muttered."

*

Neilson died in 1942. Ted Harrington was one of the pall-bearers at his funeral. Now Ted himself has gone:

He loved the bush and the open plains,
the light of the western stars,

The clink-clink-clink of the hobble-chains
and the wind in the green belars.

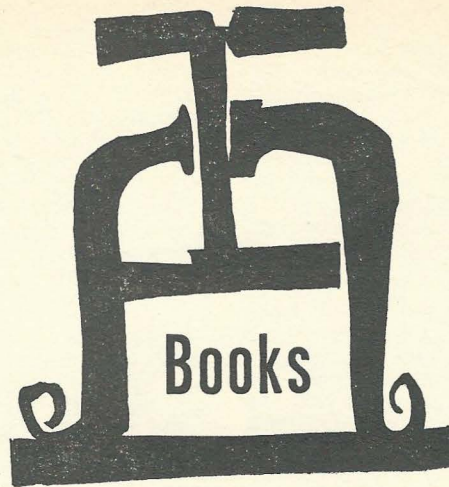
In his years of writing he had seen five books of verse appear and vanish. "My Old Black Billy" (1940) contained the title poem now beloved of folk-singers. Peter Dawson set some of the poems to music; one of these was "Bushrangers." But there were, too, other topics he loved—youth's memories of the bush, of bush dances and the fiddler by the wall, of shearing in the old sheds and living in the men's huts, of wandering down the Lachlan and beating up across the Mallee:

For a man must tramp for tucker in the land
he fought to save . . .

Through all Harrington's writing, comic and sad, tolerant and bitter, evocative and lonely, runs the old familiar theme of the nineties: "mateship's sacred call". At times in poem and story his mind ran back into the "twilight land of folklore" but his ailing body had long determined the way the swagless swaggie would go.

And I still hear him jauntily saying, that summer of '62:

When the days of tramping at last are o'er
And I drop my swag at the Golden Door,
Saint Peter will stare when he sees me there.
Then he'll say, "Poor wandering Willie,
Come in with your sensible,
Indispensable
Old black billy.



Australian Ideologies

A. G. AUSTIN

T. L. Suttor: "Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia, 1788-1870" (M.U.P., \$6.50)
John Barrett: "That Better Country" (M.U.P., \$6.00)
Ruth Knight: "Illiberal Liberal" (M.U.P., \$6.00)

In a tendentious introduction to a tendentious book ("Hierarchy and Democracy in Australia, 1788-1870") Dr. T. L. Suttor declares: "Australia is not only a country, it is an idea . . . perhaps . . . it is the purest study we have of secularism in vacuo." The "great Australian tragedy," he goes on, "is the refusal to explore—to explore God." He is not alone, of course, in making these large claims. Years ago his fellow-Catholic, Dr. J. G. Murtagh, characterised the late nineteenth century clash between Australian Catholicism and secularism as "a conflict of two fundamentally different philosophies on the nature of man" in which the secular decision taken would lead to "a triple apostasy from religion, philosophy and morals". More recently Dr. Suttor's mentor, Professor Manning Clark, has maintained that the decision to pass the so-called secular Education Acts of the late nineteenth century constituted "one of the most momentous decisions, and possibly the most disastrous in the history of Australia."

Whether these large claims can be sustained is open to question; what is not open to question is the fervent, though strangely delayed, interest Australians are taking in the disputation which surrounded the origins of this "tragedy", this "apostasy", this "disastrous" decision.

Ten years ago one was hard put to find a single, reputable book which concerned itself with these matters; here and there an earnest church historian or a teacher turned amateur educational historian meddled ineffectually with these matters, but the professional, general historians chose to act as though the Australian people were explicable without reference to the ideologies they had consciously accepted or rejected as recently as the 1870s and 1880s. Since 1956 a growing number of historians have begun to take some responsibility for this omission; understandably enough they concentrated upon the most tangible manifestation of this era of decision-making, the "secular" Education Acts, but they quickly discovered that they knew too little of the ideological issues which lay beneath this manifestation. Frustrated, they drew back and waited for the ideological historians to remedy this deficiency—

above all, they waited for T. L. Suttor to provide his long-expected analysis of Australian Catholicism, for his obiter dicta which found their way by word of mouth from A.N.U. seminars and common-rooms in Canberra suggested that a very sensitive, albeit idiosyncratic, mind was at work on this formidable task.

Late last year, after he had departed to teach theology in Canada, Dr. Suttor's "Hierarchy and Democracy" was published by M.U.P. Generally speaking, reviewers and scholars have expressed disappointment. They found the book compelling, passionate and perceptive, but they also found it tendentious and idiosyncratic to a fault. They also found that the author had persuaded his publishers to let him use a bibliographical apparatus which was quite inadequate for the weight of argument it had to bear. Suttor apologises for this defect (p.11) by stating that although he had spent three years on the book ("half of it full-time") he had sent it to press without foot-notes because "to check every quotation and allusion would mean doing the entire research again. Life is too short for that"—surely one of the most cavalier statements ever accepted by a university press!

This is essentially a book of seven chapters (for the eighth really consists of further evidence to support the conclusions reached in the seventh); the key chapter is the seventh, in which the author analyses the climactic phase in the conflict between Catholicism and secular liberalism. The preceding chapters break new and vital ground, for therein Dr. Suttor provides us with a penetrating analysis of the Catholicism which was to challenge, and be challenged, by secular liberalism, and I know of nothing which matches his analysis of the steps by which the Australian Catholic church became a pragmatic, "Irish" church instead of the theological, "Benedictine" church which its first Archbishop, Dr. Polding, had intended it to be.

So far so good. But chapter 7 was intended to confront this church with the challenge of secular liberalism and to show, of historical necessity, that the latter triumphed (indeed the chapter is called "The Ascendancy of Secular Liberalism"); however, the triumphant force is never analysed with sufficient rigor to make it anything but a thing of straw. Its victory remains inexplicable.

This is the book's failure and it stems directly from the author's commitment to his own cause. Suttor realised what had gone wrong, but he was apparently incapable of curbing his contempt for his church's enemy. In a revealing, but histor-

iographically disastrous passage, he passes this judgment on his own work:

Where I feel my treatment comes nearest to breaking down is in my villains . . . I hope their private tragedies are not too close to farce. I hope they are not squeezed in out of focus, at the edge of the picture, each only half a man. But when it comes to the personification of secular liberalism, what is the use of pretending that it had any representative of comparable personal stature? It had not. I fear its heirs will cry out against me as an unjust man, but there is nothing I can do about it in this case. Secular Liberalism, the Great Antagonist, was not Prometheus, but a reputation, a rumour, a breath of wind—what everybody thought that everybody else thought. It is utterly impossible to write a sensible history of Australia without using the terms moral cowardice and intellectual dishonesty. The chorus-hero, delivered from one arbitrary authority, the Protestant settlement, succumbs without resistance to the Darwinian conquest. But it is hard to see that a tragedy has happened because no one will break rank and say so. They all march off into the darkness refusing to admit that it is dark because they have put out their eyes.

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John Barrett's "That Better Country" is a less ambitious book than Suttor's. His sub-title, "The Religious Aspect of Life in Eastern Australia, 1835-1850", accurately sums up its purpose, which is to describe a relatively unexciting aspect of Australian life rather than to sustain a thesis.

In his concluding paragraph Dr. Barrett sensibly refrains from asserting that he has made any startling discoveries. "There is little drama here for the historian" he points out.

Its absence may lead him to talk of religious decline. If so, he must first justify the implication that religion in the Australian colonies was ever on a sufficiently high level to make it reasonable to speak of a later decline. This would be extremely difficult, and the voices heard again in these pages would not agree with him. More often, the historian is inclined simply to ignore the role of religion in Australia. This is no less wrong. Colonial legislatures do not wrangle for decades over State aid and church schools without some impact on community life and thinking; and churches and ministers have not appeared in every Australian town and hamlet without cause and effect. He who would rightly interpret Australian history must remember the religious aspect.

Within this modest framework Dr. Barrett has constructed a carefully documented account of the religious aspect of life in the colony of New South Wales before separation, and in Van Diemen's Land; the book falls into three sections: "Religious Provision in Eastern Australia", "The Churches and Education" and "Religious Opinion and Practice". The specialist scholar of each of these topics will soon become aware that the author is handling material which has been worked over fairly extensively in recent years; he will be comforted (though professionally disappointed) to find that Dr. Barrett has discovered few new sources, he will be impressed with the carefulness of the research, and he will be grateful for the minor corrections made to earlier secondary sources. Above all, he will be pleased to see how much attention is paid to Van Diemen's Land.

Dr. Michael Roe's recent book, "Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia, 1835-1851," set a pattern for the inclusion of Van Diemen's Land in studies of Eastern Australia, and Dr. Barrett has wisely followed it. Indeed the two books complement each other splendidly; each author acknowledges his debt to the other (for each read the other's book in thesis form), and they have contrived between them to bring that neglected colony back into the mainstream of Australian history. Students of Australian educational history will be especially grateful to Dr. Barrett for adding substantially to the meagre knowledge we had of events in that colony.

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The same students will also be grateful to Ruth Knight for her new study of Robert Lowe in Australia, "Illiberal Liberal". Lowe's life-long interest in education as a vital element in the stability of society—his clear realisation that universal national education was a new and potent instrument by which society could be manipulated—would probably have led him to broach the subject in New South Wales whatever the circumstances. But as chance would have it his colonial career (1842-1850) coincided with the years in which the colony made its fundamental decisions about the scope and nature of public education; it has long been understood that Lowe played a leading part in framing these decisions, but Mrs. Knight's book makes it abundantly clear that his influence cannot be over-rated. No student of this subject can now consider himself well-informed until he has mastered the material Mrs. Knight has set out here.

But her book is much more than a piece of scholarly writing on educational history. It is, without doubt, one of the finest fragments of biography ever published in this country, and one of the most successful pieces of political history ever published here. As an American briefly resident in this country, Mrs. Knight began this study without any of the advantages possessed by the local historians, but her grasp of the local scene is firm, and her analysis of colonial politics in the 1840s is perceptive and brilliant. Above all she has a deep understanding of the man she chose to write about, and a sensitive appreciation of the paradox he represented. Her final words on him reflect her understanding and compassion:

The mainspring of his personality, wound tight by his youthful anguish, inhibited that freedom of action which he considered the noblest attribute of man. In this limitation lay the root of his failure to reach the pinnacle to which his talents, unimpeded, would have carried him. In this, too, lay the tragedy of the man who dared mankind to hate him and despaired when it did.

To Live and to Create

RICHARD FLANTZ

Patrick White: "Four Plays" (Eyre & Spottiswood, \$5.80).

Reading Patrick White's four plays between the covers of one book is at times like listening to a symphony where all the major themes are introduced in the first movement, developed with variations in the second and third, and brought to a climactic summation in the fourth, to be reiterated with greater profundity.

From "The Ham Funeral" (1947) to "Night on Bald Mountain" (1962) there is a clear line of continuity. While the vision is broader and the

tone more compassionate in the later play, the fundamental concern and the prototypes through which it is portrayed remain essentially the same. I do not say this in any derogatory sense, for the concern is life: how to live, give, love, relate, create meaningfully in the midst of waste and life-negation.

To speak with a new insight and a vivid impact of questions which are simultaneously such hackneyed truths and inexpressible paradoxes, Patrick White has resorted to the creation of a living mythopoeic drama, in which a number of personae reappear and interact in slightly varied guises. These are the deeply sensitive young man, frustrated in his longings to create and to live fully the life of the feelings, the senses and the mind; the barren but sensual middle-aged woman, a kind of debilitated, urban earth-mother; the pure white-clad virgin, a fount of unity and innocence; and the self-satisfied, all-knowing, conforming sub-urban. The young man also acts as a chorus, though less overtly in each succeeding play; this is not just a device employed by the playwright to present his more lyrical insights on the prosaic action—it is organic to the nature of this young man whose detached awareness and depth of understanding are indivisibly linked to his inability to give himself to the life he observes, or even to another person.

However it is only in "The Ham Funeral," which is deliberately stylised and often abstract, that the underlying pattern borders on the schematic. Here the Young Man, significantly nameless, is afraid that he will become a victim of the forces of waste, as epitomised by the landlord and landlady in the basement of the crumbling lodging-house. Yet he feels he must make the descent to these depths; it is not enough to sit in his upstairs room, writing poems that end up in the waste-basket, or to talk through a closed door to a spirit-girl in white, a chimera of his own fashioning. Descending, he is humbled to find in the wasted landlord a glimmering of wisdom and life-affirmation beyond his expectations. But the landlord dies, and the Young Man is sucked into a nightmarish sexual encounter with the childless landlady, in whose ugliness there is also warmth. White presents her with compassion; the harshness in this play is directed mainly at the smug, identical, relatives who appear briefly for the funeral feast—these are the hearty heartless men whose easy-going complacency is above all a complicity with death.

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In "The Season at Sarsaparilla" the canvas broadens to three suburban families going through their everyday routine while in the background, an ugly animality contrasting with an uglier sterility, a pack of dogs pursue a bitch on heat.

Generically reminiscent of "Our Town," and at times of "Under Milk Wood," this "Charade of Suburbia" suffers from comparison, for most of the characters are as much backdrops as are the dogs. Nor is it particularly original satire. But this trite treatment appears to be deliberate, for these truly trite lives are the setting for the pathetic adultery of Nola Boyle, the sanitary man's wife (the childless earth-mother again, hurting without cruelty, giving without joy—all despite herself) and for the inability of the Young Man, now symbolically named Roy Child, to relate to the people around him, to give himself to Judy Pogson (a diminutive version of the girl-in-white, and finally too real for Roy) or to write his book. But this time the Young Man, while still a "chorus," does not have the centre of the stage, nor does he even enter into the Nola Boyle

sub-plot. As though to place him in perspective, White has made him just another minor character in a play which has no major characters.

A major character does appear in "The Cheery Soul," where White's most biting satire is turned on the self-proclaimed personification of giving and charity, the overweening Miss Docker. In the decaying Chinese Room of an old people's home in Sarsaparilla, where old women wait for death, Miss Docker's profuse and ostentatious giving is horrifying and stifling. She makes it impossible for others to give, sows guilt and resentments wherever she goes, and in her presence the young and earnest Reverend Wakeman cannot even give a sermon.

This image of the young man unable to give expression to his deepest longings returns in all the plays: the poems in the waste-basket in "The Ham Funeral"; Roy Child's discarded pages littering the kitchen floor; and now Mr. Wakeman, who, though not a would-be writer, can never find the words for the truths burning inside him. It is most vivid, however, in "Night on Bald Mountain." Here young Denis Craig tears up the poems he has shown to Professor Sword, while the embittered older man keeps his own writings hidden in a drawer, rips up numerous manuscripts submitted to him and is responsible for the destruction of a "naive" novelette written by his now alcoholic wife. This recurring theme is no mere preoccupation of an ultra-literary mind with the problems of creativity—it is a primary concern with a real human need, whether of the 'successful' published artist or the vast legion of Roy Childs torturing themselves over secret or unfinished manuscripts: the need, not only to relate and communicate, but to transcend and give.

On the top of Bald Mountain the urban and suburban settings are left behind, as though to prove that even in the rarefied mountain air the seeds of death-in-life are as potent as ever, for they are inside us. These seeds, the product not only of intellect but also of the unquenchable yearning for a totality of living and creativity, work on Professor Sword, whose fear of emotion and sensuality has poisoned his relationship with his wife (he lives tormented by guilts and longings and a cruel self-knowledge); on Miriam Sword, bitter, childless, still sensual, wandering between visions and memories; on Denis Craig, poised between a future like Sword's and . . . what?—and on Stella Summerhayes, the nurse—an idealised embodiment of purity and feminine strength, she nevertheless has a flaw which through the agency of Professor Sword leads to her death.

The action of this well-structured, well-characterised and powerful fourth movement takes place against the "presence" of Miss Quodling, the romanticised goat-woman, uneducated but earthy-wise, who knows what the tormented, tormenting intellectuals cannot know.

I have not seen any of these plays performed, and while I can envisage numerous weaknesses in terms of theatrical presentation, their publication in book form demands, I believe, the application of criteria beyond those limited to the stage. Here too, many criticisms could be levelled, but they would have to be minor ones, for as literature these plays are a profound poetic and philosophical contribution, an unashamedly lyrical commentary on the human condition stemming from a vision which is not the fashionable one of despair or cynical misanthropy, but of something beyond despair, a compassionate and passionate affirmation of the validity (even in defeat) of human yearnings.

Recent Poetry

ANDREW TAYLOR

- A. D. Hope: "Collected Poems: 1930-1965" (Angus & Robertson, \$3.75)
J. R. Rowland: "The Feast of Ancestors" (Angus & Robertson, \$1.75)
Bruce Dawe: "A Need of Similar Name" (Cheshire, \$1.85)
Rosemary Dobson: "Cock Crow" (Angus & Robertson, \$1.75)
David Martin: "The Gift" (Jacaranda, \$2.95)
Colin Thiele: "In Charcoal and Conte" (Rigby, \$2.10)
A. G. Daws: "Two Tides" (Privately published)
Craig Powell: "A Different Kind of Breathing" (Southern Head Press, \$1.50)

A major obstacle to the appreciation of contemporary Australian poetry is the difficulty we often have in getting access to a sufficiently wide and representative collection of a poet's work. Anthologies are inadequate, and while a poet is still alive and writing, publishers must necessarily be wary of issuing a collected edition which will almost certainly be soon outdated. Angus & Robertson's paperback Australian Poets Series is certainly a step in the right direction. Even so, it is still a series of selections.

Thus A. D. Hope's "Collected Poems: 1930-1965" is all the more welcome. Although in comparison with other poets we have been reasonably well served with his poetry, we now have at last a comprehensive, well-presented and definitive (up to 1965) "anthology of those poems which [Hope] would still care to publish."

The result, as we must expect, even perhaps hope, is uneven. Volumes of Collected Poems always are. Hope's reputation as a satirist is fairly gained, and his satirical poetry is acute and biting. "Persons from Porlock," perhaps the best, is as funny and to the point as any satirical poem since Swift, "A Commination" as savage. But his real stature as a poet is greater than his satires alone would merit.

The greatness of Hope's satires lies partly in the sense they convey of something to be preserved and healed from malaise. Too often Hope seems to be attacking the lot, malaise and patient too. Perhaps the fault is not his, but of the age. If modern life has only corrupt forms available to it, perhaps all one can do is leave Sodom to its destruction and "seek those hills in which the heart finds ease." In these satires Hope appears as a Prophet without any Word of God to preach.

The longer later poems are more satisfying. Although less intense, they provide a form where narrative, meditation and satire can blend and complement each other. But Hope's achievement to date rests on the serious, probing and passionate articulateness of such poems as "Pyramis", "The Death of the Bird", "Chorale", and more recently "The Double Looking Glass", to name but a few. These poems explore the contradictions of life with an involvement, sensitivity and poise unparalleled in the satires and in fact in most other Australian poetry. If I suggest that these poems lack the central and relating moral coherence which is the mark of a really great poet, it's not to deny that as individual poems they are outstanding.

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Few poets manage to produce a first book which doesn't read like a first book. But J. R. Rowland has done just this. We've had to wait a long time for "The Feast of Ancestors", but Rowland's critical self-awareness has made it worth waiting for.

Most of the poems are concerned apparently with the description of places. But at his best Rowland makes such descriptions the definition of a metaphysical condition. Despite overtones of T. S. Eliot (and particularly of "Four Quartets") his poised intelligence and ordered intensity remind one more of Charles Tomlinson. He speaks with a restrained voice, and only rarely is the restraint greater than the pressure of experience. The more common fault and related is an attempt to underline significance, as at the end of "London" ("... and a swollen tree-trunk/Poisonously green and bursting with the wet") or in "Cologne".

The pressure of the poetry results largely from Rowland's sense that we live in "a world of significance without sense" while aspiring to a world "where actions matter". The poetry doesn't reconcile these opposites. Man is a prisoner in this discrepancy between reality and aspiration; but among the most mundane details of life he can at times discern

A cure for habit, some beneficent
Simplicity or steadiness of heart.

But what precisely this is, or how it can operate, is not very clear. We hope that we won't have to wait so long for Mr. Rowland's second book to tell us.

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By comparison, Bruce Dawe would appear at first glance to have no hesitation in proclaiming the answer to the world's ills. Dawe has the reputation of being a "public poet" (whatever that is); but a close look at his second book, "A Need of Similar Name" shows this to be misleading. Certainly much of his poetry deals with public issues, but the worst of it, e.g. "Austral-Aryan" or "Process", is spoilt by an insistence which betrays him into oversimplification.

He's at his best though in such poems as "Head for the Hills" and "Henry Artenshaw's Canaan". Here he gives us the feel of public or political matters through the texture of personal lives. The poetry is true to the fact that although the public is much larger, the personal is necessarily in the foreground. Thus his own strictly personal poems, although light, can be sure and tender.

Dawe's strength is in the great variety of tones which he can make his own, and in the range of moods he can weld together. This swift play of mind is almost always present and results in an acute and unrelenting irony. This virtuosity is lacking from Rosemary Dobson's "Cock Crow". The bite of Dawe's irony isn't there either, and many of her poems are confined within their anecdotal structure in the way the best of his aren't. Still, her book displays a lively and sympathetic wit which is both assured and unhurried.

She is very much aware of the dangers and destructiveness of much modern life, especially in its day to day mundaneness. But rather than be oppressed by it, she can regard it as something to be at worst endured, at best compensated for by the unspectacular but genuine mysteries of life. Such subjects as the bearing of children and the delicate feeling out of the borders between two beings and two personalities are explored with tact and sensitivity.

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"The Gift", David Martin's latest book of poems, is high priced, even though we're informed that it's "published without the assistance of the Commonwealth Literary Fund." And the numerous misprints are surely unnecessary. But the poems are genial and witty, and except in some wholly unmemorable lovesongs (I think) Martin is best

when he is least solemn. "The Satyr and the Nymph" for example is light and amusing, but with a seriousness that isn't overplayed.

Some of these poems are so discursive as to become ruminatory, at times ponderous. And occasionally Martin employs inversions or archaisms such as "twixt" and "nought" which, not being used as the special effects they now are, give the poetry an unexpected "literary" flavor. Still, at their best, the poetry is made alive and good by a broad humanism and pity.

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I found Colin Thiele's sixth book "In Charcoal and Conte" disappointing, although it lives up to its name. Largely a series of portraits, it doesn't add up to much more than a collection of anecdotes or vignettes which depend for interest finally on the local color of their subjects. Each portrait is amusing enough, and makes entertaining reading. But the poems don't cohere into a series, or define or focus through a way of seeing that is any more important than each subject. Even when debunking a myth, Thiele has nothing more significant to put in its place, but remains dependent on it still. Good poetry should be more interesting than its overt subject matter; but the interest of these poems is limited to it.

Unfortunately I didn't find A. G. Daws' privately published "Two Tides" satisfying either. I say unfortunately, because this little book has a sympathetic warmth and interest which is anything but "schoolmasterly". But the self-critical labor at craft and language needed for poetry, what Pound called "Making it Right", isn't there. Too often the effort to make significance clear destroys it, and the poem is flawed at just that point where it should be surest.

However, it is the sureness of craft which distinguishes Craig Powell's first book, "A Different Kind of Breathing". Even so, a number of these poems do little credit to his obvious talents. In poems like "Literary Seminar" and "To Roland Robinson" he tends to speak out fearlessly and unconvincingly. Far more impressive are such poems as "Spastic Children", "Bridgeway, Glebe", and "The Profound Thing", where the poet's penetrating sympathy measures our inadequacies against our responsibilities. These poems show more than promise—they're a considerable achievement already.

Best Buy

EDGAR CASTLE

- "The Keys of Heaven," by Phillip Greville Mann (Heinemann, \$3.95).
"You Can't Come Back," by Bruce Beaver (Rigby, \$2.25).
"Period of Adjustment," by D. H. Crick (Australasian Book Society, \$2.75).
"Seed," by Peter Cowan (Angus & Robertson, \$3.25).

If detergent manufacturers are to be compelled to be modest and accurate, should not publishers be answerable for their "blurbs"? In looking at these novels, customers, we shall borrow the methods of Choice.

"The Keys of Heaven" is about early Sydney, and is made from the same author's television script, "The Patriots." I remember that old croquet, M. H. Ellis, getting stuck into "The Patriots" for its inaccuracies, and looking at "The Keys" I see what he meant. Heinemann calls it "this engrossing first novel." A first novel it un-

doubtedly is. I was engrossed, I confess, by the slickness of it, which suggests a Glo-weave copywriter reworking Gosse Hay. Mann has undertaken to expand the (real) fate of Private Sudds, who died under military punishment in 1827. Now this is to undertake a historical novel, as distinct from a costume-novel, and history can't be written by people who haven't done their homework. Mann's heart is in the O.K. place (he is against Darling, and for Wentworth), but he hasn't begun to get the feel of the Darling period. One officer for example "had a few rum toddies under his belt," which is the vulgarity of a naval wardroom in 1942, not the thinking of even a colonial colonel. The gentlemanly Armitage (Wentworth) kisses the hand of an unmarried lady; in a hand-kissing age this would have been an assault, not a politeness. No good value.

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Bruce Beaver's starting place is neither South Yarra nor William Street, but his own intuition. His publishers make only a modest claim for his novel, though they do say that "he is already well known in the English-speaking world through his volumes of poetry". (A survey of sixty-four English-speaking housewives in Ballarat revealed that only one lady knew the name. She thought that he was the winner of the Stawell Gift.) "You Can't Come Back" is an honest and well-intentioned piece of work. Beaver has had some experience as a surveyor's laborer, and he has undertaken to speak for a group of railway laborers, temporarily located in a country town. In choosing to write, in the first person, as one of the group, he may have undertaken something a little too difficult. While it is the noblest of things for an author to undertake the spokesmanship of the inarticulate, one wonders whether there are not technically easier ways of doing it. Still reasonably successful, honest packaging, and fair value.

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Don Crick's "Period of Adjustment" is published by the Australasian Book Society, and won the Mary Gilmore Centenary Award. Knowing readers will not require the epigraphs from Karl Marx and Bob Dylan to tell them what to expect. As the dust-jacket so rightly says, Crick "links the personal intimacies of day-to-day living with broad aspects of social, economic and personal life." In brief, the author stands with the social realists, and that's not a bad place to stand, anyway. The stereotypes one might expect are there, from the Vacluse manager to the Paddington foreman, but they come alive, and the book is neither offensively predictable, nor devoid of wit. Honest packaging, and good value.

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"Seed" is alleged to be "the big novel which admirers of Peter Cowan's short stories have been eagerly awaiting." Well, at 275 pages it is a big novel. I have admired Peter Cowan's stories, but I do not know that even subliminally I have been waiting for this novel. Still, now it's here, it is easy to greet. Like Beaver and Crick, Cowan is concerned with social relations in the broad sense, and like Crick he is concerned with interclass tensions. His particular centre of interest is the urban (precisely, Perth) adolescent, whose difficulties he handles with intelligence, originality and compassion. Car-stealing and drinking juveniles are not the whole of this novel, though. Adult life, at the office and in the suburbs, is fairly keenly probed for its diseases, some of which are not found in the stock places. It's uneven, but pleasing.

Like his short stories, and indeed like much of our fiction, "Seed" is often wordy and a trifle stiff. (Perhaps if Australia has a national literary style it would be something like this. We paint in our backgrounds too circumstantially, and allow our characters too little liberty. Our novelists should have more faith in their people, and in their readers.) None the less this is a novel of sensitivity and integrity; its solemnity does not smother it. Angus & Robertson may be talking nonsense when they recommend it for "finely orchestrated" characters, and they may be exaggerating when they assert that it is "assured of a high place in contemporary Australian fiction," but the goods in their packet are in fact pretty decent. Best buy.

Jeu D'Esprit

David Martin: "The King Between" (Cassell, \$2.85).

At a time when the news from Indo-China brings little but gloom, it is as rare as it is refreshing to find a writer who can create comedy from the tangled affairs of this part of the world. But if David Martin, in "The King Between" (Cassell, \$2.85), does succeed in this aim, it is not because he lacks compassion for the people who have become the victims in this cauldron of international power politics, but because he sees human nature finally overcoming the devious manipulations of the ideologies of all varieties.

His 'jeu d'esprit' is set in the tiny kingdom of Laodia, which appears to be on a hitherto unmapped, if familiar, stretch of the Mekong River. Here the king is having trouble with his powerful friends from China and America, with his jazz-loving son, patriotic mother and venerably religious brother, with his doubts about his young French wife and his sufferings from a diseased prostate gland. He is the king between, but many others, including the scholarly Chinese ambassador and the sociological wife of the American ambassador, become involved in his affairs before he sorts them out with an outrageous stroke of international daring.

Mr. Martin may not class this book as one of his major ones, but with his delicate lightness of touch, and sure mastery within the rules he has set himself, he has created another work to grace our current writing. Perhaps not the least of its charms is the way in which the Martin personality again reveals itself in these new surroundings.

J. M.

Editor's Choice

(Of recent books not otherwise reviewed)

AUSTRALIANA

The famous **Bigge reports** on the state of the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, drawn up around 1820 by J. T. Bigge for the information of the Home government, have been issued in facsimile by the Libraries Board of South Australia. This is a magnificent service to Australian studies. Three volumes, \$6.00 each.

J. F. Mortlock's **Experiences of a Convict**, edited by G. A. Wilkes and A. G. Mitchell. Published by Sydney University Press at the low price of \$3.50, this is the most comprehensive account of a single convict's experiences, extending over twenty years, that has appeared in print.

Peter Cunningham's **Two Years in New South Wales**, edited by David S. Macmillan (Angus & Robertson, \$7.50). Probably the liveliest and best single account of colonial Australia written before 1850, amusing and perceptive, and splendidly edited and produced.

Therese Huber's **Adventures on a Journey to New Holland**, translated by Rodney Livingstone, edited by Leslie Bodi (Lansdowne, \$3.50). No particular historical or literary value, but of curiosity interest as the first novel set in Australia. First published in Germany in 1801.

G. C. Bolton's **Richard Daintree: A Photographic Memoir** (Jacaranda/A.N.U., \$4.75). A portfolio of outstanding early photographs with an excellent introduction.

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

Michael Cannon's **The Land Boomers** (M.U.P., \$7.50). A splendid account of Melbourne's boom and bust in the 1880s and 1890s, studded with the names of those who went to gaol or the bankruptcy court, or who (more frequently) narrowly evaded both. Highly readable yet a distinctive contribution to our historical understanding of a period which marked the end of colonial innocence.

Cardinal Moran and the A.L.P., by Patrick Ford (M.U.P., \$7.50). An enlightening account of Catholic attitudes to the early Labor movement, from the point of view of the Church as well as of individual participants. A scholarly contribution to both religious and political history.

Oscar Mendelsohn's **A Waltz with Matilda** (Lansdowne, \$4.50). Literary detection—hunting down the origins of Australia's national song.

EXPERIENCE

Eleanor Alliston: **Escape to an Island** (Heinemann, \$3.50). Ten years of bringing up a family and making a living on a Bass Strait island. A relaxed, thoughtful and frequently exciting account of coming to terms with oneself and one's environment. A tranquil book about a beautiful but far from tranquil part of Australia.

The Seven Rivers, by Douglas Stewart (Angus & Robertson, \$3.75). A poet with a marvellous eye for human and bush detail talks about memorable fishing days in New Zealand and Australia. If only everyone who writes on his bush experiences had an inward and outward eye like Stewart's! And his wit!

The Sea and the Snow, by Philip Temple (Cassell, \$4.00). A 63-foot cray boat, a dozen or so amateur explorers, a small, glaciated island rising to nearly ten thousand feet in sub-Antarctic waters. A straight-forward but impelling account of a private Australian expedition to Heard Island in 1964-5 which got there, got to the top, and got back. (For the best effect first read Grahame Budd's "The ANARE 1963 Expedition to Heard Island," an official Antarctic Division report published in 1964—and one of unusual distinction.)

The Beckoning West, by Eleanor Smith (Angus & Robertson, \$3.75). The story of a pioneer West-Australian surveyor (H. S. Trotman) and of the Canning stock route, strongly and effectively told by Mrs. Smith.

Len Beadell's **Too Long in the Bush** (Rigby, \$3.95), looks at first sight like just another piece of run-of-the-mill outbackery, but turns out to be a most interesting and even moving account of the experiences of a road builder in central Australia, told with zest and thoughtfulness.

The Familiar Presence and other Reminiscences, by A. R. Chisholm (M.U.P., \$3.75): further pleasant autobiographical essays by a professional but practising humanist.

SHORT STORIES

We are fortunate in having five outstanding recent collections. These are D. E. Charlwood's **An Afternoon of Time** (Angus & Robertson, \$2.50)—John Morrison rang me recently, overflowing with enthusiasm for these stories; Colin Thiele's **The Rim of the Morning** (Rigby, \$2.25); E. O. Schlunke's **Stories of the Riverina** (Angus & Robertson, \$2.75); Brian James's **The Big Burn** (Angus & Robertson, \$2.75), and **Henry Lawson's Best Stories** (Angus & Robertson, \$3.75), chosen by Cecil Mann.

REPRINTS

Three classics or semi-classics, for too long out of print, have happily now been resurrected: Miles Franklin's **My Brilliant Career** (Angus & Robertson, \$3.00), Christina Stead's **Seven Poor Men of Sydney** (Angus & Robertson, \$3.25), and the same author's **The Salzburg Tales** (Sun Books, \$1.65).

Other welcome reprints are Angela Thirkell's wicked satire on Australians, **Trooper to the Southern Cross** (Sun Books, 95c); **Caddie: A Sydney Barmaid** written by herself (Sun Books, 80c); Alan Marshall's **These Were My Tribesmen** (Lansdowne, \$4.75)—a resume of "Ourselves writ Strange," with splendid photos by Matcham Skipper; and Russel Ward's **The Australian Legend** (O.U.P., \$1.85), a soft-cover edition of a seminal book, with a new foreword.

POLITICS

Two standard works on our political parties have recently appeared: Katharine West's **Power in the Liberal Party** (Cheshire, \$5.20), and B. D. Graham's **The Formation of the Australian Country Party** (A.N.U., \$6.90). A. F. Davies' intensive study of the backgrounds and beliefs of five rank - and - file politically - inclined Australians, famous long before it appeared in print, has now been published as **Private Politics** (M.U.P., \$7.00).

BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM

Henry Lawson: Poet and Short Story Writer, by Colin Roderick (Angus & Robertson, \$2.50) reprints two lectures in which Professor Roderick analyses Lawson's short-story technique and his contribution as a poet. A number of useful new points are made, and Roderick takes a bold (but, I believe, justified) line in partially rehabilitating Lawson as a poet.

EAST ASIA

Four important recent works are C. P. Fitzgerald's **A Concise History of East Asia** (Heinemann, \$5.00), Nicholas Tarling's **South-east Asia: Past and Present** (Cheshire, \$5.55), Gerald Stone's **War Without Honour** (Jacaranda, \$3.95) and Brian Crozier's **South-east Asia in Turmoil** (Pelican, 45c).

GENERAL HISTORY

F. B. Smith's **The Making of the Second Reform Bill** (M.U.P., \$6.00) is a basic contribution to British nineteenth-century history by an Australian historian. Penguin Books have recently issued the first three volumes of E. H. Carr's monolithic and virtually definitive history of Soviet Russia, **The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923** (\$1.50 each). The same publishers have also issued Correlli Barnett's brilliant study of the first world war through the lives and personalities of four of those in supreme command: von Moltke, Jellicoe, Petain, Ludendorff. It is called **The Swordbearers** (\$1.25). Louis Mumford's classic work **The City in History** has also been issued by Penguin Books, at \$3.50.

EDUCATION

Gwyneth Dow's **Parent, Pupil and School** (Cassell, \$1.95) describes Victoria's state education system in detail for the benefit of parents and others. This is a pioneering work which cuts swathes through standing fields of confusion, and surely needs emulation in all other states. A. G. Austin's **The Australian School** (Longmans, 75c) is an excellent brief summary in some fifty pages of the school in Australia from the convict period until today. Intended for senior school children, this booklet would also serve as an excellent introduction for the general reader to an aspect of Australian history now coming under close scrutiny.

MISCELLANEOUS

Frank Cusack's **The Australian Christmas** (Heinemann, \$3.90) is a spirited anthology of Christmas anecdotes in prose and verse, stretching over the last 150 years. Ambitiously illustrated and an original gift book.

The Poetical Works of Henry Kendall, by (Bishop) T. T. Reed, published by the Libraries Board of South Australia at \$7.50, is a definitive critical edition of the works of a leading nineteenth-century Australian poet.

Betty Collins' **The Copper Crucible** (Jacaranda, \$3.50) is a novel on industrial unrest at Mt. Isa, and a skilful evocation of frustrations in a company town. The book has been used, indeed, as source material in industrial relations at one Australian university.

The Great Extermination, by A. J. Marshall (Heinemann, \$4.75). Professor Marshall and his colleagues here assemble the most damning evidence ever brought together on the Australians' rape of their environment: animals, birds, fish, trees and plants. This is an extremely timely and important book, and we hope to have it, and its findings, examined in detail in later issues of *Overland*.

MAGAZINES

Worthy of notice: **Australian Science Fiction Review**, \$3.60 for 12 issues from John Bangsund, 19 Gladstone Ave., Melbourne, N.16; **North**, No. 5, 1966, publication of the Townsville branch of the English Association (30c from Department of English, University College of Townsville)—contains a fine little story by Thea Astley, and a fascinating scholarly vignette by Colin Roderick entitled "Was Lawson born in a Tent?"; **Thrust**, poetry and short stories by young West Australians, 35c from Guild of Undergraduates, University of W.A.

MASK OF ASIA: The Philippines

George Farwell

A penetrating account of the Philippines—its past, present and possible future. Factual reportage and lively personal observation combine to make enlightening reading. Illustrated. **\$4.50**

SEASON OF YOUTH

Judah Waten

Frank, fresh and deliciously humorous—a novel describing the boyhood and early manhood of a writer in the Melbourne and Sydney of thirty years ago. **\$3.50**

NEW FACES

Edited by Alan Stoller

Assimilation—the problem all migrants face. Their social, economic and political difficulties are sympathetically described by authorities and some surprising new facts are revealed. **\$3.00**

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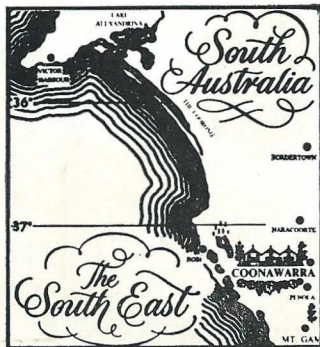
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