

The Listener

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An Arab tribesman in Kuwait, one of the oil-bearing countries bordering the Persian Gulf. C. M. Woodhouse discusses 'Prospects in the Middle East', on page 921

Art and Anarchy—II The second Reith Lecture by Edgar Wind

Has the Commonwealth a Future?
By Antony Allott

Dry Rot and Redbrick
By A. P. Rowe

Llanidloes, the Pocket Metropolis
By Ian Nairn

The Art of Michelangelo
By Lawrence Gowing

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Has the Commonwealth a Future?

By ANTONY ALLOTT

WHERE is the Commonwealth going: indeed, is it going anywhere? Has the Commonwealth a future? These may seem odd questions to ask at a time when everyone—and by 'everyone' I mean not only such long-standing upholders of the Commonwealth idea as the British Conservative Party and Mr. Menzies, but the newer and more radical elements such as President Nkrumah—is telling us what a wonderful institution it is, and what a vital role it can play in a world divided by racial and political antagonisms. But we have to ask these questions because the Commonwealth has reached another climacteric in its remarkable history: larval Empire metamorphosed into the contemporary Commonwealth, but this in its turn appears to be merely a transitional form preceding the emergence of the finished institution, which will resemble its original shape as little as the butterfly does the caterpillar.

These somewhat sombre doubts and reflections have been occasioned by the recent Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, where two problems were for the first time adumbrated. The first of these concerned South Africa, or, to speak more exactly, the question of how other Commonwealth members should treat South Africa; the second was also connected with eligibility for Commonwealth membership, though from the contrary point of view—namely, whether any limit should be placed on the admission of former British dependencies into full membership.

It will be the task of the next Prime Ministers' Conference to define its collective attitude on these points; political history,

even the doctrines of constitutional law, will be of little assistance to them at that moment, for, as we recognize by now, the Commonwealth's history has been one of pragmatically inspired innovation or improvisation, and there is nothing in the way of novel structure that the politicians can devise for which the constitutional lawyers cannot find an appropriate legal framework or expression.

To take the South African problem first: the fact that the Union has decided by its recent referendum to adopt a republican form of government has given rise to a vast amount of discussion on the incidental consequences of such a step, for example, on whether the declaration of a republic would automatically put the Union outside the Commonwealth, and whether this in its turn would terminate South Africa's right to Commonwealth preferences. These are vital matters, integral to any examination of the Commonwealth relationship; but they appear to me of minor importance compared to the major revolution in Commonwealth inter-relationships which might be produced by the censuring, still more the expulsion, of the Union on the grounds of its racial policies.

Until now, the practice of the Commonwealth has been clear: the Prime Ministers' Conference, as the highest organ of the Commonwealth, does not pass judgment on the domestic affairs of member-countries. In the words of the communiqué issued by the Prime Ministers last May: 'The Commonwealth is an association of independent sovereign states, each responsible for its own policies'. This point was recently reaffirmed by Mr.

The Listener's Book Chronicle

The Liberal Hour. By John Kenneth Galbraith. Hamish Hamilton. 18s.

Reviewed by SIR ROY HARROD

IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE to read Professor Galbraith. He has a lively and lucid style, a plentiful command of epigram and much sense of humour. He drives his points well home and imbues every theme he touches with interest. This volume contains some thoughts already known to readers of *The Affluent Society* and *The Great Crash, 1929*. There is also a good deal of new matter including sketches, sometimes scathing, of people, and historical re-interpretations.

Of great interest are his views on the topical question of inflation (chapter 4). It is to be noted that he holds that the problem of rising prices and excessive wage increases must be approached directly, namely, by discussions with the parties concerned, both on the trade union side and on the side of the great corporations which have the power to fix prices for important ranges of products. He lays much stress on the latter. It is of particular interest that this progressive writer on the other side of the water comes to the same conclusion in this respect as the third report of the British Council (formerly 'Cohen Council') on Prices, Productivity and Income. Those responsible for policy should take note of this agreement of views.

It is a pity, however, that, as well as stressing this point, Professor Galbraith belittles the importance of monetary policy. 'The less reliance we place on monetary policy, the better off we will be'. This is a harsh, and surprising, comment in a country where the Federal Reserve System, although probably somewhat too restrictive on balance, has had such remarkable success, by adroit and timely policy, in ironing out the business cycle. Professor Galbraith, in enthusiasm for his own ideas, has failed to do justice to others. It is to be hoped that the weapons of monetary policy, which have been so successful within limits, will be further sharpened, and not the other way round.

Professor Galbraith has also ventured into a discussion of economics and art. In the new age of affluence we need to have more resources devoted to the promotion of artistic endeavour and the dissemination of interest in art. Incidentally, he makes a claim for New York. 'The world accords New York the honour and prestige of regarding it as a world capital, not because of the quality of our soldiers, or our scientists, or our statesmen, but because of the quality of our actors, playwrights, composers, artists and architects'. That may be so. About further development on these lines Professor Galbraith's views amount to the idea that something should be done about it.

But he does not touch on deeper questions. There may, for instance, be a cycle in creative art by which certain veins of feeling and artistic forms are capable of generating a great upsurge of output of fine art, and later become exhausted, so that the world goes through a period of doldrums. There is nothing that the economic

planners can do about that. Or, if advocates of modern art claim that we are by no means in such a phase now, yet the forms and mannerisms of the best contemporary art may be such as not to have a wide appeal. Again there is nothing the planners can do. And there is a further question. It may be that the genetic composition of the human family is such that for the majority artistic manifestations can never be a consuming interest. If this is too pessimistic, we may at least be sure that wider extension of interest in the manifestations of art can only be promoted by those for whom interest in art is a real passion. Somehow they will have to convey their enthusiasms and appreciations to a larger number. The writing of Professor Galbraith does not seem to suggest that he is himself one of those for whom art means much. Otherwise would not so excellent a writer, with a great command of English prose, have thought that, by some turn of phrase or sequence of clauses, he might introduce into his own writing, now and then, a touch of beauty, or something that would appeal to the deeper emotions? He is forceful, convincing and amusing; but there is at the same time a certain harshness. One feels that there is rather a wide gulf between the outlook of this advocate of economic reform and those artistic types in New York, whom he praises so highly—a gulf which is perhaps typical of the American social stratification and constitutes a flaw in its 'way of life'.

Shakespeare's Rival. By Robert Gittings. Heinemann. 18s.

Mr. Gittings, having introduced Isabella Jones into the biography of Keats, now attempts to solve the most intriguing of unsolved literary problems—the identity of the rival poet of the Sonnets. His candidate is Gervase Markham.

He uses a number of converging arguments. Guilpin referred to Markham as one whose 'Subject's rich' (punning on the name of Sidney's Stella) and whose 'Muse soars a Falcon's gallant pitch', which Mr. Gittings takes to be an allusion to the Shakespeare crest, newly acquired. Then Armado, playing the part of Hector, says 'I am that flower'; and Markham, in his version of the *Song of Songs*, uses the words 'I am that rose'. So Armado, though originally a partial portrait of Perez, was altered in 1597 to satirize Markham. We may ask, however, why Shakespeare introduced no reference to horsemanship on which Markham was notoriously expert.

Mr. Gittings supposes that *Devoreux*, written in praise of the Essex family, was the poem to which Shakespeare was referring ironically in 'the proud full sail of his great verse'; and that a stanza in the same poem, entitled 'The Tombe', was the cause of Shakespeare's line—

When others would give life, and bring a tomb.
(Mr. Gittings does not mention that, in a sonnet addressed to Southampton, Markham speaks of his lines as 'the grave'.)

After being guyed in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Markham ceased to address the Essex circle in print till long afterwards, and he withheld the

publication of his *English Arcadia* for ten years because of 'the imputations of arrogance, imitation, affectation, and even absurd ignorance, which I feared Envie would unjustly lay upon me'. Finally, after Shakespeare's death, Markham recorded that he had 'ever loved and admired' Southampton, and that he lived many years where he daily saw him.

We may present Mr. Gittings with a further piece of evidence. Markham not only invokes the ghost of Essex's brother to inspire his work but in his earlier poem he invokes another 'affable, familiar ghost', Sir Richard Grenville, to perform the same service.

Nevertheless it is difficult to regard Mr. Gittings's arguments as convincing. It is not really possible to dissociate the identity of the rival poet from that of the patron to whom the sonnets were addressed; and here Mr. Gittings becomes non-committal, suggesting Essex, Southampton, and Wingfield as possibilities. Yet Essex was married, and Shakespeare's friend was not; and if the sonnets were written to someone else, there seems no real reason why Shakespeare should feel that a poem about the Essex family was a threat to his relations with his patron.

Mr. Gittings, however, makes a number of incidental hits, notably his proof that Berowne's soliloquy conflates two passages from Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller*. He also makes some questionable statements. Meres was referring not to the subject-matter but to the sweetness of versification when he called the sonnets 'sugared'; Shakespeare uses 'portraiture' in a serious context in *Hamlet* and would not laugh at Markham for using the word; and Holofernes does not attempt to use classical metres in his Pageant of the Nine Worthies.

KENNETH MUIR

Party Politics. Volume I: Appeal to the People. By Sir Ivor Jennings. Cambridge. £2 5s.

This volume, the first of a trilogy, is an examination of a form of government which rests on the idea of appeal to the people. What persons and elements make the appeal, what persons and classes respond to the appeal and propaganda of the politicians, is here examined with that solid and careful learning, and that clarity of exposition that has made the author the acknowledged master to students of politics in this country. The first part, 'the constituencies', sets out the changes in the distribution of seats made by the various reform bills, while the second, 'the electors', deals with those who hold the parliamentary franchise. Sir Ivor Jennings expounds this mass of difficult information with a master hand. He uses the typographical device of the 'box', set well in the middle of the page, clearly presenting the facts and figures with which he is dealing. There are eighty of these tables and they greatly assist comprehension of a difficult and intricate subject. In chapter ten, at the end, he has what he calls a primer of electioneering which includes a critique of recent studies in electoral subjects, the Nuffield College election histories and other works. From this

he sets forth thirteen propositions about contemporary politics: not all will agree with them, but all are maintained by careful argument.

The middle part of the book deals with the practice of appeal to the people under such titles as 'mob oratory', 'indirect propaganda', 'rank and class'. Here the author is treading on ground in which exact facts are often not to be found and he examines with judicious reserve these baffling questions of the effect of rank, class, schools and colleges, trade unions, literature and broadcasting. Here he is on the ground of political psychology, a mysterious subject on which we have lacked an individual, illuminating mind since Graham Wallas. The proportions of his present book do not give him the space to go very deeply or subtly into all this, to deal with the exceptions to rules, with secondary reactions. In face of the uncertainties of political diagnosis he is admirably restrained and judicious: he does not perhaps stand sufficiently in awe of the mystery of politics.

In his examination of class and politics and education and politics Sir Ivor finds a bias in the system to conformity in politics and religion. This is illustrated in many ways and while he shows how the social and political system is far from closed, the conformist bias always asserts itself. Nowhere does he tell us whether he approves or disapproves of this. But it may be observed that those who gladly accept this state of affairs rarely talk about it, least of all expose it with such a wealth of information. And here, for all its low temperature and careful statement, the book provides explosive material.

The author has much to say about the political effects of religious broadcasts. What the B.B.C. seeks is conformity with 'one of the churches in the main stream of historic Christianity . . . it is in other words deliberate propaganda directed towards conformity with the churchgoing minority. Except probably in Wales and more doubtfully in Scotland, this would be propaganda for the Conservative Party, though not deliberately so'. And in his chapter on education he observes that while there are minority movements, 'the median is right of centre as in the Church of England itself. Oxford and Cambridge have since the Reform Act been centres of moderate Conservatism, with occasional movements either way'. And he illustrates very well how 'the ruling few' tend to arrive via Oxford or Cambridge whether by talent or wealth; he notes especially how the second generation in a rising family are drawn into the Anglican-Conservative nexus.

All this may be accepted as a valid generalization. It is possible that Professor Jennings may be underestimating the radical potentialities of the Church and the effects of the new lower class-and-economic status of its clergy. While he speaks of the churchgoing minority as wielding an instrument of propaganda over a non-churchgoing majority, it may be that the indifferent majority would react violently to anti-religious broadcasts which might seem at first sight to be justified. But if those who are really concerned to terminate the rule of 'the Establishment' want to effect their purpose, it would seem that they must go all out to end or severely limit religious broadcasts, to dissolve or take over the public schools, to end the ancient universities' monopoly of talent and spread it over all others. Indeed they should also put

an end to titles of nobility and rank and possibly challenge the institution of monarchy itself.

'Conformity' may be the besetting sin of England. Even the Head of an Oxford or Cambridge College, like the present reviewer or the present author, may feel at times a lively impatience with the 'Varsity' mind. But there is scarcely an example in history of one conformity being ended without a rival conformity taking its place. There is scarcely a country in Europe which has abandoned its old conformity without a revolt of the dis-established leading to civil war or intolerant despotism. In contrast to these stand the constitutional monarchies, mainly Protestant, washed at some point by the waves of the Atlantic.

R. B. MCCALLUM

Lady Chatterley's Lover

By D. H. Lawrence. Penguin. 3s. 6d.

An atmosphere of hysterical over-excitement is not one in which a book may be most profitably read—still less reviewed. I wonder how many people have in recent weeks read the pages of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* consecutively, starting at page 5 and ending at page 317? We have all, like the jury at the Old Bailey, been conjured rather to dip into it here and there. This is not what Lawrence wanted at all. He wanted us to read his story, which he meant to be a good one. I have read it twice recently, and straight through. It seemed to me even richer and more moving the second time than the first; but my total impression seemed on both occasions the same. Here was the mature work of a great artist, a novel which for all its occasional lightness was seriously intended to touch the heart, which had been composed with great thoroughness, and which was, like most of Lawrence's more extended works, grounded in moral protest. If I had to say what that protest consisted of, I would say that in simplest terms it is the championship of good sexual relations against bad ones: warm-hearted sexuality against cynical and cold-hearted self-indulgence and exploitation. Asked to say as briefly as possible what happens in the book, I would say that it charts the progress of its two chief characters from the desolation and forlornness in which we first find them—and to which they have been reduced by present or past adversity—towards a state which holds out a promise of hard-won happiness. I cannot put it otherwise.

Others, apparently, can. We are told in a letter to THE LISTENER of November 17 that 'as several critics have been quick to point out, Mellors already had a wife, and Lady Chatterley seems to have had no compunction about breaking up that marriage, so long as she satisfied her own lusts (she wasn't chaste even before she married Chatterley), while she apparently had no pity for her unfortunate crippled husband. And Lawrence shows no interest in what might have been the fate of any illegitimate children that might have been born'. This is all wrong: in fact, in implication, and in deduction. Mellors has been long parted from his wife, beyond possibility of reconciliation; when Connie meets him he is living a life of contemptuous chastity, and there is no question of her breaking up a relationship. To speak of her as satisfying her own 'lusts' (surely the simple singular would be pejorative enough?) seems to me to suggest that she is merely using Mellors as an instru-

ment, or that she is suffering from temporary or permanent nymphomania. Neither is the case. Of 'pity for her unfortunate crippled husband', she has an abundance; she also has love for him. It is he who has no pity or love for her. This is the point from which the entire plot develops. 'The fate of any illegitimate children that might have been born' is said to evoke no interest from Lawrence. But is not this the chief element in the whole of the last third of the book? As for Connie's 'unchastity' before marriage, this is presented by Lawrence (with mocking disapproval) as mechanically characteristic of her class and upbringing; and indeed the sexual side of her solitary little teen-age affair is undertaken rather as a boring fashionable duty than anything else. It is not the onset of a sexual mania.

But that people can, at either first or second hand, get such odd ideas about what characters in a book are like, and about what happens to them, is probably some sign of a book's disturbing realism. (Hardy's *Tess*, it may be recalled, could once be thought of as a 'little harlot'.) And *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is real because it is art. Lawrence's great gifts are all here: his powers of construction, of subtly unfolding a complex narrative, the sureness with which he can change his tone from sober to satirical, from bitter to pathetic, from humorous to grave; above all, his incomparable way of capturing the quickly changing shifts of feeling as the inner world of his characters is acted upon by the outer. The book is not without faults; in more extensive comments one would have to probe them. At this particular point in history one's concern must be to clear the reputation of the book from gross falsification; and to urge that all who would speak about it, either in praise or blame, should dutifully address themselves to the task of reading it, from (I repeat) page 5 to page 317.

HENRY REED

The Writing on the Wall. An account of the Last Days of Pompeii.

By Jack Lindsay. Muller. 25s.

Lord Lytton's account of Pompeii as it was just before the disaster is heavy with brooding and nameless evils. Jack Lindsay, on the other hand, is concerned only to fill in the correct and concrete details for us. Lytton's city, like Sodom or Babylon, is a mythical city which God has condemned for its vices: Mr. Lindsay's is merely a thriving mercantile township which, like all other sea ports, must provide carnal entertainments for many different types of visitor. Mr. Lindsay, in fact, disposes of Pompeii's legendary wickedness; the place was no better and no worse than the Rome of Catullus or the Naples of our own time. True, this is not much of a recommendation by sound middle-class standards, but by the standards of history it is commonplace enough.

Mr. Lindsay, then, has carefully and sensibly reduced this preposterous mountain of depravity down to its proper proportions as a mole-hill of everyday naughtiness. But I have two complaints about *The Writing on the Wall*. First, its author adopts the tiresome device of addressing us through the mouth of a well-to-do local chatterbox, who leads us round the town explaining everything from banking to bawdy and dutifully pointing out every inscription which Mr. Lindsay has been able to unearth. From time to time he also draws attention to nearby