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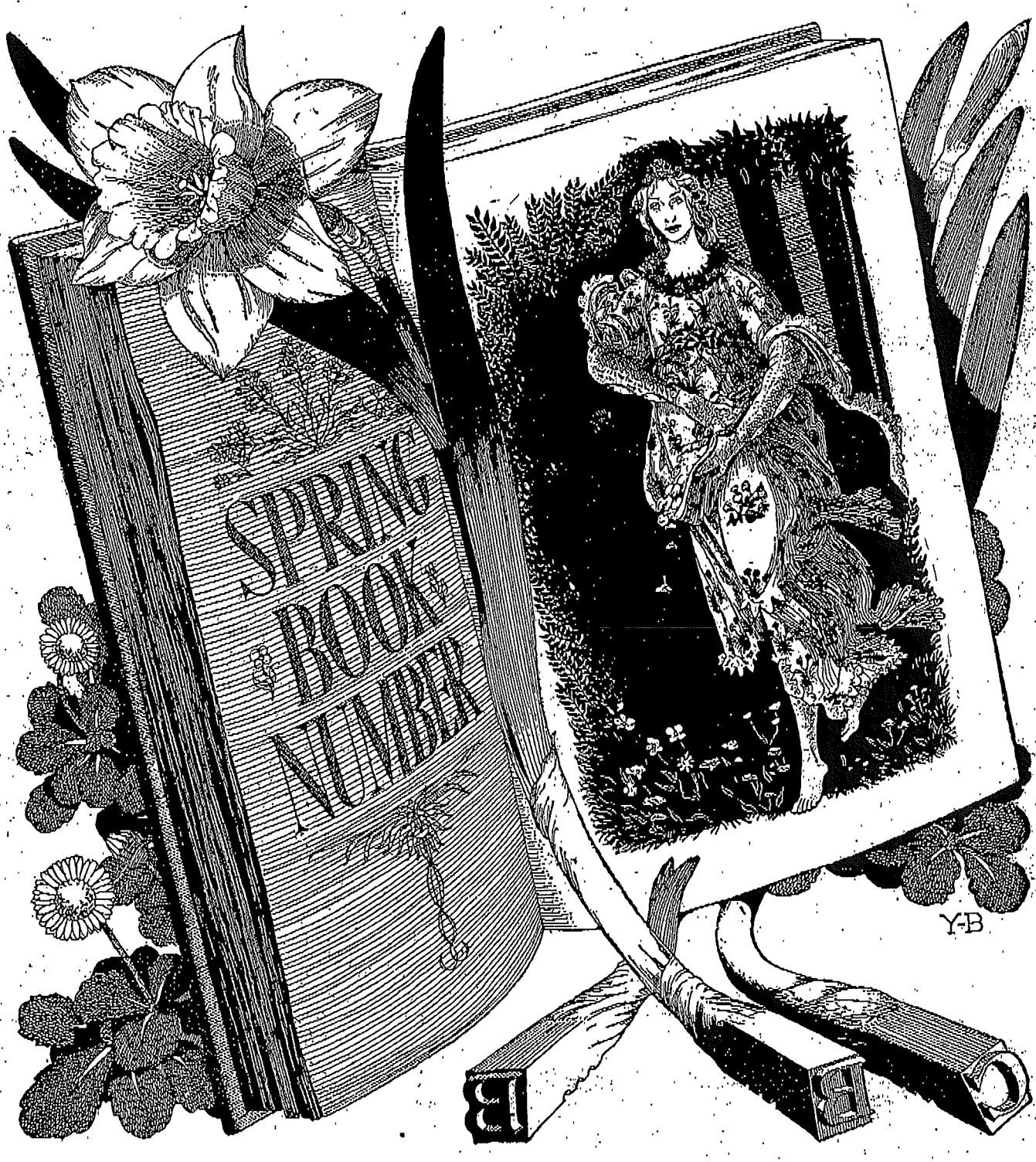


Spring Books

Lord Acton

Acton: The Formative Years. By David Mathew: Eyre and Spottiswoode. 10s. 6d.

Reviewed by Professor GUY CHAPMAN

A HISTORIAN examining the Inaugural Lectures in which past Regius Professors of Modern History had made their declarations of faith, concluded: 'I began thinking I was listening to an orchestra of eighteen strings. Before I finished, I realised that I was listening to a solo with an orchestral accompaniment. The soloist is Acton'. Today what is chiefly connected with that name is the frequently misquoted sentence from his letter to Mandell Creighton: 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely'. The nine words crystallise, I suppose, his political philosophy after much experience at the age of fifty. It is with the experience which brought Acton to that position that Bishop Mathew deals in this book, the earlier volume of what promises to be an ample story.

John, first Lord Acton
From 'Acton: The Formative Years'

Acton's writing possesses certain rarely combined qualities. There is, for instance, passion combined with absolute clarity. Dry is the adjective Bishop Mathew most justly applies, that is, not aridity but the dryness of a matured Montrachet. There is deep seriousness allied to an ironic wit, a choice of epithet so accurate as to be poetic. There is no sentiment, but an austere weighing of constancy, loyalty and independence. The concentrated style, packed with allusion, in which the happily selected word carries a *sous-entendu*, sometimes bears a strange, gnomic character, as when he writes: 'When Mommsen says that the only ascertained maxim of research is that hearsay evidence is as good as the source it comes from, I understand him to mean that genius is better than schooling'. Some say he quotes too much, and that few can grasp his allusions. But Acton's essays are constructions, and the quotations are the foundation. True, he is, especially in his youthful writings, polemical; the high perfectly phrased contempt is the product of German critical feuds and Whig society. All his thought is the fruit of his ancestry, his schooling and his early ambience. In Acton's veins ran at least three strains, that of English gentlemen adventurers (his grandfather, Sir John, was chief minister to the Two Sicilies), that of the Dalbergs, ancient ducal family from the Rhineland, that of the Genoese Brignole-Sala. He was born a cosmopolitan. His mother's second marriage—for his father died in 1835 when he was a year old—threw him into the highest Whig circles. From his step-father, Lord Granville—Granville the Polite, Gladstone's Foreign Secretary to be and Bismarck's *bête noire*—he learned the small change of political give-and-take, which made him always ready to qualify the great movements of history he traced by the awareness of the power of hidden and even minor forces to distort development. A third influence was that of a traditional Catholicism (Bishop Mathew has an excellent chapter on the conservative, old Catholic families of the Midlands, where the Acton estates lay), a Catholicism reinforced by Oscott under Wiseman and by Ignaz v. Döllinger. Thus at every turn, Acton was a citizen of the world, a member of European rather than English society, and, as a Catholic, a member of a universal and not national Church.

Refused admission to Cambridge by three colleges in a panic of anti-Tractarianism—this in the time of Newman's submission—Acton at the age of fourteen was sent to live with and study under the great theologian and historian, Döllinger of Munich, who taught him German industry and thoroughness, and gave him his critical mind. It was from Döllinger that sprang Acton's hostility to official Catholic policy, which brought about the virtual suppression of the *Rambler* and the *Home and Foreign Review*, and culminated in the battle with the Infallibilists at Rome in 1870, the excommunication of Döllinger and nearly a similar condemnation of Acton himself. One could wish that Bishop Mathew had given us more of Döllinger. He is admirable on the Bavarian atmosphere of the fifties, and on Döllinger as a man; but the account of his teaching is meagre, and one could wish that he had explored the 'table-talk' in the Acton Library at Cambridge. Nor, again, does he say anything pertinent of von Lasaulx, 'one of the best friends I ever had', with whom Acton studied for two years.

These were the main influences in the making of the great scholar. Later and English influences were less powerful. Newman, with whom he collaborated, scarcely touched him, though he put him among the great intellects of the day. There is, after all, a natural lack of understanding between the traditionalist and the convert. Gladstone, to whom he later enthusiastically dedicated himself, only confirmed and heightened traits already established.

Acton has been criticised for never casting his mind to social conditions; but it must be remembered that in his formative years, the Question of the People had scarcely grazed the conscience of Europe. Except in a few areas, the industrial proletariat was hardly formed. Europe's besetting problem was the unification of nations. Would the solution be federalism or centralisation? Solution by agreement or conquest? Would Bavaria escape the hungry jaws of Prussia? Would Italy be federated under Pius IX or annexed to Piedmont? In the decade 1860-70 he watched the gospellers of the State as Power, Cavour and Bismarck, choose blood and iron; he saw Austria surrender to Magyar intransigence. Finally, to his eyes the worst betrayal, he saw, in the Infallibility Decrees of 1870, the Vatican take a leaf from the book of the Neo-Machiavellians, and, in compensation for the loss of temporal power, assume a spiritual authoritarianism no less despotic than that of the secular State.

Four volumes of essays and three of letters are the sole memorials to 'the most learned Englishman now alive'. At his death, one elogist cried that he would have done better to have edited the humblest piperoll. Like Morley, I am 'dead against the piperoll'. Acton was not a historian but a political philosopher and moralist, worthy to stand beside Burke and Tocqueville. To him history was a tool to open the great questions of the day. He knew whither the politics of Cavour and Bismarck would lead. Up and down the *History of Freedom*, and in his letters, are pregnant passages, luminous aphorisms, foretelling the consequences of the all-absorbing State. The essay on nationality should be prescribed reading for every member of the Treasury Bench. In his last four chapters, Bishop Mathew brilliantly summarises Acton as he reached maturity, and it is to be hoped that this is but a hyphen to a study of the later years, in which what he rightly calls Acton's 'dominant integrity, high, cutting as a sword, inviolable, pure', reached its conclusions.

Japanese Expansion

A Short Economic History of Japan. By G. C. Allen. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

NINETY-THREE YEARS AGO, the 'Black Ships' of the West, under Commodore Perry, knocked at the doors of Japan with a forcible suggestion that she should link herself with modern progress. The opening of these doors fanned flames of discontent already alight inside Japan, and, as Professor Allen remarks, her economic and political achievements which followed seemed to many Westerners 'so astounding as to defy rational explanation'. By 1942, Japan was smashing down the doors of the West and threatening to engulf India and Australia.

The Big Three of the United Nations, though often unintentionally, have each had their share in encouraging the growth of this conflagration, which they have recently had to quell, largely through the burning of Japan's huge inflammable cities, the destruction of her mercantile marine and many of her industrial plants and the apparent reduction of her vigorous peasants, craftsmen, industrial workers and traders to docile obedience imposed through their Emperor. 'Rational' reconstruction will require 'rational explanation' of past events to the controlling authorities, and for this Professor Allen, with his wide knowledge of British and Japanese industry, of economic principles and of the Japanese people, is admirably fitted. His latest book covers the period from 'The Disintegration of the Old Regime' to the 'Industrial Developments after the World Depression, 1932-7'. It gives a balanced, accurate account, filled with insight, and carefully avoids wasteful discussion of such superficial topics of the 'thirties as 'overpopulation', 'social dumping' and 'unfair competition'. There is an excellent analysis of ways in which natural resources, the workers and capital equipment were organised, with the help of skilful juggling with the monetary system, to fulfil the national programme.

The general reader may miss a connected picture of the daily life of the individual Japanese citizen, about which he is usually misinformed, and there is a strong case for arguing that even a short economic history should include this. Illustrations would to some extent have filled the gap, but no doubt the shortage of paper and labour discouraged these. It is perhaps worth pointing out here that, although his individuality is submerged by collective and centralised institutions, the Japanese is one of the world's greatest 'economists', if the word is used in the sense of a thrifty person who makes the maximum use of scarce resources.

The book tells a story of expansion, which was resolutely, and later ruthlessly, imposed from above, and in which every sign of deflation was soon counteracted by expenditure on armaments or the industries on which national power depended. Although 'by 1914 she had nearly reached the limit of her foreign credit', the Great War gave her further impetus. From the 'twenties onward she developed to the full her silk, cotton and rayon industries, 'where the two major sections of the Japanese economy meet, the traditional peasant economy and a new capitalistic economy'. These brought her in materials and equipment for new engineering and heavy industries, while the United States had come to depend upon her for silk and many parts of the Far East relied upon her woven textiles (of which today they are desperately short).

In the Great Depression, Japan was the first country to push forward with reflation based on armament expenditure. By 1936, her industrial output was 50 per cent. over the 1929 level, yet the 'real' earnings of her wage-earners were no higher and were probably falling. She was rapidly approaching 'full employment'.

Unfortunately, at this stage the story has to break off, though the author points out that it 'is not from the decay of vigour, nor from administrative inefficiency and corruption, nor from internal social conflict, that disaster has proceeded. It is rather from patriotism corrupted into immoderate ambition, from a strong national spirit degenerating into fanaticism unrestrained at the last either by morality or the calculations of expediency, and from confidence in material success turned to excessive pride in achievement'.

In the eight years following 1937, Japan's fanaticism drove her to attempt an expansion greater than that of the previous eight decades, remarkable though they were. We hope that Professor Allen will chart the economic aspects of this final and breathless climb to the precipice where her power was shattered.

N. SKENE SMITH

Matriarch of Holland House

Elizabeth Lady Holland to Her Son. 1821-1845 Edited by the Earl of Ilchester. Murray. 18s.

THE DEVASTATION OF HOLLAND HOUSE, today ruinous and partly gutted, was one of the heaviest blows suffered by historical London during the bombardment. It was a double loss. The last of the big country houses within an easy drive of Piccadilly Circus, this red-brick Elizabethan mansion, set back from the streets of Kensington amid gardens and spacious park, formed an irreplaceable link with an important and absorbing period of English social history. No lover of the past, no devotee of the great principles of English Liberalism, can remain unmoved when he hears of the total ruin of its library, the dignified room that provides the background of the best-known portrait of Lord and Lady Holland, depicted there in the company of their faithful friend and factotum, Dr. John Allen, and their librarian, William Doggett.

In two previous volumes, *The Home of the Hollands* and *The Chronicles of Holland House*, Lord Ilchester has told the story of 'that long drama' which came to an end with the death of Lady Holland in 1845, having (to quote George Greville) 'illuminated and adorned England and even Europe for half a century'; while his edition of the journals of Henry Fox, afterwards fourth and last Lord Holland, supplied an entertaining, if somewhat saddening, footnote. 'The world never has seen and never will see anything like Holland House', ran Greville's lamentation. The home of Charles James Fox, it had welcomed Sheridan and Byron, Scott and Sydney Smith: later it opened its doors to Dickens and Macaulay. Then the lights flickered and the curtain began to fall. Spiritually as well as physically, the streets of suburban Kensington were drawing closer. Henry Fox was a man born out of his time. Though intelligent and sensitive, he had little of the intellectual vitality that had glorified his forbears. Diplomacy and dilettantism divided his time and talent. He patronised Watts and 'improved' his house and gardens. But he was never at ease in the Victorian era: the main currents of contemporary existence passed him by.

Underlying this book, which contains Lady Holland's letters to her eldest legitimate son from 1821 to 1845, is a domestic tragi-comedy. For Lady Holland, with all her brilliant gifts, was a definitely unlikeable woman, selfish, capricious and exacting; and, as happens with so many unlikeable people, she failed always to understand why she was not more loved. Certainly her husband loved her; and to him she gave, and from him she received, an intense and lasting devotion. But her relationship with her children, particularly with her son Henry, was often very difficult; and these letters, which pursued the moody, diffident, introspective young man through the capitals of Europe, show us the matriarch of Holland House at her most characteristic but personally least sympathetic, now grimly demanding affection, now scolding, now cajoling, now commenting on her own fortitude in the role of injured and disappointed parent.

It seems never to have occurred to Henry Fox's mother—like Byron he was lame and, like Byron's mother, Lady Holland sometimes attacked him for his lameness—that her son's lack of decision, his vague plans to marry and unrewarding love-affairs, were symptoms of a frame of mind that she herself had propagated. From the personal point of view, as study of conflicting characters, her correspondence (which should be examined in conjunction with Henry Fox's journal) makes fascinating reading. Neither party could give to the other the support, sympathy and understanding that each obscurely wanted. And, with the removal of Lord Holland, the personification of benevolence and pagan worldly wisdom, the situation between them grew rapidly more awkward. Her tyranny did not diminish: he still slipped through the grasping fingers that sought to close around him.

The book has also an historic interest. Though as a divorced woman, Lady Holland occupied among her own sex a position that was always somewhat doubtful, she passed her long life in the society of distinguished and eminent men; and many famous and notorious figures hurry through her pages. We read of Walter Scott, dining and spending the night, 'remarkably entertaining, full of legendary lore': of George IV at the Pavilion, secluded with his favourites: of the irrepressible and outrageous Brougham: of Prince Albert making a favourable impression as the prospective Consort. . . . The collection forms a worthy supplement to the two preceding volumes.

PETER QUENNELL

A Family Affair

The Matabele Journals of Robert Moffat.
The Matabele Mission of John and Emily Moffat.
Chatto and Windus. 30s. each.

TWO MORE OF THESE magnificent volumes of the Government Archives of Southern Rhodesia have now appeared. The publications have been financed by Sir Ernest Oppenheimer; most skilfully edited and annotated by Mr. J. P. R. Wallis, and produced with old-time dignity and lavishness—the controllers turning a blind eye?—by Robert MacLehose and Co.

This opening-up of Rhodesia was a family affair and the family's only object evangelisation. In the first of these volumes we have a continuation in 1857-60 of the journeys of Robert Moffat, the ex-gardener and London Missionary Society agent. He went from his advanced station at Kuruman some 600 miles north into the dangerous wilds under the despotism of Moselekatse, king of the dominant warrior tribe of the Matabele. His object was to gain the king's consent to open a mission station among the Matabele. The reader is able to get upon intimate terms with the three main figures in the story, the savage king, Moffat, and the far-away wife, Mary, to whom the letters were written.

The king is older, fatter, and more physically helpless than when we met him before, but he is no less the absolute and wily autocrat. Again we marvel at the fascination which Moffat's goodness exercises over him. It is something unimagined and unrelated to anything in the king's own experience, breaking in suddenly upon the remote hills and forests of his tribal kingdom. 'You are to me', he said one day, 'like the calf the mother licks; so do I lick you'. Yet Moffat, but for his religion, would have hated the man who so loved him. 'It requires all the politeness and patience one can muster to have anything to do with a despot such as Moselekatse . . . he possesses a fearful amount of power. His thousands of warriors start at his bidding, his slightest frown would send any one of his subjects to the horrors, . . . I found him with about ten of his wives. He was feasting them on *his* beer. They sat mute, as if stricken with awe at his presence, while almost every motion or remark made by him was received with *phesula* (heaven), *tlamantota* (man-eater), etc.'

Yet this terrible tyrant restrained his ferocity to please Moffat and, though he hesitated long, because he saw clearly the dangers which Moffat's strange doctrines meant to his military despotism, in the end he granted him the mission station.

Beside the king stands Moffat, his whole mind and soul fixed upon his religious purpose. He recoiled from heathendom with all the sensitiveness not only of his creed but of his social outlook. He was horrified as much by the nakedness as by the murderousness he saw upon all sides. It was often his duty to bleed the fat king and his fat naked wives when they had exceeded all bounds with their gorging and potations, and his disgust often stimulated his style. He describes the king sitting 'with eighteen wives in a semi-circle, with few exceptions obese. Think only of a great belly, with a navel so thoroughly surrounded with fat that a swallow, with little labour, might make a comfortable nest in it'. And every few pages he laments over the tragedy he sees. 'Here there is none, no, not one, that seeketh after God . . . all passing onward and downward to a region where hope will never dawn'.

The next volume consists of extracts from the letters of the two young people sent up to carry out the mission. The intrepid evangelists were John, Robert Moffat's son, and his wife Emily. They describe wretched journeys in ox-waggons through sands and floods, drought and lions to the precarious mission-station allotted to them by the wily and unconvertible old king. There, with health increasingly undermined, they struggled with little success to get sufficient food, to build a proper house, to obtain servants, to bear and bring up five children (one of whom died), and to start real mission work among a people servile to their own king and brutal to the surrounding victim tribes. But how different are the two generations in the stamp of their piety! The young couple, for all their evangelical heroism, speak a different language in 1860 from Robert Moffat in 1840. They are critical even of him. Has he not bribed old 'Catsey' with his gifts and his repairing of guns? Emily, brave but shrewd, questions in her vivid style the value of their work and especially of sending women and children to such a place. They are utterly engrossed in 'necessary secularities'. Really, I think missionaries should be fed with manna'. The two survived their mission, but left before the death of the king, which is dramatically told by other missionaries in the Epilogue.

But the great treasure in this volume lies in sixteen hitherto unpublished letters from David Livingstone. Short, incisive, with his overriding purpose displayed in all its ruthlessness to himself and to others, these letters emphasise the harder side of his character, his impatience of opposition, or criticism, or of failure in the human instruments he has called to his Master's service. He is no conventional missionary. He tells John, his brother-in-law, 'the missionary world is a queer one. Queer things are said and sung in it'. He writes to his brother-in-law from the Zambezi where he is making his unsuccessful effort at large-scale co-operation with other men: 'I never found two agreeing unless one were a cypher', he exclaims, and again, 'Men are drawbacks everywhere'. His associates are briefly characterised; one is 'a poor stick', another a thief. His missionaries from the Universities 'will work out their High Church bigotry' in activity. When they are all wiped out by fever, and also the party, men, women and children, sent to his beloved Makololo, whatever he may have felt, he has little sympathy to express. But then he is equally hard on his own kin. As his wife is so delicate, 'she would only be a hindrance instead of the help we anticipated', so he leaves her behind. Later she joins him on the Zambezi, only to die of fever and we have the anguished letter he writes to John as he realises his loss. His great purpose was not, however, dimmed. "But my God may in mercy permit me to benefit both Africa and England on a larger scale than at first sight may appear possible. Some poor noddles place it all to the love of exploration and seeking the glory which cometh from man. Let it stand over to be judged on that day when the secrets of every heart shall be revealed!'

This volume is indeed a treasure not only for its evidence on the history of Central Africa, but for its revelations of human character under the strain of the utmost self-sacrifice, and above all for the intimate new light it throws upon one of the greatest and strongest men ever bred in this country.

MARGERY PERHAM

Climate Without Tears

This Weather of Ours. By Arnold B. Tinn.
Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

IF A BOOK of this type could have been written fifty years ago it would probably have borne the sub-title 'Climate without Tears'. Mr. Tinn, an obvious enthusiast for his subject, serves up a vast meal of statistical matter with so light a touch that the danger of mental indigestion is removed even for readers to whom graphs and tables of figures are ordinarily anathema. The style adopted is homely and conversational with an occasional tang of Sam Weller about it, as when the author remarks in regard to certain extremes of temperature, 'Some will find these facts difficult to credit, like the old lady when she saw a giraffe for the first time'.

But entertainment value apart, the book deserves praise for what is perhaps the best popular account yet published of the various kinds of climate to be found in the British Isles and of the outstanding pranks played by our wayward weather during the last century or so. Much of the material presented has not hitherto been available outside official reports, and here Mr. Tinn certainly succeeds in giving life to dry bones. He does well to stress the advantages, too little known to southerners, of the North Wales coast as a winter resort. A useful chapter is concerned with the vexed question of the essential differences between bracing and relaxing climates. Elsewhere a page is devoted to demolishing and attempting to set an origin to the tradition of excessive raininess in Manchester. This has been done before, but the legend is too dear to professional humorists to be given its quietus.

Of the several good illustrations the most striking is the frontispiece photograph of a Chiltern road blocked by a fifteen-foot snowdrift after the blizzard of January, 1940. Inaccuracies are few. On page 79 it is stated that an apex temperature of 10°F. at Balmoral on November 14, 1919, is probably the lowest daily maximum ever recorded in Britain. A much lower one, of 3½°F., was in fact logged at Paisley on Christmas Eve, 1860. Then on page 104 Mr. Tinn tells us that December 30, 1866, brought London a snowstorm which stopped traffic and formed drifts eight feet deep in Regent Street. Something has gone wrong here. The day mentioned, statistics show, was a bright and fairly mild one, following four weeks of unseasonable warmth.

E. L. HAWKE

'Mad Margot'

Pieter Bruegel the Elder: The Dulle Griet. With an Introduction by Leo van Puyvelde. Lund Humphries. 4s. 6d.

A SKATE CROWNED with a terrine of foie-gras, a spider seated astride a harp, a half-human figure scooping out its excrement with a soup ladle: these are the subjects of the plates in the most recent Gallery Book. Unlike the earlier volumes of the series, which deal, with one exception, with well-known paintings in the National Gallery, the present book is devoted to a picture which few people will know in the original, in a museum of which many of them will not have heard. But what better subject for detailed illustration could we find than Pieter Bruegel's 'Dulle Griet' in the Musée Meyer van den Bergh at Antwerp? Measuring over five feet long and almost four feet

'Mad Margot' (detail).
From 'Pieter Bruegel the Elder: The Dulle Griet'

high, this extraordinary painting, representing an insane virago, armed with a shopping-basket and a sword, striding along outside the gate of Hell amid an obscene horde of devil-animals, is built up of dissociated episodes designed precisely for this type of analytical examination. Painted about 1566 (by a curious oversight its putative date is not mentioned in the present book), the 'Dulle Griet' reflects the influence of, and perhaps an original by, Bosch, and perpetuates, in a more extravagant and sophisticated form, the fantasy which makes the earlier artist the father of surrealism.

Professor van Puyvelde, in his introduction to the book, suggests that its subject is the challenge offered to the Devil by a 'Dulle Griet' (Mad Margot) emancipated from the male yoke, but he makes no attempt to establish a comprehensive programme for the painting, and is inclined to attribute to 'the artist's fondness for the juxtaposition of the unexpected' elements in which other critics have seen some proverbial or allegorical significance. With Bruegel, and particularly with the 'Dulle Griet', it is dangerous to assume that incidents we do not understand are necessarily irrational: to take a single instance, the symbol of a wailing monk and three monsters enclosed in a crystal disembarrassing themselves of a sphere and a roast chicken on a plate would have had an objective connotation in Bruegel's own day entirely distinct from its significance for contemporary surrealists. But until it can be established with some show of finality whether the background of the painting represents, as Professor van Puyvelde supposes, a panorama of the Inferno, or as other writers have suggested, a conspectus of the vices of daily life against which the 'Dulle Griet' wages her war; it remains impossible to determine how far the structure of the picture was dictated by objective symbolism and how far by subjective fantasy. Fortunately this uncertainty does not vitiate the present book, and the brilliantly selected details form a stimulating introduction to the uninhibited and virile imagery of a great imaginative artist.

JOHN POPE-HENNESSY

All Passion Spent

Sophocles: Oedipus at Colonus. Translated by R. C. Trevelyan. Cambridge. 3s. 6d.

THIS IS AN ASTONISHING PLAY. Written at the age of ninety by a poet who, both as dramatist and as man of letters, had led an unusually full life, the last twenty years of which were clouded by Athens' savage and losing struggle in the Peloponnesian war, it gives no indication of failing powers, and shows no trace of bitterness or neurosis. Instead, there is consummate mastery of dramatic dialogue, a pervading mellowness and wisdom hardly to be matched elsewhere in Greek tragedy, and, at the end, serenity and peace.

In form the play is loosely knit and episodic, with a return in the choral odes to the lyricism of Sophocles' earlier manner. The movement is leisurely, despite the melodrama of Creon's attempt at kidnapping, but the dramatic purpose—to illuminate Oedipus' character from many aspects—is admirably achieved. For all its quietness the tragedy is not escapist. The problem of human suffering is central here, as in all Sophocles' dramas except the Antigone, and the poet, in what he may well have felt to be his last play, chooses to recreate his greatest character, Oedipus, a symbol of suffering humanity, in a setting of the countryside at Colonus, which Sophocles had known and loved since childhood. The dramatic presence of Oedipus on the stage is, then, the tragic situation around which the play is built, and he dominates the action much as Prometheus does in the 'Prometheus Bound', a tragedy which has much in common with the 'Oedipus at Colonus'.

This is, accordingly, a difficult play to render adequately into English, since the dramatic tension of earlier Sophoclean tragedy is missing. Mr. Trevelyan's verse translation copes remarkably well with the dialogue, where he shows fine economy of phrase, incisiveness and rhythmic variety. He is less successful in the choral passages—his version of the famous ode to Colonus gives but a faint echo of the original—but perhaps only a major poet could succeed here. It is debatable whether in the lyrics it would not be better to seize on the dramatic elements and to elaborate them, using as much as possible of Sophocles' imagery, and to excise the rest, as was done by Fitts and Fitzgerald in their translation of the Antigone, and by Yeats in the odes he translated from this play. But this is perhaps a Latin rather than an English conception of translation, and implies that the translator's function is primarily to reproduce the play, not the poetry (in so far as the two are separable).

Professor Gilbert Murray's criticism of Sophocles in his youthful history of ancient Greek literature (will he not now write a palinode?), reinforced by Jebb's translation, which because of the excellence of his edition of the text came to be received as authoritative, rendered a disservice to the appreciation of Sophocles in England from which we are only now recovering. Mr. Trevelyan's version is welcome not only in itself, but because it helps to redress the balance. No one, after reading this translation, is likely to believe that Sophoclean drama is conventional or that the characters address each other in a stilted prosaic jargon. It is to be hoped that Mr. Trevelyan will translate further plays by a poet whose tragic vision of life and insight into human character give him a greater appeal than any other Greek author to the modern world.

D. E. W. WORMELL

New Poetic Drama

This Way to the Tomb. By Ronald Duncan.
The Old Man of the Mountains. By Norman Nicholson.
Faber. 6s. each

MODERN PROSE DRAMA is notorious for its thinness, and one has hoped a good deal from the poets who have turned their attention to the theatre. At least they have not usually lacked verbal sensitiveness, and it has sometimes been thrilling to hear fresh, unread verse coming over the footlights. Nevertheless, the most remarkable thing about modern poetic plays has been their crudity. Poor management of the most elementary requirements of the stage, a charade-like quality, and an excessive simplification have sometimes been offered to us as though they were a kind of *jemenfoutiste* virtue; amateurishness has glared at the reader from the printed page, and the most adroit stage-production has failed to disguise the same quality in the theatre. Two poetic plays alone have held the stage successfully, both by a hard-working major poet: 'Murder in the Cathedral' and 'The Family Reunion'. In spite of certain awkwardnesses of technique, which one liked no better for their being intentional, these plays continue to move one, because they fulfil two of the principal requirements of drama; they tell stories which embody impressive truths, and they create credible and important characters, whose actions and changes of mood compel attention.

Mr. Ronald Duncan's play 'This Way to the Tomb' strongly recalls 'Murder in the Cathedral': it is based on the theme of temptation and the breaking-down of pride, it has a satirical modern section which is presumably meant to be funny, and it closes on a note of religious exaltation. The first half of the play is a masque dealing with the last days of Saint Antony on the island of Zapte: his temptation, his cry for mercy, and his salvation; it has at times a dignity worthy of its subject. The second part is an anti-masque, showing a crowd of clamorous rationalists visiting Antony's tomb, and proving by experiment that faith is only illusion and superstition. Father Opine, who leads this rowdy band, turns out in the end, when confronted by the saint himself, to be identified with Bernard, the intellectual among Antony's early disciples. Our own age is always easy to make fun of—as Ben Jonson, Mr. Duncan's model, has shown. There is a depressing staleness about this second half of the play, with its boring conventional cleverness and its use of stage tricks (the satirical 'blues', for example) which their originators have already abandoned; and the last pages do not succeed in dragging the play up again from the depths. True, the author occasionally comes out with a beautiful and touching image:

> And I believe Christ lies in my heart like a green leaf in
> an old book
> Revealed, if I could only find my heart, open it and look.

But for the greater part of the play, his verse converts itself with easy-going sermonising, not often distinguished from platitude.

> I have described myself and fears
> Because the one is made up of the other;
> And because, clarity towards one's conscience is a kind
> of prayer.
> But eloquence and verbal gymnastics
> Only persuade, against the run of logic,
>
> And leave one where one was before.

'The Old Man of the Mountains' is an infinitely more attractive play. It is true that if you write a play about Elijah and the Raven, you are likely to have to bring the Raven on to the stage; but doubtless he can be made an impressive and not an absurd creature. Mr. Nicholson, while he is about it, has given us ('off') a babbling beck as well, and has allowed its voices to speak charming verses something after the manner of 'Anna Livia Plurabelle'. Apart from these novelties, the play is a more or less straight three-acter, the first act dealing with the drought and the raising of the boy, Ben, from the dead; the second with the dispute between Elijah and Ahab; and the third with the contest on the mountain-top between the altars of Baal and the Lord; and the advent of the cloud no bigger than a man's hand. Mr. Nicholson has transplanted his characters to the Cumberland dales he has written of so well before, and he has avoided the sentimental humour that attends Mr. Bridie's rehashes of the Scriptures. His Elijah is a really dramatic character; the picture of him surrounded by his inspiration, his muddle, his faith and his pathetic self-doubting is particularly fine. The long scene between him and the boy on the mountain is a delight; we are bound to know beforehand the outcome of that vigil against the unmoved brilliant heaven; it is a considerable triumph for Mr. Nicholson that he should give back to the famous cliché, when it is finally uttered, some of its original splendour.

The verse passages of the play are very well done. Mr. Nicholson has boldly called for realistic settings, but he knows the limitations of even the best scene-painter, and he supplements them with thrilling vividness:

> And there I watch
> A farmer put a match to a neighbour's grain.
> The straw catches light, weasels of flame
> Twist among the stalks of the corn, and the thorns in
> the dyke
> Blossom with fire. Now the barns are alight
> And women shriek from the casements, and a wind
> Sprinkles the sparks like shooting stars. Long ropes of fire
> Loop the spires of the larches.

The play is apparently a first effort in drama; but it is an enormously promising one, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Nicholson will soon attempt a play with a plot of his own invention.

HENRY REED

Prescriptions for Our Time

Reflections in a Mirror (Second Series). By Charles Morgan. Macmillan. 8s. 6d.

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY is of its perplexed nature favourable to the growth of the essay; every hour seems to require solace, explanation, protest, in assimilable dollops of sixteen hundred words. Possibly that future historian to whom Mr. Morgan addresses 'This Spring' will not need such prescriptions in a more tranquil age. Meanwhile Mr. Morgan continues to dispense them with an easy eloquence long savoured by many—at once tonic and (except on occasion) demulcent. He has the art of presenting ideas through life and letters without preaching; ideas, some of which, though the book was written mainly before the jumping of cats in 1945, demand even more attention now than then; civilising concepts, of proportion and balance, 'of variety as distinct from . . . standardisation', of individual liberty. 'The area of liberty', he writes, 'will never be extended if . . . the bureaucrats, the planners, the oppressive idealists . . . are allowed to continue in the belief that their squatting is an act of righteousness'. Some day the public may see this; and the planners too, when experience convinces them that men are not bees.

Mr. Morgan, having a partly Greek background, is convinced already: Greek, but perhaps with a Platonic bias, since he develops also a recurrent theme of depth and 'inner vision'—inclines, in fact to the universal, away from the particular, pursuing eternity with Coleridgean echoes, heard at their loudest in his 'Creative Imagination'. Among the perils of this course are a contempt for surfaces, and that characteristically romantic yearning for the unperceived. And so the importance of the surfaces, which are there all the time, will be missed. Horace implied awareness of them—'ut pictura poesis: erit, si propius stes, te capiat magis'; but Mr. Morgan eludes the Horatian view, and evidently admires Robert Nichols for being 'the most comprehensible because the most natural of seers'. We shall thank him for remembering Robert Nichols and vindicating his genius, which, nevertheless, might have succeeded better in self-expression (*i.e.*, in forming a beautiful surface which is the immediate evidence of art) had he been less of a seer. Once more, his preference in Mr. Blunden's 'Thomasine' is for the 'ever-presence of the unperceived'. 'The Wooden Benches', 'The Village Church', and 'A Homespun Festival' form a delicious group evoking rural felicity with its roots in the picturesque past, aesthetically remote from movies, housing estate pubs, and filling-stations. More recently we have witnessed the beginnings of a pre-fabricated England which seems to threaten the survival of these rich antiquities, pew, settle and all; which with Mr. Morgan's help we may here wistfully resurvey, before they grow even fainter than the mirror's reflections.

It still seems to be something of a practice to be very superior about the writers of the 'thirties, to call them playboys, and other things possibly damaging to their royalties. Mr. Morgan falls somewhat into that prospective error, from which, no doubt, he will shortly emerge in the full cognition of the fact that it is never safe to damn the last decade.

SHERARD VINES

Degas as Sculptor

Degas: Works in Sculpture. Edited by John Rewald. Kegan Paul. 4 guineas

Reviewed by R. H. WILENSKI

THE literature on Degas has now been increased by this catalogue of his sculpture—a handsome volume with a hundred and twelve plates which will be useful to students in a number of ways.

Degas was never, of course, in any sense a professional sculptor; he was never in the market to make portrait busts or war memorials or sculpture on buildings or bibelots for elegant interiors. He only exhibited one figure—the famous 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans', made in 1880 when he was forty-six and shown in the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition the next year; but both before that date and after it, he often modelled small figures in wax, clay and plasticine which remained neglected in his studio till, in many cases, they dried up and cracked or otherwise disintegrated. He never had any of these small figures cast in bronze; but about 1900 he asked the founder Hebrard to make plaster casts of three or four which presumably he wished to preserve; and these plaster casts and the 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans' (the original of which is now in the Louvre) are thus strictly speaking the only authentic sculptures by him that exist.

But we have in addition valuable records of some seventy pieces which were repaired and conditioned after Degas' death by his friend the sculptor Bartholomé. These small pieces, and also the larger 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans', were then cast in bronze by Hebrard; after the casting all the small models were destroyed; but photographs had been taken of them and some are reproduced in this catalogue opposite the photographs of the bronzes. The Louvre owns a complete set of these Hebrard bronzes; and twenty-one other sets were made.

Speaking generally, Degas as sculptor (or more precisely as modeller, because he never carved) appears in three phases—as a modeller of horses, as the creator of the 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans', and as a modeller of female nudes.

The horse statuettes show the animals static and in movement. Some were doubtless made when he was working on his race-course pictures in the late 'sixties and the 'seventies; others, maybe, were made later. For those showing horses in action he probably used photographs, as he did for some of his paintings (Paul Valéry has suggested that he used Muybridge's photographs of horses trotting, published in Paris in 1881); but he gives us more truth in his statues than the camera can give, because, as Rodin said to Gsell: The camera lies by suggesting sudden suspension of movement and time, because time never stands still; the artist on the other hand who identifies himself unconsciously with the movement of the body contemplated, can suggest transition of movement and thus truly suggest also the continuous flux of time.

'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans' (bronze)
From 'Degas: Works in Sculpture'

As the creator of the 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans' Degas holds a unique position in the history of modern sculpture. For this statue, it will be remembered, which is about three-quarter life size, has face, arms and legs of wax, a linen bodice covered with wax, a muslin 'tutu', a silk bow tying her hair, and satin shoes. There are no comparable works by contemporary great artists. But there are some fifteenth-century figures in the Toulouse Museum (formerly in the church of St. Sernin) which have points of likeness—for they wear real clothes, dipped in plaster and painted, and the faces cast from life (or after death) produce a disquieting effect by their intense realism and such details as the half-open mouths showing the tongue and teeth inside. There is indeed a tradition in Toulouse that the peasant women, when exasperated with their children, would quell them with threats to take them to St. Sernin to see the 'Momies des Comtes' as these figures were then called. I do not know if children still scream when shown the Toulouse figures; but I know that though there was much screaming by adults at the 'Petite danseuse de quatorze ans' some sixty-five years ago, no one screams at her today; to a critic then she seemed '*désagréable*', '*redoubtable*' and '*effrontée*'; to me she seems just timid with the '*gaucherie*' of a child half-broken to an artificial mould.

Degas' statuettes of female nudes are closely related to the main output of his paintings, pastels and drawings, as can be seen from some drawings reproduced opposite the bronzes in Mr. Rewald's catalogue. There are a few exceptional pieces—a 'Femme enceinte' for example—but the majority can be divided into three groups: (a) dancers in stage attitudes; (b) dancers in dressing room attitudes; and (c) women at their toilet. Of these the first are interesting as records of ballet steps, 'arabesques' and so forth and the second and third achieve what Degas also achieved in other media—the effect of life perceived through the keyhole without the model knowing that anyone was there. All are admirable in the poise and balance of the figures, and some miraculously record those instantaneous and yet transitional movements which Rodin spoke about.

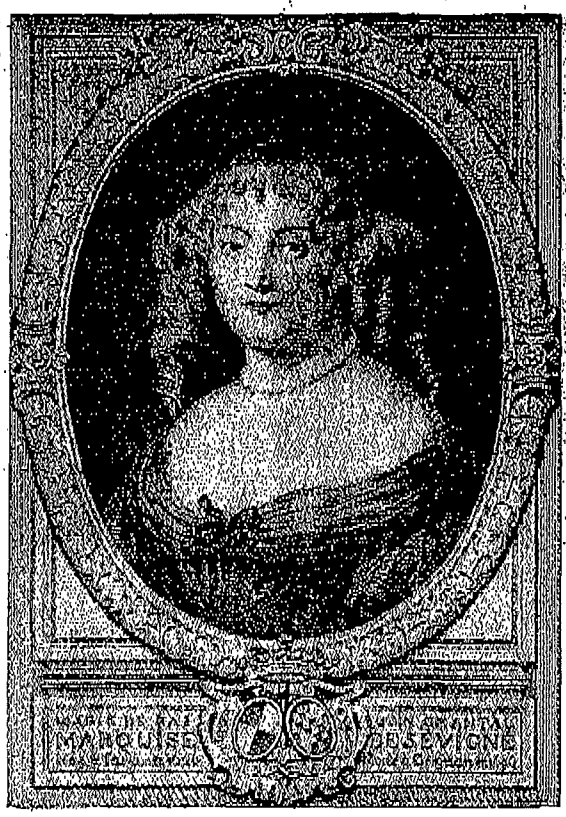
These small sculptures tell us little about Degas that we did not know from his other work; but they confirm what we already know of his lifelong interest in a few characteristic attitudes which he studied unceasingly and drew and painted and modelled from every point of view. Of one attitude—a girl standing on her left leg and looking back at the sole of her right foot held in her right hand—there are, for example, six statuettes and two drawings in this Rewald catalogue, and it would be easy to add to these versions a number of others from the pastels. In his prime Degas drew from life but produced his composi-

tions in oil and pastel from his knowledge and his drawings; and his statuettes, I fancy, were done in the same way—the living model being only called upon as *aide mémoire* at certain stages. But we have evidence that in his old age he liked to have a model posing and kept the unhappy girls in painful attitudes for long hours. Mr. Rewald describes him at work in 1910 when he was seventy-six and nearly blind; he sat very close to the model and made measurements with callipers 'which he used rather clumsily and with such sudden gestures that his models did not always escape a red gash on their arms or legs . . .'; he was working once more on the much studied theme: *'Danseuse regardant la plante de son pied droit'*—perseverance that had become perseveration after so much adventure and discovery.

'Molière's Sister'

Madame de Sévigné: Her Letters and Her World. By Arthur Stanley. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 15s.

'SŒUR DE MOLIÈRE': so Saint-Beuve called her in the article in which he welcomed the publication of the first two volumes of Madame de Sévigné's letters, edited by M. Regnier in 1861. There was need of editing. The letters, written during the second half of the seventeenth century, had at first been passed privately, as was the fashion of the age, from friend to friend. Their first editor, de Perrin (1734), had thought it his duty not merely to exclude anything that might offend families of importance, but also to omit or correct whatever the society of his time thought in bad taste or in bad style. Saint-Beuve describes with some wit the difficulties against which the new editors had to contend in restoring so far as possible the text as Madame de Sévigné wrote it; and points out (it is a warning which is still needed) that nothing of value is lost, indeed much gained, by a full and faithful transcription of an author's original version.



Madame de Sévigné, after a pastel by Nanteuil
From 'Madame de Sévigné: Her Letters and her World'

It is Regnier's edition, which finally reached fourteen volumes, and to which a few more letters have since been added, that Mr. Stanley has used in translating, with a running commentary (which is in fact a life of Madame de Sévigné and an account of her social background), a generous selection from the famous letters. His version reads well, and (this is a good test) is at its best when the French is so: as for instance in the 'Mademoiselle' letters (page 100), the story of the fire (page 118), or the account of the arrival of James II (page 272). He gives illustrations of all Madame de Sévigné's interests: her deep but ill-regulated and ill-requited love for her daughter, Madame de Grignan; her women friends in the great world of Paris and Versailles; her clashes with Bussy-Rabutin; her travels (no small adventure in those days of bad roads and worse inns); her love of nature and of country walking; and the strain of quietism which took her to stay with her good uncle Christophe, and to study the works of the pietists of Port-Royal. All this against the background of Louis XIV, his wars, his mistresses, and the great palace of Versailles, which she saw building; and of those other great feudal homes—Vaux, with its vast terraces and fountains, the grim Grignan château where in summer they ate partridges fed on thyme and marjoram, and fat quails, and turtle-doves, melons, figs and muscat grapes, but where in winter the ink froze on the pen as she wrote: or the lovely Renaissance house near the Place des Vosges in Paris which is now the Carnavalet Museum.

But—and this is her charm, and the reason why Saint-Beuve calls her 'Molière's sister'—the feminine counterpart of his comedies—Madame de Sévigné never belonged at heart to the society she decorated and described. She was happiest at her dear Les Rochers, deep in the wilds of Brittany. 'We live a very ordinary life here', she writes: 'We get up at eight o'clock, and, very often I go out to taste the freshness of the woods till the bell sounds for mass at nine o'clock. After mass I change my dress; I say good morning to everybody; then I go out to pick some orange-flowers; I come in for dinner; I work or read till five o'clock. At five o'clock I walk in my dear woods, I have a lackey who follows me with my books; I settle down; I change my place; I vary my walks and I vary my reading, passing from a book of devotion to some story or other. Then I meditate a little on God and His providence; I possess my soul; I think of my future'.

The mention of the 'lackey' hints at one failure in Madame's almost universal charity. She shares with nearly all the clever and kindly people of her set a complete disregard for the lot of the working class who made up nine-tenths of the French people. She takes it for granted that they have no part, save as supers, in the pageant of marriages and funerals, of supper-parties, dancing and hunting that passes across her pages. She speaks casually, almost heartlessly of 'the poor wretches—old men, women and children—wandering about on the outskirts of the town, turned out of their homes, without knowing where to go and without food or shelter', and of 'a musician they broke on the wheel, who was quartered after his death, and the quarters exposed at the four quarters of the town'. 'This will be a fine example to others', is her only comment, 'to make them careful not to speak evil of their governors, and not to throw stones into their gardens'. Of Louis XIV's cruel persecution of the Huguenots she says, 'This is the greatest and best work that has ever been done'. This is a reminder—and there are others—that what Mr. Stanley miscalls 'an age of refinement' was an age of coarseness and cruelty covered by a veneer of culture.

But if France had to wait for the eighteenth century for an awakening (and what a rude one!) to the rights of the common man, how much it was to lose in the *naturalness* of its attitude towards life! This is what gives charm to everything Madame de Sévigné writes about, from the nursing of her granddaughter (a letter quoted by Saint-Beuve which Mr. Stanley unfortunately omits), or her new frock 'ornamented with little silver bells' which she fears may be no longer in fashion, to her passionate affection for her daughter, or her naive attempts to become a *dévote*. She conceals nothing, she pretends nothing: she is always interested, always observant, nearly always laughing. She put up two inscriptions in the woods at Les Rochers. One was for her son, who was away fighting: *Vago di fama* (Greedy for glory). The other was 'in honour of idlers': *Bella cosa far niente* (Doing nothing is pleasant). This was really for herself. No one ever idled through life more busily or more charmingly. No one ever gave more pleasure to the world in doing so.

J. M. THOMPSON

Russia and Europe

Prelude to the Russian Campaign. By Grigore Gafencu. Muller. 18s.

WHEN ONE IS TO READ of the higher mysteries of international politics it is well to be sure of the writer's qualifications to make revelations and judgments. Mr. Gafencu was Foreign Minister of Rumania from December 1938 to May 1940, resigning when, after the collapse of the West was inevitable, King Carol decided to come to terms with Germany, and from June 1940 to June 1941 was Rumanian ambassador in Moscow; he is therefore in a position to bear first-hand witness on events in which he personally shared, and a careful reading of his book would indicate that his testimony is true.

As he sees it, the Russo-German conflict and its consequences became inevitable from the moment the Russo-German pact was signed. That pact was not a mere re-insurance treaty liberating Hitler from fear in the East and comforting Stalin by confining the war to the West. It was a partition treaty representing a reversal of Russian policy (Mr. Gafencu rightly sees in Litvinov's dismissal no mere routine change in personnel), and partition left Germany and Russia in direct contact from the Black Sea to the Baltic.

It did not need the historical parallel with Napoleonic times, brilliantly expounded by Mr. Gafencu, to reveal what was inevitable, although Russia appears to have seriously believed that she could avoid it. Her new policy, in Mr. Gafencu's opinion, was the result of internal evolution, and aimed at the amendment of all points in her disfavour in the eastern settlement from 1856 onward. Russia began to move on the old line of the Danubian principalities, the Straits, and the open sea; and along its whole length her action was brutal. On Bessarabia, Russia had an arguable case, but she not only pressed an extreme case shamelessly on a defenceless neighbour with whom she was at peace, but exceeded it; even Hitler had to admit that his partner had gone beyond the terms of the partition pact. By a simple 'yield or fight at once' ultimatum and without any reference to her security, she forced the surrender not only of her former holdings in Bessarabia but parts of Rumania she had never held.

In 1939-41 the course of events suggested to democratic observers that totalitarian Russia, by agreement with totalitarian Germany, was moving forward into Europe, from which a century-old equilibrium had so far barred her. Equilibrium gone, the small states could do nothing; they could only hope and wait for the clash of totalitarianisms. Of the tangled history of Russo-German relations and the effect on them of the partition made effective by negotiation or force, Mr. Gafencu gives an excellent account, and an analysis that is extremely interesting and plausible of the necessity under which Hitler found himself of solving by a treacherous attack the problem he had created for Germany. Ribbentrop's brilliant coup gave Germany Western Europe, but Stalin's equally brilliant coup made Russia at last a great power again. Of the fact that she now felt herself to be so and had therefore acquired new freedom of action, Mr. Gafencu adduces cogent proof; and it is here that his narrative is so vital, for now that the German menace is gone, information on the methods of its former partner is invaluable. It is axiomatic to Mr. Gafencu that, when Russia is confident in her great-power status, she moves forward, sometimes with surprising speed, on what is a secular mission. She moved forward in 1939-41; and now, a greater power than ever, the same secular compulsion seems to be upon her and the more forcibly in that she has co-operated in the complete destruction, beyond repair for a generation and more, of the old European equilibrium. It is not unfair to assume that face to face with the West she might react in the same way as when she came face to face with Germany. Partition treaties spell war, and the new settlement of Europe is taking the form of a partition treaty.

Herein lies the gravity of the situation and the importance of Mr. Gafencu's book. History does not repeat itself, but nations, under compulsion of the laws of development, often repeat their own history, and this particular bit of Russian history deserves the close study which Mr. Gafencu's book offers. It is in the best sense enlightening, and the admirable temper in which it is written makes even those opinions which do not carry immediate conviction worthy of consideration. That, despite the gloomy tale he has to tell, he still believes in Europe and regards the future with hope—at least he did when he wrote in 1944—makes them worthy of respect as well.

R. T. CLARK

Traveller from Eternity

The Voyage and Other Poems. By Edwin Muir. Faber. 6s.

IN CONSIDERING *The Voyage and Other Poems*, it is necessary to remember that the author did not begin to write verse until his thirtieth year; owing to this retardation in his creative development, these are the poems, not of middle-age, but of a maturity only just achieved. Never has the poetic impulse been so vigorous in Mr. Muir's work, its full tide steeping whatever aridity may have marred his last volume.

Perhaps owing to the circumstances of the author's own early life, man's fall from an ideal happiness is the theme, explicit or implicit, of most of the poems in this collection. Mr. Muir conceives the human spirit as an exile from eternity, cast forth to journey through time. This idea he has already expressed in two curiously memorable lines from his previous volume:

> I lean my cheek from eternity
> For time to slap, for time to slap.

But man's exile is not irrevocable; to that ideal happiness he may sometimes return, in dreams, or perhaps even in those waking visions which the author describes in *The Fable and the Story*. Adam's innocent state is represented in Mr. Muir's writings by a landscape, part myth, part memory: it is the same landscape that rolls out behind his remarkable novel *The Three Brothers*, and its features, a little softened, a little idealised, are those of the remote islands where he spent his early childhood. Nostalgia for this lost country is the strongest emotion to be found in *The Voyage and Other Poems*; it inspires the two most moving lyrics in the book, 'The Covenant' and 'The Transmutation'.

Such extensions as have been made in the terrain of poetry during the last decade have, with a few exceptions—Eliot's Four Quartets, Auden's recent volume—been in the direction of technique. But technique, divorced from matter, does not interest Mr. Muir. His style, though adequate to any demands that he may make of it, exercises no immediate fascination. In contrast to those of his contemporaries who offer the world water in a chalice of surpassing workmanship, Mr. Muir's good wine, a sip of which intoxicates, must be drunk from the most utilitarian of cups. There is a Puritan sparseness of outline to all he writes.

Like Yeats, a writer whom he resembles both in style and in the tardy ripening of his gifts, Mr. Muir's affinities are with the nineteenth rather than the twentieth century—predominately with the French symbolists. He stands outside the poetic fashions of the last four decades, and even outside the main stream of English literature; and it is precisely this apartness, this individuality of the marrow rather than the surface, that gives his poetry its exciting flavour. He is a writer of many talents—penetrating critic, skilful translator, possessor of a beautifully cursive prose style; but one may hazard the guess that it is for these poems, and for those that will follow them, fruits of his maturity, that he will chiefly be remembered.

FRANCIS KING

British Rule in India

India: a Restatement. By Sir Reginald Coupland. Oxford. 12s. 6d.

THE PUBLISHERS DESCRIBE Sir Reginald Coupland's book as 'an attempt to state all the essential facts about the British connection with India in a single volume'. To an astonishing degree the attempt has been successful. Within the space of 300 pages the author has given a brilliantly succinct account of the origin and character of the British Raj, has traced, with admirable lucidity, the development of Indian self-government, and has supplied the best exposition to date of the political problems involved in India's final liberation. The economic aspect of the British connection, though by no means neglected, has not received such full and adequate treatment as the political.

A first-rate introductory chapter on India and Europe is followed by a section on the origin and expansion of British rule. Though generally fair and dispassionate, Sir Reginald tends occasionally in this section to pass judgments too favourable to the British. He says, for instance, that British rule did not originate in British aggression. This is an overstatement. Plassey and Baxar, the two battles which gave the British the mastery of Bengal, were certainly not fought in self-defence;

and Eaxar was the result of peculiarly discreditable and indefensible aggression. Again, he speaks of 'the black facts of the decade or so after Plassey' as though the period of crude exploitation lasted, at most, twenty years. This is to give an altogether too favourable impression. Thirty years after Plassey, when Cornwallis became Governor-General, direct exploitation was still in full swing, and it continued in Oudh, the Carnatic, and Hyderabad for another thirty years after that.

Sir Reginald endeavours to assess the gain and loss resulting to the two countries from the British Raj. He places on the debit side of India's account 'all the disadvantages inherent in the one hard fact that British rule has been foreign rule'; but he does not emphasise quite sufficiently the damage caused by the arrest and distortion of Indian socio-political development. Under the British Raj healthy growth through the free interplay of the natural forces within Indian society has been hampered. Consequently, Indian society today still preserves ossified survivals from an earlier stage of its existence, which ought long since to have been swept away. This particular disadvantage of foreign rule is keenly felt by Indians, but inadequately appreciated in England.

The middle section of the book, dealing with the progress of self-government from its first beginnings in 1861 down to the Congress rebellion of 1942, is a condensation of Sir Reginald's longer *Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*. He brings out well the point that right back in 1883 the real crux of the Indian political problem was clearly stated by Sir Syed Ahmad, who uncompromisingly rejected as inapplicable to India the principle of majority rule. It is remarkable how Moslem rejection of this principle lost its emphasis in the inter-war period and was only brought formidably to notice again by Mr. Jinnah from 1938 onwards. Today Moslems seek to solve the difficulty by the partition of India. This issue is admirably discussed by Sir Reginald in the chapter 'Possibilities of a Settlement'. He refers with approval to certain ideas put forward by the late Sir Sikander Hyat-Khan for an 'agency centre' in place of a regular federal government—a constitutional novelty designed to create 'something between a normal federation and a mere confederacy or league'. Here, without doubt, he approaches the correct solution of the problem. This is quite the best book available on a topical subject, and is of more than topical interest.

PENDEREL MOON

Orpheus Britannicus

British Music of Our Time. Edited by A. L. Bacharach. Pelican Books. 9d.

'OF OUR TIME' is interpreted by Mr. Bacharach and his collaborators as comprising all composers born since 1860—the date, as it happens, which was the original term of Dr. Ernest Walker's standard *History of Music in England*. Although Dr. Walker added, in a later edition, an appendix in which he discussed, not always with complete sympathy, the output of later composers up to 1923, his book really ends with Parry, Stanford and Elgar.

The new 'Pelican' serves a purpose beyond its immediate aim of bringing to the largest possible public information concerning the achievements of British composers during the present century; it provides an historical work of reference, whose value is out of proportion to its published price. For this task the editor has assembled a strong team led, in the sense that they contribute the greatest number of chapters, by Dr. Westrup and Mr. Scott Goddard.

Mr. Goddard opens with an admirably balanced résumé of the state of music in England at the turn of the century. His appreciation of Parry's quality as a composer should do something to rectify contemporary misprision of his music; and one is glad to note the important place in the scheme of things accorded to Mary Wakefield, founder of the Competition Festival. Mr. Goddard is also responsible for an excellent chapter on Vaughan Williams, where again he shows his good judgment by drawing attention to the high merits of the unjustly neglected 'Sancta Civitas', and for an enthusiastic, but perhaps too little critical, account of Benjamin Britten's remarkable career as a composer.

Dr. Westrup's chapters on Frank Bridge and E. J. Moeran are models of scholarly exposition. In the one he is concerned to display the good qualities of music that does not always make its effect upon the ordinary listener so fully as upon the instructed musician who can appreciate its finer points of technical excellence; in the other he speaks for a composer too reticent to make his own case plain. Dr. Westrup is less convincing in his advocacy of Lord Berners, whose comparatively trivial output hardly seems to warrant a whole chapter in a book which relegates a composer of Gerald Finzi's standing and achievement to a page among 'other runners', and omits all mention of Patrick Hadley, Robin Milford and the late Walter Leigh.

Peter Warlock is another composer who, perhaps, is accorded more than his due space, but Mr. Foss writes so well on him that it would be curmudgeonly to grumble. Among the other contributions which give distinction to this book are Mr. Ralph Hill's chapters on Delius and Ireland, Mr. Herbage's on Bax (a penetrating critical study), Mr. Mason's on Walton and Mr. Robertson's on Bliss. Finally one must mention Mr. Arthur Hutchings's exceptional study of Edmund Rubbra, that incorrigible genius—exceptional in the limitation of its scope, compared with the rest, and in its use of music type which might have been more generally allowed. There is a thorough index with a useful catalogue of gramophone records, but no bibliography.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

The War in the Jungle

Monsoon Victory. By Gerald Hanley. Collins. 10s. 6d.

American Guerilla in the Philippines. By Ira Wolfert. Collancz. 8s. 6d.

Jungle Pilot. By Barry Sutton. Macmillan. 6s.

IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED, both in America and Britain, that a couple of atom bombs defeated Japan, whereas the facts of the over-all situation on the very day the second of them went down show that the Japanese were only weeks from annihilation by more orthodox military means. These three books do much to adjust the popular focus on the Japanese war. Some of the least publicised troops in the 'Forgotten' Fourteenth Army were the East Africans who made up the valorous 11th Division. They are fortunate to have such a vivid chronicler as Captain Hanley. This Division was made up of the rawest possible material—tribesmen who, within a few months of arriving in their loin-cloths at the recruiting centres, were sufficiently skilful in modern warfare to accomplish the exacting campaigns of Abyssinia and Madagascar. They were to do better still in pushing the Japanese out of Burma. It is difficult for Europeans to appreciate the impact of modern war upon these primitive men who suddenly found themselves coping with a strange world of telephones, stop-watches, antiseptics, maps and gun-sights. The speed and the confidence of their adaptation should make anyone think twice before pronouncing on the 'backward' African. Their notions about the war were, of course, sometimes more polite than accurate—'to get more land for Kingi Georgi' was one Askari's summary of his war aims. Like many other types of colonial fighter these East Africans have staked for their people a claim to a share in the benefits of our Empire's progress. What is equally true is that the white officers and senior N.C.O.s who trained and led this 11th East African Division fulfilled their obligations in the most exemplary way, and gave a positive meaning to the concept of trusteeship. It was the Africans and the Indians between them who achieved the unexpected feat of keeping a jungle battle moving in the monsoon, and this tale of what they did and how they did it is a war book of remarkable interest.

The earlier parts of *American Guerilla* fill in some significant gaps in our general ignorance of the size and complexity of the naval side of the Japanese war. One of the episodes—the attack on a Jap cruiser by American 'expendable' gunboats—is as terrific a piece of reporting as the war has produced. The resolute sailor whose adventures Mr. Wolfert sets down, having later lost his vessel, took to dry land and set up one of those guerilla organisations whose exploits not only confounded the Japanese co-prosperity schemes, but are in their incredible authenticity far beyond the limits which even a sanguine script-writer would set himself.

The third of this trio of Far Eastern narratives is the story of a British fighter pilot who in a pestilential climate had to cope with hazards as heavy as those of his comrades in the Battle of Britain. Like so many airmen Wing-Commander Barry Sutton responds as quickly to the undertones of war as to the drama of battle, and nothing is more likely to bring home to us than *Jungle Pilot* the moods and the conditions, as well as the combats, in which the R.A.F. fought the Japanese.

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