

K.L.G.—The Plug with a pedigree

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THE GERMAN RETREAT IN ITALY

THE battle for Rome is now drawing to its victorious conclusion; that that is the opinion at Allied Headquarters may be deduced from the confident statement of General Mark Clark that before many days had passed we should free this first of the European capitals from Nazi tyranny. The General's prophecy may well be correct; but what is now proceeding with full fury may perhaps be the battle to secure the German withdrawal beyond Rome, rather than the battle for Rome itself. The enemy is now in a sad plight from which he is desperately trying to extricate himself; any chances he has of extrication depend on the line on the Alban Hills holding long enough for the units retreating northward and westward to get on to the hill roads that will enable them to escape. There is no question now of fighting a pitched battle; we are now facing what, except on the Alban position itself, are desperate rearguard actions in which unfortunate units are asked to risk total annihilation to let more fortunate comrades escape. Except for these units the order is for a general retreat.

Having got himself into a position in which there is no alternative to retreat Kesselring is managing the business not unskillfully. He has been pulling out for ten days, but it is pretty clear that he is now extricating not much more than men and the weapons they can themselves handle. The advance of the Allies has been rapid enough to put the best road out of bounds to retiring troops and the hill roads are not the sort along which extrication of heavy material would be easy, even if it were uninterrupted. What makes it next to impossible is that the complete command of the air which we hold enables us to bomb these roads at will. Only at night, and then intermittently, is movement really possible and the results of trying to move by day have already been tragic for the enemy as the long lines of shattered trucks, lorries and tanks are still there to witness. With roads in a state of permanent blockade, and so vulnerable as they wind up between cliffs and banks that one well-placed bomb can transform the highway into a tangled mass of earth and stones requiring the labours of many men to clear, there is no hope whatever of getting all the army impedimenta away supposing it could be taken out of the battle, and by now very little hope of getting away any. If Kesselring gets his Regions back, they will be in no condition to fight a general action for Rome. It seems likely, therefore, that they and the troops now fighting so vigorously and not unsuccessfully to hold the Anzio forces at bay will carry the retreat away from and beyond Rome.

At the moment there is no evidence that the Germans intend to fight for Rome in Rome itself. It is, as the Germans themselves now unactfully admit, of little military value and it is far more important

that Kesselring should get an army north of Rome to contest our further advance than sacrifice his troops in purposeless and costly street fighting. That is not to say that the Germans will quietly evacuate Rome. They know that its occupation will present us with a thorny problem whose solution will take valuable time, and it is in their power, by judicious and comparatively minor destruction, to complicate it a thousand times. If they refrain it will be from no feelings of historical romanticism but simply because time was lacking, and it is by no means certain yet that time will be lacking. For the sake of Rome it is to be hoped it will be, but it is impossible to be sure and the pitiful attempt to make war absolute for other people may well be made.

There is, however, no doubt that the Germans have suffered a heavy and unexpected defeat. They have been beaten fairly and squarely by the better men and the better leadership and the result of the battle of Central Italy, even if still incomplete, is of excellent augury for the greater battles to come. The invasion cannot be far off, for the great air offensive has been stepped up to a pace that no air force can maintain indefinitely. Thousands of aircraft have kept up an incessant pounding of targets, going as far afield as Poznan but devoting their main attention to targets much nearer home. The targets have fallen into clearly defined groups and each group has its importance for enemy mobility. Power stations are as important as marshalling yards, airfields as important as bridges, and all four types of target have received their due share of destruction, and the state of enemy transport must nearly beggar description. Even the roads are now unsafe and in many places unusable and there is much evidence to show that the enemy is gravely embarrassed as a result. If we recollect that the effects of the worst air raid can be made good, and no offensive can be kept up to the extent of preventing permanently all attempts to make them good, it will be realized that soon the great step will have been taken.

The nervousness of the enemy as he waits is very evident and he is desperately striving to penetrate the thick veil of concealment that hides the Allied moves. His offensive in Rumania is typical of the state to which he is reduced. It is at a point where he could not exploit a success even if he gained a considerable one and that he should have attempted what cannot be more than a costly reconnaissance in force at a time when not a man can be wasted is eloquent of the tension under which he labours. We shall attack an enemy whose nerves are already beginning to give under the strain; those who hold an unshaken belief in the maxim that the moral is to the physical as three is to one may reckon what that state of affairs means to us in terms of divisions and be encouraged as they observe the result.

A cup of tea at noon
Is inclined to make one croon.
But a cup of tea at five
Alone keeps one alive.

Many there are who would swear to the truth of that last assertion and indeed the ratio of truth per line in this week's entries has been unusually high. Who would quarrel with D.E.V.'s "The School-Teacher's Catch to his Examinees":—

A Fearful Swot in May
Is guaranteed to pay.
A Fearful Swot in June
Has *sometimes* been a boon.
But however hard you try
Its TOO LATE in July!

or with the sad (and truthful) inevitability of Dorothy Garland's:—

A poem learned when still quite young
Is there to cull while life shall run.
A poem learned in middle life
Is tiresome as elusive wife.
A poem learned in seasoned age
Flits—ere one sadly shuts the page.

For sheer bitterness, however, commend me to (or rather preserve me from) that contained in Denvil's *diminuendo*:—

At eighteen, a love of "things of the mind"
Is worth the reputation of being ultra-refined.
At thirty, a love of "things of the mind"
Is worth the trouble of sometimes being tactfully
deaf and blind.
At fifty, a love of "things of the mind"
Isn't worth catching cold in an empty house well-
designed.

As for those topically-inspired competitors who submitted varying versions of "A Swarm of Huns in May", to the judicial mind they seemed rather to be counting their Heinkels before they had crashed—especially when they came to the month of July. Malachi came out the best of this bunch with her Rune of Doom:—

... For the German in 1942
Is plenty of evil yet to do.
For the German in 1943
The sun is sinking towards the sea.
For the German in 1944
Hell waits behind an opening Door.

Highly Commended: M. C. Hodkinson, Reason-in-all-things, Mrs F. A. Edinborough and Helen Barrett. First Prize goes to Major Vickers for a pithy piece of admonishment aimed (one can't help suspecting) at the local laggards. He might do far worse than paste it up in block letters outside the Blood Donation Centre! Book Prize is awarded to Pen for a seemingly innocuous little catch with a *real* catch at the end of it.

PICADOR

PRIZES AWARDED

First Prize Two Guineas: Major O. S. Vickers, Civil Defence Headquarters, Maidenburgh Street, Colchester, Essex.

A Gift of Blood in May
Is worth a well-won Fray.
A Gift of Blood in June
Is worth a captured Dune.
A Gift of Blood in July
Is not worth supply.

Book Prize: Pen.

A fat young Goose in Lent
Is worth a half-year's Rent.
A fat young Goose on May-day
Is worth a Pound on Pay-day.
—But a fat young Goose for life
Is worth nought as a wife!

THIS WEEK'S COMPETITION

Three elephants from Hagenbeck's collection have, it is reliably reported, recently arrived in Sweden as "evacuées" from Vienna. The largest weighs three tons. The subject set this week is an epigram in prose or verse on this piece of news.

Prizes: Two Guineas and a 10s. 6d. Book Token.

The name and address (or pseudonym) of a competitor must be written on his MS. and the coupon on page 496 attached to it (closing date TUESDAY, JUNE 13th). Address: Competition, TIME AND TIDE, 32 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Results will be published in our issue of June 24th. Under no circumstances will manuscripts be returned.

MEN & BOOKS

William Blake

A Man Without a Mask: William Blake 1757–1817: J. Bronowski. Secker & Warburg. 8s. 6d.

IT IS MORE usual to think of William Blake as artist, poet, or mystic, than as a politician or social reformer. Yet it is true that he attributed "the wretched State of the Arts in this Country and in Europe" to the "wretched State of Political Science which is the Science of Sciences." So it is on the basis of this theme that Mr J. Bronowski has made a brief study of Blake's writings, and his book presents the reader with a view of Blake from a refreshingly new angle. Mr Bronowski is not to be taken as the latest interpreter of Blake's obscurities in painting or poetry. He makes no pretensions to this, and in fact disarmingly confesses that he is not fitted to look at Blake's pictures with the care and pleasure with which he reads his writings. This is a serious limitation, for Blake can never be understood by piecemeal study. His designs and his writings are interdependent, and either taken separately lose part of their meaning. Yet Mr Bronowski's book is a real contribution to the study of Blake, for never before have the social and political bearings of this thought been so carefully extracted from the body of his writings, or set so satisfactorily against the background of his time:

Blake, the man of action, was very much subordinated to Blake, the great imaginative artist, so that it would be unreasonable to expect of him whatever his views, a consecutive or constructive attempt at political reform. It was his capacity for indignation that impelled him to set down his views, sometimes in the form of a lyrical poem, at others as a biting epigram, as blank verse in the body of a "Prophetic Book", or even as plain prose. Some of these were published, if Blake's peculiar and self-limiting method of printing could be called publishing; others were scribbled in his notebook or as marginalia, and were never intended to go further. The first part of his only political poem, *The French Revolution*, was set up in ordinary type in 1791 by an ordinary publisher, Joseph Johnson, but it never got beyond the stage of page-proof, and the whole project was then abandoned. From this and other evidence Mr Bronowski concludes that the suppression of this book formed a turning-point in Blake's life, and that the unexpected course of events in France was largely responsible for his adoption of symbolism in order to render his seditious tendencies less obvious. It seems more likely that Blake's method was due to the inherent eccentricity, or originality, of his mind, than to the direct influence of external events. Mr Bronowski maintains, however, that Blake's life was not eccentric if seen in its proper context, and that his writings are not eccentric either if read with understanding of their setting. This thesis is richly documented from Blake's writings, and there can be no doubt of his loathing for the world of money and commerce, and for all the manifestations of the industrial revolution, or of his intense sympathy with the sufferings of the poor and oppressed.

Mr Bronowski's book is an encouragement and a help to the intelligent reading of Blake's writings, and he supplies a thread to guide the reader through some of the tangles of Blake's thought. So many books have been written

about Blake in the last thirty years and so few of them seem to credit him with having had much sense. Mr Bronowski himself warns the reader that Blake's mind was fluid, and that no consistency can be expected in his symbolism. His mind moved, indeed, on the wings of inspiration and not in a straight line. Nevertheless this book succeeds in demonstrating so much sense in Blake's apparent extravagancies that it should find many grateful readers.

It may appear unfortunate that all Mr Bronowski's page references for his quotations from Blake refer to the second issue of the Nonesuch one-volume edition of the *Poetry and Prose*, because this edition has been many times reprinted, and recently entirely reset, so that the pages no longer correspond. It is difficult to see, however, what else he could have done to overcome the inconsiderateness of publishers in thus resetting (or upsetting) the text of a standard edition. The five illustrations from Blake's designs are all interesting, and the jacket by Margaret de Polnay is an excellent appetizer for the feast within.

GEOFFREY KEYNES

PERSONALIST PHILOSOPHY

Slavery and Freedom: Nicolas Berdyaev. *Bles*. 25s.

"MAN IS BORN FREE," Rousseau wrote, "and everywhere he is in chains." To the first of these assertions Berdyaev would assent with a reservation; the second he categorically endorses. Modern dictators have made obvious the fact of human servitude, but the ordinary man rarely suspects its ubiquitous pervasiveness. Fortunately, perhaps, he is unconscious, or only spasmodically conscious, of most of the fetters he is bearing; aware of their multiplicity and total weight, he might bend beneath them and be broken. Fifteen types of bondage, beginning with slavery to being and slavery to God, are enumerated in the table of contents prefixed to this book. The danger of its readers forthwith deciding that quietism is their sole recourse cannot be blinked.

Berdyaev, however, is not a quietist. Though he declares that wars have come to resemble a back street murder rather than a duel, he admits they may be less debasing than what he styles "bourgeois pacifism". He will have no compromise with any tyranny he discerns. Denouncing the Fascist and Communist ideologies, exposing the lures of nature worship and mechanical civilization, condemning submergence of identity in nationality or class, he does not omit to warn us of sexual and aesthetic spells which may overcome the spirit. And for encouragement in the struggle for freedom he expounds his own personalist philosophy.

Personalist is an unfamiliar word that supplies a common want. The gap is normally and imperfectly stopped by "individualist", but in the Russian philosopher's vocabulary personalism is sharply distinguished from individualism in all its forms. The individual may revolt against the group, but is always seen as member of a group; it is certain that he belongs to a family, and is more or less determined by heredity. Personality, on the other hand, is freedom and directly emanates from God. An individualist can only know the ego and the non-ego, whereas in personalism Thou is recognized to be another I. Personality is inward completeness and unity; egocentric individualism, notably among the cultured aesthetes of fiction, marks a disintegrated condition. Moreover, personality is immortal as well as integral. Berdyaev affirms the resurrection of the body. He is at one with St Thomas in treating separation of soul from body as unnatural, accidental, and incongruity. This is the idea implicit in a verse of the Book of Wisdom which declares "God made not death."

Throughout historic time men have described that the real world is something other than the apparent, and philosophers have sought to elucidate the variance. On the Aristotelian maxim that nothing is in the mind which has not entered through the senses, the discrepancies are explained by our sensory

Just Published

GYPSIES OF BRITAIN

An Introduction to their History

by

Brian Vesey-FitzGerald

[15s. net]

Mr. Vesey-FitzGerald makes no claim to be a Romani scholar, yet he possesses a vast cornucopia of Gypsy fact. The book is addressed to the general reader, and unfolds an enthralling account of the British Gypsies from their origin as far back as is known up to the present time. Furthermore, he knows that what the Gypsies know is not to be found in books, but he has made a valuable contribution to the literature dealing with the "wanderers in Romance."

and

MANY SIDED MIRROR

by

Joan Morgan

[8s. 6d. net]

The novel based on the play
THIS WAS A WOMAN
now drawing all London to
the Comedy Theatre.

(see Play Advt. on back page)

* * *

No one who reads this book is likely to forget the nightmare and overtopping character of a woman sadist which Joan Morgan has portrayed in Olivia Russell. Olivia's vile possessiveness fetters the lives of her gifted children, her sad, heroic little husband, and bold servant-girl; and, so powerfully is this woman drawn, that she half-mesmerises the reader also. Her equal has not appeared in fiction since Madame Chantelouve was considered the last word in the register of female sadism.

CHAPMAN & HALL LTD

limitations, but the maxim is disputable and does not quite account for our intimations of the insensible. For Berdyaev the schism between reality and appearance is designated upon the Fall. Thereafter, he maintains, we have lived, or, as Mr T. S. Eliot might say, half-lived, among the illusions of objectivization. In *Slavery and Freedom* this is the recurring theme. Without too much flippancy objectivization could be designated as the process to which Nicolas Berdyaev objects. Its phantasms include the people or nation as suprapersonal personalities. To the personalist the sun should be the centre of human personality, not, as Copernicus claimed, the centre of the solar system. "Personality which is conscious of itself listens to the inward voice and obeys that only."

Without the hypothesis, or dogma, of the Fall our dualism remains a mystery; if it be admitted, the pieces of the puzzle can be arranged so as to present an intelligible picture. Berdyaev's speculations are up to a point helpful. To think of man the individual is to dismiss Rousseau's declaration of his native freedom as false and stupid, but the case is altered when the general idea of personalism is grasped. An obstacle is the length to which Berdyaev carries his doctrine of subjectivity. To be told that truth is only to be found by taking the very paths which most of us have thought likeliest to lead into the realm of *maya* is, to put it mildly, disconcerting. On this as on numerous less vital, though still significant, questions there is no argument, no approach to the mind by syllogistic reasoning. Instead, statement follows upon statement. The author's learning is enormous, and the pitifully less learned reviewer is often left to grope for the foundations on which, as he presumes, the huge edifice of asseveration rests. Time so spent is probably wasted. In Berdyaev there seems to be a good deal of Jung's thinking introvert for whom "facts are of secondary importance". Once, at all events, in dealing with capitalism as a cause of war, he seems to have relinquished thought in favour of emotion. "War and capitalism," as Madariaga has it, "are both outward signs of human tendencies deeper than either."

All the same, Berdyaev's importance as a thinker in our times, and as a protagonist for Christianity, freedom, and human dignity, is undeniable. The God from whom he would have us liberate ourselves proves on examination to be the spectre of determinism. Now and then, too, he acknowledges that some of the institutions he arraigns are not only inevitable in a fallen world but in their interplay protect us from absolute subjection. Passages in his work may be criticized for their extravagance, yet his conclusion is magnificently sane. "There is" he writes, "a meaninglessness in history which points to a meaning which lies beyond the limits of history." His last chapter might indeed be described as substantially an expansion upon two sentences from Maritain: "It is a betrayal at once of man and of God not to understand that history is a movement towards the Kingdom of God, and not to wish for the coming of that Kingdom. But it is absurd to think that it will come in and as a part of history, where good and evil are inextricably intertwined."

WILLOUGHBY DEWAR

POETRY

The Inward Animal: Terence Tiller. *Hogarth*. 3s. 6d.

Beauty and the Beast: John Heath-Stubbs. *Routledge*. 5s.

The Second Man: Julian Symons. *Routledge*. 5s.

IN ONE of his poems Mr Symons says of himself:

"My poems are paper games, kicking a football,
Negative, disgraceful."

This, though rather severe, is true. The word "disgraceful" suggests something more vividly objectionable than anything Mr Symons has yet achieved, but "negative" and "paper games" are fair enough descriptions. "Paper games" is particularly apt; for here we have a characteristic contemporary volume of poems which very quietly, indeed almost unobtrusively, shuffles round and round those great concepts

which Mr Auden has, by constant repetition of their names, so curiously reduced in seriousness: life, death, evil, corruption, sin, error, love, time and what not. The disposition of these little objects according to personal or fashionable taste is indeed a paper game, and a game available to anyone who cares to play it. Here is an example:

*Our tears drop, the wet pearls are
Transformed into a voice*

*Crying: "O pity human,
Nature condemned, to error,
And all those good who dare not
Descend like furious birds."
Weak as a baby walking
Conscience now moves and tells them
All inappropriate action
Leads on to wrong and death.*

Mr Heath-Stubbs and Mr Tiller are to be taken much more seriously. Mr Heath-Stubbs is at his best when he avoids traditional stanza-forms, which make him sometimes seem insincere and artificial, as in the various "songs" in his new volume; and even in the sequence of sonnets called *The Heart's Forest*, which deal with an important personal experience, the sonnet form is often used too lightly and casually. Nevertheless this sequence has some unusual and successful things in it: among them a sonnet beginning "Three walked through the meadows", and another on the theme of Echo and Narcissus. It is in Mr Heath-Stubbs's longer poems, usually written in a loose blank-verse, that one finds his best work: poems such as "Leporello", "Mosca in the Galleys" and "Edward the Confessor", and a "Heroic Epistle" supposedly written from Congreve to Anne Bracegirdle. He is particularly good at identifying himself with a figure of the past, as Browning did; indeed he continues the Browning-Ezra Pound tradition. Here, presumably, is Liszt speaking:

*And the flutes ice-blue, and the harps
Like melting frost, and the trumpet marching, marching
Like fire above them, like fire through the frozen pine-trees.
And the dancers came, swirling, swirling past me—
Plume and swansdown waving, white plume over the gold hair,
Arms held gallantly, and silk talking—and an eye caught
In the candle-shadow, and the curve of a mouth
Going home to my heart (the folly of it!) going home to my heart!"*

Mr Tiller has forced on to his new volume of poems an order which appears to be rather false. The body of the book is a collection of lyrics, mainly meditations on emotions woken by a prolonged sojourn in Egypt. These he has written with all his customary fastidiousness, independence and conscientiousness. He is a poet who neither goes in for, nor comes out with, memorable lines or phrases. It is the atmosphere in his poems that one remembers—in a brilliantly composed poem such as *Egyptian Dancer*, for example, or in the poem called *Desert*:

*Still where the viper swims in sand, the pearly
scorpion stiffens, and the flat-mouthed surly
lizards are—here, looking towards the waste,
we know more bare an impotence than dust
or the dry ant-clean spectres that are born
of it, or venom of the scale and horn.*

He has flanked his collection of lyrics with two long poems, *Eclogue for a Dying House*, and *The Birth of Christ*. The former of these is intended to present the death of the old pre-war personality of the poet, the latter to present "slow mutual absorption ending in the birth of Something at once myself and a new self and Egypt". These poems, the most ambitious in the book, are the least successful—perhaps because they recall other poets very strongly, and Mr Tiller is good only when he is original. The *Eclogue* is a weary and powerless poem; its title and mode inevitably recall Mr MacNeice, but the poem is without Mr MacNeice's accomplished patina. *The Birth of Christ* employs a symbol too great and portentous for what Mr Tiller describes in his comment on the poem; and Rilke has been too unscrupulously impressed into helping in the writing of it.

HENRY REED

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson: Adrienne Koch. Columbia University Press; Oxford University Press. 16s. 6d.

"THE GOD WHO gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time". Jefferson knew that this proposition could not be proved, empirically or otherwise, and he was not interested in proving it; for to men of his stamp it exists as a self-evident proposition, more obvious and more fruitful than any other ethical principle, and as necessary to civilized existence as the assurance of free-will. The only sanction of government is that law of nature, "not graven on tablets of bronze or stone, but written in the minds and on the hearts of every individual . . . binding on great and small alike". These words of Grotius indicate the theoretical basis of Jefferson's republicanism. "For the reality of these principles," he wrote, "I appeal to the true fountains of evidence, the head and heart of every rational and honest man. It is there nature has written her moral laws . . . He will never read there the permission to annul his obligations for a time, or forever, whenever they become dangerous, useless or disagreeable." Even when the claims of expediency are strong, "the tribunal of our consciences remains" and the citizen "has no natural right in opposition to his social duties."

Miss Koch's enquiry into the nature and origin of Jefferson's philosophical opinions is an attempt to trace his intellectual lineage. The attempt is interesting and well-executed, but too much should not be claimed for Jefferson's intellectual stature. His philosophy was a rag-bag which contained the reflections of a mind rather capacious than discerning. He had not the true philosophic equipment. He was reflective and curious, but his thinking was neither disciplined nor systematic, and his sentimentality betrayed him into astonishing credulities. The enigma of his personality baffles all who try to discover what his real opinions were, and possibly that is why so many Americans have been unable to discuss him without prejudice and heat. For his opinions cannot be considered apart from the man. About the egalitarian idealism there lingers an atmosphere of aristocratic pride, of silk stockings and gold candlesticks and the feckless hospitality which dissipated a fortune; the economic theorist was the improvident landowner who failed to make farming pay, the writer of the Declaration was the owner of slaves, and the patriot was the mistrustful particularist who inspired the Kentucky Resolution. Nothing was alien from his enquiring mind. He invented a wheelbarrow with two wheels, and a polygraph—a contrivance with which he could write two letters at the same time—and a plan for the reform of spelling; he produced his own version of the New Testament, from which he eliminated all repetitions and contradictions; and he laboured for years at a vocabulary which would give words of the same meaning in the dialects of fifty different Indian tribes. Yet the quality of his intellectual achievement was impaired by emotional inconsistency and the sense that he was often playing a part. His credulities too are notorious. He was prepared to find on the Missouri a mountain of pure salt eighty miles long and forty miles wide; discovering in Virginia the bones of the common sloth, he pronounced them to be the remains of a carnivorous clawed creature unknown to science; he wrote to Macpherson for the Gaelic MS of Ossian with the intention of learning the language and making his own translation; and in support of his belief that cold and moisture increase the size of animals, he asserted that creatures larger than elephants could be found in the Arctic Circle.

Even in his own lifetime Jefferson saw his political hopes fail. The rapid advance of industrial capitalism led America in the opposite direction from his vision of a rural paradise governed by an agrarian aristocracy. Few of his theories coincided with the realities of his day. Thus he wished America "to stand with respect to Europe precisely on the footing of China", that is to carry materials and provisions to Europe, rather than attract workmen to America to swell the city mobs which he regarded as "panders of vice" and "sores" on the body politic. But cities and commerce and a navy grew in spite of him, and the federal government extended its power until during his Presidency the "strict constitutionalist" was unable to repeal any of the Federalists' measures and himself

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Author of
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BECTIVE BRIDGE
(Awarded James Tait Black
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MARY
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[9/6 net]

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Butler to the Principal,
Brasenose College, Oxford

ALBERT
THOMAS

WAIT AND SEE

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SIR WILLIAM
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THOMAS

THE WAY OF A
COUNTRYMAN

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H. J. MASSINGHAM *Time and Tide*
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adopted a larger construction of the executive authority than the Federalists had dared to attempt. Yet, fundamentally weak as he was, and humourless and intellectually irresponsible, Jefferson did much for American freedom. In his native Virginia, where he established State education, dissolved the official Church, and abolished entail and primogeniture, his democratic faith found concrete forms; and with Jefferson as President, Americans learned to regard their government as the trustee of the people, and a wave of humanitarianism and enlightenment swept through the State legislatures. Hamilton and Jefferson stood for conflicting ideals, but America had need of both of them and it was fortunate that neither of them was the sole architect of the new nation. Hamilton's clear-sighted, unscrupulous genius was restrained by Jefferson's intuitive sense that power corrupts, that bureaucracy is the ugliest enemy of human freedom, and that unshackled commercial enterprise leads to the fleshpots and Jay Gould and Warren Harding. It is the best and worst of Jefferson that he believed in the people. "The ground of liberty is to be gained by inches. . . . It takes time to persuade men to do even what is for their own good." From this faith he was not to be deflected either by "planners", who despised human capacity, or by the short-term successes of those who fed at the trough of expediency. For liberty is not won the easy way. As Miss Koch well says, Jefferson "never quite lost the farmer's sense that the products of the orchard, the garden, and the fields are born of arduous labor".

M. M. REESE

THE THRILLER AS ART

On the Danger Line: Simenon. *Routledge. 8s. 6d.*

THE FACT must be faced that it is perfectly natural for the sincere artist who begins his career as a writer of thrillers to attempt to better himself.

The modern thriller is an art form as rigid as the villanelle, as complicated as the lancers, and it is low. Make no doubt of that. Those of the intelligentsia who make a fashionable habit of admiring the thriller do so in the same excellent spirit as possessed those gourmets of the twenties who made a fashionable habit of admiring the winkle, with a preference for those from a stall.

The thriller, God bless it, is common in the sense that it is designed to appeal to the average intelligence, which is mediocre, and to the average emotional experience, which is considerable; and those examples which demand a first-class brain to follow all they contain are bad thrillers.

At the moment the standard of technique is incredibly high. The standard of taste, while less exalted, is rising and the fashion is for the embellishment of the main structure to be something of genuine worth. A first flight thriller today must possess, as a decoration, scholarship, or original observation, or specialized information; some of the best have all three. These requirements are considerable and it is understandable that when a serious craftsman has mastered the exacting form and has received recognition, not for the whole of his achievement but for the embellishments with which he has chosen to adorn his edifice, he should turn longingly towards these far more simple and more emotionally satisfying embroideries, and should produce something outside the plaguery restrictions of the form, especially if by so doing he can raise his literary social status. It may be a pity, it may be nothing of the kind. That is a question to be settled between individual writers and their readers.

M. Simenon is without doubt the greatest writer of the modern detective thriller. Some of his early work has raised the form to a degree of perfection never before envisaged, and I do not think it is possible to over-estimate the early Maigrets unless one makes the fatal mistake of forgetting they are thrillers. Yet M. Simenon has now given up the mould and has embarked on a kind of French low life story in which all his gifts, save his supreme one, are fully exploited.

The two stories in the present volume are brilliant in their way. They achieve exactly what they attempt and their appeal is not common by any means. Only the select few who are attracted by the peculiar and distinctive sordidness of this side of French life, and the even fewer who will be delighted by the writer's remarkable skill in handling grey tones, will be completely satisfied.

The first tale, which concerns the homecoming of an unsuccessful crook to his provincial birthplace, his

marriage of convenience and his final tragedy when jealousy of his mistress's new lover proves too strong for him, is possibly the better of the two. The second story is of Belgian underground activities, and is more in his old manner, with traces of the un-Gallic sentimentality which gave his early work such a distinctive flavour, but it does not compare with the first half-dozen Maigrets and lacks the essential shapeliness which, while it labelled those stories, also lent them their unique excellence.

All the same, a new Simenon is a new Simenon, and there is no one else writing who can make a man standing on the corner of the street at once so real and so exciting. I would read M. Simenon if he chose to write a Post Office Directory, but what would I give for just one more Maigret!

MARGERY ALLINGHAM

INNOCENTS AT SEA

Our Hearts were Young and Gay: Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kimbrough, with illustrations by Alajálor. *Constable. 3s. 6d.*

CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER made her first appearance as an author with a gently amusing book of essays and sketches entitled *Popcorn*. In collaboration with Emily Kimbrough (and Alajálor) she has now produced a sparkling account of a trip to Europe made by Emily and herself when they were fresh from school. At its best the humour of this narrative has more subtlety and more warmth than the humour of *Popcorn*; when it falls below its best it lands with a plop in the obvious. But those lapses are so few that to dwell on them would be ungrateful.

A mere summary of the adventures of the starry-eyed Emily and the almost equally unworldly Cornelia would convey nothing of the delicious quality of the book and its illustrations. The girls' experiences on board ship, in England and in France, are related in a manner not so much "hilarious" (as the publisher's note describes them), as verging on the surrealism of the Marx Brothers, as when Emily, dragged down by a vast tweed overcoat, walks the deck with an obliging young man who solemnly holds up the collar of her coat to take the weight off her shoulders.

But there is much more in this book than a record of incidents often embarrassing in experience though comic in retrospect; there are many moments of sensitive perception and shrewd reporting, and the nostalgic recollection of the Paris of the authors' gay young hearts is no less vividly and unforgettably recalled because their touch is fleeting and feather-light.

MICHAEL RIGA

CRITIC'S COMMENTARY

Family Allowances and Social Security: Lady Rhys-Williams' Scheme. *Liberal Publication Department. 4d.* Lady Rhys-Williams' scheme which was endorsed by a committee headed by Sir Walter Layton, constitutes an overwhelming improvement on any previous attempt of this kind. Under the scheme Income Tax would be deducted at the standard rate for all incomes. At the same time every citizen will be entitled to a personal allowance which would do away with the necessity of tax-free minimum and other allowances which at present complicate the assessment of income. The adoption of some such scheme would lighten the burden of the work thrust upon the shoulders of employers by the "Pay As You Earn" system.

Lady Rhys-Williams' scheme constitutes, in several respects, an important improvement on the Beveridge Plan. One of the great failings of the latter is that under it the amount received by certain categories of workmen would only be slightly higher than the social assistance received when unemployed. In the case of agricultural workers with the minimum wage of £3 per week the difference would only be 7s. 9d. Under Lady Rhys-Williams' plan he would be 37s. a week better off when in work, assuming income tax at 7s. in the £ and an insurance contribution of 3s. The pamphlet containing the scheme is to be welcomed as a useful contribution to the discussion on the subject even though there appears to be but little hope for the adoption of the proposals it contains in the near future.

Investment and Finance

MAY 30TH, 1944

IF IT WERE not for the seriousness of the implications involved, the Stock Exchange would have been but mildly amused by the charge that it has been fostering a speculative boom that is "bizarre and distasteful" to public opinion. Certainly, since the Chancellor gave a little more substance to the previously nebulous "post-war credit" represented by the 20 per cent E.P.T. rebate, share values have improved and, more recently, shares of companies producing the steel plates that form the walls of the Government emergency house picked up, because a prospect was opened for the employment of some of their prospective surplus capacity. But share values are still by no means high, judged by pre-war standards.

E.P.T. at 100 per cent has seen to that. If shares do not rise, money will not be forthcoming to foster that enterprise which will be wanted on all sides after the war if the country is to realise the hopes of the planners of "full employment." Certainly, E.P.T. will have to go first before money will take the risks of enterprise in return for its chance of profit.

"Limits"

Some investors are prone to the giving of an order to make a Stock Exchange purchase at a definite price, known as a "limit". Others simply leave the order to be executed "at best". Opinions differ as to which procedure is the more satisfactory. The Stock Exchange man will argue that putting on a "limit" means that if any bad news comes along, the investor will have bought in unfavourable circumstances and would have done better to wait. In the case of an inactive stock it is seldom of use to put on a limit at the "middle price" or very close to it. If the stock cannot be bought, there is none in the market and the buyer must wait until some comes along.

I am moved to these remarks because a reader complains that he put in an order, through a bank, to buy British Investment Trust when the quotation was 245 and the order was executed some two months later at 262, and he reproaches himself for not putting on a "limit". In this case, however, it is clear that he had to wait until stock came along. Had he put on a "limit" he could not have bought at all. With a tightly held stock such as this, and other first-class investment trust company stocks, the only plan is to make up one's mind on the figure one is willing to pay and fix that as the "limit". Of course, if the investor deals directly with a broker he will generally receive reminders that the limit is still "on"—the normal practice was to issue such reminders every Account Day. Even at 262, however, I do not think this reader will have any cause for regrets.

"Break-Up Values"

After a long period of quiescence during which attention has been called time and time again to the remarkable position of many shipping companies who have lost a fair number of ships, the market suddenly boiled up and some of the advances were spectacular. The rise was based partly on the fact of the Lamport & Holt offer by the Vestey interests. But this only advertised what has long been evident, namely, that shipping company assets represent more than the market values of their shares. The excess of liquid assets, however, presents a curious paradox. It only shows up obtrusively where many ships have been lost and their value turned into cash. But if these companies continue in the shipping business they will presumably want all this cash and perhaps more, to replace the tonnage they have lost. The companies that have not lost ships, therefore, are better off on this score because they will have the ships—and at a much lower cost. Many of the smaller companies' shares may be the subject of purchase-offers like that of Lamport & Holt, so that it is not easy to advise a sale. Still, prices are tempting for those who think it better to get the cash and wait until the post-war shipping position shows whether it is worth putting the money into ships again, or, alternatively, reinvesting in companies which have not lost so many ships.

Bombed Sites

The announcement by City of London Real Property of a resumption of dividends on the Ordinary stock with a payment of 2 per cent, the first distribution since 1939-40, is encouraging news. Not many people expected a resumption of dividends until after the

war, partly through loss of revenue, partly through additional costs, such as the impost of War Damage Contribution, levied on all property with no allowance of income tax on it. Property owners therefore pay the equivalent of 12s. in the £. Before the war City of London Real Property paid a regular 4 per cent. For those who want a property investment, with a certain interest in bombed sites in the City, for post-war possibilities, these City of Londons do not look dear. The company is a very old one but in 1923 it revalued its properties and distributed a capital bonus so that its properties were probably not much undervalued in 1939. What post-war values will be is another matter altogether. The £1 Ordinary stock units are quoted at about 14s. yielding £2 per cent on the 2 per cent distribution but the current dividend is nothing to go by. That dividends have been resumed at all suggests that properties are already producing substantially higher incomes.

Inactive Share Prices

In these days of the paper shortage the buyer of a small company is often at a loss to know how its price has moved since the purchase. For the benefit of readers who may have acted on some recent recommendations I may mention that North British Rayon 10s. shares, mentioned at 10s. 7½d., are now quoted at 11s. 7½d. to 12s. Hoovers, recommended at 18s., are now 23s. 9d. bid, that is, the dealers will gladly buy them at this price but have no shares to sell. United Canners, which were 5s. 3d., are now 6s. 9d. to 7s. 3d. Though the advances may look modest they represent quite a good percentage gain on cost, apart from costs of purchase and sale, which absorb rather a big proportion in the case of low-priced shares. I do not think,

however, that any holders of these shares should be in any hurry to sell out. I recommended them because they were cheap as compared with better known shares. These latter have risen too, so that the recommended shares are still relatively cheap and give good returns—Hoover have raised the dividend to 20 per cent since I mentioned them—and their post-war prospects are every bit as good as they were, and nearer to realisation we may hope.

ALEXANDER WRIGHT

TIME TABLE

Saturday, June 3rd

"The Problem of an International Auxiliary Language." One-day Conference. Speakers include Dr F. Bødmer (Loom of Language), Prof. Lancelot Hogben (Interglossa), Dr H. Stafford Hatfield (Basic English), New Educ. Fellowship, at City Literary Institute, W.C.1.

Music of Polyphonic Era. Works by Palestrina, Tallis, Gibbons, Dumont, Byrd, etc., for voices and instruments. St. Marylebone Parish Church. 6.0 p.m.

Wednesday, June 7th

Captain Helmer Dahl and Professor Alf Sommerfelt: "Norway, The Country and the People." University of London Club, 21 Gower Street, W.C.1. 6 p.m.

Donald MacKinnon: "Karl Marx." St. Anne's Church House, 57a Dean Street, Soho, W.1. 6.30 p.m.

Christian Darnton: "Listening to Music". A.I.A., 84 Charlotte Street, W.1. 7.15 p.m.

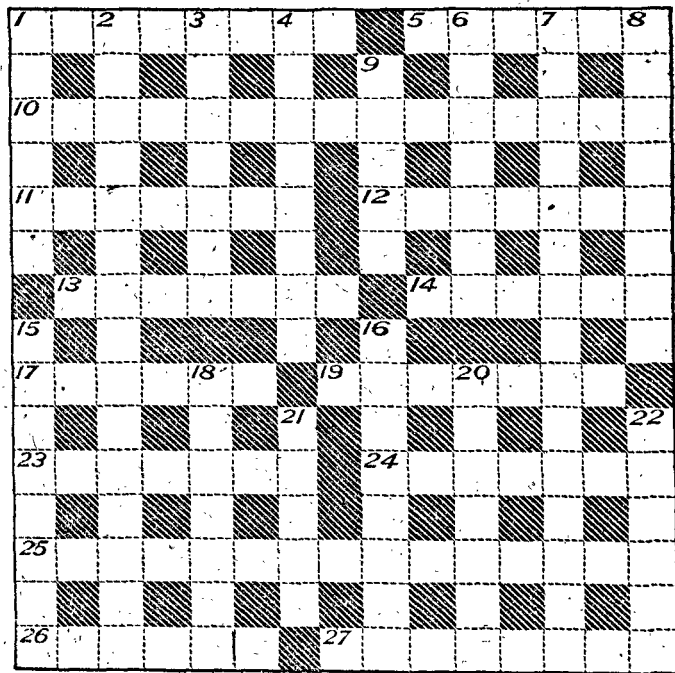
Friday, June 9th

Debate on "Was the League a Failure?" Speakers: Beverley Baxter, Vernon Bartlett, W. Arnold Forster, Major Petherick. Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1. 7.0 p.m.

Crossword No. 10

THIRTY-EIGHTH SERIES

By PERSEUS



The crossword puzzle in this issue is the tenth of a quarterly series ending on June 24th, 1944. Competitors who send in the largest number of correct and complete solutions for the full thirteen weeks will be eligible for a Book Prize (value £1. 1s.). If more than one competitor supplies 13 correct solutions the prizewinner's name will be drawn from a hat. Envelopes containing solutions only written on the form provided and clearly marked "Crossword" in the top left-hand corner should be addressed to the Editor, and must reach the office not later than FIRST post on the second Monday morning following the date of issue. No correspondence can be entered into.

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 A duck, said Dan Leno, makes a poor one. (8)
- 5 Says the virtuous mariner. (6)
- 10 A prominent Cape. (15)
- 11 No vacant hatch. (7)
- 12 Let nature be your ———. (Wordsworth) (7)
- 13 This makes you see sparks. (7)
- 14 Rake among the saints. (6)
- 17 Member of a denomination? (6)
- 19 A useful card against 15 down. (7)
- 23 Went a little too far. (7)
- 24 Refrain rather than chorus. (7)
- 25 Sol's locum tenens. (10, 5)
- 26 Broken lustre. (6)
- 27 Are they very small minded? (8)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Safe from rescue. (6)
- 2 Cracked. (3, 6, 6)
- 3 Two perches in a globe. (7)
- 4 It clears in performances. (8)
- 6 It's always this month. (7)
- 7 Song, Mabel, herein. (Anag.) (8, 7)
- 8 Was this waved in ancient Ephesus? (8)
- 9 2 down, partly in Morse. (5)
- 15 An ancestor of Kipling's "Bull that thought"? (8)
- 16 Feline air raid turn. (8)
- 18 Safety first. (7)
- 20 So a lamb may be a suspended prince in disguise. (7)
- 21 Trick half a trifle. (5)
- 22 Splices. (6)

Solution to Crossword No. 8

ACROSS—1, Trafalgar; 6, Comus; 9, Bridges; 10, Tom Cobb (Dickens); 11, Tace; 12, Falls (Hardy); 13, Fell; 16, Touched; 17, Newcome; 19, Latimer; 21, Heard in (Song of Solomon); 22, Adam; 24, Spent; 25, Ends; 29, Aimless; 30, Repined (Shakespeare); 31, Elder (Shakespeare); 32, Scatcherd (Trollope).
DOWN—1, Tibet (Udall); 2, Agincourt; 3, Argo; 4, Gaspard (Dickens); 5, Rattlin; 6, Come; 7, Moore (C. Brontë); 8, Subaltern (Kipling); 14, Chump; 15, Sweat; 16, Talkapace; 18, Ordinance; 20, Repos; 21, Honoria (Dryden); 23, Armod; 26, Sided; 27, Lear; 28, Epic.

Correct solutions to Crossword No. 8 have been received from the following:

Brownie; Doric; H. G. Hill; S. B. L.; Lilian; Poilu.

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