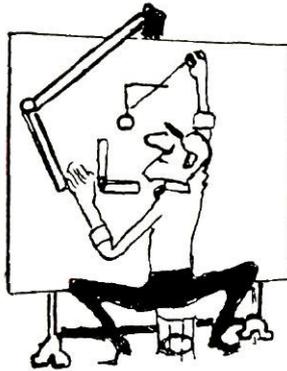


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First prize, £15; second prize, £5.

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Each entry must be submitted separately and each must contain:

1. A 2/- postal note (or equivalent)
2. Printed Form A (below) pinned or glued to the manuscript.
3. A sealed envelope with the entrant's pen name on the outside and printed Form B (below) enclosed.

Any number of entries may be submitted by any entrant. The name of the entrant must appear nowhere but in the sealed envelope on Form B. Manuscripts will be returned free of charge. Westerly will have publishing rights on all stories submitted until December 31, 1960. All stories must be original and unpublished and no longer than 3,000 words, although 2,000 words is a desirable maximum. Entries should be addressed to:

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c/- Arts Union
University of Western Australia

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If eligible for Section II, place a cross here.....

FORM B: Pen Name.....
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If eligible for Section II, please state:
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Subjects undertaken in 1959.....
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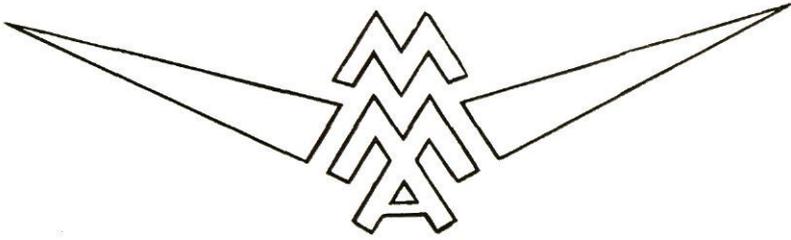
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w e s t e r l y

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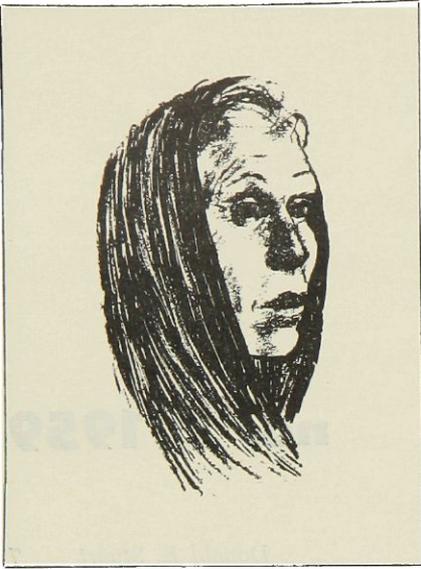
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might emerge intellectually superior? So far, however, no differences in racial intellectual capacity have been established that can not be explained in terms of environment.

If the racial levels of mental capacity *are* different, the evidence points to this difference being very slight and the probability is that superiority in one mental aspect would be counter-balanced by inferiority in another. So there is no basis for the claim of "white superiority". The intellectual drive from the white Western world in the last few centuries is capable of an environmental explanation and in any case who can honestly claim intellectual superiority for the race which is advancing quickest to its own nuclear disintegration, which has a social system steadily and insidiously undermining the freedom of the individual and which has produced the age of the frustration ulcer.

This issue of *Westerly* touches, unfortunately far too briefly, on some aspects of racial difference. Mr. Fels discusses race as a function of nationalism and language; Mr. Boydell puts one side of a regrettable situation in South Africa. (Apartheid must fail. Even if prompted by the highest motives, it will not work, because in this age of modern communication, separation will soon be impossible.)

What is most disturbing about racial prejudice is that Australia, regarded (by white Australians) as a bastion of freedom, has long been casting stones from a house of exceedingly fragile yet strangely clouded glass. The way white Australians treat the aborigines is disgraceful; the way they treat the New Guinea natives is worse; the White Australia Policy is a memorial to intolerance made all the worse because it masquerades as an "economic expedient".

Those contributors who write about the aborigines all take a sympathetic view—which is only to be expected, because as a race they deserve deep sympathy and respect, even though the white folk have made many of the aborigines and half-castes today undesirables under white-man law and custom.

What right has the white man to Australia? In the broadest sense, he has as much right as anyone else. No more. No less. For don't christian precepts give each man, regardless of race, equal inheri-

THE racial problem, the dominant theme in this issue of *Westerly*, is very complex, but there is unfortunate evasion of basic issues by those who do not really want to offer solutions. Many people express a wish for equality among all races but begin to find all sorts of "difficulties" when they discover that this equality can only be attained by their own unselfishness.

Although racial prejudice is often expressed in generalisations about physical differences—colour being the most common—the real reason lies deeper in the realms of the fears and hates of the human mind, about which little is known with certainty. Misunderstanding is one of the chief troubles. This causes much of the cultural, religious and political fear between races, fears which are sublimated into a prejudice against real or imagined but insignificant racial traits.

Only a limited number of physical differences have been shown to be effective in definitely separating races. In many others, there is considerable overlapping in the range of variation in particular characters. Physical superiority of any race over another in *all* conditions has not been proven. If, as seems likely, the behaviour of the brain can be described in physical terms, it is reasonable to suppose that there might be mental as well as physical differences between races. If this is so, who can tell which race

on the

racial

issue

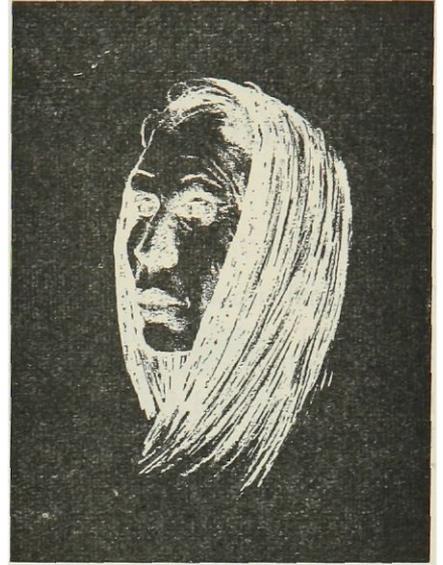
tance to the earth? What right, then, have the white brothers in Australia to keep anyone else out or discriminate against any indigenous race? Accepting the view taken by British law, had the white man the right to take the land of the aborigines without payment? In the few cases where the aborigines were paid, was the price equitable?

Aboriginal law, such as it was, recognised no individual property rights, but there were fixed tribal boundaries and it was often fatal to cross them. The aboriginal law and custom made no provision for subdivision and permanent occupation of tribal land by outsiders. Their custom also made no provision for white men thrusting harsh laws on them which they neither wanted nor understood.

So it seems that under no law, except that of the musket, did the white colonisers have any right to the land they took. And certainly there is no moral code or law which condones the present treatment of the coloured peoples by the Australian whites. The white man's doesn't—in intent at least. The white man would consider it laughable if he was suddenly told to obey the code of the black man (although in certain respects there would be a considerable improvement), but isn't it just as odd for the white man to expect others to follow his own code.

The fact is that the plight of the aboriginal and part-aboriginal is due entirely to the criminal actions of the white man. Therefore, it is up to the white man to do everything possible now to help the rehabilitation of these unfortunate people.

The first step is to grant full citizenship rights to all aborigines. Although this might mean inconvenience for some whites at first, it is the quickest method in the long run and the best from the aboriginal point of view. For while there is legal discrimination the aborigines will never *feel* equal and until they have equity they will never make a concerted attempt to improve their present lot.



Although the tribal nomadic urge must eventually disappear as black and white cultures become one, it will still be strong for a few generations. Tribal aborigines should be given citizenship rights without the obligation of accepting them as long as they choose to live in the tribal state. No white interference in tribal affairs should be tolerated. The tribes should be allowed to observe their own customs and follow their own way of life as long as they do not interfere with people outside the tribe. This rule should also apply in New Guinea.

The present so-called problems over the granting of rights to the aborigines—such as the liquor question—are merely symptoms of a racial inferiority complex, together with a natural human desire to touch the forbidden. Granting the right to drink decent liquor with dignity instead of methylated spirits on the run can hardly make the situation worse than it is now. The first step in removing the inferiority complex is to remove all tangible barriers to it. This must come before there is any hope of breaking the social barrier.

Judging from the published opinions of politicians, missionaries and others, there is a strong national desire to help the aborigines as quickly as possible along the path to equity with other human beings. Is it possible to doubt the sincerity of these people who talk? But never act.

there is a loveliness that burns

injured platman's nightmare

THE earth upon its axis turns,
Season on season all delights renew,
But still the sweet delight I find in you
Is old as rain and fresh as morning dew
Because there is a loveliness that burns,
That burns between us two so tenderly.

Ours is a strong, an earthly loveliness;
I see myself in you, yourself in me.
We love and hate ourselves most tenderly,
And each can only his own image see.
Lover to lover lost in fierce caress.
Such contradictions mock mortality.

And so our love is constant as the storm;
All grief lies lonely in your brief embrace.
God in his mercy never send me grace,
Against the hatred burning in your face.
I want no other arms to keep me warm,
Against the salt of my own tears to taste.

My body turns to you as the earth turns.
O from such bitter need you've taken me,
To dub me lover, friend and enemy,
That neither one can set the other free.
But still there is a loveliness that burns,
That burns between us two so tenderly.

Dorothy Hewett

DOROTHY HEWETT is a novelist and poet at present
studying arts at the University of Western Australia.

In
The crazed gold town
Where skeletons at midnight
Raced each other
Cackling
To the poppet heads,
With blackbirds perched
Upon those whistling shoulders,
The tenuous seams
Of unhallowed yellow treachery
Below,
Began to wind
From out those flaking walls.

As golden snakes
They poured,
Looping down the galleries
In flashing, hasty coils:
First,
The drillers and their mates
Were strangled where they sat,
The black tea in their mugs
Unspilled;
Then the boggers,
Swinging their enormous shovels,
Fell beneath those lightning strokes,
With the rest
Stampeding for the cage
On feet that met their old imprints
For all their frantic pace:

And the stumbling
To the edge of the shaft
And the
Falling,
Falling,
Falling.

Griffith Watkins

GRIFFITH WATKINS is a young West Australian poet and
a former student at the University of Western Australia.

GROWING UP



THE peedjangarra trees shaded the straggling patch of couch grass from the sun and the kid drowsed and dozed and woke and slept again. He had eaten well at midday—meat, and bread and tea—and he was full and content. The peedjangarras had their feet in the water of the pool and their soft leaves moved in the small breeze.

Karrnkah the crow came in slowly from the kadjibuts of the river and planed across the creek, settling in the dead blackheart tree high on the bank above the pool. The kid woke, sitting up slowly, and Karrnkah leaned forward ready to fly. “Kah, kah, karrrrn,” he said harshly, but stayed where he was with wings part-spread, beak open, suffering in the heat. The kid looked up at him, screwing his face against the glare of the sky, turning quickly away to look down the dry creek bed toward the river. Karrakah was harmless, he said.

At the pool’s edge, where the fallen flowers of the peedjangarras lay creamy white on the scum of water weed, Nyinyirri and Pilididi, the two sorts of pretty-bird, drank and gasped in a fluttering mob. The kid grinned sleepily and yawned. Finch, the



by **Donald R. Stuart**

white fellers called them, but Nyinyirri and Pilididi sounded much better. The pool was smaller now than it had been, but it would never go dry. All the birds knew this pool, and all of them came to it in summer when

DONALD R. STUART is a novelist, short-story writer and broadcaster who has spent about 25 years working in the north of Western Australia.

the other pools went stinking and dried up in the heat.

He pushed himself to his feet and brushed the pieces of grass from his arms and sides; the flutter and twitter of the finches a soft pleasant sound in his ears. Down to the river, he told himself, that's where he'd go. As he moved down the edge of the pool, the finches rose in a cloud of pink and crimson and grey, settling back as he went down through the stifling air of the creek bed towards the line of dark green sprawling white-trunked kadjibuts and the tall blackhearts on the bank of the river.

The smooth, rounded, dark rocks and the coarse sand of the creek bed were hot under his feet, but he smiled as he walked on, hitching his shorts every few paces. He had tough feet, he said to himself, really tough; feet that could carry him through the patches of spreading tjirri thorns and over hot sand and shingle and the roughest rockiest ground and never need rest.

Soon he came to where the creek bed swirled out drily in a long flat tongue of sand into the dry sand of the river bed and the shade of the big paperbarked kadjibuts was welcome. Down-river, the false pools of blue water lapped at the foot of Kandjar Hill where the river turned out of sight; hard blue and cruelly deceiving, moving gently in the heathaze, they were summer's mocking gift, that lent no coolness, no quenching of thirst, to man, bird or beast. Up-river the sand was split with tongues of granite, heaps of granite boulders higher than the tjalgobooda trees at their feet, islands of sand and shingle and ragged thickets of bahni, pindahl and pilnyeroo. Ahead, across the shimmering width of the river, the bank on the other side was grey with heat and distance. Far off beyond the bank, far away on the other side of the flat spinifex plain, the blue-black bulk of Oonmana Hill floated above the dancing horizon.

The kid's eyes were tired of the glare and he turned back to the bank where the roots of the kadjibuts twisted in the red earth and the rocks. He sought a place among the bared roots and found it—a place where the dust was soft and cool, deep in the shade day-long—and he looked carefully to see that Jirini the centipede was not there. Satisfied, he cambered to the top of the bank and pulled long trailing boughs, leafy and soft, from the lowest limbs of the big trees. He threw them tumbling down into the cool place and went down after them.

He laughed. Clever to put fresh cool leaves down there to lie on, clever to know how to keep cool while the land swooned under the sun and everything was still and silent.

HE SPREAD himself in the cool, dim hollow between the roots and the leaves under him were odorous with the kadjibut smell. He would lie here, awake, until the sun was far down the sky and he'd go back to the camp in the creek in the luminous warm-time before sunset, he told himself. But soon he slept. He slept while the sun moved down through the long reaches of the afternoon sky and he did not wake until a trickle of dust from the top lip of the hollow spilled softly on his chest. He woke silently, and sat up, rubbing his eyes.

Ah, it was good to sleep in the cool, while all other things that walked or flew or crawled were seeking shade and coolness too. He stood up and climbed from his resting place to the top of the bank, using the rough twisted tree roots for hand and footholds and at the top he saw the track of Manganya, who had spilled the dust down on him.

Manganya the echidna, silly slow-moving Manganya with the thin long snout and the tiny star-bright eyes; the fierce-seeming spines and the pawlike tracks with the hind-

foot ones pointing the wrong way. He nodded and grinned. This would be a great thing—to catch Manganya for the cooking fire at the camp.

He moved forward on the track and soon he saw Manganya and watched as he curled into a round clump with the stiff quills pointing out. Silly old Manganya, can't run, can't fly, you're close-up finish, he sighed and slipped out of his khaki shorts. Easy to roll the defenceless lump into the shorts and hold the legs and waist firmly so that there was no chance of escape. He felt big and strong and there was a thirst in his mouth and throat.

Time to go back to the camp in the creek below the station. He turned down from the river bank to the creek and went up towards the pool and the smell of the peedjangarra pretty-flowers was heavy on the air, mixed

with the smell of spinifex and dust and the wet smell of Manganya's fear and terror.

As he came in sight of the end of the pool, he heard the sound of a ridden horse behind him and he turned to see his father on the bay gelding with the blaze and the off hind white foot. He waited and, when his father came up, handed him the Manganya worldlessly, leaving it still in the shorts. His father's eyes were big, set deep in a hollow face and now they were bright with pride. "Manganya, hai? Yenahli, ngadjoomilly pootjahmoo Manganya mana!" Yes, indeed, his tjahbardoo could indeed say: "Just walking about, my son gets a Manganya."

He watched as his father rode on towards the camp and he followed him. The prize delivered and the shorts returned, his father rode away up the creek and up over the bank to the saddle shed and the kid went on to the camp. There would be no meat of Manganya for him this evening; such rich flesh and fat was not for hairless boys. Only grown men could have it. But there would be mutton and bread and tea and maybe a tinajam from the station kitchen.

His mother squatting at the cooking fire smiled at him and her words were proud words: "Ngalba, pootjahm, ngalba!" "Good, my son, good!" He looked at the tumble-down humpy of bags and flattened drums, and saw Butch the 'roo dog. Soon, a few more years now, soon he'd be big enough to be allowed to take Butch, or some other dog, after 'roos. Kangaroo was like beef; so much better than mutton. He squatted by the fire, looking at his mother. Soon he'd be big.

But he did not know, how could he know—blackfeller kid growing up catching his first Manganya—he didn't know that soon, not long now, just a few more years, he'd be big enough to work; riding, mustering, boundary riding for the boss. His mother knew, but she smiled at him through the thin smoke of the evening fire.

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apartheid in action

by Thomas Boydell

THIS is a milestone of progress in Bantu development in South Africa. To the whole world it is tangible evidence of the good intentions of the Government. We have accepted this not because of compulsion, but voluntarily, because this system accords full value to Bantu cultural institutions.

So spoke chief Botha Sigcau on behalf of 1,500,000 natives at Umtata on May 26, 1959, when presiding over the first meeting of the Transkei Territorial Authority, set up under the Bantu Authorities Act—the cornerstone of apartheid.

Attending this assembly were chiefs and chairman of 126 local, 26 district and nine regional councils—having jurisdiction over 15,000 square miles of territory.

The Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, Mr. D. C. de Wet Nel, who formally opened the council's session said: "This is the first big step to implement the policy of apartheid. It means self-government by the natives for the natives in their own areas according to ethnic and language grouping." In time, said the Minister, each of the proposed eight Bantu authorities would have their whole political, economic and social structure in their own hands. Everything would depend on themselves. It would be possible for every Bantu to rise to the highest rung in every sphere of life. It was also the Government's intention that they should learn to administer this judicial system and so become responsible for their own justice.

The Bantu are not a homogeneous people.

THOMAS BOYDELL is a former South African senator and Cabinet Minister.

Far from it. They are much divided by language, history and culture; so much so that even today faction fights involving loss of life occur almost weekly. Eight territorial authorities are therefore necessary. These are the foundation stones of self-government—segregation, apartheid.

The national policy of separate development is supported by a large majority of the people in South Africa, including about two-thirds of the natives. They say it is only through self-government that they can find full expression for their African nationalism.

Black nationalism is rapidly emerging all over the African continent. Its immediate objective is political power. Under a policy of integration, which about one-third of the natives favour—mostly the more educated town dwellers—the ultimate objective is to get control of the white body politic by virtue of their four-to-one numerical superiority. The policy of separate development could therefore be the safety valve against a black explosion in a white body politic.

South Africa has a population of 14,000,000, made up of the following: whites, 3,000,000 (Dutch Africaans—60 per cent., British, 40 per cent); black (Bantus), 9,000,000; coloureds (half-castes), 1,500,000 Asiatics, 500,000.

No other country has similar conditions. This is why South Africa has to work out its own solution. World opinion has the freedom to criticise, but it hasn't got the responsibility of government.

There are two schools of thought on South Africa's problem—those who favour integration and those who favour separation. Those who favour the integration of black and white through a multi-racial governing body politic based on universal suffrage and equality, include a section of the church, the Liberal Party, the Communists and the capitalists.

The church takes its stand on the sermon on the mount. Man was made in the image and likeness of God and in God's sight all men are equal. Discrimination therefore is anti-Christian and evil. The liberals take their stand on the United Nations Charter—equal rights for all, universal suffrage through a democratic government with an adult franchise. They envisage a smooth-working government in which all racial differences and varying social standards are ignored, with all sections striving with one aim in view and that is to serve the best interests of the country as a whole. Their slogan is: What is morally right can not be politically wrong.

The Communists run true to type—the fields and the factories belong to the workers. These are kept in bondage by the capitalists, all workers are wage slaves and whether black or white should unite and take control of the means of production, distribution and exchange—as in Russia, China and other Communist countries.

The capitalists also run true to type. They are against apartheid because they don't want to lose the cheap black labour. So every day, in every way, the big business Press condemns apartheid.

Now for the other side. Those who favour apartheid say that the policy of the church is one of spiritual perfection and can never be attained until the lion lies down with the lamb and swords are turned into ploughshares. The biggest church in South Africa

however, is the Dutch Reformed Church and it strongly favours apartheid. It sees nothing immoral or anti-Christian in arranging that the blacks shall have self-government and self-development in their own native territories. Incidentally, this church raises more than £3,000,000 a year for education, better services and other social amenities for the native population. This is more than all the English churches raise together.

Those who favour apartheid say that political integration of black and white has never succeeded anywhere. The upsurge of black nationalism on the African continent is so powerful that nothing can stop it. The attempt in Nyasaland has led to bloodshed and imprisonment of large numbers of the black partners. In Southern Rhodesia several hundred black partners are now behind bars for political offences. Under apartheid they claim that the Bantu people in South Africa will have full scope to express their African nationalism.

I began my Australian lecture tour on March 3 this year in Perth. Before returning to South Africa on June 27, I travelled 10,000 miles in four different States and addressed over 100 meetings—51 of these being at high schools and colleges.

I had only spoken at three schools in New South Wales when the Minister of Education made it a condition that I could only continue if I refrained from mentioning racial segregation. I could speak at length on the policy of integration, he said, but could not mention one word about segregation. As the conditions were so obviously ridiculous and unjust, I refused to accept them and so my school talks were banned.

The Minister acted under pressure from the church, students and Press. As his department had told him my talks were highly satisfactory, he supported me as far as he could. But when the leader of the opposi-

tion, Mr. Morton, entered the arena, the Minister gave way.

Not one of my many critics had heard my talks in schools. Those school authorities who did hear them, praised them. In reality I was merely a scapegoat—condemned—not for anything I had said, but by a political whirlwind that wanted to challenge the South African Government's policy of apartheid and alleged harshness in its administration.

The immediate reaction to the ban was

my being inundated with requests from adult organisations. In the short time at my disposal, I addressed 14 meetings, including two universities and one university college; three international affairs institutes, two royal commonwealth societies, Rotary clubs, chambers of commerce and others. I also made six broadcast talks and two television appearances.

There is still much useful work to be done in Australia to create better understanding. I propose to return as soon as I can, which will be 1962.

the time of day

IT WAS always morning once on a time
When the long-legged breezes laughed aloud
As they tugged at the skirts of indulgent trees.
Day, scrubbed clean, smiled out on a crowd
Of chuckling buds in rhyme
Shook with their cherub's desire to tease
The colour from wide-eyed skies
And merrily clown with their prize.

In the middle morning, a day could dream
As it read the ripening buds who blushed
To a wind, and the plumping flowers
Would quiver and giggle to seem
Put out by a face half-flushed,
Or, trembling, sigh for a later hour
And yearn, love-sore, for a moon's delight
And the tender fear of thorn-stemmed night.

Or in the time of the big-breasted sun
On its pillow of uncurdled heat,
The moist world could roll over again
And clasp the huge waters that run
Like sweat, and could cheat
The last sweetness from pain:
For the stark silence was vibrant still
To the scent of dead blooms on the hill.

Now, when the hills are all plucked clean
And sit rugged up in an easy chair,
Day croons to itself as it sews up time.
Dry-drugged is its laughter and lean
Is its frescoed bone in the air
As death gives words to this mime;
And a lonely petal wrinkles tight
In the grip of God and his welcome night.

John O'Brien

JOHN O'BRIEN is an arts student at the University of Western Australia.

integrity

by Wilfred Leyton

THE window was a narrow slit in thick stone, high up in the tower. Herrieson sat in his study and looked over the billiard-table lawns, across the highway, out to the horizon, tree-toothed and broken by occasional grey plumes from factory chimneys. The narrow rectangle was like a painting, empty of life—empty to him because he was empty. Mental struggle had come to an end; the soul-killing work was over for another year. He could rest and forget it all—but there was nothing to take its place.

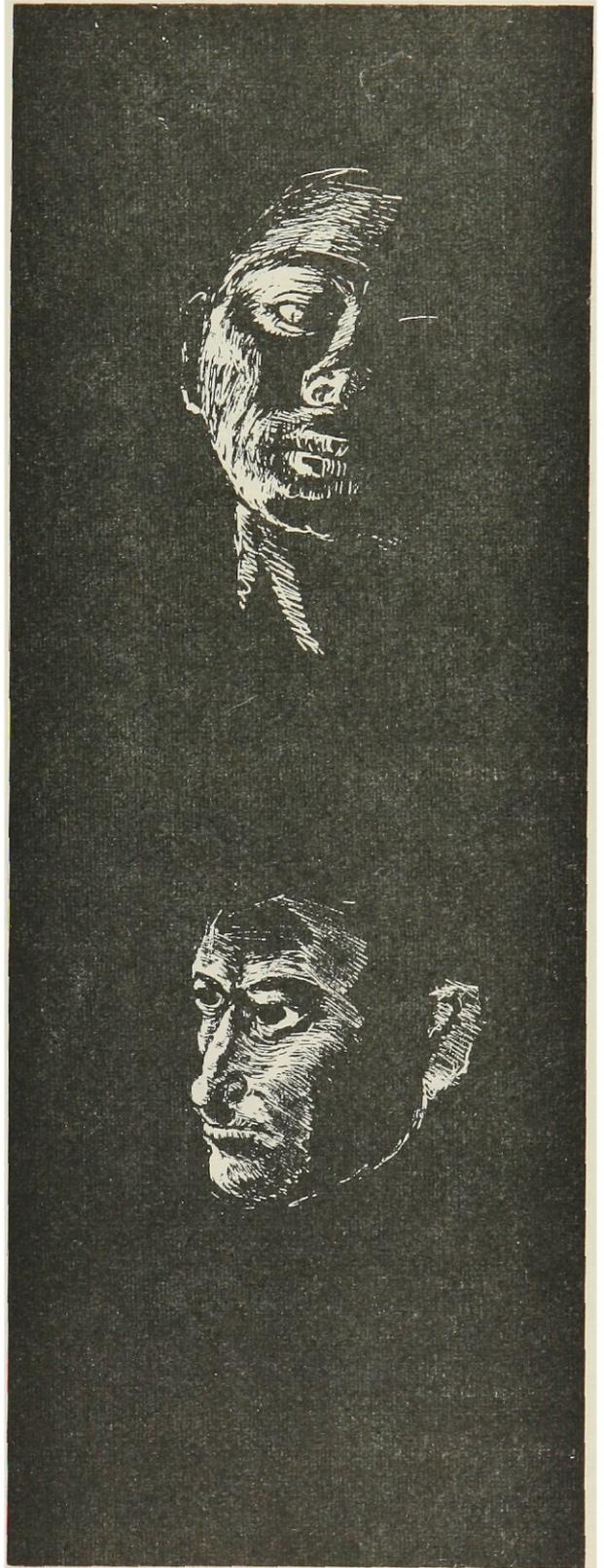
That morning the list of examination results had been printed in the papers. Idly he speculated on the afterbirths. He guessed at the varying reactions his own students might have.

Travers-Greene had gained his three distinctions; he would have been expecting them. He was always so sure of himself. By now he would have started his celebration. For the Travers-Greene type there was always the pub-crawl to give outlet to real or spurious enthusiasm. Later, he would drive, half-drunk at great speed in his Jaguar, but providence would bring him safely home. Providence always took care of the Travers-Greenes.

Johns would celebrate quietly at home with his mousy, middle-aged wife. For him, the degree was the crown of five years of uninspired hard work and the key to promotion. Next year there would be a new car and evenings by the fireside at home among the children. Next year there would be only the vaguest memories of what the university had been like.

What about Lim Kee? Herrieson frowned thoughtfully. There was not much pity in Herrieson. He had never felt excited over Colombo Plans,

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duty to northern neighbours, the awaking soul of Asia. The Lim Kees, Changs and Abduls of his world had slipped into it out of an alien culture, picked the flesh from a Western culture and digested little of it, then returned to their places flourishing, if they were lucky, an Australian degree. They gained little and they made work in the classes more mind-destroying than usual. It was better to discourage them from coming or, if possible, prevent them coming back.

Herrieson had failed Lim Kee. A grace mark might have pulled him over the line, but Herrieson had found no reason for it. Lim Kee would be sent a please explain note and would go back to Singapore or Kuala Lumpur or wherever it was and Perth would never see him again. The thought of that brought him nothing but a mild feeling of relief.

Unannounced by any knock, Professor Jackson suddenly entered the study. His first words were: "Lim Kee has disappeared."

Entering without knocking and a scorn for conversational gambits characterised all the professor's approaches to Herrieson. He disliked Herrieson; he found him arid and inhuman, unco-operative in his work and socially non-existent. That was fair

enough; Herrieson matched dislike with dislike. Secretly he knew himself to be a much better scholar than Jackson. Jackson had a woolly mind; his thoughts were always disorganised and defeated by irresponsible emotions.

Over Herrieson's eyes, the lids drooped like the lids of a hawk: "Disappeared?" he asked. "How do you mean?"

"Disappeared! That's unambiguous, isn't it? His landlady has phoned the registrar. He bought the morning paper, read it and shut himself in his room. He ignored any inquiries. Later he rushed out of the house and hasn't been seen since."

The hawk lids lifted momentarily and then fell again coldly: "Hardly our business, is it?"

Behind thick glasses, the professor's eyes glinted angrily. He had a genuine sympathy for the unfortunate Asian and was moved to champion him. Perhaps he did not realise it, but stronger than the sympathy was the resentment built out of cumulated pin-pricks that had suddenly found a chance to sting back. He sat down and leaned forward towards Herrieson:

"I think it is our business," he said with biting softness. "Lim Kee, you may know, is the son of a Chinese trader. Not a wealthy one. His course

"FAVOURITE LURES"

NO ONE CAN RESIST THE LURE OF COLD REFRESHING SWAN LAGER!

here was paid for with the savings of a life-time. He was to graduate, join the civil service and then support the family. But you failed him. You know what 'face' means? Do you suppose he'll find it easy to meet his father now?"

Herrieson shrugged. "Not easy, no. But it will have to be done. Ambition must be set a little lower, that's all. Eastern fatalism will accept it in the end. In any case, as I said before, it's still hardly our business." He was impatient to close the subject, but the professor was persistent. The sting of his words was beginning to show:

"My dear Herrieson," he said, silkily. "You are not very perceptive today—or else your misconceptions about Eastern fatalism are misleading you. It is not certain that the meeting will take place. There is another alternative, isn't there?"

Herrieson had been startled by the suggestion, but not greatly. For one thing, he had not yet accepted the possibility. For another, other lives were so distant from his own that suicide was merely an act—like digesting a meal, or sleeping with a woman.

"Please take me seriously," Jackson went on. "Apart from any—er—moral responsibility which you, of course, may not accept, there would be an inquiry with unpleasant publicity for the university, for us. It has happened before, you know. More than once."

Herrieson rose and went to the long window. He stood close to it, looking out, his bulk bringing shadow into the room. Slowly his hand combed through his hair, thick still but streaked with grey. But he said nothing. The professor saw no gain in pressing his advantage too far; he got up and went out.

Herrieson returned to the table and sat a long time without moving. The sun was low now and the shadow from the topmost branch of a tall poplar tree crept into the window and stole slowly along the wall. At first his thinking had been clouded by resentment at Jackson's obvious and sneering hostility, but he had got back his clear, cold analytical approach.

In the centre of it was a frank admission of the possibility—he began to think probability—that Lim Kee might, at that very moment, be dead. He set his own view and that of Jackson against each other. Reason against emotion—intellectual honesty, pride perhaps, that assessed objective values and standards and believed that a university existed to preserve these, opposed to a mere feeling for human life with its fears and joys and little tragedies that obstructed objective judgment.

Yet Herrieson was trying to be fair. He was prepared to admit that subconsciously his judgments also might have been influenced by feeling. He did not like Asians, he knew that, and this could be largely irrational. Would an Australian lad have been given the crucial grace mark? His fingers drummed on the table edge. No. He honestly did not think so.

But if there was emotion behind his own reason, was it possible that there could be reason behind Jackson's emotion? That was a new thought. Always the task of the great universities had been to preserve high standards of intellectual integrity; but times were changing. Was it possible that new challenges called for new objectives?

If the world demanded that these students, whose skins had different pigments, were to go back qualified to lands where dark seas of ignorance murmured for the smallest crumbs of knowledge, might it not fairly be demanded of the university that the standard should be relaxed? It was a new thought, an unwelcome thought. But his cold fairness had to entertain and examine it.

He sat there, still and silent, for an hour. The sun went, but he did not put on the light. It was a time when decision had to be made, but decision would not come. The sightless eyes of a young Chinese were driving him, driving him to accept the ideas of his professor and he retreated before them, disputing every inch.

Suddenly the phone rang at his side. He lifted the receiver: "Jackson here. Thought you'd like to know that Lim Kee's all right. He's just been in to see me. He was quite tied up with worry over his result, but I've put that right now. I took the liberty to read through his last paper and marked up two of your questions. Hope you don't mind."

Of course Herrieson did not mind. Someone had taken this intolerable load of responsibility from him. There was a wave of relief, of gratitude, that Lim Kee was alive, but it quickly passed. He was glad the lad was safe. He did not mind that somebody else had done what he had refused to do, but he saw that if ever faced with the same situation again, even if a life depended on it, he would deal with it exactly as he had this time.

It might be wrong—he was not worrying about that. It might only be the thought habit of a life-time triumphing over generous misgivings. Whatever it was, he would do it without remorse. Let others waver; the sanctity of standards would be safe in his hands. That was intellectual integrity—the only god he knew.

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a matter of nationalism

by Bob Fels

PERHAPS colour differences are the most obvious cause of racial antagonism and communal disturbance, but another important factor is that of language.

The entire question may, of course, be brought together under the heading of nationalism. The feeling for a national language has been used in some cases to help unite a people. As far back as 1928, we find the Indonesian independence movement being expressed in the first Indonesian youth conference oath:

“There is one nation—Indonesia; one language—Indonesian; and one motherland—Indonesia.”

The social force had to be united into a single power which could challenge colonialism. The unity of language in Indonesia is remarkable, as there are about 200 dialects. It was what might be called a practical move on the part of Indonesia that it adopted the Roman script. Similarly, the Philippines have adopted a national language—Tagalog—which is considered the most widely spoken of the republic's 80 dialects. These are two cases where effective unity of language has helped to provide national unity.

In colonial countries there is always the clash of the occupier's language with that of the inhabitants. All official communication is conducted in the language of the country in power. A few of the local people are trained in this language so they can fill the minor administrative posts. These people, being in constant contact with the ruling power, are in a position to seek favours and they become powerful and privileged. Their children get good education and a class is created—sometimes a class

which does not understand the ideas of the masses it is meant to represent. Newspapers first appear in a colony in the language of the coloniser, so their influence is restricted, but it is important to bear in mind that the audience is the class which influences decisions.

However, members of this select audience are also the people in a position to see what independence means to their country. In fact, the independence movements are led by the intellectuals who are trained in overseas universities, who see and understand the meaning of democracy and who want it for their own country.

Asian countries attaining independence have reacted in different ways towards the language of their former administrators. India and Malaya have retained English as the main official language and moves to change this have met opposition. Anti-Dutch feeling is so strong in Indonesia that English is replacing Dutch as the second language, as it is replacing French in Viet Nam. So English is now the *lingua franca* of South-East Asia.

Yet each country wants to establish its own national language. In most cases this requires the synthesis of several languages. In Pakistan, for instance, not only are west and east Pakistan separated by 1,100 miles, but the latter speak Bengali and the former Urdu. These languages, both spoken and written, are vastly different.

There are 14 major languages and about 200 dialects in India; the republic has been divided into States on the basis of language. The nation's Constitution names the national language as Hindi and provides for its gradual introduction over a 15-year period until it is spoken all over the country by 1965.

Hindi is a northern language and is spoken by

BOB FELS is a senior science student at the University of Western Australia, who has taken an active part in student affairs. He has made two student tours of South-East Asia.

no more than three-eighths of the people. The northerners want Hindi. The southerners, split into a separate camp, do not; they would prefer English. Northern languages are based on Sanskrit and are completely different from the five southern languages which are based on the early Dravidian.

To be even partially understood by south Indian crowds, leaders like Nehru are forced to speak English. *The Hindu*, which is the most influential south Indian newspaper, strongly supports the adoption of English as the national language.

One argument used is the adverse effect the dropping of English would have on education. There are no textbooks in Hindi at a university level except in subjects related directly to India, like Indian philosophy.

From an outsider's point of view, English would seem to be the best Indian national language. Several conferences attended by participants from many parts of South-East Asia have been conducted in English. The leading papers in India, Ceylon, Pakistan and Malaya, at least, are in English. All official Indian work is in English, the leaders speak it and it seems that more of the ordinary people speak it than an Indian national cares to admit. Nehru was asked about adopting English, but was most emphatic that it was out of the question. However, he did say that the introduction of Hindi would take far longer than originally planned.

Nehru felt that regional languages would stay and only interstate communication would be in Hindi. Eventually everyone would speak Hindi. He was not worried and said that he expected most of his people to be at least bi-lingual. The new education laws make English compulsory in schools from the age of nine and many feel that if English went by another name with no colonialist association it could easily become the national tongue.

The strongest argument in favour of the retention of national language is based on the rich cultural heritage maintained in them. One has only to visit any Asian country to see the way in which culture enriches the lives of the people. It comes into their music, dance, theatre, and especially their religion. India, for example, has a civilisation going back 5,000 years. The loss of this heritage would be disastrous.

IN CEYLON, although the two languages—20 per cent. speak Tamil and 80 per cent. Singhalese—are very different, it is very difficult to distinguish

the two races in any other way. Tamils are south Indians brought in by the British to work on plantations. Education at lower levels is conducted in three languages—sometimes all at the same school, with classes in three divisions—so from the earliest, the children tend to be segregated and the idea of racial differences is sown. Later, English becomes more important, as it is the language used at the University of Ceylon.

Language problems were strongly in evidence in Ceylon last year when I was there. The trouble first came into the open in 1956, when an election was fought basically on the issue of Tamils against Singhalese. Buddhist priests are said to have been active. The result of the election was the landslide defeat of Sir John Kotalawala's party and the rise of a coalition government under S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike with a socialist platform.

Near the end of 1957, the Opposition and the Government came to an agreement on language. Originally, Singhalese was to have been the official language, but the agreement made Tamil equal in status, although less important. Then suddenly in early 1958 the Government introduced the Reasonable Use of the Tamil Language Bill, which included a discretionary clause allowing the administration to do as it pleased with Tamil. At the same time, it issued new vehicle number plates which included a Singhalese letter. These moves were seen as a contravention of the earlier agreement.

This was too much. The Tamils, who were strong in the north of the island, started the famous "tarring campaign." It started with tar being painted over the Singhalese letter on vehicle number plates, but it soon spread to all signs and the Singhalese did the same, with politicians handing out the tar on both sides. Most signs in Ceylon, from post office notices to bus stops, were in three languages and ironically it was soon only the English version which could be read.

It was not long before mob violence broke out—and continued for three days. The governor-general, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, declared a state of emergency and imposed a strict curfew. Local newspapers and overseas Press dispatches were heavily censored, explaining why so little was heard in Australia. All the Opposition party leaders were placed under house arrest for three months. The trouble occurred in May; at the end of the year the state of emergency was still in force, although much relaxed.

More trouble occurred in February this year

when the Government tried to amend the Emergency Act so that small areas, instead of the entire country, could be declared under an emergency and troops moved in. Trade unions feared that this would be used against any attempts to get better working conditions. The Opposition was so much against the move that it would not accept the gag motion and some of its members were carried out by the police, brought into the House earlier in anticipation of trouble.

It is worth noting that students did not take part in the disturbances. This is unusual for Asia, where students take a very prominent part in politics. Possibly it indicates that the mobs were blindly led by good organisers. The annual elections were being held at the University at the time of the disturbances and the language question did not influence the result. The new president was a Tamil, the son of a prominent Opposition member, and the vice-president was a Singhalese.

An important question now in Ceylon concerns the policy on education. It is free to all at every level and is completely controlled by the Government. When tackled on this in August 1958, the Minister of Education said that the only solution was for each child to be taught in his mother tongue. The Minister would not enlarge on this, so we wondered just what he meant. Shortly after this, plans were announced for the introduction of some teaching in Singhalese in the arts faculty at the University.

Language problems have a solution. Canada, Switzerland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are examples of modern States where different languages exist in harmony because of complete political integration. Language questions have even helped integration, as in Indonesia. Chester Bowles, an American Ambassador to India, has this general solution to offer in *Ambassador's Report*: "Ultimately, India's intellectuals must learn the language of most of the people rather than vice versa. Perhaps, as has been done in Indonesia, the Roman script could be adopted by all Indian languages, even though their alphabets and sounds are more numerous than ours. This would not only make it easier for poor linguists like Americans, but would bring out the similarities between tongues and make learning easier."

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an eye for an eye

by Eleanor Pollard

IT IS towards sunset that you become acutely aware of their existence. It always sends a tingle down my spine to have to walk past them. They squat in the gutter outside the safe—grandmother to baby, all ages and shades of colour. I don't know why they pick that spot, except, perhaps, because it is opposite the high class hotel (there is a lower class one at the other end of the street) and the picture theatre.

About 20 in all gather, fish and chips in hands. They sit and stare vacantly. Not at anyone, yet at everyone. Possibly the older ones show the most interest in their surroundings. At least they sometimes utter an odd word, even if it is to only reprimand the very young children. But the young men and women seem so lethargic and listless. Yet so humble.

Has European ascendancy done this? I pity these coloured people having to fight a whole town for the right to live as people. Granted, they are accepted by the whites; but only on the understanding that they keep out of the way. And they do. A few make good, god alone knows how. They are given their rights and termed "white black men." The majority of the younger ones have had a fair education, but the more educated they become, the more sensitive they become to the colour bar.

Who can blame them for giving in when terms such as "boong" and "nigger" are continually thrown at them. A few play with

the town football team and gain a little prestige that way, but it is not living and they know it.

The town theatre shows films once a week and the natives are allowed to sit in the two back seats. This is when they can be seen en masse, as they all turn up—the elders with their fish and chips, the youngsters with their fistfuls of cheap sweets. They are very orderly, as if too frightened to speak for fear they might call down the wrath of the white man. They are complete nonentities. After the films there is often a show at the native camp. Those with their rights buy up the cheap liquor and in the sordid atmosphere of the forbidden the less privileged consume it. Anything to escape from reality. Fights naturally start and the whole thing is joked about for the rest of the week by the town puritans.

Would much trouble be avoided if natives were allowed the same drinking privileges as white men—if they could drink socially in the hotels instead of draining a bottle before a policeman does his rounds? We delegate these people to the same position as dogs, yet still expect them to abide by our standards. Where is the logic behind the white man's reasoning? But these people do not accept everything, as the following incident shows:

I was sitting in the top class hotel having a drink when I walked Milly. Milly is well

ELEANOR POLLARD is a young school teacher at Northampton State School, about 35 miles north of Geraldton.

known locally, being a fairly well educated half-caste. She keeps a clean house and has sent one of her daughters north nursing. No-one can fault her dress. She is always clean and tidy. Her presence in the hotel caused some interest and we all waited for the repercussion.

It caused the self-appointed society lady of the town (otherwise known as the pub keeper's old woman) great consternation.

"Out of here, you black bitch. You know which pub you drink at," she told Milly in tones far from genteel.

Milly walked towards the door, tears rolling down her face, then as she reached it she turned and came back. Then she squatted to the middle of the floor at the foot of the publican's wife and relieved herself, stood up with dignity and left. She had her answer.

J. Williams-Jones

THINK upon J. Williams-Jones the executive
Who has achieved all his ambition.
He, as an office boy, aimed to live
For wealth and social position.
The fruits of his arduous youth
Are laid out like comptometer keys;
With a six-figure bank balance as proof.
His superior brats got arts degrees
And forgot him. His wife
Sold herself for a life of ease
And hates him. His life
Is dedicated, all, to business
And only his obliging secretary worries,
Suffering his limp caress,
For she alone knows why he hurries
To sow riches and harvest more cash—
Knows J. Williams-Jones committed a crime;
Knows the slave fears the lash,
When he traded for money his time.

John O'Brien.

doctor in the house . . .

by Gavin Casey

THE appeal for a medico which had its origin in the theatre when patrons fainted or became ill, can be made successfully in an astonishing number of houses in the United States these days. In fact, you could say that only the humblest homes have not a doctor of something or other lurking about somewhere or other.

The trouble isn't in the quantity of doctors—it's in the quality, or rather the irregular and unpredictable quality. Some are world authorities on their subjects, but others know nothing about anything and sorting them out in a hurry is one of the knacks you develop in North America.

You can't very well blurt out: "Where did you get your degrees, doctor?" But if you could it would be a great help, for certain universities are known for turning out real scholars, whereas others are famous only for

GAVIN CASEY: see page 29.

ex-footballers, former basketball stars 9ft. high and the like. Lacking some sort of framed certificate on the wall indicating where your doctor of something or other got his academic titles, all you can do is ask crafty questions.

One doctor of philosophy I met couldn't even talk decent English in which to express his philosophy or even his momentary needs. He was easy of course. Most, however, have a certain veneer and some laughing and chaffing is necessary before you can penetrate this and decide whether or not your doctor went to a real school and learned anything.

If you are a foreigner who speaks English, wears a white collar and feels entitled to talk to audiences on any subject whatever, it is inconceivable to many Americans that you

should not have a doctorate tucked away somewhere. During my time in the United States, which was spent telling Americans about Australia, I many times became "Dr. Casey" on the prospectuses of summer schools and the like. It happened to all my colleagues too and it wasn't even embarrassing after the first time.

Similarly, it seemed to many Yanks that all diplomats belonging to any British race must have titles and my friend Jack Bridges, of Sydney, who was press attache at the Australian Embassy in Washington, was knighted many times—though never by the Queen. To the Americans, it no doubt seemed rather too familiar to address such aristocrats by first names, so most of the letters began "Dear Sir Bridges", which gave him a laugh anyway.

None of this detracts much from the sterling, honest and generous character of Americans as a race, but there are obvious dangers in the free-and-easy distribution of academic titles—which should mean something reasonably specific and should entitle their holders to a certain respect. When they become merely highly unreliable labels of literacy there must eventually be a reaction against them. There have already been signs of this in my own trade. In America, the possession of a "degree in journalism" was something to keep quiet about when applying for a job on a newspaper, unless the degree came from one of a very few universities.

The days of the "degree factory", which swopped diplomas for hard cash, are over or just about over and growing federal authority in education is gradually bringing uniformity in scholastic standards. But one of the curses of the system is the "endowed" university—the very place which is often the envy of Australian visitors because of its wonderful swimming pool and generally magnificent physical equipment. The catch is that those who pay the piper call the

tune and the dollars are frequently dubbed in by dopes.

For instance, some crank who uses the knuckles of his hands as well as his feet to get around—like one of the larger apes—late in life becomes aware that better deportment might have helped him accumulate a few extra million dollars. He then founds and endows a university which soon becomes famous for its degrees in deportment. No expense is spared in books—for graceful young ladies to carry around on their heads—and for the best and most upright professors of deportment money can buy.

Unfortunately the founder is less eager to part with his hard-earned cash for other subjects. He realises that they are unpleasant necessities, but why pamper all these egg-head professors, most of whom he reckons are Reds anyway, with fancy dough just to teach good, red-blooded American kids to get round-shouldered crouching over desks?

You can see the sort of university that attitude would produce and it is to the credit of the Americans that in spite of it they have built up so many very fine ones. But the bad ones are a warning to other nations that education should be a national, not a regional or sectional matter.

All through American education, local school boards produce results which, while sometimes outstanding, are hectically irregular and sometimes just horrible when the prejudiced and those who in their hearts hate education come to power.

One of the proudest boasts just after the war of my Australian News and Information Bureau in New York was that Uncle Sam's Federal Office of Education had okayed the use of G.I. Bill of Rights money for further education in ANY Australian university. At the same time there were many universities in the United States in which the Treasury would not permit the ex-serviceman to waste public money.

F e r n a n d o

by Max Brown

WINTER was on the attack and a bitter wind lashed Kalgoorlie that night last year when I paid my first visit to Mrs. Mary M. Bennett.

I had just driven from Laverton—an all-but-derelict mining town which 50 years before had been the centre of thriving tribes. There I had seen 80 semi-tribal aborigines, mostly out-of-work, camped in and around low humpies on the treeless creek flat—and had read in the newspaper of a new Government scheme to convert more of their hunting lands into sheep and cattle runs.

As I approached Mrs. Bennett's gate in the dark street, lifted the strand of wide that secured it and stepped into the neglected garden, I forgot my own cold shivers. In my mind's eye I saw those Laverton people, short of food and wood, sheltering against their slow fires, among their skinny dogs.

Mrs. Bennett is an old lady—I think she said 77. Though she feels her work coming to a close, she is still erect and fit enough to care for many bush natives who might otherwise have nowhere to go when passing through town. She never knew her mother. Although white, she was reared in central Queensland by an aboriginal nurse and subsequently married a sea captain with whom she had 13 years of happiness.

When he died, she set out to serve those who had shared her childhood—or as her old nurse and playmates of the Dalleburra tribe were dead or dispersed—their cousins on the western side of the continent.

Mrs. Bennett does not talk much about religion. She simply says: "I believe." But she taught aboriginal children in missions for about ten years and then settled in Kalgoorlie and opened her home to natives.

It was during her stay in London that Mrs. Bennett met Fernando. Fernando was an aboriginal from New South Wales who left Australia early in the century after the rejection of his demand to stand evidence at the trial of some white men

arrested for the murder of natives. He left Australia to blaze the truth about his people across the earth.

He was entirely self-taught and knew his bible backwards, particularly the book of judges, with its stories of Samson and the Israelites' struggle for freedom, which strongly appealed to his tribal mind.

How he left Australia probably no one knows now, but he was a qualified tradesman and may have left in a ship out of Sydney or Brisbane. Or he may have gone through Darwin to Singapore. Anyhow, he worked in many of the countries of what was then known as the Far East and later in Europe. Everywhere he went, he spoke up for his people.

It was in Milan, Italy, where he damaged his eyes oxy-welding, that he got the name Fernando—a plain Italian working man's name.

Mrs. Bennett met Fernando in 1928 and he was then an old man. A friend who knew she was a member of the Anti-Slavery Society directed her attention to a news item concerning an arrest in The Strand, outside Australia House, and she went along to Bow Street.

The police told her that Fernando did not want to meet the society and did not want to meet her. But she went into his cell, where he told her by his attitude and in so many many words: "If you are not working for the aborigines you are working against them."

He quoted Judges: **Why dwellest thou between the sheepfolds—that thou mayest hear the bleatings of the flocks?** He said: "I don't believe a word you say." Because she was white, he treated her like a criminal and the power of his conviction made her feel like one.

The only white people he loved were a handful of friends who had proved themselves—and principally one friend in an engineering shop in Italy, that land whose azure skies reminded him of home. For many years Fernando corresponded with this friend, and when the Italian died, he spent £5 of his hard-earned savings on a wreath.

Much of what Mrs. Bennett knows about Fer-

MAX BROWN is a novelist and short-story writer at present working as a journalist on the "West Australian", Perth.

nando, she learnt from an east coast barrister who she remembered by the name of Jones. Soon after World War I, Jones met Fernando in a displaced persons camp and later when Fernando got into one of his periodic tussles with the authorities, he had sent one of his colleagues to help.

Because of Fernando's refusal to take any money he did not earn by his own work, the colleague took a liking to him, and offered him a job as servant in his own home. This would have given Fernando comfort suitable to his old age and ample opportunity to continue the championship of his race. But he refused it.

Picture London in the grip of winter and the plump, black-coated, bowler-hatted empire-builders with their umbrellas and galoshes slopping along The Strand.

"Great scot—what's this?"

Against the solid stone of Australia House stands a grotesque figure—a black man, hatless and with a long grey beard; a mere handful of a man with the fine bones of the desert arab or Australian aborigine. He is old, and the cold is biting him and his clothes don't fit. Like a figure of fun, he stands there in a long greatcoat which reaches from his ears to his ankles.

And on the greatcoat, pinned from top to bottom completely covering it, are little white penny skeletons on strings that street vendors sell to children. The man's eyes are on fire for a cause and he shouts to the passers-by: "This is all Australia has left of my people."

And from the show case of the nation—which by rifle, poison, theft, starvation, disease, cant and thoughtlessness has reduced a happy, cultured people of more than 1,000,000 to 50,000 inside 150 years—issues a neatly-dressed official who runs down the steps and calls an English bobby.

They could not keep Fernando at Bow Street, of course. When the barrister colleague came, he found no charge had been laid, so they had to let him go.

Mrs. Bennett went to the Old Bailey on a later occasion when Fernando had been locked up again for the same thing. The prison authorities had him psycho-analysed, Australia House officials suggested that he was a danger to himself and the public.

The prison doctor returned this report: **If this man is given consideration he responds with gratitude. He holds strong views about the manner in which his people are treated—a sign, not of insanity, but of an unusually strong mind. There is no occasion to commit him to an asylum.**

Poor Fernando! Wonderful Fernando! Mrs. Bennett said that St. Paul himself could not have worked with more energy. But how often in loneliness and cold must he have dreamed of the sunny skies and red earth of his homeland.

He believed his people should have their own State in Australia, managed by themselves. He had been conditioned by those people, who, beyond all races on earth, knew and practised the brotherhood of man, who, cut off on their island continent, had kept alive into the 20th Century the Golden Age of man that to all other races was but a fabled memory. But white men had betrayed him so many times that this strong warmth and brotherhood lived side by side in him with the most frightful suspicions about white men.

Yet when Mr. Jones found a place for him and he eventually retired to an alms house, he at last came around to the view that there might be some good after all in a people which took at least that amount of care of its aged.

On the last occasion Mrs. Bennett tried to visit Fernando, she was dissuaded. Mr. Jones told her: "Leave him alone. You will only upset him. He has at last attained some peace of mind and some resignation."

So Mrs. Bennett never saw Fernando again. She recrossed the seas. The years passed. She taught native children, then saw them humiliated by a people made insensitive by centuries of class conflict and imperialism, whose official policy of assimilation represents the cannibalisation of an entire race and its culture.

And when she could no longer teach, she rented a house near the Kalgoorlie railway station and opened it to travelling natives, bought them groceries, treated their sores, fed their babies, made beds for them on the floor, gave them soup and meat, listened to their tales of humiliation and disaster—for there is not one family among them that has not suffered a mortal blow.

And still her fighting spirit is undimmed. By some queer chemistry of the human mind every new injury dealt her adopted people is transformed into courage.

It is now 78 years since Mrs. Bennett lost the mother she never knew and 31 years since she last saw Fernando, but burning bright in memory through these years have been his simple words uttered at their first meeting, which united them—and the whole human race:

I was taken from my tribe before I was old enough to remember my mother, but the thought of her is the guiding star of my life.

the university and

Australian literature

A UNIVERSITY is not primarily concerned with "being Australian". It is sometimes suggested that the hum of tertiary education going on in lecture rooms and tutors' studies is putting a crown on Australian-ness and that students, rooted in an Australian existence, are being helped to flower into typical Australian blossoms of imagination and intelligence-wattled sensibilities; eucalyptal wisdom.

The university, on the contrary, is in one sense a reserve—a separated enclosure. It is designed to struggle incessantly against perhaps the gravest defect of the human mind—its willingness to remain small, local and temporary. The business of a university is to work for mankind against the narrow interests of men and women, to be more universal and less temporary than any of us care to be when left to ourselves. A university serves its own community precisely because it does not wholly belong to it.

The attitude of the University, then, to Australian literature is that it is not *primarily* interested in it, except in so far as it is first-rate literature, any more than it is interested in Australian science except in so far as it is first-rate science. We are sometimes accused of not wanting to waste our time on Australian literature at the University. This is only an irritated and badly expressed way of saying that we must be concerned first with the

by **Alec King**

Condensed from a Commonwealth Literary Fund lecture delivered at the University of Western Australia.

universal and the life of the mind that is most strenuous, exacting and penetrating.

We are not indulging in an un-Australian activity by studying an English writer like Shakespeare instead of an Australian like Louis Esson. We study Shakespeare because he is one of the greatest dramatic imaginations in the world and because he happens to have written in our own language so that we can get closer to him than to a writer who uses a foreign tongue.

Sometimes we are accused of being superior about Australian literature. In the proper sense of that word, it is the function of a university student to be superior—to oversee a larger, wider, field of human life and knowledge than most people can. All professions show, however, the defects of their own proper virtues; we can be superior in the bad sense—'snooty', critical bullies, instead of enlighteners. The politician, likewise, needs to be eloquent and persuasive; his defect is to develop a mind full of bruit—a noisy, coarse speech born of too much public speaking and too little private thinking.

Finally, the idea sometimes put forward

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that we should *interest* people in our own literature and the life out of which it is locally born is profoundly funny. If people are not interested in their own life and literature, it is because they are not interested, or because the literature is not interesting—not because there are no university courses about it. Moreover, the attempt to make our literature interesting willy-nilly at a university level tends to be disastrous. It results often in uncritical over-praise, over-valuation—that pretence of discovering the “tremendously significant”—which makes our literature seem like a mediocre product dressed to kill by an advertising campaign. It deserves better treatment.

THERE is a place for the study of Australian literature in the university, though it is not a primary study. We are hoping before long to have a lecturer in Australian literature here, both to lecture

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and to guide post-graduate study. I would like to say something about the sort of study this should be as I see it.

If Australian literature is not good enough as a whole to be our primary study (which is a study of the life of the mind) it is, nevertheless, interesting as part of the imaginative history of our country. I find it sometimes strange that I know more about this history, in one sense, than anyone born in Australia, because I have had to live through the transplanted life of the Australian people in the 30 years since I came to this country.

Australia felt outside me, alien, sometimes hostile, occasionally frightening. It felt so to the earliest arrivals, only more so. My job was to remake, re-create Australia in my imagination—to make its brutal trees, its uncomfortable gravelly soil, its prickly flowers, its unpleasant sounding birds, its pummelling sunlight and eye-squeezing heat, its people and their ways move into my mind and live there. Once that happened, my imagination moved to them in pleasure. They were remade. I found them right and beautiful and no longer alien. If I was slower in this than I should have been, it was because I was not human enough, not imaginative enough.

This has been the problem of Australians and Australian writers. If we wish to be more Australian, to possess this country more imaginatively, intelligently, feelingly, we have to learn to be more human, to foster in ourselves that potentially marvellous endowment of human nature which is not ours but mankind's—though it is ours to make visible at the moment. Equally, if our writers have not made as much of this country and this life as we wish, it is because they have not been good enough poets or novelists or great enough human beings.

To study our literature as part of the imaginative history of our country is interesting because the analogy between the writing of

a poem (to take one branch of literature for the moment) and the process of "becoming Australian" is very close. Poetry, as an expression of some of the most permanent and vital processes of the mind, is very old and has changed little in its essential ways of handling language. The job of the poet is to set going these vital processes again and with such mastery that his own fresh sensations and experience may be gathered into them, find there a universal meaningfulness and achieve a human beauty and musical order.

In just the same way, any "new Australian" of the past or the present has had to gather into his humanity the freshness and strangeness of his Australian experience, there to find (if possible) its meaningfulness, beauty and order. As Dr. I. A. Richards has said: "We are all poems, though most of us are such bad poems."

Perhaps this will show in passing that the university, by trying to be wider in time and space and width of interest than the country in which it lives, is, of course, at the centre of all our efforts to be authentically Australian. For what we make of ourselves and our country depends upon our universal human gifts—gifts which we hope the university is helping to foster in all of us.

If the university is not primarily interested in Australian literature, unless it is good enough to be put beside the best that has been thought and said in the world (as some of it is, of course), it is interested in our literature as part of the imaginative history of our country. Such a history would necessarily bring in much that is not literature and to this extent would automatically become a special study—one (I hope) which would partly be fostered by the department of history as well as of literature.

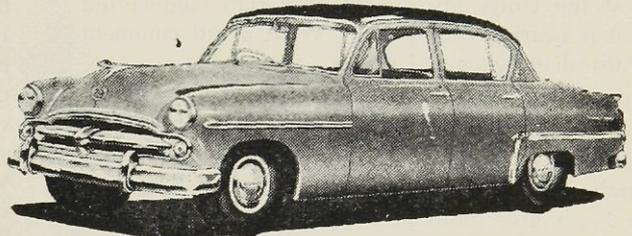
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notes

MOST people seem to think that the encouragement of writing and other "cultural" activities is a good thing—although few have any idea why and fewer still are prepared to do anything about it. This was the experience of the editor when trying to solicit support for the Westerly short-story competition (announced elsewhere in this issue). The arts can't give people more spare time, but they are high among the things that make spare time worth having. It is disturbing that more Australians don't seem to realise this.

Support for the competition, although widely mooted, eventually came from the students of the University. Two notable exceptions were the *Sunday Times* (five guineas) and the Fellowship of Australian Writers (three guineas). Not even the University Senate could afford a small donation toward the £100 target. But all over the country, like a forest of thistles, television antennae are springing up and at the University a new utilitarian engineering school is nearing completion. What a sad comment on Australian tastes and values.

True, there is a need for expanding technological and scientific faculties, but a balance in attitude must surely be maintained. Subsidy for all the arts in Australia is inadequate. Many European cities smaller than Perth give more to, say, their opera company than the whole of Australia does to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust for its multifarious activities.

AFTER a promising year for local stage dramatists in 1958, this year has been disappointing. Last year, Coralie Condon had a competent musical, *The Good Oil*, produced at the Playhouse, Perth's semi-professional repertory group, and Desmond Warwick Howard had a "crude farce", *The Yellow Swedish Label*, produced at the Capitol, Perth's largest theatre. This year nothing has been done, but the Graduate Dramatic Society—the only serious and alert group, amateur or professional, in Perth—will soon begin a series of rehearsed readings of plays written by local authors. The first will be a play by Mr. Howard.

HOWEVER, local radio dramatists got a good deal after Leslie Rees, a former West Australian and now the senior drama editor of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, arrived on a six-week visit. He was relieving playwright-producer Alexander Turner, who had gone to the Eastern States for a television course. Mr. Rees produced four plays by W.A. writers: an adaptation of Randolph Stow's novel *To The Islands*, Mary Durack's *The Dallying Lama*, Henry James's *The Siamese Twins of the North* and Mr. Turner's own *Delay at Dandarra*.

IN THE field of ballet, too, there was an encouraging sign with the growth of the self-styled West Australian Ballet Company, a group formed round Madame Kira Bousloff. The company expanded this year and put on a season of ballet at the Capitol with a cast boosted by outside talent. Two original ballets, *The Beach Inspector* and *The Mermaid and Broлга*, with music by local composer James Penberthy and choreography by Madame Bousloff, were danced, together with an ambitious attempt at *Giselle*.

VANCE PALMER, one of Australia's most distinguished men of letters, died in Melbourne on July 15, aged 73. He was novelist, short-story writer, poet, critic, playwright, lecturer, broadcaster and one of the few people in Australia—perhaps the only one—who managed to make a living entirely from writing while still maintaining artistic integrity. It is hard to say at this stage just how this gentle, friendly, scholarly man will be remembered by future generations. Possibly his critical work and his short-stories will be most enduring. When he died, a special issue of *Meanjin* devoted to the work of Vance Palmer and his wife, Nettie, was in the final stages of preparation. This valuable issue has now been published and is available in Western Australia from John Barnes, of the University English department.

WEST AUSTRALIAN writers who have had books accepted for publication recently are: Jamieson Brown (*Violent Anchorage*) accepted by Jarrolds, London; Alexandra Hasluck (*Unwilling Emigrants*) by the Oxford University Press; Helen Wilson (*Where the Wind's Feet Shine*) by Robert Hale, London.

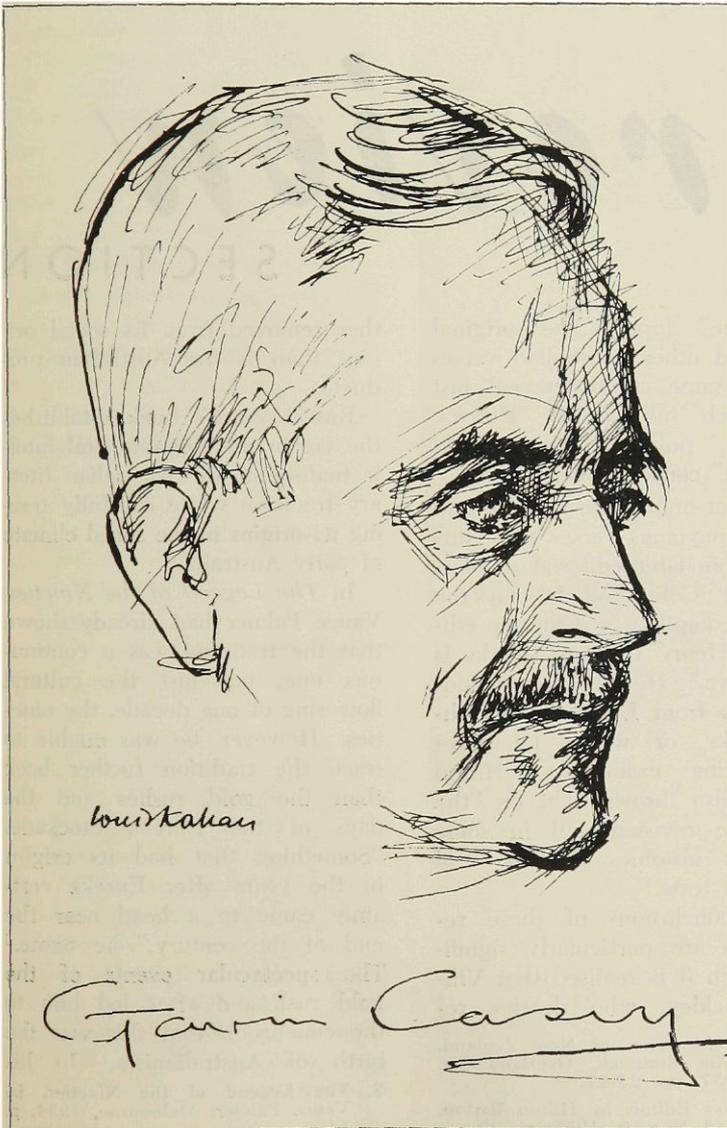
DR. C. EDGAR FORD, a West Australian member of the fellowship, has won the Queensland Centenary composers' competition for a patriotic song with a piano accompaniment with *Australia Rise to Glory*.

WHEN Thomas Boydell, whose article on apartheid appears in this issue, returned to South Africa on June 29 after his Australian tour, he blamed "priests, politicians and the press" for the banning of his lectures to school children. American Associated Press reported him as saying: "Ordinary Australians gave me a wonderful welcome. Those who criticised me did not even attend my lectures." Irresponsible pressure groups could be expected to support the lecture ban, but it was disturbing to see the Students' Representative Council of the University of Sydney joining the public outcry. The liberal days of "disagreeing with what you say, but defending to the death your right to say it" seem to have passed, if indeed they were ever with us.

THE Sydney Journalists' Club annual competition this year will be for a television play of at least an hour's duration. The prize will be £500. Entries close on November 30 and entry forms can be obtained from the manager of the club, 36 Chalmers Street, Sydney.

* * *

ORIGINAL stories, poems and articles on any theme are welcomed by the editor, especially those from young writers. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless a stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. Brief biographical information with each contribution would be appreciated.



Gavin Casey

FOR many months Gavin Casey has been in Hollywood Hospital, Perth, suffering from tuberculosis. Gavin is widely acknowledged as one of Australia's leading short-story writers and is well known as a humourist and journalist. After he entered hospital and it was known that he would be there for some time, the word soon passed round Australia on the writer's 'grape-vine'. Then an extraordinary thing happened. From his mates in other States where he had worked and earned their respect, offers of help started to come in. Not just one or two, but literally a flood. Here in Western Australia, local writers and journalists were also doing their bit. The outcome was an art exhibition and auction sale at the Perth Press Club on July 27. Artists from all over Australia donated pictures. There were works by Missingham, Joliffe, Such, Endean, Rigby, Juniper and many others. The line drawing on this page was one of several Louis Kahans on sale. The money raised—several hundred pounds—will help Gavin during his long convalescence. When he submitted the article which appears in this issue, he wrote: "I'm doing pretty well these days and should be back in general circulation by next year."

social influences on literature

THE AUSTRALIAN LEGEND (Russel Ward)

RUSSEL WARD has written an excellent book. In view of the present confusion of thought on Australian literary and social history this is an extremely important work.

In Australian historical studies and literary criticism it has become fashionable to belittle the so-called Australian tradition.

Thus Professor Manning Clark, in reviewing Keesing and Stewart's *Australian Bush Ballads* says "Eureka, chartism, political utopias and mateship" are "severely left out." This, he says, "is a faithful mirror of the age of improvers."¹

Likewise, Vincent Buckley, lecturing on Australian literature at Melbourne University last year, scorned the suggestion that research was a necessary prelude to the study of Australian literature.² He said, in effect, that the sole criterion in evaluating Australian literature should be aesthetic—we should accept or reject purely on grounds of taste. He showed alarm at the increasing extent of research into the origins of Australian literature.

Yet the results of this research show that the historical conclusions of those like Buckley himself need serious revision.

The work of men like Vance Palmer, Colin Roderick, Arthur Phillips, Muir Holburn and Russel Ward show among other things that the texts upon which academic judgment is passed are often incomplete or corrupt. Editors, publishers and compilers of anthologies have been responsible for distortion.

1. *Meanjin* No. 4, 1955, p. 572.

2. *Towards an Australian Literature*, by Vincent Buckley, *Meanjin* No. 1, 1959, pp. 59-68.

Let us look at so recent a collection as *Australian Bush Ballads*. The editors say they were concerned only with collecting ballads in the strict sense—that is, narrative poems. They excluded philosophical and descriptive verse, just those forms most suited to the expression of ideas. This literary criterion must preclude the drawing of any general historical conclusions from the book. Even among the works included some have been trimmed of moralising prologue and epilogue, presumably on the grounds

search, omits Henry Lawson completely from his olympian canon of Australian literature.

The real but often concealed objections to Australian literature usually arise from its concern with ideas not immediately associated with literary style. The Australian tradition belongs essentially to our economic, social and political history—and this has been reflected in the country's literature. To the literary formalist this is anathema. His standards are based upon an older and more effete tradition, much fur-

review

SECTION

of "pure" form. The original texts and other non-ballad verses by the same authors reveal just how such subjects as "Eureka, chartism, political utopias and mateship" come to be left out.

But not only these obscure and often anonymous verses have suffered from later editorial scholarship. Dr. Colin Roderick says the task of compiling a definitive edition of Henry Lawson's works is imperative.³ He deplures various omissions from Lawson's published works, of which he gives illuminating examples. Hilton Barton also throws light on "the wholesale revision and in some instances absolute butchery" of Lawson's texts.⁴

The conclusions of these researchers are particularly significant when it is realised that Vincent Buckley, who decries re-

ther removed from its social origins than is the Australian product.

Russel Ward's book establishes the vigour and fundamental intellectualism of the Australian literary tradition while carefully tracing its origins in the social climate of early Australia.

In *The Legend of the Nineties*, Vance Palmer had already shown that the tradition was a continuous one, not just the cultural flowering of one decade, the nineties. However, he was unable to trace the tradition further back than the gold rushes and the days of the Eureka Stockade. "Something that had its origins in the years after Eureka certainly came to a head near the end of the century," he wrote.⁵ The spectacular events of the gold rush and after led him to the conclusion that this was the birth of Australianism. In his

5. *The Legend of the Nineties*, by Vance Palmer, Melbourne, 1954, p. 14.

view the descendants of the convicts and earlier settlers took for granted the dominance of the squatter. This had to be overcome, according to him, by the new arrivals with no sense of the tradition of the pastoral age.

Russel Ward shows conclusively that the tradition developed continuously from the arrival of the first fleet in 1788. His main argument is that the "typical Aussie" does exist, deriving his character and outlook from the working class of the outback, originating with the first convicts. The tradition grew among the lower orders who had to regard Australia as home. It was the prisoners' country—and the upper classes looked upon themselves—and were looked on by the convicts—as exiles from "home". Unlike the convicts, they did not put down roots; they were too busy trying to remain English.

With this convict basis—seasoned by the Irish element and strengthened by emigrant workmen—it is not surprising that the tradition includes a hatred for authority—gaolers, the police or the boss. Under the stimulus of the environment this developed into a code of hospitality and egalitarian sharing—the traditional mateship.

Unlike his American counterpart, Ward says, "the typical Australian frontiersman in the last century was a wage-worker who did not, usually, expect to become anything else."⁶ Outback life taught him the value of social co-operation, or mateship, while by contrast the frontier life of independent small settlers led to the American concept of rugged individualism.

Thus the rough and ready bush worker became the bearer of the Australian tradition, even when outnumbered by his urban cousins. In the earlier period new-

comers were readily assimilated into customs already established, adopting the attitudes of the experienced and acclimatised Old Hands. Similarly in both the earlier and the later periods town dwellers followed to a great extent the customs and outlook of the bush.

With a few early exceptions (notably *Settlers and Convicts* by 'an Emigrant Mechanic,' 1847; reprinted by Melbourne University Press, 1958) the accumulated tradition was recorded in formal literature for the first time in the nineties. Earlier it had gained expression through folk-stories, songs and spoken verses, many of which Ward quotes, using them as evidence for his argument. But he does not stop at purely literary material; memoirs, letters, journals, newspapers and many other official and unofficial sources are convincingly woven into the complex pattern of the Australian legend.

It now remains for this type of research and analysis to be extended into the twentieth century and our own time.

R. W. Smith

Oxford University Press, Melbourne. 46/-.

a good deed well done

**WEST COAST STORIES (edited by
H. Drake-Brockman)**

THIS book is a good deed, planned by the Fellowship of Australian Writers in Perth, and generously carried out by Henrietta Drake-Brockman and the publishing firm of Angus and Robertson. The purpose of the anthology is to raise funds for the Tom Collins House, which the fellowship has preserved as a memorial to Joseph Furphy, who wrote under the name Tom Collins.

It is a platitude to say that a writer's books are his true memorial, but it is something of which Australians—ever willing to erect plaques in honour of writers whose books they do not know—need to be reminded. Furphy's *Such is Life* is a book that lives as part of the literary tradition within which every Australian author works. Tom Collins House is of value less as a memorial to recall Furphy's spirit—a page of *Such is Life* is better than a houseful of mementos—than as a symbolic meeting place for local writers, a reminder of what earlier writers have achieved.

This anthology of the work of local writers, for whom Tom Collins House has become a focus of literary activities, is therefore a very appropriate way of supporting its upkeep. Happily, it is a pleasant and competent selection, in which the editor has insisted upon a professional standard of writing. A remarkably consistent level is maintained, but D. J. Hislop's tiresomely sentimental story hardly deserves the permanence of this collection. The contents have been restricted to prose writing—an inevitable decision, since Randolph Stow is the only mature poet today who belongs to Western Australia.

Most of the contributions are short stories or extracts from novels and as the title indicates the emphasis is upon stories. The best-known W.A. short story writers are represented—Katharine Prichard, Lyndall Hadow, Henrietta Drake-Brockman, H. H. Wilson, J. K. Ewers and Gavin Casey—but the most artistic and original of local short story writers, Peter Cowan, is not included.

The first piece is an essay, *On Pioneering*, by Walter Murdoch, which, although amusing, doesn't do him justice. Probably it was chosen for its subject-matter in

preference to one of his richer, more fully flavoured essays. The second piece is Miss Prichard's *The Cooboo*, a story which was first published more than 30 years ago. It is still fresh and vivid, but I wish that a less anthologized story had been used. Miss Prichard is the only writer to be represented by two pieces, but the second choice, *The Curse*, strikes me as being meretricious.

Every reviewer is tempted to substitute his own selection for that of the editor, knowing nothing of the difficulties which beset the maker of the anthology, but from my limited knowledge of the literary resources, I would say that the anthology gives a fair picture of the condition of prose writing in W.A. For any other State, the idea of a local anthology would be hard to justify; but because of its isolation and numerical smallness, W.A. has a stronger awareness of locality and local identity than other States. The book is merci-

fully free from the "earnest patriotism" about which Professor Murdoch protests in his essay.

What impressions of local writers are likely to be formed on a reading of *West Coast Stories*? The subject-matter is varied, but most of the material is drawn from bush life and genuinely reflects the patterns of living in the State. In the themes of the stories there is a quality I find hard to define — something characteristic of Australian writing, but more pronounced here than in the eastern States. I don't know how to describe it except as a lack of contemporary relevance, a remoteness from the consciousness of modern men and women. Except for Max Brown's tasteless but clever attempt at an atomic-age tall story, there is no reference to the problems of the post-war world. Several stories touch on Perth life, but none of the pieces could be said to render the sensibility and attitudes of the modern city-dweller. The nearest the

reader comes is in Gavin Casey's story of a Kalgoorlie miner. There are, of course, details of the war and the contemporary scene, but the moral and political strains of the modern world are never presented.

The writing is old-fashioned in technique and, more significantly, in feeling. Most of the ground is well trodden. The anthology leaves a reader with stronger impressions of places than people. Except in Stow's *The Fox* (from *A Haunted Land*) and Casey's *Short Shift Saturday*, the characterization is trivial and slight. There is an absence of melodramatic posturing, but there is also an absence of intensely felt experience. Even sophisticated pieces of story telling, like those of Ewers, Mrs. Drake-Brockman and Mrs. Wilson, leave one feeling that the raw material has not been thoroughly mined; the flow of life which each of these stories suggests seems to hold a fuller significance than the plot ex-

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presses. They are neatly contrived and have the virtues of the well-told-yarn, but one feels that they could be more than that.

Stow's writing belongs to a different order of creation. He grasps his subject imaginatively, seeing life with eyes unclouded by conventional images and habits of seeing. His work is exciting because it breaks through the crust of observed reality, recreating the landscapes of the soul with the same sensitivity and delicacy that he brings to the natural setting. The Fox presents a small moment in a girl's life, but it holds a vision of life, it has a depth and intensity of imagination and consequently a truth which the rest of the writing does not possess.

Not that the writing in the remaining stories is unconvincing. There is much to indicate conscientious observation, notebook in hand. Details of setting and behaviour are put down accurately and precisely and are often used effectively to point a scene, but this dutiful realism frequently ends in dull reportage. Perhaps the worst example of this is Bert Vickers' *The Pommies' Club* (from *First Place to the Stranger*), in which a flat, lifeless recital of "facts" fails to establish the reality of the potentially amusing story he tells. In the larger context of the novel this method may be more successful. On the other hand, Donald Stuart's simply reported anecdote in *Dingo Pups* has the flavour of first hand experience.

Interestingly enough, a piece of straight reporting—an account by Ida Mann of a visit to a mission station in the North-West—is one of the most vivid contributions. Unfettered by the need to produce a formal neatness of events, she arranges her memories to form a colourful and coherent impression. Dorothy Lucie Sanders contri-

butes a fragment of reminiscence which has some evocative detail, but the effect is diffused and the style forced.

There is surprisingly little variation of style. Among the fiction writers, there are a few distinctive voices—Miss Prichard, Stow, Miss Hadow and Casey—but the rest are commonplace and show little feeling for the subtleties of language.

Whatever the limitations of the writers in *West Coast Stories*, however, they display a love of honest workmanship, an integrity and assurance which indicates that local writing is alive and well.

John Barnes

Angus and Robertson, Sydney.
20/-.

mixed bag from Miss Prichard

N'GOOLA AND OTHER STORIES
(Katharine Susannah Prichard)

KATHARINE Susannah Prichard's reputation in Australian literature is such that any publication from her is likely to excite interest and in the present instance that interest has been further stimulated by the number of years since her last work has appeared in print.

In some ways this book justifies expectations, in certain others it lets down the reader sadly. Like most volumes of short stories it is something of a mixed bag, for while it contains some excellent stories the total effect of these is spoilt by a deplorable few. And the latter are so artificial and ineffectual that it is difficult to believe that the author of *Coonardoo* has produced such ill-contrived tales.

Part of the answer to this inconsistency can be found in Miss Prichard's dedication of the book

to the "leaders and members of the great Australian trade unions who defend the rights of working people and the struggle of all peoples for peace and a good life. "It is the second part of this dedication that is important. Miss Prichard's great feeling for the poor and those who weep can inspire her to write sensitive and penetrating pieces about the aborigines and at the same time provides the motivation for blatant propaganda writing which eulogises the particular political group she decides has the greatest welfare of the under-privileged at heart.

But while excuses might be brought forward for her beliefs, the manner or means by which she extolls them can not be pardoned. The three openly Communist stories in this collection are completely lacking in subtlety and the content of the stories and the intention of the author are obvious from almost the first paragraphs. There is no attempt to develop the characters except as Communists and anti-Communists; the sentiments and viewpoints expressed are no more original than the familiar communistic thought on which they are based. Work of this sort must fail as literature and the inclusion of such items in this book is hardly justified.

Yet when Miss Prichard writes of the aborigines, she writes convincingly and acutely. Her attitude to them goes further than mere sympathy; it appears to be the result of an empathetic projection of herself into their outlook and way of life. She realises that the aborigines do not belong even with those who are struggling for peace and a good life. For them, there is no point in struggling. Their peace was shattered by the arrival of the first colonists, their good life slowly smothered by the industry that grew up from the foundations laid

by John MacArthur. There is no attraction for them in the future when the things they want belong irrevocably to the past, so they suffer passively in the present.

This point is brought out vividly in the story Naninja and Janey when two old aboriginal women go out into the sandhills to die of thirst and hunger rather than remain as a burden on their starving tribe. There is much in the story that is general to the whole history of the aborigines since white settlement—the acceptance of the whites by the blacks, the appropriation of the old native water holes by the newcomers until independence and survival for the aborigines becomes a thing of the past. Ultimately there is only one thing to be derived from the dry ironstone country and the menacing dog-toothed ranges and Naninja and Janey prefer to look for it rather than wait for it to come.

In *The Elopement*, the past is a much more active force wielding

power through the tribal laws and the elders against Esmerelda, the young full-blood who rebels against the social order. Her strength, arising from youth, cannot withstand the concerted opposition of the old people and though the story starts in the fullness of the bush in spring, it ends in the barren backyards of the township.

The other wholly aboriginal story is *N'goola*, where the settings of scrub camp alternating with town settlement are representative of antagonistic forces. Again, the past reaches out to claim its rights from the half-caste woman, *N'goola*, and to prevent her aspiring to a civilised future. A glossary to the story informs us that the word *n'goola* means wild boronia and one is immediately struck by the apt naming of the half-caste girl from the brown and yellow flower. But when we find that the native settlement is built close to the town's sewer works, the wider implications of the use

of the fragrant boronia as an image becomes apparent. Primarily it suggests the hopeless clash of wild nature against overwhelming civilisation, but by leading us to think of the boronia under conditions of sustaining bush or destroying town, it also compels consideration of what might have been in contrast to what inevitably will be.

In something the same way, the struggle between civilisation and the natural order is presented in *Yoirimba*, a simple uncomplicated story in which good taste and the natural beauty of the bush are opposed by commercial values and the man-made ugliness of raw suburban gardens. Although the plot is slight it is handled with great skill and the sympathetic light in which both ideals are presented makes the final effect particularly moving.

Perhaps this is also partly the result of Miss Prichard's love of flowers—a love that is apparent in many of her stories. The op-

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portunity to use flowers as symbols of love or ideals is rarely missed and in such a competent story as *The Prayer Meeting*, the hakea serves as an adjunct to the main theme and intensifies it. Sometimes this flower image is relinquished in favour of the equally colourful one of birds, as in the not wholly successful story. *The Galah*, or the somewhat brutal *White Turkey*.

In the latter, the turkey has been used as a unifying thread linking the violent action of the first part of the story with the stillness of the final scene and its moment of awareness for the central character. The juxtaposition of quietly moving spirit with troublous flesh is most striking and the story gets its validity from this balance and change of mood.

The same pattern of storm followed by calm, movement by reflection, occurs in *Josephina Anna Maria*. The turbulence of the main section of the story culminates in the composure of *Mary Ryan's* reflections at the end and while she turns over in her mind the events of life and death, in the background—like a pool of human tears—the salt lake shines in the sun.

When she presents stories of this texture, without sentimentality, Miss Prichard shows a capability and a feeling for her subject that is not discernible in her lighter pieces. For instance, stories like *Buccaneers* or *His Dog* do not seem to carry the same conviction or have the same power to satisfy as even such a small but sober story as *The Rabbit Trapper's Wife*. This at least has sincerity and the unhurried tones of its bush setting. It has something to say. The others seem to conclude tritely or just drift away into nothingness without having done very much at all.

Miss Prichard shows in this book that when she herself is

profoundly moved and accepts a theme of sorrow as something personal, she can endow her writing with a quality of fine expression that communicates her experience to the reader and makes him a sharer in it.

Peter Abotomey
Australasian Book Society, Melbourne. 17/6.

State election in retrospect

STATE ELECTION—THE FALL OF THE HAWKE GOVERNMENT (F. K. Crowley)

DR. F. K. CROWLEY, lecturer in Australian history at the University of Western Australia, obviously had a limited objective in view when he wrote his study of the 1959 West Australian election.

He has satisfied that objective—documentation and analysis of the issues and results of the election—and in fact has made a worthwhile contribution to a wider field of Australian political science studies.

The basic election issue was the effort of Perth commercial groups to get a bigger slice of the cake in a political unit where the chief entrepreneur and disburser of worthwhile cheques is the Government.

The population of Western Australia is not much greater than that of the Sydney City Council area. With such a small number of voters and a mundane issue at the focus, the election may not appear to be worth a second glance to students of politics outside, to resurrect a phrase, the Golden West.

It would be a mistake to take this attitude.

Federation and uniform taxation have changed the character of the West Australian border. National issues must intrude, par-

ticularly in a claimant State; but economic and geographic conditioning of temperament have seen the border remain a symbol of psychological detachment.

The State has developed differently from its neighbours. A significant difference has been the large-scale State intervention in various sectors of the local economy—a factor which has grown with a number of Labor Governments.

With the post-war boom and inflation in the background, the past few years have seen economic difficulties in Western Australia. There is less tolerance of competition. While there had previously been room for both private and public activity and previous conservative governments had not greatly interfered with State trading, when the fight for sparser resources developed, conflict was inevitable.

The election was a contest between forces representing something inaccurately termed socialism (but more closely approaching a form of State capitalism) and private enterprise. With the federal Labor Party in the wilderness and other State Labor governments on happier terms with private enterprise, political scientists may lack information on current Australian attitudes to "socialism." This is one of the good reasons why they should read Dr. Crowley's book, which documents a nicely isolated case study in this perennial battle.

The book is enthusiastic, well written and entertaining. Dr. Crowley has a keen sense of the underlying humour in West Australian politics and society. This shows regularly in his study: ". . . and the distribution of Democratic Labour Party preferences continued throughout the rest of Holy Week."

The point is that there are very funny aspects of what might ap-

pear to be ordinary events. This fun is the complement of the Establishment's deep gravity in a State where there is much conscious and unconscious resistance to efforts to build an upper-class and secure reverence for God and property.

The book has four principal bases: the effect of D.L.P. intervention; the activities of the West Australian Trade Bureau—a sort of wing of the Liberal Party which energetically sought redress for Labor's crimes against private interests; the absence of an issue; the inconclusiveness of the result.

An excellent chapter, Political Arithmetic, analysing election figures from many angles seems to support Dr. Crowley's conclusion that the D.L.P. accomplished its primary objective of depriving the A.L.P. of its Legislative Assembly majority.

But it qualifies his earlier submission that State issues predominated in the contest, for the propaganda of the D.L.P. was very largely tied to federal issues and attacks on the "Evatt-Chamberlain" alliance.

D.L.P. preferences were the decisive factor in ousting Labor members from three seats; the present government is supposedly a give-and-take coalition between 17 Liberal and 8 Country Party members with little identity of policy and who, on Dr. Crowley's observation, have spent the past six years giving and taking in a

different sense; and the Government really has no majority at all (when Liberal candidates tried to take the seats from the independents in the last election, they were quick to dissociate these independents from the Liberal Party). It is thus extremely difficult to know what the people voted for. If, as Dr. Crowley says, the Labor Government was defeated, who really won?

Dr. Crowley finds that the thundering right staked its claims heavily on anti-socialism, but found time to occupy itself with side issues such as the racing crisis; the name of a new bridge across the Swan River; and a weak attempt (which reacted against it) to disfranchise a number of voters. He also looks at the irritation at Labor policy shown by the *West Australian* and other crusading bodies.

Labor parliamentarians would no doubt hold that Dr. Crowley has under-estimated the influence of the *West Australian* by failing to tell the full story of its vehement campaign launched against the last Hawke Labor Government almost as soon as it was elected. The bias of the newspaper is extreme and Dr. Crowley might profitably have examined its editorial and news policies outside the immediate scope of the election campaign. The paper's supposedly independent political commentator who wrote a daily human interest piece on election angles did such a good

job that he was appointed public relations officer to the new Premier immediately after the election!

The book has some findings of considerable value. Dr. Crowley shows that the party-to-party movement of votes only has to be small to alter radically the distribution of seats. Based on swinging seats, the Hawke Government's winning margin in 1956 was 1,767 votes, giving it an eight-seat majority. The Brand-Watts Government only had to switch that figure in its favour and better it by 656 votes to put it into office, although its hold is tenuous.

Dr. Crowley says that it is futile to run candidates against the stream in safe seats. He advises parties to apply most of their resources to seats where there is a floating vote powerful enough to overrule traditional loyalty to one party.

This sort of work is necessarily episodic and needs follow-ups to establish or contradict conclusions. Dr. Crowley got a lot of fun out of this effort—he even kept smiling when the Cockburn Cement Company extracted the corrigendum at the foot of page 77 and a press retraction out of him for calling it an unfair trader (according to the Supreme Court legally incorrect). Knowing Dr. Crowley, a study of the next State election will appear. It also will be well worth reading.

Bill Hartley

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