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OLD GRANTITE CLUB

A Prologue to and an Explanation of this Edition

THE face of greatness often seems to be
Completely hidden in obscurity.
“Ridiculous!” the more observant cry
And some still more perceptive exclaim, “Why?”
Greatness kept hid they know cannot be right
But few object and fewer still will fight.
The truth is this and I shall tell you straight
About this tome’s sad former hidden state.

* * * * *

An unstrung lyre, a choked organ pipe,
An apple fallen ere it could grow ripe,
All images of the dread unfulfilled
Of dormant purpose prematurely killed
Are conjured up by our *Review*’s long sleep,
Which was not death nor slumber half so deep.
This glowing ember far too long has been
Like Leonardo’s work too seldom seen
And has remained a most elusive flame
Not flowering forth but staying much the same—
But wait—I hear it—can my ears play true?
The wind is blowing, the flame is growing too
Or can it be that my sharp eyes do lie,
For learning’s flame eclipses all the sky,
Burning but briefly, soon to be curtailed.
But cynics do not think that ember’s failed!
It still will glow and patiently await
Another time; extinction’s not its fate;
For yet again, its benefits to all
Most happily on this our school will fall
And clothe its inmates with celestial bliss
Who once were unenlightened and remiss,
And the *Review* again will show to us
Westminster’s heart, and sole *Vesuvius*.

House News

R. D. E. Spry is Head of House and *Princeps Oppidanorum*.

The Monitors are A. Pain, F. Strickland-Constable, P. J. Bottomley, H. H. Clark, A. J. Stranger-Jones.

M. J. Stancliffe is Head of Chiswicks.

The Chiswickites are D. B. Wadham-Smith, A. C. E. Jarvis, P. W. Semple, R. C. Beard, J. J. T. Jeal, A. T. Cooke, T. M. Hunt.

P. G. Hollings is Head of Hall.

The Hall Monitors are P. K. H. Maguire, P. D. Craze, C. N. Foster, T. B. Williamson.

* * * * *

The following colours have been awarded:—

Athletics .. *Seniors* to C. R. McNeil, N. Harling, A. Abdela, R. C. Beard, R. D. E. Spry.

Colts to N. Harling, C. R. McNeil, A. Abdela.

Juniors to R. J. Shearly-Sanders, P. G. Hollings, N. Johnson, T. F. Hart.

Football .. *Half Pinks* to F. Strickland-Constable, C. R. McNeil, P. J. Bottomley.

Thirds to A. J. Dugdale.

Seniors to P. J. Bottomley.

Juniors to R. J. Green, A. Abdela.

Fencing .. *Juniors* to J. P. Hardman, J. D. R. Rose.

Shooting .. *Juniors* to C. R. McNeil.

Fives .. *Seniors* to R. C. Beard.

* * * * *

The House appears to have made a take-over bid for the C.C.F. We now have three Warrant Officers and four Sergeants, not to mention the Corporals.

We now rely on one piano-player for the evening hymns, and when he has taken the evening off we have been forced to go it alone . . . and very successfully too.

The size of the House is a valuable ally in our bid to capture the Halahan Cup this term; indeed the great number of watermen, many of whom are in the first three eights, would seem to show that we have a very reasonable chance.

Television in the House does not seem very far away now.

We were excited by the Orpington result; we have been heartened by the trenchant oratory of Jo Grimond. Still more people read the *Guardian*, though quite rightly the *Times* commands the greatest respect. Perhaps the most significant development in the House's leftward trend is the introduction of the *Daily Herald*.

Grant's relied entirely on the Juniors in Athletics this year, and between them they won nine finals. McNeil (Captain of the Colts), Harling, and Abdela were outstanding, and although we only came second in the Challenge Cup there is much hope for the future.

We have great news from two Old Grantites. Lord Rea has been made a Privy Councillor and J. T. Wyldes has won the Chancellor's Essay Prize at Oxford.

No Halt on the Damascus Road

MAN ever acquires more knowledge, science is continually reaching new frontiers, but in the inspiration of the arts there is no recognizable progress. Painting, sculpture, music, and literature flourish over a few generations or centuries, then decay. Golden ages are followed by silver; Homer, after almost three thousand years, is still without an equal; a world so deeply impressed by the great tragedians of Athens waited more than two thousand years for Shakespeare. Can this be called progress?

"If Art was progressive," said Blake in his *Annotations to Reynolds*, "we should have had Michelangelos and Raphaels to succeed each other. But it is not so. Genius dies with its possessor and comes not again till another is born with it." There is a vital truth in what Blake said, but he went perhaps too far, for Aeschylus certainly did not hinder the progress of Greek drama, and in the same way English drama developed significantly in the Shakespearean age. What marked tendency then is evident in the decline of a great literary age?

It is widely held that literature declines when men "declare their independence of heaven." In the great ages of literature heaven and earth were directly

related to each other: the picture of heaven may have been distorted or out of focus, but still its existence was never doubted. From Homer to Milton the greatest epics were written by poets who not only accepted a religious background but even made religious issues an intrinsic part of their work.

The influence of religion upon epic poetry needs no proof: just as in the *Odyssey* Poseidon and Zeus interfere with the travels of Odysseus so in *Paradise Lost* Milton attempts to "justify the ways of God to man." Homer relates the story of the Thracian musician Thamyris who challenged the Muses to a contest of skill. But the daughters of Zeus won and "in their anger maimed him." The story illustrates the eternal dependence of inspired literature upon an immortal world, which is not to say that atheistic writing cannot be inspired, but that there is a positive relationship between the literary imagination and the religious imagination.

Architecture, sculpture, painting and music all have taken inspiration from religion, and here again no proof is necessary: the great European cathedrals, Michelangelo's *David* or *Moses*, Raphael's *Crucifixion*, and Handel's *Messiah*, all testify to this. Even men without strong religious convictions have drawn inspiration from this source: Leonardo da Vinci who, had he lived in the nineteenth century, might well have been a Darwinian agnostic, was capable of his *Last Supper*.

It might be argued that the great literary ages were superstitious and lacked the rational thought of our own, that the great literary works merely reflected the theology of the time. Between the wars there was much talk of literature's breaking new ground in the sense of creating new forms, but such an idea is based upon the illusion that literature is scientifically progressive. There will never be another Homer until there is another great poet who believes in the Olympian Gods.

Religion is no more likely to produce great literature than politics, indeed one has only to open a hymn-book to read some of the most archaic verse in the language. Wordsworth declared that poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," and certainly most hymns have an awful sincerity and are often overflowing with powerful feelings, yet as literature their value is practically nil. Hymns may be good for their own purpose, but they rarely give what has been called the "double delight" of great poetry—the delight both in the subject of the poem and in the way in which it is expressed. Perhaps the most reasonable explanation of the mediocrity of so many hymns is that the poet wrote to express the emotions of men in general and not necessarily his own personal feelings, or it may be held that in any case those who wrote hymns had not the genius of a Wordsworth or a Shelley. There have of course been poets who have written both religious and secular verse, but even then in most cases the secular far exceeds the religious. Donne is a good example in this connection. His *Divine Poems* do not show that he had any remarkable spiritual gifts, whereas his third satire is a piece of secular verse that shows extreme sensitivity to the influence of religion.

“ Let no pious ear be offended,” wrote Dr. Johnson, “ if I advance, in opposition to many authorities, that poetical devotion cannot often please . . . Contemplative piety cannot be poetical.” A contemporary critic, T. S. Eliot, suggests that religious poetry gives a limited kind of pleasure.

The attention drawn to the hymn shows that, though its purpose is primarily argumentative and not imaginative, poetry with strict religious limitations is not directly opposed to the greater works of secular verse. As for epic poetry the facts certainly suggest that great epics cannot be written in a world without the Gods, but the importance of the religious background is not so clear in drama, lyric poetry and the novel. It is held that modern literature acquired its virtues largely as a result of the break with the absolute authority of religion. If this theory is accepted then literature becomes heretical; poet opposes priest. Walter Pater maintained that one of the strongest characteristics of even mediaeval literature was a “ spirit of rebellion and revolt against the moral and religious ideas of the time.” He goes on to quote as evidence the passage in *Aucassin and Nicolette* where Aucassin scornfully rejects all threats of hell to force him to surrender Nicolette. Another passage often quoted in this connection is the famous dialogue in mediaeval Irish literature between St. Patrick and Oisín, the long-dead pagan hero, who returns to Ireland to find Christianity triumphant. The ensuing dispute would at first appear simply to be an allegory hiding the contentions of poet and priest. But this is not so. The conflict is between two different kinds of religion: Patrick has his Heaven and Oisín has his Country of the Young.

With the development of the drama, and later the growth of the novel, literature did indeed confine itself more specifically to human issues. Shakespeare's plays dealt exclusively with human situations, tragic or comic, and yet they show at every turn a strong religious imagination at work. *Hamlet* is perhaps the supreme example; the human duels are fought against a religious background. In later works the same influences are there: Goethe's *Faust* and Ibsen's *Brand* both display the influence of the supernatural, if only as a dramatic convention. The tragedy, no matter how unorthodox it may be, is given a new dimension when it is played against the religious background.

The religious element in literature is of course more striking in poetry than in the novel. “ It utters somewhat above a mortal mouth,” declared Ben Jonson of poetry. The greatest poets have written true to Ben Jonson's words. “ Poetry,” wrote Shelley, “ defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions.” It is rare for a modern novelist to defeat this curse: he is too often content to observe rather than to imagine. It may be that the modern novelist is so thoroughly a realist that he believes a religious background to be outmoded, finished with. He may be right, but he would do well to take note of the past and fashion some new Olympus. As Helen Waddell has pointed out, even the humanists of the Middle Ages took inspiration from divine sources; “ there was no halt, dazzled with the excess of light, on the Damascus road.”

Humanity and the Actor

ONE of the most disquieting aspects of the contemporary scene is the subordination of the individual to the various bureaucratic institutions. If the theatre ever became State controlled one would see the logical result of this trend in our theatres, spreading everywhere in all forms of entertainment where human personality is irreplaceable. This, to me, an actor whose experience reaches back to the theatre of Henry Ainley and Gerald du Maurier, and to the films of George Arliss and Emil Jannings, is a danger signal that we ignore at our grave peril.

I am not lamenting the past. To move forward is to change. I can rejoice in an improved naturalism, a more flexible language and morality, an ingenuity of construction, a more reasonable status for the actor. The road from Sardou to Brecht, from Henry Arthur Jones to Harold Pinter, may not be a direct one and has been ambushed but it has not led us to an impasse. No older theatre-goer sighing for the panache and flamboyance of the Irving era can wisely ignore the effortless naturalism of the moderns.

But the peril is not diminished by its symptoms. A photograph is not a painting; the minutiae of idiom and inflexion and the intimacy of portrayal we now take for granted are no true substitute for the tempest of language and gesture which lifted the theatre from the plains to the heights, which gave Coquelin in "Cyrano de Bergerac" a time for greatness as surely as the painting of the Sistine Chapel gave Michelangelo his miraculous vision. These were men, great men, showing man to himself greatly. And that, even now, means great entertainment.

It is the privilege of the actor to show greatness in terms of humanity and he should jealously guard that privilege. He is at his best when the theme is man; at his least inspired when man is subordinated to a political theory or the new-minted philosophy of the avant-garde in the shadow of Sartre and Camus and Giraudoux. Shakespeare had his Burbage and the genius of each fed on the humanity in each. If Burbage was more concerned with what Hamlet felt, Shakespeare could tell him what he meant. But what was vital to both was that Hamlet should live in the actor's humanity.

Inevitably the actor's gift of humanity has always transmuted the playwright's words in its own terms. When George Robey, a great actor in the greatest era of Music Hall history, was asked to play Falstaff, he at first demurred on the grounds that his experience as a variety artist was inadequate to the demands of Shakespeare. His robust and warm humanity fired the spirit of the ribald old rogue and Robey's inspired ad lib of "a jugged hare" for "a lugged bear" would have delighted Shakespeare—and Burbage.

Of course, few of these giants had heard of a microphone. They were seen and heard in direct audience contact. Their difference from their audience was one of distance. They projected and in so doing enlarged. The modern actor—

more particularly in films and television—is seen and heard in terms of identification. “Is he like me? Or my brother, or my friend? Do I feel like that?” There is recognition here but not inspiration. But in all of us there is a greatness.

“What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god!”

It is this aspect of the actor—the sublimation and intensification of the humanity in all of us—that is endangered by too great a conformity to the machine and too subservient a spirit to an over-organised society.

The “Heauton Timorumenos”

TERENCE’S “Adelphi,” Westminster’s last production, was much appreciated even by those who usually slight Latin comedy as trivial and “hack,” because of its peculiarly sensitive and sincere treatment of the old familiar theme. It is hoped, this year, that the Heauton will further strengthen this conviction that Latin comedy can, in its own limited, but very individual way, give us some insight into human nature.

Because the plot of the Heauton is, as one expects, only a variation on the “young-son-in-love, unwitting-father” theme, the comedy is inevitably restricted. Yet the genius of the play lies in the perfectly controlled portrayal of characters and their reactions to situations, not in any conventional facade of comic characterization or bitter-sweet pathos. The characters seem to be in themselves trivial, uninspired, unimaginative, yet so true to life and so blatantly the victims of their own self-centredness.

Menedemus the regretful father, who in remorse for the harshness he has inflicted on his son, torments himself with painful drudgeries, is the honest sympathetic man who in the actual plot is primarily the butt for Terence’s gradual evolution of the important character, Chremes. The whole plot is in fact built round the gradual dénouement of the wise-and-understanding-father exterior of the real Chremes. When at the start of the play it is Menedemus who is in trouble, Chremes has no difficulty in assuming the attitude of a wise preacher, and the bitter irony of his pompous words about Menedemus’ relations with his son, Clinia:

Verum nec tu illum satis noveras
nec te ille: hoc ubi fit, ibi non vere vivitur
tu illum numquam ostendisti quanti penderes
nec tibi illest credere ausus quae est aequom patri:

only really assume their true significance when we learn that Chremes' own son has involved himself irresponsibly with to say the least, a rather expensive prostitute, Bacchis. The irony is intensified still further by the way Chremes in his confident short sightedness is totally fooled into paying out a large sum of money to his son for the upkeep of the prostitute. The comedy of the situation is made even more convincing by Terence's brilliant portrayal of the other parts: Chremes' son, Clitipho, who shows himself to be more and more of a useless idiot, while Clinia turns out to be a sincere and sensible young man, sincerely in love.

The stupidity of Clitipho is typified in the following little scene, one of the few really "comic" ones in the whole play, where Chremes' slave, Syrus, actually has to prompt Clitipho to accept from his father the sum of money which in order to obtain, Syrus has made such elaborate plans.

Chremes: Ubi Clitipho hic est?

Syrus: "eccum me" inque.

Clitipho: Eccum hic tibi.

Chremes: Quid rei esset dixti huic?

Syrus: dixi pleraque omnia.

Chremes: Cape hoc argentum ac defer.

Syrus: i: quid stas, lapis? quin accipis?

Clitipho: Cedo sane.

The humour in the Heauton, however, is rarely as direct as this. More typical is the scene, when Syrus presents Chremes with the absolute truth of the situation concerning the two sons, pretending he is letting his master into the secret of a sub-plot. Of course Chremes, so convinced of his own control of his son, shows with his "Probe" not even the slightest sign of alarm:

Syrus: tui Clitiphonis esse amicam hanc Bacchidem
Menedemo dixit Clinia, et ea gratia
secum adduxisse ne tu id persentisceres.

Chremes: Probe.

Syrus: dic sodes.

The plot, let it be faced, becomes almost impossibly involved and in its complicated evolution one sometimes loses the subtleties of the actual characters. Even if, too, the plot seems to be built rather artificially round the development of characters rather than spontaneous action on the part of the actors, this is surely not a reflection on Terence. The artificiality and stylization of the plot should be accepted, or at least endured, as a convention rather than as a cause for harsh criticism. It is rather the subtlety of the character sketching and the versatility of the language that bring out the real comedy in the Heauton. Chremes becomes in the play a real person and through the intricacies of the plot we see his whole self totally revealed.

It is almost an unkind sort of humour, almost "sick" laughing at the fool, who is the fool but is completely oblivious of the fact. Indeed such a clear picture

of the selfish, self-centred, pompous man is portrayed that the conventional reconciliation at the end seems hardly plausible.

On the other hand it is this very quality that distinguishes the "Self Tormentor" from other Latin plays, the thought that all the machinations might, instead of ending in a reluctant O.K. (fiat), have eventually come to a tragic conclusion. In the "Adelphi" Terence is trying to probe beneath the gay and easy going exterior of the brother Micio's character and glimpse at the far more real and touching element of worry and disillusionment beneath, added a very deep sense of pathos to the comedy. In the Heauton he has perhaps achieved something greater, for in a man whose very characteristics, self-centredness, lack of humour, lack of respect for other people, we find laughable in the play, there also lies a kind of tragic horror and dread of losing face, which is pitiful and almost fearful.

"Vintage 1940"

MADAME (MARIE-MADELEINE) FOURCADE, O.B.E.,

Officier de la Légion d'Honneur

WITH victory in sight, General Eisenhower rated the French Resistance Forces at the equivalent of four regular Divisions. But in the darkest days of 1940, small indeed was the number of French patriots who had refused to recognise the armistice and who were ready to risk torture and death at the hands of the Gestapo, in order to carry on the war "underground." The problem of the British was to establish contact with this *élite*.

After many false trails, the leader of such a group was smuggled out of France to meet a British Officer in neutral Lisbon. Then followed three days of intense planning in which the Englishman was surprised to learn that the second in command of this "reseau" was a woman of twenty-seven. Not long after the meeting the leader was, alas, trapped, and for four years of hazardous combat Marie-Madeleine (better then known by her code name of Poz) led a group which rose to 3,000 men (and women) of which more than a third lost their lives. In order to maintain contact with the allies Poz was once brought to Madrid sealed in a diplomatic bag and later to London by an aircraft "pick-up" operation.

Twice arrested and having twice escaped, charming, beautiful, but commanding and, if need be ruthless, Marie-Madeleine carried the fight to victory and served, incidentally, as the inspiration for Charles Morgan's heroine in "The River Line." Since the war she has played a remarkable part (behind the scenes as might be expected) in the return to power of General de Gaulle and the political revival of her country.

7th May, 1962.

A Sharp Turning for France

*“ France, although broken by every mischance,
“ Is always lifted up over all
“ By the same joy of life
“ The Buckler of the Gaul.”*

Rudyard Kipling.

AN important turning was made in France on the 8th April, 1962, when French citizens voted a huge *yes*, approving General de Gaulle's request which was to end warlike operations in Algeria. The real meaning of this Referendum was in fact the end of a twenty-two-year period of struggle and war.

Remember! For the United Kingdom and France, both allied for best and for worst, the war began on the 2nd of September, 1939, and from that dramatic and drastic moment, lasted until our common victory on the 8th of May, 1945. Then we saw French troops sail immediately to Indo-China until 1954, then to North Africa for more fighting and for holding high the French flag.

For about a quarter of a century, French soldiers were killed!

In spite of deep political and even foreign antagonism, murderous actions, treasons and plots, General de Gaulle stuck firmly to his decision to stop fights, to negotiate and promote “ self-determination ” which means for Algeria the choice for her own fate and for France the end of the ancient colonialist formula.

Before this, in three years, he had created, without a drop of blood, and according to the will of the French people, thirteen new Republics in Africa. Algeria will be the fourteenth!

When voting, the French people have accepted this hard task of progress and civilisation. But a group of ungallant officers mixed up with ancient Nazis made up their minds to make difficulties for the concluding of the “ Evian agreements.” Rackets, murders, outbursts in the street and even firing at French soldiers are now employed, according to the best methods of “ subversive war;” that is to say, a form of civil war for promoting the departure of General de Gaulle and a real revolution.

But the French people are wise and O.A.S. plans are certainly not working! In six weeks most of the main O.A.S. leaders were arrested and one of them has just been sentenced to death.

These facts belong to yesterday. France with its high and positive democracy and its wealthy territory must take a new line of action: we have more and more to become a strong and modern nation and to stay a valuable partner in Europe and Nato. That is why General de Gaulle, with the new Government of the French Republic, is now going to plan new regulations and laws for social and military problems and for the re-organisation of home territory. This accomplished programme will strengthen Europe and consequently the free world itself.

And it is a real comfort for us French to see the British Government having

promulgated new regulations and laws for the British Empire and Colonies and making them free also. Thus, together, England and France are running along the same hard and harsh way, with the same purpose, as two occidental partners contributing to the progress of underdeveloped people in the world.

If we are successful, mankind will be growing up . . . !

21st May, 1962.

A Monk's Tale

IN the monastery we thought that it would be another ordinary day. We sang lauds and prime as usual. It was not until after Father Gervaise had been gone for nearly ten minutes that we heard the news. A boy from the village brought it; he was hot from running and was glad to be in the still cool of the cloister.

“The Norsemen are here!” he gasped breathlessly as he stumbled into the monastery. Soon the alarm bells were ringing, and many of the villagers came to the monastery for safety. As they hastened up the hill with their carts and baggage they glanced back at the river. At its mouth were four black ships; their single sails stood out against the blue of the sea; they were quite close now.

Meanwhile the Abbot had given orders that all the gold and silver was to be put in the chests and stored. Some of the lay-brothers followed his instructions while the remainder set about hiding the villagers. By the time we had finished the invaders had landed. The long dragon-prowed ships crept up the channel and discharged their hordes. They were tall, handsome men with winged helmets. But they were heathens. They ran ashore to pillage and loot, to rob and kill. Soon flames leapt into the sky, and black smoke rose from the burning thatch.

I stood, sadly watching the sight, for I was on watch, ready to raise the alarm if they should come nearer. A hand touched my arm. It was Brother Thomas: he had to relieve me, so that I could eat. As we sat in the refectory, I pondered. Would the Norsemen attack us? We were not safe from them and if they attacked we would not be able to beat them off. My thoughts were interrupted by the calm unruffled voice of Father Gervaise. He said grace and then we went into the chapel and prayed. And as we prayed the invaders went. They left us and sailed away. In the silent chapel I offered up a prayer of thanks to the God who had delivered us from the hands of our enemies.

Lines written . . .

*. . . after reading that King John was in full possession of all his teeth
when his tomb was opened in 1797*

DENTISTS beware
And drop your high-speed drills
Those eager pliers dare
No longer harm.
In short, all dentists, everywhere, disarm,
For I have found a fallacy
In all your dental sophistry
That will destroy your foul intent
And thus prevent
The needless pain you cause,
So pause
Before you fill another tooth
And harken to the awful truth.

* * * * *

The venerable shrine of John
Was opened on
The twenty-seventh day
Of June or was it May
Of seventeen ninety seven,
Or so they say.
In consequence of the restoration
Of Worcester Cathedral where he lay
And still lies . . .
His illustrious remains appeared entire
Five foot five in size
Clothed in undecayed attire
Alas quite colourless through length of time.
On one side of him lay a sword,
The bones of his left arm lay on his breast
While the feet of our feudal lord
Still stood erect.
He wore a monk's cowl to protect
His soul, and beneath
This holy garb his jaw-bone, and his teeth
Shone like new discovered pearls
From the hollow that once had held
The villan's lips and tongue
But now only the teeth—but teeth intact
Remind us of the fact

That before tooth paste began,
Before sweets were made
The mouths of many stayed
Quite well.
Reform of food is what we need;
A greater care in how we feed
Must be employed,
And then dread dentistry
Thou art destroyed.

(The poet is indebted to an eye-witness's account in the Gough MSS.)

A Youthful Dream

*A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.*
—Longfellow

I THINK it was the long summer nights that caused me the greatest anguish—yes anguish, the stretching of the mind by shallow thoughts. Dim vibrations would carry in the air; carry nowhere really, just round and round and round. The sky was like brass and the earth like iron, and between, the wind. A fly or moth would be caught in the stream and be whirled about, making no contact with anything concrete, but just whirling. A gust of wind broke through the window, broke the stream and cooled the sweat on my face. “The fly that touches honey cannot use its wings; so the soul that clings to spiritual sweetness ruins its freedom and hinders contemplation.” “Whose words are they?” I cried; “Whose words?” Again the wind whipped through the curtains. “St. John,” it seemed to say, and then losing its natural purity in the stagnant heat, it whispered, “St John of the Cross.”

The wind blew and ruffled the curtains and ship masts became crosses, millions of them; and the ships glided away and the crosses stood on the sea. There was no land, nothing but crosses upon the sea. Nothing could save me but those wooden planks that tossed gently on the waves. For the moment I had found salvation, clinging to my cross. But I needed more. I was just going round and round and round. To save myself I must cling to something better than a piece of wood swollen by the water on which it floated. Flies like honey so why not cling to spiritual sweetness. “And ruin your freedom?” whispered the wind. Yes, ruin my freedom. The wind did not answer, it had died.

My youth was spent in the country: I think there could have been no better place. When I was very young I was overawed by what surrounded me; it seemed

as though I could not hope to understand; I was like the poor Indian
whose untutor'd mind

Sees God in clouds or hears him in the wind.

I saw the dance of gnats above a stream in summer and I saw the star-powdered sky on cold winter nights, but never did I understand. I still don't. As I sat on a fence or under a tree the wind would tell me of distant lands and distant cities, of great trains that thundered over gleaming track, of giant engines, ruthless and deliberate, that throbbed beneath the ground lighting huge glass palaces, it told me of power.

I had read it in the great books—the time of your youth is the time for action. I left the country and went to the city. It seemed as though I had stopped revolving, it seemed as though I were going forward, or at least away from the dreaded stream. I went to the city with my cross.

It is said that great cities terrify the contemplative soul but intoxicate the ambitious. I suppose I must have been ambitious. Here was a new world, new but never, I think, wonderful. It was too easily understood. It fascinated me, and despite the complexity of city life, it somehow all seemed quite logical, which of course strongly appealed to my youthful imagination. Above all, this world presented me with power, quite raw and with many loose ends. But power has a terrible fascination for the young soul in its weakness and dependence.

I began to clutch less and less at my cross; its once sharp image became blurred, not through any sudden twists or turns, but gently, deceptively it dropped from my life. It was as though the sun had blinded me to reality and as time passed the shadow of the cross, cast by the sun, lengthened till darkness was all around me. The summers were hotter and the winters were colder and all the time the view was the same, infinite variations of stone and glass.

I loved my childhood and had not judged it till I had reached the city. I condemned my childhood, but I had based my judgement on alien values. The city had taught me that there was a luxury in self-reproach, that my weakest motives were those of whose nature I was conscious, that it was the confession, not the priest, that gave absolution. But not all was brick and glass: there were always women. It is true that even they bore the visible signs of the cynical atmosphere which rather put them in the position of being the last thing to be civilized by man. They were slaves in search of their masters. And therefore I demanded nothing because it was a far surer way to their hearts than all the wiles of the seducer. But a woman has within her the incorruptible, the pure. And there if anywhere was hope, that quality which at least makes for toleration.

In the country where life had been vigorous, even the most stagnant day had been tinged with the colour of natural things, but in the city there was a broken spirit behind every wall. Was experience of no ethical value, but merely the name men gave to their mistakes? And as I cried it seemed to me that I saw my soul, a shadow of this house of sin. The shadow moved across the room towards the door and lay before me, projected through the window. It was in the shape of a cross and I believe it was my soul.

T. S. Eliot . . . An Interview

Q.: Could you enlarge on your view that the work of art should stand by itself? Does the finished work when it is read have necessarily to be connected with the author?

T.S.E.: I think that to take a work of art simply as the starting point of an enquiry about the author, his background and private life and all that has led up to his producing this work of art—I think this is a mistaken attitude. I don't mean that the author's background and history have nothing to do with the work of art—which is of course not independent of the author's personality. But in order to enjoy and appreciate the work of art, one needs only that work of art itself. Kipling—a poet whose work I very much admire—put some verses at the end of his collected works, which are very much to the point. Here they are:

If I have given you delight
By aught that I have done,
Let me lie quiet in that night
Which shall be yours anon:
And for the little, little span
The dead are borne in mind,
Seek not to question other than
The books I leave behind.

I put these lines also at the end of the selection of his poems which I made some years ago.

To enjoy that lovely lyric of Shelley beginning *Art thou pale for loneliness* we don't need to ask who was Shelley and what was he like. The lyrics of Shakespeare are beautiful in themselves, but also they have a dramatic value, each coming where it does in the play. You don't get all the delight they are capable of giving you, unless you read the plays in which they occur. Look at *Cymbeline*, for instance. And you don't really know any one play of Shakespeare fully until you have read them all. It is I think true of all major poets that you need to read a great deal of their work. In some cases, *all*.

Q.: We have read that you have said that there is room for the Romantic in life but not in letters. Could you expand this?

T.S.E.: I don't remember where and when I said this—it rings a bell in my mind—it must have been a good many years ago. But I'm not so much interested in the classical-romantic distinction as I once was. You can find the romantic wherever you look for it and the classical in the best of the romantic. To tell the truth, the discussion rather bores me now.

Q.: Do you agree with the publication of Rose Macaulay's letters?

T.S.E.: I could answer this question better if I had read the letters. But one cannot always read books just to decide whether they ought to be read or not. After the newspaper discussion, and especially after reading what Rebecca West

said about them, I felt repugnance: I did not want to violate Rose Macaulay's privacy.

Q.: Prufrock. Did the person you had in mind represent the age, or is he a character from the "wasteland"?

T.S.E.: I could not have answered that question at all when I wrote *Prufrock*. It was partly a dramatic creation of a man of about 40 I should say, and partly an expression of feeling of my own through this dim imaginary figure. In the theatre, for instance, I always feel that dramatic characters who seem living creations have something of the author in them. Sometimes, as W.B. Yeats would have said, it is the anti-mask: something which is not only different, but the opposite of the author as he is. Take two characters of Shakespeare. I think that Iago is alive, and Richard III a dummy: a splendidly dramatic dummy, to be sure, who speaks lines written by Shakespeare—a great privilege for a dummy—and a good role for some good actors. And I think of Shakespeare as a delightful man, but I think he put something that he suppressed in himself into Iago. And a dramatist might put something of him—or her—self into a character of the other sex, too. Richard III is a pure villain, and pure villainy is one kind of purity in which it is hard to believe. Even the Devil is a fallen Angel.

There has been a good deal of nonsense written about the name *Prufrock*. Someone discovered that there had been a shop in St. Louis, Missouri, where I spent my boyhood up to the age of 16, which bore the name Prufrock. Then the question arose whether as a boy I had ever had occasion to pass down the street in which the shop was found. And someone else has discovered symbolism in the name which allied it to *Touchstone*! But I chose the name because it sounded to me very very prosaic. I have taken names often because they sounded to me euphonious—like Sweeney or Rabinovitch.

Q.: How much do you think Pound owes to Hopkins?

T.S.E.: Nothing at all. Remember that Pound and I had both written a great deal before we ever heard of Hopkins. I remember glancing at the first edition of Hopkins on the table of Roger Fry the art critic, who was interested. I did not read Hopkins until the edition came out which was prefaced by Charles Williams. I don't know whether Pound has ever read him at all. Hopkins became known just in time to influence poets like Auden, Spender and Day Lewis. Anybody who was young enough could hardly escape his influence. Day Lewis most, I think; but he seems to me closer to Thomas Hardy. There again was a poet whose influence came later than any that could influence Pound or me. When I was 18 or 19, I read Hardy's novels; but I did not know of him as a poet until years later. He had written novels, I believe, because one can't make a living on poetry alone. But, speaking of money that Russian poet who was over here as the guest, I believe, of the British Council, told me that there were 1,500 professional poets in Russia. (Whether this was his ground for maintaining, as he appeared from a newspaper interview to have done, that Russian poetry today was the best in the world, I don't know). When I asked what he meant

by "professional poet," for the term was new to me, he said that they earned their living by their poetry. He admitted, however, that only about fifty of them were good poets. I said that I have never heard of so many good poets in any one country at one time (including China, I had in mind) but whether this got through to him, as we talked through an interpreter, I do not know. I was told that the only language he knew except Russian was Spanish.

Q.: When you first read Yeats did you value his work and do you value it now?

T.S.E.: Well, when I first read Yeats, it was in the early days when he was writing Celtic Twilight stuff: Deirdre and Cuchulain and all that. He seemed to me then merely a minor member of the Nineties Group of poets (Dowson and Johnson were the best). Yeats, you see, was rather a late developer. His first poems that excited me appeared in 1916 or 1917. And then he went from strength to strength; and some of his best work was his last. That's a wonderful achievement. I admire his later poems very much indeed. And he read them well: but when he read aloud from English poets, in the chant and the brogue that suited his own—well, Blake sounded rather odd.

Q.: Do you find that this scientific age presents greater problems of communication?

T.S.E.: This age, whether you call it scientific, or technological, or anything else, does present problems of communication. But I have never worried about communication in my poems, only in my plays. Communication is obviously easier—and this applies especially in the theatre—the more the dramatist, the actors and the audience have beliefs and standards in common. In an essay called *The Three Voices of Poetry* I made the point that in a poem the author may be, so to speak, talking to himself: at least, he is really writing something to be spoken by his own voice. In a play, the author, whether he is writing in verse or prose—is writing something which some producer will take and train some actor to speak to an audience: the author may not know when he is writing, who the producer will be, who the actors will be, or who the audience will be: he must try to write something that can survive handling by any producer and any actors who want to perform that play, and for any audience that will want to see it. . . . Of course, I often find other people's poems very obscure, but my own seem to me quite clear and simple. But I think that the practice of writing for the theatre has made me write more simply in my later poems. When I was writing my first play, Mr. Martin Browne, the producer, advised me to strike out some lines which were very good in themselves, because they did not pertain to the character of the speaker in the play, or because they did not advance the action. I think the discipline of writing for the stage does make for clarity.

Q.: The "Ariel Poems"; do these reflect a search for faith?

T.S.E.: I was already a practising member of the Church of England when I wrote them. Faber & Faber published every year for several years a series of short new poems by well known living poets, which were illustrated by some well-known artist and sold as a kind of Christmas Card. Hence *Journey of the*

Magi. I was asked to produce a poem for the season and so I chose that subject. Later, I chose other subjects, year by year, with no seasonal association. We brought the series to an end, and I kept the title for those of my poems which had been written in this way.

Q.: Do you feel that a period of doubt is essential to the gaining of faith?

T.S.E.: Any belief about the universe requires faith, whether religious belief or not. There can be simple faith without any antecedent doubt, but it can only be the faith of very simple people. There are of course many people who hold no beliefs about the universe at all; but they are simply people who don't think at all. But for people of intellect I think that doubt is inevitable. Pascal had a very sceptical mind and he was a spiritual descendant of Montaigne. The doubter is a man who takes the problem of his faith seriously. Any religious faith is in a way incredible, but a materialistic or anti-religious attitude involves believing something else equally incredible.

Q.: Many people find the "Four Quartets" hard to understand, could you attempt a brief explanation?

T.S.E.: No, I cannot explain the *Four Quartets*. Any attempt on my part to explain would merely be saying something else. One can say that *Little Gidding* is a patriotic poem—it was written during the dark days of 1942—but that is only one aspect of it. It was after writing the first two that I saw the pattern required four in all. I associated them with the four elements: air, earth, water and fire, in that order.

Q.: Your plays seem to have connections with Greek Drama. Does the death of the "Elder Statesman" resemble the transfiguration of Oedipus?

T.S.E.: Yes, of course it is based on *Oedipus at Colonus*. What I have done in all my plays after *Murder in the Cathedral* has been to look for a permanent human situation, in some Greek drama, and develop it freely in our world of today. Thus *The Cocktail Party* was based on Euripides' *Alcestis*: the return of a wife who had died. The other characters were added; the husband and wife situation was Euripides. In the *Elder Statesman* I did not want to make my protagonist guilty of the most heinous crimes: the patricide and incest of the Greek dramatist. It was more effective, for my purpose, to take some lesser crime of sin, some act of cowardice, which would be humiliating for the transgressor to think of, and which he would keep out of mind as long as he could.

Q.: The Dean of Westminster in an interview with Ludovic Kennedy remarked that this is a Post-Christian era. Would you comment on this?

T.S.E.: Christians are certainly in a minority, and in a small minority, when one considers that the majority of people, in most of their activity, are able to ignore the Christian Faith—though some of them might be annoyed if they were proclaimed to be non-Christian. One reason why I could not interest myself in the recent discussion about Sir Charles Snow and Dr. Leavis is that I believe—and I wrote an essay which seeks to make the point—that culture springs up with and in the practice of a religion: the major cultures have been in the past so

closely involved with the major religions as to be the other aspect of the religion. Neither Sir Charles Snow nor Dr. Leavis appears to take that view.

Q.: A number of people have remarked that you joined the establishment when you became an Anglican. How would you answer these critics?

T.S.E.: Let other people think what they choose to think. If the suggestion is that I was seeking social status, like a man who wanted to get into a good club, I observed many years ago that one advantage of living in a post-Christian age was that no one could say one had become a Christian for respectability's sake. Several years ago an M.P. said to me: "I have seen you described recently as a member of the Establishment, together with the Archbishop of Canterbury." I asked him where he had read that. He said: "In *The Queen*."

Q.: Has the poet a moral duty to his readers, did your views on this change when you became a Christian?

T.S.E.: The poet has the same moral obligations as any other man; but they are his moral duties as a human being. A man could be a very good poet, and yet fail conspicuously in his moral obligations and responsibilities. When one is writing a poem, one may not be thinking about one's moral duties. One just has something inside that one wants to get out, and the only way to get it out and at the same time find out what it is that one wants to get out, is to find the words for it. If you are a poet, you will come to know when you have found the words and when you haven't.

Q.: Peter Sellers; What do you think of him?

T.S.E.: Peter Sellers is certainly very versatile. I admired very much his work in *I'm All Right Jack*. And I have a gramophone record in which he does a surprising variety of turns.

Q.: Would you agree that nationalism is out-dated?

T.S.E.: The extreme of nationalism is ridiculous and so is the extreme of internationalism. At the present time we can observe the extremes of both. I say "ridiculous," but I must say also "deplorable." The Russians seem to encourage both.

Q.: Are you interested in politics?

T.S.E.: I am interested in politics just as every thinking person must be; but I am one of those who would much prefer not to have to think about politics. Politics do not interest me in the way in which they interest politicians.

Q.: Who is your favourite composer?

T.S.E.: Of living composers, I admire Stravinsky. I liked Bartok. Of the classics, I find the Austrians—Haydn, Mozart and Schubert—very sympathetic. Beethoven is terrific, but I do not feel on quite such intimate terms with his music as with that of those three Austrians!

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This Treatise is Dedicated . . .

. . . to Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth whose continued Patronage of the Establishment is sincerely appreciated

IT is now generally conceded that those Differences which were Once held to divide one Country of Europe from the Others can no longer be thought of as providing any obstacle against Unity. Further it is my Suggestion that we should hasten to take Advantage of the Suspension of Hostilities which hitherto existed between those lesser and more back-ward Races on the Continent, and ally ourselves with them, calling ourselves the "Free Allied International League of United Republican Europe" or some such clear and explanatory title.

"But," someone will urge "are you so stupid as to suggest that we should mix ourselves with scurvy Frenchmen who are still so Barbarick as not to have a Democratic Government?" And I here perceive we arrive at the very Pith of my Contention. I would not deny but that there might be some few Difficulties of Adjustment attaching the Venture, but I say that because of our National Advantages and Enlightenment and the superior System of Education that we have in this salubrious Land, that any Englishman should be able to surpass any Inhabitant of France, in the Open Market, or for that matter, anywhere. I appreciate that there will have to be a certain amount of give and take, though who shall give and who shall take must clearly be cleverly manipulated; but as it is manifest that to allow new Blood to enter an Established Family serves to increase its Vigour, so in a like manner will each Country profit from the Others. It will rest upon our shoulders to carry some of the Burden, because since our Literature is undoubtedly the Best it would be only Right to insist that our Allies learn the English Language so they can edify themselves with Shakspere and Milton and not such bawdy Rhymsters as they are at present forced to read. In return for the Benefits we can bestow on Foreign Lands, they will have nothing to give except material Wares. *But these we will Greatfully receive as a Mark of our good Nature.*

Thus we will have Grapes from Italy, Cheese and Wyne from France, Beer from Germany, Oranges and other Fruit from Spain, and Pastries from Denmark. It has even been proposed, by People with no Knowledge of Mechanicks or the Science of Forces, that a tunnel should be built to facilitate the Transport of the Merchandise to this Country. This plan is clearly impossible since the Weight of the Water would crush and Annihilate any such Structure. Nevertheless I have devised a Wonderful new Scheme to overcome this Difficulty which I will explain to my Readers. Instead of the usual System whereby Ships cross and recross the Channel, spending much of their valuable Time in the Ports, it would clearly be better, and therefore advisable, to join them together with stout Ropes in a long String or line across the Sea so that each Ship has only to pass on its goods and cargo to the next Ship immediately in front, which Ship would then transfer it to the next and so on until the Merchandise reaches our Land.

If my Scheme is followed I can forsee that in only a few years England will be the Richeft and most Prosperous Countrie in the World, and we fhall be able to devote out Time more fully to Literature and Art, which we can fell to the Other Countries, who, though toiling in the Fields and in the Mills, can have no Time for such Pursuits. They they will become even more indebted to us, and the Procefs will be Continuous. It would only be Right and Fair that the Originator of this Scheme fhould be sufficiently rewarded for his wonderful Plan, fo I fuggeft that I fhould receive ten per cent. of the Profit that we make. So I must recom-mend our Moft Gracious Majefty to fign the faid Treaty af quickly af poffible fo that we can all receive the maximum Benefit, moft of which will go to

Andrew Jarvis.

Morning Rush

AT five o'clock in the morning there are few people drifting, moving, going anywhere with a definite object in view. In Billingsgate there is activity already. Men bustling about in dirty, greasy, white aprons, with baskets full of fish, cod, halibut, haddock, and the kipper for breakfast. The milk too, is ready for the milkman's tiring daily round. He is prepared.

But what of the people? Billingsgate is ready, the milkman is ready, the stations are ready, the buses are ready. Where are the people? At seven o'clock most of the curtains are opened in Sebastopol Terrace. A bleary-eyed woman in curlers stands over the smoking stove. By eight her husband is off to work. Down the road he goes, then stops suddenly. Twenty past eight, and he's forgotten his briefcase. He strides purposefully back again, dashes in to the house and returns with his briefcase tucked under his arm. Half past eight. He mutters to himself. He has lost valuable time. Instead of going to work early, away from those madding crowds, he is now one of them.

At last he catches a bus. Packed with people: typists, shoppers, school-children, housewives, and men like him going to work or to shop. After an interminable length of time, standing up in the bus, he steps off. Into the Under-ground he vanishes, and into another crowd of people. Sullenly he purchases a ticket. He hands it to the inspector, who tears it in half. Down the steps. Into the tube train. People, still more people. O why, why, did he leave his briefcase at home! At Piccadilly Circus he at last comes out to fresh air. Here is the hub of the world and his office. Heaving a sigh of relief, he climbs the steps. Late, perhaps, but at his office at long last.

An hour and a half later, while sipping a cup of scalding tea, eating a dry office biscuit, he observes that the Circus is thinner with people. The mere trickle at five a.m. has now reached its crescendo, and passed it. The morning rush is over.

Ivan the Terrible

THERE is a widespread belief, no doubt encouraged by publicity men, that film makers are a collection of eccentrics, leading luxurious and extravagant lives and subject to frequent fits of artistic temperament. The prosaic truth of course is that film-making is a highly trained profession like any other, and, with the economic pressures caused by television and falling attendances at the cinemas, there is little place for flamboyant displays of artistic temperament either by film directors or actors.

Before the war, in the palmy days of Hollywood when the Cinema was young and exuberant, there were some directors who believed in leading lives as large as the films they made. There are still one or two around but they are a dying race. Some years ago I was lucky—or unlucky—enough to work with one of these directors of the old school.

I shall call him Ivan, but this is not his real name. He came from Central Europe and, although he had worked for many years in Hollywood and England, his command of the English language was highly ungrammatical though very colourful. He had been an Officer in the Imperial Army in the 1914 war which no doubt explained why he often came to work carrying a riding crop and why he was prone to shout at the unit as if they were a bunch of incompetent recruits. His charm, when he wanted to use it, was enormous and irresistible. At other times he would dance with rage, foam at the mouth, and scream at us that we were all sabotaging his film. He was also a very fine director and I learned much from him.

I first met Ivan when I went for an interview for the job of editor on a film he was going to make in Africa. His opening words to me were that he couldn't stand intellectuals from Oxford and Cambridge who wore suede shoes. Quickly hiding my feet under the desk, I did my best to assume a "red-brick" accent. Somehow I persuaded him to overlook the crippling disadvantage that I had been educated at Westminster and Cambridge and he agreed to take me on, adding that I would of course be "on trial" This apparently was his attitude to most of the unit and during the shooting of the film he fired two assistant directors and the make-up man. In addition the continuity girl had a nervous breakdown.

Although I survived until the end of the film, I was away for three weeks with an attack of jaundice. While I was ill, Ivan was at his most charming. He sent me books to read and rang up every day to find out how I was. When I returned to work however, still rather yellow in the face, Ivan informed me that I had caught jaundice deliberately, in order to sabotage his film at a moment when we were in the middle of cutting a highly important scene. From then on, if I did anything which he didn't approve of, he would refer to me as "the yellow peril."

After many months of being alternately intimidated by Ivan's anger and seduced anew by his charm, I breathed a sigh of relief. The film was finished.

Ivan went back to Hollywood and I went to another studio to work with a more conventional director. To my amazement I missed Ivan and his rages, life was dull and the quiet, orthodox director a pygmy by comparison.

There is one celebrated story about Ivan which, unfortunately, I did not witness. Just after the war, while making a film in the East, he contracted some obscure tropical disease which caused a skin rash on his face. As a result he was unable to shave and when he came back to England he had several weeks growth of beard. He decided that he wanted to shoot some additional scenes for his film and, because the studio was full, agreed to shoot them on a temporary stage that was not soundproofed. This stage was next door to the projection theatre and the assistant director had arranged to warn the projectionists when dialogue was being shot so that they could stop their projectors.

On the day of shooting Ivan arrived at the studio not only bearded but with his face painted purple—the result of a new treatment the doctors were using to try and cure his rash. The scene he was filming involved a soldier with a rifle and fixed bayonet. Either, because he had a hangover, or, because he was nervous, the actor kept on forgetting his lines. After the scene had been shot and spoiled about fifteen times, Ivan had reached the screaming, frenzied stage with which the unit were all too familiar. Finally, by some miracle, the actor got his lines right and the scene was going perfectly when suddenly from the projection box there was a terrific clatter as the projectors started up. In the overwrought atmosphere, the assistant director had, for the first time, forgotten to warn the projectionists.

With a mad bellow of rage Ivan grabbed the rifle from the actor and charged the projection box. The door splintered and a startled projectionist turned round to be confronted by a spectacle more terrifying than any horror film he had ever screened. A hirsute monster with a purple face was advancing on him brandishing a rifle and bayonet and shrieking, “You sabotage my film! I kill you for that!”

Clutching his heart, the projectionist collapsed in a dead faint.

Alarming stories came from the hospital where he was taken, He was dying, he had lost his memory and finally that he had a weak heart and would never be able to work again. Fortunately the reports were exaggerated and he was back at work within six months—but not at the same studio. The doctors were afraid that the sight of his old projection box might cause a relapse.

Sometimes the rumour goes round the studio that Ivan is coming back from Hollywood to make another film. The studio-manager looks worried and the projectionists test the locks on their doors. Personally I hope he does come. I should like to see Ivan again. This time I think I will limit our relationship to a drink and a talk about old times. One film with Ivan in a lifetime is enough.

Tony Havelock Allan . . . An Interview

MR. HAVELOCK ALLAN is a producer with a number of very famous films to his credit, including "Orders to Kill," "Great Expectations," "Blithe Spirit," "Brief Encounter," and "Never take No For An Answer." A tall, slightly arched figure he sat back at his desk the obvious master of the many phones, dials and dictaphones before him. He seemed the typical producer, the man behind the show. What follows is a much edited (but strictly accurate) version of his talk, which was really a brief comment on a very wide range of topics.

The Role of the Producer

"The simplest explanation is by a direct analogy with the army. The producer is the man who sits at the base and the director is like the general who fights the battle in the field. The director is the man who is on the floor, directs the actors, consults with the cameraman. The producer is the man who sits in the office, who has selected the story, hired the writer, worked with the writer and the director on the script. Once production is started the producer is the man in the office who watches expenditure, who does all the pre-planning so that the director has the sets, the actors and the people he needs to do the job on the floor. You have the same thing in the theatre—Charles Cochran or Littler, these are producers: Peter Hall or Peter Brooke, these are directors."

Independent Film Companies

" . . . They are more than necessary, they are absolutely the life blood of any film industry. What happened in the American film industry (and the pattern was followed here to some extent) was that the moment it became a big and profitable concern it was organised along business lines, and the producers were hired rather like departmental managers and the company as a whole said what it was going to make. It was a business operation. The independent company has to find the money for what they as creative workers in films want to make. The other way round the money comes first and it is a business rather than a creative approach. Independent production has grown enormously both here and in America: Cary Grant, Billy Wilder, Tony Curtis, Kirk Douglas all make their own pictures today. People like Woodfall Productions (Tony Richardson) make what they want to make and I am sure this is the right way. If they are wrong it's just too bad, they won't stay in business long. But they have been right. It took a long time to persuade anyone to make 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning'; it took two years to raise the money for it. When they got the money and made the film they were triumphantly proved right."

A Remedy for the Fall in Cinema Attendances

"My own view is that there are only two kinds of picture that have a chance of surviving today—one is the epic and the other is the type of film that up to a very short time ago it would have been impossible to make, such as 'A Taste of Honey.' The odds are slightly against you at any time in the cinema; you

are lucky if one out of five films makes money, and today it is probably one out of six, but the odds are slightly better if you make a good off-beat picture. Then it is about even money, and with an epic it is probably even a little better.”

The Disappearance of the Second Feature

“I simply don’t know what the answer is to this. The people who run cinemas say, and I suspect that this belongs to the audience of yesterday and not of today, that they want two films, they want a second feature. But the plain fact of the matter is there is so little money for a second feature today that, if it costs more than £15,000 you have lost your money; and there is not much you can do for £15,000. So on the one hand you have the exhibitor who says, ‘My patrons need to see two films, a crime thriller, a good documentary, and a feature film,’ and on the other hand you have the people who say that what they really go to the cinema to see is the main feature. There are many who say they are bored by the second-rate stuff that comes beforehand: they resent the advertising section, they resent the selling of the ice-creams. I suspect that if you’ve got a short film like ‘Saturday Night and Sunday Morning’ you need another film.”

The Most Successful Film

“Success is a difficult thing to assess, because it is in relation to the cost of a film. Take ‘Brief Encounter.’ We felt that there was practically nothing we could have done better if we had had to film it again, but we felt that nobody was going to want to see this film. Now in fact over the years it has made a very handsome profit. But on the other hand ‘Great Expectations’ made an immediate profit, a much quicker profit. I made a little film called ‘Never Take No For an Answer’ which was very crudely made; it took us a long time. This has made a big profit. but it is not a big film; it never had the kind of success that ‘Great Expectations’ had, but rather like ‘Brief Encounter,’ over a long period of time it was enormously successful, and it goes on being played. The most successful film really is the film you think you have done as well as you could have done, all of you—it’s a team job making pictures. But by and large you are nearly always dissatisfied.”

The New Italian Films

“The interesting thing about the new wave of Italian and French films is that they make a bigger impression outside their own countries than they do in their own countries. I think they are fine because they are experimental, they are trying to do different things. You take a director like Antonioni—‘La Notte,’ ‘L’Aventura’—what he is trying to do is something quite remarkable. He is trying to use film in the same way that a novelist uses a novel. He is concerned with telling a story really in literary terms, not in film terms. The general film terms today require speed; whatever story you are telling you must keep it going, you must have constant changes of atmosphere. Antonioni goes at a very, very slow pace giving the audience time to do what a reader does when he reads a book, which is to think. When there is a passage which is particularly evocative

or difficult you slow down in your reading while you think it out. He is trying to do exactly the same thing in films. He is leaving a lot of things unsaid, a lot of action doesn't take place, the audience has to imagine it, the audience has time to think about it. Take 'L'Aventura' for example. There are long periods on the island when nothing is happening and nobody is saying anything much, and Antonioni is expecting the audience to say to themselves, 'What did happen to that girl? I wonder why she disappeared? Did she kill herself?' It's just like a book and this is extremely interesting."

"And then you get the French examples. I haven't seen 'Last Year in Marienbad,' but here again a literary technique is being employed in a medium which has become more and more stylised in terms of action. These films are asking the audience to do more work, which the theatre can always do. The theatre does in fact ask the audience to do some work, and a book asks a reader to do a lot of work very often. These young writers and directors are trying to do the same thing. They are trying to make the audience use their imagination, fill in the gaps, think, be moved by the very slowness of the thing, be engaged in working out the problem for themselves. This replaces the usual film which does all the work for you—it tells you everything, there is nothing left out, you know what the plot is about and the only game is to be ahead of the plot. I think they are extremely valuable, and so far they are having more commercial success than one might have thought, but none of them make a very great deal of money."

A Didactic Purpose in Films

" . . . I think the answer to this is an entirely personal one for the director and producer. I belong to the school of producers who feel that a film should have a didactic purpose. You must disguise your purpose as much as you can, but I think that on the whole if you are making a non-comedy, and even a comedy, it is very nice that it should say something. 'The Apartment' is a case in point. Here is a wonderful comedy, very funny, and in fact it says some very penetrating things about the organisation and structure of American business life. I think a film ought always to have some content however thinly disguised. To make a film for no reason whatever, except of course purely to entertain, is wrong. Such a film may even say some things that are not true about human beings. This is not interesting to me, but this is personal. There are many producers and directors who only want to make a film to entertain. I want to make a film to entertain and if possible to say something about human beings or the contemporary scene."

Competition from Television

"There can be no compromise with television. I don't think that competition in terms of what we do, that is to say in terms of fictional entertainment, is a real competition at all. Where television competes is when it puts on such excellent programmes of immediate interest, when it deals with politics and personalities. As far as fictional entertainment is concerned there is no doubt about which is the better; neither the cinema nor the theatre can be bettered on

television. But of course one doesn't have to queue or stand in the rain, one just turns the knob."

Plans for the Future

"I always have plans for the future. I have a science fiction film in hand which has been written by one of our most eminent astro-physicists who is a professor of astronomy at Cambridge. This I need hardly say has a message I would like to put across, and this is the kind of picture that can only be done on the biggest possible screen. I also have a war story but with a different kind of meaning to it. It has two wonderful parts which we have been trying to fill during the last two years: at one time we had Anna Magnani and at another Sophia Loren, but we've never had the right man at the same time as the right woman. Also we are going to film certain performances of ballet and opera so as to have a record for all time."

A Letter from Spyro Spyromilio

Mr. Spyromilio has been unable to write, but he sent the *Grantite* this letter of explanation

Ravine 7
Athens,
Greece.

Sir,—

I am most terribly sorry not to have written an article for the magazine on the Greek cinema, but unfortunately just after you left Aegina, I discovered that I had jaundice. And for some time now I have been turning more and more yellow, eyes sunken and throat quaking. So I have been confined to bed and have not been allowed to do a thing. The doctor's orders were "complete rest." So I'm very sorry, but I look forward to reading this special edition. The best of luck with it, and may it sell well!—Yours sincerely,

Spyro Spyromilio.

Old Grantite Club

BY way of a change the Club Dinner has been arranged for the Autumn this year, and will take place on Friday, 28th September. The Executive Committee is also trying a new centre for the Dinner, namely the National Liberal Club in Whitehall Place. Notices giving full details will be circulated nearer the time.