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will swiftly be brought to bear on a decadent Britain over the control of the Nile waters. The great Arab Empire, which is to extend from the Atlas to the Taurus, must also reach down to the Equator."

"Flags of Convenience"

Edinburgh "Scotsman" comment on the modern "pirates":

"In the world of marine commerce nowadays the 'pirates' are the ships that sail free from crippling tax-burdens imposed by the traditional shipowning nations on their own merchantmen. Today, faced by a general trade-recession, those who own and build ships are less than ever able to meet the competition of the ghost-fleets.

"The recession hits everyone, but the untaxed cosmopolitan millionaire has had a chance to build-up reserves, and his large margin of sheer profit must be a competitive advantage in good years and bad.

"It is ironical that from the viewpoint of the businessman the world's most highly developed countries should be the least worth living in. Their huge defence-budgets on high rates of taxation put their citizens at a disadvantage not only in the unimportant matter of luxurious living, but in all forms of business-competition where opportunity goes to the man with surplus capital. The great nations have imposed a handicap on themselves which may in the end prove disastrous.

"So far no one has been able to suggest a very effective answer to the 'flag-of-convenience' problem. Ships will be registered in Liberia, Honduras, Costa Rica or Panama for a negligible fee and escape all the normal burdens of taxation. One commonly heard proposal is that the [U.K.] Government should make tax-concessions to let the British owners compete effectively with cosmopolitan financiers. This, however, apart from the political repercussions, would establish a precedent for other industries.

"Another proposal came from Lord Simon, who suggested that the traditional maritime nations might form a kind of 'club.' Members of the club would operate a closed market which excluded the flag-of-convenience countries. This drastic step would mean

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the turning-away of trade, a measure of self-sacrifice which would only be repaid if the opposition could find no loopholes in the scheme—but they are specialists in finding loopholes.

"Another weak point is the relatively tolerant attitude adopted by the American Government towards its own citizens who use flags of convenience. If real unanimity existed among the genuine

January last year, and Canada also shows a big increase.

"Except in the U.S. and Canada the figures do not yet give evidence of really large-scale recession; but the general trend is clearly away from full employment, except in West Germany and Japan. In Italy, though there has been a small improvement, the level of unemployment remains distressingly high. In Great Britain, where the aggregate increase

means of carrying through their industrialisation plans and even of keeping their increasing populations fed where food-stuffs have to be imported."

The H-Bomb

London "Sunday Times" comment on the proposition that Britain "should have no part or lot in nuclear preparations":

"This is not the pacifist view, that we should neither arm nor fight at all; it is simply that we should not arm or fight with these particular weapons.

"It either accepts the shelter of the United States nuclear power, while treating it as immoral, or must be content to face the withdrawal of that power and our exposure to the nuclear power of the Communist bloc.

"In the one case it is dishonourable, in the other a gross deception; for it masquerades as a way to lessen our risks, whereas it enormously increases them."



—N. Y. "Herald Tribune"

"I THINK WE OUGHT TO PASS IT AROUND RIGHT NOW."

maritime nations, it might be possible to do something, but Britain seems to be the chief sufferer in practice."

World Unemployment

London "New Statesman" comment on world-unemployment figures as at the beginning of March:

"The figures are of value rather as an indication of trends than of movement in actual numbers, for countries compile their statistics on no uniform or comparable basis.

"In most countries unemployment is higher in the latest returns than it was a year before. In France and Great Britain figures show, in the one case a slight fall and in the other a slight increase, while the U.S. shows more than twice as many out of work than in

last month was still quite small, there are pockets of serious unemployment in such places as South Wales, Merseyside and parts of Scotland, and fresh evidence of so-called 'redundancy' is accumulating almost every day.

"In the U.S. President Eisenhower has confidently predicted a turn for the better by the middle of the year; but he has produced no evidence, and many people believe that he will be proved wrong unless the Government resorts to definite measures of reflation.

"Meanwhile West German recovery has continued in face of rising wages, and Japan has been successfully pushing exports at a great rate.

"What the figures fail to tell is the sharp reaction of falling prices for primary products on the economic position of the underdeveloped countries; this is bound to limit their



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THE OTHER FELLOW'S MIND



School Discipline

As one with opportunities to observe modern educational methods, I must admit I admire them: everything's so enlightened and compassionate and so unlike what was formerly practised when pupils were expected to make quite an effort to lay hold on knowledge. Yet, despite all the psychological understanding and the rest, sometimes a little cloud of doubt assails me and I wonder whether there isn't, after all, something to be said in favor of the "harsh, unenlightened" instruction of my childhood 50 years ago.

In those days we were thrashed not only because of disobedience, defiance and general misbehavior, but also because of ignorance. Our teachers were realists and perhaps they may have been wiser than the kindly ones of today. Certainly they were aware of a fact to which a lot of us shut our eyes these days: that Nature herself punishes us for ignorance of her laws. Man's hope of progressing through life in a reasonably comfortable manner depends on his ability to *learn*: he can't afford to remain ignorant. He must get hold of wisdom.

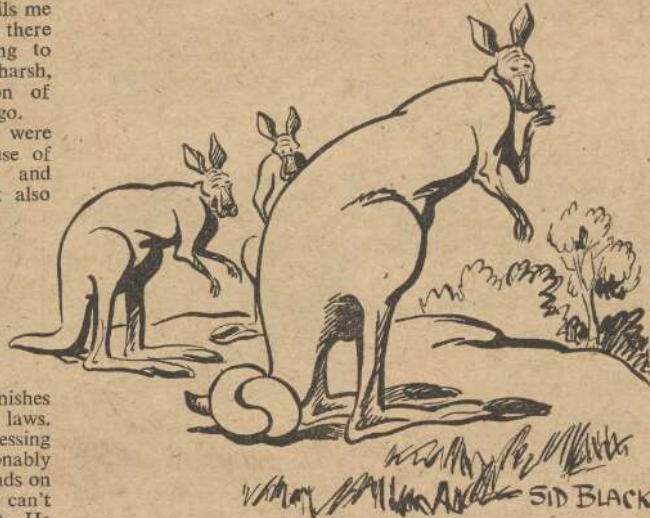
When I first attended school I was terrified. My first school was run by a lady of stern demeanor who, in return for the guinea-per-term paid by our parents, literally knocked into us (our ages ranged from six to 13) an astonishing amount of knowledge. She had no assistants and, having to provide all the teaching single-handed, had no choice but to be a strict disciplinarian. The entire community believed the punishments to be fitting, and to avoid similar treatment in the future we made a point of learning what was expected of us. At eight I'd already mastered the valuable lesson that ignorance is unlikely to be excused.

Later, at other schools, similar methods were the rule. The cane was the order of the day, and we didn't dare let on to our parents when we'd

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been caned; if we did, we'd probably get a further thrashing and also have our pocket-money docked. Undoubtedly, this corporal punishment must have done unspeakable things to our psyches; yet I retain no resentment towards teacher or parent.

I'm mostly in favor of the modern, enlightened, compassionate, learning-made-easy type of education: all the same, deep down inside, I'm still glad I was subjected to the old-fashioned training, and I wonder at times if all this teacherly kindness is actually as kindly as it appears. There may be occasions when



"It all started as a joke, but now he can't undo it."

we have to be cruel to be kind.
—KENYAS (N.S.W.).

Exploiting the Moon

Being undertaken by man, it naturally follows that any excursions to the moon will have only one purpose in view—to exploit that poor burnt-out satellite—which seems to indicate minerals, there being apparently no inhabitants to rob. As a mineralogist I have been sneaking a peek at the orb.

I have decided that it is more fluorescent than luminescent. Thus it would be composed largely of willemite, one of the zinc-oxides.

Now, the moon is 238,817 miles away from us and is approximately a quarter our size, so I would have a four-to-

one better chance on earth; even with transport at 18,000 m.p.h. it would take over 13 hours for the trip; and what with exorbitant cost of fuel per ton a mile, to say nothing of burglarious Customs charges, plus the knowledge that zinc is £90 a ton, my interest is waning.

I've decided to stop here and poke around for the stuff. There may be less of it here, but it's safer and surer to get.—
SEMPER FIDELIS (N.S.W.).

Patrick White's "Voss"

It was extremely disappointing to read Douglas Stewart's negative review of *Voss* (R.P. B. 5/3/58).

Mr. Stewart is perfectly entitled to find the idiom

The Bulletin

America, but a larger criticism is quite surely establishing Faulkner among the greatest novelists of the century.

I would suggest that the problem posed by the overseas enthusiasm and the Australian indifference to *Voss* be approached from a more sensible direction. Rather than think that everyone is out of step but the local boys, it would be better to consider seriously if Australian literary taste, and the criticism that forms it, has not developed along narrow lines. Australian fiction has developed along the pedestrian lines that stemmed from Victorian realism, and anything which diverges from this flatly respectable realism is prone to be regarded as aberrant.

The daily task of the Australian literary critic has been to assess the refinements that have occurred within this realism. Because the Australian novel is almost wholly realistic, critics here have lost touch with, and lost their taste for, the more sublime and imaginative forms of the novel. It is possible that Mr. Stewart would respond to Dickens but feel out of the element to which he is habituated in dealing with the final volume of Proust, or *The Brothers Karamazov*, or the cosmic symbolism of *Moby Dick*, as well as *Voss*. In short, rather than have it that overseas critics are universally in error over *Voss*, could it not be that Australian critics can only deal with their own narrow and provincial concept of the novel?

This is rather cruelly put, as the possibility is, in general, less applicable to BULLETIN criticisms than most others. But in this case Mr. Stewart has gone on to some shuddering statements. *Voss* is likened to the ethos of Salvador Dali and has the qualities of a surrealist poem. This suggestion must be the product of a well-intentioned innocence. Dali's painting is held in the lowest repute in contemporary art, and surrealist in these days is considered a descriptive term for meaningless twaddle. Mr. Stewart obviously doesn't intend the insulting denigration of *Voss* which his analogy most certainly implies. But it does point to a dated knowledge of critical opinion in the imaginative field!

I am well aware that it is possible to say "*tu quoque*" to this argument. The possibility has occurred to me that my deep pleasure in *Voss* argues a chronic romanticism in myself and in all the European critics.

Honest discussion is the only way to work through to some kind of answer. It is certainly

uncongenial to his literary temperament. I do not question his integrity nor the seriousness of his approach. But, having found himself unmoved by the poetic mystique of *Voss*, he is then hard put to explain why every serious major literary critic of England, Europe and America found it an exciting and world-significant work of art rather than a verbal fuddle. Mr. Stewart's explanation is shockingly ingenuous: those critics who can give a responsible assessment of Sartre, Camus, Faulkner, Nabokov or Moravia go right off the rails, all of them, when they deal with the literary products of Australia.

This sort of reasoning won't do. One comes across provincial literary critics writing the same things about the prose of William Faulkner in

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most unsatisfactory to have the world acclaiming a great Australian achievement while Australia sullenly rejects the compliment.—MAX HARRIS (S.A.).

Australia and the U.S.

"H.A.F.'s" friends (B. 22/1/'59), who in the U.S. live in luxury, certainly must be on salaries well above the acknowledged average 80 dollars which shrinks to a take-home 73½ dollars after tax-deductions. If they aren't, how can he explain the comfort they enjoy on this \$3809 p.a. when it is clear that two retired people require \$1700 to provide minimum needs?

There are, of course, very many Australians drawing wages considerably in excess of the £14 1 regard as equivalent to the \$73.25. The B.H.P. last year paid an average of £1000 to its 35,000 employees.

The U.S. admittedly has, *pro rata*, more coal, steel and power, and more and cheaper cars than we in Australia; it also has over 30 million people living in conditions of which Governor Harriman of New York says minimum health and decent living-standards cannot be maintained. If Australia were in equally bad economic shape it would have, in proportion, nearly two million people living in such conditions.

Australia's nearest approach to such a class consists of about half-a-million age- and invalid - pensioners whose married couples draw £455 p.a. That is at least sufficient to maintain health and provide most necessities. The enormous amount of poverty which exists in the U.S., despite its wealth and luxury, has no counterpart here.

If "H.A.F." considers the matter properly he will find that his hymn of praise should really be addressed to Australia.—L. W. FERRES (S.A.).

"Revolt at the Pig-trough"

I note one discrepancy in "H Pappagallo's" article (B. 19/2/'58). Clubs still have a big advantage over the hotels in Sunday trading. In several N. S. Wales clubs I have attended Sunday is their busiest day.

Another point missed by "H P." is the prostitution of the words "soldiers," "memorial," etc., in some clubs. Some clubs are run by sub-branches of the R.S.L. Others use titles such

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as "Bullswool and District Services Memorial Club"; they are in no way connected with the R.S.L., and in some instances have as many associate-members as ex-service members. Your contributor is correct in saying they are, "whatever they are called, only gambling-joints"; but he omits to state that numbers of them are soldiers' clubs in name only.—P. C. M. (S.A.).

"Filter" Folly

Few smokers admit publicly they are scared by recent disclosures—but there has been a remarkable trend towards "filter-tip" cigarettes in the U.S., Australia and elsewhere. Smokers apparently persuade or delude themselves into a belief that such cigarettes are safer, and at the same time the companies save up to half-an-inch of tobacco in each cigarette and replace it with "specially-imported" tissue.

In the U.S. last year filter-cigarette sales took 40 per cent. of the market, compared with 1.5 per cent. only six years ago. In Minnesota a State Government sub-committee investigating the alleged benefits of filters reported that in most cases a smoker was "getting as much or more nicotine and tar from the filter than he would get from the regular cigarette."

The Government Operations sub-committee in the same State asserted that the U.S. Federal Trade Commission had failed to show vigor and diligence in preventing deceptive practices and misleading advertising.

Perhaps the medical authorities who have been conducting inquiries calmly and judicially into the accusations against smoking will devote some attention to filters. If they could find an effective filter which would remove dangers without detracting from the pleasures of smoking, then everyone concerned would be much happier.—WELL-CURED (N.S.W.).

Municipalised Hire-purchase

As local-government rates can scarcely go much higher it is time shire- and municipal-councils looked around for additional means of raising revenue. I suggest they should enter two fields which at present yield handsome profits to private concerns—hire-purchase and fire-insurance.

The entry of the trading-banks into hire-purchase and

Faith in the Future



It is remarkable how memory forms its own pattern of a personality or an event.

My own recollection of the visit of the Queen Mother to Australia will always be stamped with that broadcast to the nation in which Her Majesty spoke of the supreme importance of family life.

You will remember how she referred to a happy home as the one sure foundation on which our young people can build their future in an age of uncertainty and shifting values; to their resultant strength and integrity as ensuring the greatness of Australia in the years ahead.

Had the Queen Mother done nothing else but deliver this message—but she did very much more in the time she spent amongst us—her presence in this country would have accomplished a noble purpose.

For she was pointing to the very centre of our hopes of standing in quality among the people of the earth.

Given good homes; happy homes; homes in which the children are nurtured in the disciplines as well as the freedoms, and in which spiritual training is imparted to match the material learning that comes to them in the schools, there is no ceiling to those heights of achievement to which Australians as a people can rise.

We have in gift a glorious country; but it is more important that we have the living power that will make it great—and the source of that is in its family homes.

Behind this again there is a deeper thought: The essence of family life is in close and generous affection—and the best of love, as we know, brings its share of suffering and sacrifice.

Here, then, is where Faith enters to raise the role of a father and a mother to missionary heights.

The parents of Australia's children are more than guardians of the family unit in this "age of shifting values": they have the responsibility of moulding the character and charging the moral power of a whole race.

H. Hastings Deering