

1965, Jun.?



Guddon's COSMOPOLITAN REVIEW

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What a fortnight:

The greatest event being the award of M.B.E.s to the Beatles for their services to Inland Revenue, and the glorious indignation of sundry politicians, and other social grubs, who feel that this should not go to a bunch of long-haired scruffs who can't sing in tune as it devalues the award for the balding bureaucrats who can't live in tune. Yeah!Yeah!Yeah! Liz!

Victor Gollancz scored a knighthood (yeah,yeah) thus bestowing a belated accolade on popular front, Left Book Club - FORWARD FROM LIBERALISM!!!

Nothing for rouble-earning Collet's???????

Mr.Robert Menzies,Slime Minister of Australia (land of the White Australia Policy) announced that he was delighted with the increased American commitment in Vietnam - so delighted that he is sending off quantities of Australians to earn their thimbles - full of glory.

Mr.Harold Wilson complained about the mess which the Tories made of the country. Sir Alec Douglas Home complained about the mess Labour is making of the country. Mr.Jo Grimond complained about the mess he hopes the Liberals will be able to clean up. And after several all night sittings the cleaners are complaining about what a messy lot of bastards they all are. Vox Populi - vox Dei!!

The Albert Hall acted as an echo-chamber for the Holy Barbarians when they spoke to the multitudes - how sublime is the holy voice even when it is from the arse of God. Some of it was in English.

In Viet Nam the people are still losing - so are the Americans but they are not suffering quite so much.....yet!

An American took a walk in space.....wouldn't half an ounce of marijuana have been cheaper?

The leader of the Ku Klux Klan was refused entry into this fortress built by nature. England will not tolerate bigots who dress in night-shirts in order to masquerade as dictators....we will only tolerate bigots who dress in uniforms and who, in fact, are properly accredited dictators!

B E A strikers were verbally crucified by that well known bastion of the working-classes Mr.Ray Gunter; the fact that Mr.Gunter was one of the incommoded travellers is irrelevant. The press,generally,considered it inconsiderate of the stikers to withdraw their Labour on a busy Whitsun weekend. Future strikes should take place on a Whit Thursday sometime in November, and for maximum effectiveness be confined to the canteen cleaners. Mr. Gunter and the B E A management seem to agree that a union should control its members and that it is absurd that workers should dictate to their union.

The Soviet Union.....is still there.....Daily Worker.....only just.

Why Cuddon's

The first anti-State journal to be published in English was Ambrose Caston Cuddon's *Cosmopolitan Review*.

Cuddon was originally a follower of Robert Owen; he combined the Utopian Socialism of the Owenites with the non-Statist ideas of William Godwin.

In 1853 Cuddon formed the first Anarchist group in an English speaking country.

Whilst publishing *THE WORKING MAN*, which was still in the radical tradition that had been set moving by Jacobinism, Chartism, Owenism and early Trade Unionism, he welcomed Michael Bakunin to England (1862) and later in the same year, the French delegation to the London Exhibition. These two events were the first step to the International (1864), at least on the Federalist side (as the Anarchists were then called), it would be unjust to deny the part played by Karl Marx.

As a result of the collaboration between the European Anarchists and the London *RATIONAL REFORMERS* (as Cuddon's group was called) the *COSMOPOLITAN REVIEW* came into being: the first Anarchist journal.

We hope that this answers the question so frequently asked - Why Cuddon's? In starting a lit/art/satirical journal we wished to commemorate an old and forgotten comrade.

Why CUDDON'S? Why not?

TED KAVANAGH
Editor

EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of CUDDON'S much correspondence has been received complaining of what the writers see as lack of commitment and also too great a quantity of satire. Our flippancy has also come under fire.

Lack of commitment, flippancy, satire: if lack of commitment means that we do not print only committed works, then we are, of course, guilty as charged, but frankly we have found that most of the solidly committed writing has been uniformly bad. Socialist-realist work should be sent to *SOVIET LITERATURE*. CUDDON'S welcomes creative writing especially if it has a point of view. But we feel that it is unfair to ask us to sort out fictionalised manifestoes of any sort - We would also welcome straightforward Libertarian manifestoes.

THE EDITOR

CONTRIBUTIONS should be on quarto paper - typed - and double-spaced, if this is impossible please make it as clear as possible, as we have not got the time to decipher poor manuscripts.

DRAWINGS WELCOMED not necessarily political or funny. Main proviso - black and white only, max. dimensions: six inches by eight and a half inches.

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SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

John Hammet.

I entered the Supply House. The cold and a feeling of slight hunger overcame my fastidiousness - life is a series of compromises, always a question of where to draw the line and I draw the line at hunger. I vaguely considered the possibility of a world without Supply Houses, a world in which consumers produced their own supplies, and dismissed the idea as quickly as possible; people have died for such thoughts. In the middle of the panel I located the Coffee button and pressed a carton, and on the top row the meatcake button glowed green so I pressed a cube and went with it to a stool. My mind (my mind - that's funny) drifted back to the group discussion of the previous night. Col with his revolutionary talk -
Remove the owners.....

Freedom of access isn't enough.....

We want power to decide what we should have freedom of access to....

Dissolve the guardians, and the hospitals.....

We want power We power power WE.

Who is we? We who are about to die salute thee, our rebellion is a salute to power..... the music started... free music... I looked to see who pressed it. He was very old, and there was one thing I noticed immediately - he looked calm, really calm; and then he talked - nothing unusual about that, only the non-urban people are shy - but his voice was different, I mean there was none of the usual urgency, he didn't say how cold it was as though the weather was the most important fact of existence, and each thing he said was interesting, really interesting, meaningful. I said something about there being no birds in city when it rained, and he told me that was a poetic thing to say, and did I read poetry. I said -

Who reads.....

True - not many.

Unless you mean the tabloids.

No I don't mean the tabloids. I mean books with thoughts in them. Thoughts like you justed gave voice to: There are no birds in the cold streets.....

Is that poetry..?

Not quite, but it could be. Perhaps one day we'll hear it again. This world of ours offers little scope for it - no privacy, everybody going nowhere frantically, desparately trying to make doing nothing have a purpose, and above all never asking why or where.

I said:

That's not really true - some of us ask ourselves questions, want to do things. I mean really do things but.....

It's hard to know where to begin - isn't it. You have trouble working out what there is to complain about - if you want something, you just go to the appropriate Supply House and take it..... if you feel run-down you get the right pills..... if you are sick you go to a health centre... and if you want to do something, well, there are the gymnasiums or the games halls.

Its the last thing that's most important - sometimes I want to do something, make something that will last - something I can use knowing that it is mine, I mean it isn't really important that I use it, I'd just like to see something like that, something that was all mine. But lots of people feel that way so....

But if a lot of you feel that way, surely you could do something about it.. if you have the will.....

We've got the will, alright, but not the power!

The power..no ...you definitely lack the power.

That was when the Guardians came in. The old man went out - they nodded to him, grabbed me and took me to the hospital. They've already hospitalised Col, I don't know about the others. If this guard is to be trusted give me a message letting me know who they have...I'll confess, of course, but I might be able to avoid giving them information about the free ones. At least for long enough....

Was this all the patient had with him.
Yes sir!

IF YOU SHUT YOUR EYES,
PERHAPS IT'LL GO AWAY.

We were just coming into the Square. The punch-up had begun around the soldier who was with us. I was making my usual hasty way out of the fracas. I made sudden contact with a military policeman; his elbow, my chest. A CND marshall told me earnestly, "Military Policemen have no authority over civilians". I smiled. He repeated it; the MP's hand came smartly across my face. "It's illegal, they can't touch civilians", the marshall protested, angry with me, as though I had hurled myself at the MP asking for action. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the MP's fist coming level with my nose. I didn't seem to have much in common with either gentleman, so I split. The last I saw was the MP, both fists flailing above his red cap. The marshall was being swept away in the opposite direction sobbing, "It's illegal, they have no authority!"

One of those people, I suppose, who think that if you don't "recognise" governments, then they haven't really happened.

Diana Shelley.

BOOKS FOR FUTURE REVIEWING:

TO RUSSIA-WITH LOVE. R. Palme Dutt.
PROSPECTS OF ETERNITY. Werner von Braun.
MY APPEAL TO YOUTH. Lady Violet Bonham Carter.
TWELVE SUCCESSFUL RECIPES WITH HP SAUCE. Mrs. Harold Wilson.
TOTEM AND TABOO. Clement Freud.
R 'n' B. Vera Lynn.
THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD George Wigg.
TROTSKYISM AND SEX: a study in deviationism. Magnus Hirschfield and R. Palme Dutt.
THE ROMANCE OF BESSIE BRADDOCK Barbara Cartland.
SUCCESSFUL SHEEP FARMING. Peggy Duff, O B E.
THE CULT OF THE VIRGIN MARY Lord Boothby.
GOD AND THE STATE Billy Graham.
VERNON RICHARDS. E. Malatesta.
POETRY AND ANARCHISM. (New revised standard version) the Viscount Read.
WHITE HOUSE TO LOG CABIN Dwight Eisenhower.
COMMONWEALTH AND EMPIRE Lord Kenyatta of Nairobi.
LOVE IS A MANY SPLENDURED THING Viscount Montgomery of El Alamein.
VEITNAMESE IN ONE EASY LESSON.: a course in unarmed and armed combat for American troops.

The blues aint nothin'.....

The blues has almost invariably been accepted by those with left wing leanings as a vocal music directly protesting the American Negro's social position. This is, of course, a superficial judgement and, like most superficial judgements, it severely inhibits the enjoyment and understanding which may be had from the blues form. Simple transcriptions from blues records in my possession follow and they are chosen simply because I enjoy them, finding them moving, amusing or interesting. I have supplied a personal commentary but the words stand in their own right.

Although protest is a limited factor in blues, particularly on record, the following song by Sleepy John Estes, amongst the dozen finest rural singers of our day, indicates that some numbers did find their way onto record. (There is, of course, the further point that record companies were owned by whites and it may have occurred to many singers that to protest on record was sticking their necks out!)

Now I was sittin' in jail with my eyes all full o' tears, (Repeat)
Y' know I'm glad I didn't get lifetime, boys, that I 'scaped th' 'lectric chair.

Now I consulted lawyers, 'n' I know dern well I was wrong, (Repeat)
Y' know I couldn't get a white man in Browns(ville), yes, to even say they'd go my bond.

Now the sheriff he 'rested me and he march me 'round from the circuit court, (Repeat)
Y' know I knowed th' things was gettin' kind of cross, I heard the city judge when he
set up his court.

Estes also recorded comic numbers like his *Everybody Ought to Make a Change*:

Now, change in the ocean, change in the deep blue sea,
Take me back baby, y'll find some change in me.
Everybody they ought to make some change sometime.
Because it's sooner or later we have to go down in that ol' lonesome groun'.

Now change my money, change my honey,
I change babies, just to keep from bein' funny
Everybody they ought to etc.,.....

Now change my pants, change my shirt,
I change, baby, just to get shed of the dirt.
Everybody they ought to etc.,.....

Estes was not exceptional in his choice of material. Most of the great blues singers have recorded a wide variety of numbers. Blind Willie McTell, for example, saw nothing strange in recording hymns and the most obscene comedy material. The blues singer as a conscious serious artist is, for the most part, a white fiction.

Most blues have dealt with women; this is the sort of generalisation which can lead to trouble, but, although some singers have sung about almost anything which has interested them for a long enough period to inspire a blues, the fact remains that from the beginning any blues listing will naturally contain a higher proportion of sexual blues than blues on any other subject. Estes is in fact one of the least sexually orientated singers. Another, more modern, and possibly the greatest living blues poet, is Sam Lightning Hopkins who is the giant of the contemporary blues scene. Even when he sings of women, he does so with a subtlety absent from most contemporary blues:

The night it was thundering, thundering and lightning, velvet shine like gold,
Don't ya hear me talkin', pretty mama?
It was thundering and lightning, velvet shine like gold
Yeah, y'know that was the night I found my baby lyin' on the coolin' board.

Well I couldn't do nothin'...walk the floor and moan.
 Don't ya hear me talkin',pretty mama?
 Well I couldn't do nothin' but walk the floor and moan.
 All I could say to my little velvet now she dead and gone.

Don't the hearse look lonesome,,backed up to the door?
 Don't ya hear me talkin',pretty mama?
 Don't the hearse look lonesome,backed up to your door?
 Yes,when the motor's runnin' and almost ready to go?

And in his brothel blues,*Miss Loretta*,a fine re-working of the almost traditional *Sugar Mama*,Hopkins draws in the traditional Christian rejection of sex,and with it blues as "devil music".

Oooh,Miss Loretta,where'd you get all those good lookin' women from,
 Well,well,Miss Loretta,Lord,will you please tell me baby,where'd you get all those
 good lookin' women from?
 She said:" They come in here unexpected,Sam,y' know,they blown in here by the storm".

.....
 Yeah,y' know I went to church last night,I didn't get there on time.
 Because of the praying I had preying on my mind thinking about Miss Loretta and her
 women

Yes,man,they was on my mind.
 Yes,I thought about how nice Miss Loretta was and how them women treat' me so nice
 and kind.

The great Mississippi delta singer,Son House,the first in a direct line of descent,
 via Robert Johnson,to modern Chicago singers like Muddy Water,sang another fine blues
 which introduced the subject of religion,always a vexing one for bluesmen:

Oh,I'm gonna get me a religion,I'm gonna join the Baptist church, (Repeat)
 Oh,I'm gonna be a baptist preacher and I sure won't have to work,
 Oh,I'm gonna preach these blues and I want everybody to shout.
 I want everybody to shout.
 I'm gonna do like a prisoner,I'm gonna roll my time on out.
 Oh, in my room I bow down to pray, (Repeat)
 Oh,the blues came 'long 'n' blown my babe away.

Oh,I have religion on this very day, (Repeat)
 But the women and whiskey,well,they would not let me pray.
 Oh,well,I wish I had me a heaven of my own....Great God Almighty!
 Yes,a heaven of my own.

Well I'd give all my women a long,long happy home,
 Well I love my baby just like I love myself,oh,just like I love myself,
 Well,if she don't have me,she won't have nobody else.

It may come as a surprise to readers to know that House did in fact achieve his ambit-
 ion and became,for many years,a Baptist preacher,despite his somewhat unorthodox
 attitudes.

Another early singer,since rediscovered like House,was Skip James whose whole blues
 style is so unique as to be totally recognisable from any other singer's,and whose odd
 use of oriental tunings (I say this as a musical amateur,but they sound oriental to my
 ears!) and oriental vocal inflexions marks his work as without visible antecedents and
 without visible descendants:

Hard times here everywhere y' go.
Times is harder than they ever been before.

Well the people are driftin' from door to door,
Can't find no haven, I don't care where he goes.

Let me tell you people just before I go
These hard times will kill you,.....this dry, long floor.

If y' hear me singin' my true lonesome song,
These hard times can last such a very long...

If I ever get off this shit ass floor,
I'll never get down on this floor no more.

Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord.
I'll never get down on this floor no more.

If you certain you ha' money you better be sure,
Cos, these hard times will drive you from door to door.

Sing this song, I ain't gonna sing no more.....
Sing this song, I ain't gonna sing no more.....
Hard times will drive you from door to door.

James' individuality consists primarily in the way he accompanies himself and sings and is not evident in print. His use of the two line stanzas is not unique, particularly among early singers, and neither is the way he cuts the last word of the fourth verse - 'time' is implied - to achieve rhyme. Again rhyme is more evident when the song is sung than it is in print.

Thus far I have kept to recordings by older singers, or singers in an older style. Although most modern blues do not compare very favourably as poetry with the older songs, some of them are worth quoting nonetheless.

Otis Rush, a singer who has learnt all that he knows of the blues tradition through radio and recordings rather than oral tradition in the old style, has not, unfortunately, made a record for almost three years. He is, despite this, probably representative of the newer school of Chicago singers. He has an anguished style, based on a very hard, ringing and exciting guitar and a high pitched tortured voice. Old time blues enthusiasts will recognise the derivations in these verses:

So many roads, so many trains to ride, (Repeat)
I gotta find my baby, ohoo, before I be satisfied.

Well, I was standing at my window when I heard that whistle blow, (Repeat)
Yes, it sounds like a streetlamp* but it wasn't y' know.

It was a mean ol' fireman, 'n' a cruel ol' engineer, (Repeat)
Yes, takin' my baby, yes left me standin' here.

Amongst the old guard of the modern stylists is Blues Boy B.B. King, whose flirtation with ballads and white tin pan alley has disconcerted his white followers markedly more than his coloured public. At his best, as on his new LP, *Live at the Regal*, he has many of the qualities that I find exciting in Otis Rush and Otis' disciple, (if that isn't a defamation) Buddy Guy:

It's my own fault baby y' treat me the way you wanna do,
Yes when you were lovin' me baby, aah, the time will tell I didn't love you.

She used to make her own pay cheques and bring 'em home to me,
I would go on the hillside, y' know, and make every woman that I see.

It's my own fault etc.,.....

She said she was going to leave me, she'd be running round with the boys.
She said she was going to leave me, going to be all round Illinois.

It's my own fault etc.,.....

Singers like King have a violence in performance more explicit than almost any of the earlier singers. This same tortured quality stamps the work of Buddy Guy, so far the only really modern Chicago stylist to visit this country:

The first time I met the blues, people, I was walkin' down through the woods. (Repeat)
Yeah, you stopped by my house first, Blues, don't you know you got me, you got me all
the harm you could.

The blues got after me, people, they ran me from tree to tree. (Repeat)
Yes, you shoulda heard me beggin', Blues, o-a-ye, Blues don't bother me.

Good morning, Blues. Blues, I wonder what you doin' here so soon? (Repeat)
Yes, y' know you been with me every morning Blues, and every night every noon.

Guy is the epitome of modern blues and it is the existence of singers like him that constantly refute the notion that the blues is dead. Of course parts of the blues tradition are dead. Almost no new singers are recording in the country style (although even here singers like Short Stuff Macon indicate that the tradition still survives to some extent). Fine "Traditional-style records are still being made of course. Only last year Guitar Nubbitt, like Rush a singer whose style has obviously evolved from listening to records (though Nubbitt has obviously listened to a different type blues), issued several magnificent tracks of country blues, with superb words and startling guitar accompaniment. And in the early 'fifties blues enthusiasts may have been startled by a Chess release of Bo Bo Jenkins, one of the most overtly political blues in the history of recording. His *Democrat Blues*, over a very fine harmonica, guitar and drums accompaniment, was also an indictment of the irresponsibility, as he saw it, of many Northern negroes:

Well, do you remember, baby, 19 and 31, that's when the depression, baby, just begun.
Yes, darlin', you know what I'm talkin' 'bout.
Well the democrats put you on your feet, baby, you had the nerve to put 'em out.

You didn't have to plant no more cotton, baby, you didn't have to plant no more corn.
If the mules was runnin' away from the world, baby, y'd tell 'em to go head on.
Yes, darlin', you know etc.,.....

Well, do you remember, baby, when the steel mills shut down?
You had to go to the country cos you couldn't live in town.
Yes, darlin', you know etc.,.....

Yes, man, play it a long time....1956....beat 'em, beat 'em!

Well, do you remember, baby, when your stomach was all full of slag?
Somebody help me get them democrats back.
Yes, darlin', you know etc.,.....

Amongst my most treasured recordings is an obscure one which a friend taped for me. I have no idea, unfortunately, who the singer may be, but he has a fine voice and the accompaniment, a sort of sustained soul-jazz riff, adds a great deal to the interesting words:

9

THE HOLY BARBARIANS etc.
at the Albert Hall.

The evening began beautifully - with cornflowers and jonquils being handed to us as we entered the hall. It is difficult (even for the English) to maintain reserve if one is walking about with a fistful of flowers.

The flowers were the best part of the evening. Most of the poetry was unworthy of the initial gesture.

Of course, there were the excellent poems of Anselm Hollo; and Pete Brown was worth listening to. The big disappointments were the Americans: true Ferlinghetti showed that poetry can also be funny, and he expressed the right ideas - the holiness of sex against the obscenity of boundaries. But are the right ideas enough. For example: the idea behind Adrian Mitchell's poem, TELL ME LIES ABOUT VIETNAM, is impeccable but the poem is dreadful.

Throughout, I had the impression that most of the audience were cheering the ideas rather than the way in which they were expressed; in particular they were cheering the idea of Beat. Delighted giggles and laughter greeted the keywords; pot, fuck, etc. And that half of the poets appeared to be high added an extra kick to the performance, even if it marred the readings.

There is, I suppose, one cause for gratitude - the organisers of the evening brought together thousands of people who do not believe in the bombs and bloodshed, people who, one may hope, will come down on the side of life in a world which seems dedicated to the most democratic form of death; and the poets are our poets

expressing a will to love which we share.

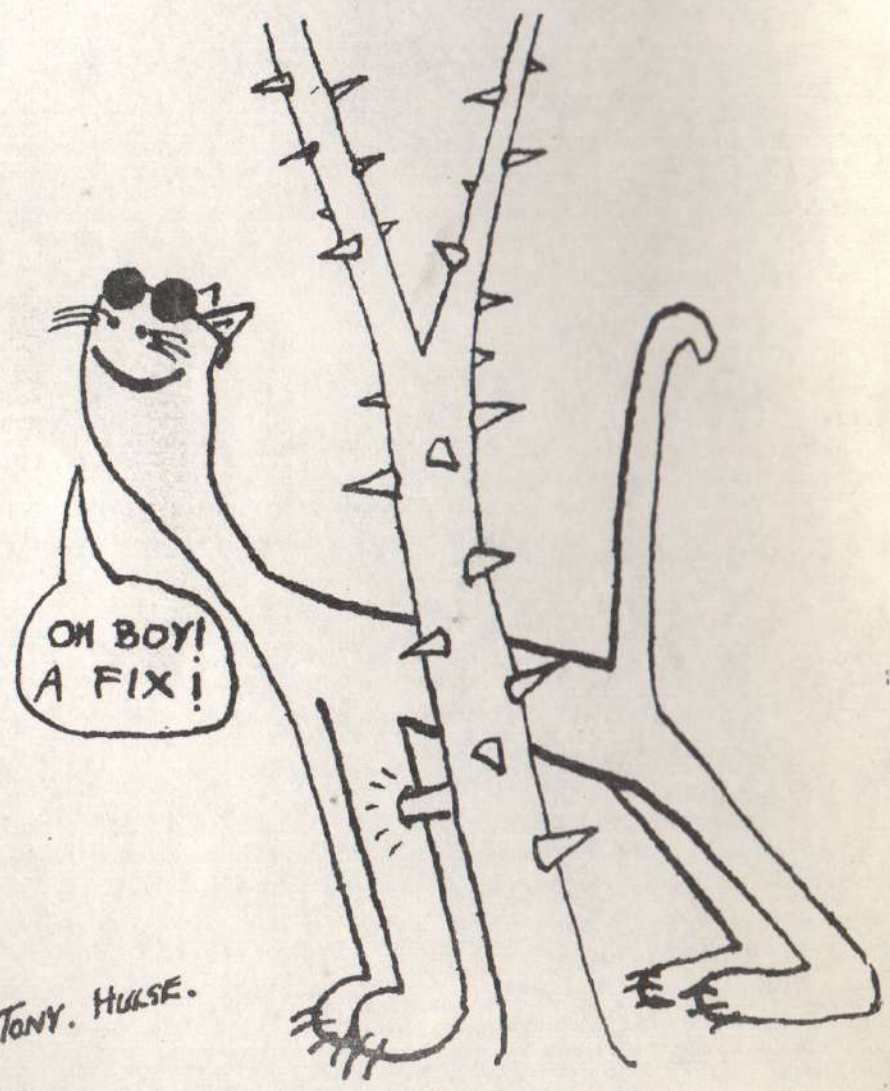
But still, was it really such good poetry?

TED KAVANAGH

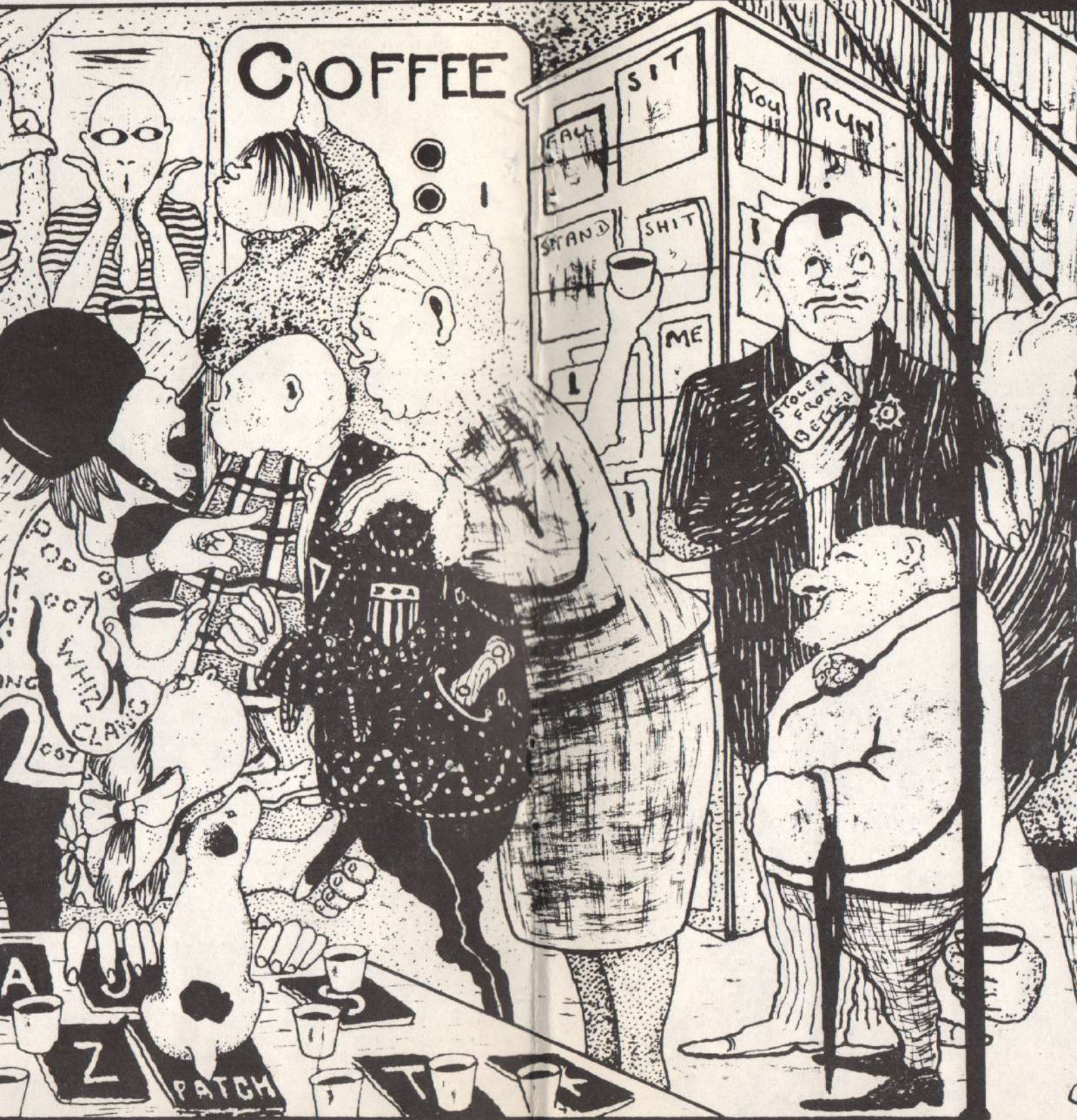
Adrian Mitchell Remounts the Platform.

this Season's word is
Vietnam
and when I write a poem
containing the word
Vietnam
I want you all to stand up and cheer
NOW!

Diana Shelley

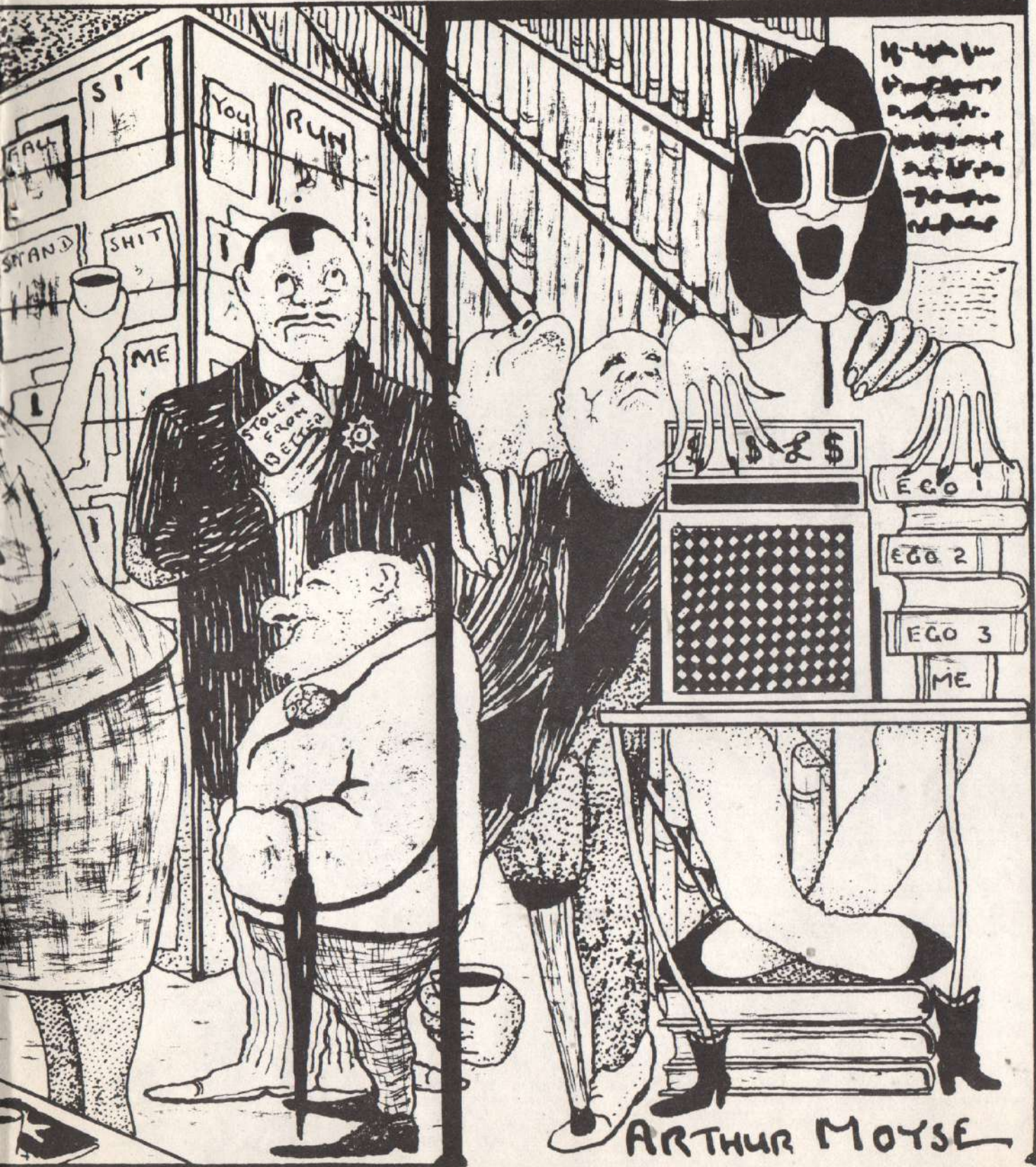


Arthur Moyses's London Arthur Moyses's London Arthur Moyses's London



£ \$
Better Books

Moyse's London Arthur Moyse's London Arthur Moyse's



ARTHUR MOYSE

Please somebody help me to find myself (Repeat)
 Cos I'm lost like a little boy since my baby's found someone else.

It was a time I know she love me, she could thrill me with her slightest touch, (Repeat)
 Now I can't move on no more, and the way is much too rough.

I stormed with my baby through a whole lot of shameful things, (Repeat)
 Now all she do is say bad things about me, it makes me turn my head in shame.

No matter what I do she make it seem so small, (Repeat)
 And that lead me to know that she don't want me at all.

I feel like climbing my family tree and cutting it down limb by limb, (Repeat)
 I take all the blame on myself, cos I want nothing bad to happen to them.

Despite the fact that there is virtually noone (except Hopkins) recording today who can match the sustained awareness and inventiveness of a Bukka White or Charley Patton it may be seen from the verses above that the blues is still very much alive and that if it is less poetic it may just be that the American negro has lost something, however ultimately valueless, as a result of the amelioration of the social conditions to which he has been subjected ever since Black Anthony Johnson first set foot on American soil in 1619. For if the blues is not a music of direct protest it has represented a vein of recalcitrant resistance in the American negro and it is unlikely to die until the American negro becomes a genuinely integrated citizen of his country. The blues has, in fact, been a permanent two fingers to the notion of white superiority, and this is the role it continues to play. The fact that most white Americans no more recognise this now than they did fifty years ago in no way reduces the stature of the music and there is a nice irony in the fact that the only significantly American contributions to the art of the world have been two branches of negro folk music - the blues and jazz.

CHARLES RADCLIFFE
 June 1965

* This rather odd image is explained by a similar line in a blues of Mercy Dee Walton where he states that a train whistle sounds like a streetlamp tinkling - presumably an old-fashioned streetlamp. C.R.

THE REBEL WORKER. (available from Freedom Bookshop)

My first reaction to the REBEL WORKER was so complex that I won't even bother to explain it. And as I have only seen two issues it is difficult to make a general comment on it; but the two issues I looked at were marvellous: the work printed varies in quantity - very good to very bad, but it's alive and kicking all the way. The make-up is good; I particularly like the way text is built around drawings. The general impression is that the team who produce it enjoyed getting it out. A pity, however, that the general liveliness is dulled by a poor duplicator. But if every I.W.W. journal had the life of this one, it would be a sign that the movement was really swinging.

JAZZ POEM Chris Torrance.

I feel a little closer to you, Dexter,
When you go deep down like Sonny Rollins:
& when you blast me with one of your
quotable quotes

I curl up, grin,
& drink my wine.

I know you, Dex, you
stalk out,
tall, saxophoned, and
leaving a roomful of
stoned people.

REALITY Chris Torrance.

everywhere i go is
bloodstains, bloodstains, bloodstains.
broken bone of 7000 space victims
million nerve neurosis of the
beautiful mushroom.
crushed nerves of the beautiful bedroom, the
howling siren,
the uniforms, uniformity.
we've been across the styx
for years now, don't you deny it! i've
never been able to examine hell
more closely, more
minutely than this, i can't see the charred
wood - feel the burns for the
flames. i've got you all
buttoned up, World. World!
Are you listening?

World?

MOONLIGHT METAMORPHOSIS Tony Hulse.

One strange night,
When cool rain from the the skylight
Falls to flood your unprotected shoulders,
Dampens troubled lips,
How different you seem to me,
Your sleek and feline fur to be
Alien, wailing open-jawed
At vagrant moons tonight;
I dread these crescent pools,
Light pendulums between the pinpoint stars,
As every pair of eyes for miles around
Is glorified as brightly as the sound
Laughter, heard amid oppressive calm
With hardly strength to move a single step, although
In blackened shapes below
The wall with dusky doorway,
Seen by neighbourly eyes
Behind the windows, fury lay
In neighbourly houses, just
Peering out of glass that's grey with dust;
The filthy panes are smashed by you
When flying out beneath your feathered back,
Your arms like monstrous wings,
Your gentle paws like eagle claws.

DREAM Chris Torrance

blue night
all is quiet now
the moon is smiling
upon you and me
threading softly through
the back alleys
& orangelit avenues
of the suburbs, the
suspicious cat that
runs ahead of us twitching it's tail
i think
is after
mice, and beetles. and
all things that move. watch
out! that scurrying
leaf has had it! moths fluttering
in the dark, our steps bold
in the night.....
hugging ourselves.

Kurt Emmentaler

You
 To whom progress
 Means hotting
 Up the pace
 Of repetition
 Repetitiousness
 Repetitive
 Acts of Commerce
 By the many
 For the few
 To whom they owe
 Nothing.

You
 To whom improvement
 Of the Human race
 Means acceleration
 Of the race for power
 Crud-gold
 Crud-votes
 Crud-prestige
 And higher crud
 Than Jones
 Faster rehashing
 More frequent regurgitation
 Of the pretended facts
 Of life

You
 Who cannot meet
 A man
 Without taking
 His measure in terms
 Of your own and
 Even then
 Are terrified lest
 It be higher
 Than yours

You
 Whose mechanistic standards
 Condemn all
 Who live
 To die

You
 Civiliser
 Cybernetician
 Management consultant
 Trade expert
 International jurist
 You
 Whose lives
 Are part of the race
 For crud-power
 Crud-wealth
 Crud-expertise

The arms race
 Rat race
 Flat race
 Disgrace

I am not part of your race
 Thank God'

I do not belong
 To the world of
 Power
 Capacity
 Riches

Crud-power
 Crud-ability
 Crud-cash
 Brainpicking
 Brainwashing
 Brainbashing
 Skullduggery
 Pickpocketing
 Pockpicking
 Pockspreading
 Muckspreading
 Muckraking
 Bankbreaking
 Spirit-breaking
 Slave-trading
 Slavery

The world of the "right-
 Thinking beer-drinking"
 (unquote)

The non-delinquent
 Non-kicking

The obedient
 Respectful
 Respected
 Respecting
 Property but not
 Life

Unless it be
 That of a policeman
 Soldier or other
 Protector of
 Property
 Or sometimes
 That of a chairman
 Or P R O or other
 Accumulator
 Of dishonest wealth

You
 Whose Eden is
 Inferno
 Whose devotion
 To Mammon
 Whose petitions
 To Moloch
 Are essential to you
 In your aim
 Your hope to become

Burghers of Mahagony
 Which you can only build thus

You
 Whom I despise
 And who hate
 My ilk
 For the breath
 The blast of the shout
 From our lungs
 Which will destroy
 Your Mahagony
 Before it is built

I do not belong
 To your race
 Thank God!

II

Boll-weevil
 Maggot
 Blindworm
 Foot-crushed
 Slimily loathed
 Flicked aside
 On the end of a stick
 Hidden under
 Stones and swept
 Under carpets
 Unconsidered uncounted
 Scapegoat of society
 Labelled when seen -
 Revolting
 Destructive
 Poisonous
 Corrupted
 Corrupting
 Dupes of knaves
 Agitators
 Misfits -
 Imagined
 Where you are not
 And never were
 Ignored
 Where you are
 And always will be
 Relegated
 To private places
 Public prisons
 Public lavatories
 And the public hangman
 As well as the private
 Executioners of His High and
 Mightiness' army

Mole
 Under the feet of society
 Burrowing rodent
 Under the roots of life-
 Long may your feet remain
 sharp -

Humming gadfly
 Constant irritator
 Of placid souls
 And ubiquitous contaminator
 Of psychic soothing ointments

Reject
 I accept you
 Solo creature
 I am your comrade
 Undisciplined
 I conform to you
 Indecent
 I respect you
 Renegade
 I admire you

Boll-weevil
 Under every stone
 You are there and I
 With you
 Mole
 Worm
 Creatures of the earth
 From which your calumniators
 Have alienated themselves
 In the depth of truth
 Is your goal
 And mine
 I am one with you.

MY FATHER'S HANDS.....

My father's hands were soft - working hands.
 Under his fingers songs took shape, and the dark
 Beyond the window sometimes failed to terrify
 While words from my father's hands ebbed
 As I flowed into sleep.

My father's hands were soft - working hands.
 Under his fingers webs of wire grew, beautiful
 To look at, figures of his love. The bitter smell
 Of solder, the iron's heat, his hands and pride;
 I remember and hold to these things, to forget
 Would be a kind of treason.

John Hammet



SUCCESS STORY.

In my early days at Frenton my only contact with the theatre was Hilda Bentham's Dramatic Society, which vied with the frowsty Empire (already on its decline and fall) as an outlet for what was jocularly known as live entertainment. It is true that Miss Bentham's delight in the more obscure aspects of the dramatic scene kept most of the town away from what they chose to regard as a path to temptation for the idle youth, at best, and a boring exercise in fatuity, at worst; indeed, having cajoled or bullied large numbers of talented amateurs into the more difficult Strindberg, it was discouraging to her to find an audience composed of mothers and aunts, who derived little satisfaction beyond family pride.

She lived in a one room flatlet above the theatre and referred to herself as one of the last bulwarks of the Little Theatre. Barrie once sent to her for an album of the Theatre, and she kept his postcard over her mantelpiece; James Bridie had, quite unrequested, sent her an autographed copy of one of his plays she had performed; and George Bernard Shaw had sent her a witty postcard demolishing her pretensions, which was, of course, water on a duck's back.

The theatre had formerly been a Mormon Temple, which Miss Bentham bought when the flock deserted the elder, some for the Promised Land of Utah and some for the Bethel Mission which held a corner on revivalism in our town. There was a provision in the deed of sale that there were to be no immoral presentations, the elder having very elementary ideas as to what happened in theatres. The sop to Mormon conscience did not, of course, appease the Bethel Mission, which considered Satan to have been ousted by Beelzebub when Miss Bentham took over the Mormon priest's pulpit as a prompter's box. On the whole, however, respectable opinion did not favour the Mission on this occasion, as the first play Miss Bentham presented for the delectation of Frenton was Ibsen's "Ghosts" in which what the audience considered the ennobling character of Pastor Manders stood out as a pillar of rectitude, and they all went home very proud of our artistic progress.

"The main thing is to get the town interested," Miss Bentham would insist, as she harangued her young collaborators, who stood around the tea-bar in the spacious green-room (formerly the Mormon bridal-chamber) waving sandwiches at each other in what they imagined to be attitudes of wild abandon. "We may even get a grant from the the council, or get some rich man interested." I only went along to help paste up bills, and hang around Patricia Gogan -- who was one of Miss Bentham's white hopes for the advanced drama - but even so, I could not help feeling sad to think that so intelligent a woman, who spoke easily of Gerhardt Hauptmann and Luigi Pirandello, should entertain the illusion of a benevolent millionaire or high-minded town council that would provide her with the interest on the mortgage (and this therefore dates the period as thirty years ago).

It was indeed the time when advanced theatre got so advanced that in order to claim a new advance playwrights had to resort to the dramatic effect of having dead soldiers' corpses pointing accusingly at the audience and saying a few pointed words about war. It was quite safe to do this in those days without committing oneself, of course, but even so, it was strong meat for Frenton and often even the actors' relations did not clap; sometimes, indeed, they did not know if they were supposed to.

"It's a pity the advanced theatre can't stop at Shaw," sighed Patricia. "I love playing those domineering women anyway; I get so little chance of domineering over men when they've just been sacrificed to Moloch. But I shan't stop long at Frenton, you'll see. I'll get on in the theatre. I'm going to become a professional. You can't expect me to have no ambition. And at least one doesn't have to get up so damned early in the morning."

"You could always go on night shift at the mill," said Miss Ragland caustically. She was one of the old brigade of what passed off as radicalism at Frenton, and largely consisted of a discussion on how to spend rates. But she was an admirer of Shaw, and had been imprisoned as a militant Suffragette. When she had written to him about her experiences years later, he had sent her an even wittier postcard that he had sent Miss Bentham, telling her where she went wrong, and she had sent him a long reply which his secretary had answered courteously.

It could not be denied that so far as the glamour of it went, there was a certain difference between going on night shift at the mill, and working in the theatre but it was somewhat hard to explain it in these terms to Miss Ragland who had often taken stranded chorus-girls off the railway station when shows had closed somewhat rapidly, as they were apt to do in those days, at the Frenton Empire. Patricia, however, saw the difference very clearly, and appreciating the fact that her abilities were not such as would cause a demand from London impresarios, learned tap dancing at Madam Chifley's Academy, and some idea of the nature of Frenton will be gathered when I tell you that Miss Ragland, Miss Bentham and Madam Chifley constituted between them all that was thought of as Bohemia, and the mention of Jezebel in the Frenton Mission was usually taken as a nasty backhander at one or the other of them.

"I'm going into the theatre," said Patricia for the hundredth time, in the interval of a particularly dreary saga of the Silesian cotton weavers. "I know I shall. I must."
 "You ought to take a more philosophical attitude," said Miss Bentham, "The Theatre is not for careerism. It's for Life."

"You'd look a bit of a fool coming to the Frenton Empire in the front row of the chorus if all you had to display was a philosophical attitude," I said. Miss Bentham snorted, but Patricia was very soon in the front row of the chorus in touring revue. It was admittedly none too easy for a girl who had cut her teeth on Hauptmann and Chekhov, and not a lot better than night shift at the mill. The first time the musical director proposed to her that they share lodgings during the tour, she spent the evening locked in the lavatory crying. But she soon overcame this hangover from puritanical Frenton, which was as well for everyone's comfort, and did quite well in the revue; in fact, she was picked for a Blackpool season. I did not see her for a year or two after that; naturally she was picked out by one or two of the London agents, and enjoyed a modest success. It is difficult to recollect what degree of success it was. I remember her name was larger than usual on some playbills, but this was a common dodge in the cheaper circuits then, when Jennie Nobody was billed in large capitals to the audience at St. Helens as 'direct from the West End' which was for all it meant, quite probably true.

In some of the smaller halls, Patricia was, at one time, passed off as a coloratura, and vociferously applauded in a shamefaced manner that agreed to the worth of what they could not appreciate, particularly when it was allied to kick-step dancing and a dramatic monologue or two. Perhaps her apex of fame came when her breasts were prominently displayed in an illustrated paper, which contributed considerably to the war effort, and she received many proposals of marriage from lonely soldiers, whom she thanked in an advertisement in a theatrical trade paper which it might be supposed that few of them read, but which obtained for her several engagements as an independent act.

The inferiority complex of variety audiences stood her in good stead in the early war years and might have brought her the plums of the profession had it not been for newspaper criticisms which influenced the booking agents to get something better in return for their money. Success, however, did not entirely escape her. Sometimes when she left the theatre, autograph hunters made it seem worthwhile. Many a disappointed act has wondered if the great-hearted boys were Scouts in disguise doing their good turn for the day by cheering up those most in need of consolation, so unerringly did they pick the wrong ones.

The night before she was due to play the Frenton Empire I met her at the railway station. She was getting a quick drink before the bar closed. The train had been late getting in and the entire company was on edge. She remembered me, but she had forgotten her determination of the old years of how she was going to get on in the theatre. "I'm as nervous as a kitten going to the Empire", she said, "All these years a cinema and now we open cold with revue. And the old tabbies will be there who remember me from Madam Chifley's and playing Nora in the Mormon Temple. They'll be hoping like hell that I'm not as good as I'd thought I'd be, and when they see how much I have to do in this damned show they'll be as pleased as pigs in shit."

She told me about her life in touring revue. "You mean I used to think it glamorous?" she cried. "Thank God it'll all be dead in a few years anyway." Only sometimes in a provincial town, having coffee in the morning with the musical director, someone pointed you out to her companion so that the whole restaurant could hear. It was fame, and satisfying in its way. They probably thought you were sleeping together, which was sometimes annoying when it happened not to be the case, though to be sure the time for locking oneself in a lavatory had long passed...

I walked along with her to her lodgings. We passed the old Little Theatre of Miss Bentham - long since changed. It was now the local Food Office, and the overseer sat in a high altar that had once accommodated the much married priest at its rites, and Hilda Bentham and her prompting. It had passed from the doctrines of Smith and Young to those of Strindberg and Schnitzler, and finished like everything else a government department. When Pat saw it she began to cry a little. I went into her lodgings to console her, and, inevitably, at the moment I was about to do so an irate landlady with arms akimbo marched into the room and announced, "I don't want to be disagreeable," in a tone that very much indicated that she was about to be.

All in all, it was a melancholy homecoming; and on the Monday morning there was nothing for it but to push the gin very severely, and by the evening performance, with the gin and the sentimentality she could not think what the hell she was standing on the stage for. She stood there and looked on the dark vault, and instead of breaking into a song about looking on the bright side, she began to speak about life in one of the most inspired monologues I have ever heard. She got the most rousing applause that evening. It was the first time I had ever seen people crying in the music-halls. I had been wrong, you see, all those years ago when I said that she would have looked a bit of a fool if she came to the Frenton Empire in the front row of the chorus and had nothing to display but a philosophical attitude.

ALBERT MELTZER

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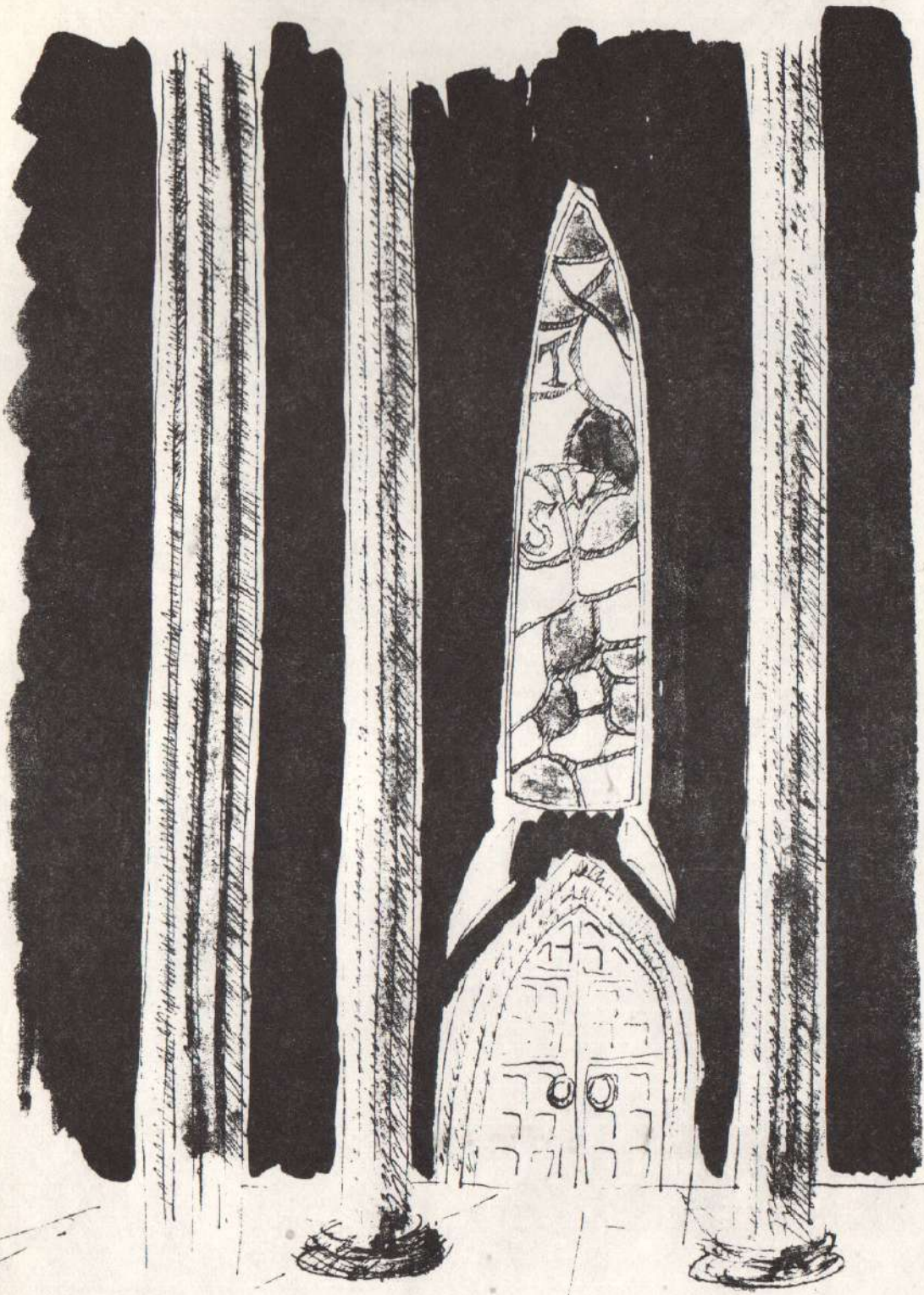
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