

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

"Force has no affinity with Justice."

—H. N. BRAILSFORD.

REFLECTIONS ON THE SURRENDER OFFER TO MAU MAU

BALANCE SHEET OF KENYA TRAGEDY

THE surrender offer made to an estimated four thousand Africans* still holding out in the forests of Kenya is one of those half-hearted measures which provide Fleet Street with front page copy and the editors of the sober journals with food for the weekly thought, but which leave the basic problems, of which Mau Mau is not the cause but the product, untouched. For all the offer does is to declare to these men: "If you surrender now with your arms . . . you will not hang, no matter what you have done". The implications that the "Mau Mau" are continuing to resist the might of nine armed battalions and the various police forces only because they fear capture and certain death at the hands of their captors or at best in due course under one of the innumerable Defence Regulations. Such lack of understanding is in itself significant and can be accounted for either by a congenital blindness as to the aspirations of the African people or simply as a shot-in-the-dark by the Kenya government to re-establish "law and order". The government has nothing to lose and everything to gain. The offer may have the immediate effect of causing some confusion among the Mau Mau (though in the long run removing the waverers will strengthen the unity and resolve of those who remain). It also provides an excuse for drawing a veil over the crimes and excesses committed by the security forces, since it has been announced that no further prosecutions will be brought in such cases.

Those Mau Mau who surrender will not be hanged, it is true, but they will be taken to detention camps where they will be screened and according to the official state-

*Estimates vary. The figure we quote is the lowest.

Resistance in W. Germany

LAST week we drew attention to the growing resistance movement in West Germany against rearmament. Further reports from Bonn say that the popular resistance movement is feared "to be getting out of hand", (we may well ask whose hands?). Bruce Rothwell, writing in the *News Chronicle*, says that some of the Socialists who instigated the campaign are worried where it will lead.

The Socialists, who originally wanted a national petition against rearmament, have been ousted from the lead by the 6,000,000 strong trade union movement whose leaders have organised mass rallies and torchlight parades to gain support for a referendum. This goes much further than the socialist petition, because under the constitution, the 600,000 signatures which the union has already got can force a referendum in the State of Bavaria. This means that if it goes through the question of rearmament will be put to the electorate for a general vote.

The German Government can hardly risk such a step, but if the Socialists who are now wavering can call a halt to their supporters it may split the campaign. Judging from reports however, the movement has gained too much momentum to be halted. The following report gives us some idea of the dilemma in which the Socialists find themselves:

Publicly, the Socialists oppose rearmament until another conference with the Russians exhausts the chances of German reunification.

Privately they have agreed among themselves to co-operate in executing the ratified Paris Treaties so that they can have a say in the army.

ments will either be set free or detained indefinitely. The possibilities of their being set free seem very remote. Of the 60,000 Africans at present detained, 12,000, according to the Commander in Chief, were free of thought-crime or any other crime which warranted their continued detention, yet though many months have passed since his statement only 305 have so far been released. Those surrendering now with their arms (a crime normally punishable by hanging) have little hope of emerging from the detention camps during the duration of the Emergency, if at all, since if it is decided that they are beyond "rehabilitation" they will be banished for life to some island or reserve set aside for such cases.

Mr. Blundell, Minister without Portfolio told a meeting of settlers that he wished to make it clear that although murderers who surrendered would not be prosecuted they would be deported for life. The Government estimated that between six thousand and nine thousand terrorists might be expected to surrender, the majority of whom would have to be detained for life. Many "irreconcilables" would go to an island in Lake Victoria.

These are matters which will weigh in the balance against surrender. But if we understand at all the minds of these courageous and desperate men, such considerations will play a small part in determining their course of action compared with the main issues at stake: the future of Kenya as a predominantly African country, with equal rights for Asian and European nationals who live and work there.

SO far there is no evidence that the influential white settlers have budged an inch towards conceding equal rights for the Africans. Their attitude to the Government's surrender offer has been one of open revolt. Their demand is that the military campaign should be carried on for another two years if necessary, "fought to a finish" said Mr. Humphrey Slade, Legislative Council Member.

These are the people who express horror at the thought that the surrender terms will allow Mau Mau murderers to escape the rope, but not in the name of justice, for they are the same people who contributed

£2,750 for the defence of a police reserve commandant whose perjury all but sent an African to the gallows; and who subscribed to the defence of a "loyal" chief ("and other loyal chiefs or headmen who may find themselves in a similar position"), charged with the murder of an African who, according to the prosecution, was "a citizen and not a member of the Mau Mau".

Again, the report prepared by Colonel Arthur Young, former Commissioner of Police in Kenya, in reply to allegations made by the judges of the East African Appeal Court in August that the police force in Kenya "is tending to become a law unto itself" may be a "vindication" of the Kenya police viewed from the white settlers point of view, but hardly encouraging in the eyes of Africans, "loyal" or "irreconcilable". They will hardly be comforted by the fact that the convictions against four Africans of murdering their employer was quashed by the Appeal Court when they learn from

*Reuter report in *Manchester Guardian* 11/1/55.

Colonel Young's report that none of the four Kikuyu had been freed after the Appeal Court's verdict: one had died in prison, while applications for the Governor's detention orders were being made against the other three†

AS each week passes, the situation in Kenya becomes more complex. The terrorist campaign and its handling by the British has created deep antagonisms amongst sections of the Kikuyu which will be healed with difficulty. They have sought to divide and rule and have only succeeded in dividing the population. The white population too is divided; on the one hand the planters and landowners whose prosperity is dependent on a large, docile African slave labour force consider that the effect of the surrender offer on local Africans was that they thought "here was a Government which had to crawl on its knees" (an interesting and perhaps revealing choice of words coming from the white *herrenvolk*?); on the other hand Agency reports state that "among the business community in Nairobi the offer is generally approved if it will lead to a speedy end to the emergency" (you can always trust the business men to be broad-

†Reuter report 11/1/55.

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SYNDICALIST NOTEBOOK

Riviera Holidays for Workers

BY Jove, Carruthers, what next? D'ye see these dam' working chaps are going to invade the Riviera! They'll be demanding tickets for the enclosure at Ascot next!

Perhaps we misjudge the Colonel. Let's hope so. But certainly there must have been many an upper-class eyebrow raised at the announcement that the National Coal Board has initiated a holiday savings club to enable miners and their families to have holidays abroad.

In Lancashire and North Wales the start has been made by the N.C.B. welfare organisation, and the holidays can be paid for by deductions from wages at source. Holidays planned include fortnights in Paris, at Mentone on the Riviera, or at Belgian resorts. And prices can include travel by flying-boat.

This, in the words of Lancashire miners' leader Sam Unsworth, is a scheme that has been long overdue. 'The workers underground,' he said, 'see little sunshine and the shocking weather last year didn't help.'

The miners, of course, are a bit behind the railwaymen in this respect. Through arrangements between British Railways and those of other countries, railway workers have for some time been able to have holidays abroad much more cheaply than anybody else, because they had considerable reductions allowed in their fares.

There is no official scheme, however, run by British Railways, to make holidays abroad easier for railmen. Perhaps the Transport Commission doesn't want too many of them taking advantage of the cheaper travel concessions. Or, more probably, even with the reduced fares, most railmen couldn't afford a fortnight's holiday abroad anyway.

When Sam Unsworth, however, says the N.C.B. scheme is long overdue, he is unwittingly criticising his own union. Why have not the trades unions—especially the big and prosperous ones—organised international exchange holidays long before this?

If there were a large anarcho-syndicalist movement in this country, it would show its concern for the leisure and health of the workers, as well as encouraging international coming and going, by arranging exchange holidays between workers wherever it had the necessary contact. It would not wait for a nationalised board to do it officially and through commercial agencies—It would

do it as a recognised function of an internationalist movement.

Come to think of it—why isn't this being done by anarchists already? The nearest thing we have is the annual anarchist camp in Italy, to which comrades everywhere are invited—but few go from this country.

B.T.C. Plan Large Scale Sackings

SOME railway workers may find themselves having long holidays they don't want, if all the new economy schemes being dreamed up by the 'experts' come to fruition.

These schemes aim at a reduction of the labour force on the railways by 60,000, and it is to be achieved by staff re-shuffling and more lodging-turns. The latter, of course, have been determinedly resisted by footplate men, and, for all the agreements at top level, the rank-and-file will very naturally resist economy measures which simply mean sacking some and piling more work on the rest.

Mechanisation is also one of the means by which the British Transport Commission hopes to save the bulk of the cost of the recent pay increase. The N.U.R. is agreed with the B.T.C. about the need for more mechanisation, but the men who are going to lose their jobs through it don't look upon it so kindly.

We are not going to defend jobs for their own sakes—but we must understand railway workers if they defend them for their sakes. The only way, it seems to us, for any surplus labour there

may be on the railways to be eliminated is certainly not through sackings, but by putting a stop to further recruitment and allowing the usual wastage, through leaving and retirement, to reduce the total. Even this, however, will not be acceptable if it means hardship and more arduous conditions for those remaining.

Whatever is done in this direction will have to be done with the agreement of the workers concerned. And we don't mean the officials of the union whose members are concerned—we mean those members themselves who do the work of running the railways.

MILITANT BUT DIGNIFIED

NEARLY 100,000 wage slaves in an essential occupation are to launch a campaign for pay increases ranging from £40 to over £150 a year.

There will be a mass meeting at Central Hall, Westminster, when the union's president—a Manchester militant—will outline proposals 'to overcome the frustration now affecting' these workers. The union's general secretary, Wally Bernard, said, 'We shall show our determination to obtain a square deal.'

Comrade Wal, however rather weakened the militant tone of his call to battle by adding "—by negotiation". For Mr. Bernard (as we should really call him) is general secretary of the National Union of Bank Employees, and bank clerks, as we all know, are nothing if not dignified.

'There will be no strike threat or go-slow proposals,' said Mr. Bernard. 'It would be repugnant to bank men and women to put their case in any but a dignified manner.'

Such crude and nasty methods are only suitable for the lower orders—like dockers and miners and others who produce real wealth instead of merely counting money, but we must not hold the bank clerks' snobbery against them too much. After all, it's all they've got.

It would be intriguing, however, to see suitable forms of direct action being developed in the banks. Just as I.W.W. workers in a salmon-canning factory in the States once started putting 'Best Cut' labels on the 3rd grade tins and *vice versa*, so that the poor got good salmon cheap and the rich inferior salmon at top prices, so our bank clerks could divert a few figures from some accounts into others more needy, quite in error; they could make honest mistakes like giving £5 of silver for every 5/- of cop-

Fundamentally, there is only one answer; the anarchist one of the workers controlling their industries themselves, thereby making efficiency and economy very much in their own interests. But the mere reiteration of this achieves nothing. The workers must learn how to come into that situation, and the taking of as much responsibility as is possible here and now is the only way by which they will attain the experience and knowledge necessary for the successful operation of workers' control in the future anarchist society.

One other little point for the here and now: There's still plenty of room for economy in the payment of compensation to shareholders, and in the fancy salaries paid to the Transport Commission members and—those 'experts'.

per asked for; they could pour sand into the calculating machines by accident and even forget to lock up when they went home every evening. They could even get married without the manager's permission—or have they now won that revolutionary liberty?

It is not only the humble clerks, however, who are considered by the union. Worst hit of the bank employees, in the union view, are the senior men and women—including branch managers—because "automatic" annual pay rises end at the age of 32.

Apart from an overall pay increase, it will ask for an extension of the salary scale to £950 at age 39. A minimum of £1,250 is asked for branch managers, rising to £2,100 for managers of branches with a staff of 50 or more.

Well—no wonder they're dignified!

Educating them in Freedom

ONE very good way (in theory) of showing the victims of Communist dictatorship how free democracy allows you to be, is to demonstrate it in practice—before their very eyes.

A trainload of 200 Yugoslav ballet dancers landed at Dover the other day. They were made welcome in this land of liberty by having 25 litres of Slivovic taken from them by the Customs Officers.

Slivovic is a kind of plum brandy and is the national drink of Yugoslavia. The ballet dancers brought their own supply of it with them for their own use, but the Customs men decided they should pay duty on the privilege of drinking it on English soil—one of the last bastions of freedom . . . etc. . . etc.

How petty can they get?

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST.

PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT! WEEK 3

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The Tools of Authority: I-The Scapegoat

THIS article is intended to be the first of a series in which the technics of those in authority will be analysed in order to see just how they get away with it. By exposing these technics we can hope better to be able to meet the challenge of authoritarian control.

There seem to be three main questions which capture our curiosity. Why do some men seek power? Why do others accept and even seek the rôle of doormats? Just what are the means by which the complex motivations of these two groups of people are mutually satisfied?

For the present we need not directly concern ourselves with the first two questions. The answer to the first looks obvious enough. In any highly competitive, materialistic, power-orientated society the material needs of those at the top of the pyramid will be more fully met than those at the bottom. Their human needs may remain starved, but since the path to satisfaction of the less tangible appetites for affection, loyalty, sincerity and other warm pleasures of social life is not as clearly signposted as the road to worldly success a lot of folks overlook it or mistake it for a sidetrack. Anyone who is interested in such a morbid topic should have a look at Sanford's *Authoritarian Personality** to get some idea of the arid existence accepted as living by these emotional half-men.

The answer to the second question has been dealt with adequately by Fromm in his *Fear of Freedom*†.

This leaves us with the problem of discovering how the social structure functions to serve the neurotic needs of both bosses and bossed—the Boot and the Doormat.

Since it is a not uncommon belief, particularly among members of the Boot fraternity, that there is some divine law of God or nature that quite properly sorts men into Boots and Doormats, we had better get this piece of medieval hocus pocus out of the way before we go any further.

To refute this argument it would be necessary to take a large group of infants, divide them randomly into Boots and Doormats and by inflicting on each group the appropriate form of mis-education show that the two types are made and not born. To a certain extent we have an example of this process in the Middle Ages when a privileged class

*Reviewed in FREEDOM, 8.3.52.
†See FREEDOM, 30.1.54.

of nobility maintained its superiority by precisely this process of differential indoctrination. Even to-day our infamous Public Schools still turn out more than their share of politicians, diplomats, tycoons, Bishops and other shaky pillars of our sick society. Nobody now pretends that blue blood surges through their noble arteries in larger quantities than in the miner's son, since the miner's son may in fact be unfortunate enough to find himself at Harrow or Eton if he wins a State Scholarship or his old man becomes an M.P.

So nowadays the believer in the Divine Right of Boots to Use Doormats defends his position with a different philosophy. Instead of insisting on a pre-ordained order in society, since Darwin popped up about 100 years ago he points to the natural law of Survival of the Fittest to justify his more comfortable survival at someone else's expense. What our ingenious philosopher conveniently forgets is that the increased probabilities of survival that come with living in a society only do so because of the co-operation that takes place between members of the society in competition with a hostile environment. Nor can the Boot-Doormat relation be described as co-operative in this sense since the survival of the Doormats depends on the benevolence of the Boots to refrain from trampling them out of existence, a benevolence that was sadly lacking in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. Only when the Doormats fought back by forming Unions did the Boots moderate their wiping activities. And now the Doormats discover that by giving power to the Union leaders they have simply created another style of Boot which is learning to march in step with the Old Boots very well indeed, thank you.

Meanwhile, anarchists await the day when the Doormats wake up to the joy of making their own decisions and accepting their own responsibilities instead of surrendering their destinies to the destructive whims of the big and little Schickelgrubers of this world.

With the decks cleared of that piece of twaddle we can get down to examining specific instances to see how the domestic harmony of Boots and Doormats is maintained.

Any repressive society has to allow safety valves for the hostility and other internal tensions that are constantly building up within it. In fact, by noting the extent to which such devices are employed we obtain a very reliable measure of the degree of repression in any particular society.

War, of course, provides an oppor-

tunity for a positive orgasm of sadistic brutality. But in between wars people still nurse their little volcanoes of hostility and in the proper circumstances, as dictated by the prudence of the Powers That Be, they are permitted to erupt on a lesser scale.

The Jews in Hitler's Germany and the negroes in the Deep South provide the classic examples of scapegoats. The authorities even permitted the victims to be killed illegally; and the right to murder is one that the State generally jealously monopolises within its borders.

But catastrophes on an apocalyptic scale tend to pass over our heads emotionally. It is difficult to credit the abyss of sordid horror that is a concentration camp without having been an actual guest. So we shall first take a more homely example. More homely in the sense that is nearer to home and also of less breath-taking proportions.

That citadel of conventional virtue, the B.B.C., is good enough to provide us with an interesting commentary on our cosy social system. In a chatty vein on the Light Programme last July, René Cutforth disclosed a humorous incident in his school life. It is a pretty little cameo which illustrates exquisitely the value of the scapegoat to those in power.

"Old Kip, our headmaster, had several bees in his bonnet about what he called 'moral responsibility'. He would summon the whole school into hall and make a speech. 'It has come to my ears that there are boys in the school who have not written to their parents for some weeks. As you know, I never interfere. Writing home to parents is a boy's own moral responsibility. But if a further example comes to my ears, I shall name the boy and leave him to the disapproval of his fellows.'

"Old Kip forcibly enrolled us all in the Boy Scouts and, after that, what had been minor crimes became all at once mortal sins. Orgies of moral responsibility went on in the dorms where patrol leaders solemnly poured cold water down the sleeves of boys, who, in loose moments had said 'damn' or 'bum'. But there were times when the disapproval of one's fellows was a serious business.

"There had been an occasion about two terms before when one of the house-masters had died, and a boy called Plant had incautiously said that far from being damped by this event he saw it as a happy release. A monstrous version of this sinful remark reached Old Kip a few days later and he summoned the school. It had come to his ears he said, 'that there is in the school a boy so lost to

moral shame, that even death itself, etc., etc.' A very eloquent piece, and finally: 'I will name the boy. His name is Plant, and I leave him to the disapproval of his fellows.'

"Old Kip then swept out, and a howling mob trundled the victim over to the stables where a supply of dried orange peel was kept for such occasions. This was ceremonially ignited with matches and when properly smouldering, stuffed down the back of his shirt. This usually used to make him run screaming round the grounds in circles with the whole mob after him armed with thin switches specially cut for the job. To mark the end of the afternoon's sport the victim was thrown in the pond.

"This ceremony was known as 'mobbing' and few ever fully recovered from it. Plant, for instance, spent the rest of his school life as a gibbering incompetent, skulking in the changing rooms or weeping into the overcoats in the cloak-room passage."

Delightful. Another misguided child who had not learned to lick the Boots

that ground their heels into his rebellious spirit was broken. The hostility which was due to Old Kip and his cohorts was channelled against someone who needed ginger up a bit. The other Doormats, besides having the satisfaction of letting off steam in a way that degraded the victim beneath even their status, could enjoy the glow of moral righteousness that comes from being backed in their iniquity by the Almighty. In so doing they were able to identify themselves with Authority and fool themselves that they were Chosen Instruments to execute the Just Wrath of God instead of being just miserable, snivelling Doormats. And Old Kip did not even get his arm tired or need to feel guilty at thrashing yet another defenceless child.

Almost poetic, isn't it? Reads like a parable. All that is missing is the return of the Black Sheep to the Fold, gratefully licking Boots, both old and young, and begging to be permitted to become a happy little Doormat. Maybe he did, too.

One final comment before we leave this gem of a story. Note that the victim was not even guilty as charged, and no attempt was made to establish his guilt.

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CINEMA

Are All Governments Equal?

ANIMAL FARM, the film by John Halas and Joy Batchelor, based on George Orwell's book, is a notable work. It is the first feature-length cartoon ever made out of Hollywood. Furthermore, it is the first feature-length cartoon ever to have a social message. And despite its historical importance, it is quite passably entertaining.

The direction—the design of the actual shots and their juxtaposition—is strong and dramatic, if no more moving than the dramatic sequences in *Snow White*. Most of the character designs are rather flat, but Comrade Napoleon, with his black, mask-like head, is delightfully and originally villainous. The backgrounds are corny but adequate. In the work of animation, the artists, like 'primitive' painters, have compensated for their lack of skill with enthusiasm and patience, producing some quite wonderful effects. The bonfire made of whips and harnesses, for instance, has the incredible appearance of a very free, highly coloured pastel drawing being animated; and in the very beginning of the film, when the farmstead is inspected by the camera, every brick and plank is enlarged or diminished in perhaps unnecessarily complex animated perspective.

Such loving application produces special effects which all the skill in Hollywood could not excel, and it is a pity the patience (or the money) gave out before work started on the explosion of the windmill, which is as bad as the bonfire is good.

It is a pity, too, that patience is not sufficient in character animation. Animals and men are well enough drawn to be quite alive with only their eyes or the background behind them moving; but when they run or jump or fight they turn into awkward, unreal cripples, with jerky, reluctant movements, like the figures photographed from cut-out card in the pioneer German cartoons. Felix the Cat had more life, and the ease and grace of modern American cartoon characters is almost beyond comparison. However, I am not to be taken as meaning that the animation kills the drama at any point; as patient work can compensate for lack of skill in effects, so good direction and lively drawing can compensate for lack of skill in character movement.

My chief criticism, and it is a major one, is of the story adaptation. Of adaptation as such I approve; no novel ever made a good script for a film or play as it stands. I like, for instance, the comedy sequence in which Halas and Batchelor show us (as Orwell in his different medium could not) exactly how animals, with awkward animal limbs but human ingenuity, can manage the work of hay stacking and building. And I do not object to the mention of a good shepherd on another farm, the omission of the knocks at religion, or the introduction of a gleam of hope at the end, none of which would spoil Orwell's point. But I do object to one appalling alteration which makes the moral of the film entirely different from that of the book.

In the book, the pigs are eventually visited by men, and the animals perceive that there is no longer a difference between pigs and men. In the film, the pigs eventually receive pig delegates from other farms, whom Napoleon addresses somewhat as follows:

"Comrades, success in running a farm is to be measured by how hard the lower animals work in relation to what they consume. On our pig-run farms, the lower animals work harder and eat less than on any man-run farm. These [medals] will encourage you to make your lower animals work even harder and eat even less."

The moral of the book is that a revolutionary government becomes indistinguishable from any other government; the moral of the film is that revolutionary government remains alien to other governments and is worse. The book may be anti-Communist propaganda* but it is not propaganda for any other authoritarian ideology; the film is cold war propaganda, anti-Communist, but favouring the older governments. This, and, to be honest, this alone, mars my pleasure in remembering the film.

Ah well, I never thought they'd dare make a film of *Animal Farm* anyway.

D.R.

*One thinks of *Animal Farm* as an allegory of the Russian revolution, but it can equally be applied to the French revolution (note the name "Napoleon") or the American war of Independence (note the slogan "All animals are equal").

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SCIENCE NOTES - 3

Food Adulteration: Alum to Agene

THE Elder Pliny describes how pigment was added to wine. Spices and condiments have been coloured for more than five hundred years, and one may speculate as to whether the singing troubadours of the Middle Ages found it necessary to add cantharidin to the mead to help them gain maidenly assistance in solving the mechanical problems of chastity belts, but it was not until the rise of the merchant class that food adulteration assumed serious proportions. Indeed a history of capitalism could be written as a history of food adulteration.

The commonest food adulterant has always been water, but in the early days of capitalism, pepper, the most important item sold by the grocers was frequently adulterated with juniper berries, vermilion, ochre, and red lead. Tea introduced from China early in the seventeenth century as an expensive luxury was an excellent substance for adulteration, and was commonly mixed with the leaves of the ash and the elder, and common cheaper substitutes were made from leaves of the red whortle berry, betony, rose bush, nettles, cherry tree, peach, and rosemary. Some of these substitutes are held to be superior, even to-day, to the original product. Coffee suffered a similar fate, and its most successful adulterant, chicory, is still commonly used on the continent.

Although the bakers were often under suspicion in the eighteenth century, bread appears to have suffered little in this way, but alum was always added as a bleach presumably because people liked their bread white. The use of alum was prohibited in 1758 and more recently nitrogen peroxide has been used for this purpose. To-day bread is the subject of much controversy and we may still be eating bread made from flour which has been treated with agene as an improver, which has been shown to be capable of causing a condition of canine hysteria in dogs, which may terminate in death. Although no ill effects have been obser-

ved in man, its use was made illegal in America in 1949 and becomes so this year in Gt. Britain. The substitution of chlorine dioxide although recommended by a representative scientific committee has aroused doubts in many minds.

The adulteration that occurred before the eighteenth century was due partly to ignorance of the presence of harmful impurities and partly to a desire to increase profits by substituting cheaper for more expensive substances. Such adulteration was often known, and opposed by the law but from the constant repetition and extension of the relevant acts it is certain that it was incapable of dealing with the situation, and it is due much more to the development of analytical chemistry since 1780 that the common foodstuffs now available are free from gross adulteration.

Problem of Preservatives

While the analytical chemists have been developing techniques for detecting the adulteration of food the industrial chemists have been producing many new chemicals which have been added to foodstuffs to either colour or preserve, and the emphasis has now shifted to the use of substances to make the food appear more palatable and keep longer. The position to-day is shown to be far from satisfactory by the official report published this month by the preservatives sub-committee of the food standards committee. They state that at present almost all known synthetic colours can be used in foods and suggest that only those colours whose harmlessness has been established by adequate biological tests should be so used. They recommend the use of thirty synthetic colours and thirteen colours of natural origin only. The only natural colours they recommend are, alkanet, annatto, caramel, carotene, chlorophyll, cochineal, flavine, orchil, Persian berry, saffron, tumeric, iron oxide, and carbon black.

The addition of colour to milk is already prohibited and they recommend

the extension of the prohibition to all natural products such as meat, fish, fruit, and vegetables sold in the raw or unprocessed state. They specifically condemn the use, now widespread, of coal tar colours and other similar compounds, for which there is no evidence of harmful effects, but whose chemical structure arouses suspicion. Eighty per cent. of our margarine is harmlessly coloured with caratene but some manufacturers still use coal tar colours.

The addition of colouring matter to food is defensible on psychological and physiological grounds and there will be a need for the use of food preservatives while so many people live in cities, but the methods used need the constant attention of food producers and chemists and will always be open to abuse while there is a profit motive in food production. Dehydration is one of the oldest methods of food preservation, and its modern counterpart, freezing, is becoming very popular. This is an excellent method provided care is taken to see that the food retains its flavour, appearance and vitamins, and parallels the process seen in nature whereby grains lie dormant in a state of desiccation until the process of germination is initiated by moisture. Salt, vinegar and sugar are preservatives that have justified themselves over a long period of time, but many of the chemicals now used have not been fully investigated as to possible ill effects. Chemicals used in some countries have been condemned in others, and in this respect the U.S.A. and the Scandinavian countries have much higher standards than this country.

These are problems that have to be faced but rather in a spirit of enlightened scientific investigation than with the superstition, ignorance, credulity, and lack of a critical spirit, which are responsible for the quaint and often absurd statements which one hears concerning food.

Bios.

Comments on "THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL"

RICE is the staple food of Sierra Leone, and sufficient of it was grown in past years to supply home needs (or presumably as much as the people could afford to buy) with a small surplus for export. By the middle of 1945 however, the situation had been reversed and Sierra Leone had to import rice from Italy and Burma.

The cause for this shortage in home production has been the discovery that Sierra Leone is, as it were, studded with diamonds, and hundreds of young farmers have given up growing rice for the, at present more lucrative occupation of diamond mining. The greater wealth (in terms of money) of the people living in the mining areas has meant that they are able and willing to pay more for their rice and to consume more than they did before, in spite of the fact that less rice is being grown in Sierra Leone.

It may sound logical to those who think in terms of money. To us it sounds crazy. For suppose that diamonds were to be found in all countries and were to result in a general abandonment of the less profitable occupation of food-growing then what? We should then reach the stage where a grain of rice was considered more valuable than a diamond, which of course it always will be. The rice produced in the world is the means for sustaining life for hundreds of millions of people; the diamonds at most, keep a few tens of thousands of people in idle luxury; they give brilliance to drab monarchs and dried-up marchionesses; they are used for weighing over-weight Eastern potentates, but we have yet to hear of anyone eating diamonds.

★
THE United States' accumulated stocks of 10,000,000 lbs. of butter is still in cold storage waiting for buyers. During the whole of last year only 400,000 lbs. were sold outside America. The problem is not a shortage of potential consumers, but of money plus all kinds of complications in world markets. Countries such as Denmark, New Zealand and the Netherlands had expressed "concern" lest the United States disposal policy upset what they considered their traditional markets. So the price was fixed at 41 cents a pound plus delivery charges, whereas the butter exporting countries sold their butter at the same price including delivery, with the result that the "traditional markets" went on buying from the same sources and the other markets, which could not afford butter at all, got none of the American surplus.

Incidentally, we are hearing a lot these days about the motor and radio spare part monopolists—and we are the last to complain when price rings are exposed. But these rings are international, with active participation of Governments on the side of those who want to keep up prices or restrict output to push them up even higher. And it applies to the bare necessities of life as well as the motor car tyres and television tubes.

★
THE poverty-stricken millions of Pakistan know to their bitter cost what is "the root of all evil". When a member of the family falls sick, or when a slightly better life hinges on acquiring a hand cart (remember the life and death drama, the job that depended on the possession of a bicycle in the Italian film *Bicycle Thieves*?) then for these

BOOK REVIEW

THE GOD OF THE WITCHES,
by Margaret Murray. (Faber and Faber, 21/-).

CONVENTIONAL history is usually found, on closer inspection, to be a tissue of falsehoods, half-truths, misunderstandings, and downright lies. This is because it is generally written from the point of view of the ruling class, or the ruling religion, and until very recently the common people could not read or write at all, and so never had a chance to record events from their point of view. This is shown particularly clearly in the nonsense now generally accepted regarding witchcraft, which all consider to have been concerned solely with doing evil for evil's sake.

Dr. Murray's theory is that the witches were in fact the pagans, adherents of the old pre-Christian fertility religion, which survived among the country people for centuries after the rulers and the town-dwellers had adopted Christianity. The

people there is only one way out: the Pathan moneylenders. In Karachi, in spite of the fact that under Islamic law usury is forbidden, these organised moneylenders prowl the city collecting their pound of flesh from their victims and always on the look-out for new ones. How great must be the need of the poor that, knowing as they do what fate lies in store for them once they fall into the moneylenders' hands, they still go to them. The "business" is conducted on the following lines. The client needs say 500 rupees. First of all he signs a note for 1,000, a procedure insisted upon by the cunning moneylender for his own "protection" in case he is taken to court where generally the magistrate suggests settlement by payment of half the principal. The borrower is then given 375 rupees, the 125 rupees withheld representing interest payment for the first month, for that is the rate of interest demanded on all loans up to 500 rupees: 25 per cent. *per month!* The Pathan moneylenders are understandably not at all pressing for the repayment of loans; on the contrary when a victim offers to repay a loan he is refused "with a gesture of magnanimity that discourages a second try". And few are brave enough to have recourse to the law since the moneylenders dispose of hired thugs (goodras) who will make him pay in more ways than one. Some victims are driven to suicide, others, according to police reports "are dealt to death and eyes removed" by the thugs. Some loan victims, such as Mohan, a Hindu launderer, are eventually "freed". But that takes a long time. Mohan's association with the usurers began in 1941 when he borrowed 100 rupees (about £11). At the time of his "liberation" he held besides the original receipt for the 100 rupees, a further 157 receipts for interest payments totalling 3,925 rupees (over £400). It is said that legislators in one province being unable to prosecute the Pathans for flouting the religious injunctions against usury are now trying to enact a civil statute that would end the moneylenders' racket. How optimistic are these believers in the law and how restricted in their approach. If the authorities are so concerned to stamp out these moneylending racketeers the simple solution is to take over from them, making these small loans to those genuinely in need (and who would pay 25 per cent, a month interest if they did not desperately need the money?) at a low rate of interest. That surely is the solution within the framework of existing society.

The deeper issues of the wretched conditions of millions of Pakistani and their utter insecurity which results in a life and death struggle when there is a doctor's bill to pay or a hand cart to be purchased, these are, of course, the major problems which are not entirely unconnected from the storage sheds in America bulging with butter and grain and other foodstuffs, and the abandonment of the rice fields by the false and bewitching smile of the diamonds of Sierra Leone.

reason for the bad reputation of the Old Religion was simply that Christianity triumphed, and the Christians wrote the books. Most of the pagans could not write.

"The god of the old religion becomes the devil of the new." The Christian Satan, with horns and tail complete, was in fact the ancient horned fertility deity, now given an evil significance. Horned gods and goddesses have been worshipped since Stone Age times, as cave paintings show, and incidentally these paintings portray a "devil" almost exactly like the one represented in seventeenth century prints. One of them shows him playing on a sort of bow-instrument, an ancestor of the violin, and as late as the eighteenth century the Devil was said to dance while playing his own accompaniment on the fiddle. Burns in fact wrote an amusing poem describing how "the Devil came fiddling through the town, and danced away with the exciseman." The Devil was evidently an anarchist!

These "devils" were in fact men dressed up in ritual costume, which usually consisted of the skin and head of some horned animal, though it could be sometimes a dog or even a pig. They were men, who were chosen to represent the god of fertility, and were regarded as Incarnate Gods. Their religion demanded periodic sacrifice of the Incarnate God, though a substitute could be chosen. There must have been a large number of these gods in Europe when the witch religion was still strong, which would explain why "the Devil" could appear in so many different places at once.

Normally the gods did not dress very differently from their fellow citizens, though they usually wore a black suit. In the seventeenth century, when the witch-cult was fighting for survival, these "devils" went about among the population seeking converts. There is even record of a "devil" who stood a prospective convert a dinner. If one thinks of this as grotesque one must remember that to this day Tibet and Mongolia are full of incarnate gods, and that at one time they required a licence from the Chinese government to practice. The Mikado is an incarnate god, and so, to all intents and purposes, is the Pope, and since the reign of Queen Victoria the position of British royalty has increasingly approached this status. (It is curious that the country that clings most determinedly to royal gods should also cling to the death penalty, which originated in human sacrifice, though in the beginning it was the god-king that died, not some obscure criminal).

Up till almost the end of the Middle Ages many European kings were probably pagan in secret, and it seems likely that the sudden death that overtook so many of them was in some cases ritual murder. William Rufus was an open pagan, and his memory has of course been besmirched by the Christian chroniclers, although he does not seem to have been besmirched by the Christian chroniclers and successors. His murder was clearly ritual, and accepted by him voluntarily.

GOD OF THE WITCHES

Thomas à Becket, Joan of Arc, and Gilles de Rais, were substitutes for their various kings, and accepted or contrived their deaths.

The witches were organised into "covens", or groups of thirteen, which included the Incarnate God, or his personal representative. The various countries of Europe were covered by a network of these "covens". The religion was international, and included most of the Old World, and probably the New, though Dr. Murray's book deals principally with Europe. It was in any case one of the oldest, if not *the* oldest, religion in the world. It is interesting to note that witch practices in Eastern England were strongly influenced by those of the Lapps and the Finns, who were all regarded as born witches, and were greatly feared. Finnish seamen, as late as the days of the clipper ships, were often persecuted by the captain and crew, if the ship on which they sailed ran into a calm, or a serious storm.

Christ and his twelve disciples formed a coven, and Christ's death, as recorded in the New Testament, looks suspiciously like a pre-arranged affair, a voluntary sacrifice. (Whether Christ existed or not does not affect the story, which as it stands resembles a witch-sacrifice).

The witches were often spoken of in close connection with the "fairies". This term is now become one of derision, because of the gossamer-winged sprites that flit through the pages of children's picture books. But this is only a recent development. The sprites were more or less a creation of Shakespeare. Before the sixteenth century, and in those parts of the world unaffected by Shakesperian fantasy, they were described as people of flesh and blood, though shorter than the average European, and endowed with magical powers. In reality they were the descendants of Neolithic inhabitants of Europe, with an admixture of subsequent Bronze Age peoples. Originally they came from the Mediterranean region, and were short and dark, of Iberian race, like the modern Welsh, and it is perhaps no coincidence that there was little persecution of witches in Wales.

These people lived on, mainly in re-

mote places such as moors and on hills and downland, retaining their own society, customs, and religion. The various invaders of Western Europe, Celtic and Germanic, made war upon them and tried to exterminate them, and they were reduced to carrying on a sort of Mau-Mau resistance movement in self defence. In studying the records of these so-called "fairies" we get an idea of what the earliest civilisation in Europe was like. In many ways they were a more civilised people than the Celts and Saxons, but were not so skilled in the art of war, and used bronze and not iron weapons, and so were driven out of the fertile parts of the country.

In consequence they were forced to abandon agriculture, and to become a pastoral people. Like the ancient Piets they practised communism, there was social equality between the sexes, and there was no obligation for the woman to be faithful to her husband. This sexual freedom would by itself be sufficient to explain why all good Christians hated these people. But they also refused to embrace Christianity, and were prepared to defend their own way of life against the surrounding population by anything from sorcery to poisoned arrows. "The animal is vicious, when attacked it defends itself." They were hated with an intensity that is inexplicable if they were only pretty little creatures that children could play with. The penalty for associating with them was at one time death, as it was for associating with gypsies, nevertheless they were finally absorbed by the surrounding peoples, and their story passed into legend.

Dr. Murray's theories are revolutionary, and completely at variance with those generally accepted. But they do explain the facts at our disposal, whereas the theory that large sections of the population spent their lives worshipping the principle of evil can, I think, be dismissed as absurd. Attenuated forms of the witch-cult still survive in out-of-the-way parts of Europe, particularly in peasant communities, and since indifference to religion seems to be increasing in urban areas it may well survive Christianity after all.

ARTHUR W. ULOTH.

Femme Fatale

NOW that *Carmen Jones* has arrived in London (at the Odeon, Marble Arch) we shall doubtless be told that Prosper Mérimée and Georges Bizet are both spinning in their graves. I have no sympathy with such pedantry. This is an unusual and exceptionally fine film.

The music is unmistakably Bizet's, though the score has been hotted up a bit in places, but a new book and new lyrics have been provided by Oscar Hammerstein II. The plot follows the original pattern in the same way that the plot of *The Young Lovers* followed that of *Romeo and Juliet*. Carmen Jones works in a parachute factory, but she seems to have little interest in helping the war effort. Charged with damaging government property (a parachute that gets torn in a fight between Carmen and another girl), she is packed off to the civilian jail at nearby Masonville in the reluctant charge of Joe, the corporal she has set her heart on (Don José in the opera). The rest follows naturally enough. Carmen escapes, the corporal goes to the glasshouse, they meet again at a café, and they go off to Chicago with Husky Miller, the prizefighter (Escamillo the bullfighter in the original), and his entourage. The inevitable climax of jealousy and death follows.

The lyrics are quite good and always appropriate. The "Habañera" has been tricked out with the words you can see on the attractive posters now decorating the tube stations. The Toreador's song now goes: "Stand up and fight until you hear the bell".

The acting by the all-negro cast is much better than one usually sees in the majority of films. The three principals, Carmen (Dorothy Dandridge), Joe (Harry Belafonte), and Husky Miller (Joe Adams) are outstanding.

Carmen Jones will have a strong appeal for many anarchists. As played by Dorothy Dandridge she is an overpoweringly feminine young woman who makes Marilyn Monroe seem like a frigid misandrist. She can't stand being cooped up, and she has a refreshing dislike of the conventions that govern other people's lives. Marriage has no attraction for her. When the possessive Joe, to justify a jealous outburst, tells her he loves her she retorts "That doesn't give you the right to own me. No man's going to keep me on a leash. I've got

to be free or I won't stay at all." But I am afraid that some comrades will find her a little bit irresponsible. All, I am sure, will regret her reliance on superstition. But all, I am equally sure, will approve when she tells us, after she has drawn the fatal nine of spades, that she will live every second of her life until the end.

There is not a square inch of pink skin in the entire film, but this does not make the negro players seem like beings apart. What it does show is that the colour of their skin is irrelevant. In Joe we see a man (any man) destroyed by jealousy, and what interests us in them all is their humanity, which is also our humanity.

The chief singing voices have been dubbed, but this is not so dreadful as it sounds as it is the usual practice to record musical numbers in advance. Sopranos would not smile quite so widely if they were really singing that top C.

The film is in CinemaScope, and for the benefit of those who have not seen it perhaps I should explain that this system uses a screen with proportions of about 1:2½ as against the conventional screen with proportions of 4:5. This is achieved by using a hypergonal lens to compress the picture, rather as a distorting mirror makes fat people seem thin, and to expand it again when it is projected. It should not be confused with the abominable "panoramic" screen, which achieves a wider picture by masking the top and bottom of a conventional picture and showing only the middle.

The film is also equipped with stereophonic sound, which means that the sound comes from the part of the screen where it appears to originate and occasionally offscreen from the appropriate side or the back of the auditorium. The gain in realism is considerable, and it is an innovation well worth having. The magnetic recording gives improved fidelity and transients are noticeably better.

The colour is by De Luxe, one of the better—though certainly not the best—of the integral tripack systems that are now being so widely used.

As this is not the science column I will not go into any more technicalities, but will content myself with a simple recommendation to go and see *Carmen Jones* for yourself. E.P.

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KENYA TRAGEDY Continued from p. 1

minded; they would sup with the devil if it were good for business!)

Something more than the removal of the shadow of the gallows and the substitution of the detention camp and the continued tyranny of the white settlers is needed to bring an end to the violence in Kenya.

Only a few years ago a somewhat similar situation existed in Palestine. No one so far has suggested that a useful lesson was provided by that experience for application to Kenya. With the experience gained in rounding up Africans (28,000—or nearly the equivalent of the total white population of Kenya—were rounded up in the Nairobi area during April and May last year), the Commander in Chief should start by rounding up all the white population. They should be screened and classified as whites, greys and blacks. Those who were of the opinion that Kenya was a white man's country should be classified as whites, and ordered to pack their belongings and all available air transport should be put at their disposal to fly them into "exile", giving them a choice between a small-holding in the Isle of Wight or a boarding house in Torquay. They might even be offered a pension as well. Those who were whites but who declared themselves prepared to undertake a course in citizenship should be placed in the grey category. Finally those who were willing to remain in Kenya as citizens with the same rights as the Africans; who were prepared to work and not employ slave labour (which would also mean agreement to break up the large estates) these would be the blacks and they would be released at once, and might be incorporated into a goodwill mission first visiting the detention camps where they would explain what had taken place, then by holding public meetings and finally informing Mau Mau by means of leaflets dropped from planes, over loudspeakers and through Mau Mau contact men. In fact they could release the detainees and let them send their own delegates to the forest hide-outs.

★

THIS may all sound quite fantastic. Yet all we have done is to

use all the non-violent methods of the British in Kenya with this difference: that we have assumed that Kenya having seventeen times as many Africans as white men is primarily an African territory, whereas the Government has all along assumed that the rights of 30,000 white folk override those of five million Africans.

In our opinion it is far more human to "banish" (we can hardly be accused of using the word literally!) a few thousand white "irreconcilables" to the temperate climate of the English South Coast (or where they will!) than to declare, as did Mr. Blundell, that the government would "deport for life" and "detain for life" anything from six thousand Africans, and that many "irreconcilables" would go to an island in Lake Victoria.

In the past two years of the Emergency in Kenya, casualties as a result of the fighting alone have totalled nearly 10,000 killed and 2,000 wounded. Besides, some 800 Africans have been hanged for crimes extending from suspected Mau Mau support to murder, and no figures are available for those liquidated by the security forces without the semblance of a trial. There are, furthermore, 60,000 Africans in detention camps.

To maintain this kind of "law and order" in Kenya more than 35,000 British and African troops and Kikuyu guards are now in action, and by the end of last year it was estimated that the Emergency had cost £22 millions and was now running at the rate of £1 million a month.

This is the price in human life, effort and misery that is being paid to retain a few thousand white "irreconcilables" as lords and masters in Kenya. And if in this country we allow the barbarities of some Mau Mau actions to obscure the real facts and to justify barbarities that are being committed in our name, then human conscience and dignity have indeed sunk to low depths.

§Based on the figures given by the Kenya War Council and quoted by Reuter 19/10/54.

THE TOOLS OF AUTHORITY Continued from p. 2

As always with scapegoating, the facts of the matter are irrelevant. Any excuse does so long as the attack falls upon a defenceless individual who has not embraced the coercive system.

With Jew-baiting the cry of 'Christ killers!' is a very effective hate-raising slogan that appeals to many good Christians. The equally obvious fact that since the action took place in Israel the first followers of Christ must also have been Jews is conveniently overlooked.

Quite as much pseudo-scientific nonsense is talked to justify colour prejudice. In emphasising how much the negro's flat nose, long arms and protruding jaw "proves" his closer relation to the ape the racially superior white moron forgets that his own possession of body hair, thin lips and uncrinkled hair puts him closer to the ape than is the negro.

Such irrational attitudes are encouraged by those in power. It is useful for the Doormat to have someone to feel better than. Economic motives are often involved, too. The poor White in the Southern States could better be manipulated by playing him off against the even poorer negro.

The direct relation between economic pressure and mob violence was beautifully shown by Hovland and Sears. Taking the value of the cotton crop for 14 Southern States over the years 1882 to 1930 they found that as the value of cotton went down so the number of lynchings went up.

Eventually the Unions began to get wise to this one, realising that a population of underprivileged helots must threaten the job security of the privileged helots. So negro prejudice in the States is dying despite the efforts of southern Big Business to keep it hot.

Regarding the way irrational beliefs are spread we must not ignore the influence of the family. In a study which is not so often referred to in the U.S.A. now that a new scapegoat has been found, Horowitz discovered that children of Communist parents did not display any colour prejudice. We are bound to admire the Kremlin's enlightened egalitarian attitude on the colour question. We regret only that their attitude towards the negro stems from the philosophy that all the proletariat are equally Doormats.

Nationalism and scapegoating go hand in hand with the economic motive. The dispossession of Jews in Germany provided Hitler's thugs with loot besides practice in brutality. When Jews became scarce after a while it was necessary to

enlarge the scope of the term Jew in order to provide fresh meat.

There is the story of the two German workers reading an official bulletin: "I see another anti-Jewish campaign begins on Sunday," says one. "Yes," replies the other, "I suppose that means another wage cut on Monday."

Whenever a nation is in a bad way the time is ripe for the authorities to produce a scapegoat. In France after the defeat of 1870 the Dreyfus affair was used to whip up anti-Jewish hysteria.

Dreyfus was framed as a spy by those virtuous Children of God, the Roman Catholics. The only difference between this instance and the state of affairs in Nazi Germany was that the Catholics did not fully control the French government, and eventually people like Zola were able to force a retrial and expose the conspiracy.

Once the scapegoat had been branded both the government and military authorities were obliged to support the Catholics in covering up the crime. For it is axiomatic that those in authority never make mistakes, and in particular a miscarriage of justice is impossible. Only the courageous integrity of a fellow officer, Piquart, and the sharp pen of Zola saved Dreyfus.

Piquart, having read the dossier of the trial, mentioned his doubts to his superiors who promptly despatched him to the Tunisian hinterland on a dangerous expedition. Zola, having the public's ear and no Commanding Officer, wrote an open letter to the President of the Republic, was convicted of libel and forced to flee.

But, eventually, through the heroic efforts of these two independent men Dreyfus was vindicated. True, he had five years on Devil's Island to his credit before the slip was admitted, and by that time the Socialists and Radicals had recognised the dangers of anti-Semitism and new government officials could blandly disclaim any responsibility for the scapegoat's ill fortune.

From our point of view the lesson to be noted is that by making enough noise it is sometimes possible to make the Boots think again.

Now, the gentlemen in the Kremlin have a much more logical approach. Since scapegoats are useful and political enemies have to be disposed of somehow or other, the whole business of scapegoating is organised very efficiently bearing these worthy ends in mind. When anything goes wrong, as things do even in the Perfect Socialist Society, it is vital that the Doormats should not fall into the error of blaming Big Brother, alias Big Boot. All that Big Boot needs to do to avert this tragedy is to discover, or rather have discovered, a crypto-fascist, imperialist lackey, Enemy of the People who smuggled himself into a high place due to the negligence of some bungling, bureaucratic, Enemy of the People. The plot is unmasked in the nick of time. Heads roll. And the State machine, cleared of the crypto-fascist grit, trundles on to further triumphs of Man over Humanity.

Apart from killing two birds with one stone the only really new gimmick that the Inquisitors of the Perfect Socialist Society have introduced is the brainwashing technic.† For those not familiar

†See FREEDOM, 31.7.54.

THE TEA RACKET IS IN LONDON

To blame the present price of tea on the export duty of 1s. 6d. a pound levied by Ceylon was "incorrect and misleading," said a statement issued from the office of the High Commissioner for Ceylon in London last week. It continued:

"The main reasons for the increase in the price of tea are the greater demand for tea due to higher consumption, and the depletion of stocks in the London market as a result of the London dock strike. The stocks of tea have fallen to 64,000,000lb. which is the lowest level in the history of the tea trade. As a result there is keen competition for spot tea, and it is this intense competition that has forced up prices and helped to maintain them at the present levels."

The statement said that the export duty levied in a producing country was paid by the local producer. The present price of tea was determined "not by the producers in Ceylon, but by the overseas purchasers who, in their bidding, reflect public demand."

So now we know that the racketeers are not in Ceylon but right on our doorstep. Not that it makes much difference where they are.

RIDGELEY CUMMINGS.

AMERICAN LETTER

LOS ANGELES, JANUARY.

MANY, if not most, of my Hollywood friends are strugglers. And like a transgressor, the way of a struggler is hard. Some are gifted and may make it some day, but with others their ambition exceeds their energy and talent.

If this sounds unkind, let me hasten to say that I like them none the less because they are still floundering around at the foot of the artistic scale. To dig deep into the awful truth, I probably enjoy their company more for their lack of success.

It is irritating to be continually surrounded by people with more money and fame than oneself. For they are constant reminders of the lack of justice that prevails in the handing out of the good things of life.

This is particularly true of those one knew in their early and struggling days, and I must admit that I seldom see those few celebrities whom I knew way back when. I'm not mad at them and I'm not above accepting an occasional invitation to some event I would otherwise miss.

But I let them phone me. And usually when they phone I have a previous engagement to drink coffee and play scrabble with a bunch of actors, writers, musicians or other hopefuls who don't know where their next job is coming from.

All this by way of introduction to the discussion of a comedy titled "Candle Light", in which three of my struggling friends were fortunate enough to secure parts.

To begin with, "Candle Light" is not a very good play. It deals with a prince and his valet and a baroness and her maid. There is a mixup of identities, with the servants masquerading as nobility, aided and abetted by their employers, but deceiving only each other, and that not very long.

THREE ON A CANDLE

Hereditary titles seem strangely dated in these days of cinema royalty, economic barons and TV crown princes. Furthermore the play has no solidarity, no timelessness, no message, nor any function other than entertainment. To be amusing, it requires brisk direction with the light touch, plus wit, fire, spirit.

A lover of the theatre whether the play be good or only fair, I took a mild interest in this production of "Candle Light", sitting in briefly on a few rehearsals and once acting as chauffeur to see that some of the cast got to the theatre.

My reward was an invitation to opening night. I went with some misgivings, for the rehearsals had been wooden and dull, with the potential humour of the lines seldom realized. The actual performance was less than brilliant, though at least one of my friends acquitted himself well and the other two were passable.

After the opening we all met backstage and my actor friends indicated in no uncertain terms that they hoped, nay expected, to read something favourable about themselves and their play, with me as the writer. What publication they expected the laudatory lines to appear in they left unspecified, assuming no doubt that such boring details were a matter best reserved for my ingenuity.

I promised to write something but explained that on the basis of the first night's performance it wouldn't be too favourable, that perhaps I had better defer comment until I had seen the play again, in the second week, after they had polished it up a little.

The second week has gone by, and the third week too, and I still haven't gone back, other matters intervening. During the interim however, I did see two of the three and asked them some details about the play, such as who wrote it.

Although they had studied the book diligently and knew their lines, neither could remember the name of the playwright. The best information they could provide was that P. G. Wodehouse, the

English humorist, wrote the adaptation and that the late Leslie Howard had appeared in the original Broadway production.

With these slender clues I set about learning the author's name and something of the play's history, for a discussion of a theatrical work without mentioning the playwright is as incomplete as Lady Macbeth without her dagger.

During the course of my research I discovered that "Candle Light" was written in German by Siegfried Geyer. It had its American premiere on September 30, 1929 at the Empire Theatre in New York and lasted for 128 performances.

Leslie Howard was indeed in the cast, as my friends had informed me, but he left the play after a month to take over the lead in another and better production. Others in the cast were Reginald Owen and the late Gertrude Lawrence.

With actors of this calibre it was understandable why the play had been a hit, particularly when one remembers that it opened in an era of frivolity and false prosperity, just before the Black Friday stock market crash of October, 1929.

The rôle that pulled Leslie Howard out of his valet's costume was that of Peter Standish in "Berkeley Square", a fantasy involving a flight backward through time, one of the best plays in the early science-fiction genre. Opening November 4, 1929, it ran 229 performances, a hundred more than Geyer's Viennese comedy.

If the Hollywood production under discussion had just had another Gertie Lawrence or Leslie Howard in it, my comments might have been more rapturous. As it is, I'm afraid my three friends in "Candle Light" won't be too pleased to see so many words devoted to subjects other than themselves. Their names are Bill Bagdad, Rae King and Gil Ward, all nice and short for marquee purposes. Maybe some day you'll be seeing them in lights.

RIDGELEY CUMMINGS.

with this wonder of the atomic era, briefly the idea is so to confuse the victim by lack of sleep and unrelenting grilling that he can't tell his armhole from breakfasttime and readily puts his autograph to a statement that he helped Trotsky scuttle the battleship "Potemkin". For some reason the Doormats are supposed to find this very convincing.

Nothing much need be said by way of summing up, except that if ever you come across a pack of Doormats yapping at the heels of a scapegoat try to infuse some guts into the jackals so that they direct their attentions to the proper quarter. If this should prove impossible, at least show the victim that not everyone is against him and help him to avoid the pit of joining the Doormats.

Aggression, like all complex aspects of human behaviour, is learned, despite Daddy Freud's drivel about a Death Instinct. In a non-authoritarian society aggression cannot be learned because it is never taught. Our task is to treat the gangrenous tumours who have vested interest in hate to a dash of healing sunlight.

BOB GREEN.

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FEB. 6—Bonar Thompson on
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