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LONDON LETTER

By Gregory MacDonald

It is a custom that at the beginning of a new reign the chief clergy and the privileged public bodies present their loyal addresses to the King in person. This ceremony took place last week, and King Edward made of it a representative gathering to which he spoke in the democratic fashion now associated with the crown. His speech was both interesting and important in days when too many claims are based on rights and privileges:

"As Prince of Wales I bore a device with an ancient motto, 'I serve.' As King, I shall hold this in constant remembrance, for a King can perform no higher function than that of service." He recalled from his days as Prince of Wales both the hardships of war for the common man and the hardships "of those who since then, through on fault of their own, have had the misfortune to endure long periods of unemployment." And in conclusion the King assured his hearers that his constant endeavour would be "to promote the establishment of peace throughout the world, and a revival of that commercial and industrial activity, both in this country and abroad, that alone can provide the opportunity to work which it is the right of every citizen to enjoy."

There was a mild political sensation when the Government suffered defeat three times in the course of one week, twice in the House of Lords and once in the Commons. The verdict of the Lords did not matter very much, as the attendances were small and the questions at issue were unimportant. The defeat in the Commons was more serious. Here again the attendance was small — less than half the full House — and in a sense the reverse

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STATE ENTERPRISES UNDER INVESTIGATION

Following the National Economic Conference of a few weeks ago at which a number of important conclusions were adopted with the view of rectifying existing economic maladjustments, a special Commission for the investigation of state owned or controlled enterprises was duly appointed at the instance of the Council of Ministers. The Commission comprises a score of the leading officials and businessmen of the country, many of whom have been, for the last few years, conducting an incessant campaign against undue interference of the State with private business.

At the first meeting of the Commission, held a fortnight ago, under the chairmanship of Dr. Górecki, Minister of Commerce and Industry, the following board was chosen: W. Byrka, M. P., Chairman, J. Hołyński, and L. Zadrowski of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry as Vice-Chairmen, and H. Brun, A. Snopczyński and Dr. Maciszewski as members. Mr. Brun is a well known industrialist, while Dr. Maciszewski is acting President of the Scheibler, Grohman Textile Works in Łódź, and President of the Łódź Chamber of Commerce. Among the remaining members of the Commission we may mention well known businessmen and economists, Wierzbicki, President of the Leviathan, Aret, Fajans, President of the Union of Banks in Poland, Gliwic, former Minister of Commerce and Industry, who is identified with a number of foundries and mining enterprises in the Silesia district, Battaglia and Krzyżanowski, both prominent economists, and a number of others.

At the above meeting of the Commission it was decided that the investigation should be carried out along the following lines: a) management, operations and the effect of the State enterprises on the budget of the State, b) effect on private business,

c) working out of draft of measures to be taken in order: 1) to limit the business activities of the State, 2) to bring about a uniformity as to the conditions under which State and Private enterprises operate i.e. in so far as taxation, social insurance, bookkeeping etc. is concerned, 3) to bring about a higher efficiency in State enterprises.

For the purpose of the investigation, all the enterprises have been divided into twelve groups, and the experts of the Commission have been allotted their places depending on their knowledge in the given field.

The State enterprises to be investigated fall into the following general groups: a) commercialized i.e. possessing a separate legal entity as prescribed by the Presidential Decree of 1927, b) non-commercialized i.e. constituting a part of certain Ministries or State Agencies, without a legal entity, and not publishing their balance sheets, c) enterprises of a private character, in which the State directly or indirectly, for example, through State Banks, has acquired a controlling interest.

At the meeting of the Commission, the list of all of the above enterprises was compiled and made public for the first time. It includes the following enterprises, the investigation of which has been or will be started shortly:

1) State Printing Shops, 2) numerous subsidiaries of the State Forestry Department, exploiting over one half of the timber area of Poland and operating hundreds of saw mills, pulp factories etc. 3) State Meat Industry Works, 4) State Road Building Materials Factory, 5) State School Book Publishing Company, 6) Enterprises of the State Hygienic Institute, 7) State Water Works in Upper Silesia, 8) State Grain and Produce Agency, which had been chiefly engaged in

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THE SEASON'S GREETINGS TO OUR READERS

PARIS

The Paris shoe designer Andre Perugia has brought something of a hornet's nest about his ears since he made known his readings of feminine character by the foot.

Years of study, says M. Perugia, have taught him that women with a firm, even walk have sex appeal, that splay-footed women are timid, that women who lack rhythm in their walk are nervous and that pigeon-toed women are stupid and dull. It is the last of these findings that has been hotly contested by public and press, with examples cited every here and there of pigeon-toed women who were and are brilliant intellectuals in other walks of life beside its sidewalks.

Eminent foot specialists have been asked for their views, some declaring that there is nothing in the theory and that there is little or no connection between feet and character, such things as pigeon toes and bunions being purely physical defects.

All the same, Andre has directed the Parisian masculine glance groundwards, whence it is ascending somewhat anxiously.

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Arrangements are proceeding for the making of a costume museum at the Hotel des Reservoirs at Versailles. The shade of the Marquise de Pompadour, patron of the arts, whose former home this was, should watch developments with interest, though the Hotel des Reservoirs has had many masters since the days of Madame de Pompadour. It was a resort for week-end gatherings of cosmopolitan society and later was the house allotted to the Austrian delegates at the Peace Conference of 1919.

The Pompadour used to pass along a passage from her own apartments to those of the King in the Palace and this very passage will be used to connect the museum with the Galerie des Glaces.

MADRID

Madrid has four hundred churches but no cathedral. It is half a century since work was begun on its cathedral and it is not yet half finished. It looks as if the thirty workmen employed upon the Gothic edifice rising so slowly near the former Royal Palace will be on the job to the end of their days.

So far about \$ 2,000,000 has been spent on the building, towards which the State in 1882 decided to contribute \$ 15,000 annually. When the Republic suppressed the Budget allowance for the Church in 1931, this steady income was cut off. Another and strange source of income is the sale of the tombs in the crypt of the building, part of which is already finished. Each tomb costs \$ 16,500 but so far only thirteen persons have been buried there.

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INVESTIGATION

(Continued from page 1, col. 3)

the purchases of grain in Poland and its export to prevent further collapse in agricultural prices, 9) Chemical Works at Moscie and Chorzów, the biggest enterprise of its kind in Poland, formerly under the management of Prof. Mościcki, now President of the Republic, 10) "Polmin" Mineral Oils, 11) "Starachowice," one of the biggest steel and iron concerns in Poland, 12) "Brzeszcze," the coal mining concern, 13) "Tesp," Salt of Potassium concern, 14) "Boruta," chemical works, 15) "Grodzisk," chemical works, 16) Union of the Polish Mechanics of America, metals and machineries, 17) "Foundry Pokój," mining and foundries, 18) Polish Navigation (Żegluga Polska), Steamship company, 19) "Polbryt," Polish-British Steamship company, 20) "Gal," Gdynia-America Steamship Lines, Inc., the most important Polish Navigation Company, operating the two newly bought liners of 15,000 tons each, M/S Piłsudski and M/S Batory, 21) Refrigerators and Warehouses at Gdynia, 22) "Lot," Polish Air Lines, possessing a practical monopoly of Commercial air transportation, 23) "Orbis" travel bureau, possessing a practical monopoly, 24) "Polish Radio," the only Radio Programme Agency in the whole country, 25) "Rella-Mella" oil company in Borysław, 26) Oil Company in Dantzig, 27) "Pollon" oil company in Lwów, 28) "Azot" chemicals, 29) Polish Ocean Agency, 30) Emmigraton Syndicate, 31) "Paged" Polish Lumber Export Agency 32) Mail Advertising Agency.

As it may be seen from the above, the importance of such numerous enterprises for the whole of the Polish economic life is far reaching. State Banks and Monopolies as well as Military enterprises have been excluded from the scope of the investigation.

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THE SOVIET ARCTIC, THE NEW FRONTIER.

By Dr. Ruth Gruber.

Forty-three hunters and trappers living in an obscure region of the Arctic awoke one morning to find the eyes of the Soviet Union turned upon them. A group of scientists and engineers had sailed down the Yenisei and found their settlement, Igarka, a natural harbor north of the Arctic Circle.

The discovery of this commercial outlet in the heart of the great arctic frontier was broadcast through the nation; every newspaper in the land carried stories of the new seaport which was to release the vast timber wealth of Siberia.

Flying down the Yenisei to Igarka, now the focal point in the network of polar airways and seaways, I found a thriving boomtown of 15,000. In little more than six years these pioneers had surged northward across the Arctic Circle in the most significant migration of our time.

In surprisingly fluent English the port authorities welcomed me to the city and the special dinner where the newspaper staff was waiting with the inevitable question, — what do you think of our town?

But this was really my question. What, I wanted to know, was the town doing while we feasted and talked. Too restless to sleep, I walked out to a city as significantly alive, as self-confident, as purposeful as any industrial town south of the Arctic Circle. It was three in the morning, yet the docks, white in the glare of huge electric lights, were bustling with workers. Strong ruddy young men were driving American made wood-carriers which straddled their load between the wheels. In the yards filled with the sweet smell of freshly sawn lumber, older men and women were grading the planks, piling them to season in the Arctic air. And lined against the newly constructed wharf were lumber ships from most of the sea-going nations of Europe.

A WOMAN ITS LEADER.

With an energetic woman as its leader, Valentina Petrovna Ostrumova, the mother of two children and still in her early thirties, Igarka has become the central figure in the nation's restless desire for construction. Igarka's pioneers have built three large saw-mills on the swampy marshes of the Arctic, and constructed docks for ships to load in the six-mile natural harbor. Wooden houses have sprung up, followed quickly by nine schools, four hospitals, clubs, gymnasiums, a movie house, a dance hall, a broadcasting station, a marriage bureau and the inevitable steam baths.

Now a international seaport, Igarka has completely dispelled the dread of food shortage, inherited from wri-

ters who sat in southern attics writing of the barren north. Cows and pigs sent north from Siberia are now multiplying in Igarka. Tomatoes cucumbers, kohlrabi, tall wheat and rye and about thirty varieties of vegetables are grown outdoors.

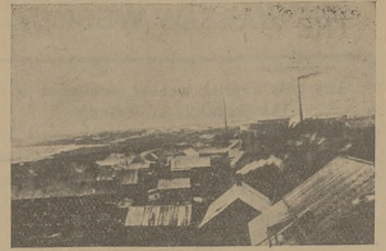
About a month after I had come to Igarka, a laden ship made its annual autumn trip, bringing additional supplies. We had expected its arrival and now three loud blasts caused a sudden excited exodus from the open market place down to the docks. The ship threw out its anchors and began to unload its wares on a special wharf. Into the Arctic light emerged iron beds, china, linens, dried fruits, springs, shoes, woolen underwear, fur-lined coats, sweaters, dictionaries, school books, magazines and hunting supplies gathered from all corners of this far-flung nation and brought to the young city before the approach of the polar winter.



A Lumber Convoy

Work does not cease when the last ship leaves Igarka in the middle of September, when the Yenisei freezes and the inhabitants draw out their sledges and polar dogs, bundle themselves in fur parkas and switch on electric lights during most of the day. Children return to school, studying not only the three R's and geography, history and the social sciences, but English, to be able to speak to the English seamen who return in the summer. All winter the saw-mills operate, preparing the wood which had been floated in the spring from the Angara down the Yenisei to be loaded on next summer's Kara Sea ships.

Following the route of these Kara Sea ships, I sailed down the Yenisei to Dickson Island, the radio and coaling base of the Soviet Arctic. In Moscow, Professor Otto J. Schmidt, head of the Northern Sea Route Administration had described Dickson to me as a paradise in the Arctic. In glowing terms, he had pictured the scientists and colonists wintering on the little island, with ice-breakers patrolling their coast and radio operators sending dispatches and



Boom Town of the Arctic

weather forecasts from the largest radio station in the Arctic.

Circling above us as we neared the island was Dickson's cruising seaplane, for, like the rest of the Soviet Union, Dickson is air-minded. With a special seaplane for scouting, hunting and life-saving, Dickson Island is the terminus for the air route from Moscow to the Yenisei and down the river from Krasnoyarsk to Igarka and the Arctic Ocean. An all-year service was recently inaugurated, and pilots now fly not only in the summer but through the nine months of polar darkness.

In the harbor, greeting us as we entered, were five British ships which had journeyed from London across the Kara Sea, stopping here for coal brought from Spitzbergen, Kuznetz and the Ural Mountains. From here they would continue their caravanning up the Yenisei to Igarka to load red wood and white wood and larch to build furniture for Great Britain.

With a group of the colonists, I trekked across the three settlements on the island, Old Dickson, Port Dickson and New Dickson, built in 1934. The ships and coal barges lay at Port Dickson. And in Old and New Dickson, facing each other from opposite ends of the island, were the wireless stations for exchanging information and advice with ice-breakers, freighters and the forty-one other radio stations in the Soviet Arctic.

Following the international convention, these Soviet polar stations wire their meteorological observations five times a day to ships, planes and weather bureaus throughout the Soviet Union. The international "Polarfront," predicting the weather for the entire globe, is establishing the Arctic as "the weather-kitchen of the world."

Professor Schmidt had been right; Dickson Island was a scientist's paradise. Secluded in the Arctic Ocean, these men were free to bury themselves in their laboratories, pour over charts, predict the weather and

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ARCTIC

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construct new instruments to analyze the ice and study the changing currents and tides. For diversion there was Moscow or New York on the radio, an evening social at the club or a polar bear hunt, from which they returned with exciting yarns of the "bigger one" that got away.

Back of their hydrological studies lay one all-pervading purpose, the conquest of the Arctic, the opening of the Northeast Passage from Europe to the Orient. Lying almost in the middle of this trade route and less than half a day's flight from Outer Mongolia, the region observers call the tinder box of the hour, Dickson Island is today the commercial and strategic center of the Soviet Arctic.

Art, Music, Literature

ORPHEUS.

Last season the *Teatr Nowy* gave us our first taste of the dramatic writing of Jean Cocteau by presenting his deep and extraordinary play, *The Infernal Machine*, a sort of modern solution of the immemorial Oedipus story. And now on the boards of the same theatre we saw a special performance among others of a second play by Cocteau, *Orpheus*, prepared by a group of our youngest stage directors fresh from the *State Institute of Theatre Art*. As is evident from the title, the theme is again an ancient Greek one, a speciality of the author no doubt. In contrast to *The Infernal Machine*, which was a play of sustained intensity from beginning to end, *Orpheus*, though called a tragedy by Cocteau, is a play enlivened with many moments of sparkling humour.

This modern version of the celebrated Orpheus and Eurydice legend is an exceptionally clever combination of sagacious thinking and terror effects that succeed each other with a lively crackle of witty fireworks in ideas no less than in words. It is possible that the author had deeper motives and wanted to bring out a deeper sense in this old legend; and perhaps the symbol of death so precisely defined in the person of a beautiful woman with her coterie of surgeons is intended to emphasize some vital truth applicable to our own age; but in spite of all these earmarks of profound import, the play makes the impression only of a masterpiece of thought juggling, a well exercised humour and wit, and a high talent for throwing a new spotlight on old and well known truths. It interests us, therefore, only as an acrobatic act does, no longer than it lasts; *Orpheus* being just a stunt in intellectual acrobatics is promptly forgotten when the stunt is over. Nevertheless, we must

admit that Cocteau takes our breath away while he performs, and is worth seeing if only for the thrill.

This play in the *Teatr Nowy* was the debut of Miss Krystyna Severinówna, as a stage-director. She prepared it with intelligence, deftly catching its right tone at all moments, now realistic and vital, now fantastic and grotesque. We may say that this performance reflects credit on her directing abilities.

The players, especially Piaskowska as Eurydice, Chodecki (Orpheus) and Kreczmar (Heurtebis) did excellent work in their respective roles, incidentally quite difficult in Cocteau's version, and gave them full, natural, convincing characters. The low-pitched expressive voice of Eichlerówna, together with her uncommon personal beauty made of her just the type of apparition Cocteau needed to portray death; her interesting acting, besides, gave her portrayal a magnetic intensity.

The decorations were by Ujejski.

Arno

THE HOFFMAN SCANDAL

(Premiere in the *Teatr Letni*).

The story of Cinderella is perhaps the most popular and inexhaustible source of pleasant little comedies that exists. There is scarcely a comedy writer however ingenious he might be, who has not at one time or other, in one way or another used this beautiful little tale of our childhood. And just as we always have an indulgent heart for long and well loved characters, so Cinderella in whatever guise she may appear, always awakens our warmer sentiments and brings to our faces that pleasant smile that rises from the assurance that all will turn out well and that all the tribulations and adventures of our childhood heroine will be surmounted.

English comedies, especially the light, natural, sunny, ones whose humour has its birth in pure simplicity and sentiment and never strains at complicated effects, such comedies or rather farces, have used the Cinderella story so many times that we hardly see how it has avoided being kneaded to death. Yet this could not prevent Walter Ellis from using it again for his new play, *The Hoffman Scandal*, which is in reality an exact transcription of the classical tale. Only the time and place of the action have been changed, and the names of the characters.

And so here the ugly step-mother is Lady Blundell, Jenny's rich aunt, who neglects her sweet young niece, who in turn has the quite modern aspiration and dream of making a career in Hollywood. The wicked sister is Jenny's rich cousin, Isabella Blundell, a pronounced egotist, exclusively devoted to her own pleasures and her ambitious marital plans. The fairy god-mother this time is honest old



Alina
Halska

PRESS REVIEW

Kurjer Polski, writing of the effect of the international situation on the exchange, says that, after the German breaking of the Locarno Treaty and the attacks made on Hitler by the French Press and part of the English, that one might have expected signs of nervousness and fluctuation on the exchange.

Meanwhile quite the contrary has happened. It has valued the situation quite calmly, and come to the conclusion that there is no need to fear an armed dispute, and that, as a field for discussion has been found, an understanding in one way or another must follow.

The same journal comments on the article of Winston Churchill in the *Evening Standard* in which he said that Hitler is continuing his efforts to bring about misunderstandings between England and France and also to foment differences between English public opinion and the English Government.

There is no doubt that in Hitler's proposals there are motives calculated to captivate pacifically disposed English opinion encouraged by the clergy. It has always been and still is a fault of English diplomacy, in spite of its magnificently organized intelligence service, that it does not know the actual psychology and currents of opinion among different nations. We might risk the statement that the English orient themselves better in the moods of exotic nations or races than in those of European nations.

The German *Völkischer Beobachter* discusses Polish foreign policy during recent days, stating that Poland is tending towards cooperation with the States lying between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. The writer states that

uncle Tom, Lady Blundell's brother, and Prince Charming a rich and very handsome young English aristocrat. All these characters are familiar as daylight to us, and so, knowing their "fairly tale" origin, we have no need nor desire to check the logic or probability of their behaviour; otherwise we should be puzzled to understand why Jenny suffered so terribly in her aunt's house when she might have a warm welcome at any time at her kind and lonely old uncle's.

Ellis treats his story with such pleasant humour and gives his characters so much liveliness and colour, that the only fault we may find is that he has a great tendency at times to go too deeply into the details of Jenny's adventures. This slows up the action and makes certain scenes monotonous. Perhaps after all we ought not to blame him too much (what author does not like to exercise his eloquence?), but rather the stage director Mr. Emil Chaberski, who was

the first aim of the understanding is to create a Baltic entente to which, perhaps, Lithuania may accede if, meanwhile, a relaxation in the Polish-Lithuanian tension is brought about. In view of the provocative behaviour of France after March 7, Poland having raised a protest in London against the violation of smaller states, Poland has thereby gained the moral right to stand at the head of a group of smaller states. Her protest in London met with full recognition from these states... Poland is aiming at the formation of a uniform front of north-east states. If she succeeds in securing this in the north, it will facilitate her action in the south.

The author remarks that these are only possibilities, but having every chance of realization.

Le Temps finds that it is high time that Italy should return to Europe. After her victory in Africa, she has now the best opportunity of liquidating the strife, and, taking into consideration her financial and economic condition, it lies in her best interests to end the war. Moreover the dramatic situation in Europe is such that she needs Italy.

Europe needs Italy, and nobody seriously thinks it would be possible to solve the difficulties connected with the present critical phase without her help. Doubtless Rome and London are both fully aware of this fact.

Robotnik points out that the Abyssinian War is one of these accomplished facts typical of Fascist policy.

The very fact that Fascism places before the world accomplished facts is the most characteristic feature of the present time. It proves that Fascism is, in its essence, a factor in view of which the non-Fascist world ought always to be in readiness. Unfortunately until now this has not been the case, and there-

a bit lax with the scissors, and so allowed the comedy to drag in spots.

The play was excellently cast. The rôle of Jenny is simply one great opportunity for an actress, and what a glorious one. It wins the sympathy of the audience from the first moment. And scenes like a clandestine visit in a young man's apartment, getting drunk on the stage, and the impersonation of another woman have always been counted as sure fire hits with any audience. With such trumps in her hand, an actress as intelligent and talented as Miss Romanówna could not help but make a great success.

It was with the greatest admiration, that we watched the playing of Miss Halska, as Isabella Blundell. What talent and what scope this artist must have to slip so easily and gracefully from the profound dramatic characterizations, so suited to her powers into the comic figure of the egotistic and shallow Isabella, and carry a

(Continued on page 6, col. 1).

fore Italian or German Fascism can allow themselves actions upon which they would never have ventured if Europe were not so disunited and disorganized.

Robotnik proceeds to maintain that the war might have been prevented if strong and purposeful sanctions against Italy had been applied. In any case, it would have been reduced to a minimum, and Italian Fascism would have received a deathblow.

But the differences of interest between France and England, and class interests of both capitalistic states coupled with the passivity and extreme neutrality of Russia, have enabled Italy to pursue its usurping campaign without great difficulty.

Finally, *Robotnik* attacks the policy of the Powers and the League of Nations which, through its weakness and indecision, has caused the Fascist Powers, Germany and Italy, to unite in spite of differences on the Austrian question and in spite of internal difficulties. They are now playing a greater rôle in international policy than ever before.

Gazeta Polska, writing of the attitude taken by Poland towards the breaking of the Locarno Treaty, says that it has met with universal approval outside the country. This is seen not only in the press, but also in the

warm support which the position taken by Minister Reck was given by the so-called neutral states, which entirely agreed with the opinion of the leader of Poland's foreign policy. — that small and less powerful states cannot be treated, against their will, as objects of the policy of Great Powers, and in any case the kind of move taken by the Great Powers ought to rest on the basis of the contracts, and not be fathered under the mantle of the League of Nations.

The *Gazeta Polska* points out that certain changes for the better have taken place in the situation of Poland since the period of the conclusion of the Locarno Treaty.

At that time, we had to count on the possibility of combat on two fronts. At present, we have a pact of non-aggression for many years with both our neighbours. The surplus of military potentiality of our neighbours is in a certain measure compensated.

Finally, concludes the *Gazeta*, with the abolishing of the Locarno Agreements which limited the automatic action of the Polish-French Alliance, this same automatism ought to be reinstated. Hence, there is no reason for sowing panic-stricken moods, as the opposition is trying to do.

The *Temps* gives voice to the disinclination of France to take part in sanctions against Italy, saying that it is difficult to agree to the conception that sanctions be applied in entire rigour against Italy while they are rejected in regard to Germany.

France cannot let herself be used eternally as an instrument for anti-Italian sanctions while sanctions against German violations may not even be placed on the order of the day for diplomatic discussion.

Art, Music, Literature

THE HOFFMAN SCANDAL.

(Continued from page 5, col. 2.)

comedy dialogue with masterly ease and truly Parisian brilliance.

The rôle of Lady Blundell was played by the well-known artist, Mrs. Duleba.

Mr. Michał Znicz, as Uncle Tom, took full advantage of his rôle to display the wealth of his humour and wit and to create a lovable almost Pickwickian type of a country Englishman.

Mr. Różycki played the modern Prince Charming with his usual finished elegance, and Mr. Roland gave us a very interesting bit of the exotic in his portrayal of the Greek prince.

The decorations by Jarocki were glaringly unsuccessful. To be sure the play itself mentions the rather doubtful aristocracy of the Blundell family, whose fortune was made in soap-products. But we hardly think the that the interior of Lady Blundell's house needed to have been so utterly lacking in taste and so disagreeable in colours. As a contrast the gorgeous dresses of Miss Halska and Miss Romanówna were a veritable fashion show, proving the exquisite taste of the firm *Chez Madelaine*.

—Arno.

THE FAMILY MASSOUBRE.

(La prière pour les vivants)

The Forsyte Saga opened a period in literature, which we might well call the "history of a family" movement. Galsworthy's masterpiece has found many imitators not so much in the exact sense of the word, but rather in the fact that they have taken the same type of theme. In a novel, it is much easier of course to develop such a comprehensive theme, as the history of a family presents, than in a play, for a playwright is limited by the exigencies of the stage and the patience of the audience. For this reason the history of a family when shown in the theatre, usually concentrates around one central figure.

Jacques Deval, the famous French author, whom we know from his splendid comedies in the style of *Mademoiselle or Etienne*, has just tried his hand at dramatizing a Galsworthian theme in his newest play *The Family Massoubre* (*La prière pour les vivants*). We see the whole life of the hero, Pierre Massoubre, spanning the period from 1873 till 1935. Massoubre is a type of the rich French bourgeois, as for that matter is his whole family. Deval paints in the background of his play with firm strokes, not sparing the bourgeoisie the discomfort of being

shown all their pettiness, egotism or superficiality, and in many places venting his malice on them. His purpose evidently is to show that the people of this sphere inherit their disagreeable traits of character and their callousness toward the weaker than themselves together with their money. That not even the hard school of experience can kindle a spark of sympathetic understanding in these people is shown by Massoubre's own treatment of the young engineer, who appeals to him, a financial potentate, for help in developing a new invention. Massoubre receives him coldly and gives him no help, although he could not have but remembered his own parallel experience long ago, when for lack of money he could not even spread a breakfast table to receive a minister, supposedly interested in his invention. No echoes of his own suffering remain in Massoubre, a man now utterly materialistic in whom all kinder feelings have long since been stifled. His father was the same before him, his son shows the same sterility of heart, and all things point to the certainty that his grand-son and namesake, Pierre, will inherit the same stony callousness.

The author seems to reach the conclusion that there is no room on this sphere for people of kind hearts and noble feelings, that such sentiments have been lost and trampled down in the battle for material prosperity and the indulgence of physical appetites.

Although Deval was able in this play to show more than one side of his uncommon talent - the unrelieved gloomy atmosphere is already too much for the spectator even before the play is half over, and he begins to wish for the end of it all with a certain measure of impatience.

Of course the *Teatr Polski* must be credited with great care in presenting *The Family Massoubre* but we might also say that this very care emphasized the play's defects. Mr. Leon Schiller, our great stage-director gave the performance the gravity and sombreness so characteristic of all his works to the disadvantage of the play, which really requires a faster pace. By not cutting the scenes, effective enough in themselves, but having no bearing on the action of the drama, he made the play drag far too much, so that the finale did not come until about one o'clock in the morning. Massoubre's death scene, for example, with its whole troop of ghosts might have been interesting only to a stage-director, but as a solution of the problem of death was so unconvincing as to be almost ridiculous (death appears to be a naked young athlete) and therefore quite unnecessary for the audience, which knows of Massoubre's impending death from the preceding scene. With generous use of the cancelling pencil and more efficiency

in changing sets, *The Family Massoubre* ought to be an interesting spectacle.

The cast includes some tens of actors. Except for the slow tempo imposed by the stage-director, there was nothing in their work, which did not deserve praise. Kazimierz Junosza-Stepowski, as Pierre Massoubre gave another impressive characterization, especially portraiture convincing in its of Massoubre's last years. Of the remaining men's rôles, all of which even down to the briefest episode were prepared with great care and understanding, those that made the deepest impression were: Gustaw Buszyński, Wacław Pawłowski, Zygmunt Chmielewski, Ludwik Fritsche and Stefan Michalak.

Among the woman players Miss Ewa Kunciewiczówna and Miss Janina Piaskowska had the best rôles. The former was perhaps a bit too monotonous and colourless as Mrs. Massoubre, but Miss Piaskowska was able to find the right accents of superficiality though not losing the saving grace of sincere feeling, so necessary in the part of Mrs. Tessonier.

The decorations by Roszkowska, Sigmund and Ujejski were quite satisfactory although the cut-outs in the window scenes were too short in perspective to appear natural.

Arno

HAMBURG

Geography without tears is the new-est treat for junior schoolchildren. Those who are considered too young to be bothered with such things as trade winds, isotherms and regional vegetation are to have their lessons at Hagenbeck's Animal Park at Stellingen. The animals will be re-arranged and grouped according to the Continent from which they come and will be accommodated in surroundings resembling the landscape of their country of origin.

* * *

BUDAPEST

This city intends to do away with drabness. The new houses that are going up all the time in town, seventy million pengos' worth are to be erected this year (about twenty-one million dollars) are very different in size and colour from the typical pre-war apartment house which looked like a fortress and contained some fifty flats. The new houses are washed with bright colours, contain only eight or ten flats and cost from a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand pengos.



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LONDON LETTER

(Continued from page 1, col. 1)

was a technical one because there would be dispute as to whether rules of debate were followed when the question was put to vote. But the subject under discussion was that women in civil service should receive equal pay with men. There was nothing academic or obtruse about that, so everybody immediately fell to discussing it: noting the Government's refusal to admit the defeat or accept the verdict that women should be given equal pay. The insistence of Mr. Baldwin upon making 'this' a question of confidence in a second debate argues that the Government intends to live the whole five years of the Parliament, calling upon the official majority to support it, whatever may be the individual opinions of the Members of Parliament. It seems that many Conservative M. P.'s are in favour of the women civil servants for equal pay with the men.

At all events, this crisis in the House was not handled very diplomatically, and for other reasons the prestige of the National Government is less than in used to be. Not only do the continued successes of Signor Mussolini reflect upon the foreign policy recently pursued, but it is also admitted that Sir Samuel Hoare's peace terms (provided that Italy might have accepted them) would have been a wiser solution of the conflict than any peace terms now likely to be arranged in very changed circumstances.

Also, the resignation of Lord Eustace Percy is a blow to the Government. True, he was a Minister without Portfolio and he made it clear that he agreed with the Cabinet on questions of foreign policy. But it is assumed that he resigned in connection with Sir Thomas Inskip's appointment as Minister for Defence, Lord Eustace Percy having been one of the favoured candidates for the post. All this, without touching the Government's strong majority in the House, adds to a feeling of instability, so that many expect a reconstruction of the Cabinet fairly soon. There is, however, no question of a General Election. No Party can afford the expense, there are no vital issues likely to be raised, and the Labour Opposition is in no way prepared to take office.

The rumour already published, that Mr. Baldwin will resign the Premiership at Whitsuntide, is a political kite, but it shows which way the wind blows. In any event Sir Samuel Hoare is likely to come back, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain has a high enough reputation (one cannot say widespread popularity) to justify advance to a higher office. And there are, on the back benches of the House of Commons, many brilliant men who might well be in a reconstructed Cabinet.

Behind the political scene there is the economic situation, an aspect of which is now coming under discussion. Mr. Runciman announced in the Commons last week that although Great Britain had storage capacity for about 1,500,000 tons of wheat, roughly ten weeks' supply, there were only 214,000 tons on hand on March 1. The bulk of the world's stocks are in Canada, and the millers have not been buying because of fears of a rise in prices.

In time the demand will have to be made, and there will be a rise in food prices, but the problem raises the war-time question of blockade and of ocean routes. *The Times* suggests ingeniously that a large portion of the Canadian Wheat Board's stocks should be transferred now to Britain for future use, but Canada is not likely to relinquish them while prices are ruling low, much as London would like that arrangement.

So the demand arises that Britain should be self-supporting: to which *The Times* replies that "any attempt to make the country self-sufficient in this way, even if it were possible, would create so many economic difficulties and would have such disastrous repercussions upon international trade, particularly upon our trade with the Dominions, that it cannot come into rational consideration." The old economic order of international trade financed by international loans is, however, hardly worth sighing for; already both Canada and New Zealand are well on the way to financial autonomy. The real struggle of the past few years has been financial and economic rather than political and diplomatic. The issues seem now to be deciding themselves.

Hauptmann Execution

Bruno Richard Hauptmann, the German-born carpenter, found guilty of the kidnapping and murder in March 1932 of the Lindbergh baby, was electrocuted at Trenton Gaol on April 3.

Thus, while thousands besieged the gaol, ended a four-years drama that has stirred the world — the drama of the greatest crime of the century, of sentence and appeal, re-sentence and respite in the shadow of the "chair."

Hauptmann did not make any confession. He walked seven paces into the death chamber at 8.41 p.m. and was placed in the chair half a minute later. He uttered no word as Executioner Elliott adjusted the electrodes and placed the cap soaked in brine on his head, although his face bore a half-smile and from the time he entered the death chamber his lips could be seen moving as if in prayer. Once he turned and stared at the 55 witnesses who were crowded into the little chamber. He was quickly strapped into the chair.

Elliott gave him the first shock at 8.43 p.m., and two more shocks followed at minute intervals. At 8.47½ the prison physician pronounced: "This man is dead." Two other physicians examined Hauptmann and similarly pronounced him dead. One of them was Dr. Mitchell, who performed the autopsy on the Lindbergh baby.

Hauptmann was in the chair six minutes. All that time, Elliott, who is 62 years of age, was doing his work deftly and fast. Rumours that he had been slowing down, that he had lost his sure touch with the electric controls, were unfounded. He did this job, for which he was paid £30, with the expertness of an old master. There was hardly a quiver noticeable on Hauptmann's face, and even his long, well-formed fingers, which appeared to grip the arms of the chair under the straps, did not seem to tremble. He said he wouldn't babble in the shadow of the chair and he didn't...

Though nearly 40 persons were in the death chamber besides the condemned man, they were absolutely quiet, and the only sound was the praying and the noise of the wheel which Elliott moved back and forth so rhythmically and surely. Only when it was all over and there was a terrific scramble to get out of the place did the "little party" — as Colonel Kimberling called it — manifest any sign of disorder.

To the last there seemed an idea that Hauptmann might talk. Some students of his peculiar psychology said that because he was an exhibitionist after a fashion he might want to stage one final grand gesture; to blurt out something at the last minute. This was apparently in the mind of Colonel Kimberling when he warned witnesses and news-papermen that if Hauptmann said anything they must keep quiet and let him use his own judgment in handling the situation.

There is to-night a great feeling of relief in this city, which has been in a state of hysterics since New Jersey's chubby Governor, Harold Giles Hoffman, injected himself into the case by visiting Hauptmann one night and then giving him two reprieves. But not all questions are answered; everybody knows that there will be more rumours, more investigations, and that the grisly story which began that night four years and 33 days ago, when little Charles Lindbergh was kidnapped is not really ended. For one thing, some of the ransom money is not accounted for. The case has many loose ends, as Hauptmann himself pointed out.

A few hours before the execution Hauptmann's wife had sworn a complaint before a Flemington justice charging Paul Wendel — the disbarred lawyer whose "confession" caused controversy — with the kidnapping.

(Continued on page 8, col. 1)

HAUPTMANN

(Continued from page 7, col. 3)

The justice issued a warrant against Wendel.

When at 5 p.m. it was announced that Mr. David Wilentz, the Storney-General for New Jersey, had approved the execution, Hauptmann's head was once more shaved in readiness for the electrodes.

He ordered a "last meal" of celery, olives, corn fritters, sliced cheese, fruit salad, cake and coffee.

One of Hauptmann's spiritual advisers returning from the cell, declared: "He looked me straight in the eyes and said, 'I am innocent. I have told the whole truth and I cannot change it.'"

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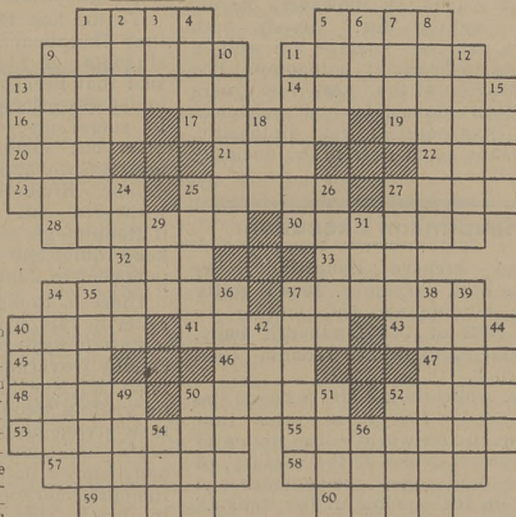
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