

inspired man to understand, clarify and appreciate more fully his own nature, purpose and destiny". Faber and Faber have recently published the speech Benjamin Britten made on the occasion. It sounds off some interesting themes.

One which crops up in various guises has to do with the inspiration and constraints human conditions put in the composer's path. "During the act of composition, one is continually referring back to the conditions of performance . . . the acoustics and the forces available . . . not only a restriction but a challenge, an inspiration." Then there are the "dangers which hedge round the unfortunate composer: pressure groups . . . critics who are already trying to document today for tomorrow". Third there is "home"; somewhere to sink roots and from which comes all the music he writes. For Mr. Britten, this is the "same small corner of East Anglia, near where I was born".

Not unnaturally, Mr. Britten argues for the closer integration of the composer into society. He feels that as someone whose art is an essential part of human activity, the composer may reasonably demand from society "a secure living and a pension when he has worked long enough . . . We must at least be treated as civil servants. Once we have a material status, we can accept the responsibility of answering society's demands on us."

One small query. How well attuned is our leading composer to our present society's demands? He warns the young musician against finding himself writing "more and more for machines in conditions dictated by machines and not by humanity" as though present conditions offered an either or rather than a socio-technical mix from which there is no contracting out. And he bemoans the loss of a sense of occasion by the mere turn of a switch (the loudspeaker he writes "is not part of true musical experience") as though by the turn of a time switch we could shape our occasions the way they always used ("and ought") to be.

WHOSE AGENTS?

The other day we heard of a man paying a house agent a registration fee of £20 for the privilege of being found a room costing £5 a week. He lived there for only five weeks before getting notice to quit. He did not get his registration fee back. Another man signed a six year agreement for a flat. He contracted to put it into an order and did so for about £300. He did not discover that a closure order had already been put on his home until a prised council official found him there and told him. Shortly after moving into the flat in a large house a client was asked the agent to buy the whole house. His offer so far would count as deposit. A mortgage could be arranged. Had the agent refused he would have had to leave. Activities of this sort are common in areas with a housing shortage and with agents who are ignorant of the law. They are agents to bring some order into the chaos which could be more speedily successful.

HARVARD'S BUSINESS

Franks report on business schools a "flimsy document . . . of little weight or significance" according to hon. G. Branch, secretary elect to the Royal Training and Recruitment Board Marketing and Advertising, writing in

the winter number of *Scientific Business*. It could have been "an authoritative statement on the need for a management policy". But that would have involved "a comprehensive survey of the needs of industry". Instead Lord Franks spent one month. He talked to 50 firms with an average capital of £10 million.

What is needed, claims Mr. Branch (who has himself just completed a six month survey of business education in this country), "is an official report on the field of business education as a whole. There is considerable lack of knowledge of what is going on in management education throughout the country and consequently there is a danger that the limited funds available will be dissipated or misapplied." Already smaller companies are in danger of being left out in the cold. They will find it difficult to release men for long courses. And they will not easily foot the students' bills either. "It seems

that management colleges of the type that Franks proposed" (and now being set up) "will be of little use to them."

Mr. Branch also warns us sternly against an unthinking acceptance of a misunderstood Harvard Business School. Last year in the US, 94 universities and 23 independent colleges gave undergraduate degrees in business administration. 52 colleges gave graduate courses. Over 2,000 students took MBAs. Harvard crowns the whole structure. But below it are dozens of less glamorous schools serving smaller firms. What is more, unlike most graduate schools HBS is not giving advanced technical and analytic skills. It provides training in "the art of decision making". Reflecting this, most of the faculty are former administrators.

The new business schools at London and Manchester may think of themselves as little Harvards, but Britain still lacks the substructure.

Colour: another view

C. L. R. James

There are tens of thousands of such relations that exist all over Britain and they are increasing every day. They do not get into the press. Instead, it is Smethwick and the special areas where there are special racial problems which continually fill the newspapers and are constantly on the lips of propagandists. The general impression that these give is quite false, so false that I have heard a person well established in public activity against racialism say that there is no difference between Birmingham, Warwickshire, and Birmingham, Alabama. There is constantly among anti-racialists, if not the actual statement, a significant silence which gives the impression that we English people in Britain should not be so quick to condemn what is taking place in the United States because we have the same thing here, or nearly the same thing. But the situation in Britain bears no relation whatever, no possible relation, to what is taking place in the United States. The response of people in Britain to immigrants or visitors of a different race has changed over the years. Yet there is one permanent and very British characteristic—empiricism. I remember that in 1932 I lived at the house of Leatrice Constantine in Nelson, Lancashire. Except for a coloured man who used to push a cart about the street and collect garbage they knew nothing at all about coloured people, had never got into close contact with any. Mr. Constantine was a very distinguished cricketer and a local hero; I was obviously a person with education and knowledge more than the average in Nelson. Mrs. Constantine conducted herself with great reserve and dignity. The three of us were very conscious that we were, so to speak, on exhibition. The people of Nelson began by believing that we had something to do with India. When they were made to understand that this was not so, that English was our native language and we had no native religion, they began to look upon us as an entirely unknown sort of people, unknown at least to them, and they began to look upon us as typical West Indians. So much so that a local acquaintance who was very critical of my pronouncedly pro-Labour attitudes, having visited the West Indies, returned and did a powerful propaganda along the following lines: "All of

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them are not like Constantine and James. The Constantines and James are exceptional people, but don't think that all of them out there are like these."

Even today, despite the massive number of immigrants, I have found that the average English person who is not politically motivated on the issue or does not meet with it, has a similar empirical attitude. If the coloured man or woman living next door to him is a person with whom he is able to establish a good relation, or whom he thinks conducts himself or herself in a decent manner, that is to say, somewhat like the people he knows, then he has a tendency to assume that all the coloured people are much the same as these are. If for some reason his coloured acquaintances or neighbours are in any way objectionable he and his family will assume or easily agree that most of them are that way.

It is those who have intimate relations with coloured people in industry, housing and other social problems, who are affected by these relations and are subject to propaganda and agitation. The large majority of people in the United Kingdom are quite unaffected by any active prejudice and, the general trend of opinion in the world being what it is, they begin with an attitude of readiness to integrate as far as is possible or convenient. It is this attitude and the innumerable examples of it which never seem to get expressed anywhere. And the unfortunate tendency even among those who mean well is to concentrate upon and therefore exaggerate the anti-racial tendencies in Britain as a whole. Recently there has been a notable example of this. The Prime Minister in his first speech in the new House of Commons used a very striking phrase about the MP for Smethwick and his campaign. Mr. Wilson no doubt did this of set purpose. I inquired about the particular aim and was lectured by a very prominent anti-racist in the Labour Party as to the full "significance of the use of the word, 'leper'. Leprosy, I was told, was a contagious disease (I let that pass), and Mr. Wilson was pointing out that there was a danger of this racial question spreading contagiously from Smethwick, or wherever it was allowed to develop, and corrupting the democratic traditions and practices of Great Britain; the phrase was a warning of what could happen, and the need for all members of Parliament to be mobilized against it.

Although I did not argue I was not very impressed with this argument. I do not believe there is any danger of racialism in Britain becoming a pervasive feature in the democratic process. Determinedly racial elements (as in Smethwick) can be met only by militant and unambiguous opposition. But if any serious defects appeared in the democratic process in Britain, they would be due to inherent weaknesses in the process itself. The idea that these could arise because of the colour problem, the problem posed by immigrants, is of the same kind as the argument that the immigrants are responsible for housing difficulties, immorality, disease, crime, unsatisfactory educational standards and so on. Immigrants or no immigrants, these are there. The tendency that has to be fought, both consciously and unconsciously, is to give the impression that the unusually large number of immigrants is responsible for them.