

els that weld the social, historical and psychological into high art. I realize that, confronted with a novelist of Mrs. Bedford's gifts of language and insight, I seem to be demanding the extraordinary instead of the excellent. But what else should we ask of the artist who wrote *A Legacy*?

The flaws of *A Favourite of the Gods* are not Mrs. Bedford's alone. They hound all novels of manners and plague the contemporary English novel particularly. Writing within the realistic tradition—the only tradition possible for him, it seems—the modern novelist of manners must integrate the forces of history into the lives of

his characters, infusing his literal work with the symbolic and naturalistic as well, to create the impression that his fiction does deal with a real world that has larger significance than the individual lives it describes. Because an ordered world appears to the contemporary observer more improbable, more difficult to imagine with every new day, the realistic novelist strives for the almost impossible. There are other alternatives with which to view the larger world—distortionism, antirealism, existentialist comedy—but they deny the realistic novel its apparent objectivity. Finally, the realistic novelist can only pray for the flash of genius of *A Legacy*.

Violence in the Abstract

ON REVOLUTION. By Hannah Arendt. The Viking Press. 343 pp. \$6.50.

D. J. Goodspeed

That war is a hazardous and unprofitable adventure is scarcely a new thesis. After 1918 this not very recon- ditione conclusion was assented to, albeit regretfully, by most professional soldiers and almost all statesmen. Their near unanimity, it is true, did not prevent the Second World War, but since 1945 it is more than ever obvious that those who put their faith in war as a political instrument run the risk of finding themselves masters of an obsolete trade.

Hannah Arendt begins *On Revolution*, by recapitulating this and by pointing out that professional soldiers have in fact become practical pacifists, devoted not to winning wars by fighting but to preserving peace by making war impossible. Furthermore, the physiognomy of the twentieth century has so far been determined by wars and revolutions; thus, if wars are eliminated, only revolutions will be left. Therefore, Miss Arendt concludes: "In the contest that divides the world today and in which so much is at stake, those will probably win who understand revolution. . . ."

The logic here is perhaps not quite faultless, but Miss Arendt's theme has an inherent fascination and the reader is prepared to follow her eagerly as

she reveals her revolutionary mysteries. However, disappointment awaits any who are listening to catch the sound of tumbrils in the streets, freedom in arms or the shouting of assemblies. Miss Arendt's book is concerned with revolution in the abstract, the ideal revolution, the revolutionary form as it appears to the eyes of God; no single drop of blood stains these philosophical pages.

Unhappily, much of the argument is weakened as philosophy because Miss Arendt draws almost exclusively on the French and American Revolutions as a basis for her generalizations. Moreover, on the few occasions when she sets her discussion of revolution in a wider context, she is apt to make mistakes in history. She comments, for instance, that "the most important terroristic attacks in Russia prior to war and revolution seem all to have been police jobs" — a statement which would certainly have outraged Mihailov, Zelyabov and the members of the *Narodnaya Volya*. And she suggests that all the European peoples who were granted new constitutions after 1918 distrusted them, a judgment that is quite false insofar as Czechoslovakia and the Baltic states are concerned.

Although Miss Arendt nowhere precisely defines revolution or subsumes its causes and effects, she does point out that neither violence nor change by themselves are sufficient hallmarks: ". . . violence is no more adequate to describe the phenomenon of revolution than change; only where change occurs in the sense of a new beginning, where violence is used to

constitute an altogether different form of government, to bring about the formation of a new body politic, where the liberation from oppression aims at least at the constitution of freedom can we speak of revolution."

For Miss Arendt freedom "is" the aim of all revolutions and the only cause which can possibly justify the violent overthrow of states. She does not attempt to prove these assertions, but she does distinguish sharply between "freedom" and "liberation," saying that liberation may be the condition of freedom but does not lead automatically to it. Her concept of freedom includes the right to "public happiness" as well as to "private happiness" and to "public freedom" as well as to "private freedom." Full freedom, therefore, is achieved only by citizens who take an active part in government, finding in that sphere their "public happiness" and "public freedom." Moreover, no revolution is truly complete until public happiness and public freedom can be attained by all the citizens.

Whatever may be said for "public freedom," "public happiness" appears to be a rather specialized value. No doubt a certain type of man does experience a unique happiness in the conduct of public affairs, but to make — or even perpetuate — a revolution in order to secure this joy would seem to show a disproportionate concern for an atypical minority.

The ward system advocated by Jefferson, the revolutionary societies and municipal councils which spread through France after 1789, and the soviets which sprang up during the February Revolution of 1917 are to Miss Arendt the true end of all rev-

South Wind

I dreamed of horses in the night,
invaders with strong, sweating
bodies plunging through the cold.

The stars were suddenly hidden,
but dark manes flowed
with sparks, and on the black,
frozen hills the rushing air
soared like a forest on fire.

The thunder of their passage
broke down the walls of my dream.
I awoke in the ruined kingdom
of frost with a warm wind
blowing my hair, and heard about me
and in the distance
the heavy hoofs still pounding
as the wild, invisible army
overran the north.

John Haines

Major D. J. Goodspeed is attached to the Historical Section, Canadian Army Headquarters. He is the author of *The Conspirators: A Study of the Coup d'Etat* (Viking).

olutions. The professional revolutionaries, however, whose art consists not in creating revolutions but in coming to power after they have broken out, generally find themselves in opposition to the soviets and councils, for these revolutionary institutions always challenge the party system.

Miss Arendt also challenges the party system. In her final chapter, by far the best and most thought-provoking in the book, she criticizes the party system for having achieved only "a certain control of the rulers by those who are ruled" and argues that it has by no means enabled the citizen to become a "participator" in public affairs. However, she is vague as to the scope and functions of the councils that would replace the party system in a completed revolution, being on the whole content to say with Jefferson: "Begin them only for a single purpose; they will soon show for what others they are the best instruments."

It may indeed be so, but Miss Arendt by no means presents a con-

vincing case. In fact her argument throughout is marked by a lack of clarity only partly attributable to her subject. It is unfair, of course, to ask for simplicity in profound matters, and the philosopher can always claim that as he dives deeper the light gets less and less, until, presumably, in the great depths at the bottom of the sea it is perpetual night.

However, not all obscurity is the result of profundity, a good deal of it is due merely to bad sentence structure. All too often in Miss Arendt's book, the sluggish flow between subject and verb is diverted and the reader is left to trace as best he can a thin trickle of assertion through a flooded swampland of redundancies, oppositional phrases, pronouns of indefinite antecedent and unnecessary relative clauses. The title of this book, of course, automatically invites a comparison with Clausewitz's *On War*, and it is unfortunate that this should be so, for even in matters of style, where Clausewitz was not perhaps at his best, he has the advantage.

Are Cigarettes Necessary?

COMMON SENSE ABOUT SMOKING.

By C. M. Fletcher, Harvey Cole, Lena Jeger, Christopher Wood. Penguin Books. 128 pp. 65c paper.

George A. Silver

While American physicians and public-health people try desperately to disengage themselves from the sticky and embarrassing necessity of doing something about cigarette smoking, the British profession is moving ahead firmly to effective action. Contrast the headline, "Tobacco Study Shelved by AMA," March, 1963, with the Royal College of Physicians' report in 1962. The U.S. Public Health Service bumbles along with a "study committee" for two years (as yet no report) while the Ministry of Health in England has plastered the countryside with posters attacking smoking and inaugurated school programs to deter youngsters from starting.

Doctors themselves take the strictures more seriously than they let on to the public. Cigarette smoking is now much less prevalent among doctors than in the general public; a few years ago the ratios were even.

George A. Silver, M.D., is chief of the Division of Social Medicine at Montefiore Hospital in New York.

May 4, 1963

Now four British authors cover all aspects of the subject. Fletcher, a specialist in lung diseases, outlines clearly and unambiguously the theoretical and epidemiological basis for considering cigarette smoking a cause of lung cancer. Cole, an economist, presents the plain facts of financial interplay—not only the tobacco companies' stake, but the government's tax stake, and that of the thousands of small shopkeepers whose cigarette sales are the mainstay of their marginal existence.

The last two chapters, Jeger's on social and historical aspects, and Wood's "How to Stop" (not quite answered) cover somewhat the same ground. The net conclusion: fashions in smoking change and cigarette smoking as a fashion is less than a hundred years old, so maybe we could convert to cigars (apparently harmless) or pipes (dirty, smelly and not quite so harmless).

Of all the suggestions, preventing children from starting seems the best. There is an unfortunate vagueness about what to do about smokers (since we still don't know why people do smoke) and the suggestion that we emphasize the staggering economic cost may be helpful more in frugal



WILLY BRANDT

Good Fences — Uneasy Neighbors?

THE ORDEAL OF COEXISTENCE

Willy Brandt, living behind one of the most important fences in political history, sees the Berlin Wall as a major admission of Communist defeat in the only place where true competitive coexistence has ever been tried. Speaking forcefully and realistically, he urges nations of the free world to create situations of peaceful competition in which all countries may participate.

\$3.00



LINCOLN GORDON

New Lights on Latin American Neighbors A NEW DEAL FOR LATIN AMERICA *The Alliance for Progress*

What are the accomplishments and shortcomings of the Alliance for Progress? The Ambassador to Brazil, one of its chief architects, answers these questions in a searching appraisal of the plan's aims, philosophy, and methods. His analysis is significant for readers of both hemispheres, since the United States plays a principal role in what must be considered one of the history-making events of the 1960's.

\$3.25

Ask your bookseller

1913 HARVARD
1963 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Copyright of Nation is the property of Nation Company, L. P. and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.