

Courier

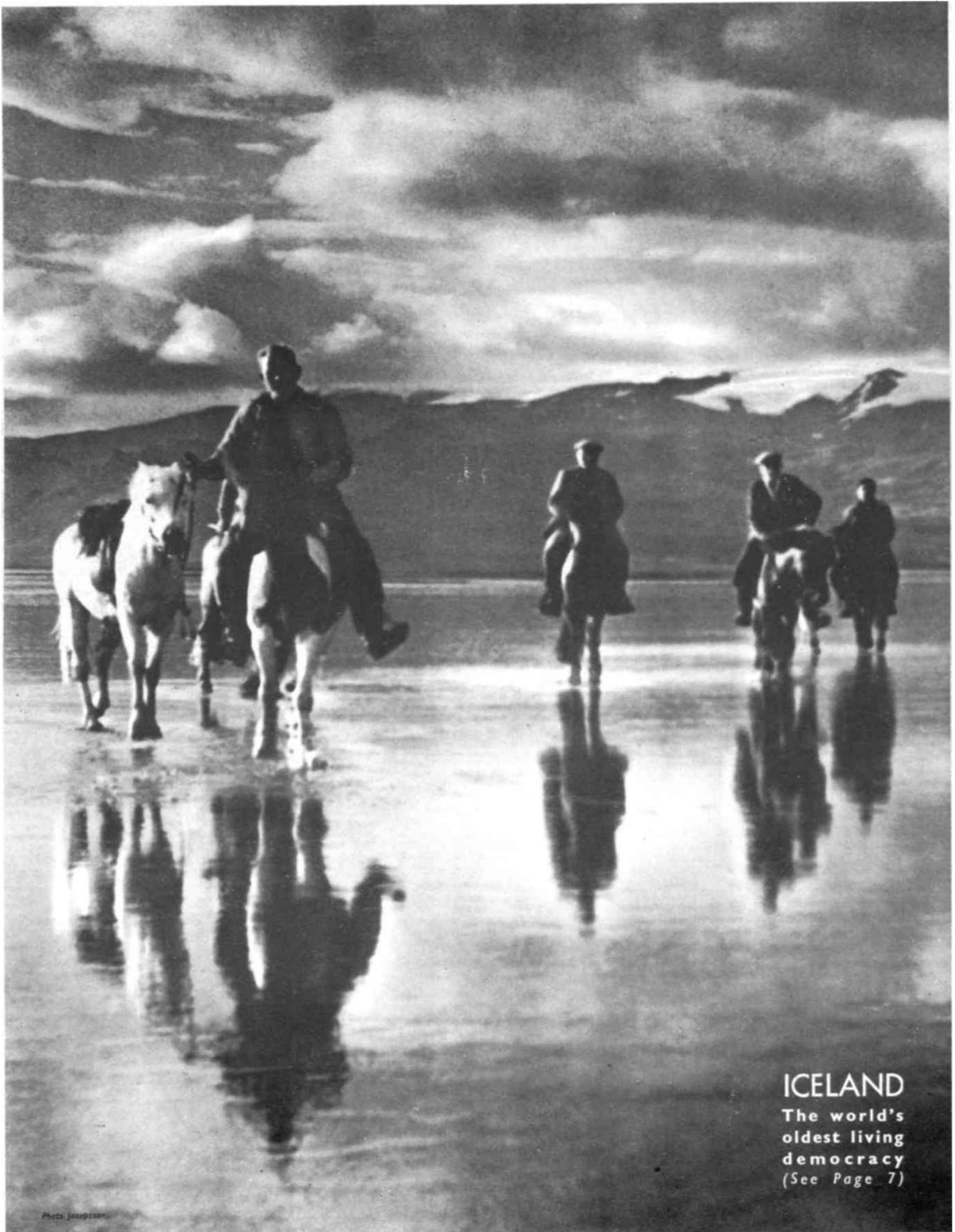
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Courier

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FROM THE UNESCO NEWS ROOM

★ **France** : A new type of mobile theatre is to give performances in the war-devastated Normandy area, where so many theatres were destroyed. The mobile unit was designed by theatre director Paul Douai.

★ **Lebanon** : An international commission, created in Beirut for the translation of masterpieces of Arab literature, has just published one of the most important books of Al-Ghazali in French, English and Spanish. This book, *O Disciple*, is one of the outstanding works of the famous Moslem mystic, whose great influence on the philosophy and theology of Islam remains after eight centuries. Two other classics of Arab literature have appeared in the same Unesco-sponsored collection: *The Book of the Directives and Remarks*, by Avicenna, and *The Book of the Misers*, by Al Djahiz.

★ **Brazil** : One hundred fellowship students have arrived in Rio de Janeiro from 20 Latin American countries to participate in a nine-month course on vocational training. The course was organized by the Brazilian Government in agreement with the United Nations. Also from Brazil comes word that the International Labour Organization has sent in a score of specialists to help in the government's technical training programme.

★ **Peru** : A wide campaign against illiteracy soon will begin in the Peruvian countryside, following the recent creation by the government of a rural education department. Educational missions will teach rural dwellers how to read and write, and will also help try to organize a better use of natural resources.

★ **Gold Coast** : Blind people in the Gold Coast may soon have their first vocational training school in Accra. The new school is to start with 25 trainees who will be taught such handicrafts as basket-making, weaving and rope-making. A workshop will be opened later to provide employment for the school's graduate students.

★ **Unesco** : A regional conference for the extension of free and compulsory education in South Asia and the Pacific region will be held in Bombay, under Unesco auspices from December 12 to 23. About forty experts from thirteen countries are expected to attend. Delegates will have on hand the results of special Unesco enquiries on primary education now being undertaken in eight countries of the area.

★ **Austria** : To stimulate the exchange of letters between school children of different countries, the Austrian government has issued a special stamp to be used only on school correspondence.

★ **Burma** : A Unesco seminar in Rangoon on the Education of Youth for Living in a World Community was attended by youth leaders from 13 nations in South Asia and the South Pacific. Four Member States of Unesco, administering territories in that region — France, the Netherlands, the U. K. and the U. S. — also took part. The aim of the seminar was to encourage the participation of youth in the improvement of community life at all levels — local, national and international.

★ **Unesco** : The influence of technical changes on the traditional juridical and social structures of countries in the Near and Middle East was studied at a Symposium in Athens held under Unesco auspices by the Greek Society for International Studies. Social scientists from the Near and Middle East countries studied the effects of technical progress in these regions during the past 20 years. Members of the Greek National Commission for Unesco and regional representatives of United Nations Specialized Agencies attended the symposium.

★ **International** : Ten European nations have selected a site near Geneva for a great nuclear research laboratory, which is to house what may be the most powerful atom-smashing cosmotron in the world — a huge accelerator that will be rated at thirty thousand million electron volts. There will also be a synchro-cyclotron with a rating of six hundred million electron volts. The laboratory will take about seven years to build and equip, and will cost the participating countries an annual total of almost \$4,000,000. It is to be used exclusively for pure scientific research. Results will be supplied freely to all member-nations of the European Council for Atomic Research, an organization founded recently with the help of Unesco.

★ **Belgium** : A large-scale exhibition designed to show that art should make its impact on everyday life, and not simply be cloistered in museums and art galleries, has been held in Brussels. Entitled "Monumental Art in Public and Industrial Premises", the exhibition used examples ranging

from factories to bridges, and from private homes to post offices. It also showed that architects, painters and sculptors can and should collaborate in bringing works of art before the public, and in helping to revive such branches of art production as the making of stained glass windows, ceramics and tapestries.

★ **Unesco** : Unesco Gift Coupons are to be promoted throughout Australia by the Australian Association for the United Nations. Unesco already has supplied the Association with a list of the needs of educational institutions in nine countries. Australia thus becomes the seventh donor country to participate in the Unesco scheme that enables voluntary groups to send coupons abroad to institutions needing help. These coupons are a form of international currency. With them, the recipients order required equipment from suppliers, who later are reimbursed in their own currencies by Unesco.

★ **International** : United Nations Associations in Cuba and Japan have organized a scheme for an artistic and cultural exchange between primary and secondary schoolchildren in the two countries. To start off the scheme, between 200 and 300 drawings are being sent by Japan to Cuba, for public display and later distribution among individual children. Later, Cuba will send a similar exhibition to

units, more travelling exhibitions, international exchanges of staff, and the creation of fellowships.

★ **Turkey** : About \$15,000 worth of Unesco Book Coupons have been sold to institutions and individuals in Turkey since this country joined the Book Coupon Scheme just over a year ago. Coupons, which are sold through the Turkish National Library in Ankara, have been used to buy books and periodicals on education, science, art and other cultural subjects in hard currency countries such as the United States and Switzerland. Purchases made in this way are not subject to the usual currency restrictions.

★ **Unesco** : Two more countries, the Philippines and Cuba have ratified the Unesco-sponsored international agreement abolishing import duties on a wide range of educational, scientific and cultural materials. The agreement, which came into force last May, has now been ratified by 11 other nations — Cambodia, Ceylon, Egypt, Israel, Laos, Monaco, Pakistan, Sweden, Thailand, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. Eighteen other governments have signed it, but have yet to ratify.

★ **International** : A world-wide radio commemoration of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child will be held on December 18, anniversary of the death of Eglantyne Jebb, author of this Declaration. The commemoration will be sponsored by the International Union for Child Welfare, following a decision by delegates, representing 36 nations, who met in Zurich, Switzerland.

★ **Indonesia** : Eight Indonesian engineering students are to receive six-year scholarships in Sweden offered by the National Union of Swedish Students, which will pay all tuition expenses. After studying the country's language and resources, the Indonesian students will be apprenticed for some months in an industrial works and will later study physics, chemistry or mechanics at the Royal Technological Institute.

★ **Venezuela** : Encouraged by the success of its travelling teacher plan to combat illiteracy, Venezuela is to provide more teachers so that evening classes can be increased, and a number of new centres opened. The Ministry of Education is also to inaugurate a special office for the anti-illiteracy campaign.

★ **Pakistan** : Canada is helping Pakistan to make an extensive aerial survey of the country's natural resources as a Canadian contribution under the Colombo Plan. The techniques to be used will be similar to those already utilized successfully and on a large scale in Canada itself. Geographical and geological mapping will be done by Canadians from aerial photographs, and will provide Pakistan with an inventory of her latent resources contained in an area of 123,000 square miles. The inventory is designed to help the country plan its economic development, and especially its future irrigation and hydro-electric schemes.

★ **International** : A hundred teachers in Britain, and a similar number in the United States, have taken over each other's posts under an international teachers' exchange scheme. Now in its seventh year, this programme has made possible the exchange of 1,426 teachers between the United States and other countries.

★ **Belgium** : Belgian authorities have granted free postage for all Braille publications for the blind posted within the country or sent abroad. This decision follows recent changes in the Universal Postal Convention made on Unesco's recommendation.

★ **Israel** : The first demonstration and teaching centre on the building of houses from packed earth is to be established in Israel, following an agreement between the Israeli government and the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration. The centre will conduct research on how packed earth houses might be used in the arid and semi-arid regions of various countries. The United Nations will provide technicians, laboratory equipment and machinery.

★ **International** : Since 1950, November 8 has been celebrated in many parts of the world as Town and Country Planning Day. Last year, for example, it was observed in twenty countries. The aim of this commemoration, which was initiated by the Town Planning Institute of Buenos Aires, is to bring together in a common effort, town and country planners, technicians and all those who are concerned with improving the living conditions of people everywhere. Reports on this year's celebration emphasise the importance given to projects aimed at improving social life in rural areas and of providing amenities to put the countryside on the same level as urban areas. In France, such discussions between engineers, administrators, mayors and Prefects took place at Paris University.

UNESCO'S SEVENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE

UNESCO'S seventh General Conference opened in Paris on November 12, and is due to conclude about December 10. It will discuss Unesco's programme and budget for 1953 and 1954. On the opening day, Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, was elected president of the Conference. Philosopher, theologian, statesman and diplomat, he has headed his country's delegation to every one of Unesco's General Conferences, and was a member of the Executive Board of Unesco from 1946 to 1951. The president of last year's Conference, Mr. Howland H. Sargeant, United States Assistant Secretary of State, opened the Conference in front of the representatives of 58 of Unesco's Member States as well as observers from many international and inter-governmental organizations. Speakers on the opening day included representatives of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Organization of American States, and the Council of Europe. This issue of the Courier goes to press as the Conference is beginning its meetings, and further details of its work will be published next month.

Tokio. The organizers hope that the scheme will also lead to a greater amount of "pen-friend" correspondence between children of the two countries.

★ **India** : Villagers in the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh have surpluses of fruits and vegetables at harvest time, shortages during the rest of the year. Dr. Garbasins Weber, of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, is to advise the State how it might best adapt the traditional Indian earthenware jar for food preserving purposes. The goal of this experiment is to help raise nutrition standards among the 60,000,000 people in what is India's largest State.

★ **The Netherlands** : An exhibition on man's technical and cultural progress throughout the centuries has been opened at the Delft Prinsenhof Museum. Organized by the Delft Student Society, the exhibition displayed man's most primitive agricultural implements along with very modern ones. The world's cultural development was illustrated, among other things, by the fight for social justice undertaken by such world figures as Pope Leo III, Pestalozzi and President Lincoln. Present day efforts to promote world peace were represented by publications about the United Nations and Unesco.

★ **Unesco** : Forty-five museum experts and educators from 25 European, Asiatic and American countries met in Brooklyn, New York, at a Unesco-sponsored international seminar to seek effective methods of co-operation between museums and schools, especially in the art, science and history. Delegates recommended that practical courses in museum work ought to be given at teachers' training colleges. Other recommendations included establishing international mobile museum



U. N. Photo.

TEACHING WORLD UNDERSTANDING IN THE GEOGRAPHY CLASS

“**I**n what way can geography teaching help foster better international understanding?” In the past few years Unesco has provided a number of replies and clarifications to this question. In 1950, Unesco called an international seminar on the subject at Montreal and published a small volume entitled *Some Suggestions on the Teaching of Geography* (1). Now, as a complement to this booklet, it has brought out a *Handbook of Suggestions on the Teaching of Geography* (2) which embodies the main conclusions and suggestions of those who took part in the seminar.

I think that it would be worth while to return to this subject for it seems to me that neither the authors of the first booklet (of whom I was one), nor the members of the seminar (in which I also participated), nor even the author of the second booklet, have sufficiently stressed the tremendous possibilities for the development of world-mindedness which geography offers. Nor have they. I feel, laid sufficient emphasis on the serious difficulties which teachers are likely to meet in encouraging an attitude of mind favourable to better international understanding among their pupils.

But first let us try to reach a clear definition of the fundamentals involved: What do we mean by education for better international understanding and what, exactly, do we mean by geography?

First of all, one thing that education for international understanding should not be is just a high-sounding, vague phrase. For it is only when we understand exactly what we are trying to achieve through such teaching that we can determine with any degree of precision or clarity what methods to use.

The definition that I propose is one that I formulated with my study group at the recent Unesco seminar in the Netherlands on teaching about Human Rights.

The definition, as formulated by the group, was:

(1) Give youth an understanding of the past and present-day life of peoples in other countries—their traditions, their chief characteristics, their problems and the solutions they have found for them.

(2) Make youth conscious of the contribution of each nation to the common heritage of humanity: technology, science, arts, literature. Civilization is a vast network of reciprocal debts between nations.

(3) Make youth conscious of the fact that, if the world remains dangerously divided as far as interests and passions of political origin are concerned, its solidarity in the fields of

by **Louis FRANÇOIS**

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economics, science, techniques and culture is nevertheless becoming daily more evident, and that a deep desire for peace exists in all peoples. The organization of the world on an international basis is not only possible, but has become a necessity. It is a question of making the different citizens conscious of their future responsibilities towards this international organization, and towards world peace.

(4) Make youth conscious of the fact that the nations must work together in international organizations for the common good, and must find ways of collaborating even if they are separated by different ideologies. The world cannot be uniform, but the different nations must unite to maintain peace.

(5) Organize schools and universities so that they are able to initiate children and youth in all their future social responsibilities from a material, as well as from a moral and intellectual point of view, and in the idea of liberty through self-discipline. Youth can serve this same apprenticeship in the various youth movements. It is personal experience which will make youth conscious of their duty both as citizens of their own country and as citizens of the world.

To this definition, however, must be added a double word of caution:

(a) Education for living in a world community is merely the complement and the development of living in a national community.

(b) To understand is not always to accept; it is sometimes to censure, even to show opposition and resistance when certain great higher principles such as liberty, justice and solidarity are in danger of being destroyed or of disappearing.

Geography consists in locating, describing, explaining and comparing scenery and human activities on the face of the globe. This definition may appear rather sweeping with regard to human activities. Do painting and philosophy, for example, come within the scope of geography? Here we should perhaps give a more precise explanation.

We mean human activities insofar as they are directly affected by natural conditions and insofar as they exercise a direct influence on the appearance of the world's landscape. Thus, the Moslem religion is of interest to the geographer, but not in its complicated doctrines nor in the literary and artistic works it has inspired. The geographer is concerned with its essential ele-

ments; first because it reflects an image of the desert and semi-desert world from which it sprang and in which it expanded; second because it has inspired original ways of life; third because Moslem cities with their houses crowded around their mosques have given the landscape an appearance distinctly different from that of European cities dominated by their churches.

Geography, then, is a natural science, but even more is a human science. These two aspects cannot be separated because nature directly affects man's mode of living and because man exercises a limited or complex action on nature which varies in degree with time and place. The pattern of human existence on the earth's surface is thus one of the basic concerns of the geographer.

Every society has its individual traits and sometimes even exceptional characteristics caused by different factors. It is up to the geographer to emphasise them for the very destiny of man speaks for his greatness and explains the flowering of civilizations. But like every science, geography seeks to generalise and to find a common measure for natural and human factors by means of appropriate explanations and comparisons.

The mode of life of the Tibetan people, for example, permits many picturesque descriptions with which any teacher may let himself be carried away and by means of which he may strongly impress his class. But the explanation for this pattern of life is to be found in Tibet's high altitude, and the restrictions of mountain life there are also found in other mountainous regions of the world. By the same token, Buddhist practices of Tibet are to be found in many parts of China and South East Asia. In this way, the geographer succeeds in situating people within the framework of humanity as a whole, and in fitting them into one vast and common undertaking. And this applies even to those people who live at an altitude of 16,000 feet on the "roof" of the world.

If geography is a science, it must also be an art. It does more than list facts and explain them; it ingeniously assembles ideas and shows their relationships, especially through descriptions of countries and their inhabitants. To "put over" his subject in such a way that people will really profit from reading his work or listening to him the geographer must possess a mastery both of composition and of style.

Let us take as an example Holland's polders which are tracts of low-lying land reclaimed from the sea. First of all, the geographer describes these "low countries" just as they were painted by Ruysdael and van Goyen; peaceful, (Continued on next page)

(1) Out of print.

(2) Price: \$0.75; 4/-; 200 francs.

GEOGRAPHY AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

(Continued from distant landscapes studded with windmills and church towers and overshadowed by mountainous, turbulent clouds. He depicts the dyke walls and, running alongside them, the green waters of the canals, the meadows on whose lush grass herds of black and white cows graze, the multicoloured fields of flowers around Haarlem and the chess-board pattern of the market gardens near Amsterdam. He takes his students inside the towns criss-crossed by canals, into the peaceful, prosperous and bourgeois Venices of the north. Through his description he tries to interest his class in the country, to arouse in them a friendliness and admiration for Holland.

MAN'S PACIFIC CONQUEST

THEN he goes on to explain how, through an unceasing fight, polders have been wrested from the brutal grasp of sea and river waters, how thousands of acres have been put to cultivation, and entire provinces have been created even though the land lies below sea-level.

Finally, the geographer draws comparisons between the Dutch polders, those of Belgium and France and the German *marschen*. He shows how men of many countries are heroes in a common effort of conquest—a pacific conquest waged solely for the benefit of man, for his progress and for his happiness.

In these areas, war has always brought about a brutal step backwards to conditions of centuries past; the dykes have been blown up; the locks have been destroyed, and the sea has once again invaded land that men had won back patiently and progressively. Is not this the sort of explanation likely to inspire a better understanding and a greater affection for the Dutch people, to show the benefits of peace and the follies of war? And is it not also a real lesson in geography?

There is no need to distort geography in order to make it contribute to international understanding. If it is taught thoroughly, intelligently and honestly, the result will be obtained quite naturally.

Geography will be taught thoroughly if the teacher explains the principal characteristics and features of a country or of a geographical phenomenon, always bearing in mind that he must locate, describe, explain and compare a given geographical situation. It will be thoroughly taught especially if the teacher explains everything that the children of his class are capable of understanding and assimilating.

Geography intelligently taught makes use of various scientific facts so as to build them into a coherent whole; it must on the basis of scientific facts become an art.

This transition from science to art requires skill, flexibility and sureness of touch. Geography teaching must never be stereotyped, but must vary in both method and approach. In short, it must combine the initiative and improvisation of the creative mind with the logic and sense of proportion necessary in evolving a synthesis.

Geography is honest insofar as it is complete and establishes true relations between various facts, insofar as it strives for objectivity and seeks after the truth, and insofar as it repudiates sensationalism and political propaganda.

Is this, however, an over-simplification? It may be argued that, however skilfully it is done, geography teaching is aimed primarily at the pupil's intelligence, and that while it may very well produce a complete intellectual knowledge of the country under study, this in itself is not sufficient to create a desire for co-operation between peoples. For is not a spy supposed to have the best geographical knowledge of the country against which he is operating? Therefore, we should not only appeal to the intelligence of young people, but also to their willingness and feelings.

A determined and tenacious will is most often produced by a clear understanding of things. Intelligence is still the best, the most powerful driving force of true will power. So all geo-

graphical studies should include recognition of the following facts:

(1) In order to live and raise their living standards, men must either fight nature or work with it. Naturally conditions vary according to different regions, but the experience and the efforts are common to all, and all men benefit from these efforts to some extent.

(2) No nation, even under conditions of freedom and peace, is self-sufficient. All have need of one another to live and prosper.

(3) Thanks to scientific and technical developments, and to the progress of communication and transport, the earth has so shrunk that it is now possible to conceive as a not too distant reality a world economic and political organization which would be of benefit to all.

The emotional response of children can be brought into action by a form of teaching that is concrete, alive and active. Verbal and didactic teaching which only crams names and facts into young minds and buries the spontaneous enthusiasms of youth under a ponderous weight of knowledge must be abandoned. Young people must learn to discover the natural beauties and the worthy achievements of their own country as well as those of other countries which are sometimes even more creditable.

I remember a class of boys aged between 13 and 14 to whom a young student teacher had given a lesson on Yugoslavia.

Towards the end of the lesson I had arranged for some slides to be shown; the pupils were grouped in teams, and asked to identify the region or city projected on the screen. As I showed the first, I said: "At the upper left corner of the slide is a monument which should help you to name the city." While the boys discussed the photo among themselves, I asked the student teacher if he had found the answer. He shook his head and said "No." But very quickly each team gave me the following report: "In the upper left corner of the photo is a Gothic church; Gothic style usually signifies a Roman Catholic church; the photo then shows a large town in the predominantly Catholic area of Yugoslavia; the town in question is Zagreb, capital of Croatia." I went over to the young teacher and pointed out to him that teaching should be less concerned with cramming home facts than with helping the pupils to discover these facts for themselves.

I should like to stress the enormous interest that geography arouses in the young people of the world today, and the difficulties which face the teacher of geography because of this. The curiosity of young people about the world is constantly being aroused by the newspapers and magazines specially published for them and illustrated with magnificent photographs. Their curiosity is aroused by the radio and television which they listen to and watch as often as, if not more often than, their parents. Through these modern media of information the world throngs into the minds and imagination of the young; their memories become filled with notions that are often confused and false, but sometimes, too, extremely clear and exact.

This formidable competition must be taken into consideration by the teacher.

No longer do children obtain all their knowledge from their teachers or their textbooks. Their interest in geography centres on the living and up-to-date picture of the world that it brings them. If they realize that their teacher is not aware of recent discoveries or the latest changes in economic or human affairs, the teacher loses his prestige and geography its fascination.

Today pupils may be better informed than their teacher and so discover that his knowledge is out of date. There are some teachers who do not know, for example, that Canada has become a great industrial and commercial power, who have never heard of the extensive irrigation works already completed or being executed in North Africa, who are unaware of the recent upheavals in the geography of oil.

Geography teachers must therefore aim at a form of teaching that is both concrete and

alive, making as much use as possible of photographs and even occasionally of films. They must keep themselves constantly up-to-date, especially through books and periodicals with the sudden changes so common in the modern world.

Finally, we come up against the most serious objection. Can one really advocate teaching which strives to develop international understanding in a world where passions and hatreds engendered by the Second World War are still fresh in many minds and where new hatreds are growing; in a world split into two camps and resounding with abuse and even the clash of arms? Even if we agree that this kind of teaching is to be desired, in what way can it be achieved, and how can some of the difficulties be overcome? What can a French teacher who may have been tortured and deported say about the Germans? What can an American teacher say about Russia or a Russian teacher about the United States?

When emotions are unleashed, a thinking person worthy of the name tries to rise above the conflict and to reach as informed and reasoned an opinion as possible. When the person concerned is a geography teacher entrusted with the task of describing and explaining a world rent by passions and factions, his duty is to give his teaching as objective a character as possible.

Objective teaching is patterned on its subject matter. It is not vitiated with subjective preferences of a personal, social, political or national character. Because its aim is truth it eschews all propaganda and is as complete as possible, for propaganda tends to deform facts.

It takes the form neither of a panegyric nor an indictment, neither of praise nor of systematic criticism. It recognizes the many diversities that exist in the great and common enterprise of mankind, because not all peoples live under the same geographical conditions nor have they attained the same stage of historical development. Geography also remains apart from politics. It is the facts supplied by the geographer which are selected and used to develop political systems and to justify their aims.

CLEAR VIEW OF REALITIES

TO recognize the speed of recent economic progress in the U.S.S.R., which has immense reserves of manpower and resources, does not constitute a defence of Communism. It is merely a simple and objective expression of a geographical fact which is explained by the manifold possibilities of a natural environment and the co-ordinated activity of men. Nor is it an expression of anti-Communist sentiment to speak of the difficulties of communicating and trading with the U.S.S.R. and neighbouring countries which have the same political and social systems. It is again to state a geographical fact which hurts the common effort of mankind.

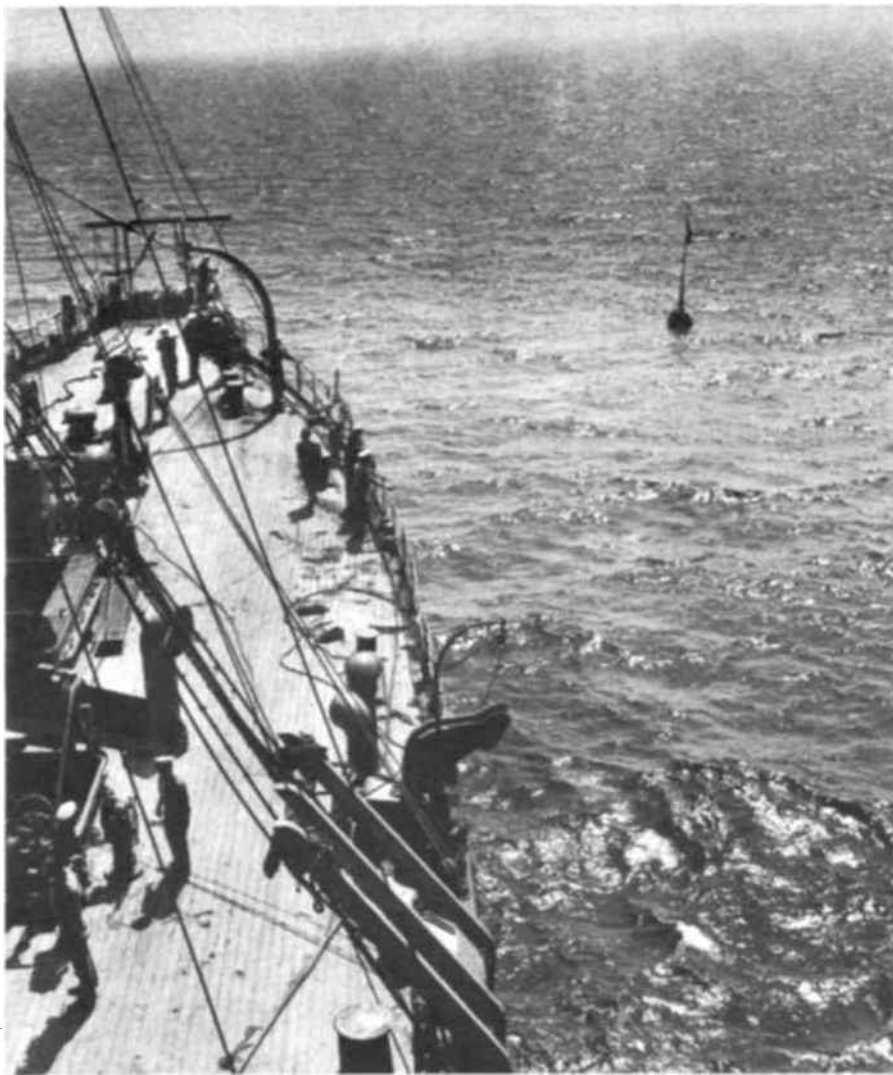
There is no praise implied in recognizing that Germany has become a great economic power in the 20th century. Rather it is, once again, a simply and objectively stated historic fact which is due to the progressive unification of Germany, the country's rich coal deposits and the hard-working and dogged qualities of the German people. Nor is it criticism of Germany to describe the periodical outbreaks of imperialism—the *Drang nach Osten* and the *Drang nach Westen*. To do so is simply to state facts which are explained by the absence of natural frontiers and the racial overlapping of Eastern and Central Europe.

Today it is more vital than ever to separate teaching from political or national passions and prejudices, and to promote a spirit of tolerance and of mutual understanding, not founded on blissful pacifism or timid resignation, but on a clear-sighted view of present day realities and on the will to contribute something, however small, to the achievement of world peace. For the geography teacher needs a clear vision of his responsibilities both towards his subject and his audience—the young people who must go out into the world imbued with courage and the will to peace.



DENMARK'S FIRST SPEEDBOAT LIBRARY FOR ISOLATED READERS

Fishermen and farm workers on the many small islands lying off the coast of the Southern Danish province of Svendborg are now being provided with reading matter by the first water-borne library service to be organized in Denmark. The county library of Svendborg, like all other Danish country libraries, supplies its rural branches by using bookmobiles, but some of the smaller islands in the county have been deprived of this service because the lack of harbour facilities makes it impossible to land these vehicles. The Svendborg County Library has overcome this problem by installing a library of 500 books on a high-powered motor boat which has started to make regular trips to these small islands. The service is warmly welcomed as was shown by the results of the first trip made to three islands where for a total population of 230 people, 365 volumes—fiction, non-fiction and children's books—were borrowed. On every trip a trained librarian is on board to help and advise the library users. Svendborg's isolated islanders now look forward eagerly to the arrival of the floating library whose services will also help them to pass the long winter evenings.



All types of ocean-going vessels ranging from whalers to weatherships and from merchant ships to cable ships (above) have been adopted by schoolchildren



in five European countries. As soon as "their" ship docks at her home port the children are eager to go aboard to meet their sailor friends. (Photo COI).

MY SCHOOL HAS 'ADOPTED' A SHIP

ARRIVING at a port of call one day, Captain Kelly, master of the merchant ship *Irish Cedar* found a letter addressed in a childish hand waiting for him. He opened it and read:

"Dear Captain Kelly,

"My name is Patrick Smith, I am eleven years old and I am a boarder at Avoca School. There are 254 boys in the school, of whom 14 are boarders.

"Please could you send me some information about your ship? I know that it weighs 8,000 tons and I have read your messages. I have also seen its photo and I like it very much. You see I am very interested in ships, the things they carry and what ports they are calling at. When you come back to Dublin I should like to come on board.

"I also hope that you will be glad to receive this and many other letters."

The letter came as no surprise to Captain Kelly, for he knew that Patrick Smith and the other boys of Avoca School at Blackrock, County Dublin, had just "adopted" his ship. Like thousands of other children in Western Europe and Scandinavia, these Irish boys go to one of the schools associated with a Ship

Adoption Society, through which boys and girls are in constant touch with the captains and crews of hundreds of ships sailing in all parts of the world.

These Societies have already been formed in five countries: Denmark, Great Britain, Holland, Ireland and Norway. The oldest and largest is the British Ship Adoption Society, founded in 1936 after a successful experiment in 1934, when a London ship-owning company allowed four of its ships to be "adopted" by four London schools.

In Britain today there are some 1,000 ships and over 800 schools associated with the movement, and official recognition of the educational value of the scheme is evident in the number of educationalists and ministry representatives serving on the committee of management.

In Norway, a similar organization was set up shortly before the war through the efforts of teachers' associations and shipping companies. Its work, interrupted by the war, was resumed after Norway's liberation, and 1946 saw the formation of *Norsk Skipsadopsjon* (Norwegian Ship Adoption Society) to which 370 schools are now affiliated.

The Dutch Ship Adoption Society, *Nevas*, which was also founded in 1946, today has 200 "adopted" ships.



Letters from children to their adopted ships are delivered in the Port of London. This London river postman is a member of a family which, for 150 years, has been delivering all mail to crews of ships lying in the Pool of London. (Photo COI).



The president of the Netherlands Ship Adoption Society explains to a class the history and voyages of the mail steamer "Merweda" — which the boys and girls have adopted — and presents them with a coloured painting of "their" ship.

The most recently formed, that of Ireland, began operating in 1948.

Liaison between ships and shore is maintained chiefly by correspondence. A steady exchange of letters between pupils and crews forms the basis of a friendly and useful liaison which adds life and zest to classroom lessons.

Descriptions of journeys, cargoes, ports of call and weather conditions during the trips open up new horizons for the children. True stories and adventures lived and recounted by their friends transform "just another geography lesson" into a wonderful journey into reality.

"We sighted the Azores one evening just before nightfall," wrote Captain A.R. Spearman, master of the British motor tanker *Nicania*. "Their rugged peaks were silhouetted in the red rays of the setting sun. When they were first discovered back in the 14th century by the Genoese, they were uninhabited. They now belong to Portugal and the people are mostly Portuguese.

"The islands have a mild climate with a high and steady rainfall. The soil is very fertile and three or four crops a year can be produced.

Maize and beans are the principal crops, others are wheat, millet and barley. Sugar and beet are also grown, and fruit grows abundantly — there are sweet potatoes, pineapples, grapes, bananas and abricots. Tea, coffee, tobacco and flax are also cultivated, and there are sugar and tobacco factories."

From such first-hand descriptions as this, the chapter on the Azores in the geography textbooks takes on a new interest. During the voyage which took him to the Bahamas, to Florida, New Orleans and Curaçao, through the Panama Canal and across the Pacific, Captain Spearman sent accounts of what he saw — vivid pictures and instructive and picturesque details which all helped to enrich classroom lessons.

The children bombard their seafaring friends with innumerable questions: How long did the voyage last? Where do you go to refuel and how much did it cost? The replies are detailed and instructive. They teach the schoolchildren how sailors live and work at sea, the kinds of products imported and exported by differ-

(Continued on next page)

LESSONS BECOME A VOYAGE TO REALITY



Not all the stories the children hear from their sailor correspondents have happy endings. Sometimes they read of storms, typhoons, of ships being disabled or even wrecked. But such accounts only tend to bring them closer to the seamen

(Continued from **ent countries, previous page**) and the customs and habits of peoples in foreign lands.

Here, for example, is an extract from a letter sent by a member of the crew of the *Lutterkerk* to the boys and girls of a Dutch school:

"This time we have been making a trip to the Persian Gulf. One of our stops was Ashar which lies in Irak near Shatt-el-Arab, a river which flows from the Euphrates into the Tigris. I want to tell you something about Ashar which was, according to legend, the birthplace of Sinbad the Sailor.

"From the harbour we had a clear view of the city, which is surrounded by date trees. They grow along the river for several miles, and their fruit is the outstanding export. The first thing that strikes you about the city is the cupola of the mosque. Two stern looking Arabs are sitting at the entrance. According to religion custom, I must take off my shoes before entering, and I am sure to have a hole in my sock. The building is made of sandstone and the cupola is decorated with mosaics—thousands of tiny multicoloured stones.

"Outside the mosque is a busy street, where mules pull heavy carts

filled with vegetables and dates. The women in the street are heavily veiled and dressed in black—a practical garb offering protection from the millions of flies which exist here even in winter."

The value of this exchange of letters extends far beyond the geography class. Details of shipping transactions are used in economics courses. Descriptions of feeding arrangements on board are useful for domestic science classes; copies of the engineer's logs can be used in the mathematics period; an article on Palestine will illustrate a Bible lesson; a letter on the growth of a port of a coastal town may provide historical information.

Sometimes they provide material for a lesson on international co-operation. For instance, one captain whose tanker visited Rotterdam wrote:

"We spent about four days at the loading berth, and during this time I was able to go down to the Hague and have a look over the International Court of Justice building—the Dutch call it the Peace Palace. It really is a very lovely building. Every country that is represented has contributed something. England's gift was the lovely stained glass windows, Italy contri-

buted marble from which they made the floors—a marvellous bit of work, as it is composed of thousands of inch-square blocks set into the most intricate design. A Dutch painter did the murals. Japan presented a set of beautiful tapestries, made as only the Japanese can make them; Burma contributed teak and mahogany, and so it goes on. An Englishman was responsible for the lay-out of the gardens which surround the palace."

If the maximum benefits are to be drawn from the ship adoption scheme, teachers must play an important role. They must link facts recounted in the letters with classroom lessons, encourage children to use their initiative, and organize all sorts of activities to help bring children in touch with the life of their adopted ship.

Photographs of the ship are pinned on classroom walls together with copies of telegrams giving her position, notes on the types of weather experienced, details of the cargos carried, and so on. The children follow the ship's progress on a map of their own making, marking each stage of the voyage with small flags.

The headmaster of one Irish school is even arranging for a film-strip to be made of a typical voyage of one of the ships. This will be distributed to schools for use during geography lessons. Many Irish schools have already seen the excellent films which an Irish shipping organization has made of its growth and activities. Nearly all exhibit in their libraries or reading rooms, books, magazines or collections of photographs and post-cards which are souvenirs of a call "their" ship made in Sweden, Finland, Canada, the United States or Cuba.

The Irish Ship Adoption Society has close contacts with its British counterpart, and from France it has received posters and pictorial and informative material sent to Ireland by two shipping companies.

In Norway, schools have received collections of many strange objects brought back from voyages by their friends. These objects include turtles from Africa, native spears and musical instruments from Madagascar, and shells and dried plants coming from many latitudes.

The interest and activities stimulated in the schools by the exchange of letters is unending. Some children make models of ships, or of farms, factories and plants described

by their sailor correspondents. Girls are given an incentive to improve their needlework, for they send gifts to the crews at Christmas.

But the ship adoption system is not a one-sided affair. Through letters from the children, officers and crews are kept in a special way in close contact with life at home, the sort of news they receive giving them the impression of being closer in touch with daily life in their country. Parcels, books and papers they receive help to break the monotony of a long voyage. Some schools edit "newspapers" illustrated with amusing sketches, which they send to their sailor friends.

The success of the system is shown by the long list of schools waiting for a ship which they can adopt. War losses, the slowness of building today, and the normal depreciation and loss in shipping all make it impossible to provide a sufficient number of ships.

But the Ship Adoption Societies are finding other ways of maintaining the children's interest. Publications such as *Our Merchant Ships*, *Skolen og Skuta* (Schools and Ships) and *t'Kraaiennest* (The Crow's Nest) which are put out respectively by the British, Norwegian and Dutch Societies, reproduce the letters of children and sailors, and keep the schools informed about the activities of the movement. Booklets on great ports of the world are to be published by the British Ship Adoption Society which has already produced a book entitled *Seafarers, Ships and Cargoes*.

The adoptions are also proving an effective aid to international understanding. When the Norwegian merchant ship *Vistafjord* called at Takoradi on the Gold Coast, it was visited by a group of English children. The captain explained that his ship had been adopted by the children of the Alvdal Stor School at Osterdalen, Norway, and suggested that the English boys and girls should write to them.

About a week later the children at Osterdalen received a letter from Takoradi accompanied by a collection of drawings and embroideries. The English children wrote:

"Dear girls and boys,

"It is a great pleasure to send you a collection of some of our work. Our friend, Captain Kristiansen, has told us about you and how you work in your school high up in the mountains. I expect you have to wear sweaters and furs to keep warm, while we try to keep cool by wearing cotton clothes. Our school is held on a verandah of a long, low wooden building. We have sixteen pupils, six of whom are in the nursery department. Our ages range from five to fourteen. Serious work in the heat is difficult, but we do our best, as most of us are going home to the United Kingdom in the near future.

"Will you write to us and tell us about your school? Perhaps one day we shall have the pleasure of meeting you. On another page of our book you will find the names and United Kingdom address of the girls and boys who would like to start a pen-friendship. We should, however, be delighted to receive a letter from you, here in Takoradi. May we wish you, your parents and teachers every happiness."

The spirit which inspires the Ship Adoption Societies and useful purpose served by the movement are well summed up in the words of one of the organizers of the Irish Ship Adoption Society:

"While we wish to remain independent, we do not want to isolate ourselves from the peoples of the world with whom we wish to co-operate in the building of a happier and more prosperous world. The interest which hundreds of boys and girls in some of our leading secondary schools have for three years been showing in the ship adoption scheme is also a small contribution of the Irish people towards the building here of a greater understanding of other peoples and their problems."

There is no reason why every country should not have its Ship Adoption Society. Educational authorities and ship-owners throughout the world can co-operate in this truly modern venture to promote education in the widest sense of the word.



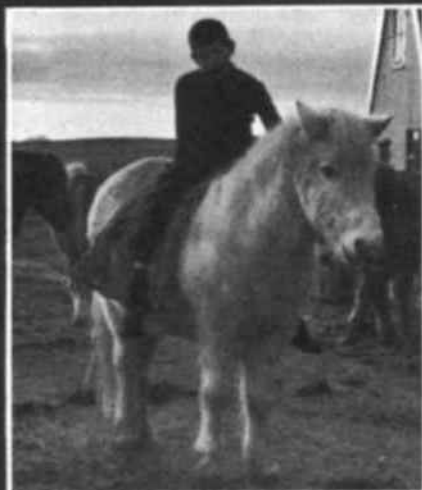
Schoolchildren in the Norwegian valley of Gudbrandsdalen received a letter containing a series of questions from the crew of the "Herva" which they have adopted. In their reply, the children illustrated their answers to this friendly general knowledge test with simple drawings and decorations (shown above).



ICELAND

THE OLDEST LIVING DEMOCRACY

by Michel SALMON



ON the quayside of Reykjavik, capital of modern Iceland, stands a Viking carved in granite, stern-featured beneath his winged helmet. With his back to the sea, he leans on the shaft of his steering-oar, his stony gaze fixed upon the rugged circle of black and purple volcanoes dominating the bay. It is Leifur Eriksson (Leif the Fortunate), who discovered America 500 years before Columbus and established a settlement in the snowy wastes of Labrador. Leif the Fortunate ranks not only as the first of history's great explorers but also as an early humorist, for, to attract colonists, he gave the pleasant name of "Vinneland"—the country of wine—to Labrador. (It was a tradition begun by his father, Eric the Red, who discovered and christened "Greenland".)

Everything about Iceland, incidentally, has a similar stamp of fantasy—gay or tragic—and if there is any part of the world where Puck, fleeing from conformity with its levelling effect on scenery and customs which is a sign of our times, may have found refuge, it must surely be here in Ultima Thule, "the most distant land", where stood, according to the Ancients, the gate of Hell.

Iceland is a country of paradoxes, of sharp geographical and human contrast. Though it still bears the misnomer it was given by a near-sighted ninth-century Norwegian, it is really much more the island of flames than the island of ice. Lying just below the Arctic circle, its climate is almost as temperate as that of Brittany, thanks to the Gulf Stream—a kindly sea-serpent, whose warm coils envelop it. Neither trees nor wheat will grow there, but constant warm springs and geysers enable tropical fruits to be cultivated extensively under glass. Isolation in the cold, northern mists for a thousand years drove Iceland to offer generous concessions in exchange for visits from foreign ships; today it is a vital link in the air communications of the whole northern hemisphere.

For most Europeans, there is still a spice of adventure in the very name of Iceland, but this is due more to the survival of legend than to actual facts. Reykjavik can now be reached as easily and quickly as many of the Western capitals—eight hours by air from London or Amsterdam, or four or five days by sea from Copenhagen. The last port of call before the polar wastes, Reykjavik is a city of 50,000 people, a somewhat ill-assorted union between a small Jutland community—neat little wooden houses brightly painted in salmon pink, canary

yellow and green—and a typical American "mushroom" town—square, reinforced concrete warehouses, a university and national theatre on strong, simple lines, and a crop of apartment-houses and bungalows with large windows, lining miles of streets which have no pavements.

What attracted me to the shores of Thule, however, was not this spectacle of a modern metropolis within a stone's throw of the Pole, nor even the marvels of northern nature with its wild, awesome contrasts—the unending glaciers and volcanoes in eruption, the lava fields like storm-tossed seas, the intermingling of the sun's blood-red and ochre colours by day, or the twinkling lights of the Aurora Borealis by night. I was primarily fascinated, after a long stay in Scandinavia, by the idea of retracing, as it were, the source of Nordic civilization in a land where the Viking world, with scarcely any alien intermixture, came to flower.

The population, incidentally, includes some Celts (Irish and Scots) but, to the detriment of the picturesque, not a single Eskimo.

The Vikings were not only bold seamen and fierce pirates; they also gave the Western world the first example of a democratic parliament, the Althing, which was established in 930 AD by the oligarchy of the *godords*, their clan chieftains.

Although it is relatively close to us in terms of history, the civilization of the wild Norsemen is so bound up with legend that its origins seem to be lost in the mists of time. But this is not true of Iceland, where the past is still regarded as a living continuity and never ceases to play its full part in daily life.

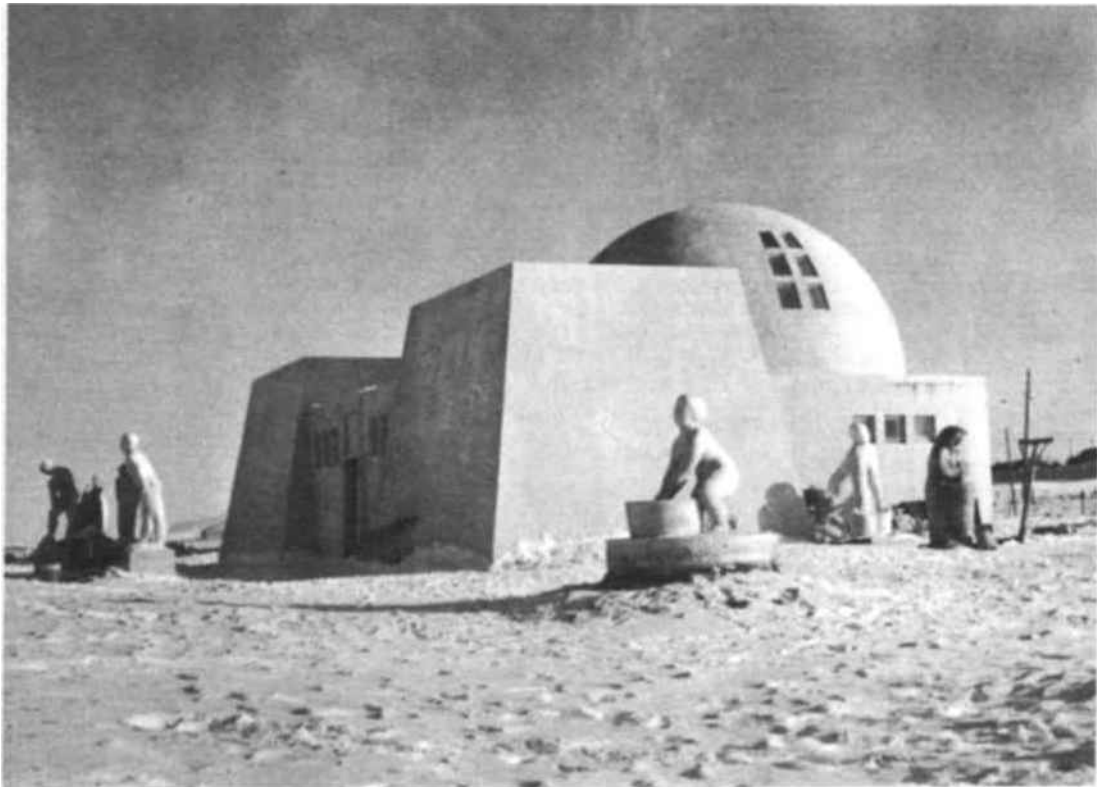
One day, with a chance acquaintance, I went for a drive in the "countryside"—a barren chaos of lava with, here and there, a small field of poor grass, a flock of sheep, a few wild ponies, and every ten miles or so a farm. I looked in vain for the many hamlets whose names were on my map. My friend soon explained the reason. The names were not those of villages or farms; they preserved the memory of a church which had disappeared 500 years before, of a Viking village which had crumbled into dust, of an historical (or legendary) event. Of these buildings and events my companion spoke, pointing out some invisible spot on the inhospitable horizon with as much interest and knowledge as though he were describing some recent episode. Iceland is not a "museum" of ancient Scandinavian life. The Viking heritage is here a very part of the people's daily existence.

(Continued on page 10.)





WHALEMEAT IS A FAVOURITE DISH Iceland's only whaling station is situated in the Fjord of Hvalfjodur, to the north of Reykjavik, where during the season at least one whale is processed each day. Whale steaks, a popular item on the family menu, are eaten with potatoes cooked in sugar and a sweetened tapioca sauce. Fish, too, is an important item of diet, as well as being the country's main export.



THE STONE IGLOO HOME OF AN ARTIST Near to Reykjavik is found this curious stone dwelling—home of the sculptor Sogurjon Olafsson, who finds his models among the local people and works in the open air. Iceland can boast a galaxy of artistic talent out of all proportion to its population of 120,000 and area of some 40,000 square miles. In few other lands is there a more widespread love of good literature.



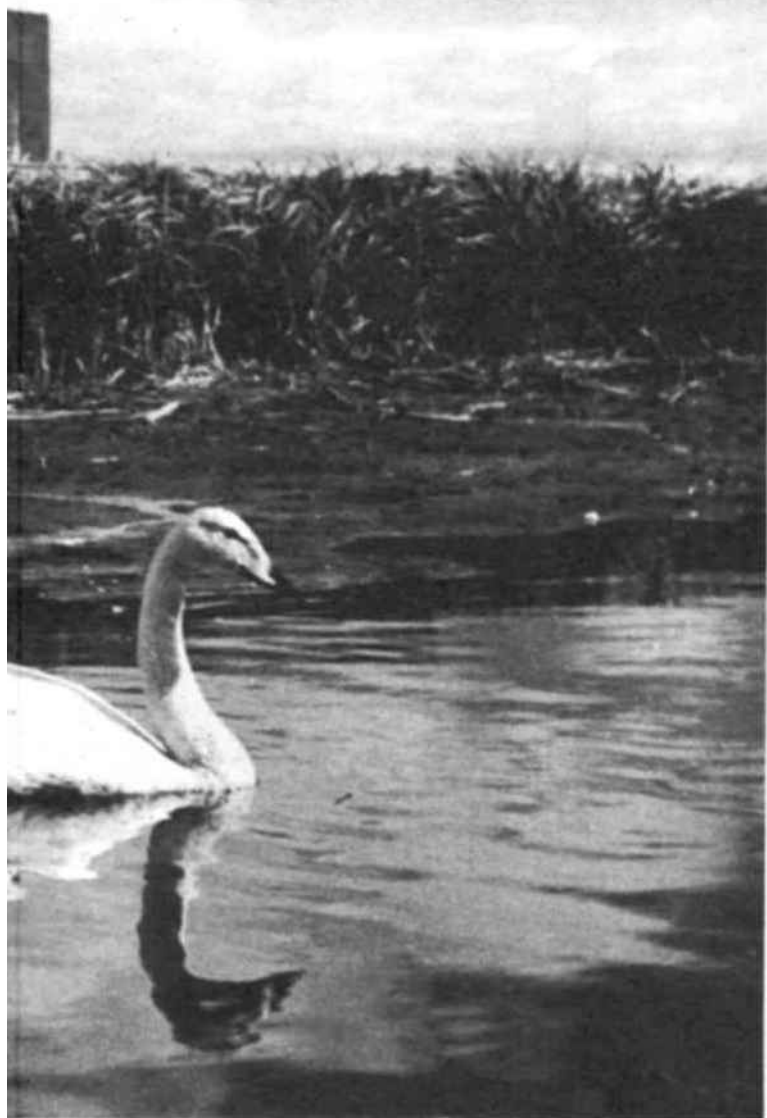
GRASS — THE BACKBONE OF FARMING Icelanders have made grass, which grows well in the thin soil, the backbone of their farming. They raise cattle and small, hardy sheep and horses. In Spring the sheep are marked and put to graze on the hillsides where they are left until the farmers go out to collect them in the Autumn. This photo shows the "Rettir" or rounding up of the small and long-wooled flocks.



The statue of a Viking—one of many in Iceland—dominating this "Swan I" with present-day life in the island. Nameplaces on maps still mark the site today there is simply bare ground. Despite their everyday struggle to gain fish (below), from a more bountiful sea, the people of Iceland cherish the



GE LIVES ON TODAY



this "Swan Lake" (above) is a reminder that the past remains bound up in the present. It marks the site of former villages or the scene of long-past deeds where people struggled to gain a livelihood from a poor soil or, like these women salting fish, and cherish the Viking heritage in language, story-telling and customs.



THE ISLAND OF ICE AND OF FIRE Most of central Iceland is a wind-swept desert of sand and lava, ridged by mountains and strewn with glaciers and snowfields that never melt. The valleys of the fiords and the narrow coastal plains in the west and south are almost the only places where man can live. An eighth of all Iceland is buried under snow and ice and more than half is mountainous. But winters are mild.



EVERY ROOM HAS ITS OWN ROOF The traditional Icelandic farm is built partly below ground level with a separate roof for each room. The row of roofs seen on the left of this photo all belong to one farmhouse and represent a link with old Viking architecture. Typical also is the form of the Lutheran church often found in Iceland's countryside. Newer houses are made of imported timber or concrete.



"STORI GEYSIR", THE GREAT GEYSER More than a hundred volcanoes, some still active, make Iceland one of the most volcanic regions of the world. The volcanic rocks heat countless hot springs and geysers, the largest of which is the famous Geysir (from geysa, Icelandic word meaning "to rush forth furiously"), from which the world's geysers take their name. The warm spring waters are piped to heat houses.

A BOOK-LOVING PEOPLE IN A BLEAK LAND

(Continued from page 7.)

When, one bright summer morning in 1944, Iceland re-established the Republic in the very spot where it had first been born—the majestic amphitheatre of Thingvellir hollowed out in the rock and lava beside a mighty lake—the members of parliament quite naturally and unself-consciously donned the leather cape and breeches of the *godords*. The language they used, *Izlenka*, the root-language of the Scandinavian peoples—with its archaic system of writing and its tonal resemblances to the Romance languages—was very nearly the same as that spoken by their ancestors.

The Icelandic vocabulary is still extraordinarily rich. It comprises no fewer than 200,000 words and is far purer than any other European language, as it has preserved 57 per cent of the original Indo-European roots. It has fewer than 3,000 borrowed words. Icelandic has also preserved the old declensions and conjugations, with all their cases and tenses. One hundred and twenty-five out of its 130 suffixes date from the Aryan period. This extraordinary, complicated "Mandarin" is spoken by 140,000 people.

The laws of the new State were to include, almost unchanged, considerable portions of the *Jonsbok*, the old customary law which was codified in 1281. The past is everywhere alive, even in the most common daily practices, in the survival of customs which, today, sometimes strike us with surprise. The Icelanders, for instance, have no patronymics, no surnames handed on from father to son. They still observe the Viking custom, which was common in mediaeval Europe, of using only the Christian name. Children add the suffix *son* in the case of boys and *dottir* in the case of girls. Married women do not take their husband's name—a custom which reflects the respect shown to women in primitive Germanic society.

Whatever the disadvantages of this system, not one Icelander would

agree to give it up. This attitude is something more than a childish, parochial chauvinism. It is the proud self-assertion of a small but determined nation which has, for ten centuries, withstood the combined assaults of malignant nature and men—volcanic eruptions (about 100 to date), earthquakes, periods of deadly cold, epidemics, famines, the ravages of English or Barbary pirates and the despotism of ambitious kings already thinking of Iceland's strategic position. Despite so many heavy blows, whose effects are shown in the fluctuations of the country's

still knows little of our sagas, one of the truest treasures of the human mind." The man who said this to me was expressing, with some bitterness, the unanimous opinion of the Icelandic people. Possessing a strong desire to escape from their age-long isolation and having an active interest in the culture of the world, the people of Iceland find it hard to understand what they regard as a neglect of their intellectual heritage by other peoples.

Despite the work of Xavier Marrier, Craigie, Poestion and others,

some English translations of these sagas, and I am inclined to share the opinion of the Icelanders, who hold them worthy of comparison with the epic masterpieces of the West, the poems of Homer, the *Nibelungenlied* or the *Kalevala*. Composed between the 11th and the 13th century, and mostly anonymous, they embody with restrained and sober lyricism the *Weltanschauung*, the "outlook on the world" of the Vikings, a kind of lay philosophy based on the strict and stern observation of human nature in the light of ideas held prior to the introduction of Christianity into the country. One cannot help being struck by the realistic intensity of these tales, imbued with the pantheistic mythology of Asatru, the cult of Othin and the belief in *Válföllum* (the Germanic Odin and Walhalla). Dissension, bloody strife and vengeance are the principal themes, while a fate as implacable as Sophocles' hangs over the gods and men and inanimate things. The thirteenth century, the golden age of the sagas, saw the composition of great numbers of masterpieces—the *Tale of Egill Skallagrimsson*, the *Laxdaelasaga*, the *Hrafnhelsaga* and above all the harsh *Njálsaga*, the only Icelandic work which is comparatively well-known outside Scandinavia, since it has been translated into many foreign languages.

The sagas, which the school-children of Reykjavik can read easily in the original because the language has changed so little, are not only the cultural wealth of Iceland, but are also the nation's "public records," its genealogical tree. The influence of the sagas—which are found, richly bound in every home, even in the isolated farms of the hinterland—can only be compared to that of the Bible amongst the Puritans of colonial America. Public discussions and newspaper editorials are full of references to them. I can remember a stormy argument between half-a-dozen rough fishermen in the fore-castle of the trawler which I took

OVER A THOUSAND YEARS OF HISTORY

- 8th century. — Discovery of Iceland by Irish monks.
- 870. — Ingolfur Arnason, a Norwegian emigrant, lands on the site of the future city of Reykjavik.
- 870-930. — Colonization by Viking feudal lords in voluntary exile owing to their dissatisfaction with the policy of King Harald Haarfager, who built up the crown lands in Norway.
- 930. — Foundation of the Althing, the first Parliament in the world, and of a highly decentralized oligarchical Republic.
- 982. — Discovery of Greenland by the Icelandic Viking, Eric the Red (Erikur Raudi).
- 1000. — Eric's son, Leifur Eriksson, discovers America nearly five centuries before Columbus.
- 1000. — Iceland converted to Christianity.
- 1262. — End of the Viking Republic. Internal strife among the *godords*, or local chieftains, leads to the island's submission to Norway.
- 13th century. — Golden age of the sagas, the hallmarks of Icelandic literature.
- 1382. — A change of dynasty brings Iceland under the Danish crown.
- 1402. — Plague kills two out of every three people on the island.
- 1550. — The Reformation in Iceland; the population joins the Lutheran Church.
- 1602. — Denmark imposes a very severe "commercial monopoly" on Iceland.
- 1783-1790. — Volcanic eruptions and famines, resulting in the death of 10,000 people.
- 1904. — Home Rule for Iceland.
- 1918. — Iceland recognized as an independent monarchy within the Danish Union.
- 1944. — Proclamation of the Second Icelandic Republic.

population (estimated at 80,000 in the eleventh century, and declining to a mere 50,000 at the time of the 1801 census), the people of Iceland have never lost faith in their future; and this justifies their proud, non-aggressive patriotism.

"In the past few decades, holiday-makers have been discovering the beauty of our scenery, sportsmen have made acquaintance with our trout streams, and military leaders have begun to appreciate our strategic importance, but the world

very little is known abroad about the ancient Icelandic literature—the drama of the Eddas and the poetry of the Skalds, with their complicated and mannered metres, strange collected works like the *Landnamabok* (Book of Settlements), and the *Islandiabok* (Book of Icelanders), the versatile works of the churchman Thorgilsson (1067-1148), which are a mixture of epic, genealogy and cadastral survey, and above all the half-historical, half-legendary cycles of the sagas.

I have had the opportunity to read



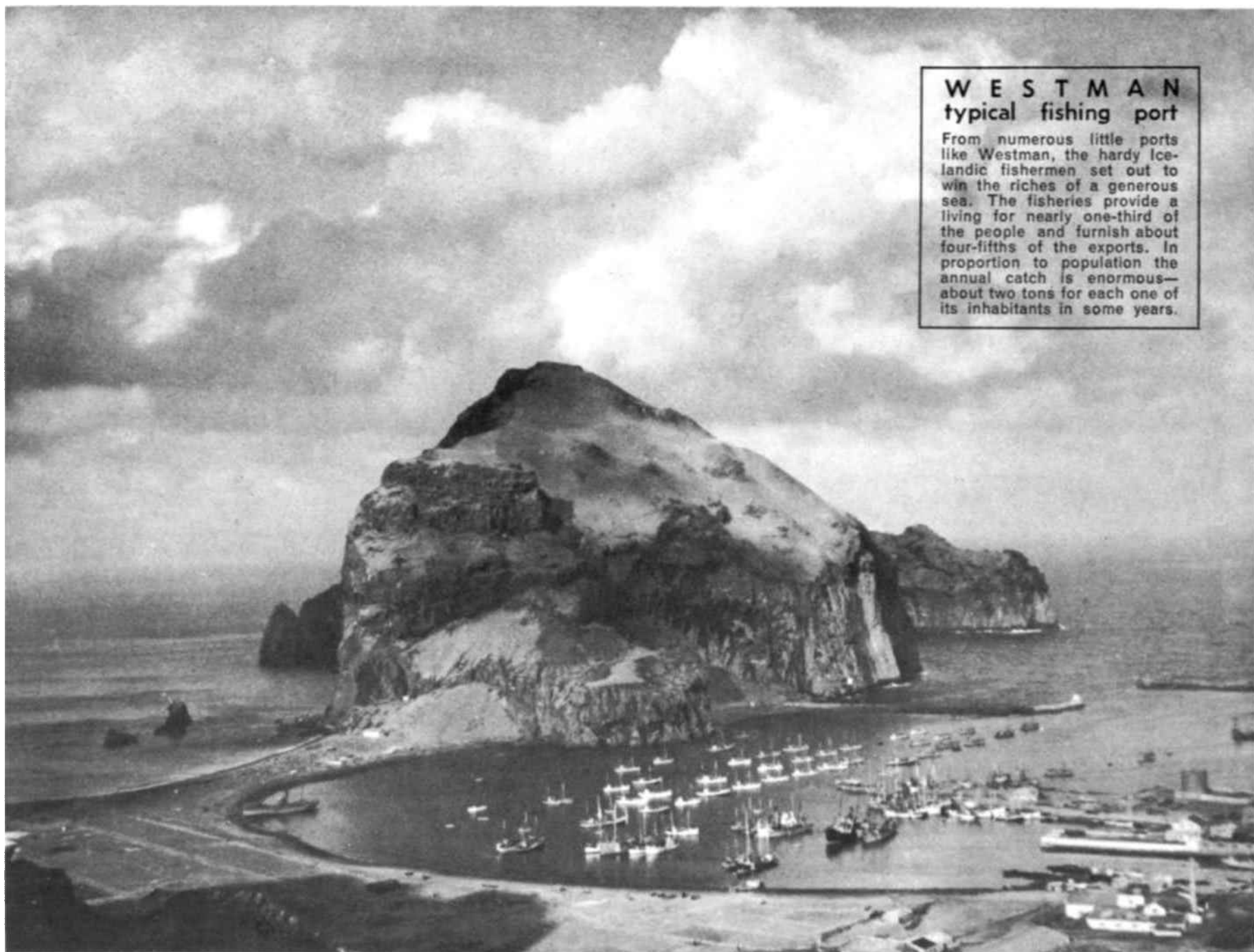
THE WORLD'S MOST NORTHERN CAPITAL CITY

More than one-third of Iceland's people live in Reykjavik (from *reykur*, "smoke" hence "smoking harbour"), the chief port and capital, which looks like a small Jutland community in an American "mushroom" city. Amid one-storey homes are buildings which illustrate the importance of culture in the lives of the people: the National Library and the National Theatre (photo on left), the University and other educational institutions. Iceland reads more books than any other nation in proportion to population.

ICELAND HAS A NAME THAT IS MISLEADING

Natural hot springs tapped near Reykjavik provide water almost at boiling point for 3,000 homes and warm 538,000 square feet of glass-houses, the rate of flow being about 88 gallons a second. In these glass-houses are grown bananas, pineapples and other tropical fruit. In some places water is piped through the soil to warm it for growing green crops, and is also used in open-air swimming pools. In fact, the name Iceland is rather misleading, for this country is much more the land of flames than the land of ice.





WESTMAN
typical fishing port

From numerous little ports like Westman, the hardy Icelandic fishermen set out to win the riches of a generous sea. The fisheries provide a living for nearly one-third of the people and furnish about four-fifths of the exports. In proportion to population the annual catch is enormous—about two tons for each one of its inhabitants in some years.

on my return journey. It was not about women or liquor smuggling, but was in fact a literary discussion on some obscure point in a no less obscure saga, in which my seamen-commentators appeared to display remarkable erudition.

Icelandic culture has by no means become petrified in fruitless contemplation of the past. This is shown by the tremendous amount of educational work being done, in which the most up-to-date teaching methods are prominent. As he goes about the country, the traveller is struck by the large number of large modern buildings standing by themselves far away from the town. With their petrol pumps, their swimming pools fed by warm mineral springs, their pleasant guest-rooms, and sometimes even their own small aerodromes, they are comfortable stopping-places for travellers. Except during the two summer months, however, they are not hotels but simply country schools. The pupils come by jeep, or riding ponies, over miles and miles of mountains or lava. The total enrolment in the schools and universities of Iceland is 28,000, or 20 per cent of the population; last year, the State allotted 28,300,000 kromer (over £560,000) to education, out of a total budget of 256,000,000 kromer. There are 20,000 children in the elementary schools alone.

Iceland is a nation where illiteracy has been banished, and whose people are in fact among the best educated in the world (one is soon convinced of this after talking to the "man in the street", who often speaks several languages). The people have also a remarkable respect for the printed word, as is shown by the enormous number of bookshops in the country, all, so I was told, doing a very thriving business. I was always surprised,

when passing through a small town with a few thousand inhabitants, such as Akureyri or Vestmannaeyjar, to see bookshops whose luxury offered a sharp contrast with the primitive austerity of other shops.

During the six long months of Arctic night, when their work is considerably slowed down, the Icelanders devour hundreds of books, mainly translations of world classics and popular scientific works. Publication for so small a market is not a very good commercial proposition, and as a result copyright laws have sometimes been stretched. But we can hardly criticize the Icelanders for this, nor discourage their eager curiosity, especially as an acute shortage of foreign currency has caused large restrictions in foreign book imports. Friends of mine in Iceland told me, in this connexion, how sorry they were that Iceland was not yet a member of Unesco, as the Book Coupon Scheme would make it possible to remedy a shortage whose effects are particularly felt in university circles. On a more general basis, the inclusion of the country in a great international organization would meet one of the deepest wishes of the Icelanders, who still feel the hereditary dread of cultural isolation.

Without dealing exhaustively with intellectual developments in Iceland—with its wide variety of newspapers, its national theatre where works by Shakespeare, Pirandello and Bernard Shaw are presented in the language of the Vikings, its symphony orchestra and so forth—I should like to mention the most surprising feature of this small country's intellectual life, namely its great wealth of contemporary artists and writers worthy of international fame. If the word had not lost much of its force, this might well be

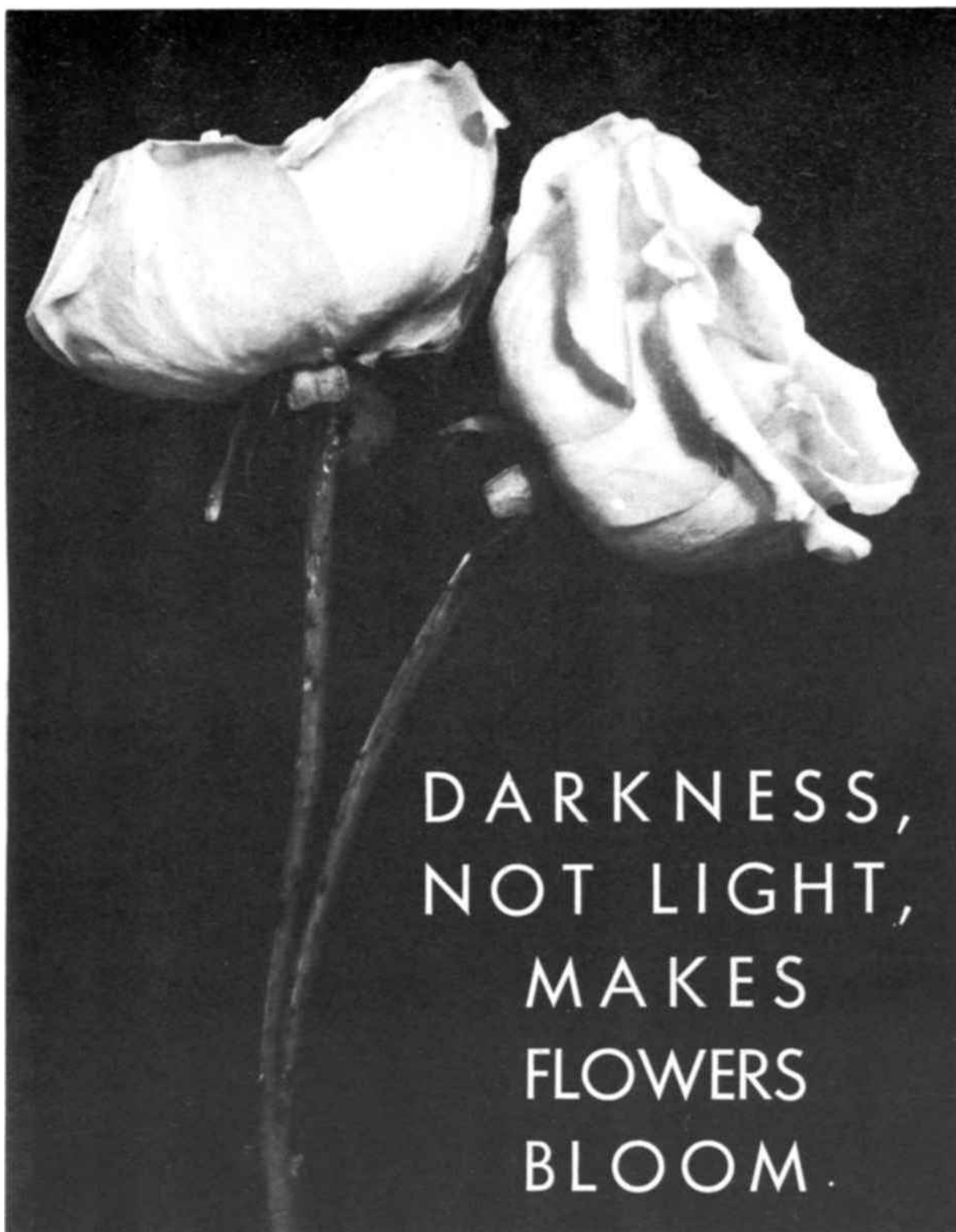
described as a miracle; but it is a miracle brought about by intelligent action, by wise State patronage, which enables men who cannot count on a large enough audience within the boundaries of their own country to maintain a decent standard of living while practising their art. Among these men are Halldor Jiljan Laxness, the powerful novelist, considered by Scandinavians as comparable with the world's great writers; Gunnar Gunnarsson, the novelist and essayist, some of whose works written in Danish have earned him an honoured place; the painter Johannes Kjarval, a Van Gogh of the Arctic; the portrait-painter Jon Stefansson, a brilliant pupil of Matisse; the

sculptor Sogurjon Olafsson, and others. This galaxy of talent gives the smallest and least favoured of the Nordic nations a prestige out of all proportion to its poverty and its tiny population.

The picture Iceland affords us is not merely that of a progressive people clinging doggedly to life in the most inhospitable of geographical surroundings. It is that of the triumph of the Spirit where Matter is most difficult to master, that of Arctic solitude overcome by a bond of union which links the dweller in Farthest Thule to all mankind, in the love of the truest treasures of humanity. It is an outstanding example of spiritual vitality.

Photos: H. Malmberg, R. Jonsson, T. Josepsson and Icelandic Tourist Office.





DARKNESS, NOT LIGHT, MAKES FLOWERS BLOOM.

Photo Z. Mihanoff.

by Dr. Gerald WENDT

IT is light that makes plants grow but it is darkness that makes them blossom. By day the leaves absorb the energy of the sun and build the body of the plant from materials that are taken from the soil and the air. Water and carbon dioxide gas are chemically combined to make the materials that comprise the stem, the leaves and the roots. Without sunlight there would be no plants, therefore no food for animals — and no animals. There would be no life on earth.

But plant life cannot go on unless there are seeds, which usually come from flowers or blossoms. And the development of flowers is dependent on periods of darkness, according to recent botanical research. Without the right amount of darkness even healthy plants do not bloom and without seeds most food plants would soon die out. So the alternation of light and darkness is needed for the continuance of life on earth.

The role of darkness is so important that it controls the geographical distribution of many types of plants over the earth. Some need a short night, some a long one. In the tropics the night does not vary much in length at various times of the year; in summer, as in the winter months, both day and night are about twelve hours long. But in the higher latitudes, towards the poles, both north and south, the summer nights are short and the day long. Only those plants can survive there which need only a short night for their flower production.

Sugar cane, for instance, needs a twelve-hour night and will never come to flower away from the tropics because in the temperate zones the summer nights are too short. The cockle-burr, on the other hand, needs only a nine-hour night and will thrive as far north as 50° of latitude, where the nine-hour night comes in August so that blooms may come and seeds may form before the coming of frost. Still farther north (or south) of the equator the nine-hour night comes too late in the season so that seeds do not ripen in time and the plant dies out. Plants that grow wild in the far north or south need

only a short night to stimulate their flowerings.

The discovery of the important role of darkness in plant reproduction is a story of modern botanical research, told by Professor A.W. Naylor of Yale University in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*. The most surprising discovery was the simple fact that it is the length of the dark period that counts in flower formation. A chrysanthemum flowers only when the days are short and the nights long. Darkening it by day does not affect its blooming but if it is put into artificial light for even a short time during the night it does not bloom. The darkness is then too short. Florists are learning to bring their plants to flower whenever they want them by controlling the length of the dark period. But flower-lovers who bring blossoming plants home from holiday trips to the north or south often find that they grow well but never bloom. A change in latitude of only 150 miles (250 kilometers) makes a small difference in the length of the night but it is sometimes enough to make flowering impossible.

But this was only the beginning of the research. There was still the question of how the length of darkness can have so profound an effect on the life of the plant. Darkness itself is only the absence of light. What goes on in the dark that makes the flowers bud and grow? Growth is a chemical process. Does darkness then produce a special chemical in the plant which in turn produces flowers? This bizarre guess proved to be correct. What this chemical is is not yet known, but that it exists is now quite sure.

The proof of its existence came from many laboratories, in the Netherlands, in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R. Nearly twenty years ago, Professor Knott of Cornell University (U.S.A.), got a clue when he experimented with spinach plants, which bloom in the summer on a long day and a short night. For part of the day he covered the little stem where the flowers would sprout, thus putting them in darkness and changed, in effect, the length of day and night. But the flowers budded and grew as

usual. Then he gave the leaves a shorter period of darkness. In this case the plants refused to flower. The action of darkness is therefore on the leaves and not on the flower bud.

This was proved by other research workers who found that when all the leaves were taken from the plant, no flowers formed but if even one leaf remained and had the proper alternation of day and night the flowers came. Professors Hamner and Bonner of the University of Chicago (U.S.A.) worked with the cockle-burr. They found that even one-eighth of a leaf kept for the necessary nine hours in darkness stimulated flower formation, no matter how much light or dark fell on the rest of the plant. This was taken as proof that the proper period of darkness on one leaf or less produces a chemical that travels through the plant and starts flower formation.

Other investigators went even further and grafted a number of plants together. Even six plants grafted together in a row all flowered together when a single leaf was given the nine hours of darkness.

Even more surprising is that the flower-producing chemical seems to be the same in all plants because a leaf from an entirely different plant can be grafted to another plant and will still produce the same effect of stimulating the formation of blossoms.

There is much interest among botanists to discover what this chemical is. If it could be prepared in pure form and plants could be treated with it then any plant could be brought to flowering at any time. This would make it possible to grow flowering plants far from their natural home. It would make it possible for florists to offer blossoms of any climate or area by the simple device of providing the chemical that nature can make only by the proper alternation of light and darkness. Even more important from the point of view of agriculture is the fact that this would permit the plant breeder to get blossoms at the same time on two different varieties which usually bloom at different times. He would thus be able to cross or hybridize them, and obtain new and valuable varieties which are at present impossible.

Although the fact that periods of darkness produce such a stimulating chemical is new, it is well known that many chemicals have a direct effect in stimulating or inhibiting root growth, leaf growth, even flower growth. They are sometimes known as plant hormones, but are more correctly called auxins. Already, some plants can be sprayed to prevent them from flowering and others can be sprayed with different chemicals to increase the number and size of the flowers produced. In a few commercial operations these methods have proved profitable. In the pineapple fields of Hawaii, for instance, the flowers naturally develop throughout the summer so that only part of the field is ripe for picking at any one time. But if a field of pineapples is sprayed with a chemical called naphthalene-acetic acid, then in six to eight weeks the entire field blossoms at once. Consequently, the entire field of pineapples ripens at once and can be harvested by machinery. This has enormously reduced the cost of harvesting and therefore the cost of pineapples.

In Hawaii also, experiments are now under way to increase the flowering of the litchi-nut trees. This delicious fruit has not become commercial because in Hawaii only about four percent of the trees come to bloom. But when the orchards are sprayed with naphthalene-acetic acid nearly 90 percent of the trees blossom and bear fruit. This discovery may create a new industry for Hawaii and for other areas of the earth.

In other plants it is desirable to prevent flowering. In the case of lettuce and celery, for instance, the leaves are edible and important and the growers wish to prevent the formation of blossoms and seed. In this case, chemicals can be used to delay the formation of flowers. On the other hand, growers of celery-seed can spray with a different chemical and thereby promote seed formation.

Interference with the natural growth of plants for the benefit of man is thus not uncommon in special cases, but the largest and most important development will come when botanists learn the chemical nature of the substance that is produced by all plants and which is necessary to begin the formation of buds, followed by blossoms and seeds. At present, plants depend on the night to form this unknown chemical, but once it is identified, and manufactured darkness may no longer be needed because that chemical could then be injected into the stem of the plant. It is as if animals and men were freed of the necessity of sleeping. The major prospect perhaps is that in that case the far northern and southern regions of the world might become productive because the long days and even the midnight sun would not interfere with the production of valuable food crops.

LIBERIA HAS APPOINTED THE FIRST U.N. TRAVELLING TEACHER

I never thought I would come across a young white girl walking all alone along a jungle path in Liberia. It surprised me all the more in this country — the only independent Negro state in Africa — where only Negroes can become naturalized citizens, and where until seven years ago, only a handful of foreigners even lived in the capital, Monrovia.

It was not until 1945 that a forward-looking president opened the frontiers of Liberia to whites. Even today the white population is made up of only a few hundred foreigners, most of them employees on an American rubber plantation, businessmen, officials working on a contract basis, or diplomats. There are also a number of missionaries.

I suppose you would call the young American girl I found walking in the jungle a missionary too. But she is probably the only one of her kind in the world. Her "mission" is the United Nations, and the words that she spreads from village to village are those of international co-operation. Her name is Miss Dora Lee Allen and she is the world's first "Travelling Teacher for the United Nations".

The strangest thing about this un-

by **André BLANCHET**

usual "missionary" is that she is not officially connected with the United Nations at all. The idea originally came from the President of Liberia, Mr. William S. Tubman who conceived the travelling teacher scheme as a gesture of gratitude towards international organizations such as Unesco, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, whose technical assistance experts are helping to modernize the country.

Miss Allen thus is an official of the Liberian Government, and all facilities and transport for her work are provided by the authorities. Every day she goes off to tell the schoolchildren in the different primary schools about the United Nations, the things it stands for and the work it is doing.

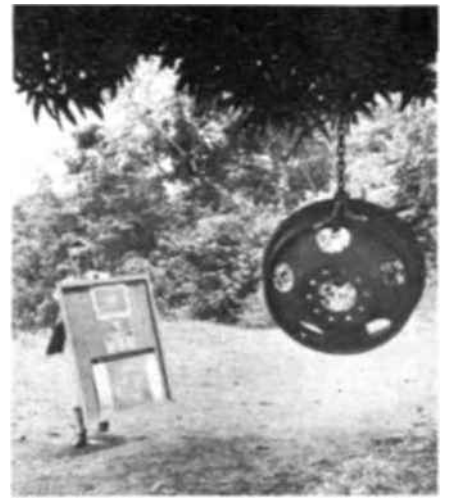
Primary schools in Liberia are far from rich. Few of them, even in Monrovia, have enough desks or tables. Almost always the children have to sit crammed together on tiny benches. And since none of the schools is provided with electricity, Miss Allen is unable, for the moment at least, to illustrate her les-

sons with films which the U.N. Information Centre could provide free of charge.

There are many things in the countryside of Liberia which remind one of the American South. Between 1821 and 1860, about 10,000 American Negroes landed on the West Coast of Africa and set up the first independent Negro Republic on the African continent. They brought with them an architectural style which was far removed from the traditional mud hut one usually associates with Africa. They constructed their homes in the Southern Colonial style—tall wooden houses with corrugated iron roofs and a verandah built on all sides.

The old Baptist church in Johnsonville, with its bell tower housed in a separate wooden structure, also makes one think of the South. For want of other accommodation, this rusty iron church, with its dilapidated floor-boards and—more important—its benches, is used as a school for 150 pupils.

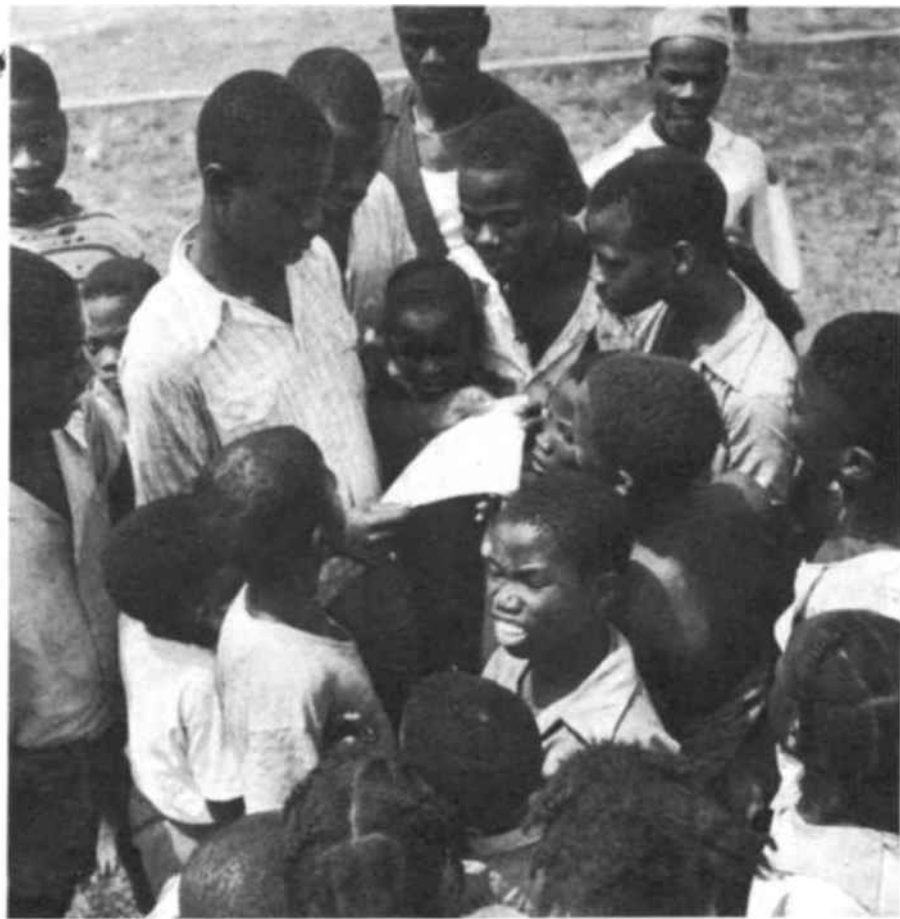
Soon after Miss Allen arrived, the school was brightened up by a small multi-coloured tree with 60 branches and leaves, symbolizing the United Nations, which was placed next to the artificial flowers on the altar. From the car that had brought her from Monrovia, through a geometrically laid-out plantation of



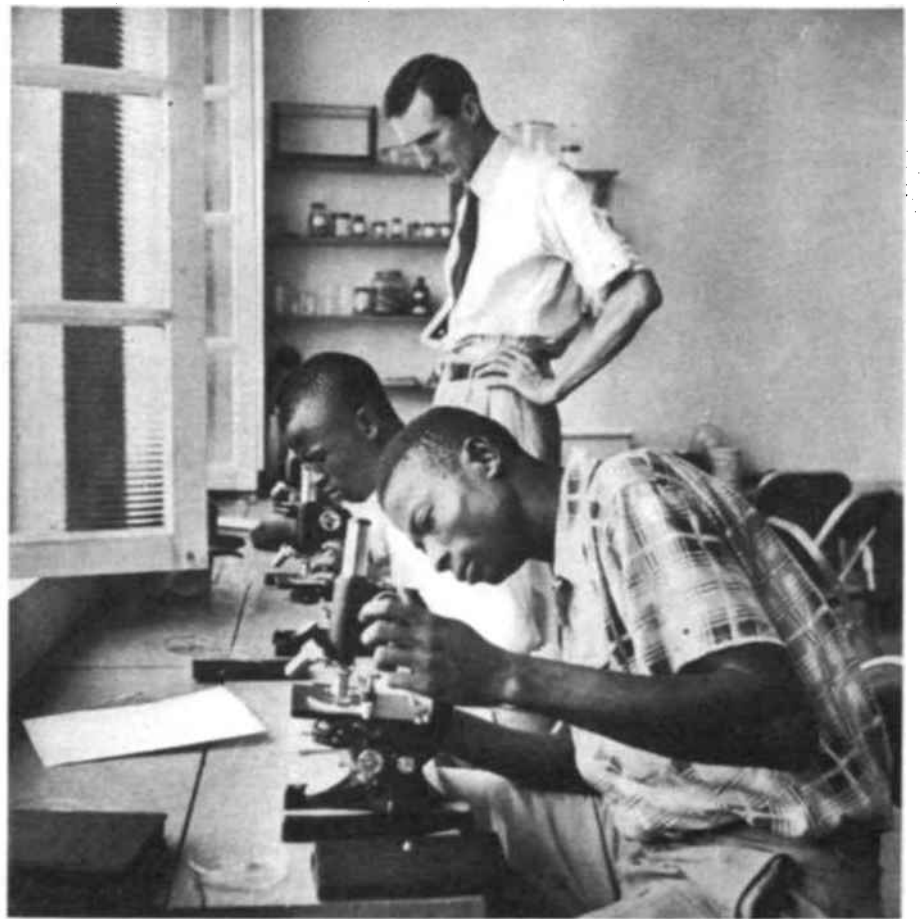
rubber, trees, there came a series of posters, pictures, diagrams and other panels which make up Miss Allen's travelling teaching equipment.

To the boys and girls in this school, who have never seen a train or a paved road, but who are all eager for learning, Miss Allen has been bringing a new kind of picture of the outside world with her exhibits and her lessons.

Wherever she arrives, classes are interrupted so that everyone can welcome her. The teachers —most of whom lack even simple (Continued on next page.)



Liberia has been undergoing large-scale technological and social changes in recent years. These have created increasing demands for skilled workers and an alert, literate population, which Unesco technical assistance missions are helping to develop. Above, Liberians study leaflet on what is being achieved.



The University of Monrovia is now developing its faculty of science. With Unesco aid, classes have been equipped with microscopes and other laboratory equipment and a team of science teachers has been sent to Liberia. Here, a New Zealand biology teacher, Mr A.J.D. Barker, instructs a class at the University.



Education games are encouraged by the Liberian Government as a "painless" way of learning. This is a letter card game. Liberians are told "Poverty and disease cannot be fought without literacy. It is a patriotic duty of every citizen to spread education."



Unesco technical aid experts from seven countries meet weekly at the Ministry of Education in Monrovia with government and university officials. These meetings are considered so important that Liberia's Vice-President (back to camera) attends regularly.



Liberia has undertaken a fundamental education experiment in the region of Dimeh, 20 miles from the capital. Above, Unesco technical assistance scientist, Mr W.S. Rankin, registers people for a routine health visit at a rustic jungle dispensary.

SHE TEACHES IN 15 SCHOOLS

(Continued from maps for their previous page.) geography classes

—look on with pleasure as she sets the bright panels with the U.N. symbol against the wall (or against a tree, when the lesson is held out-of-doors). To see if the children have learned the previous lesson, the travelling teacher asks them a few questions, such as "What is the meaning of the word 'international'?" Then she goes on to talk about the United Nations and why and how it was set up. Slowly and simply she outlines her theme.

"Now, let's take a few notes," she says, and rows of heads bend over twice as many knees which must serve temporarily as desks.

The lesson over, there will be seven days to think over what Miss Allen has been explaining—and to do some "home-work". Before going on to the next village, Miss Allen leaves a set of questions for the children to answer in writing, or gives a subject for an essay on international co-operation. On her next visit, she corrects their "home-work". Miss Allen's lessons require a good deal of work on the part of her pupils. They are not mere "pep talks", to be listened to half-heartedly. The results she has achieved thus far prove that the U.N. is becoming an understood reality in this tiny country.

Every week, Miss Allen brings her panels to the older children in 15 dif-



Liberia's war against ignorance: To dramatize the opening of the campaign against illiteracy an aeroplane drops leaflets proclaiming an out-and-out war on "enemy number one to progress."

ferent schools. Her largest classes are in Monrovia itself, in an extremely overcrowded school. An hour after leaving the capital, she may be giving a lesson in an open-air class under a mango tree, in a village on the edge of the Liberian forest.

To reach the village, she has had to drive through a maze of forest tracks, almost indistinguishable one from another. These tracks often give out some distance from the village. Followed by her chauffeur, who, carrying her posters and display board, looks rather like a sandwich-man she then sets off on foot. As she passes, people wave a friendly greeting or invite her into their homes to share their simple meal.

Sometimes the villages are even more isolated, so like other missionaries she adopts a local form of transport, in this case the *finalzane*, an uncomfortable sort of hammock slung on the shoulders of two or four bearers.

What Miss Allen is trying to do may not seem very far-reaching compared with similar efforts in other countries. But it should not be forgotten that Liberia is a small and still a very poor nation. Yet in this country which is struggling to transform its economy and raise its standard of living, the awareness of the role of the United Nations is great. What, for example, could be more symbolic of its belief in the world community and its ideals than its choice of having its children taught about the United Nations—by a foreigner.



THE REINDEER: Even in a tiny Finnish village some 70 miles north of the Arctic Circle, needy children are not forgotten by UNICEF. Supplies are sent to them by reindeer and sled.

THE spirit of Christmas and the New Year, which is a time of colour and gaiety, and above all, a time of joy for children, has been captured delightfully in a series of five Greeting Cards for 1952 produced by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. On the theme "Round the World with UNICEF" the cards depict some of the favourite animals of children in different parts of the world — the camel, the elephant, the reindeer, the donkey and the water buffalo — bearing cargoes of food and medicine to the needy.

These cards serve as a reminder of the work UNICEF has been carrying out among many millions of the world's children and of the need for continued contributions to its fund. Each box of five cards sold will help UNICEF to provide enough BCG vaccine to immunize 12 children against TB; or enough DDT powder to protect 10 children against malaria; or enough skim milk to give eight children a glass of milk every day for a week.

UNICEF helps countries to help themselves, the nations receiving its help "matching" the value of the Organization's aid locally, thereby doubling and often trebling the numbers of children reached. When present programmes are completed, one out of every 15 children in the world will have received some form of UNICEF aid.

In addition, this year's official United Nations Greeting Card, — an interpretation of the U.N. building in its New York setting — designed and donated by the famous French artist, Raoul Dufy, is being sold for the benefit of UNICEF.

THE CAMEL: In the desert areas of Jordan, Gaza and Lebanon, a caravan of camels laden with barrels of powdered milk marked UNICEF, wends its way slowly over the hot sands. They are destined for mothers and children among the Middle East refugees. Other supplies go to 30,000 children and mothers in Gaza who are non-refugees, but whose families have lost their lands and their livelihood.

THE DONKEY: Across the thorny scrub and high sierras, a small boy guides a sturdy donkey. Laden with dried milk and other supplies, donkeys are bringing an extra meal for 360,000 Latin American children. Among the projects assisted by UNICEF in 21 Latin American countries and territories, Mother and Child Health Centres and child feeding programmes have very largely predominated.

UNICEF SENDS YOU...



Assorted boxes of ten of the five UNICEF cards, or a box of ten U.N. cards with or without the Season's Greetings in the five official U.N. languages can be obtained at the following addresses:

	Price
EUROPE	
FRANCE	
UNICEF, 24, rue Borghese, Neuilly-sur-Seine	350 fr.
DENMARK	
U.N. Information Centre, 37, Vestre Boulevard, Copenhagen	D. Kr. 7.0.
SWEDEN	
U.N. Information Centre, 37, Vestre Boulevard, Copenhagen	S. Kr. 5.50.
NORWAY	
U.N. Information Centre, 37, Vestre Boulevard, Copenhagen	N. Kr. 7.50.
SWITZERLAND	
U.N. Information Centre, Palais des Nations, Geneva	S. Fr. 4.50.
HOLLAND	
Netherlands UNAC Committee, Standhonderslaan, 148, The Hague	Fl. 3.80.
BELGIUM	
Section Belge de l'UNICEF, 57, rue du Congrès, Bruxelles	B. Fr. 50.
UNITED KINGDOM	
UNICEF, Russell Square House, Russell Square, London, W.C.1.	7s. 6d.
AMERICAS	
UNICEF Greeting Card Fund, United Nations, New York, U.S.A.	\$ 1.00.
AUSTRALIA	
UNICEF, 52, William St., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia	Price on request.
ASIA	
UNICEF, 19, Phra Atit Rd., Bangkok, Thailand	\$ 1.00.
MIDDLE EAST	
UNICEF, UNESCO Building, Beirut, Lebanon	\$ 1.00.

THE WATER-BUFFALO: In South-East Asia, where 1,000 mother and child welfare centres have been equipped by UNICEF, there are many areas where transporting supplies is a difficult problem. During the rainy season even jeeps cannot penetrate to the remote villages and journeys have to be made by a convoy of buffalo carts. Supplies are also loaded into sampans which go down the canals.



FOR THOSE WHO LIVE BY THE PEN

by José de BENITO

THROUGHOUT the centuries the history of writers as a class has been one of continuous material difficulties. This may well have been due to the tradition that the written word was sacred and therefore not for sale; to the mass of the people the writer was a kind of priest and as such was forbidden to exploit his priesthood for his own gain.

The normal work of the "scribe" — the man who could write — was to copy the sacred scriptures and it was through such copyists that the Persian Zendavesta, the Hindu Ramayana and Mahabharata, the Torah and Talmud, the Bible and Gospels and the Mohammedan Koran were handed down to us. Moreover, as well as being sacred, writing was thought to have definite magical powers. To make a curse more effective and surer to break the thread of the victim's destiny, it was scratched with a pointed implement — a stylus — on the waxed tablets on which Romans wrote before parchment or papyrus came in. For the written word remains. Even today when we speak of things we had felt were bound to happen all along, we say they were "written".

Writing was the privilege and responsibility of a small caste and from the times of classical Greece these men regarded themselves as the spiritual guides of their people. Again, because the written word is "imperishable", the law has been "written" ever since the tablets of stone of the 10 Commandments on Sinai and the Twelve Tables of early Roman law were produced and promulgated to leave no excuse for ignorance of the law. This promulgation was done by formal public reading of the text. From the time the spread of printing made newspapers possible, new laws have been published in the daily press or official gazettes.

With the crushing weight of such traditions pressing down on it, the writers' trade has ever been thankless, hard and with more than its share of perils and even disaster: it is worth remembering that both calamity and the calamus (1), or reed pen, which for centuries was the typical tool of the writer, are connected in philology and also in mythology. Fame — if he won it — was the greatest reward a writer could hope for: what he got rather more commonly was prison or exile and the gallows or the stake if he fell into heterodoxy or heresy. But in the story of man's fight for freedom, it is the writers, nevertheless, who hold the place of honour as the awakers, in every age, of the spirit of resistance to tyranny. The French Revolution, for example, was the work of the Encyclopaedists.

Books themselves have always been eagerly sought and, both before and after the invention of printing, works by certain philosophers, mathematicians, astronomers and historians, in print or manuscript, have sometimes fetched fabulous sums. However, until the 19th century, the maker of the books — the writer — was not much better placed than a mediaeval serf bound to the land, who farmed his lord's acres, dwelt there at his lord's pleasure to keep other nobles out, and who had to drop everything to follow his master to the wars, at the peril of his life, but, in the serf's case, on foot and unarmoured.

Save in the East and in the Islamic sphere, Eastern and Western, where there was generous patronage of writers, such patronage as existed was confined to the artists who adorned the palaces of the rich and there was not a copper to spare for the long and toilsome work of the writers whose loving care created the intellectual heritage of mankind and built the steps for civilization to climb higher.

Don Quixote achieved worldwide fame so quickly that in its author's lifetime it had been translated into the tongues of all the civilized peoples of his day. Yet Cervantes lived and died in poverty and had to serve at various times as a soldier and a tax-collector to keep body and soul together. Another professional soldier, and an exile from Lisbon, was Camoens, the greatest Portuguese poet of all time, who sang his country's glories in the *Lusiads*: he too died in the blackest poverty. Shakespeare did make some money during his life but it was as a producer and actor and not as the author of the immortal plays.

For five and twenty centuries authorship was so exclusively a labour of love that it could only be indulged in by those who by nature were not afraid of sacrifices or by the privileged who wrote

in their leisure time, like Sir Francis Bacon. For one Erasmus or Voltaire, favoured by a sovereign and with some sort of pension from him, there is an unnumbered multitude of writers of works of science, literature and philosophy who paid for the boldness of their thought with their hides or lives. Let us not forget Galileo, Servet or Pico de la Mirandola.

There was yet another hardship under which the professional writer laboured. Strictly speaking he did not "make" actual books; he only wrote them and the printer did the manufacturing. The finished article was sold, not by the author, but by a bookseller and as he was risking his money in his business he could get exclusive sales or printing rights in the merchandise he handled. However while the actual book was "merchandise" to the seller and even the buyer, what was in the book was never counted as the merchandise or saleable property of the author. So freedom was actually easier for the villain to win than independence for the author, since the earth and its fruits are tangible things and as such can be acquired as property, which every villain aimed to have and some actually achieved, so as to become a free peasant.

Before they could accept the notion that ideas could be property, lawyers had to break free of the rigid definitions of the Roman law which held that only material things like land or cattle or goods could be owned; even though writing them down did in one sense give them a physical shape, ideas were not material things in the Roman sense. So the process was a long one and for

of the other serial writers and men of letters of Paris to found the first Authors' Society to protect the interests of those who had to live by their pens. However, as often happens, the awakening of the corporate spirit of authors was a cumulative process and not the result of explicit recognition of their right to enjoy the fruit of their work.

In 1709, under Queen Anne, an Act was promulgated in England "for the encouragement of learning, by vesting copies of printed books in the authors or purchasers of such copies, during times therein mentioned". Ten of the 13 American States which issued laws on copyright between 1783 and 1786 took the view that it was a natural right and one of them went so far as to speak of there being "no property more peculiarly a man's own than that which is produced by the labour of his mind". However in all these laws — as later in the Federal Constitution of the United States — the concessions were treated merely as a means of assisting the progress of science and the useful arts and the unfortunate authors had to continue the fight, with the profit from their works in most cases going to the publishers and booksellers. In France, Beaumarchais concerned himself with the protection of the rights of playwrights and as a result of his efforts the first laws on performance and publication rights were promulgated in 1791 and 1793 respectively.

As far as copyright and its accompanying financial benefits were concerned, the second half of the 19th century was a real spring-time. In every country there was a spate of domestic legislation on copyright, while international dealings in books and the question of their translation into other languages raised new problems. The first attempt to tackle the latter was in the Berne International Convention of 1886, later amended at Berlin in 1920, at Rome in 1928, and at Brussels in 1948. In the Americas a second international system took shape under the terms of the Montevideo Treaty of 1889 subsequently revised at the Pan American Conferences in Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Havana and now reclassified as the Washington Inter-American Convention on the rights of the author in literary, scientific and artistic works. This dates from June 1946.

However, the Berne Convention does not cover all the non-American, nor the Washington Convention all the American States, while the need to protect different interests in the two areas has led to clashes of principle between the two conventions on certain points. When principles are in conflict, the victory of one implies the utter defeat of the other and hence the whole question of securing effective worldwide protection of the rights of authors of works of the mind had reached an impasse from which it was hard to see the way out.

In 1947 at the Second General Conference of Unesco in Mexico, it was decided that the drafting of a Universal Convention to proffer a solution to the main difficulties arising over international copyright was desirable. After five years' work, collection of materials, meetings of experts and struggles with the obstacles which inevitably arose, the representatives of 36 nations from every continent last September formally signed the first Universal Copyright Convention. The governing principle of the new Convention is that the same protection shall be given by each signatory country to foreign works as to those by its own nationals; it also enormously simplifies the formalities required for the enforcement of copyright and includes wise and equitable provisions on translation.

This new world-wide Convention embodies clauses specifying that it shall not in any way affect the provisions of the Berne Convention or abrogate multi-lateral and bilateral conventions which may be in force between two or more American Republics, or two or more contracting States; that no reservations shall be permitted — a most important point, since more than one convention has foundered on accepting reservations about its implementation — and that Unesco itself, which prepared the way for the Convention, shall be the body acting as Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission for the supervision of its proper application and for the reception of instruments of ratification and denunciation.

Annexed to the text of the Universal Convention are three additional protocols: the first on the application of the Convention to the works of stateless persons and refugees; the second on its application to the publications of certain international organizations; and the third on the means of determining the effective date of instruments of ratification, acceptance or accession.

When the text was signed, in English, Spanish and French in Geneva, one of the delegates said: "Justice has won a fresh victory".

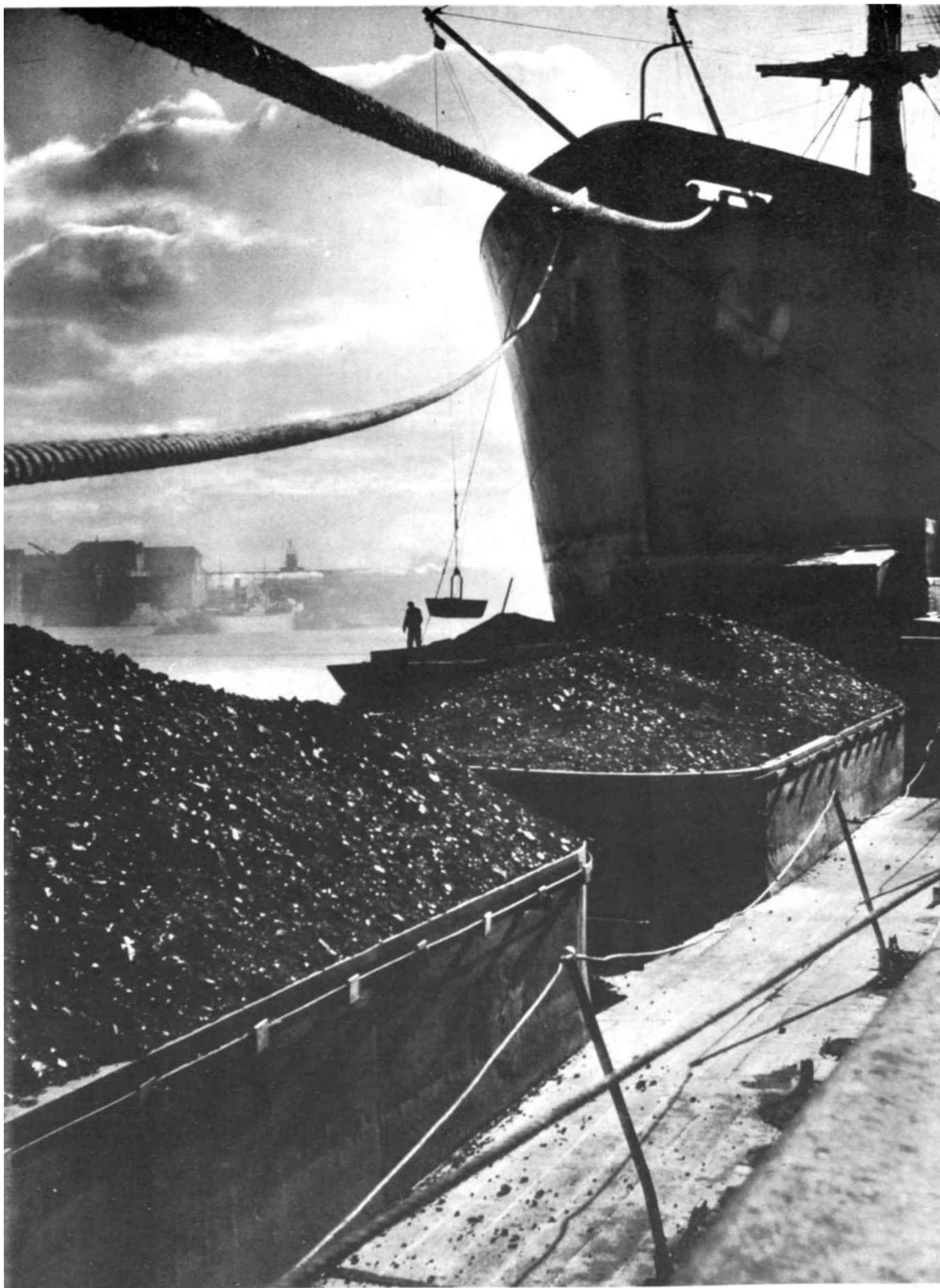


C. O. I. Photo

thousands of years authors took it for granted that writing — setting forth their ideas — might bring them fame or honours or shame, but never a livelihood. The result was to deprive mankind of the contributions of many who could not face the sacrifices which authorship demanded — though undoubtedly the loss in quantity was offset by the quality of those who obeyed the imperious need to give their vision of the truth without balking at the complications which might follow.

The fact was that writers had to count on some other profession for a living — sometimes teaching, like the numerous writers from the universities, and at other times a trade. For instance Spinoza earned his bread as a spectacle-maker, so as to be able to produce the great philosophical work which is the origin of many of the human rights now recognized by law. It was not until the daily press came into being, and with it the serial as a bait for readers, that there was any possibility of getting a living by the pen. The first man to dare to describe himself simply as an author and to make it his sole profession was Balzac. His output was prodigious and he earned a good living; indeed though he tried several times to change to another profession, each time he was driven back to writing by the failure of his latest industrial or financial scheme. It was he who first had the idea of convening a meeting

(1) The calamus was a thin reed used by the people of old for writing on papyrus or parchment. It was cut and shaped in the same way as the quill pen later on and was used with very thick ink. In the pictorial symbolism of mythology, Calamity is shown as a mourning woman veiled in black and leaning on a calamus, symbol of the insecurity of human fortune.



A SEA WIND BLOWS THROUGH THE CLASSROOM

there are few schoolboys who have never dreamed of living the life of a master-mariner. How, during their geography lessons, many children must have wished that they too could set off on a voyage to places they read about in their textbooks and see it all for themselves instead of having to memorise the names of cities and long lists of national products. How different too it would be if Columbus, or Balboa, or Cook could visit the classroom to tell his story. Some-

Few sights capture the imagination of a boy or girl more than that of a ship setting out on an ocean voyage. And

thing approaching this ideal is possible today for thousands of children in schools associated with Ship Adoption Societies which have been formed in five European countries. Thanks to these Societies the schoolchildren are in constant touch with scores of ships on the oceans and in ports and harbours. They follow the fortunes and progress of the ships through the eyes of the captains and crews with whom they exchange visits and letters. In this way, geography—above all a human science—makes an important contribution to international understanding. Thanks to the accounts of voyages and visits they receive from “their” captains and crews, the schoolchildren get really “live” lessons for, as an old Dutch proverb puts it, “He who travels a great deal has a great deal to tell.” The interest and enthusiasm aroused in schools gives a general impetus to a child’s desire for learning. For an account of this link between ships and schools see Page 3. (M.S.A. photo.)