

great literary craftsman. This present translation is, fortunately, excellent, and it reveals his literary skill. It is no doubt right that historians should be warned against the dangers of being over-literary, though surely historical novels are a perfectly legitimate form so long as it is remembered that they are not history. But if history is going to be written at all, it will be ineffectual and meaningless unless it is well written. There is no reason why a historical work should not be a literary work of art, so long as the standards of historical honesty are maintained. Huizinga's own work is proof of it. He stands in the front row of the historians of our time because he obeyed four of his general precepts with scrupulous care and because at the same time he could not quite manage to obey the remaining precept. Whatever he may have intended, his writings are literary works of art; and therein lies their power to enlighten and to convince.

Steven Runciman

Europe—In or Out?

The Commonwealth and Europe. Prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Commissioned by Britain in Europe. 42s.

AFTER A FLURRY of excitement in the spring and summer, British attitudes to European integration have once again sunk back into apathy. We now have the remarkable situation where the greater part of industry, most of the press and most of our radical thinkers realise that Britain *should* join the Common Market and, indeed, *ought* to have joined long ago—yet the hopes of anything of the sort happening seem to be fading.

If we do fail to get into Europe and in consequence find ourselves increasingly isolated and impotent, the main blame will undoubtedly lie in Whitehall, which now seems to be too tired and apathetic, after its wartime and post-war exertions, to be able to face up squarely to new ideas and new opportunities. Throughout the European negotiations, Whitehall has consistently made two great mistakes. For one thing, it has always been out of date in its understanding of continental opinion. It clung to the "Free Trade Area" concept when that idea was manifestly a non-starter; it saw the "Outer Seven" as a device for building a bridge to the Six, and failed to realise that the Six had

no such ideas in mind; when the British Government at last got around to considering the idea of a Customs union, early this year, Whitehall again failed to realise that whereas this proposal would have clinched the negotiations in 1958, it was too little in 1960. For eighteen months at least, it ought to have been obvious that the only solution was full-hearted British acceptance of the rights and duties of Common Market membership. The danger is that, by the time Whitehall openly realises this much, it will be too late again.

The second great mistake of Whitehall in all the negotiations has been to look for solutions which offended no significant interest in Britain or the Commonwealth. The original Free Trade Area proposal was the classic example of this mistake; by excluding agriculture and by excluding Commonwealth Preference, it carefully evaded all the real problems. The real lesson of the last three years is that we cannot gain as big a prize as that of participation in the new Europe, unless we are willing to pay a price.

Regrettably, the Economist Intelligence Unit, in its massive study of *The Commonwealth and Europe*, repeats both of Whitehall's mistakes. (Mistakes which, let it be said, have practically never been made by the *Economist* newspaper, which is closely associated with the Economist Intelligence Unit but is nevertheless independent of it.) The E.I.U.'s report makes the task of reconciling our Commonwealth links with new ties to the Six seem unrealistically easy. The report fails to see something that should have been obvious for at least eighteen months before its publication, namely, that Britain cannot hope for concessions from the Six which are completely different in nature from those already given to existing members by the Rome Treaty. The whole argument of the report is based on the unrealistic assumption that in any merger of Britain and the rest of the Seven with the Six Common Market countries, "no substantial sectors of Commonwealth exports should suffer as a result of the terms of the merger." If Britain approaches negotiations with the Six with that as its basic assumption, then the negotiations will once again fail. We can, given the will, hope to negotiate a settlement which will disturb the Commonwealth's trade links with Britain relatively little, at the same time giving us big advantages and giving other Commonwealth countries substantial gains through increased access to continental markets. But we cannot hope to reach a settlement which leaves the Commonwealth's trade practically undisturbed. We have to risk offending one or two Commonwealth countries—in particular, New Zealand and Canada—if we are to get anywhere. Very

possibly, we should not do any appreciable harm to any Commonwealth country by joining the Six; but we cannot avoid disturbance and it is unrealistic to expect that we can.

The detailed analysis by the E.I.U. of the effects of the existing European trade systems and of a possible merger on the Commonwealth results in few surprises but a great deal of useful information. The only real disappointment is that the chapter on Commonwealth exports of manufactures is inadequate and for the most part unnecessarily vague.

The Intelligence Unit's survey of the present-day system of Commonwealth Preference clearly demonstrates two facts. One is that there is serious imbalance between preferences given and preferences received. Some ten territories (including India, South Africa, Ghana, and Nigeria) give to Britain either no preferences at all, or very little indeed, while they receive preferential treatment on much the greater part of their exports to Britain. On the other hand, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada give substantial preferences to Britain, but enjoy a good deal less in return. The E.I.U. concludes that "it is small wonder that some countries are prone to suggest that Britain gets more than she gives."

The second feature of present-day Commonwealth Preference is that its benefits are *less*

important to the overseas Commonwealth than often appears.

The most that can be said is that over something between one-third and two-fifths of Commonwealth exports to the UK preference markets are large enough to raise the volume of Commonwealth trade, though this does not necessarily mean they do so in practice; and that over a further 10 to 20 per cent the preferences may give Commonwealth exporters a slightly more assured position in the market.

Moreover, it is clear that the ties both of preference and of sentiment, which in the past have favoured British exports to the Commonwealth, are now declining. Britain's share in Commonwealth markets is steadily declining; and the E.I.U. sees

a noticeable tendency for British exports to do best in the less commercially developed, less competitive markets of the Commonwealth. The more rapidly the character of a market is changing, the less well the UK is tending to do and the less inclined representative businessmen are to speak favourably of Britain's performance.

BEYOND THIS DISTURBING conclusion, the E.I.U.'s study does almost nothing to consider the effects of weakening the ties of Commonwealth Preference on British exports. It is suggested that the United Kingdom, as part of a Commonwealth-European settlement, should "release the overseas Commonwealth from their obligations to grant preferences on imports from Britain." In what is perilously near to being a contradictory statement, it is argued that it is unlikely that "a large proportion" of our existing exports would be lost as a result of a reduction in the preferences we enjoy, but that the shift "should be enough to be of real advantage to the Continent." It is a serious shortcoming of this whole study that no attempt is made to analyse the effects on British exports to the Commonwealth of the disturbance to the Preference system which will result from any likely settlement with the Six. The truth is that we should lose some export markets in the Commonwealth, but that these losses would involve nothing more than an acceleration of a process which is taking place anyway, as a result of the continuing erosion of the Preference system and other imperial links. To my mind, these more rapid losses are well worth accepting for the sake of the prizes of a European settlement. But there are plenty of people who prefer a scrawny and ageing bird in the hand to a whole covey of fat young birds which still have to be captured from the bush.

The E.I.U.'s survey is able to underplay the importance of the problem of British exports to

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the Commonwealth largely because it is unrealistic about the extent to which a European settlement would disturb the pattern of preferences currently given to the other Commonwealth countries by Britain. The Unit's analysis of the broad nature of the problem is, indeed, enlightening. It shows that very little difference would be made to the pattern of British imports of raw materials and semi-manufactured goods if we were to enter a European customs union with the Six, simply because both we and the Six import most of them free of duty. The main difficulties affect aluminium and possibly oil seeds; Canada, Ghana, and a few other countries would suffer and complain, but the net effect would be small. The E.I.U. also shows that, if we entered the Six our tropical colonies and ex-colonies which export foodstuffs could reasonably hope in the wider European market to share the benefits already enjoyed in the Six by the colonies and ex-colonies of those countries; on balance this would probably benefit the African Commonwealth territories.

There remain the problems of temperate-latitude foodstuffs (mainly produced in the "old" dominions) and of Commonwealth manufactures. With regard to these, the E.I.U. is unrealistic in hoping that a settlement is possible which would involve no disturbance to existing Commonwealth interests. Once again, it is a matter of taking a balance, and once again, I have no doubt that we should make the European settlement. But it is, nevertheless, unrealistic to suppose that we can reach an agreement without loud squeals from people who dislike being disturbed.

All of this is particularly true of the temperate-latitude foodstuffs, such as wheat, dairy products, and sugar. The E.I.U.'s optimism about an easy solution is largely based on an interesting but not wholly convincing argument that demand for food in the Six will grow faster than supply, so that they will not want to push more of their domestic output into the British market. Moreover, the study underestimates the pressures that would be put on Britain in any settlement to accept systems of agricultural protection similar to those of existing Common Market countries—which implies a higher level of food prices in Britain as a result of a reduction in subsidies to farmers and of new import restrictions. No doubt Britain could negotiate for a guarantee of existing British markets for Commonwealth food; but the Commonwealth countries are also concerned with safeguarding their share of the future growth in the British market, and that would be less surely guaranteed to them if Britain entered the Common Market. It is dangerous and misleading to suggest that this real—yet manageable—problem

can be evaded by a settlement leaving Britain half inside Europe and half outside. This is the old Whitehall fallacy; it should by now be completely outmoded.

A CHOICE IS A CHOICE. For Britain in 1961, the choice is simple. We can argue our way into the dynamic new Europe, at the price of some disturbance to Commonwealth links but of little real damage. Alternatively, we can stand aside, resentfully declining into a degree of isolation and insignificance which we certainly do not deserve. In this choice, there can be no compromise.

Alan Day

History as News

The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. By WILLIAM L. SHIRER. *Secker & Warburg*. 63s.

HISTORY and journalism appear, at first glance, to have a considerable amount in common; both are informative rather than artistic, for in theory at least the content is of greater importance than the form in which it is presented. This resemblance can, however, be misleading, for history is most certainly not congealed reportage, is not "the news" in amber.

History relates the past in terms comprehensible to the present. Journalism informs contemporaries about current events in terms that will interest newspaper readers. And there is a vast difference between being interesting (whether this be to readers of the *Financial Times*, the *New Statesman*, or the *Daily Mirror*) and being comprehensible to an age. What interests newspaper readers changes not only from newspaper to newspaper, but from generation to generation, even from decade to decade, almost from year to year. Anyone who has ever read hundred-year-old papers or toiled in the newspaper morgue at Colindale will know how rapidly evanescent is not only the subject-matter of journalism but also its technique. Mr. Shirer is an extremely successful journalist of the written and spoken (broadcast) word who made his name in Germany twenty and more years ago.

History relates the past to the present, but how? Manes Sperber has remarked that the true nature of history is epic, not dramatic. Every drama ends, but history cannot end until there