

Editorial

Some of the papers included in this issue were read at the latest meeting of the 'Societe d'Etudes pour le Commonwealth', a branch of the 'Societe des Anglicistes de l'Enseignement Superieur' in France. The meeting took place in May 1978 in Limoges. A brief comparison between this and the second meeting of the same association in May 1972 clearly indicates how widely interest in Commonwealth studies has grown in French universities and how dynamic the association has become in the six intervening years. In 1972 only two papers were read, one by Maurice Pollet, President of the Association for Commonwealth Studies, on the question of Kashmir. Aspects of civilization have always been a basic subject in the curriculum of Arts students in France and sometimes even tend to have precedence of literature. The other paper by Rene Richard on Scyinka's theatre reflected a continuing and (given France's own links with Africa) natural interest in African literature.

In the present volume all major areas of writing in English in the Commonwealth are represented except Canada, which was given the lion's share in 1976 in Rouen and 1977 in Tours. Victor Dupont, who is largely responsible for introducing Commonwealth studies in France and founded an Institute for Commonwealth Studies in Toulouse, contributed a paper on John Mulgan's *Man Alone*. Carole Durix brought to light a very different aspect of New Zealand literature by analysing Sylvia Ashton-Warner's treatment of the Maori in her fiction. Australia came in for attention in Bruce King's sensitive study of A. D. Hope's poetry and

Pierre Besses's anthropological reading of engravings by early European travellers to Botany Bay. Prabhu Guptara very appropriately read a paper on the influence of France on the nineteenth-century Indo-Anglian writer Toru Dutt. Practically a whole morning was devoted to the papers on West Indian literature and the lively discussion they led to. Dealing with the language in Samuel Selvon's novels, Michel Fabre eloquently brought out their humour and pathos. Jean-Pierre Durix gave a deeply perceptive and very clear interpretation of Wilson Harris's novella, 'Arawak Horizon', and Gordon Collier re-examined the Walcott-Brathwaite debate with open-minded critical acumen. The only contribution on Africa to appear here is Stanhope Robb's analysis of John Munonye's *A Dancer of Fortune*, for Maurice Pollet's paper on 'Nigeria: From Independence to Civil War', it has already been published elsewhere, and, unfortunately, I did not receive for publication Jacques Alvarez-Pereyre's excellent paper on 'Soweto and the Black Consciousness Poets'. This was most significantly and poignantly illustrated by his extensive reading from the poetry of Mtshali, Serote and Sepamla. Andro Dommergues's article on 'Malta at a Turning-point in its History' was the result of his participation in the EACLALS conference in Malta a month earlier. It not only testifies to the fruitfulness of such meetings but comes as a timely and useful reminder of the crucial choices with which countries of the Commonwealth are faced. They are to be connected, 'Only Connect' was the motto dear to E. M. Forster. Julian Trevelyan a close friend of the novelist pays him homage during the centenary year of his birth.

I wish to express my warmest thanks to Professor Gowda for offering to publish the proceedings of the latest meeting of the French Association for Commonwealth Studies. A brief look at the special issues of the *LHY* in recent years is enough to convince us that he is the most hospitable and generous editor.