

RADIO

IRISH
GUISE

Val Arnold-Forster's
weekly survey

"IRELAND," said Magnus Magnusson, "is a land of epigrams as well as epitaphs." And since Radio 3 put on an Irish evening on Sunday and Magnus Magnusson concluded his four-part history of Ireland—Landlord or Tenant?—on Wednesday (Radio 4) the air has been thick with epigrams. Quite a few of them, of course, turned out to be no more than flash generalisations about such eminently Irish topics as nationalism, mythology, poetry, and potatoes, but as befits a nation so richly verbal they were elegantly expressed.

F. S. L. Lyons, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, remarked that Irish history was something for Irishmen to forget and Englishmen to remember, and Landlord or Tenant? was a thoroughly useful and enjoyable gallop through Irish history. Even to attempt to cover such a controversial subject in three hours, particularly when the series included a considerable assortment of quotations and songs, was an ambitious undertaking.

No doubt all keen historians, which includes all Irishmen, would take exception to some of the omissions and simplifications. But the four episodes did present some of the patterns and pull together some of the themes in this complicated story in a clear and workmanlike manner. Magnus Magnusson's all-purpose Celtic accent was pleasantly fitting: neither the voice of the English ascendancy nor representing one of the differing Irish accents. And no other country has chronicled its history to such hummable tunes.

You can hardly spend an evening on Ireland without its poets and we did, of course, hear some satisfactory readings. Radio has an impressive stable of poetry producers and readers. Time for Verse (Radio 4, Tuesdays) is always worth catching and so is Robin Holmes's charming Rural Rhymes, on Radio 3 on the first of each month.

The Irish evening followed the usual pattern of an idiosyncratic national portrait: music, political discussion, the familiar search by great minds for a national identity, and a play. Recurring themes were the Irish propensity for violence and the Irish use of language. The play, *Attracta* by William Trevor, was both beautifully written and about violence, or rather about attitudes to violence.

An old schoolteacher recalls her childhood in a small Irish town. The girl she then discovers that her parents had been shot nine years ago in an IRA ambush. A wild young couple who did the shooting had become of kindly rectitude, much loved by the girl. Repelled by the venom of the local Protestant zealot who tells her of the killing, she continues to love and admire the couple and to reject the pattern of bigotry and revenge.

Today, teaching in her old school, she reads of an atrocity committed by local terrorists and talks about it to her pupils. They accept it with the calm of a generation raised to such things and cannot understand at all the young widow dragged to live in Belfast, where she is brutally raped and killed herself. The only reaction is that of the school board, shocked to hear of the classroom discussion. It contrasts with the school teacher's childish understanding based on her realisation

picture of Stephen King
by Frank Martin



it. Without prejudice, Kubrick likes to do his own.

The new book was triggered by the idea of an isolated hotel off-season. In human and superhuman terms the nexus is that of a child possessed. Apart from the prime object of dealing out whopping big shocks, said King, he hoped people would understand the moral purpose of examining child-abuse and the causes of it. Any parent had murderous impulses towards his children from time to time, and it's important to appreciate how the controls may break down, especially since the nuclear family in the last 20 years has disintegrated.

To use children in malefic stories is the instant way of creating tension. If a variety of writers are asked for horror tales, half will offer stories centred on children. Lately in America, this has gone over the top (if there is a top) and they seem to stand in the middle-class mind as familiars of the Devil. King said that his approach is to view the best horror stories as caricatures that mimic their own times. He didn't see children as "bad seed" types, but as vulnerable to alien pressures.

He wouldn't either believe or disbelieve in demons and the pyramid of cacodemons, ESP, precognitions, and hauntings couldn't, as Descartes said, be dismissed out of hand. Not for anything would he spend a night in a haunted house, light three cigarettes off one match (the risk of smoking is already serious enough, though he smokes on). Why cross a black cat? he asked. Why take chances?

em's Lot, has another sure-fire shocker

r stardom

classified 4-F by the Army for high blood pressure, and so missed Vietnam.

He wrote a large number of rejected novels before Carrie was taken, and felt he had done his apprenticeship. The tone of the rejection of his first effort, composed at 16, still leaves him resentful. The Grand Old Man of SF, Donald Woolheim, turned his book back with the curt note "We here at Ace Books are not interested in negative Utopias." He wished it had occurred to him to tell them the word is "dystopias," but he did say that it was a blessing Orwell never tried to publish with Ace.

However, he did win a pen that didn't write, plus 10 dollars, for an essay in a competition in National Scholastic magazine, and at College began selling stories to the last bastion of short fiction, where the muse is starker on a gatefold, the girlie magazines. Mostly about men against some kind of supernatural force. And stock stuff like *The Graveyard Shift*, with the bulk of the dramatic personae gigantic rats.

A collection of his best macabre tales will soon be published by Doubleday and he feels they'll make the impact of wholly new material, since the readers of *Dude* and *Cavalier* and *Gent* are overwhelmingly distracted from the reading matter, though some of the fiction is good by anybody's standards.

The biggest cheque he ever had before Carrie sold was \$500 for a novella based on the idea of a schoolteacher revisited by pupils a long time dead, who start to pop up in his English class. With these beginnings and a wish to be,

himself, a teacher, he graduated and married and found the streets were full of teachers out of work.

So he worked for two years in a laundry, still in Maine (he could never venture into New York—too scary). He washed sheets, and pressed them with a heated revolving cylinder called a callender. It was hard, and like working for shirt buttons. He got his own back—never underestimate the power of personal revenge motifs in the chronicle of the horror story—with a tale about the place.

What in England we call a callender, in American laundry circles is known as The Mangler. There was a guy in King's place of work who'd lost his hands. Cleaning above the machine one Saturday while it was running, he fell on it and his hands were drawn in before they could reverse it. He had hooks, and in the heat of summer ran the hot and cold on them full blast in the men's room, until one was freezing and the other scalding. These he would place simultaneously on people's necks by way of a joke.

There was a taste of revenge about his novel *Carrie*, too. There is, said King, a great satisfaction in destroying your own home town, even in make-believe. Revenge is not all of his inspiration, however. *Salem's Lot* grew out of a speculation about the difficulties that vampires would face in modern America. It caused interesting problems of credibility. For instance when, in *Dracula*, Van Helsing infused one woman with four separate men's blood, Bram Stoker could do it careless of blood groups. Not now.

Besides, in Stoker's day people were buried on the issue of a death certificate, while nowadays we have all this business of embalming and autopsies. They take out the heart. A vampire couldn't stand that.

Carrie sold when he had at last a teaching job. It made him free of teaching (and laundries) for good. The advance was \$2,500 and after tax they thought they could risk buying an economy Ford Pinto. The paperback rights went for \$400,000. Of this he kept most of his \$200,000

share by averaging the tax back out over the five years he'd been working for shirt-buttons.

This gets harder to do. He and his wife, he said, have seen a lot of money since. *Carrie's* film rights went in the bargain basement, \$55,000, but the other two books realised a quarter of a million each without contingency clauses. A good deal. Stanley Kubrick will be making *Shining* in England in a few months' time. King wrote a screenplay but thought Kubrick never read

FIRST NIGHT

COLISEUM

Hugo Cole

Toussaint

DAVID BLAKE'S *Toussaint* is another of those grand pageant-operas (like *War and Peace* or *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*) which the English National Opera stages so well. The Haitian scene is brought to life in brilliant colour, with gay and fantastic sets and costumes (Maria Bjornson) in a masterful production by David Pountney, which includes everything from the loudest and best-lit pyrotechnical battle of recent times to a lascivious trio sung in mid-air and undress by Napoleon's sister and her maids.

The battle scene, preceded by Dessalines's stirring address to his troops and followed by a mourning chorus led by Suzanne, Toussaint's wife (Sarah Walker), is musically and theatrically enormously effective in a bold grand-opera way, with Geoffrey Chard rousing the house with a suitably melodramatic performance. This great scene stars Dessalines rather than Toussaint because history has it that way. For the same reason, many secondary characters are brought in; we visit Paris to meet the National Convention and later Napoleon himself.

New characters are still coming in the twenty-second and last scene of this four-hour opera, and tend to crowd out the main protagonists. Suzanne, who plays the



Toussaint at the Coliseum. — picture by Douglas Jeffery

ance; if the art of music-theatre ever gets off the ground, Belcourt will surely be its first great star.

Willard White and Teresa Cahill stood out among an excellent cast who allowed us to hear many words clearly. Mark Elder was the conductor. There were anxious moments in the pit as well as on the stage; but the spirit of this richly inventive rambling opera came over clearly enough.

ROYALTY

Michael Billington

envy, does scat-singing while belting across the forestage and shoots out her legs like pistons. And in case one doubts her star quality she returns later to sing *God Bless The Child* while sliding through the vocal scale with unfractured ease. Clearly the lady is a champ.

But a virtue of the revue-format is that it gives a number of talents room to shine. Thus Elaine Delmar sings *Honeysuckle Rose* with lubricious glee extending the "s" sound to unchaste infinity; Billy Daniels renders *Memories of You* with a warm, toothy humanity; Miffy

language leads to the conclusion that its "actuality" is so deficient in structure, form, decisiveness, and dramatic tensions that it fails to strike the imagination—a touch of the literary would have given it that force which distinguishes art from jabber.

A theme of great importance becomes soap-opera. Not only that, the whole thing was, I fear, staged with a lumbering lack of sensitivity. The players deserved far better and, frankly, their talents (all of them)—Darien Angedi, Renu Setna, Sheila Kelley, Paul Webster, and Richard Hope—saved the evening, but only just.

at Hemingway's line in the play: "Critics. Creatures without testicles. Spermless parasites." I cannot deny that in my case he is biologically quite right.

Getting on for 21 years ago, I was standing with Mrs Hicks at the back of the Café de Paris listening to Tommy Steele rehearse and she was crying cheerfully at the sight, she said, of his dear little baby face. Now I have a heart of gold so, if the price is right, I won't mention this. But 21 years on Tommy Steele keeps that same clean, cheeky charm and urges us at the end of Tommy Steele and a Show (Thames) to believe in great big birds or something. It is so Peter Pan, it is eerie.

Thames did Tommy proud and he did them simple and simplicity, too, is a gift.

EDINBURGH

Cordelia Oliver

Diary of a Scoundrel

THE GALA opening of the new season at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, began with a speech by the company's chairman, Ludovic Kennedy, in which he reiterated the boring old Lyceum Company claim to precedence over all other Scottish theatres. Unfortunately, the performance which followed fell somewhat short of what one asks of a would-be National Theatre of Scotland.

To be fair, the new disastrous colour scheme in the

WOMEN OF THE WORLD THE FACTS

1. Women and Home



The 'top' social group among women in Third World societies is those who live in total seclusion, often behind the veil, and like the upper caste women in an Indian village, never take part in outdoor activities. Their husbands' farm work may well be confined to supervising hired labour. This degree of seclusion for women is only possible where the plough is used.

This pattern of life is typical of that of the veiled, non-working women of the Middle East.

The next ranking social group is the equivalent of the Indian cultivator caste. Women do domestic duties and never earn money to support the family. Their menfolk do their own ploughing, planting and agricultural work, though at certain seasons the women may lend a hand, and also look after some poultry. This pattern of life is typical of that of most women in Latin American countries.



The third group is like low-caste women in the Indian village. They assist their men in the fields, and also go to market. In the busy season, they do extra paid work. Most women in S.E. Asia live like this. In Southern India, women work 20 hours a week on the family farm, while men work 30 hours. In the Philippines women work 30 hours, men 43 hours.

The fourth and 'lowest' group, equivalent to India's Untouchables, is composed of women who are expected to support themselves and their families virtually independently. In Asia they seek regular work as landless labourers, but in Africa, which is where this is the typical pattern, they obtain the right to work a piece of land by marriage, and then bear all responsibility for food production. In Gambia, women work 20 hours on their farms per week, while men work only 9 hours.



This classification of women's roles is based on research cited in *Woman's Role in Economic Development* by Esther Boserup.

2. Women and Work

The Agricultural sector

In Africa south of the Sahara the predominant farming pattern is shifting cultivation, suitable for sparsely populated country. Women do more than 50% of the farming work, which is mainly subsistence food production and a little cash cropping. The use of hired farm labour is negligible as a proportion of the farming work-force; around 1% to 5% is hired.

In Asia and Latin America, plough cultivation is normal, in more densely populated country. Women do less than 20% of the farm work, although they work 20 hours in the fields per week like African women. Land ownership means there are many landless labourers. In some parts of India, 70% or more of the farming work-force is hired.

The Non-agricultural village sector



When people who previously lived a subsistence way of life start to move into a developed economy, jobs which used to be shared between adults - building houses, making tools and cloth - start to become specialised, and trade also begins. Women often take up some of these occupations: marketing, home industries, domestic and other services, loading and carrying in the construction business or the mines. There are regional differences in the number of women in these quasi-rural jobs, and in the particular jobs they take up. In Arab countries, the proportion of women in them is low: Egypt, 6%. In Africa, the number can be high: Ghana, 20%, mainly in trade. In the Caribbean, even higher: Jamaica, 25%. In Latin America, women account for around 40% of these occupations, mainly as domestic servants. In South East Asia, 40% - 50%, often as porters, or 'coolies'.

The Modern sector



The second major sector is a skilled one, and is the one that from village industries and services to an industrialised economy, with employment in factories, offices, modern shops and modern service industries. The proportion of women in this modern sector is correlated with the degree of development a country has reached. In the developed world, 30% of the industrial workforce is female; in the developing world, only 15% are women. This connection is mainly explained by the low literacy levels in developing countries. But in countries where over 40% of the women are in the quasi-rural sector (trade, domestic service etc.) the proportion in the modern sector is also higher: certain countries in Central America and South East Asia have 25% - 30% women in their modern workforce. Employers normally prefer to take on women who come from a quasi-rural background. 87% of the female factory workers in Sri Lanka come from non-agricultural families.

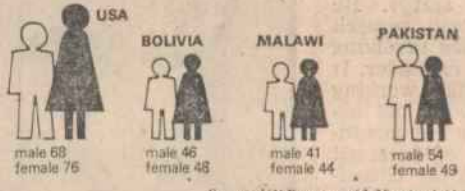
Source: *Woman's Role in Economic Development* by Esther Boserup

3. Women and Health

Expectation of life

Women's natural lifespan is longer than man's. In the industrialised world, where public health is efficient and medical care widely available, the longevity gap between men and women can be as high as an average of ten years (USSR). In the less developed countries, where infant mortality and expectation of life is universally lower, the longevity gap between the sexes is much narrower because various factors mitigate against women's health:

- In strongly male-dominated societies, men eat first and get the best food, even when women are pregnant or breast-feeding. So when food becomes scarce, women suffer more.
- Women need greater access to health services because they bear children and are therefore at greater risk.
- In many parts of Asia, a dowry is paid by a girl's father on her marriage. Girl children are therefore regarded as expensive and undesirable. So they are often neglected, and receive far less medical attention than boys.



Water

Women are the universal water bearers, spending between one and four hours a day in its collection. Usually they carry it in heavy buckets or jars on their heads or backs. The distance from their home to the clean water source is crucial to the standards of health and hygiene in their families. WHO (the World Health Organisation) has a massive community water programme underway, which aims to raise urban dwellers' access to clean water to 50%, and rural dwellers' to 20% by 1980 - still pitifully low.



Maternal morality

A crucial factor in raising the health standards of women in the Third World is to provide easy access to regular maternal and child care health services, a goal which is now accepted as part of the 'basic needs' strategy adopted by UNICEF and other UN agencies concerned with health. The availability of these services, which include anti- and post-natal care, maternity care, and family planning services, can be gauged for different regions by the different figures for maternal mortality.

Deaths per 1,000 live births from deliveries, complications in pregnancy, and diseases related to childbirth.

Country	Rate
Developed countries	
Netherlands	10.7
Spain	24.2
Less developed countries	
Angola	108.9
Nigeria	67.3
Jamaica	128.3
Ecuador	181.3
Philippines	137.8
Sri Lanka	179.3



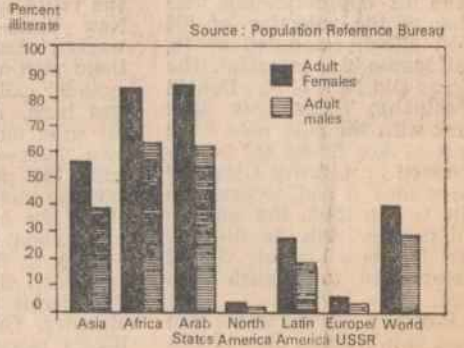
Source: UN Demographic Yearbook, 1975.

4. Women and Education

ILLITERACY

Since 1950 there has been simultaneous improvement and deterioration in women's education. A higher percentage of the world's women than ever before can read and write, but the absolute number of illiterate women is greater than ever. And while the worldwide campaign to increase the number of literate adults is succeeding, the majority of the newly literate are male. Nearly two thirds of the world's illiterate population is female. Resistance by third world women to other opportunities of raising their quality of life - better nutrition, family planning, hygiene - is very closely associated with illiteracy.

Male and female adult literacy rates: (1970)



SCHOOLING

Primary education

Parity between boys and girls in primary school enrolment has been achieved in only 14 out of the 99 countries of which UNICEF has comparative statistics. The share of girls of primary school age attending school varies widely, and is still under 10% in many countries. In several African and Asian countries the picture the figures suggest is distorted by the huge female drop-out rate once the few compulsory years are completed, because there has been no accompanying change in parental expectations for daughters.

Secondary and higher education

In developing countries the gap between 'modernised' men and 'traditional' women is aggravated by the higher attendance at secondary school of boys than girls. Boys also have more chance of receiving technical and scientific training which will equip them for jobs, while girls are restricted to domestic courses or traditional training as nurses and primary school teachers.

Women's share of education enrolment: (1970)



The lot of women in the third world is changing. But they are still being kept a safe step behind their men. The October issue of *New Internationalist* is devoted to these women and shows that they are carrying an unfair burden

while being excluded from the benefits of progress. Here we reprint the editorial by Maggie Black who put the issue together, and the fact sheet which brings the situation into sharp focus.

How the other half lives

OF OUR 48 chromosomes, there is only one in women that is different from those in men. But on this difference society has based a complete dichotomy of male and female. Blithely assuming that the possession of a womb equips you miraculously with the ability to cook, clean, care for children, fetch water, hoe yams, grind corn, and carry huge bundles on your head. If appearances are anything to go by, all these occupations are exclusively sex-linked.

The *New Internationalist* has singled out women for special attention. But women are not just one more cause. They are, rather, part of every cause. List the victims of injustice: the poor, the black, the homeless, the jobless, the underpaid workers, the political prisoners. But don't add women. Because

women are already there. Women hold up half the sky. Women are half of the people.

It is just an accident whether you were born boy or girl. Like black or white, there never was any chance to choose. But you cannot equate being a victim of racism with being a victim of sexism. For you can be both black and female. And because of the way the world treats women, among the downtrodden they are often the downtrodden of the downtrodden. If you are poor and female, or hungry and female, the chances are that you will be poorer or hungrier because you are female.

Most women in Third World countries would find the kind of demands made by the Western women's movement puzzling to say the very least. More work, more decision-making, more

responsibility, more independence is the last thing they want. For many carry a daily burden on their shoulders that their sisters in the industrialised world would shudder to contemplate.

They often bear all the workload of growing, preparing, and cooking the family's food, as well as bearing and rearing the children, gathering fuel and collecting the water. Between a quarter and a third of all households in the world are reckoned to have a woman as sole provider, and most of these households are among the poorest people, in the poorest societies. Yes, indeed, women hold up half the sky, and a great deal more besides.

For far too long, the issue of woman's rights has been treated as a problem entirely distinct from economic development, capable of isolation from matters such as

over-population or world unemployment. Not just separate, either, but altogether less pressing - the kind of diverting side-issue to contemplate when the main task is done. Meanwhile, they feel, these harbingers of progress, if a few more laws are passed, legalising abortion, outlawing polygamy, making the sale of girl children into prostitution an indictable offence, steps in the right direction will be seen to have been taken.

This attitude betrays a deep-rooted psychological resistance by men, and by many women too, to accept that the issue of women's rights is central to the whole process of development. While women are pushed out on the margins, relegated to the cracks and crevices of society and denied equal access to jobs, education, training, new ideas, and new

technology, development across the board is stymied. Because it is being held back by half of the people. And they must be dragging back the other half with them.

There has been an ignominious failure to appreciate the connection between the rights of women and the problems of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, unemployment, low food production, and all the other pieces in the development jigsaw.

It was all said a hundred times over during International Women's Year. It has all been said a hundred times since. Slowly the good intentions are being translated, the process of bringing women in from the cold is getting under way. The first step is to recognise the part women have traditionally played in their own societies. The second will be to devise policies that fully bring that role into account, and build

on to it rather than undermine it.

People's liberation involves women's liberation, as female and male supporters of both are fond of repeating. But the greatest obstacle in turning the rhetoric into reality is the familiar, age-old enemy of womankind; her male oppressor. Are many men anywhere in the world really willing to share their power and share their freedom and share, too, the heavy domestic workload that would release their women for a new way of life? Or is it instead as Portugal's revolutionary spokeswomen, the Three Marias, have put it: "I wonder whether the guerilla who battles side by side with her brothers is with her real brothers, or whether these brothers may not still bear within themselves the roots of treason, both in the present struggle and in the future City."