

Compromise

WHAT fun it is to compromise, and fool around with any bloody thing beneath that bright inferno called the sun, or that pale ball that bowls around the night. I think it was the so-pat Emerson who said the art of living was to skate upon the surface and forget the dark and gloomy depths beneath one's feet. The bright abyss of soaring blue above is easily ignored; you need not look and then you will not fall and cannot be submerged in oceans of infinity.

HOW cute a thing it is to compromise! smooth surfaces for all and lots of fun and games:

Step up! Step up! You nize people! All prices cut—you can't afford to miss! You can acclaim the truth and write with spit and polish: pose in paint, in purple, pink and cobalt, cubes and coils; in female forms whose guts are Paris gowns that drip untidily from handled drawers. And unintelligible poetry is quite another thing; be cryptic and you won't be bum. With Eliot shake a dead geranium.

THIS expounds a profitable gambit—to compromise sincerity with fashion, to introduce art to the artificial, and substitute sensation for emotion, to compromise in life and live with caution; adulterate all marriage with discretion. Vowed in a church one has no faith in, fidelity can follow fornication; compromise in sex with contraception; propagate by accident and then compromise with parenthood again.

EVERYTHING for eleven-pence-ha-penny! Leviathan reduction sale of life! Art silk, art feelings and art anything? If you are careful you can get it cheap—cheap love without responsibility, and friends so cheap there is no obligation, ideals without a tear or a discomfort, ideas that have no corresponding action. Compromise is the sweet song I sing; the sirens heaved no sweeter sounding breath; but pardon me for mentioning the thing—you'll find you cannot compromise with death.

Gwen Hawthorn

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a trite device and it frequently leads to stagey situations which too clearly reveal the firm's origin in the theatre. But it does have the advantage of relating the Ambassador's private character to his public behaviour, which is certainly a valid point. It is also something for a Hollywood film to recognise that it is "not enough merely to be in love" for domestic as well as international problems to be solved; and this is another mark on the credit side for *The Searching Wind*.

But I am not sure that it is altogether a fair wind. I am willing to believe all sorts of things about diplomats and the kind of official language they use; but try as I may, and as the playwright wants me to, I find it hard to credit that any ambassador would send off such a fatuously-worded and indecisive report to his State Department as this one does on the eve of the Munich Agreement. And while it is true that diplomats have knowledge and power, and therefore responsibility, not possessed by ordinary men, to expect them to have realised in a flash in 1923 and 1928 that Mussolini and Hitler were wrong 'uns and to have taken action accordingly, seems to me to be demanding a prescience equivalent to that of the Oracle at Delphi or some of the Old Testament prophets. Miss Hellman would appear to have got her wires rather badly crossed here, since so much of her story is occupied with proving that this particular diplomat was just a frail and fallible mortal.

THE film contains some good acting and, of course, some very good lines. For instance, the remark that "when

people tell you that you shouldn't take sides it usually means that they have already taken one." Robert Young, Ann Richards, and Sylvia Sidney form a competent triangle; and the supporting performances of Dudley Digges (as an ancient cynic), and of Albert Basserman (as an equally ancient German diplomat) are very noteworthy. I am afraid I cannot say as much for the acting of a certain young man named Douglas Dick, who is hailed as a new "discovery." The only discovery I have been able to make about him is that he is out of his depth in the rather deep waters of this film; and this is a pity because, as the diplomat's son, who has been severely wounded in the war which his father failed to prevent, he is given the main burden of Miss Hellman's sermon to deliver. He does this so pontifically and at the same time so ineptly that he is often almost incoherent. Clearly we must have no more appeasement, but it is not made clear whom we must now avoid appeasing. The young man is also quite definite that we must Do Something and that he Loves his Own Country, America—both admirable sentiments no doubt, but not markedly helpful contributions towards a solution of the international situation.

However, even though the thinking is frequently confused, *The Searching Wind* is at least a film of ideas. As such I applaud its intention while regretting some aspects of its performance.

SHORTWAVE HIGHLIGHTS

WITH the replacement of GSP by GSG in the Pacific Service, the BBC programmes should be even better heard than they are now, since GSP often had more interference from an adjacent station. Listeners can be assured of good reception from London throughout the transmission period on all stations, except from the two in the 31 metre band after 9.0 p.m.

Stations, frequencies and wavelengths (the times of transmission are from 6.0—10.0 p.m. except for GRD which comes on the air at 6.45 p.m.): GVZ (9.64 mc/s, 31.12 metres); GRX (9.69, 30.96); GSN (11.82, 25.38); GRD (15.45, 19.42); GSG (17.79, 16.86); GRQ (18.025, 16.64).

Headlines in the Programmes for the current week: Science Survey, 7.15 p.m., Wednesday; Celebrity Recital by Jo Vincent (Dutch soprano), 9.15 p.m., Wednesday; The Fight Against Pain (Discovery of Anaesthetics), 6.45 p.m., Thursday; Flying Colours (a Hornblower serial by C. S. Forester), 8.30 p.m., Thursday.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* has been arranged for broadcasting in four parts. The first episode will be heard at 6.45 p.m. this Friday.

TEST CRICKET BROADCASTS

Radio Australia is broadcasting the full day's play of the cricket tests, and listeners will have no trouble in finding the commentaries from the stations detailed below as they all put in an excellent signal to this country (with the exception of VLQ3 and VLR which are only low-power transmitters). A continuous commentary will be broadcast from 2.0 p.m. until 6.45 p.m. with short breaks for lunch at 3.30 p.m. and tea at 6.5 p.m.: VLB5 (21.54 mc/s, 13.94 metres); VLC9 (17.84 mc/s, 16.82 metres); VLG7 (15.16 mc/s, 19.79 metres).

Between 6.45 and 7.0 p.m. (when the stations change frequency), VLQ3 (9.66 mc/s, 31.06 metres) and VLR (9.54 mc/s, 31.45 metres) will carry the commentary but their signal is rather poor. From 7.0 p.m. until 8.10 p.m. (end of play for the day) the following stations will carry the commentary: VLA4 (11.77 mc/s, 25.49 metres); VLC10 (21.60 mc/s, 13.84 metres).

Finally, at 8.30 and 9.40 p.m., a summary of the day's play will be heard from VLQ2 (7.215 mc/s, 41.58 metres) and VLB8 (21.60 mc/s, 13.89 metres).

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