

DUBLIN SKETCHBOOK

BEFORE Nelson's Pillar trams slowed, shunted, changed trolley, started for Blackrock, Kingstown and Dalkey, Clonskea, Rathgar and Terenure, Palmerston park and upper Rathmines, Sandymount Green, Rathmines, Ringsend and Sandymount Tower, Harold's Cross. The hoarse Dublin United Tramway Company's timekeeper bawled them off:

—Rathgar and Terenure!
—Come on, Sandymount Green!

Right and left parallel clanging ringing a doubledecker and a singledeck moved from their railheads, swerved to the down line, glided parallel.

—Start, Palmerston park!

NELSON'S Pillar stands there still, being not so debasing as the corpulent lady of a later era. But of James Joyce's trams, no more. Only their tracks, which by their width inform me that Dublin's trams must have been at least as wide and as spacious (that hard-worked word of nostalgic literature) as those of Christchurch. Dublin's last tram changed trolley for the last time only a few months ago (there followed an astonishing scene: the crowd went mad, tore it to pieces for souvenirs) and now, after a hot summer, little tongues of bitumen are creeping across the rails in Rathmines Road.

Doubledecker buses run instead, like London's. only green. Everything that is red in England seems to be green here.

SHOPFRONTS: Old fashioned, meek, unsmart. None of the slickness of the New West. "Kelly the Practical Taylor." "Right here for Bikes." There is a shop called Boylan's . . . Blazes Boylan and Mrs. Bloom—ah yes, I remember.

Bewlay's Oriental Café is of another age from ours. A draughtsboard floor of black and white tiles. Counters and high, mirrored dados of ornate polished mahogany, dark plaster above. A row of girls dressed as waitresses in an old comedy—in black, with black stockings, white caps and little white aprons—stand watching their tables. A high, domed skylight above, with a pattern in stained glass, casts a reverent, sobering light. One tends to whisper. Rich things to eat under glass bells. But you don't help yourself; a selection is brought, a teapot in Wedgwood cameo, a cup festooned in Adam-pattern wreaths,



"Bewlay's Oriental Café is of another age from ours"

Written for "The Listener"
by A.A.

with B.O.C. in old copperplate lettering. Ah, those spacious days! The bill 1s. 2d.

FAIRIES: Yes, there were fairies at Blessington and Poulaphouca during my few days. A boy of 17 was playing his mouth-organ out of doors at Blessington, and a leprechaun began to play on the bottom three notes. "It took me three steps to get home," he told the papers.

ART in the Hibernian metropolis: An exhibition of frantic oils by Jack B. Yeats, the currently boomed younger brother of W. B., was opened in a private gallery the day I arrived. Most of them would have suffered no detriment had it been possible to tell on sight what the figures and objects were, and what was going on. They were not abstract shapes, and the rather literary titles suggested that something was going on. But to find out what, one had to go to the only-too-keen-to-assist proprietor of the gallery, who seemed to be always rinsing his hands beneath a tap of gratification (and well he might, for practically all the twenty-three oils were sold, and the sum of the prices in the catalogue was £7,400). If you have seen nothing of Jack Yeats's latest style, put the "apoplectic scribble" of Felix Topolski into oils, remove lucidity, add passion, fine untrammelled passion, and a texture produced by squeezing paint straight from tube to canvas, add a horse—always a magnificent horse, like those of Marc—and you have something like a characteristic example. But can you tell what that is in the lower right corner? Is it a man seated, or a parrot? And if not why not? In "The Last Dawn but One," one gets the awful boding fear all right, but what is going on? Are they soldiers sitting on ammunition boxes, awaiting orders? When Mr. — explains that they may be any human beings, and the idea (his own idea, he tells you, not Mr. Yeats's—that would be cheating) is that they have another whole day to endure, not just a last few hours and then The End, but another day and another night, one says "Ah yes, I see now," and so one does, and shudders. But what would one do without the busy, smiling Mr. —?

One woman we heard of had no need of his help, however. Standing in front of one startling canvas priced at £1,200, she is reported to have cried out suddenly, "My God, I can't stand the emotional impact of this any longer" and swept downstairs to the office—the proprietor on the spot in a split second, pen in hand—where the deal was fixed in five minutes. Let us hope that now, to use Mr. S. J. Perelman's phrase, "She's made her emotional adjustment."

(continued on next page)



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