

deft technology had almost banished from the earth.

About one-half of the book deals with the three-fold challenge of Ignorance, Sickness and Poverty, and it is shameful to read how modern economics and technology were used to drain Africa, rather than to enrich it. "The real colonial crisis" was not simply the incompatibility between the colonial system of rule, and the African drive for freedom, but was the utter decrepitude of Africa, caused by the exploiting colonial economics. There is no excuse for the subjection of any part of Africa in 1964; there is small excuse for the legacy of disease, illiteracy and barely-subsistence economies.

I found the most interesting parts of the book the discussion of means employed to achieve a new society. The one-party state? Socialism? Federation? Some form of neo-Capitalism? Neutralism? The future of

Democracy. All these are issues in these times of flux, and Davidson shows how new and coherent societies are forming in such divergent countries as Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Tanganyika. In the long run the future of national sovereignty is inseparable from the question of economic advance. Dr. Nkrumah has declared, "We must unite or perish", and Davidson could well have discussed the possibility of South Africa's eventually giving up her narrow, bitter nationalism and uniting with the other members of the continent to which it belongs. South Africa's electorate should be ashamed that her apartheid policies preclude her from joining in the imaginative and brave attempts to "co-ordinate and intensify . . . efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa".

DAVIDSON'S "MESSAGE" is one of qualified optimism, with lessons particularly relevant

to the scornful, and the faint-hearted. Davidson is not afraid of the future; nor are politically conscious Africans. The Addis Ababa Charter of Unity (25th May, 1963), signed by 30 heads-of-state, and setting out boldly and clearly the tasks to be accomplished in the Africa of the future, is printed as a culmination to the book. Davidson's preceding 182 pages, all too briefly, serve to emphasise the practicality of this thoughtful manifesto, which may well one day be regarded as major a document in world history as the charter of the United Nations. I look forward to Davidson's volume *Freedom—the First Twenty Years*, published by Penguin Books in 1977, in which he traces the period since Ghana's independence. This book will include an account of the young South African Democratic Republic. We will be able to learn much by then from the mature independent ex-colonial states. ●

Two Poems from France

Rulers

*This is a rainy night
Rulers unroll scrolls of wretched landscapes
And boast and drink and dance under
the silvery disc of chandeliers
In castles threatened like pleasure boats
in a furious ocean.
(They are like insects that dance
around a street lamp,
Looming in the fog of a stormy sky)
This is a seismic night;
Water-divide hills sink into valleys
And rivers flow backwards.
Our faces and farms drip with salt
water from the flooded ocean;
But while our hope splits like lips in
winter
We must seek the reticent sea-gull
before it drowns
Mourned by stray crows.
Such is the fate of the wicked kingdom
Governed by gorgeous parrots.*

MBELLA SONNE DIPOKO

Extract from Grottoes of Glory

*. . . blow bugles into the sensual night.
We must leave them in bed —
Those women who promised us coral
islands of desire
And intimate leisure in lake-side hotels.
Fly like birds.
Make bullets of the stars;
Leave behind the litanies of the tiny
princes
And the charity of their lost lessons
on life . . .*

MBELLA SONNE DIPOKO

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