A. One Modern Travel Books about the Poles and Iceland.

General Features: The very name of the Poles rings like a bell in every young heart; the boy is always alive in every soul, and just the mention of it brings at once to mind the vistas of glacial snows and fogs and illusions where in appear the misty figures of great heroes - Scott, Peary, Shackleton, Amundsen and many others. The challenge of the Poles has called out all that is finest and noblest in the human character, the enemy that wrestles with us is our friend - as Carlyle would like to say. But considered as works of literature most of the books of great heroes are as simple as a sailor's log book, the beauty and appeal is in their deeds and not in their words, in their character and not their utterances. These books are not much different from the old journals of Cook and others. They have little poetic imagination except that which is applied to their performance, and they have no love of prose rhythm except that it should convey clearly what they mean to say. But these simple words convey great sadness and melancholy, it is a drama of death, weak human beings struggle with the unknown foe, and most often they die, and leave nothing but their bones.

"Although in 1850, I had made many visits to the graves I found it impossible to express the melancholy feelings which a scene so painfully interesting naturally suggested. Here were we arrived at the very scene of the first stage of the perilous voyage of the missing explorers. The three resting places proved that death had been busy amidst the little band, during their lengthened sojourn in this lone and desolate spot, but beyond this and a few un-important articles scattered around there existed no record pointing out their intended route nor even a trace which gave a clue;"

Some how the Poles and other extremely cold regions do not yet admit of a truly poetic and imaginative treatment, at least England has not yet sent her poets and dreamers to the North Pole or the South Pole. There is none who can compare with Nansen or Amundsen, even in fiction they have not produced a man who could write of cold regions as well as Iceland's Nobel laureate Haldor Laxness. Dr. Axel Munthe has given brief glimpses of the Lapland in his *Story of San Michele*; though very brief his account surpasses that of all others, probably England has no spiritual affinity with those regions. Axel Munthe's account of the journey in company with Ristin, Turi's young daughter through Lapland is a classic.  


Peary's story takes the reader from New York to Etah, and Etah to Cape Sheridan, the autumn is passed there, and from there they journey to Big land and thence they reach latitude 87.7; the book also deals with the return to New York. The poles do not afford the cultural background that Asia and Europe do; imagination cannot work in a vacuum the dates which are the only life-line by which they keep contact with civilisation make the description a mere glorified log book. The sentences have a strange unusual
length; it is the work of a man not used to style, but well read in nautical literature. But his cheerful, brave and indomitable spirit is marked on every page.

"March 17th - A glorious day clear as a crystal, and the sun is shining nearly twelve hours.

March 18th - Another glorious day, but bitterly cold.

March 26th - A glorious day and a splendid march." 1

What Peary lacks in style is compensated in spirit and achievements; but that does not make it literature. In fact Poles are still a happy virgin land for the writer of the future; at some future date poets and writers may go there as they have often gone to the desert. The aeroplane will probably bring that time nearer.

161. Sir Vivian Fuchs and Sir Edmund Hillary

The Crossing of Antarctica - 1958

The Crossing of Antarctica does not show much change in the style and literary quality of Polar literature of travel although the book has been written nearly half a century after Peary's book. It appears that as long as a man is not able to travel alone, and with ease and safety - he cannot let his fancy roam. In fact, books about modern expeditions are full of greater data, and are a more technical affair. It is a book full of very useful information, and it has great scientific importance, but its style is that of tired sailors.

"South of the Dawson Lambton, in the vicinity of latitude 76.32 S we came upon an area of very active calving where icebergs lay floating or stranded in scattered confusion. It was within four or five miles of this point that Shackleton's ship - the Endurance, became beset, and began the long drift to West and North till she was finally crushed in the ice".2

2. The Crossing of Antarctica - London 1958, p. 27.
The 'Mysterious North' is a specimen of the type of real travel literature that will come from the North in the near future. This book is a very fine presentation of the true spirit of this country; its eerie loneliness and man's enemy Death, its sadness and gloom and its unfathomable mystery - make a pathetic appeal and have attraction for a mind that loves the new and the un-known. All the legends and myths, tales of giants and ogres, headless valleys and mysterious killers - are nicely presented by this son of the North; he lived and grew up in the surroundings, and understood the arcana of the snow bound regions better than any other old writer, Ice-landic writer Laxness - alone equals him, but their domains are different. There are places where he is as grim and primitive as Ernest Hemingway; one story particularly resembles a story told by Hemingway wherein a man does not bury the dead body of his wife because it is winter, and it is difficult to dig a grave; he puts it on a pile of wood and hangs his lantern so that the face is burnt black by the time he calls the priest in the spring days to say prayers over her. The story told by Pierre Berton is grimmer still.

"On Fore Basin in the winter of 1948 a man and two boys died of cold and starvation after devouring the dogs, their clothes and their sleeping skins. The wife and daughter survived by eating the cadavers and using the fat to light the seal oil lamps."

Men in these cold and isolated places must become dreamers, and they dream of happy warm places, full of tropical comforts and luxuries.

"The hardiest myth of all is the wistful tale of the Tropical valley. Into this chronicle of a warm and verdant oasis hidden among the impassable snows is distilled all the yearnings of men who have been chilled to the marrow by the northern winter. Long before James Hilton spun his narrative of a Shangri-la behind the cold Tibetan mountains, stories of a tropical valley, were rife in the north." 1

Lonely men in this lonely land form the main theme of the story; solitude of lonely men spreading beyond the horizon and loneliness taking a real solid abysmal absolute form— that is the essence of this story. Not only men, even hills and rivers and stones feel lonely—if they can feel so, and they are all unknown to one another—directions and locations are unknown, all is an illusion. Hindu Mystics would have been happy there. His description of this loneliness of the unknown regions has a frosty effect, but it stirs up the imagination; there are great poetic possibilities for a writer who dwells in that land for a sufficiently long period.

"It was Baker’s practice to watch out for men who lived by themselves. One fall he dropped a trapper on to a little lake a hundred miles north of Fort St. James. Three months later flying over the man’s cabin, he felt something had gone wrong, for it looked strangely silent. On a hunch, he landed and there tacked to the birch tree was a slab of box-wood with the pathetic message: ‘Russ come and get me, I am blind’. He snow-shoed in land, and brought out the sightless trapper who had lain alone in darkness and pain for weeks with only a dog for company." 2

"We would sometimes hear the chill call of the wolf drifting down from the wilderness behind us. It is an eerie sound, plaintive, mournful, mysterious. The wolf like the husky is mute; his vocal cords are so constructed that he cannot bark, but only howls across the endless hills. If the north has a theme song, it is this haunting cry which seems to echo all the loneliness and the wonder of the land at the top of the continent." 3

2. Ibid., p. 30.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
It is still a land of mystery, men have found the way to the moon, but the Polar regions still defy man and still confound all his scientific instruments and equipments.

"There is a saying that after five years in the North every man is an expert; after ten years a novice. No man can hope or expect to absorb it all in a lifetime and fifteen generations of explorers, whalers, fur-traders, missionaries, scientists, policemen, trappers prospectors, adventurers, and tourists have failed to solve all its riddles. To me, as to most northerners the country is still an unknown quantity, as elusive as the wolf, howling just beyond the rim of the hills. Perhaps that is why it holds its fascination."

It is a great saga that he relates, and he does so because he loves and enjoys sharing it. It has greater appeal than any other record of discovery in the North or South.

Icelandic Literature

Icelandic literature too has the same characteristics as all other literature of the cold northern regions, the human element in the story does not add to it, often it takes away much from the beauty of loneliness and endless horizons. The spirit and approach is always the same, Iceland is hated, reviled and condemned in the harshest terms, its ugliness and sadness are vividly described by all writers. W. H. Auden and Louis MacNeice give some selected morsels from old books in 'Letters from Iceland' - London 1937.

"A very characteristic feature of the race is the eye, dull and cold as a pebble - the mesmerist would despair at the first sight". (Burton - Ultima Thule - 1875).

"Fieh for thee, Iceland dog. Thou prick eared cur of Scotland". (Henry IV Shakespeare).

Miss Miles in her Book "Rambles in Iceland "1854" tells how

Madam Pfeiffer tells lies in her book: *A Visit to Iceland-1854*.

"Where she does not knowingly tell direct falsehoods, the guesses she makes about those regions that she does not visit while stating that she does, show her to be bad at guess work."

"Letters from Iceland" is itself a dull and boring book inspite of all the efforts made by the authors; poetry may interest the reader, but these poetical passages are like plums in a bad pudding. There is nothing which may stir the imagination. There are no interesting characters, and no scenes to describe. Yet, he asserts that he liked Iceland.

"I have tasted a hot spring (a taste was wine). And foods a man remembers till he dies. All things considered, I consider Iceland Apart from Reykjavik, a very nice land". 1

Other modern books are not much better; Annandale's book - 'The Faroes and Iceland' (1905) W. Russells' "Horse Back Tours in Sagaland" - 1914, and Mrs. Chapman's 'Across Iceland - 1934' do not possess much beauty of style; it is very rarely that sun shines through the gloomy atmosphere.

"A glorious morning of brilliant sunshine and a clear blue sky greeted me when I awoke next day. The air was like champagne, and it was indeed a joy to be alive! I made a sketch of the quaint old farm-house to the great interest of an old-man and several women and children". 2

B. A Note on Journalism and Travel.

The contribution of journals and daily newspapers to the love of travel and the cultivation of this spirit of wandering and globe trotting is immense; often it is these magazines which inspire people, particularly in early youth, to take to the road;

the call of the road is one that cannot be denied. These miscellaneous articles do not fall within the scope of this study, but it must be accepted that the standard of this type of writing on travel is fairly high, and literary quality is often amazingly satisfactory. They are very much like the one act play and the short story, a creation of the times, times of hurry and hustle.

"The hour before dawn! one by one the stars go out like lamps in heaven. A faint glimmer shows the quiet water asleep, girt by dim mountain shapes that appear in that ghostly radiance like 'the splendours and glooms and glimmering incarnation' of some twilight fantasy. An unreal hour, an unearthly stillness, a world asleep". 1

"There before the Nile I stood where an Egyptian archer had stood when Cushite soldiers from the south advanced to attack. He fell and likely died, this archer; the enemy tumbled the walls of Bubon, and burned the rubble and broke the wine-jars, and I saw the ashes and stood on the shards myself 3500 years later". 2

But most of the magazines very soon come down to the low level of the readers, the new democratic readers who want information without beauty of style, and a popular magazine today cannot afford to have a highly literary style. The Reader's Digest and the 'Life' cater for the average reader, and the style is not literary but informative.

"Unfortunately, the glories of Tahiti are there only on the surface. Dig a little deeper and the dream wavers, fades and then ends with a pop of disillusionment. — The truth about the Tahitian virgins, indeed, is almost too sad to report. That unclothed beauty of the travel poster was a professional model. Most Tahitian women have big feet, thick ankles, and un-spectacular figures - and they dress far more modestly than the average U.S. summer time super-market customer". 3.

But these short sketches of travel have no characterisation, no full fledged study of persons and places; the spirit of the place is not step by step portrayed till it possesses the reader's mind; there is no width and no open spaces; beauty of form is always out of question. When such articles come from the hand of a great-master in the form of a series of connected articles and letters - it becomes an altogether different thing. One man behind these letters gives them a unity and cohesion, his tastes, and views slowly and slowly take a definite shape, and smoothly stand on the border-land between literature and journalism.

164. Maurice Baring - 1874 Letters from the Near East - 1913
Maurice Baring stands nearer to literature than to journalism; he was aware of his limitations, but still working within his limits he creates something really beautiful.

"However special correspondents must rush in where even fools fear to tread, and record such impressions as they receive, however misleading and wide of the mark they may be". 1

The first part of the book consists of five letters written from Turkey, and the second part deals with the letters written from Balkans. The letters from Turkey have a certain beauty of arrangement; they are like the parts of old Wilkie Collins type of novel; every journal and epistle - written by a separate person throws more and more light on the same theme. It is a story of gradual dis-illusionment; they begin by being enthusiastic and then little by little enthusiasm gives way to scepticism, scepticism to doubt, and finally doubt to disbelief.

But apart from the political picture which they present they show a great journalist at his best; in fine style he lays bare the spirit of the land, the Byzantine character of that country; the scenes and sights of nature delight the heart; even the melancholy of Constantinople as he describes is a haunting melancholy that possesses the heart. He is a fine judge of men and morals as a whole; the garish colour of modern journalism, the conflicts of parties with loud sounding names, do not mar these pages.

"Somebody once said that Turks had never conquered Constantinople, but that Constantinople had conquered the Turks. And certainly what strikes a man arriving here for the first time is the existence, the strength and the baffling spell of that influence and that atmosphere which we call Byzantine, and the permanence of the spirit of Byzantium. It is this atmosphere and influence so hazy and so enigmatic - which makes it difficult for a stranger to find out what facts are happening, and to form any estimate of their significance". 1

By the time the last letter is written the gloomy atmosphere of Constantinople takes on a saddening aspect.

"Many people have recorded the intense melancholy which they felt on arriving at Constantinople for the first time, specially in the autumn under a grey sky, when the kaleidoscopic opalescent city loses all its radiance, suffers an eclipse and seems to wallow in greyness, sadness, dirt and squalor. A man arriving at Constantinople three days ago would have received this melancholy impression at its very intensest. They sky was grey and the air was damp, and the streets looked more than usually squalid and dishevelled". 2.

Modern journalists have declined in this particular type of journalistic pieces of fine studies of men and lands; photography, modern sensationalism, film and wireless have much to do with it; modern theatrical equipment and film mechanics have taken away much from the beauty of old drama; scenes are not depicted in words, they can be shown on the

2. Ibid., p. 144.
screen; same is true of the illustrated magazines. But still there are great names in modern journalism - no modern device can replace them or their talents.


Maurice Hindus never cares for literary style, his preoccupation is mainly politics, and that too cheap politics of every day changing events. *Russia Fights on* is a collection of articles most of which appeared in 'Harpers Magazine', Scribner, Commentator 'New Republic' and 'Toronto Star Weekly'; literary quality is that of that of the daily newspaper. *Mother Russia* is again a book on current affairs, its one saving grace is the direct talks which he has with the people from the different walks of life.


Edgar Snow won great fame as a great adventurous reporter before and during the Second Great War; his great adventures are narrated by himself in *Journey to the Beginning* 1959. This book is more moving than the original accounts; here is the crowded feeling of the wide and varied events on this globe, things seem to be pushing and jostling one another and life looks like a tragic and horrible show; there is the Gobi desert where five million die of hunger; there are goods trains full of little boys and girls being sent to the cities for immoral purposes. As a writer he possesses force, biting irony, vividness of description; and he has the ability to judge a man or a situation in a few telling phrases. The same is true of his descriptive powers. He studies human-beings in abnormal conditions; it is impossible to find any calm and peace in

2. Ibid., p: 7.
his books; there are real horrors, and his experiences have made him nervous; he is possessed by these dark things; the trouble is that he is not giving fiction but facts.

"Mishakova agreed and she told me that she herself had adopted three orphans whose parents were killed in the war. She told me how the eldest a lad of six, had seen the Germans slowly beat them to death as a man might leisurely beat out the life of a helpless rat with a stick." 1

Slowly and slowly these events dominate his mind, and soon even his dreams are no less terrible than the horrors of Dracula.

"I had had a dream that night, which I had confessed to none, wherein I walked into a white valley and drawing closer saw that it was white with crowded corpses, millions of them, reaching farther than I could see. Then a storm arose, a storm of curious sort with a falling of huge flakes, and as it swelled above me I saw that flakes were leaflets each crying out " Dig, Dig, Dig, for Victory", and as they fell the figures rose up, and began to dig. From afar came dispatch riders with orders, and the diggers listened and obeyed and kept changing the path of their digging, and increasing the tempo I saw long forgotten faces among them." 2

Red Star over China 1940 is a great classic, a great piece of war reporting; here he was at the height of his powers. Characterisation is in a way the weakest point in his books as compared with those of John Gunther and Louis Fischer; but Red Star over China is a star-studded book; the heroes of that book live and move, and act in the most life like manner; there is suspense, and breath taking sensation and surprise. This book had a background of eighteen years of study; he went to China as a cub in 1942 and he covered the Chinese sub-continent for all different events that took place during these years. His work is uneven, there are things for which he has no taste, and no understanding. As a stylist, he rarely rises to great heights, but he is never dull.

2. Ibid., p: 82.
Louis Fisher is a better stylist, a better judge of men, and he is sweeter and gentler in his approach than Edgar Snow. He is rarely bitter; in fact his style is winsome, friendly, genial, appreciative and cheerful. His sunny temperament makes him a better travel companion; he is more interested in men and human virtues and weaknesses; he travels to see life, and recaptures in words the scenes and actors of this great drama of existence. But the trouble about him is that he is more of a political reporter than a traveller, and his style is never free from his Americanisms.

"The noise of propaganda that thunders through Soviet life jams the still small voice of truth, faith and art, and leaves the people uninspired and bored." 1.

Other books by journalists in recent years are mostly about China, India and Russia; but they are mostly dull reports and have no literary beauty.

William Stevenson - The Yellow Wind 1959

The Yellow Wind is an excursion in and around Red China; it is a cheap American book of political propaganda based on travels between 1954-1957, financed by Toronto Star and Star Weekly.

James Bertram - Return to China - 1957

James Bertram was a British attache at Chungking, and joined the 'Times' with the ambition of becoming a press correspondent; Lord Lothian, Chairman of Rhodes Trustees sent him to China in 1935. The book gives useful and authentic information; cocktails with Chou-En-Lai, and May Day with Mao-Tse-Tung show the intimate relations which he had with the Chinese big guns; he supplies first hand facts about the Chinese writers and Chinese Universities. 2. The book has no beauty of style, and

it has no literary importance; but he certainly fulfils the ambition with which he sets out.

"This is a very personal book, for I believe, human contacts can sometimes be more revealing than statistics or political arguments. No one can pretend to know the whole truth about Communist China. But not so many independent observers who knew China before 1949 have since had the opportunity to visit it again; and one of these can at least try to give his own impressions, as directly and honestly as possible. That is all I have sought to do here." 1.

170. John Gunther 1901


John Gunther the great 'Insider' is a unique phenomenon in modern journalism; none matches him in sheer scope, reporterial zest, and the gift of vividness and clarity of description with which he popularises distant places. He has driving curiosity, elephantine memory, gregarious charm, and ferocious vitality.

He has phenomenally sharp ears and eyes for the telling anecdote and the detail that vividly catches the mood. He is a master of the art of brain picking and of choosing the right brain to pick. The seed that Cass Canfield, the publisher, planted in 1934 by ordering a book on the inside of Europe, has blossomed into many 'Insides;' by this time Gunther has travelled millions of miles and has interviewed thousands of eminent men - both living and dead.

His style and method has improved with time. 'Inside Europe-1935', 'Inside Asia-1939, Inside Latin America-1941,' represent the first stage; 'Inside U.S.A.-1950' and 'Inside Africa-1955' represent the second stage and 'Inside Russia Today-1958' and 'Inside Europe-1961' represent the last stage. The first stage shows his love of sensational news, variety of

life, the picturesque details, and whimsicalities of nations and men; his first three books are thrilling, exciting and provocative; they have force, strength and clear presentation of matter; but all the time he looks at life like a reporter, and facts and figures dominate the canvas of those scenes. The second stage shows greater and deeper love for life; none has written about U.S.A. and Africa with greater sympathy and understanding; now he is aware of the motive forces that move life, and the causes that lie behind this drama of human existence. His style becomes simpler, he has much similarity with Theodore Dreiser at this stage. 'Inside Russia Today' and 'Inside Europe Today', are the work of maturity. These books are simple but more charming; he is calm, confident, profound and sure of his opinion and attitude. At last he really looks inside; the surface can no more charm him. The first and the last vision of Europe have a gap of 25 years lying between them; from a sensational reporter he becomes a sensitive and wise writer.

At the first stage he collects and presents colourfully the strange details of foreign lands; his idea of the picturesque and the strange is different from that of the Intourist or Cook guides; he is original even in his enumeration of strange things. This is the characteristic feature of the first stage.

"Chinese the most civilised people on earth, keep ink in a box; and send invitations on blotting paper. Chinese smoke in Church and wear white, not black for mourning. No long division is possible with Chinese numerals. Chinese do not perspire; they have no ear wax and very little bodily hair. At Chinese dinner the guest of honour faces the door, presumably so that he can see his way out. Chinese houses face South, and are not numbered in sequence." 1

1. Inside Asia, London-1939, p1 320.
"In Japan a person's age is counted from the date of conception, not from birth; nouns have no inflection or number, and verbs no person; a cup of tea should properly be drunk in exactly three and a half gulps, and pillows are made of wood." 1  

His love of anecdotes and jokes, his liking for quotations from great Insiders of the past - is already a contributory charm of his books.

"Better a diamond with a flaw, than a pebble without". Confucious. 2  

The story of 'Inside Europe' is a study of nationalism; 'Inside Asia' is a study of Imperialism and 'Inside Latin America' is a study of jungles, open vast plains, a vast variety of races, strange dictators, arid colonial politics and economics. The first stage - of picturesque journalistic description here reaches its height. The description of real jungle is freshly delightful.

"The most interesting thing about Panama, the country, is that here, for the first time in this book, we touch real jungle, not merely political or racial jungle. In Panama the explosive force of a tropical climate becomes a major phenomenon. Here man fights primitive nature, When I arrived in Balboa, I blinked to discover that such animals as Tapir exist within a thousand yards of the Canal, that in army camps a few miles from Colon or Cristobal you may run into twenty-five different kinds of snakes." 3  

The scenes and sights of America appeal to him for their picturesqueness and he revels in the description of these sights in telling phrases.

"This is Ruritania. Paraguay the most remote and picturesque state in the Americas, is a kind of forlorn and almost forgotten fairyland with overtones of brutal contemporary reality. This is the country of flaming red flamboyant trees of streets paved with glistering sharp pebbles, of tranquil sunsets over the broad meandering river Paraguay". 4  

This type of description is matched only by Archibald Mac Leish (Fortune July-1938). The second stage shows a Gunther with a sure hand and mature mind; the fine audacity of the first

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1. Inside Asia - 1939, p: 122.
2. Ibid., p: 282.
4. Ibid. p: ..
stage gives place to dignified sobriety of 'Inside U.S.A. 1950' and 'Inside Africa-1955'. He can mingle wisdom with facts; he can afford to love and hate, and he is not afraid of the tastes of the reading public. Mere sensationalism and the crispness of statement is not enough, he becomes more of a writer than a journalist. Inside U.S.A. is a study of democracy in action; it is not a cross section of American society, it is the whole society itself that he serves as a fine dish; the book is a veritable Leviathan, it is a gargantuan feast; it has the bigness and colourfulness of the pagan rites; "its central spine and substance is an effort in alldiffidence to show the most fabulous and least known countries, the United States of America to itself. (Foreword).

He shapes new instruments and new ways of describing the character of cities and lands, and the features of the cloudy confused politicians; he has no phrases to describe new problems and new material forces. Wheat fields are described with a rare force and originality.

"The whole rippling blanket underneath might have been the palette of an artist painting sunsets. The colours are fantastically variegated because the wheat planted at different times is ripening at different stages of growth; they run from a deep red copper through a buttery chrome to gamboge, to fawn. Some fields looked like maple leaves and some like scrambled eggs. Think of all the red headed girls you have ever met; they are all down there in the wheat—auburn, russet, titian, chestnut, sandy. Then throw in the blondes." 1

Cities are described as Theodore Dreiser alone could do.

"Chicago is stupefying ——— an Olympian freak, a fable, an allegory, an incomprehensible phenomenon — monstrous, multifarious, unnatural, indomitable, puissant, preposterous, transcendent ——— throw the dictionary at it". 2

2. Ibid., p. 259.
Inside Africa in a way marks the highest stage of his
inside work; the next two books are like rejoinders to his
earlier books. In 1955, he stands on a peak in Darien, and
he seems to have seen all that is worth seeing. After this he
looks back, refers to his own books like a retiring professor;
here Ulysses starts on a second voyage, a sentimental journey.
Thus 'Inside Africa' must be considered his highest work, his
last testament, his final effort, and his Olympian performance.
But somehow he is already showing a return to simplicity, and
the love of the simple statement. Thus in a way his 'Inside
Africa' is less sensational than his 'Inside Asia' or 'Inside
Europe'; time has made him sober; he now speaks of Africa and
golden joys (Shakespeare Henry IV Part II Act V Scene 3). The
beauty of the desert days and nights has something of J. B.
Priestley's calmness and coolness: "Midnight in the Desert".

"During the day the Cyclopean sun eats up all the colour,
but at dawn or sunset the mountains are radiantly painted
with gamboge, slate blue, purple, coral and above all
crimson rose. And there is no life in them whatsoever.
At night arrive the stars. Everybody knows what desert
stars are like, but not everybody knows the Hoggar stars,
which hang down just over head like enormous silver
cherries. The Tuareg have a story about the planet Venus
saying that she was a naughty goddess who sold her
father into slavery to gain beauty, and was punished
by being fixed in cold space for ever. We watched her
blink". 1

The last stage is a stage of maturity, simplicity, profundity
of thought and artlessness of expression; he goes over the field
which he has already covered. It is a study in change, a study
in the changing shadows of life; yes, he must try to recapture
life, time has moved both within him and without. Inside Russia
Today and Inside Europe Today represent a stage of sentimental
journeys to haunts of youth; the pilgrim goes out again, and
now he finds a different landscape. He is sixty, and he has

no time for the journalistic tricks that was his stock in trade when he started. Now it is human conduct and character that he examines; the kingdom of God is within; men reap the fruit of what they sow, and it is in this spirit that he looks at men and their problems. These are his wisest books; it is a new John Gunther who speaks through them. Characters, powerful and great, are etched in simple and clear forms; the old sensational and colourful method is discarded.

"He is a grand father who tells us fairy stories", one of his political adversaries put it to me. Another said "He is not grand-father image but a ghost image." Be this as it may, Dr. Adenauer, even if not loved, is almost universally respected and admired. He has strong ethical appeal. Moreover his age is a veneer, an armour serving to make him untouchable. One of his major political opponents, a Social Democrat, told me that he no longer felt free to press him closely in a political attack; it did not seem sporting to tilt the lance too sharply, even though the Chancellor is amply able to take care of himself in debate". 1.

Gunther may be the last vision and most sublime of individual journalism; no single man in future shall be able to do so much and so beautifully as he has done.