and the eggs which we are beginning to get through the kindness of the Variscos and by Colontoni's efforts, we are all improving in health. My dysentery is much better. The heat is our only trouble now. Of course we live ridiculously here—we work at the rate and have the same hours as in England—and indeed we must, as there is so much to do. But the natives think we are crazy.

Monday, 27th September 1943

After supper called at the Variscos' place in the Via Roma about some ethnological books, as I want the avvocato to get me some at the bookseller's to-morrow, and I sent Colontoni home—saying I would walk back. On the way home I staggered and nearly fell—and with the greatest difficulty reached home—stumbling over bomb damage on the pavements as I reeled along. How my head swims.

Wednesday, 29th September 1943

I have been ill since Monday with sandfly fever—at first I was afraid it was malaria. I think Monday night was the worst I have passed in my life—I have never had such a headache—not even when I fractured the base of my skull.

Not knowing what was wrong, I dragged myself down to the car on Tuesday morning, and Colontoni took me to the office—but I soon became so ill that I went to see Colonel Cheyne (Head of the Public Health Division) and one of his American colonels looked at me and sent me home immediately.

To-day I have got out of bed, but I am weak and the thought of food nauseates me. Anyway, I have managed to eat two bananas and drink a glass of wine and feel somewhat better. When one gets ill from the climate here one begins to realize how little we English appreciate our own—which is the best in the world, avoiding, as it does, all extremes. A country where flies do not crawl over everything, where rain falls and cleans the streets, where dust does not choke one all day, where the sun does not make work a struggle, and where filth does not choke the kennels, and finally where sandfly fever, malaria, dysentery, and typhus are unknown.

The old cook is ill too, with stomach trouble.

Fullerton, an Irish orderly who acts as a sort of janitor—there being no batmen provided here where we could most do with them—is ill too.

Thursday, 30th September 1943

I have been surprised to see in the shops fascist literature still on sale—and particularly is this the case in the literature of a more serious character used by students and thinkers. I have made representations to the Chief of Staff about it, as some steps should be taken by the local Civil Affairs Officers to see that all such literature is impounded: but the booksellers will not help them as this literature forms a large part of their stock in trade. I think that some scale of compensation should be worked out—and we can do with the paper which the pulping of these books would provide, for the printing of the school text-books.

Friday, 1st October 1943

I feel much better. The fever has now left me—and I am only suffering from an appalling weakness.

Signora Varisco and her husband have been here daily about business matters and so, despite the fever, I have been able to keep the office going by remote control.

I hear that G.I.s (American private soldiers) are paying simply ridiculous prices for things in the shops. Women's silk knickers and petticoats seem to be a line the shops still have some store of, and these are being sold for 1,500 lire (£3 15s. present rate of exchange) whereas before the invasion they were 300 lire (15s.).

Meanwhile it is more than hard on the native population because shopkeepers are not interested in selling to them at all when they can get such prices.

Saturday, 2nd October 1943

To-day I got out of bed and into the office. Although weak I am glad I got to the office to-day as work is getting very much in arrears—there is not time to be ill out here.

The weather has at last broken—and we are having much rain. It is like a wet October at home, but not quite so cold. I feel better as a consequence.

The Variscos sent me a chicken to-night, for which I am very thankful. But they simply refuse any payment.

Sunday, 3rd October 1943

To-day I went into the country—to Vicari to interview Professor Vincent Grasso whom I have decided to employ as one of my secretaries; as I am still struggling along with Signora Varisco in one small room, I simply must get help.

During the journey I wasted an hour getting across a water-course as the Germans had destroyed the bridge, and the small valley which it spanned now carries water, and the car stuck in the mud. The car ahead was pulled out by oxen, but by the time we got to the same position and stuck, the man and his oxen had disappeared. After settling a fight between some men working on the repairs to the bridge by threatening them with my revolver, I got some of them to help me, and with the aid of a lorry pulled the car out.

While searching for Professor Grasso in Vicari we ran into a funeral—they are very funereal indeed here. The coffin is borne aloft and priests precede it in their vestments, occasionally raising their voices in doleful outbursts of chanting, while the mourners walk behind. The men in these parts wear blankets over their shoulders—which are for the same purpose as the highlander's plaid.

Professor Grasso's town, like all these Sicilian towns, is very primitive—and takes us back almost to the Middle Ages. Not only does this primitiveness of the towns strike one forcibly but also the simplicity in which the intelligentsia lives. There is in most cases almost a complete lack of pictures, fine furniture, glass, and books; all necessary features of the educated person's home in England. Of course books do exist, but they are usually a small collection concerned with the scholar's own subject, rather than of general character. There are exceptions to this rule certainly, but that is where English or French influence through northern Italy has come to bear upon the civilization, and in such cases one finds the other extreme—over-furnished rooms full of bric-à-brac, and Empire and Victorian forms, with lace hangings and gew-gaws everywhere. As one might expect, this other type of home is found among those scholars who

belong socially to the upper classes and their homes are on a par with those of the normal Marchese's or Duca's. But Professor Grasso's house into which Signora Varisco and I entered yesterday represented the other end of the scale, and with little doubt that of the majority of Sicilian professors. Except for the discomfort, which is probably never felt because anything different has never been experienced, the simplicity of such a life has much to be said for it—and it is certainly more fitting to the climate. The tiled floor, the table, a few chairs, a sideboard of some sort or perhaps a bookcase, and a china cabinet, thick walls and small windows make for a cool haven in summer away from the hot streets and the smells.

From Vicari we went to Baucina at the pressing request of Signora Varisco whose home is in that town, because the avvocato and signora insisted that we must have some provisions—pasta, grapes, and wine from their land for our little mess in Via Nicolo Garzili. They insisted that I should come away with tomatoes—over a stone of them, about double that amount of grapes, and two live chickens tied by the legs—for they do not kill them here till they are ready to be eaten. I also brought away two loaves, for my own use, of their own home-grown, home-ground, and home-made bread, for I cannot eat the terribly insipid, dry and tasteless white army bread, after the good bread we have had in England these last three years. This bread of the country is a beautiful yellow colour. They also pressed on me a bottle of wine sixteen years old—which is a great luxury as the only wine sold to soldiers here is wretched cheap new wine, which is often almost undrinkable, but despite that, fetches high prices. It has alcohol in it, and that is all that concerns the average English or American soldier.

Baucina is probably the most primitive town I have ever seen. As one approaches it round a bend in the road, there it lies, beautiful upon its hillside. The blue sky, the white staring houses, the green vineyards, and the brown stubble fields, and above the town the mountain with the grey of the rocks showing everywhere. Among the houses lie many baroque churches, for small as the town is, there are many evidences of that traditional faithfulness to the Church which is typical of these lands of the Two Sicilies.

As we enter the town the picture of beauty which it presents from a distance changes to one of the most indescribable scenes in Europe. The streets are narrow, atrociously cobbled, with deep ruts and holes in them. No Englishman has any conception of what Sicilian ruts are like till he has seen them. For the car to lurch down one foot is not surprising, and broken springs are a common complaint: and these things are not the result of war—but of a primitiveness from which Sicily has not moved through the ages, combined with the influence of fascism. For, whatever may be said for the centralized government in Rome, and especially the fascist one, and its modernization of Italy, it has left Sicily untouched. Indeed, it did not merely leave Sicily untouched, but deliberately neglected and mulcted it to boot—for the returns of the Bank of Sicily clearly show a drainage of funds northwards to Italy at the expense of the Sicilian. This appalling neglect, combined with the fact that the Sicilians are clearly not racially the same as the northern Italians, and nationally are not very Italian in feeling, accounts for the very strong separatist movement which meets one at every turn here—especially when one comes to talk with the country people. In fact, that class which in northern and western Europe is shrieking for 'reforms' of a socialistic nature, in Sicily (outside of the big cities) tends to be separatist.

Anyway, this neglect accounts for towns like Baucina. The streets are narrow and rutted, and they are full not only of children but of pigs, hens, turkeys, cows, goats, horses, mules, and donkeys, all of which live around together in the streets—the cow, pig, or goat usually tied to the wall, whilst, a yard or so away, the family sit on the doorstep and talk to their neighbours across the street or watch the passers-by.

There is, with the exception of the veneer of nobility at the top, an almost classless society in Sicily—and even the nobility seem to stand more on their merits than their dignities—as a result, a large proportion of them have no place in the community at all. Anyone will talk to anyone else without expecting to give offence, whilst of course any question that arises in these towns is a matter of common interest, and the neighbours join in and offer advice freely without being asked for it. Thus when our car comes to a halt, as at Vicari and elsewhere, a mob

gathers round it and shows great interest in the discussion between the arrivals and those that receive them, and freely takes part in the conversation. Whilst the children, who are too indulged altogether in Sicily, climb all over the car and inside of it, and blow the horn, without a single adult restraining them, or even Colontoni, my Neapolitan ex-sergeant-major driver, raising a finger. Sometimes the inhabitants have had a shock when the patience of some long-suffering English Civil Affairs Officer has given out, and in a forthright English way he has put a particularly aggravating annoyance across his knees. But the Sicilians are sportsmen and take it in good part.

From the outside the houses look alike, the rich and poor are all huddled together, but inside differences are seen. But even here, in the Variscos' house, despite the fact that they are quite well off by the standards of these towns, and are returned emigrants from America, there is the same plainness, cheapness, and sparsity of furnishing.

Here I was served with chicken cooked in the Sicilian manner —which is well worth eating for a change from our own method of cooking. Garlic is pushed into the breast at many points, and lemon juice poured over it, and then the chicken is roasted. It makes a remarkably good change of flavour. I think that it would, however, be improved if stuffed, and served with some sauce. But, as in all else, the Sicilians are very simple, and so, although the meals are endless in their courses, and the food is of the very best, there is little attention given to extra 'fixings'.

The economy of the Varisco family is typical of the position of the professional classes throughout much of Sicily. The avvocato combines his legal profession with that of farmer, having like everyone else of the more substantial kind, land just outside the town on which vines and corn grow. This is worked by his men, and himself sometimes, and for the rest of the time, including Sundays, callers pour in on legal business which is transacted in the sitting-room on the first floor. It is a sign of improved social status to live on this floor—downstairs, when not let as a separate house, is the store place, and extra kitchen and so on, as it is here in this house. It causes no confusion to the client to come and talk of his business in the midst of all the family.

Because the professional people of Sicily all seem to have land,

the population of the big cities such as Palermo is largely migratory. When a lawyer or doctor does well, he moves into the city, but he still has his country home and his land, and in the hot weather, and during the holidays, moves back to the *paese*, that is to the Baucinas and the rest. It is this attachment to the land which has probably saved a very great section of this class from undue suffering owing to the inflation which has occurred since our occupation—for they have their own pasta and oil, grapes, and wine upon which to live, provided they can get back to the *paesi* for it. And some way or another they do. But at home people can have no idea of the suffering and toil that these people endure to travel. If there is a car licensed by the Government to travel, shall we say, between Baucina and Palermo for a special mission, all the countryside know about it. Then start visits to the lucky holders of the permit, and bargains and arrangements, heart-burnings, and disappointments. Finally it is settled and that car starts with not four people, for which it was built, but carrying twelve or more. Then it breaks down, most frequently with a puncture, and often all the tyres puncture in the course of a twenty-mile journey. This is due to the inferior quality of fascist rubber, the worn-out condition of the tyres—as new ones cannot be bought except on the black market at fabulous prices—and the terrible state of the roads. But some way or another that car gets to Palermo and disgorges its passengers and their baskets and bags, and in due time returns similarly laden. Where we have got buses running, it is the same story. Here the mountains are steep and you can travel nowhere in Sicily without crossing mountains, and as we travel in our requisitioned cars or jeeps at the reckless speeds of our Italian or American-Italian soldier-drivers, we see the buses crawling up the mountain sides at somewhere about two or three miles an hour. If the bus is in a bad way, then the men are walking—but if it is just managing to take it—and no-one gets off mule or car in this country if it can just bear the load without breaking down—then you see a sight which has never been seen in England. Not only is the bus crowded almost to suffocation inside (Englishmen would actually die if carried as passengers inside in this heat) but the whole of the roof is stacked with the luggage, and on top of that more passengers, usually including several carabinieri in their blue

and red uniforms or in the grey-green that some of them wear, who are usually seated on the hood of the cab. This is Sicily in 1943.

Monday, 4th October 1943

The weather is getting more and more like an English autumn which is a great relief.

The more I see of *some* of the Italo-American officers the more I wonder whether it was really wise to select them for Military Government work. Of course there are outstanding examples of the wisdom of that choice—Raffa for instance. But these are exceptions. In the main the Italo-American has not been as successful as one would expect, and often he is a failure. It is a frequently mistaken notion that linguistic knowledge is the sole or principal qualification for dealing with foreigners—that is far from being the case. Character, fair, just, straight dealing, executive ability, a broad outlook, a wide cultural background, are all more important. It was, of course, natural to expect that Italo-Americans should be chosen for duty in Italy since they knew the language, and the faults which became apparent among some of them were not obvious until the experiment had been tried. Of their faults I would list the following. In the first place they are upstarts. In several cases I could mention, they came from the lowest stratum of Sicilian society. The first thing they did on returning to the land of their fathers was to seek out their relatives—people often living in abject poverty, and many of them of the near criminal class. As a result they have become involved in the feuds of their kinsmen, and furthermore they have assumed the hatred of their kin against other classes higher in the social scale. This has affected their work, and the respect in which they should have been held by the population generally. Again, an American officer is fabulously wealthy by Sicilian standards, and with all the attributes of the *parvenu* such types have lorded it over the upper classes. The educated classes also complain of the uncultured speech of such officers when speaking their emigrant Italian. Perhaps what is equally unfortunate is that although clearly and unmistakably Italians when it suits them they affect a strong Americanism, and nothing could be more provoking to the European Italian. An

instance of this occurred the other night when one of my officers was having a drink before dinner. One Italo-American second lieutenant came in mopping his brow, and turned to him and said in strongest Bowery, 'Geez, these Wops burns me up!'

Tuesday, 5th October 1943

At my orders a meeting took place to-day at the Provveditorato of all the Directors of Education in Sicily (*Provveditori agli Studi*), there being one for each of the nine provinces. I met them and laid down carefully the principles which were to be followed for the re-establishment of education in Sicily and ultimately on the mainland, and from these foundations, if wisely laid, we ought to be able to see arising a new and free educational system for Italy.

I cannot get them to use my military rank. I am sick of being addressed as 'Professor'. I think they feel that it removes the suggestion of defeat which lies behind the military title. But I think the title of professor is loathsome, and I had the same trouble in Germany when lecturing and doing research there. Sometimes, in moments of extravagance, they address me as Excellenza and Ministero! I think, however, the fact that I am a researcher and student has been a help in dealing with the universities, as they do not feel so much that they are talking to a 'lewd and licentious' soldier or some crack-pated educational theorist of whom they have nearly as great a horror as I have.

After the meeting I left for Piano dei Greci, some miles south of Palermo. This town, filthy and unkempt as it is, is certainly a little better than most of the Sicilian towns which I have seen. However, its interest lies not in that but in the fact that it is one of the ancient Albanian colonies, which have been here and in southern Calabria for five hundred years. The common speech is Albanian, although the Italian Government has never permitted the language to be taught in the schools. As a result Albanian children entering the schools at six years of age have to start learning in the foreign—Italian—tongue. Being of the Greek rite of the Roman Catholic Church, the mass is said in Greek, and the priests are allowed to marry, and wear beards. The women, on all high festivals, wear Albanian costumes, all beautifully worked with gold and silver thread. These are still made, especially in the wealthier homes. They consist of a wide skirt

of a brilliant colour, worked with this expensive braid and thread, and a bodice; and over the head a magnificent headdress falling down on both sides and down the back. Round the waist is a highly ornate and very expensive silver belt—in this case with a huge buckle of Saint George, their patron saint. With the aid of the policeman and one of the priests we were introduced into one of the better-class homes—that of a schoolmistress—where very fine work of her family was shown to us. Incidentally this house had the most tolerably furnished room I have yet seen in Sicily outside of the cities. It had a settee and a set of gilt upholstered chairs in the Empire tradition with tapestries on the wall. From the outside this house was squalid like the rest, but when we went up the steps (it was on the first floor) all was different. This contrast, which I also observed at Baucina, reminds one of what a medieval town must have been like with rich and poor living cheek by jowl in the narrow streets.

The schools here are most primitive places in which we should hesitate to house cattle in England. One of these schools, that of the boys, was housed on the floor above the local jail—which was a most unsavoury-looking dungeon. When people go to prison in Sicily there are no prison libraries, chapels, and cinema shows—but cells, cold and dank and often verminous. It is a place that prisoners do not like to visit again if they can avoid it. I had only visited one room, or rather cell, of this school above the jail, when the school-mistress screamed and then Signora Varisco did the same, and off they went clattering down the stairs on their cork 'utility' shoes—leaving me half a minute longer before I realized the cause. The whole of my ankles was covered by a carpet of fleas. To the amusement of the whole street we had to spend our time in the undignified task of brushing the fleas off our legs—and for the rest of the day none of us felt comfortable, imagining bites all the time. Certainly I have never seen so much vermin at one time as could have been seen on one square inch of ankle. They just crawled over each other. In the corner of this cell-like classroom with the whitewashed walls and stone floor, which was devoid of all furnishings and equipment, was a pile of old straw. It was undoubtedly from this straw that the fleas came. On inquiry I found that this boys' school had been lately occupied by bombed-out refugees from

some of the poor districts of Palermo. The whole building will have to be cleansed of vermin, and the jail below, before we can allow children to go back there to school again. The trouble is that this is not an isolated case—because the schools have been used freely for troops and refugees. To get both shifted and the children back is a difficult enough task, but we also have this vermin question to tackle after the refugees are turned out.

Afterwards we went to a little girls' school, but this was cleaner, and surrounded a tiny whitewashed courtyard. However, it would not be permitted as a school anywhere in England. Then to a small private girls' school run by a small convent and called the Collegio. (The Church schools are always called colleges.) Here the children were neat, and although the one longish room I saw in use was inadequate, everything was scrupulously clean. Then, on leaving, the sisters invited me into the convent proper, and they showed me over the building—which was not very big, and as usual more or less of a quadrangular shape. On one side there was a kind of dormitory which was normally a classroom, but they had put beds in it for evacuee women. These women all looked clean and one felt sorry for them, for, like so many of our people at home, they had lost their all. Unlike the normal evacuee I have met out here, they were anxious to get back to Palermo, and besieged me for transport to assist them—but this I could not promise. So back to Palermo.

There is some sort of underground fascist organization in existence, as we might well believe, for ardent and deeply implicated fascists were bound to go underground—and the difficulties of keeping order, our numbers being so thinly spread on the ground, makes it all the easier for them. Evidence of the survival of this organization has been provided lately by the fact that the death sentences passed by the fascists in Rome on those officials who are collaborating with us here, have been served in writing upon them. Raffa tells me there have been about forty so served, and among them Musotto the Prefect has received one. It has been a nasty shock for some of these men, who feel that the assassin is only lurking just round the corner.

Wednesday, 6th October 1943

I am getting sick of the mixture of American and Italian food

on which we live, and so I am getting the cook to make some of the dishes as near English in type as possible. It is curious that everyone, after a time, begins to pine for his own native food.

The weather is now quite cool and very pleasant. Soon we shall be getting into European clothes again—which will pose the Sicilians with a problem, as they distinguish the *Inglese* from the *Americano* by the bare knees.

The large proportion of light eyes in the population continues to be a source of great interest to me.

Here, so Signora Varisco tells me, the doctors will not allow tangerines (called mandarines) to be fed to children, although they seem to feed them mainly on oranges.

I have at last a clerk—thanks to the personal interest of Colonel Spofford who has been trying to find me a good man since I arrived. He is John Nester, private soldier of the American Army, and a very good type, the son of the former American Consul here in Palermo and so almost a Palermetan in upbringing. His father is in these parts too, and is calling to see me to-morrow.

Thursday, 7th October 1943

Mr. Nester to see me. A pleasant man, who walks with a limp and the aid of a stick.

To-night we had chicken cooked in the Sicilian manner, with cloves of garlic and lemon juice, which was a great treat. This again was due to the kindness of the Variscos.

The electric light system of this town is still only partially restored, and so it eccentrically flashes up brilliantly and then dies down to a twinkle, which makes work in the evening difficult.

Another great difficulty is baths, as there is no coal for heating the water, and the water is only available for about an hour a day.

Yesterday I bought two books on racial biology in Italian, which are going to make interesting reading, despite the very obviously tacked-on last chapter on the Razza Italiana!

To-day I went over the tropical and sub-tropical gardens of the university with Professor Bruno, and I was interested to see the oranges and bananas growing there. The gardens have suffered some damage from our bombing, the worst damage being

done to the glass-houses. I have had a grant made already for these repairs, and provided the glass and labour can be found in time, the plants will be saved. This must be one of the unique gardens in Europe because tropical and sub-tropical plants grow out of doors.

Friday, 8th October 1943

Major C. W. Washburne of the American Army arrived to-day to say he was (under Brigadier Carr) the Educational Officer for Region IV—the region around Rome. I was delighted to welcome this acquisition of staff after these weeks battling alone. He is a tall man, very tall, with rugged pleasant features and hearty disposition—he is not very soldier-like, but then that is not to be expected, as he is a civilian recruited specially for this job. He is, in fact, a distinguished American educationalist, with wide travelling experience in foreign countries, and belongs to their progressive movement, being well known as Director of Education at Winatka.

Although he has only been here a few hours, he is already busily at work and it looks as if he will be able to take off my shoulders much of the work of text-book revision, which has already been started for me by Professor Grasso. But Grasso needs direction, and because I have been so busy with other matters, he has not had the help from me which he needed.

There is a remarkable degree of loyalty on the part of servants to their masters here in Sicily, compared with what one would either get or expect in England. In effect, this is the sense of personal, as against corporate, loyalty. Therefore, it is rare that even all the force of the law and military power can extract from a servant facts which his master does not wish disclosed. This was well illustrated in the case of our recently requisitioned Lancia. It was essential to find a new car. After inquiries I found that a certain wealthy citizen had a car hidden in a garage off the Via Roma, and Colontoni and I visited the premises with Signora Varisco. The *portiera* had never heard of a car when questioned—no such thing was known to her at all—in fact she could not have described what a car looked like. In any case, we should try someone else—another and higher servant. As John said afterwards, we were getting the 'run around'. Well, we tried him,

and argued with him, while all the neighbours came on to the stairway and joined in—until punching one in the chest, and reducing the scene to some order, the new man was put into a car and taken to the spot—and his answers being entirely unsatisfactory, I ordered Colontoni to take a hammer from our car and smash the locks of the garage, and then, and only then, as our Allies say, 'he came clean'. He admitted there was a car inside, and so smashing the locks we found it, but, as we expected, without tyres. However, by the proper pressure put on the owner next day, the missing tyres which he had said had been worn out through wear and tear, came back, as though by magic, from their lurking place twenty miles away.

But where else in these days, when threatened with the Questura, and locking up in jail, would one find servants so faithful? It is this character in the Sicilian which is something positive, and although it has been in the past often enough the mainspring of anarchistic energy (the loyalty of one Sicilian bandit to another in America is a case in point) it could be directed into the right path. At any rate, this loyalty, which they are capable of displaying one towards another, has something wholesome in it.

Saturday, 9th October 1943

Recently in the evenings I have managed to do a little work at my big treatise, which seems never-ending, and which I have now been engaged upon these nine years (on the Racial Groundwork of Anglo-Saxondom). In the last few days I have completed a chapter on the three primary human species, which is mainly based upon the new theory of blood groups which I am elaborating, arising out of the work I was doing when stationed at Oxford before coming out here. The two Italian books which I bought on human biology have been of some use—divorced as I am from my own books and notes. Thank God I have a good memory for racial materials—although it is like a sieve for all else!

To-day again to Baucina where the Variscos live. My previous impression of the squalor of the town and the communal sort of life they all live has been reinforced.

Everyone gathers around the car as it arrives and when it goes

away. The children shriek and chatter and the grown-ups all hurl remarks at the Variscos in the car. It would make me feel ashamed in England, but here we know it to be the custom of the country—and so we treat it as quite normal.

While talking to the Variscos and Signora Varisco's mother (who is a returned emigrant from America) one of the grandchildren came in, and was pushed bashfully forward, and I was surprised to see, and indeed remarked upon, the bright blue eyes and golden hair of the little girl, which was all the more surprising, as this family is extremely dark. But the grandmother replied: 'She's just another little Wop!'

Old Cavaliere Fuxsa says that the Variscos are very rich but I should imagine that this is only comparative by this town's standards. Certainly the plainness of the house, and the fact that all the furniture I saw could not have been worth more than £50 to £100 all told in England (before the war) would not lead one to that assumption. But of course, again it is the custom of the country to hold wealth not in furnishings but in land and money, as among all farming communities the world over. And here the land has values out of all proportion to its real worth.

[Avvocato Paolo Gentile told me in February 1944 that the price then of land in the neighbourhood of Palermo, with a good water supply, was 50,000 lire a tumulo (7½ tumulos=1 hectare). This is about £50 an acre. If the water supply was at a distance the normal price would be about 40,000 lire for similar agricultural land, i.e., £40 an acre. But for mountain, which is mainly bare rock, 1,500 lire a tumulo, or £2 an acre was normal, although before the war the price was about one-third of this.]

Cavaliere Fuxsa is another case of a man with a 'town' (i.e. country) house and a city home—but his 'town' accommodation, where he lives with his son and daughter-in-law, would be surprising for any English knight to be found in—and especially one who prints two coats of arms on his visiting card! It was a downstairs floor further up the street from the Variscos and there was a bed in the sitting-room. The son is quite a good artist, but owing to the fact that the Cavaliere is one of the most outspoken anti-fascists the son could never get employment during the fascist régime as an art teacher—and furthermore, was never permitted to sit the qualifying examination for a

teacher's diploma. As a result I have been besieged by the Cavaliere who importunes my office daily about his son's case, and is beginning to feel that there is no hope in the Allied authorities and that they are not going to redress the wrongs he has suffered from the fascists. At least that is what he says. But in point of fact, he is wrong. His son's case is being dealt with at much greater length and is occupying more attention than the matter really deserves, but we feel we have to do it in order to go to the extreme in righting injustices. As a result, I have established a Commission which will examine his son and pronounce whether he is qualified to teach or not. Obviously we cannot force him on the educational system no matter what the family has suffered, if he is incompetent. As I keep on telling these people—'a bad fascist record may mean that you will lose your position, but a good anti-fascist one will not necessarily mean that you will get someone else's job simply because the coveted appointment is held by a bad fascist.' But it is hard to make these people realize that we mean this. However, although I have set up this Commission to examine young Fuxsa, even so I shall have trouble as Fuxsa senior and Albeggiani, the *Provveditore agli Studi* for the province, do not get on well together —the former accusing the latter of being a fascist in disguise, and the latter claiming to be a friend of the liberal Benedetto Croce—and which to believe I know not yet, until more proof comes in.

The fact that I went all the way to Baucina just to go into the affairs of an inconspicuous art teacher lets the people see that this Military Government, whatever its shortcomings, is the most honest government they have yet had. In fact, I believe that our popularity is due to the fact that they believe that. I have had several deputations on many matters, and when I have pointed out to them that a certain matter could lie over till the ultimately legal Italian government took office, there has always arisen the remark that they did not want any other government than the Military Government, as they were not yet ready for a democratic Italian government.

Here for the first time they have government located in their own country of Sicily, and there is no need to go to Rome; they can actually get interviews with the equivalents of 'Ministers' even if it does mean waiting a week in anterooms because of the

huge queues which form daily. This is something they have never been able to achieve at Rome except at very great expenditure of money in the way of bribery and party and social influence. It surprises us out here, knowing that it is the very poor, and the humble people like this Fuxsa family who rejoice in the beneficence of the Military Government, to read in the odd scraps of newspapers from England which occasionally fall into our hands that Labour members are for ever sniping at what they quaintly believe to be a jack-booted government of a militaristic type. If they only knew—they are attacking something which is attempting to bring fair play to the little man for the first time.

However, back to Baucina. As I have said, it would surprise English folk to find a 'knight' living at the same social level as Cavaliere Fuxsa, but they have to understand that the titles here in Italy cannot be translated literally. It is true that *Principe* means a prince, and *Duca* a duke—but, nevertheless, by English standards they are not the same. Our nobility right down to lord or baron are barons of parliament, and therefore in the old medieval sense they are 'magnates'. The Principes and some of the Ducas and Marcheses may be 'magnates' of parliament (when they sat in the King's councils) but the majority of these titled people are *barones minores*—and so the highest of them, such as many of their marquises and certainly all their counts, fall about the same rank as baronet and below with us. Therefore, when we get down to Cavaliere, it comes nearer to our title of esquire—when properly used by us.

Besides seeing this old Cavaliere (who is credited with having led a revolt of anti-fascists who obliterated the Mussolini signs from the walls of the town before the Germans were really out of it) I took occasion to see one of the professors of medicine of Palermo University who also lives here. He was as well inured to the primitive conditions in this town as the rest. Although we should be accustomed to it by now, we cannot get used to it, and it seems strange to us to find upper middle-class people living with that standard of comfort which even our own working class would consider inadequate.

Before leaving Cavaliere Fuxsa and on promising to speak to Dr. Albeggiani, the Provveditore, about his son, I had a most

embarrassing episode—speaking to me in French, as he knows no English, he seized my hand and kissed it and placed it on his heart and thanked God in a loud voice! The question of employment for this crippled son and only child does, no doubt, mean much to the old man.

After a meal in the always hospitable Varisco house, which consisted of one course after another, through all of which one had to wade to avoid giving offence, we went with them to look at their vineyard. There I met the avvocato's brother—a young priest of twenty-three years of age, dressed in a spotless cassock. He seemed a very pleasant fellow and persisted in talking in German, which I found a strain, as I am gaining a fairly speedy appreciation of Italian, and I have never been able to carry more than one language in my head at once. However, the priest showed me his church of which he was very proud, and its altars —but I fear that baroque architecture leaves me rather unimpressed.

From his church we went to the Collegio or the Girls' College, really the Girls' Infant School, run by the convent, which consisted of one room. Unlike most of the schools, here there was neatness, despite the restricted quarters, and clean lavatory accommodation. There was also better equipment than in most of the other schools. I am now beginning to understand why parents who are not necessarily admirers of the Church tend to send their children to Church schools rather than to those of the State.

After showing me the school, the Mother Superior and the Provincial Superior took me into the church. One feature of these Sicilian churches which is pleasing is their use of colour and their lightness which takes away the depressing atmosphere of the interiors of some of the northern continental churches. In this bright church in a squalid town was the embalmed body of a certain 'Saint Fortunata'—a girl she looked—who died about one hundred years ago, by whom they swear in this place, for she is supposed to work miracles when they carry her around the town once a year.

Sunday, 10th October 1943

Signora Varisco has already developed a method of protecting

me as much as possible from as many of the callers as she can—as they are all coming to ask for favours. All of them seem to start the same way—twelve bambini, an invalid wife, and the direst woes are portrayed. What is more annoying than all this chatter about 'bambini' and hands clasped to stomach in expressive gestures of starvation, is the dirty and unshaven condition of the men. I have astonished them—even men of rank—judges, lawyers, and professors, by refusing to deal with them until they have shaved! An unexpected and terrible imposition in the eyes of the Sicilian—but Signora Varisco tells me they come this way in order to evoke pity and so obtain assistance. But I am afraid it does not produce the effect they desire—I cannot be fair to a bristly chin and untidy appearance and a whining voice. However, national manners differ from people to people. Our out-of-work, coming in clean clothes and polished shoes for an interview, would probably look audacious and presumptuous in Italian eyes.

Owing to the cramped nature of our accommodation I am finding it extremely difficult even to retain the one room I have got. There is a tendency for 'groceries' (Economics and Commerce) and suchlike divisions to bulk too large in general estimation and they have more officers and accommodation than I have, and so as they have expanded I have had to move from floor to floor and room to room which makes life trying, as I am still without adequate assistance.

But I cannot stand this moving around from room to room any longer, so I must find the British Institute if it still stands and move in there. Sir Percy Loraine, to whom I am indebted for some excellent advice on how to handle the situation out here, opened it when our Ambassador, and is anxious that it should not be destroyed if still standing. So Signora Varisco has sent the avvocato to find it. The avvocato has been most kind, often putting his services at my disposal in such matters.

At last we have effected the transfer (on paper) of Major W. H. Sherwood from A Branch to the Educational Division. He is absolutely the right man for us—a playwright, able to wield a pen, speaks Italian perfectly, and has a god-given sense of humour. I am relying very much on the assistance he is going to give us in our work.

The British Institute is located in a fine old baroque Palace of the eighteenth century called the Palazzo Constantini in the Via Maqueda—one of the principal streets of the town and perhaps the finest, containing many fine palaces. It is near the Quattro Canti, which is the cross-roads in the middle of the Via Maqueda formed by the four very fine baroque buildings of the time of the Bourbons.

But we have had much trouble getting possession of the Palazzo Constantini. Like all these palaces it is built round a courtyard and approached from the street by a great gateway. On the left is the porter's lodge, and further on, on the same side, a photographer's shop, with soldiers, mainly American, going in and out of it. About the yard are children playing; children seem to be everywhere in this country, playing mainly with bits of army gear—German and American. Military water containers seem to have been acquired by every house.

On one side of the courtyard opposite the entrance gate are some broad steps which turn to the right and then left, bringing one to the first floor which is the Palazzo proper, the ground and top floor having been looked upon and being treated still as the place for all the hangers-on of the household.

At first the *portiera* refused to tell me whether this was the British Institute, then, when I had squeezed that information out of her, she refused to show me inside or to give up the key.

Her husband joined in this clamorous argument and only desisted after I threatened to put him in prison on the spot. Then the wife rebuked her husband and they flew at each other—by this time it was nearly dark and now quite impossible to see the inside—so they said—because the electricity had been turned off! On investigation it became quite clear that all this fuss and bother was due to the fact that they were most anxious to carry out the directions of Major Greenlees of the Psychological Warfare Department (who was formerly a representative of the British Council in Italy) who had told them not to encourage any military to take over the premises. At last, when they found that I was going to take it, and in any case my entry would exclude the Seventh Army who had designs upon it, of which they knew naught till then, they were satisfied—the more so as Sir Percy

Loraine had asked me to give what protection I could to the building, for they remembered him when he opened the Institute in this Palazzo. So it is all settled now and I get the key tomorrow and we go in—and the Barone Ferrara who owns the building is to appear then to show it to me.

By this time, all the ill-humour had passed off and all were smiles—except the *portiera's* husband who was still somewhat sullen—he may have an axe to grind in keeping us out. Here in Sicily one always looks for ulterior motives.

Being quite dark, it was necessary to see Signora Varisco home in our car, as no Palermitan will walk the streets in the dusk (although there is a good hour to curfew) for fear of what evil might be lurking in the shadows.

It is a good thing that I took the precaution a little time ago of getting Lord Rennell to agree to my move into this Palazzo as I shall probably have to fight to keep other people out. If the army really get their hands on it, they will ruin it.

To-day I took occasion to write to Sir Alfred Zimmern to tell him that I have one of his old Geneva students on my staff now—he is Professor Salvatore Catinella, an advocate, who is an *incaricato* professor (lecturer) in the Faculty of Laws of Palermo University. His wife is an American and his father an avvocato also. Professor Catinella is an absolute find, as, since I had no officers until Major Washburne's arrival a few days ago, it has been necessary to get some assistance from somewhere, and I have had to fall back on Italians—and so I have Professor Catinella and Professor Grasso. The former is for legal advice on procedure and statutes connected with the educational administration and the latter as secretary for the revision of text-books. Thank God that the Italians are not Germans, for we could not trust so much responsibility to them as we must leave to our civilian staffs. But this shows how this Military Government is having to tackle a job with hopelessly inadequate machinery both as to man-power and equipment—there is not a department of the Government which is not in the same condition as we are with Sicilian typists, drivers, and secretaries. Up till now, first Nick Devino and later Nester, and I have had to handle all the military documents between us, as we cannot show these to our civilian staff, although I often think that they are shrewd enough

to know pretty well what is happening. Now that Major Washburne is here the responsibility is being lifted somewhat off my shoulders.

Signora Varisco still acts as my secretary, but is specializing in handling the mob who flock round our office all day long. Only a Sicilian can do that.

Tuesday, 12th October 1943

To-day we have taken possession of our Palazzo Constantini. The interior confirms the good opinion of it which we formed last night. On opening the door, on the first floor we entered a large entrance hall immediately over the steps and on the opposite side of the court to the entrance gate. Turning right or left one passed through a series of rooms and *salotti* which brought us back to the entrance hall again, as they open upon each other around this courtyard.

In some of the rooms the walls are covered with red silk, the ceilings are painted, and there are great glass chandeliers, some in Venetian glass, whilst on the walls are gilt mirrors. In one large room there are four holy pictures, one in each corner, and this room was the chapel. This room is remarkable also for having an open fireplace—a rare sight in Sicily. There is normally no means of heating a Sicilian house, and in the cold weather a brazier of copper or brass is placed in the middle of the room with charcoal in it.

The trouble we had to gain access to this place is absolutely unbelievable—but it reflects once more the faithfulness of the Sicilian to persons—the only real kind of loyalty he understands. Ideas of loyalty to a State or a political or civic order of existence are foreign to his nature.

Yesterday I sent for the Barone (the owner of our Palazzo) to be here this morning, and he has not turned up —so I have had to send again and now he has come very late. He seems to be starting very badly —this is the first time anyone has dared to act in this cavalier manner.

He swears that he did not behave unpleasantly when John went around there the first time —but I believe John. He also repeats that he has no furniture —other than the small amount here in the Palazzo—but I have told him he is a liar (which he

did not like) and that I have evidence that he took the furniture away himself. He says that he did not, and that it was taken over by the Germans when the British Institute was turned into the German Academy after the Italians came into the war against us, and then removed by them to Germany. I have given him till midday to-morrow to return the furniture! By midday, or God help him.

This is an important matter, as all this furniture which has now disappeared belonged to the British Council and they are likely to be faced with serious losses if I do not get it back for them—and, although it is not our business to do so, we might as well get it—because we know how to 'operate' in this country, and it is doubtful if any representative newly out from England would know how to set about the matter and so the furniture would be lost for ever.

I do not believe that the Barone intends to deliver anything as he is the most stubborn man I have yet met in Sicily—and in that respect is quite un-Sicilian. I am told—for scandal is talked here of everyone—that he is a great lover of money and will make a fight for what he has got his hands upon.

Wednesday, 13th October 1943

To-day as I expected, the Barone did not appear on time. So Major Raffa's Lieutenant Barone and John went with a truck—and he soon appeared, very frightened and dishevelled. I told him that he would be in for serious trouble before the military court if he made it his business to disobey an order wilfully in this way. I have given him till midnight to deliver the furniture—and he has gone away in a great state saying he could not do it, but I know he will, or at least he will get sufficient in to act as a guarantee that he will really move it all back.

I have changed my mind about him. He is a Sicilian. For he tried to wring out of me a truck or two and petrol and men to move the furniture! But I have told him that I am not going to provide anything for him, and he can carry the furniture in himself—but in it will come.

It is a curious thing how the fact that the furniture exists and that it is there to be moved is taken for granted now. His hundreds of protestations that it had all gone to Berlin having

been steadily brushed aside, he realizes that he has to bring it back.

What really broke him down was first that he did not know how much the *portiera* had told me, and secondly, my expression of regret that it had all gone to Berlin, since, as I understood he had a well-furnished palazzo, I intended to send trucks and help myself to his own furniture. He then realized that truth—or some measure of it—was the safer policy, otherwise he might find himself having to give us more than the British Institute's furniture.

Thursday, 14th October 1943

Arrived to find some more furniture coming in, all of it not having been delivered yesterday, partly because they had not time to bring it in. But we should not have got this extra load or so if I had not then expressed anger at the small amount they brought, and threatened to consult the list I said I had of the complete inventory of the Institute.

Here occurred an incident so typical of the times. The Barone's steward superintended a few weaklings trundling in the furniture at the slowest possible rate—to the disorganization of the whole office. I told the steward to hurry up and carry some chairs through to my room. He refused to lift them as he was above that sort of thing. So I picked up the heaviest, an armchair, carried it through myself, as an example, which was not lost on the assembled multitude—and then ignominiously turned him out before everyone. I believe we shall have no more trouble with the precious Barone and his idle and insolent steward. For two pins I will run the pair into the military court for obstruction, disobeying orders, and an attempt to defraud the British Council.

Now our offices are more than decently furnished. There are no offices anywhere in Italy under the Military Government with such fine furniture and so magnificent a setting. Raffa's wing, into which he has moved as I want him near me since we seem to be the only Division making full time demands upon his Political Intelligence Section at the moment (I suspect the others have not yet realized the invaluable help they can get from Raffa), is positively indecent. The furniture is covered in a light blue brocaded

silk sort of stuff—and as Orsolina, the typist, is frequently visited by her friends who are typists and secretaries in other government departments, they have all been here admiring the new quarters. I told Raffa just now, after supper, that I considered that he had better make some attempt to remove the impression of a harem which one gets on walking into his wing, with these girls sitting on the settees laughing and chattering!

I have sent, through the aid of Signora Varisco, produce from Baucina, fine wine, sixteen years of age, grapes, and a chicken, to Colonel Spofford, our Chief of Staff at the hospital, where he is lying wounded, his plane in which he was flying having been shot down on the mainland. Spofford being wounded at this time is a great nuisance for he is a man with a wonderful grasp of the situation here, and without him in charge of affairs when Lord Rennell and General McSherry are away so much, things are not likely to be too easy.

Friday, 15th October 1943

The weather is beginning to get much cooler. The Americans to-day have gone into woollen clothing, but we are still in tropical kit—shorts and shirts.

The American Army has what is to us the curious procedure of marching officers into orderly room for punishment. One of our American majors displeased with one of his lieutenants has fined him a month's pay! It certainly seems to me that the American Army is stricter in its discipline of its officers than our own: or put another way, the President's Commission does not carry the same privileges as the King's. That reminds me of a very new American Second Lieutenant who created a stir on joining his unit by saying he had been specially appointed by President Roosevelt! His commander was very chary in dealing with him (lest there should be political repercussions) until he discovered that the simpleton referred to the Commission granted to him by the President.

Sunday, 17th October 1943

To my surprise I received sixteen letters to-day. Two months and ten days after leaving home!

Colontoni presented me with a problem of dealing with

drunken negro soldiers this evening. I had told him to drop me at the Variscos' house and go on with the cook, take her home, and collect me on the way back. I had expected having to wait not more than about ten minutes for him, but it was an hour before he came, and when he did, he arrived with a terrified *portiere* and three drunken American negro N.C.O.s who were exceedingly troublesome to get rid of—Signora Varisco and her mother complicating the situation because they were terrified. Really I should have tried to apprehend them in some way, but it was an extremely difficult business as they were foreign Allied troops, and I had no arms on me, and I did not know what the real position was at the time I turned them out of the house. But, after Colontoni had calmed down, I was told that they had signalled him to halt, at a place where there are negro troops stationed on the way to the cook's home, and he had obeyed them—as he must under the existing military law—and they had pulled the cook out of the car, got into my car themselves, and ordered him to drive them to several places, threatening him all the time; they apparently failing to get what they wanted at all these halts, then gave Colontoni his head, to find for them *pesce* and *donne*. Given the chance he drove straight to the Variscos' house where he knew I was waiting for him.

Tuesday, 19th October 1943

Monsignore Ballo, Bishop of Mazara del Vallo twice to see me to-day about his Church schools. I told him the question was extremely difficult between the forces of the Church pressing for their opening and the anti-clerical influences, particularly among those of leftish point of view in the towns, trying to prevent them re-starting, and my business was to be fair to both. I told him as a member of the Church of England (even if somewhat nominally nowadays) I could not agree with the sweeping away of religious influence from education—but on the other hand, I could see that the anti-clericals would be anxious to curtail the privileges of the Church at an opportunity such as the present: and I repeated that I must be fair to both sides in my position. The Bishop replied that he considered that to-day all Christians must stand together, and his Church considered us Christians, although they deplored our errors. To which I replied, mischievously, that I had no

doubt that the Archbishop of Canterbury with equal charity, conceded that the Pope was also a Christian but deplored the error of his doctrines! The Bishop looked, at first, as though he had not heard aright—and then suddenly burst into a peal of laughter —laughing so heartily that his purple skull cap fell off and had to be retrieved from under the easy chair in which he was sitting. We parted friends. [Dr. Temple, late Archbishop of Canterbury, was amused when told later of the way I had committed him to this act of Christian charity.]

Wednesday, 20th October 1943

The Bishop of Mazara del Vallo, whose diocese is in Trapani province, called again to-day. Both yesterday and to-day I had to keep him waiting a long time because of the queues of people to see me, but he did not seem to mind. The Sicilian has a habit of waiting and so does not grow as impatient as we do.

The Bishop is exceedingly enthusiastic for his schools. Here in Sicily we have had absolute chaos in connection with the schools. The war, the destruction, the flight of officials, the need for a purge of fascist teachers and officials and for revised text-books is a complicated enough situation. But added to that we have the problem of the Church schools. The fascists banned these and the Church and religious people, believing we are liberating them from fascism, not unnaturally expect that we shall restore to them the freedom of their schools.

The Church authorities say that General Alexander and Lord Rennell both told Cardinal Lavitrano, the Archbishop of Palermo, that Church schools could re-open; and it seems to me that they could scarcely deny to Italy to-day a liberty which we have permitted in England. But, of course, the immediate problem is the opposition of the anti-clerical Labour Front. This body is more noisy than real and is mainly to be found in the large towns such as Palermo. Elsewhere, in the country parts, workers are found more closely associated with the Christian Democrat Party, and this party takes quite a different line concerning Church education. It is not surprising, therefore, to have all these troubles down at Trapani in the diocese of the Bishop of Mazara del Vallo. The parents there, as everywhere else, are clamouring for schools to open in order that the children may be

taken off the streets, where they are in serious danger from the streams of military traffic. The Bishop, as a result, in taking the initiative of opening fourteen Church schools in his diocese, has received much popular support, not only from the devout but from many others. There is another factor also involved. There seems not the slightest doubt that the better-class people prefer the Church schools as they believe they give a sounder and better education—and from what I have so far seen, there is some justification for this view.

It is not unnatural, in a tense situation such as the present, to find an immediate antagonism to these developments. The Provveditore of Trapani is apparently opposing the Bishop, and in some quarters the whole question is getting down to an unseemly brawl with innuendoes being made against the Bishop. Here is dynamite to handle with a vengeance.

Nevertheless, I am perfectly certain that both Alexander and Rennell were absolutely right because our coming has been to bring liberty and not to deny it by maintaining the oppressive fascist attitude in this matter.

Therefore I am going to give the Bishop authority to maintain the schools he has already opened as long as proper safeguards concerning the subjects they teach and the standards of education given are established. It seems to me that if there is a Church Educational Commission established in the province representing the Bishop and the Provveditore jointly, some sort of orderly development of these new free Church schools can be arrived at. Whilst I have asked the Bishop not to open any more free schools, I do not believe it is my business to suppress those already functioning and so become involved in a bitter internal Italian political wrangle.

Anyway, I have asked the Bishop to have a talk with the *Provveditore agli Studi* of Trapani and then to come back and see me again.

Monsignore Ballo was accompanied by a Padre Gliozzo, the Provincial, or something of that sort, of the Jesuit Order in Sicily, who wanted to have one of his boarding schools in the neighbourhood of Catania freed from military occupation so that he could get the school re-started. This school, as well as the Jesuit school here in Palermo, does not raise the same difficulties

as the free schools opened by the Bishop, since the fascists permitted certain Church schools to survive provided that they accepted complete State control. In other words, the Church provided the building and the teachers, the State the curriculum and inspectors, and insisted that the pictures of Mussolini and Victor Emmanuel should be in each classroom along with the crucifix. Now these walls are rather ill-balanced because the crucifix remains, with the King on one side and only a stain on the wall where once the Duce glowered down upon the childhood of Italy.

Naturally, these Church schools of this type, and which are called 'parified', are anxious to achieve freedom from this State and bureaucratic control—but at the moment I cannot see how I can grant them that freedom—and so I propose to allow the new 'free' schools of the Bishop and at the same time leave the status of the 'parified' schools the same as before. Neither party will be satisfied but it seems the fairest decision. I have had a talk with Spofford and he is in complete agreement with this decision.

Sometimes I get the fascist salute. Callers, especially some of those who have been peremptorily sent for, and therefore are not relishing the interview, on entering my large and imposing office, lose their heads and salute, usually stammering out something about *Excellenza* or *Il Ministro*!

Friday, 22nd October 1943

A danger into which some of our civil affairs officers have fallen is that they have allowed themselves to be taken over and actually run by bad fascist elements, until they have found them out. In one town not more than about eighteen miles from Palermo I have been told of a case of this sort. As soon as the Civil Affairs Officer arrived, a man who was a member of a family with a criminal background and who himself had been an informer for the Fascist Federal Secretary, presented himself to him with a plausible tale—and from then on became the C.A.O.'s factotum and confidant on all local matters. Immediately, working from this privileged position into which he had wormed himself, this blackguard indicted many respectable citizens as fascists, including in these accusations American citizens living in the same town. Many of these accused people were thus placed

under a cloud of suspicion, and, I understand, one of them was fined in the military court for an offence never committed. Later, after numerous representations by respectable citizens, the C.A.O. discovered that he had been imposed upon, and dropped his confidential agent. But harm has been done meanwhile. This is a concrete case in which Raffa's *Scheda* (questionnaire) system would have been invaluable and why Military Government in its planning stage did not work out some such effective scheme before we landed in the country I do not know —as it is all so obvious. Instead of that, Raffa has had to design his system in the field after frequent representations made by him for permission to use it. If every C.A.O. had been given copies of the *Scheda* and told that they could not employ anyone who did not comply with its conditions satisfactorily, these mistakes would not have occurred.

Saturday, 23rd October 1943

To-day, Lieutenant-Colonel T. V. Smith who arrived yesterday, and Major C. W. Washburne accompanied me on a call upon Cardinal Lavitrano, the Archbishop, at his palace near the cathedral in Palermo. Signora Varisco and Monsignore de Gaetano were also present.

The Cardinal is a little man, with a shrewd and intelligent face and he received us cordially. He raised the question of the opening of his schools which he was hoping to open as a result of his discussions with General Alexander and Lord Rennell. I pointed out to him the fact that the question was charged with difficulty as it is quite probable that both the Generals had assumed that the free Church schools were already in existence, and it was merely the matter of re-opening them—whereas, the position was quite different in that these free schools had not existed since the fascist régime had come into power. On the other hand I agreed that in England we had free Church education and I felt as a principle that the Church had a strong case for reverting to that freedom which it had enjoyed before fascism had deprived it of these rights. However, as the matter was so fraught with difficulties I felt we had to say that if he did open free Church schools he ought to agree to the plan I had suggested to the Bishop of Mazara del Vallo, that the *Provveditore agli Studi* and

he should set up a joint committee to regulate the curriculum so that the education given to the children would be related to that in the State and parified schools. Under this compromise it ought to be possible to find a way out of a difficult situation.

The Cardinal expressed concern for the children and parents owing to the fact that the schools were not open, and he was grateful for the great efforts of the Military Government to remedy this situation.

There has been an influx of new officers arriving from Tizi Ouzou in North Africa to form a part of Armistice Control Commission with which Military Government is to be merged. As a consequence a period of chaotic uncertainty is developing.

Colontoni has had a fright. While sleeping during dinner-time at the wheel of the car outside our flat at Via Nicolo Garzili, at the spot where we had our first car stolen, he heard the door quietly opened, and this woke him with a start, but before he knew what he was doing he was struggling with a man who drew a dagger on him. Car thieves here will stick at nothing apparently. Later in the evening, just about ten-thirty, as Colontoni was driving the cook home, which he does every night, he was stopped by bandits in the main street of Palermo, the Via Maqueda, not far from the Massimo Theatre, and made to dismount; when an American truck approached with bright headlights, the thieves sprang back into the protection of the side street from which they had issued, and Colontoni had sufficient presence of mind to drive away.

Sunday, 24th October 1943

Lord Rennell has been away for some time grappling with the difficult situation on the Continent where our rapid advance has raised many problems: and now he has taken over direct control of the Military Government in the forward—15th Army Group—territory, leaving Sicily to the command of General McSherry.

Whether Lord Rennell has gone for good or not I am not sure, as there is considerable confusion here—but I hope he has not as we shall miss his energetic leadership which has made work so simple. Rennell has two outstanding qualities. The first is his

ability to choose staff. This staff here in the H.Q. in Palermo is one of the smallest bodies of men called upon to carry out a big task. Yet never have I met a staff of like proportions—it contains among its higher elements, officers of outstanding ability. Here indeed, could we find a Brains Trust at almost any time if that were required, and I think it is because of this high quality that so much has been accomplished by so few. I am thinking of men like our Reggie Harris; (Captain) Mason Hammond, a professor of Yale University and trustee of the American Academy in Rome, (Lieutenant-Commander) Southard, U.S.N., another University Professor, (Colonel) Grafftey Smith, the Chief Financial Officer, (Colonel) Cheyne, the head of Public Health, and (Colonel) Charles Spofford, his Chief of Staff, a pleasant and very clear-sighted American. The spirit of the headquarters is good—perhaps because Rennell's staff has excluded mediocrity to such a degree that all that jockeying for position which one so often finds in bad organizations, is not so apparent. Unfortunately, many of these people will now be forward with Rennell in the 15th Army Group area and we shall lose them in Military Government H.Q. here.

Rennell's second quality as a Commander is that, having chosen a staff, he reposes confidence in it. Furthermore, there is no question of rank or 'channels' here. He is ready of access and it is a question of a direct approach between head of a division and the General, or General McSherry, or the Chief of Staff, whichever might be most readily accessible. The result is that there is both freedom and rapidity of action and decision.

Major Washburne is proving a great help at this time, and he has taken much of the text-book revision work off my shoulders. He has joined our little mess and is a pleasant and very intelligent companion. If the Italians get any new text-books at all, it will be in no small measure thanks to him.

Typewriter! We are now struggling to get a second.

Monday, 25th October 1943

To-day a crisis in our educational work came to a head. The whole of our administration has been designed to give neither favours to the left nor right—anti-clericals or clericals. In the state of intrigue which exists here this is no easy task. I have

been faced with the need for finding a new Dean for the Faculty of Philosophy of Palermo University and the choice is very difficult. The only man academically qualified, as well as politically unexceptionable from our point of view, is Professor Ferretti, and so I must appoint him whether I like it or not. But he is as a red rag to a bull so far as the Church is concerned because of his socialism and anti-clerical activities. But despite these considerations, of which I was already aware, I have appointed Ferretti Dean to-day.

Tuesday, 26th October 1943

A deputation from the Catholic Democrat Party (led by Signor Aldisio) was ushered in by Major Raffa and they came about the appointment of Ferretti. I spoke frankly with them and they proved very reasonable and accepted readily enough the view that I had little other alternative than to appoint Ferretti, whose academical qualifications were outstanding, although they said they deplored his judgement and his extreme bitterness towards the Church. Having heard my explanation and views, they said they were certain that the Cardinal would also feel that the correct and only (if regrettable) action had been taken.

Wednesday, 27th October 1943

There is a form of draining of an occupied country of material resources which is perhaps not consciously carried out, but which is nevertheless none the less undesirable. I do not believe that it is a good thing when the natives of a territory find it necessary to sell their jewellery to Allied officers in order to live. Fortunately, as far as bulky articles are concerned, British troops cannot buy them as they are strictly limited to posting only very small parcels. But this does not seem to apply to our Allies—or at any rate, there are means of avoiding it—since Major Sherwood saw outside one of the local H.Q.s a complete Sicilian cart packed and ready for transport to America. I have also heard of parcels of pictures and other works of art being sent home.

More serious than this, for these articles, after all, were all obtained honestly, is downright pillage. Our Professor Grasso (than whom no-one could be more pro-Allied) complained to me bitterly of the bad impression being made by soldiers, including

officers, removing pictures and ornaments from the unoccupied furnished flats and houses in which they have been billeted.

He also complained to me of what is much more excusable, although in view of Sicilian character, a serious question for them, and that was the removal from a flat of its furniture and amalgamating it with the furniture of other flats. This has happened all over Palermo, and furniture has been travelling about in every direction. Professor Grasso quite rightly pointed out that any Sicilian householder returning to find his house possessed of three times its normal amount of furniture, would be almost sure to swear that that was as he had always had it furnished! Anyway here are the seeds of almost unlimited litigation to keep the great army of lawyers of which this country is possessed, busy for many a year.

Thursday, 28th October 1943

Virgilio Titone is under consideration for a chair in Palermo University—like many other anti-fascists he was banned from office, and now we are doing what we can for him, provided the commission of Rectors and their consultants consider that he is up to the necessary standard. But meanwhile, what trouble he gives us, poor fellow, without intending to do so. He is everlastingly at the office to inquire of the result of the examination of his published works which is now going on, and he has been to see Aldo Raffa at seven in the morning—which goes against Raffa's grain, for he finds it difficult enough to get to the office at nine-thirty these days, as he has to be up half the night with his dysentery which is much worse than mine. The last straw occurred the other morning when Titone bothered me when I was particularly harassed and I told John to tell him that unless he made himself scarce he would not get the job at all! This he took literally and went away apparently in the utmost distress—and as a result, as he could not sleep that night, he went around and woke Signora Varisco up at five o'clock to pray her to tell me that he had not intended to harass me! Her feelings were murderous this morning. Anyway he can rest satisfied, he will get the chair.

Friday, 29th October 1943

Astounded to read a proclamation by Lieutenant-Colonel

Poletti in the *Sicilia Liberata* setting out a series of orders on educational matters without having consulted me at all. Washburne and I are mad with rage—this ruins all our work if it goes through, as he has blundered in without knowledge of the facts and abolished the '*Scuola Media*', a type of school which, although set up in fascist times, is a distinct advance in certain directions.

To-night Washburne and I went to dinner with Professor and Mrs. Catinella at Mondello—a change from the usual round which has done us both good. To sit at a decently laid table is such a change from the higgledy-piggledy way we have to live.

The weather has become quite English now.

Saturday, 30th October 1943

To-day asked General McSherry, who has taken over command (Lord Rennell not being here) to order Charles Poletti (now chief officer for Region 1—Sicily) to rescind Article 3 of his proclamation in yesterday's *Sicilia Liberata*, in which he had abolished the *Scuola Media*. The General called a conference of Poletti, Lieutenant-Colonel Chandler, who is now his chief of staff, Washburne, and me. We had it out—a long, argumentative but friendly conference, which went on till one-thirty and would have lasted longer if the General had not wanted his lunch! The upshot is that I have lent Washburne to Poletti as his educational officer for Sicily in order to straighten out the muddle. All this comes, however, of being so understaffed. I am now in a difficult position without Washburne. If Poletti had had an educational director for the region, this could not have happened. It is this shortage of personnel which makes everything so extremely difficult at present, especially in matters of a technical nature such as education.

Washburne is the most indefatigable worker I have ever met and he will do a big job in Sicily with Poletti. Colontoni, my driver, who is an ex-sergeant-major of the Italian Army, a Neapolitan, has difficulty in calling him by his name, and so refers to him as 'Il maggiore Washp!' As a result he is affectionately known to us as 'Wash'.

The town is getting more into a normal way of life.

For about ten days or so this headquarters has been thrown

into complete chaos by the arrival of what calls itself the Armistice Control Commission and its personnel. Whether Military Government is in the saddle or whether this new institution, the Lord only knows. The outcome in most branches of the government is that high ranking officers—both British and American—have arrived and taken over the lead in each division and department. This has produced a moral collapse. Officers who have worked long hours with untiring zeal now find that where one day they were heads of their own show, they suddenly become subordinates—sometimes at a very much lower level than deputy or assistant deputy. I can think of nothing more demoralizing than to ask a man who from the time we landed has gradually built an administration from the ruins in which he found it, to clear out of his office and from his desk, and sit in the clerks' office. Yet that is what has happened here. Dave Morse, who was director of labour in New York, or something equally important, a Captain, and who has worked out all the labour problems of the country and drafted new rates, finds himself about fifth down in the chain of command in what was his own office.

The result of this crazy state of affairs is that the Military Government officers who have been superseded have practically ceased to function, for they can no longer take their own decisions. Their successors are so completely ignorant of what has to be done that they do not make any decisions either. As a result of the going of Rennell which is connected with the passing away of the old Military Government order, and the arrival of this new Control Commission phase, there has almost been a breakdown in that fast, speedy, and efficient work which was so characteristic of this Military Government.

One symptom of these conditions is the size of the queues at 8 Via Bari—the main headquarters of the Government. Here it used to be difficult to get in and out because of the lines of people controlled by the picturesque carabinieri in their cocked hats. To-day you hardly see anybody about. The Sicilian is the shrewdest man who ever lived, and he is no fool to hang about for interviews which lead to nothing.

Another symptom is that officers of the Military Government can be seen visiting the cathedral, going up Monte Pellegrino, visiting Monreale and the Royal Palace—and generally having a

sight-seeing tour. It is all done with a cynical sort of levity and gaiety, but these men have really been deeply hurt and injured by what has happened. Furthermore, the effect on the newcomers is not a good one. They know they are resented, therefore many of them have become even more aggressive than their army training would make them normally. It seems a pity that Urdu and Pushtu should be considered as qualifications for administering European countries.

Here, anyway, passes away the Rennell régime which has always kept a strong informal civilian touch about it, and its replacement by a body of officers, many of them high-ranking, who whether drawn from the regular army or not, tend to have in their ranks an unduly large proportion who think more of 'channels' than getting the job done.

Another great difference is that A.M.G. officers, perhaps because they were few in number, lived close to the people and knew their problems. Whether the work was finance, legal, education, or preservation of monuments, it was with civilians one dealt all day long. It was not a military headquarters in the normal sense—civilians were everywhere, and the officers behind the desks were in a large measure civilians in uniform. As a result after duty the officers disappeared from a hurried meal in the mess and interwove their way through the life of the people. Therefore there was hardly anything that went on that was not known by more than one division. This was open to abuses, and there have been abuses, but it is better—in Sicily at any rate where an intimate knowledge of a very difficult people is necessary for good government—than what is taking its place. Here we have a new type, used to mess, to regulations, to channels, with an aloofness from the people which means that they will remain in ignorance of what is wanted or what they have to do. They live in Sicily but know nothing of the Sicilian—nor will they ever. They are the type who believe that niggers begin at Calais.

In my own office I have not such an acute problem. Here as the representative of the Control Commission for Education, there has arrived Lieutenant-Colonel T. V. Smith, an American ex-Congressman. He came as a shock when he flowed into my office some days ago with the general flood of 'Commissionites'—but

we soon adjusted our position, largely thanks to the charming qualities of T. V. and to the fact that like myself, he is not a regular soldier and therefore is not concerned with a prolongation of service, and ultimate ranks and pensions. From the beginning he has insisted—in his modesty—that he is not able to do the work I have got through and he will not take over my appointment from me. For my part I am indeed reluctant to be turned out in this way, having built up the beginnings of a new Italian educational régime, but on the other hand I cannot injure Smith if the job is really his. But in that case I prefer to go home—as it is a great loss of face which I cannot endure in this country where face counts for so much. We both saw General Julius Holmes, General McSherry, and General Joyce, the latter the head of the new Armistice Control Commission which is taking over A.M.G., and they were satisfied with a long account of the work which I put before them and T. V. showed himself in complete support, and very sportingly said that he was quite willing to work as my deputy, although the intention was that he, in common with all the new arrivals, should take over from their A.M.G. opposite numbers. No decision was made by the generals and so we play at a sort of comic opera division of responsibility in our office. T. V. and I sit together in the office, and if something applies to Armistice Control Commission conditions, he deals with it as the Director of Education, and if it is about education arising from the universities and the Provveditori I deal with it as the Educational Adviser. But how long this chaotic condition can continue I do not know. If there are conferences called at headquarters nowadays they are usually called by the new arrivals, who have created a wonderful genealogical tree of hierarchs so that no-one can speak to anyone else unless he has the appropriate rank, and Smith goes there to them—because my office is not recognized any longer by them.

Thus we have a queer situation. The country is being run by a Military Government, most of whose officers have now lost interest in the work, and there is an Armistice Control Commission slapped on the top of it, which is not yet a functioning organization—for the Italian Government is not yet functioning—but these new organizations are trying to run the Military Government of which they know nothing and seem to care less.

Mason Hammond, after his excellent work for Fine Arts and Monuments, finds himself superseded, like almost everyone else. But here, as the officials concerned are charming fellows like (Major) Baillie Reynolds and (Major Theodore) Sizer, I do not think there will be any greater problems of adjustment than the problem Smith and I have.

Anyway, for my part I only hope the awkward situation between Smith and myself will be solved. One man alone, so far, does not seem to have been disturbed by these revolutionary changes of recent times, and that is Reggie Harris, who is in charge of Property Control.

Sunday, 31st October 1943

The Control Commission is evidently intent upon militarizing Military Government with a vengeance. A ridiculous order has been issued which forbids anyone to talk to anyone else two ranks or more higher!

Was there ever anything so unbelievable before? This means that if the chief of staff, who is one rank higher than I am, is not available I cannot go in and see the General no matter how pressing the business. While the Fine Arts Adviser, who is of equal status by function, but lower in military rank, cannot talk to anyone!

Among the other nonsenses is the order to write all our letters in sextuplicate on a size of paper far larger than the printed Military Government notepaper of which we have a large quantity already printed. I shall ignore the order and use our old paper whatever the consequences. It seems to me criminal that such folly and waste should be permitted.

Monday, 1st November 1943

Washburne with his usual directness and fearless tread has solved the problems for T. V. and myself, He, apparently, marched into General McSherry's office and asked him to solve the problem, with the result I am to continue in office as Educational Adviser in Military Government territory and Director of Education in Control territory. We are both glad to know where we stand, and I think Colonel Smith more than I.

General McSherry ordered Washburne to go and see the