

'Elementary school text-books are being revised by the Badoglio Government's Education Ministry,' the announcement said. 'Books for schools in Sicily, Calabria, and other parts of liberated Italy are affected by this revision.'

Won't Carlton be annoyed?

The weather is terrible—rain and wind—and quite cold, but that one is used to now, after a winter in Italy.

We took off to-day from Oran in a South African aeroplane. It is good to be in a British machine again, but we had to turn back on account of this bad weather. In fact the pilot was afraid for his wings.

At first, on our left was the North African shore, and immediately behind it the mountains, and on our right a solid dark wall (a 'cold front') of storm. Gradually the streak of clear weather between the coast and the mountains closed in, and the pilot tried to climb up over the mountains, but finding it too dangerous, and being sorely buffeted about, we turned about, just clearing the nearer mountains, and so returned to Algiers. The weather here too was very bad. Curiously enough, on getting out of the 'plane I met Major McDougal, one of our American officers, neither of us having noticed till then that we were fellow-passengers. He was also on his way to England.

Later, after lunch—a mug of coffee and terrible sandwiches struggled for in a jostling crowd of officers and other ranks (Americans so often do these messing arrangements badly)—we tried again. This time we reached Oran safely, although towards the end of the flight there was lightning, thunder, and mists—but the pelting rain and wind had died down. McDougal and I stayed at Ganieli's Hotel and messed at the American Grillon mess, where was provided the very opposite of all I said about American messing in that terrible hutment on the airfield at Algiers, where, even after we had had to struggle for our coffee and sandwiches we were turned out at two o'clock. Here was a great contrast indeed. The first exception was the generosity—for they did not charge strangers. The food, too, was good, and the place was spotlessly clean and well arranged. Then the wine was free—and as much of it as we needed, and the waiters, Italian prisoners of war, were very pleasant and helpful when we spoke to them in Italian.

Wednesday, 1st March 1944

We took off from Oran to-day at eight-thirty in the same South African transport 'plane with its very pleasant crew of young well-mannered officers. Having found that I had been in the Airborne Division, they were kind enough to invite me into the cockpit. Here it was much more interesting and, flying at a great height through the Straits of Gibraltar, we had magnificent views of Spain and Tangier. This route lay in what they call 'Bomb Alley', because German fighters have the habit of ranging out here from France and frequently attack shipping and transport 'planes. This one, for instance, has neither armament nor speed, and so it is fair game for any enemy fighter. One of our pilots a short time before had been attacked here by eight Messerschmidts.

We came down at Fort Lyautey, where, in an American mess, we had a very indifferent lunch at a very high cost—officers and men feeding together. We arrived at Casablanca at 2.30 p.m., having called at Rabat on the way. The weather was noticeably warmer and quite a change from the cold of the Mediterranean.

To our delight we were told we could leave for England tonight. But they make these arrangements badly. We were told to return at 9 p.m., although the 'plane was not leaving till midnight, and the second-lieutenant in charge was as near insolent as he could be. Although the Americans have covered the Mediterranean with a network of transport services, which have been of immense help to our war effort, it is difficult to see how they can retain them after the war in competition with other nations. It may be, of course, that this is not a fair comparison with their civilian services.

During the day I walked round Casablanca and bought a small panier of eggs, dates, and nuts to take home with me, drank beer (a welcome change) at a wayside café and was pestered by begging Arabs who were far worse than the beggars in Sicily. It was noticeable that there is a stronger negroid element in the native population here than in Algiers, but at the same time, as in Algiers, the blue-eyed strain is very large. This colour might be derived from Atlantic as well as Nordic sources, but the latter must form a large proportion of it, and it would seem to

suggest that the Nordic element has tended to migrate more than the other French racial strains.

At midnight we left for England.

Thursday, 2nd March 1944

At 4 a.m. the aeroplane, after climbing 14,000 feet to rise above the storm, so that we had to take oxygen, turned back as the weather was too bad, and we were back in Casablanca at 8.30 a.m.

This morning I spent looking round the town, and bought some lemons (but they are not so good as those of Sicily), grape-fruit and nuts to take home, as well as a moroccan leather bag for 600 francs.

This afternoon I toured the Medina, the native quarter, with a guide of the name of Cohen, a Jew, who lived there, and was of Gibraltar. The Medina was not so filthy as the Kasbah of Algiers, but some parts were nevertheless quite indescribable for all that. I was surprised to find that not only did Jews live in the Medina with the Arabs, but also Spanish Catholics, who have a church there, into which we went. These Spanish Catholics like so many of the Jews, appear to come from Gibraltar. Here I was interested in the silversmiths, whose work is very fine, and apparently they will beat half-crowns into good ornaments—at a price. For needless to say things are excessively dear in the Medina—the result of a tourist traffic, and now, of the military who will pay any sort of ridiculous price for anything. Soldiers ought not to be permitted to spend much of their pay in foreign parts—they just waste it, and demoralize the community in which they live. I was very interested at being shown by the guide the native barbers at work shaving the customers all over the head, with the crudest instruments and without soap and brush; and again the 'doctor' with his charms, and the Moslem women, with sore eyes and other obvious diseases, squatting opposite to him in the dust for a consultation. In other places there was the story-teller at work, with the crowd of men and boys around him. What a tragedy has been wrought by reading in some ways. In days gone by it was common to have the story-teller, not only among the Arabs but also among ourselves, in the bard and scald. With the result that a communal sense was

developed. For reading, in order to understand the tale, drives one to a selfish privacy, whereas in the realm of the story-teller men gather together, and laugh and weep together at the tales of wonder, of fun, or pathos which are laid out before them with an eloquence and elegance that no written word can match. Having bestowed some centimes on the story-teller, we passed on to find a woman story-teller beginning to tell her tale, with some women gathering around. This woman was worthy of some notice, because, apparently, she had a first-class command of Arabic, despite the fact that she was a pervert from Christianity.

Leaving the picturesque and interesting Medina, we returned to the airport to be told it was uncertain whether we could leave again this night owing to the weather. While waiting these dreary hours I took a walk in a near-by Arab village to kill time. Here we saw camels tied up near some of the shacks, and in other places donkeys, with hens hopping about here and there. Apparently the bakers had just finished baking the bread, and there was what looked like a free fight starting as this bread was sold—for here in North Africa, as in Sicily, bread, the mainstay of life, is not too easily come by in these times. It is hard when custom and your own temperament make it pleasant to haggle for hours over a sou to be pushed into getting what you can quickly without adequate haggling. The noise was terrible, the arms waved, the hands gestured, but withal the business was brisk, as brisk as with us under like conditions. A donkey-cart jogged by, and one of its many passengers nursed one of these dearly-bought loaves, till, passing a group of women, he suddenly hid it out of sight. What human problem lay here? After them, coming along the road, were a couple of boys with their flock of scraggy sandy sheep and when they drew abreast the youngest in his best English cried out 'Gum and candy, Gum and candy, f . . . you, please!' Such is the impact on the rapidly changing Moslem world. Before leaving I emptied my pockets of a small collection of brass francs, to the joy of the juvenile population, and their increased admiration of the 'Americans'—for all strange white men here are Americans.

One of the pilots has volunteered to make the attempt and so I have taken off in the same 'plane with General Miller of the 9th U.S. Air Force at twelve-ten.

Friday, 3rd March 1944

Seven-forty-five and off the coast of Donegal, thank God—and so the dust of Africa, camels, donkeys, sheep, and dirty Arab boys who seized your feet and polished your shoes before you were aware of it, and whether you wanted them to do so or not, are left behind. At eight-forty-five over Scotland. It was strange to fly over the Mull of Kintyre and Arran and see the deep snow after Casablanca with its camels in the native village by the airport last night. But it is a sinister thought. Space and distance have collapsed, and this power is in the hands of man, who has so far only abused what he has discovered—what of the future? Again, how can the human brain possibly adjust itself so quickly to moving with the rapidity which such speed demands? *Kultur* is outstripping Culture.

At nine-fifteen we arrived at Prestwick, an excellently run airport in startling contrast to all those through which I have recently journeyed. Here I had a good snack, a hair-cut and shave, and sent off a telegram. Home at last.

INDEX

*

- Abardi, Professor, 128
Academicus, Senatus, 163
Academy, German, Palermo, 70
Academy, Peloritania, of Messina, 209, 226, 227, 239
Academy, Pontaniana, of Naples, 209, 215, 216, 220, 226
Academy, Royal, of Palermo, 109, 111, 112, 119, 129, 239
Academy, Royal, of Medical Science, Palermo, 238
Action, Catholic, 126, 229
Acquarone, Count, 231
Africa, North, 236, 242, 245
Agira, 28
Agrario, Consorzio, 105, 106
Agrigento, 47
Airborne Division, the, 243
Albanian, Chair of, Palermo University, 99, 110
Albanian communities in Calabria, 103, 174, 175
Albanian communities in Sicily, 43, 56, 131, 175
Albeggiani, Dr., 63, 64, 93, 140, 180, 229, 232
Alcamo, 97
d'Alcantrez, Principessa, 147, 164, 202, 204
Aldisio, Signor, 80, 181
Aldo, see Raffa.
Aldo, the waiter, 117, 238
Alexander, General, 74, 75, 77, 137
Algiers, 17, 29, 241, 242, 243
Alpine racial type, 201
Ambrosio, General, 231
Anthropology, and Institute, Chair of, and Society, 33, 59, 61, 104, 110, 112, 138, 139, 140, 160, 161, 162, 188, 193, 194, 197
Apicella, Corporal Johnny, 178
Aprile, see Finocchiaro-Aprile
Apulia, 101, 102, 113, 164
Arabs, 201, 205, 207, 243, 244, 245, 246
Arangio-Ruiz, Professor, 181, 190, 211, 220, 227
Armenoid racial type, 172, 175
Arran, 246
Arte, Accademia di Belle, Palermo, 43
Arts, Fine, and Monuments Division of A.M.G., 28
Ascalesi, Cardinal, 213, 214, 215, 222
Ascoli, Professor, 126, 136, 160, 196
Atena Lucana, 208
Atlantic race, 201, 207, 243
Auletta, 208
Badoglio and Badoglio Government, 87, 92, 94, 100, 113, 169, 191, 231, 241, 242
Bagheria, 162
Bakunin, Professoressa, 190, 210, 211, 220, 226
Ballo, Monsignore, see Mazara, Bishop of.
Bandits, car, 78
Barbary, 201, 207
Barbatti, Signorina, 211
Bari, 87, 94
Barone, Lieutenant Roy, 44, 70, 110, 133, 156, 192
Baucina, 29, 30, 37, 51, 54, 61, 63, 64, 96, 124, 198, 199, 200, 234
Bateman, Captain, 126, 127
Battipaglia, 177, 209
Baviera, Professor G., 91, 97, 108, 109, 110, 118, 119, 121, 136, 147, 160, 180, 193, 232
Beard, Lieutenant, 195, 225, 237
Beggars, in Sicily, 34
Bellotti, Italian pilot, 236
Bees, 119, 122, 234
Bee-garden, 121, 234, 237
Berbers, 201
Bergin, Major, 185, 188, 223
Bishop, the, see Mazara.
Blas, Gil, scenes from, on Sicilian carts, 28
'Blimps', American and British, 218
Blood groups, theory of, 117, 203, 226
Bosco, Don, School, Palermo, 125, 133, 157, 159
Botanical Gardens, Palermo, 59-60
Bowery dialect, 56
Braziers, for heating, 180
Brindisi, 87, 94, 100, 101, 174, 180, 185, 191
British Council, 67, 70, 188
British Institute, Palermo, 67, 70, 71, 188