

## CHAPTER XI

### IMAGES AND STEREOTYPES

*Green fields of England! whereso'er  
Across this watery waste we fare,  
Your image at our hearts we bear,  
Green fields of England, everywhere.*

A. H. Clough

#### 1. *Images and stereotypes*

During the Second World War some of us may have encountered an occasional refugee who – if it is not too unkind to say this – was unable to escape from the rooted conviction that Englishmen were trying to be Germans and were doing it very badly. This naturally aroused his pity and at times his exasperation. He did his best to spread enlightenment, which was not always too well received. Fortunately he was not in a position to do anything more.

We may think that this is a caricature, but in fact nothing is easier than to slip into attitudes of this kind: we are all tempted to do it in some degree. We have only to suppose that our national ideals are ideals, not merely for ourselves, but for all mankind. Up to a point the assumption may be justifiable; for to suppose others incapable of sharing our ideals would be even more arrogant – we should be regarding them as ‘lesser breeds without the law’. But we should not apply our ideals too rigidly to others or suppose that there can be no genuine ideals except our own.

The trouble becomes acute when we are too pleased, not merely with our ideals, but with our achievements. We then have what may be called an image or stereotype of ourselves as the ideal nation, and of others as trying, more or less ineffectively, to be like us. We become, as it were, the standard to

which others ought to conform and, if possible, should be made to conform.

In some ways the word ‘image’ is better than the word ‘stereotype’: it sounds slightly more flexible. A stereotype is an image that has become rigid. Both words are akin to the word ‘legend’, as this was used in an earlier chapter; but a legend at least professes to describe the past, while an image or stereotype is directed mainly to the present.

Every nation has images or stereotypes of itself and of its neighbours. These determine to a great extent both what it sees and how it acts or reacts. We must here try to understand them as psychological factors affecting the relations between England and Scotland. This they do in every sphere; but we shall from now on be concerned mainly, not so much with the way in which Scotland has suffered from their political and economic effects, as with the way in which she is impeded in the development of her own traditions and ideals. This is a more difficult and ultimately more important problem, which must here be treated in far too crude a way. After the last sombre chapters we are in need of relaxation, and perhaps some measure of caricature may be forgiven.

This being understood, we may proceed to state boldly and baldly the main contention of this chapter. It is this. The troubles of Scotland arise partly from the rooted English conviction that Scotsmen are trying to be Englishmen and are not doing it very well. The English by their sheer numbers are in a position to put this right, and this they are only too willing to do. What is more unfortunate is that by modern means of communication they are enabled to spread their English stereotype in Scotland itself at the expense of the native product. If only they would relax the rigidity of their stereotypes and conceive it possible that even in these islands other reasonable beings might have different ideals, many of our difficulties would be overcome.

In the sphere of law the English stereotype, as we have seen, has been formulated clearly by the highest authorities. Let us recall one outstanding example from Lord Cranworth: ‘But if such be the law of England, on what ground can it be argued not to be the law of Scotland? The law as established in

England is founded on principles of universal application.' This was further generalised by Lord Campbell: 'The law must be the same in all countries where law has been considered as a science.'

The formula need not be confined to the law: it can – and does – conveniently cover other established English institutions as well.

## 2. *English and Scottish stereotypes*

The English stereotype of themselves is based on national self-admiration. All national stereotypes are; but the English, it has been thought, carry this practice to extremes. The characteristic is of long standing. Even the mediaeval Arab historians, who knew nothing else about the English, knew that they held all other nations in contempt. One jolly Englishman, so the phrase goes, is a match for at least three foreigners – or is it seven? – especially if they happen to be French.

The stereotype the Scots have of themselves is more limited. They too are certainly not without self-admiration, but they have more sense of the equality of man and take a respectful interest in other nations and their ways. Yet they have – or had – one rooted conviction: namely, that one Scotsman is a match for at least three Englishmen.

The Scottish stereotype, besides being more limited, is perhaps also more kindly. This can be illustrated by a phrase used by Sir James Barrie and still heard occasionally in Scotland. In reply to the question, 'Is so and so a Scotsman too?', you may get the answer, 'No, he is just English'. This recognises that the English are at least on the lower rungs of the ladder that leads to the full height of perfection appropriate to the inhabitants of these islands.

For ethnological equations of this type the evidence has to be selected with the utmost care. If, as seems probable, they were originally concerned with prowess in war, the English can look back to Crécy and Agincourt, the Scots to Bannockburn: defeats must be discreetly overlooked. But national stereotypes are extended to every walk of life and can become ever more remote from the truth. The boldest freebooters who ever sailed

the sea succeeded in persuading themselves that the British Empire was a fulfilment of the promise 'The meek shall inherit the earth'. Some Englishmen even cherish a firm conviction that the English have always left the Scots to settle their own affairs in their own way.

It is absurd to take national stereotypes seriously, except perhaps as the expression of ideals. If you try to apply them to actual individuals you know, it will often become obvious that they do not fit at all. If you imagine that they are based on supposed racial differences, you may find that you have built up your stereotypes on somebody who doesn't belong to the race in question. I was astounded when the late Sir Richard Livingstone, an old friend whom I had always regarded as among the flower of Englishmen, insisted that he was a mixture of Scots and Irish and added with great vehemence: 'As to the English, their mental processes are entirely beyond my comprehension'.

If we were asked to name a typical Victorian Englishman, we might be tempted to choose Mr. Gladstone. Yet, though born and educated in England, he was a pure-bred Scot. Once this is realised he may begin to show some characteristics supposed to be Scottish – his devotion to theology; his tendency to go on arguing at greater length than might seem necessary; his readiness to flout public opinion in his zeal for good causes, as in his practice, even when Prime Minister, of talking to prostitutes in the streets and bringing them home to Mrs. Gladstone in order to save them from the error of their ways. That eagle head and eye, and even the collar, seem almost to demand as their setting a pulpit and a Geneva gown, complete with bands. Yet he was so conditioned by his English upbringing that he would walk for miles to a conventicle of his own rather than accompany his sovereign to a service in the Church of Scotland; and he took an active part in introducing the English public school system into Scotland in order to win young Scotsmen away from the faith of their fathers and so to accentuate social distinctions by the aid of religious differences.

The fact is that national stereotypes are based more on a traditional way of life than on racial differences. Yet Scotsmen

may be tempted to imagine that some of the most magnificently English among our more recent politicians inherit from their Scottish forefathers a tendency to be more liberal and less inflexible than is common among undiluted Englishmen. Mr. Harold Macmillan with his 'wind of change' might be a case in point.

Another characteristic of national stereotypes is that they obscure similarities, much in the same way as family resemblances obvious to strangers are often concealed from members of the family themselves. In one of Frank O'Connor's short stories two Irish priests pursue a delinquent girl on board a French ship lying in harbour. The skipper, being a Frenchman, takes the lowest possible view of their motives and incidentally addresses them as 'English'. When they protest that they are Irish, he says: 'I know all that: you call yourselves Irish, and the others call themselves Scotch, but you are all English. There is no difference. It is always the same; always women, always hypocrisy, always the plaster saint'.

Perhaps if we could become less obsessed by our own stereotypes, we might comfort ourselves with the thought that the British nations may be more alike than we imagine, sharing not merely some common vices, but even some common virtues.

Rigid stereotypes, national and otherwise, besides being partly false and partly silly, can be really harmful in so far as they prevent us from seeing every man as a unique individual. If we proceed to play about with them here, it is because they may have serious consequences.

### 3. *The English stereotype of England*

If we sought to do justice to the stereotype the English have of themselves, this would be a lengthy business. It would consist mainly in a eulogy of English virtues, a eulogy often richly deserved. It would be a pleasure to attempt such a eulogy here, but this would be irrelevant to our present purpose; and in any case the English image of themselves is widely known. We are concerned only with the way in which it affects the English attitude to those who are not English. In this ungracious task

we hope we may be forgiven if we elaborate a little further the thesis already put forward: namely, that the English stereotype of themselves tends to foster a lack of sympathy with other points of view. This is what is known as their insularity. It has led even a friendly European to write a book entitled *The English – are they human?*

Inability to allow for other points of view may be illustrated by the story of the English lady on a Rhine steamer who couldn't understand why she and her party were being stared at. When told 'It is because you are foreigners', she said indignantly: 'Tell them we are not foreigners. We are English'.

The point was put in another way by Bernard Shaw, when he said: 'The English, if they think at all, think about the English'. This does not mean that in thinking about themselves they compare themselves with others. Far from it. Standard weights and measures are not compared with others – they are the standard of comparison. Nothing bores Englishmen more quickly than a comparison between them and other nationalities – unless it is designed to show where other nationalities have gone wrong.

The same tendency comes out in another way. Even English defects, so far as they are recognised at all, are treated as virtues. As another friendly European writer has said: the English give the irresistible and maddening impression of thinking it rather cute that their cooking and their laws and their pubs are so impossible, and rather gallant of them to bear all these afflictions so gaily and bravely. Their pride in 'muddling through' is a still more obvious example.

All this is part of the inflexibility which is at once their strength and their weakness.

As can be seen from the lady on the Rhine steamer, the English maintain their inflexibility even outside their own country. A distinguished French politician went so far as to say: 'The defect of many English people is that they cart England around with them to the point of insanity'. The word 'insanity' ought to be reserved for Scottish protests against English interference, but foreigners seldom display a due sense of linguistic propriety. Although badly expressed, what he meant is obvious enough.

If some Englishmen carry England around with them in foreign countries, they do so still more when they visit Scotland. Englishmen of the best type have always been welcome in Scotland. But there are others, not always so gifted, who can never understand how the inhabitants of this English province should deviate from the stereotype the English have of themselves. Their indifference, or even hostility, to all things Scottish, and to all signs of Scottish patriotism, does a great deal of harm, especially if they hold official positions; and their condescension does almost more. But here we begin to pass to the English stereotype of Scotland, and this is our main concern.

#### 4. *The English stereotype of Scotland*

National stereotypes, however self-laudatory, do relatively little harm within the borders of the country itself: they may even inspire the natives to efforts that would not otherwise be forthcoming. Their harmfulness arises mainly when they develop into derogatory stereotypes of other nations. It becomes serious, as Sir Isaiah Berlin has pointed out, when they are exported and to some extent imposed on others who have national stereotypes of their own.

Even here a good deal depends on the nature of the stereotypes exported, and the English stereotype of Scotland is in fact very mixed. Sometimes it is too flattering. On television an English lady once said something like this: 'Aren't the Scots wonderful? A truly educated race!' The others taking part in the discussion were too polite to contradict her; but so favourable a judgement, however welcome, must bring a blush of shame to the cheeks of Scotsmen familiar with the real situation. More remarkable still, Scotsmen have in the past been sometimes regarded as an exception to iron English rules. The fact, for example, that they did not speak with an English public school accent was sometimes excused as an amiable eccentricity which did not necessarily put them beyond the pale. It might not be untrue to say that they are generally considered to possess some of the less spectacular virtues – to be competent and hard-working and honest and even intelligent. Their military prowess also has been generously recognised.

So far as the Scots are supposed to share in the virtues which the English attribute to themselves, the English stereotype of Scotland is highly favourable. In some moods the English are even prepared to lump Englishmen and Scots together and to be unconscious of the difference. In a radio quiz, when Sir Walter Scott was described as an Englishman by one participant, there was some demur from the Scottish side, and the English speaker asked in manifest astonishment: 'Aren't Scotsmen English?' This was received with amusement, but it seemed almost ungracious not to accept so high a compliment.

The English stereotype of Scotland becomes more interesting when it begins to emphasise differences, and it may be worth while attempting to pursue some of these differences, if they are not taken too solemnly.

The one thing every Englishman knows is that Scotsmen are 'dour'. This word (generally mispronounced) is not altogether clear in its English meaning. Certainly Scotsmen are dour (or hard): they could never have survived otherwise alongside a really tough people like the English. But they can also be 'douce' (or gentle). They can on occasion be 'cantie' and even 'crouse'; but this lies far beyond the English horizon. Furthermore they can be 'kindly'; and it is no use telling me that 'a kindly Scot' means merely one who is Scottish by birth. But if the English stereotype appears to be somewhat restricted, it must be remembered that stereotypes by their very nature must be over-simplified.

Another feature in the English stereotype is that the Scots are parsimonious. Here too there is a basis of fact: poor men have to be sparing, and many Scottish stories, especially those made up in Aberdeen, make fun of the trouble taken to save money. In the English version this is sometimes twisted into vices alien to the tradition of Scotland, such as greed and extortion and even sponging. So far from being extortionate, an Aberdonian is as anxious to save money for others as for himself: he disapproves of extravagance as such, but in fact he is most generous. As to sponging on others, this is in flat contradiction with Scottish pride and independence. Unfortunately it is

now easy to spread such distortions in Scotland itself and throughout the world. Even a long-suffering Scot may feel irritation when a foreigner plays up gleefully to the English by repeating charges which he might more profitably apply to his own people.

Yet another English conviction is that the Scots are without humour. This view is ludicrous to any one acquainted with the Scottish people or even with their literature and songs. Perhaps we have here the usual tendency to disparage one's nearest neighbours or rivals. The Americans, for example, believe the English to be 'dumb' or humourless; and indeed, like Continental Europeans, they have been known to ask why it is that Scotsmen have so much humour and Englishmen so little. There are different kinds of humour, and all of them are precious. Perhaps the English are here again supposing that their own variety is the standard for all others. This would suggest rather that their sense of humour is limited, as would also their habit of insisting on how humorous they are. 'We English', they say, 'have the great gift of laughing at ourselves'. Yet the evidence for this is strangely lacking. When asked for instances of such salutary behaviour, they are apt to mention *The Diary of a Nobody*; but what this book does is to make rather cruel fun, not of the English as such, but of the English lower middle class. This is a very different thing, and I know nothing comparable to the many stories in which the Scots poke fun at themselves as Scotsmen.

Although so many Englishmen stiffen and freeze at any jest against themselves, they have no hesitation in directing their humour against others. A standard music-hall device is to address a Scotsman with a list of words, if possible mispronounced, like 'kilt', 'haggis', 'bagpipes', 'parrich', and ending with 'hoots, mon'. This, like other stock gambits, is a good example of the primitive humour which finds everything outside the tribe to be excruciatingly funny. What is extraordinary is that sometimes even civilised Englishmen, not only use the same technique, but expect their Scottish friends to join in their shrieks of laughter. Perhaps the lack of enthusiasm with which these sallies are received is the source of the conviction that

Scotsmen are without humour. It might be possible to suggest a simpler explanation.

On a different level is the fixed belief that in Scotland it is always raining except when it snows. This is indeed one of the stock jokes, though it is taken very seriously. Here, as in other cases, those who are mesmerised by a stereotype have a curious knack of finding what they expect to find. An example of this used to be connected with the Russo-German frontier before 1914. Although it ran through the middle of a flat plain stretching for hundreds of miles, the Germans who visited it would stretch their hands out towards the East and exclaim, with a shiver, 'Ach! Wie kalt!' The English stereotype ignores the fact that Scotland is an area with almost as many different climatic regions as England itself. In a long cold spell like the freeze-up of 1963 the greater part of Scotland may have consistently better weather than England, but nothing would induce an Englishman to believe this. He spreads his dismal picture to the ends of the earth, and it is something of a miracle that the Scottish tourist trade is able to survive.

Samples of this kind may seem small beer, as indeed they would be if they were confined to England. The real trouble arises when Scottish ideals and traditions are depicted in Scotland itself as ridiculous and irrational so far as they differ from English ones. This is particularly depressing when the Scots are following a wider European tradition from which the English have departed and of which they are unaware.

##### 5. *The Scottish stereotype of Scotland*

Scotsmen have – or at least had – a stereotype of themselves as flattering as national stereotypes usually are. They are sometimes charged with self-praise, but this is no more true of them than it is of the English – to mention no other nations. At times they may have to emphasise their achievements in protest against the distorted pictures that have been spread abroad. An example of this can be found as early as 1320, when in the Declaration of Arbroath they had to refute English misrepresentations in order to secure the attention of the Pope. Generally speaking, they

may take their own merits less for granted and as more open to discussion; but this might be a sign of modesty.

The Scots certainly ascribe to themselves the more sober virtues – like honesty, competence, thoroughness, and reliability; and in these they are apt to consider themselves superior to the English – slower to promise and readier to perform. But the main qualities in which they have claimed to be outstanding are their zeal for freedom and equality and their capacity for rational thought.

When exaggerated such claims become laughable, especially if ideals are confused with achievements; but they are not wholly without historical support. From the Latin verses commended to William Wallace as a boy and John Barbour's well-known eulogy of freedom, the passion for liberty runs right through Scottish literature and political thinking. The liberties of the realm, the liberties of the Church, the liberties of the Parliament, the liberties of the people have been the aim of endeavours throughout the centuries. It is no accident that Adam Smith was the first to propound the doctrine of free trade. One foreign historian has even maintained that the liberal tradition in British politics has sprung mainly from Scotland. From pre-Reformation times onwards Scottish political thinkers have exercised influence also on the continent of Europe. It would be foolish to lay too much emphasis on this; but it would be a still greater mistake to ignore it, and it would be a pity if it were forgotten – as it almost is – even in Scotland itself.

It may be replied that it was only their own liberty that was pursued by Scotsmen. This charge would come strangely from liberty-loving Englishmen, who have imposed on their neighbours – not to mention remoter regions – so many struggles for freedom. Enthusiasts for liberty usually begin by defending their own, and only later extend their range to include the liberty of others and ultimately of all men. The Scots need be no exception.

As to equality, the passion for this is bound up with the passion for the liberty of the people. This too runs through Scottish literature. It is to be found, for example, in Sir David Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Three Estaitis*. It comes out everywhere

in Robert Burns and receives its popular expression in 'A man's a man for a' that'. It also comes out in political thought and action.

It would be absurd to maintain that Scotland is without class differences and class snobbishness. No nation, not even the American, is wholly free from this. None the less there are differences of degree; and it would not be untrue to say that the Scots have been more democratic, and the English more hierarchical, in their outlook. At times the English tell us frankly that 'we British' – they mean 'we English' – are bound by class distinctions to an extent unknown elsewhere. More recently they have shown a tendency, very marked on television and radio, to explain to each other at great length that class distinctions no longer matter. It never seems to occur to them that if this were really true, it would be unnecessary to talk so much about it.

We come to more difficult ground with the Scottish claim to greater rationality in thought and action. This would be ludicrous if it were a pretension to general intellectual superiority. What is true is that until the present century education in Scotland was more widespread among the people than it was in England. The claim to greater rationality must be interpreted as a claim to a different intellectual approach. It may seem arrogant to say that the Scottish approach is more philosophical; but it can be described as a habit of seeking for principles manifested in experience and of applying these principles to fresh cases. This Scottish ideal comes out in their law and their theology and, I am told, even in their heraldry; but it is of much wider scope. In this respect the Scots resemble the French rather than the English. These differences are never so sharp as they appear, but it seems fair to say that there is a genuine contrast between the Scottish approach and the English distrust of abstract thinking, their preference for rule of thumb, their dependence on precedents, and – if we may mention this again – their glorification of 'muddling through'.

In philosophy itself the Scots can claim to have produced two of the greatest figures in both the mediaeval and the modern period – Duns Scotus and David Hume. Even apart from these

giants, Scottish philosophy, though this is forgotten to-day even in Scotland, had a wide international reputation and exercised a powerful influence on European philosophy, particularly in France.

It is not good enough to dismiss the national stereotype of Scotland as mere bragging. The Scots may claim with some reason that for a small nation they have in thought and action contributed much to the civilisation of Europe and the world. If they sometimes exaggerate this, it is unfair to demand that they should be free from a human weakness which is common to all nations without exception.

#### 6. *Alien stereotypes of England*

Nothing need be said here about Scottish stereotypes of England. Like the English stereotypes of Scotland, they might not be flattering or even just; but the English are sublimely unconscious of them, and are in no danger of being induced to accept them in place of their own.

We have already alluded to some continental stereotypes of the English – doubts about their humanity, convictions that they are all hypocrites and all mad. It was widely believed at one time that all Englishmen had tails, and this may serve to remind us how false and twisted alien stereotypes can become. But the best parallel to the English stereotype of Scotland is the American stereotype of England; for of this the English are becoming at least dimly aware. At times, as a result of invasion by American cinema and television, they have even been known to say that they prefer their own traditions, however inferior, simply because they are their own. Scotsmen too may have such a preference without being unreasonable.

The American stereotype is mixed, but it tends to regard Englishmen as 'dumb' or humourless; as 'stuffed shirts' or social snobs; as 'snooty' or showing condescension or contempt for men of other nations; and as pursuing English interests inflexibly under a cloak of outward amiability. There would be no point in taking this stereotype seriously; but Englishmen who resent it may be better able to understand resentment against similar English stereotypes of Scotland.

Even in these days Scotsmen are sometimes exempted from American criticism of the English. At a party in California a lovely and learned American lady, whom I hardly knew, called out to me suddenly: 'Mr. Paton, you are the only nice Englishman I have ever met. All the others were Scotsmen'. I was so taken aback that I blurted out the melancholy truth. It has been a life-long regret to me that I missed the opportunity of making some slight return, by keeping silence, for all the benefits that I owe to England and to Englishmen.

#### 7. *English policy in Scotland*

The national stereotypes outlined here in a crude way are trivial enough in themselves and may be dismissed as unkind family jokes. In any case our concern here is not with family bickering for its own sake, but with the effect of national stereotypes on English policy and Scottish reactions.

Once it is assumed that the English take England to be the only standard of excellence, it becomes easy to understand why they treat Scotland as a province rather than a partner; why they endeavour to extend their control over every sphere of Scottish activity; why they use every encroachment as a precedent for fresh encroachments; why they consider the adoption of English models to be the sole method of reform; why they despise what they describe as 'local cultures' and seek to turn real Scotsmen into imitation Englishmen; why they resent any exhibition of Scottish patriotism; why they insist that Scotsmen shall have no powers to legislate for their own affairs, and not even an opportunity to say whether they want such powers or not; why in short they refuse to regard Scotland as a nation entitled to such rights as are freely accorded to all other nations, even the most primitive and insignificant; and why in so doing they continue to regard themselves as models of sweet reasonableness and justice and generosity.

These are matters of high policy, and we should walk warily: other factors enter in – notably the instinct of the powerful to increase their power and the passion of administrators to flatten out for their own convenience differences among those whom they control. On a humbler level we must glance for a moment

at the way in which ordinary citizens are affected by national stereotypes, especially when an alien stereotype is imposed in place of their own.

#### 8. *English propaganda*

A national stereotype affects not only what men do, but also what they say, and even what they see. This is true of any fixed idea, whether national or not. If you expect blemishes in your fellow men, it is blemishes that you will find. If you hold it a blemish to depart from the English norm, you will see many blemishes in Scotland. Even in the earlier centuries English visitors gave a much less favourable account of Scotland than was given by the French.

Nowadays some English residents in Scotland talk down to Scotsmen in ways that are hard to credit. They think nothing of lecturing a Scottish audience on the inferiority of their law, their industries, their architecture, their science, their education, their traditions, their religion, and their 'local culture'. The whole intellectual and cultural life of Scotland, if recognised at all, is said to have decayed in the last 130 years. One of the most depressing of charges is that a nation of pioneers is utterly deficient in initiative. This is like tying a man up and then taunting him with an inability to move.

It never occurs to these gentlemen that perhaps an unsuitable system of government may have something to do with these appalling results. On the contrary, they hold that of all the bad things in Scotland nationalism is the worst. The typical clichés are trotted out without a trace of sympathy or understanding, or even of common sense and ordinary respect.

It is to be hoped that this sort of propaganda is misreported in the press, but uncorrected reports have to be taken at their face value, and it is as uncorrected that they affect public opinion. Needless to say, there are also Englishmen who show sympathy and understanding when they come to Scotland, and even when they are subjected, as they sometimes are, to a barely concealed distrust. Some – to borrow a phrase from one of them – may become 'honorary Scotsmen'. The wisest of them, whatever they may feel, refrain from lecturing Scotsmen

in a way that would be unbecoming to an old-time district commissioner addressing a primitive Bantu tribe.

#### 9. *The effect in Scotland*

Unfortunately the English stereotype of Scotland is so widely spread by means of modern mass communication that it may be undermining the traditional spirit of independence and self-respect in Scotland itself.

Some Scotsmen, it is to be feared, have abandoned their Scottish patriotism – or parochialism – altogether, or almost altogether, and are only too anxious to further the cause of anglicisation. They echo English clichés about Scottish traditions and ideals and practices. Some of them – though this, I am sorry to say, is found more often in women – become almost venomous in their contempt for Scotland's past and present.

Much more serious is the effect on the plain people of Scotland, who have not ceased to be patriotic, but are bewildered by the suggestions of their inferiority and by the continued assumptions that most of what they used to think right is really wrong. Some, it is to be feared, become bitter and aggressive in their feeling of being left defenceless. Others may become timid and unsure of themselves – everything in fact that their ancestors were not.

Attitudes of this kind may be revealed in little things. A Scots girl, when asked on television whether she thought the Scots were fit for self-government, said something like this: 'Well, perhaps not yet; but with a little training they might soon become so'. She meant, presumably, training by the English. She also said the Scots were not a 'cultural people like the English'. No Scot could conceivably have said anything like this fifty years ago, so perhaps the English propaganda is beginning to take effect.

A new bitterness appears to have arisen even in the attitude to old jokes. The chestnuts once swallowed with relish seem now to cause acute indigestion. The old tale of the Scottish visitor to London who had learned nothing of the English because he had dealt only with heads of departments is received



with cold disgust – perhaps because it suggests that Scotsmen may be well content to hold minor positions in English business. Younger men seem to squirm even at a harmless speech made by Sir Harry Lauder after the first World War. He said we ought to express our gratitude to our Allies – the French, the Americans, the Italians, and of course the English – for helping Scotland to beat Germany. This was funny at the time because it was not too wildly remote from the way some Scotsmen actually felt; and it belonged to the old Scottish game of poking fun at themselves. To-day it appears to be seen as a sycophantic effort to obscure the utter insignificance of Scotland in world affairs, and the humour has gone sour.

Neither Scotland nor Britain will be enriched if an inferiority complex is to take the place of the old sense of humour and the unruffled assurance which used to go with a proper pride.

## CHAPTER XII

## BROADCASTING

*What is he buzzing in my ears?*

Robert Browning

1. *The invasion of the mind*

If a nation is to be reduced to a province, it is not enough to limit and control its exercise of political and economic power: it is necessary also to provincialise the mind.

Even without government action it is not difficult to provincialise the mind when a smaller partner is linked with a larger and richer one. The relative size of the book-markets is bound of itself to work in this direction. English books will be read in Scotland, no matter how false an image they give of that country; but Scottish books, at least those about Scottish history, will be little read in England because of the indifference of the English people. Scottish authors in general must write for an English public in order to earn their bread. If they depict the Scottish scene at all, they must simplify it for readers who cannot appreciate its subtleties. Too often they indulge in caricatures which play up to English preconceptions. The Scottish image of Scotland is at a disadvantage from the start.

A similar result is produced even more obviously by the developments of modern journalism. The London press invades Scotland with so-called Scottish editions. These give some Scottish news, especially about sport; but in the main they spread purely English stereotypes and images. In days when a newspaper with a circulation of a million copies pays its way with difficulty, Scottish newspapers are bound to have a hard struggle. It is surprising that they succeed so well. Without them Scottish opinion would find almost no expression at all.