

communication and harder competition on the modern creative level. A little of it happens already.

For instance, a fountain based on that beautiful thistle of water at Kings Cross is now being built in San Francisco in a court in the Golden Gateway. What's much more, the Sydney designers of the original, Woodward, Taranto & Wallace, have been retained to do the job. Whenever I hear of a little crumb of reciprocation with America like that I believe again in the possibility that Australia will live on after all as an individual creative region. This belief is strengthened whenever I think of a few internationally celebrated people like Sid Nolan and Alan Moorhead, who, though living more outside than in Australia, are not expatriates and still essentially Australian and are sending back to America (and the rest of the world) Australian contributions to 20th century civilization...or better still Patrick White who can actually bear to live here, alongside the critics whose insensitivity might have destroyed him, while continuing to make his major contribution.

To see just a little bit of good Australia in America is all anyone could wish for in this context. Americanisation is a phenomenon but not a problem in, say, Sweden, Switzerland or Scotland, because these three, like some other countries, have reciprocal exports to America which enable them to retain their self-respect. May I emphasize this point as strongly as I can, for it is at the heart of everything I have been saying: We

must produce our own ideas in the arts and sciences, not for mean chauvinistic, nationalistic reasons, but because no one living on this island - call it Australia, a British Colony or the last outpost of America - no one here can maintain selfrespect in the modern world of ideas unless we contribute to it.

Finally, I suppose it's necessary to stress that I personally love America, and am prepared to outdo anyone in my enthusiasm for its arts and sciences. What I am against is only the dulness and laziness and philistinism of many Australians who make or accept stale copies of things from overseas when they could make life more fun for themselves and everyone else if they tried to make, and encouraged others to make, something fresh and original here. Our stale copies of Danish furniture of Japanese gardens are often just as silly as our stale copies of Americana in most other things. It is not Denmark or Japan or the U.S.A. which is at fault.

The argument for importation of our ideas and entertainments is that only thus will we keep up our standards, for anything that originates here must be in some way inexperienced and inferior. There is a lot in this of course, but only if the imported material is of highest standard, only if it doesn't swamp out all local endeavour, and only if we are prepared to recognize and encourage good, unusual local talent when it does appear. None of these qualifications apply to Australia now. But they show the way to our salvation. Especially if there were a social climate here that

encouraged originality. Then it would not be impossible to foresee eventually a proportionate representation of imaginative Australia in America - and she would surely welcome it; she is hungry for ideas from everywhere. If and when that day comes there will be no longer any problem for us inherent in the phrase: America in Australia.