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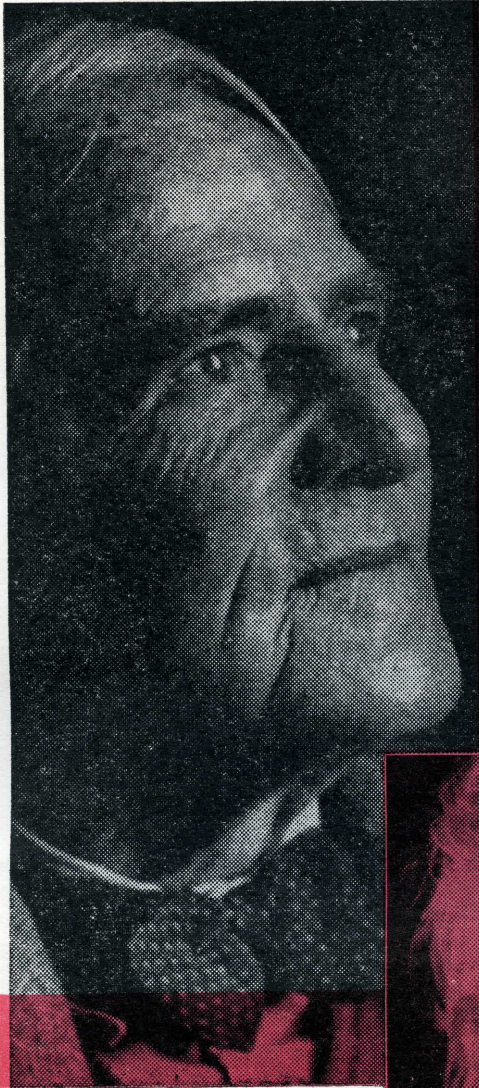
Meanyin

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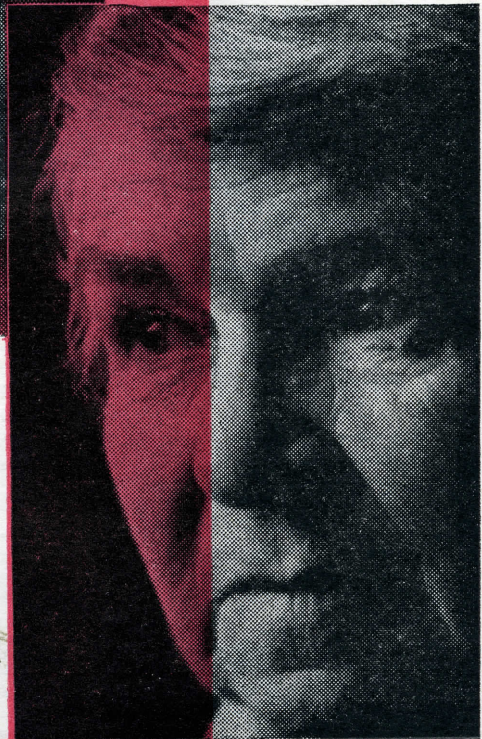
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Meanjin

2
1959



For the Library
The Teachers College
Wagga Wagga.

Mary Gilman
24. 8. 59

Siberia and down the coast of China, not an easy journey. But Australia is his homeland — a continent over which he has travelled widely and which he knows thoroughly, particularly the Queensland littoral and Melbourne and its near bush. All this experience of men and places has been material for the work of a perceptive and sensitive spirit.

I have mentioned something of what Palmer and his wife have, in their private capacities, done for writers. A particular instance of Nettie's concern has come to mind — that for Lesbia Harford, the introduction to whose small posthumous volume of lovely poems Nettie wrote. By his dignity, his kindness, his wisdom, his faith in man, **always** Palmer has helped humane causes, always he has been in the struggle to defend the freedoms and interests of his own people.

He was a leader in the making of the Fellowship of Australian Writers into a national body. As first president of the Victorian section, he gave it both prestige and vitality, as well as guidance in the right direction. He and the late Flora Eldershaw were F.A.W. representatives on the Advisory Board of the Commonwealth Literary Fund, and they transformed the Fund into a useful and important agency.

M A R Y G I L M O R E

MAY I with others say how glad I am that Vance and Nettie Palmer are to have an issue of *Meanjin* to themselves as a tribute to and recognition of their part in the creation of a distinctive Australian literature? But they have done more than write. They have given themselves to helping young writers to whom help and encouragement matter so much.

In their own books they have done such close and finished work that future historians and literary critics will look to them for knowledge of life today and background for their later publications. In this the Palmers' exactness of characterization will play a very certain part.

But there is more than this to note in what these two people have done. In evaluating the work of others, young or old, they have never used a sharp-pointed or a blasting pen. They have always been broad-minded and tolerant. They have never seared the young or left them hurt and broken. In the creation of literature, nursing is important. In such nursing the Palmers have never slackened.

Australia, like all young countries, in order to be known at home and abroad has too often aimed at the spectacular. But when, like *Waradjeri* in the wind, the spectacular is blown away by Time, these two writers, Nettie and Vance Palmer, will remain.

DAME MARY GILMORE, D.B.E., of Sydney, one of Australia's leading poets, will celebrate her 94th birthday in August.