

VENITE APOTEMUS

BEING SOME REFLECTIONS
ON A YEAR BOOK



BY TOM TURNSPIT

FRESHWATER BAY PRESS - - - MCMXL

With the institution of the Continental cafe system I can see our capital city transformed, even our country towns made endurable. I can see stuffy, dark and unsavoury bars emptying and fresh, sunny cafes springing up. There will be a few days' orgy of drunkenness before men realise that they are making fools of themselves; there will be a wail unto heaven from the Trade until the new balance is struck, and if some of the less reputable suburban hotels go unlamented out of business the more reputable will find that, after all, the sky has not fallen about them and that they will still have their faithful trough-swillers until a new generation grows up, the new generation which will find it more pleasant to sit down and talk than to stand up and drink. Such a step will be the turning-point in the fortunes of our Cinderella industry, though if France and Italy are any guide as to what will happen, the coffee and tea merchants stand to gain as much as the vigneron. Perth, no longer a second-rate provincial town, will become a city of happy people; the streets and the river foreshore will echo the gaiety and animation with which we will return thanks to God for the blessing of a generous, and on the whole kindly, climate.

Come, my friend, "drink and let me see that smile of yours; soon enough, I dare say, neither of us will smile any more, though we may grin for all ages to come, if the soil is dry."⁵⁸ Let us drink, and bury all unkindness, and let us drink the wines of our own vineyards.

⁵⁸ Norman Douglas, *op. cit.* ch. xi.