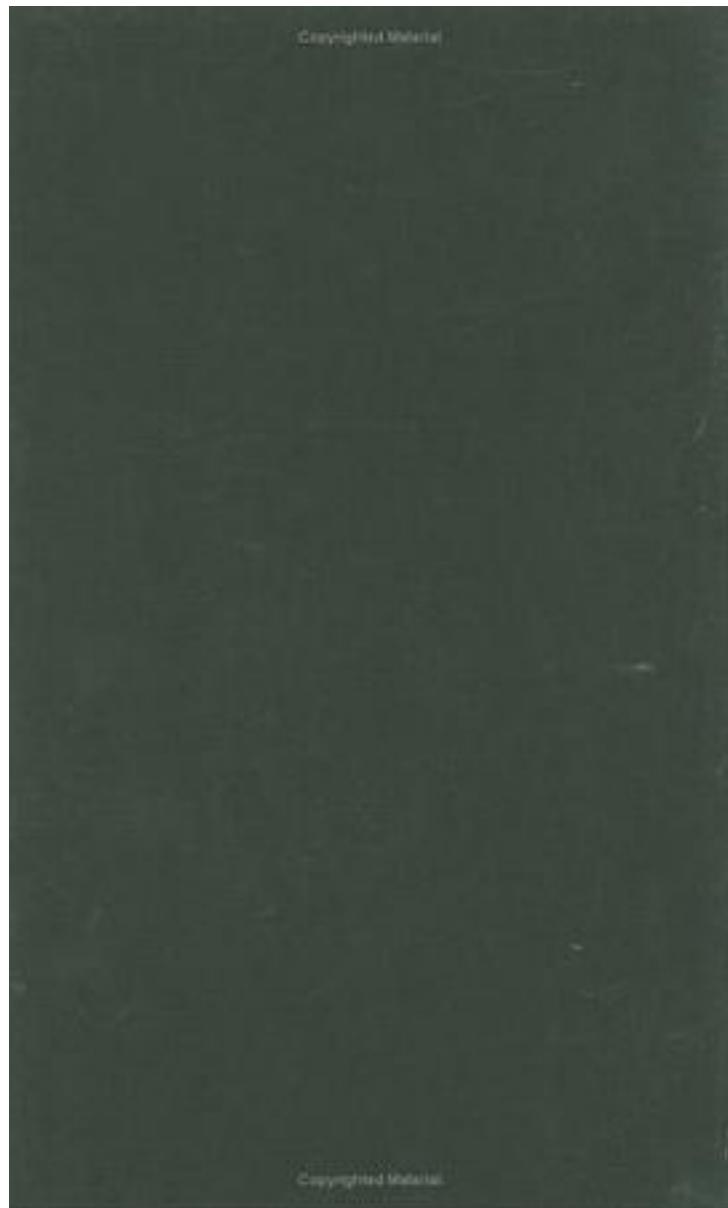


People, Places, Things



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Throughout her career, Elizabeth Bowen, the Anglo-Irish novelist and short story writer, also wrote literary essays that display a shrewd, generous intelligence. Always sensitive to underlying tensions, she evokes the particular climate of countries and places in "Hungary," "Prague and the Crisis," and "Bowen's Court." In "Britain in Autumn," she records the strained atmosphere of the blitz as no other writer does. Immediately after the war, she reported on the International Peace Conference in Paris in a series of essays that are startling in their evocation of tense diplomacy among international delegates scrabbling to define the boundaries of Europe and the stakes of the Cold War. The aftershock of war registers poignantly in "Opening Up the House": owners evacuated during the war return to their houses empty since 1939. Other essays in this volume, especially those on James Joyce, Jane Austen, and the technique of writing, offer indispensable mid-century evaluations of the state of literature. The essays assembled in this volume were published in British, Irish, and American periodicals during Bowen's lifetime. She herself did not gather them into any collection. Some of these essays exist only as typescript drafts and are published here for the first time. Bowen's observations on age, toys, disappointment, charm, and manners place her among the very best literary essayists of the modernist period.

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