

The Building of the Colossus

WHY JAPAN WAS STRONG. By John Patric. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1943. 313 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HALLETT ABEND

TOO many books about Japan deal only with its generals, its admirals, and with the small group who for years have had their ups and downs in the civilian administrative offices of the government and on the diplomatic staff. John Patric's new book goes to the other extreme, and deals almost entirely with the "little people" of the Rising Sun Empire, seeking to find amongst them the reason and the basis for Japan's strength. It is an interesting work, and serves admirably as a counter balance for those studies which deal almost exclusively with the higher-ups.

Mr. Patric finds Japan's strength in the industry, the frugality, and the uncomplaining characters of her peasants and her laborers. The faith of these people, their blind patriotism, the blind confidence which they have in their leaders, and the manner in which they have been content with the one-sided education which has been meted out to them—all of these things the author assesses as the alloys of a truly formidably powerful body politic.

He should know, for he made a trip and lived amongst them. On money carefully saved by extraordinary economies at home, Mr. Patric saved enough cash to travel over part of the Far East, his trip including much of Japan which the tourist rarely sees, Korea, parts of Manchuria, and the Peiping-Tientsin region of North China. In all these areas, apparently, he sought out no one of higher rank than police sergeants and troubled railway administrators, and in most cases it was they who sought him out. He started his trip with the advantage of a smattering of the Japanese language, and much well conceived advance investigation.

There is much sound observation in this book, even though there is also much of error of fact. Mr. Patric notes the fact that most Japanese are accustomed to overcrowding and what we would call hardship, from infancy onwards, and from this explains to himself that Japan can crowd three times as many soldiers aboard a transport of given size as the American Army can. "The saturation point where morale is wrecked" comes much later with the Japanese than with Americans, he observes.

The author believes that had we

compromised long ago, and reduced our own standard of living a little bit, in order to raise the Japanese nearer to equality with our own, we could have avoided war. "What a sacrifice the little men have forced us, now, to lay on the altar of national inequality!" he exclaims. "What a bargain we *might* have had! That we are fighting an enemy whose assets are his cruelty, his toughness, and his frugality I admit. Yet we have helped to keep him cruel, to make him tough, to force him to be frugal."

Mr. Patric might profit by the reading of much Japanese history. Their own chronicles have always glorified cruelty and frugality, and tough they have always been. His own pages reveal the utter indifference and bewilderment with which such organizations as the Society for the Prevention

Literary Highway of Understanding

THE MAKING OF MODERN BRITAIN: A Short History. By J. B. Brebner and Allan Nevins. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1943. 243 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HANS W. WEIGERT

THE writer of this review, who happened to be educated in the Germany of Wilhelm II before World War I, left high school without ever having heard of Jefferson. Of Lincoln he knew scarcely more than the name. His background in British history was almost equally poor. But he knew all the details of the battles Prussia had fought.

These and other deficiencies of education explain in part the frame of mind which made Germany's academic youth, in 1914, fight and die convinced of the righteousness of Germany's cause. The same ignorance made another German generation succumb enthusiastically to Hitler's new order.

Such remarks are seemingly strange in a review of a "short history" of Great Britain. They serve to show why this small book, in spite of legions of voluminous texts on Britain's history, conveys an important and timely message. Here is a book without the well-known characteristics of fact-crammed textbooks which the plain reader refuses to stomach, unless he has to. This study, written in a brilliant and vivid style, is for the average American. And it is this kind of book that will have an immense effect in the educational battle to win a lasting peace: books on America for the British, on Britain for the

of Cruelty to Animals are regarded in modern Japan.

It is to be regretted that in many cases the author did not check his facts. For instance, writing about Korea, he places the population at "about 20,000,000," and says "there are few Koreans in other lands," entirely ignoring the large exodus from Korea to Manchuria, to the Siberian Maritime Provinces, and to China.

But in spite of errors of easily ascertainable facts, "Why Japan Was Strong" is a worthwhile book, and time and again the reader comes upon statements which the American people should take to heart. For instance:

But at the same time, because of their capacity for hard work, for long hours, and for doing without civilian necessities that consume man power in this country, Japan's 70,000,000 of people have a physical working strength of almost twice that many Americans. . . . It helps explain why Japan dared attack us.

Americans, on the Soviet Union and on China for their allies, and, last but not least, the educational vitamins which the Germans, the Italians, and the Japanese have so desperately been lacking for decades.

I hope this small volume will set a shining example for those who will be called upon to write similar texts which, after the war, will help to re-educate the peoples by making them understand the other members of the family of nations. The authors (both of Columbia University) have told the glorious story of Great Britain in scholarly fashion and yet with so much natural charm that the American reader after finishing this book will more than ever appreciate what Churchill said, three years ago: "These two great organizations of the English-speaking democracies, the British Empire and the United States, will have to be somewhat mixed up in some of their affairs for mutual and general advantage." Churchill added that he viewed the process without misgiving. "Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll."

There is only one note of regret. The story ends on September 3, 1939, the very day when history started a new chapter in the book of modern Britain. The authors may have felt, and probably rightly so, that it is premature, in the turmoil of our time, to design the image of the Britain of today and tomorrow. After the war, the authors, we hope, will write the second volume of "The Making of Modern Britain"; it will be welcomed heartily by the readers of the present text.

Ignoble Experiment

THE GOEBBELS EXPERIMENT:
A Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine. By Derrick Sington and Arthur Weidenfeld. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1943. 274 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by STRUTHERS BURT

WHAT a fantastic name Goebbels is! Gnome-like, goblin-like, goose-like; red-eyed and hissing.

Try saying these out-loud, and fast. Goering, Goebbels, Hitler, and Hess!

History has a strange sense of caricature and of stage-direction as if, back of the historian, were a major historian, history itself. What better name, for example, could be found for Caesar than Caesar, or for Napoleon than Napoleon? The short, sharp, predatory consonants and vowels of the first, the oratund, pompous, but dignified and important vowels and consonants of the latter. And what could be more perfect for weasel-hearted traitors than Quisling? While even Charles Dickens, genius of nomenclature, could have hit upon nothing more apt for the greatest and most vocal liar the world has ever seen, natural and self-taught, than Goebbels. Some god must have laughed at the birth of this man; if one of the bloody German gods, laughing deep in his beard, all the better. Therefore, for the enrichment of the already magnificent English vocabulary I suggest a further word, onomatopoeic and exact, complete in all its necessary nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs, tenses and cases.

"To goebbel; goebbelingly. A goebbeler; a goebbel."

"The Goebbels Experiment" is a complete scholarly and unimpassioned document. The Yale University Press issues it as the thirty-first volume published under the terms of the Philip Hamilton McMillan Memorial Publication Fund; Philip McMillan having been a generous and upright son of Yale who, although he died in 1919, a year after the last war, would not have been able, decent American as he was, to have imagined a creature like Joseph Goebbels.

Nowadays all living Yale men, as well as all decent and informed men and women everywhere, hundreds of millions of them, have had to accept Joseph Goebbels and others like him not as nightmare phantasies but as dreadful matters-of-fact. And Goebbels in a certain sense, even more than his master Hitler, is the most sinister of these inhabitants of the dark, for more clearly even than Hit-

ler he realized that the truth, reversed, is the strongest of lies, just as Anti-Christ is the exact image, reversed, of Christ, and so deliberately, cold-bloodedly, and scientifically set out to debauch the minds of men. It will take generations before this poison is entirely out of the bloodstream of the intellect. This is indeed the syphilis of the spirit; the sin against the Holy Ghost.

The co-authors of this book start their study at the beginning of Nazi propaganda, unbelievable as it may seem in July, 1918, while Germany was still undefeated, and when there were still four months of the World War to go, and Hitler, the unknown corporal, was still with his company among the desecrated towns and village of Flanders. In that month a dubious young Bavarian, son of a Silesian railway engineer, calling himself Rudolph von Sebottendorf, but whose real name was Rudolph Glauer, bought (with money borrowed from his mistress, Käthe Bierbaumer) an obscure little Munich sporting weekly, the *Münchener Beobachter*, and announced that henceforth it would be a "patriotic" sheet. In his very first editorial, he said this;

There exist higher and lower races. Those who rate the racial mongrels as equals of the Aryans commit a crime against mankind. These inferior races need Leaders and a Leading race to develop them . . . The Germanic race is destined for this Leader role.

I suppose no American need be told that the Nazis have always catalogued us as one of the leading "mongrel" and "inferior races," along with England and France, and at an early date laid plans to subjugate us and, when that was accomplished, assign to us proper "Leaders."

It is interesting to note that "von Sebottendorf," this early exponent of "the Master Race," had stolen a minor title of nobility; that he had borrowed money from a bemused Jewess; that his "Fuehrer," soon to appear, was an Austrian, an illegitimate grandson, and came from the Sudeten, one of the murkiest population areas in Europe; and that Joseph Goebbels, upon whose narrow shoulders the mantle of "Rudolph von Sebottendorf" fell, was a waspish, lecherous, club-footed nobody. One runs out of quotation marks to indicate the spurious. All that was needed to complete the picture "of this blond Aryan group" was the name and appearance of the Russian Balt and former Communist who speedily emerged to take over "von Sebottendorf's" theory of

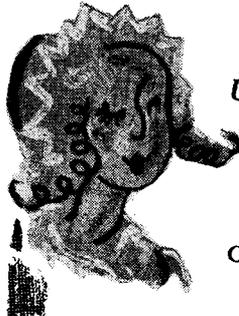


this is
Lorence
A narrative of
the Reverend
Laurence Sterne
by
Lodwick Hartley

THE REVEREND LAURENCE STERNE'S morality has often been called into question—his literary conscience never. Rebuked by the smug and shocked clergy for the hilarious impropriety of his *Tristram Shandy*, London society was highly amused and surprised by it; for no novel like it had ever before come from an English pen.

Sterne's astonishing love affairs, his patience with a neurotic wife, the midnight gaieties of "Crazy Castle," and the stories of the people portrayed in *Tristram Shandy*—all of these are recounted here.

"The author of *Tristram Shandy*, himself one of the rare comic spirits of the world, would have liked this book . . . a narrative of admirable sprightliness, and a critical study illuminated by most unstodgy wisdom, reinforced by an enchantingly mad jacket." — *N. Y. Times Book Review* \$3.00



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