

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. Goëring, 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

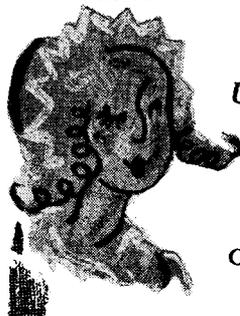


this is
Lorence
A narrative of
the Reverend
Laurence Sterne
by
Lodwick Hartley

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



The
University of
**NORTH
CAROLINA
PRESS**
Chapel Hill, N. C.

"racial purity." The name of this dark-haired Balt was Rosenberg.

The *Münchener Beobachter* became the *Völkischer Beobachter*, Hitler's especial paper, and presently passed under the control of Max Amann, a former bank clerk who had been Hitler's sergeant major, and who now was to become his publisher, head of the Eher Publishing House. As a result, both Hitler and Amann became multi-millionaires. In 1925 Hitler sent Goebbels to Berlin to take charge of Nazi propaganda and meetings there, deliberately and secretly undermining the influence of one of his earliest friends and supporters, Gregor Strasser, chief of the Party's propaganda. Goebbels immediately showed the criminal and vicious genius that has distinguished him; he invited martyrdom for his followers by hoodlum tactics, he provoked brutal incidents on all occasions, and he used language solely as a subversive weapon.

Fact by fact, document by document, date after date, original source after original source, these backed whenever necessary by direct quotation, the authors of this masterly study of the Nazi mind where it has to do with propaganda, domestic and foreign, build up the picture of the monstrous machine designed to destroy thought. There are even charts, like those of some vast corporation, whose various divisions, stemming from the fountain-head, Minister of Public Enlightenment (sic!) and Propaganda, Goebbels, spread eventually into every country, large or insignificant, and down into every function of German life. Nothing was neglected. Like the Chinese children of the sixteenth century who were brought up in vases until, dwarfed and monstrous, they were sufficiently grotesque to please, as slaves and pets, the great ladies of Europe, the lies of the Nazi Party and its theory of "categorical cynicism" warped and deformed throughout the world all those so foolish or so ignorant as to listen.

This is a fascinating book; this book, "The Goebbels Experiment." Told with lucid directness, it has the damning quality of cool, objective writing, but because of its context it is far more hair-raising and exciting than most murder stories. And that is another eerie result of the paradoxical horror of the times in which we are living . . . any true document concerning the Nazi regime in any of its aspects is as shocking as a sudden look into hell.

The Yale University Press has published this particular and overwhelmingly important aspect of hell with grave scholastic decorum. Also, three dollars makes hell expensive. The format of the book is such that none but the scholar will be tempted to look inside. This is not only a pity in a literary sense, but it is also an unwitting crime against knowledge. I sincerely trust that the Yale University Press will republish this book to the sound of bugles and in a paper edition costing not more than fifty cents and to be sold everywhere, especially on news-stands. There are still too many Americans, protected as we are by oceans, although no longer adequately, not yet fully aware of the shape of hell; the inner fiery hell of Nazi murder, torture, assassination, rapine, and rape; the cold outer frozen hell of Nazi theory and intellectual procedure where, as in Dante's Inferno, sit the treacherous, the unimpassioned cruel, the venal, the sellers out of honor, and the despisers of humanity; all these presided over by a small, sharp-faced, club-footed minor demon.

New Publication Fund

Princeton University Press has announced establishment of the MacLaren Fund in the History of Engineering and Technology, which will be a revolving fund, named for Malcolm MacLaren, pioneer American electrical engineer who is now a professor emeritus at Princeton.

AmericanDimensions

ATLAS OF AMERICAN HISTORY.
James Truslow Adams, Editor-in-chief. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1943. 360 pp. with index. \$10.

Reviewed by NORMAN COUSINS

THIS volume is a notable service to the study of American history. It takes the place of dozens of separate works which, when pieced together, add up to a cartographical story of America. But that is only one of its major accomplishments. In addition to presenting a geographical record in compact, unified form, it serves as a fascinating study of the unfolding development of the United States. In a series of 135 pen-and-ink maps reproduced in photo-offset on good stock, the "Atlas" provides the geographical picture of the principal events in American history in chronological sequence, region by region as well as the country as a whole. Included, too, are maps dealing with topography, forestry, railroad building, survey guides, etc.

In sum, "The Atlas of American History" is an immensely valuable aid and standard reference work for anyone interested in or working with the materials of American history. James Truslow Adams, the editor, and R. V. Coleman, the managing editor, have succeeded in having their "Atlas" do for American geography what their "Dictionary of American History" does for the written record. They were assisted in this undertaking by some sixty-four specialists in history. In practical operation, it works out this way: Each map, in addition to the usual legend, carries the name of the supervisory expert. Thus Douglas Southall Freeman directs the cartography on the plate dealing with Virginia as it was in 1864-65; Carl Coke Rister on the clash with Mexico and the new boundaries, 1836-48; Dan E. Clark and Alvin F. Harlow on the Northwest as it was in 1865-90—to mention only a few.

Despite this range of experting, there is no lack of uniformity in the volume, for the maps are drawn by a single cartographer, LeRoy H. Appleton, whose work is distinctive yet direct, concise yet comprehensive. The lettering stands head and shoulders above anything being done today in historical maps.

THE MAKING OF MODERN BRITAIN

By J. B. BREBNER & ALLAN NEVINS

Here is the book every alert American has wanted, but has been unable to find until now—a concise history, stripped down to essentials, which supplies the background facts as we need to know, and is as enjoyable to read as it is informative.

Its pages tell the story of the English people from prehistoric times to the present in a manner that makes sense to the modern reader and in a form he can quickly grasp.
\$2.50

W. W. NORTON & CO.
"Books That Live"
70 Fifth Avenue, N. Y.

WAR BONDS

Not a Gift, But Thrift