NEW BOOKS

TWENTY-FIVE TROUBLED YEARS. By F. H. Soward, Professor of History, University of British Columbia. Oxford University Press. $3.00.

THE SURVIVAL OF WESTERN CULTURE. By Ralph Tyler Flewelling, Professor of Philosophy and Director of the School of Philosophy, University of Southern California. $3.00.

Professor Soward's book is one which in no merely conventional but a real sense may be said to meet an urgent need. It presents with crystal clarity in a compact volume the sequence of world events from 1914 to 1939, showing how they bore upon one another, and rescuing the general reader from innumerable facile confusions. The utmost care has been taken to keep apart the facts and theories regarding the facts. Professor Soward is to be congratulated on his successful self-detachment in this narrative even from the interest which his other work shows to be precious to him, that he may give to each movement or party, in the momentous development of affairs he has undertaken exhibit, the benefit of that initially sympathetic narrative without which it cannot be understood.

I should not endorse some of the judgments which, despite his rigorous impartiality, the author has here and there avowed or implied. A great deal may be said against the statement that "To Fascism must go the credit for closing a religious controversy of almost sixty years' standing". Andrew Carnegie has been quoted as saying to a silent but enraged bishop on the golf course "My Lord, there are silences more profane than speech", and the Fascist method of closing that religious controversy must rank, I think, among Mussolini's major blasphemies. But most cordially do I recommend *Twenty-Five Troubled Years* as a calm, judicious survey of the period the general reader now most needs to understand. It is a book rich in instruction for the average enquirer and of invaluable reference for all.

A different sort of purpose was that of Professor R. T. Flewelling when he wrote his *Survival of Western Culture*. This is a book by no means intended simply to show what movements mean: it is a work of intense definite conviction, which is set forth with a blend of critical acumen and apostolic fervor.

Professor Flewelling was stirred by the work of Oswald Spengler (perhaps if one may venture upon a great comparison, like Kant by Hume). He will not hear of any inevitable "Decline of the West". On the contrary, fr9m the West he believes has come in the past, and may well come again, the blend of ideals of liberty and order by which the great values of mankind can be assured. In a word, the conception of a free personality. It is the argument of this book that there is no automatic progress of mankind upon which we may heedlessly cepend.e Like one of Thomas Hardy's reflective characters, Professor Flewelling would agree that "There is a backward current in things, and we must keep moving forward if we would bide just where we be." But he feels that the great contribution of the West was to insist on such perpetual movement forward, the unceasing guardianship of personality.

Unlike the fatalistic Orient, the West understood the peril of leaving this to "Nature". Unfortunately, from time to time, western minds have fallen into a folly of their own, in analyzing away are essentially religious concern for progress into the interplay of economic self-seeking impulses. The paralysing touch of a selfish scepticism, a demoralising (in the strict etymological sense)of social and international life, has brought us to a sad impasse. But Professor Flewelling will by no means endorse the conclusion of Rabindranath Tagore, that the East is the real source of regeneration for a decadent West. His book is an enquiry first into the problem of the decline of western culture and next into the problem of its resurgence. Like the famous case of the moods of one "Philip"—an appeal from the West drunk to the West sober!

With splendid wealth of historical illustration, and a constant subtlety of argument, this is a book to stir the thought we need. The Foreword warns readers that it is "not a comfortable book". But a book of which Henri Bergson wrote that it is "full of ideas, suggestive in the highest degree" can dispense with the poor recommendation of being comfortable. As Kingsley said about a comfortable religion, "If that is all you want, you may get the same result from opium or Scotch whisky". To many readers the *Survival of Western Culture* should prove in the highest of senses an intellectual stimulant.

H. L. S.

REVOLUTIONS IN RUSSIA—Their Lessons for the Western Worl.d. By S. R. Treviranus. Harper & Bros., New York and London, 1944. 303 pp. $3.00.

The author was a German naval officer in World War 1 and a conservative member of the German Reichstag, held a post in the Bruening Cabinet 1930-32, was on the Nazi death list on Bloody Saturday, (June 30, 1934), managed to escape, and is now a citizen of Canada. As a German politician and statesman he had more than an academic interest in Russia, her internal affairs, and her foreign policy especially in relation to the German *Reich*. This book is the fruit of keen obser-vation during Mr. Treviranus's political career, and of thorough study-ing in years of imposed leisure. It is one of the best publications in recent years on the genesis of Revolutionary Russia, and on the general line of Soviet policies, internal and foreign.

The first six of his ten chapters are an accurate narrative of the political currents which led up to the Revolution of 1917. The author refrains from an analysis of the deeper spiritual forces which generated the Russian revolutionary spirit, as we find it, e.g., in Berdyaev's *The Origin of Russian Communism* or in Gurian's *Bolshevism*. He concentrates upon the political. This serves the important purpose of drawing the attention of the West to the fact that economic motives and aims were always a mere epiphenomenon in Russian political and cultural consciousness, quite contrary to the impression which the out-side observer was likely to receive from what he heard of Russia in the last 25 years. In the last four chapters Mr. Treviranus describes the

general course of Soviet policies, and the turn from Trotzkyist internationalism to Stalinist "Revisionist Slavism". He concludes with a forecast on the future of the U.S.S.R.

His prophecies are the most interesting but also the most disputable part of the book. In Soviet foreign politics, Mr. Treviranus foresees a further withdrawal from the ideological Imperialism of the Comintern and an even more pronounced turn towards some Panslavist power-politics of a pre-revolutionary style. He assumes that the Kremlin, still under the cloud of the deep suspicions formed as the result of 25 years of universal ostracism, projects a defence in depth covering the globe: "Zones of Incorporation, of Infiltration, of Interference, of Interrogation, and of Information, though without rigid contours, can be drawn as a rough conception of this global strategy." (p. 259) It seems as if the recent Polish, Baltic and Balkanese policies of the U.S.S.R. would, in the main, justify this prediction. Internally, Mr. Treviranus predicts a new revolution of the peasants for the right to own more land individually rather than in the form of the present communal, quasi-cooperative proprietorship. It is likely that the new elite will gradually grow into a feudal stratum, with vested interests and all the social stratification that this implies. But the peasants have meanwhile been so weakened by the urbanization and industrialization of the country that their desire to own land will hardly be sufficient to revolutionize Russian society as a whole. A much greater probability, to which Mr. Treviranus points, is that, in a people so deeply religious strongly mystical currents will take hold of the Russian spirit again and lead to the formation of a new religiousness, essentially different from traditional Orthodoxy.

E. L. M.

ENGLISH SOCIAL HISTORY. A Survey of Six Centuries, Chaucer to Queen Victoria. By G. M. Trevelyan, O.M. Longmans, Green and Co. New York, 1943. Pp. 628, maps and diagrams.

For a quarter of a century Mr. Trevelyan has been the doughty protagonist of historical writing as an art, which requires scientific care in the collection and arrangement of source material, philosophic caution in interpretation of that material, and literary skill in narrative or exposition: so that once the historian has made sure of his facts and arrived at sound conclusions, he may catch and hold the interest of his readers. Before entering the lists in behalf of his theories he had given proof of their merit in his brilliant studies of Garibaldi and of England in the age of Wycliff. Since then he has published *inter alia* intensive studies of two vital periods in English history, and a history of England in one volume. *English Social History*, therefore, is the crowning achievement of a long life spent on the theory and practice of vivid historical writing. It deals with English social history from the middle of the 14th century to the end of the 19th, sketches class relationships, family and household life, conditions

of labor and leisure, the attitude of man to nature, the culture of each age as expressed in religion, the fine arts, learning and thought. In other words, it begins with the English people when they are emerging as a nation with a language and literature, social customs and institutions, and traces their evolution to the present day. In justification of this approach to his subject the author defines social history as "history with politics left out", not because politics are unimportant, but because they and economic history have hitherto received most attention, and because "without social history economic history is barren and political history is unintelligible."

But despite this limitation of the field he admits an embarrassing wealth of material to assimilate and reproduce in concise yet readable form: for long as political speeches have been, and heavy or diffuse the arguments of economic theorists, source materials of the social historian far outrange them both, comprising all English literature, both the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. Moreover, the convenient pegs of kings, prime ministers or revolutions cannot be used by the social historian who finds that while all periods are transitional periods, forms of old institutions and vestiges of old customs are found side by side with the new. Hence the social historian must deal with broad periods and, while keeping the permanent stream of history clear, describe the new features of each succeeding age. Though readers may be disappointed in such hackneyed chapter headings as Chaucer's, Shakespeare's or Cobbett's England, they will find something new on many subjects in each chapter, and many illuminating comments which keep these subjects in perspective and reveal their significance; for Mr. Trevelyan is not content with narrative without interpretation or with exposition without criticism, and he does not hesitate to praise or condemn the taste, ideals or conduct of either his contemporaries or his ancestors. It is his capacity for critical appreciation that makes him so stimulating and informative.

D. C. H.

HEAR, HEAR! By William Freeman. Illustrated by Gluyas Williams. Edited for America with additional chapters by Quincy Howe. Simon and Schuster, New York. $1.50.

Mr. Freeman's dedication explains his title, reveals his quality, and strikes the keynote of his work. It runs: "TO THE VOICE, suspiciously indistinct, recklessly good-natured, and forever anonymous, which cheered me with my first *Hear, Hear*! this book is dedicated." The book is a light-hearted guide to what should be a universal art these days—public speaking.

As for scope, Mr. Freeman discusses composition, diction, figures of speech—their uses and their dangers—delivery, the ominous transition "from laughter to libel", and special occasions. Being a well known English writer and lecturer, he has made *Hear, Hear*! a piece of literature as well as a text replete with practical knowledge. Instruction is always lively. On one of the special occasions cited, he had to

lecture in competition with Greek dancers overhead, "a frenzied pianist below, while outside a man with a concertina did his best to drive off the pitch another man playing the bagpipes."

Roget's Thesaurus is highly praised, that philosophical dictionary which Barrie has proclaimed his "only companion in London" during early days. Mr. Freeman's style is humorously urbane, but he can on occasion use the vernacular with pungent effect, as in this sentence "Of the three traditional axioms for a chairman—to stand up, to speak up, and to shut up—the last is the most important and the one most often forgotten."

Leacock offers very much the same criticism, with a spice of irony. In *We Have With Us Tonight* he instances the familiar type of chairman who says, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have not come here to listen to *me*. So I will be very brief; in fact, I will confine my remarks to just one or two very short observations." And he proceeds to make observations for half an hour. Both Leacock and Freeman speak from the lecturer's point of view.

The last three chapters and the epilogue are evidently from the pen of Mr. Howe. He is concise, practical, and experienced; and, be it noted, he pays women the compliment of saying that "they almost invariably make better speeches of introduction than men." This, because they take the trouble to gather a few vital facts about the person being introduced.

Mr. Williams's cartoons, the dozen of them, are delightful. Choice here is perhaps a matter of personal taste, but several emerge distinctly above the general level of excellence. *Illustrated Talk*, for instance, tells an hilarious story with sly humor; *Street Orator* speaks an eloquent volume on soap box oratory; *Toastmaster* and *Madam Chairman* are delicate and delicious satires.

SISTER MAURA.

BRITISH COLONIAL THEORIES 1570-1850. By Klaus E. Knorr. With a foreword by H. A. Innis. The University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1944. Pp. xix, 429.

This study, originally written as a doctoral dissertation, is a very competent compendium and analysis of British colonial theories from the beginning of the first empire to the end of the second; and thoug it concerns itself with British theories only, taking little if any notice of the view. of colonial statesmen or of their attempts to influence imperial policy, it will be extremely useful to students in those colonies for reference as they look at British theories from the colonial point of view. As an aid to clarity, Mr. Knorr adopts a combination of the topical and chronological methods, and is thus enabled to show the arguments that were used at different periods, which arguments were most cogent in each period, what changes in theory resulted from the loss of the first empire, and what cumulative modifications of the old colonial system finally led to its abolition. Though there is little new in the subjects discussed, there is some freshness in organization and emphasis; and there is a lesson for the

impatient reformer in the reminder that the idea of the "white man's burden" was a product of the late 18th rather than of the late 19th century. For those who cannot read extensively in the original sources, this volume provides a painstaking and convenient handbook; and, for those who can, it will serve as a guide not only for reviewing the theories of the period up to 1850 but also, as Dr. Innis suggests, for analyzing the theories of empire that have been held since that date.

D. C. H.

VIA DIPLOMATIC POUCH. By Douglas Miller. With Foreword by William L. Shirer. Didier, New York, 1944. $3.00.

This is an illuminating book, especially for those who still curiously retain some shred of belief that the Nazi regime began well, but became corrupted by its Fuehrer's personal ambition. A like legend has been circulated, with regrettable success, about an initial period of Mussolini's dictatorship. Mr. Miller shows in *Via Diplomatic Pouch* regarding Hitler, as Professor Salvemini has shown in *Under the Axe of Fascism* regarding Mussolini, that the atrocities by which the dictator eventually appalled mankind were but the continuation of conduct by which he had risen to power, and that the very earliest years of his authority (when a chorus of ignorant adulation could be heard aboard) were strewn with horrors no less to be reprobated because as yet they had not touched the critic's own countrymen. German and Italian refugees often complain that Nazi or Fascist outrage was condoned by so many in Britain, in France, in the United States, untill it began to threaten British or French or American interest. How, they ask, does a question cease to have merely political, and acquire moral, significance when one's own fellow-citizens begin to be involved? Our "appeasers" of six years ago may well wish to evade that challenge.

The answer which some (by no means all) can fairly make is that they did not realize, in those years gone by, what the Nazi and Fascist regimes actually meant. A cloud of propagandist commendation, and the systematic discrediting of complaint from victims, produced a quite genuine belief abroad that Mussolini had saved Italy from chaos and that Hitler had "restored to Germans their self-respect". How far this spreading of delusion, which it seemed impossible eight or nine years ago to stop, contributed to the world's tragedy should be a painful thought to those who promoted it.

Mr. Miller at least is guiltless. As Mr. Shirer's foreword to his book says, he has the right to remind his fellow-Americans "I told you so". He had fifteen years' experience in the office of commercial *attache* to the United States Embassy at Berlin, and of these the last six had been spent under the Nazi dictatorship. In 1939 he resigned from his government job, and accepted a position in the Economics Department of the University of Denver. Thus free to speak his mind, he gave us in 1941 that arresting monograph entitled *You Can't Do Business With Hitler*. What he has now published is still more convincing. In *Via Diplomatic Pouch* we have reproduced actual despatches, sent at intervals over the period 1931-1937, to Washington by

this *attache*. They describe and estimate confidentially for the American State Department what the Nazi policies meant. Peculiar force belongs to reports thus not only written on the spot by an observer of exceptional competence, with exceptional sources of information, but also going uncensored by any German authority, under the immunities of an ambassador's mail.

What a disclosure they constitute! A disclosure, from the very first, of brutality and fraud, of the design to exploit good will in the foreign powers that could be befooled, of a government lacking in all the qualities which could make it dependable in international intercourse. Mr. Shirer recalls how he himself, having seen these reports when they were presented to the State Department, had urged the American ambassador at Berlin to get them somehow published. He thought the American people, as well as the American government, should have such eye-opening revelations in time. But it was not done. The influences for hushing things up were too strong. Appeasement was in the air—with the result we know.

Shall we allow similar influences to repeat the tragedy? I commend these vivid pages by Mr. Miller to all who would understand the antecedents of the calamity which befell us, that they may be vigilant against such "architects of ruin" again.

H. L. S.

THE SILENCE OF THE SEA. By "Vercors." Macmillans in Canada. Pp. 47. $1.25.

THE SIGN POST. By E. Arnot Robertson. Macmillans in Canada. Pp. 313. $2.75.

THE CANNON'S MOUTH. By Wilfrid Heighington. Forward Pub. Co., Toronto. Pp. 368.

France, Britain and Canada are represented by these three novels, and honours for artistry must surely go to Occupied France. Vercors is the pseudonym of one of the many French writers who refused to write for the Germans or the collaborationists; the work, published secretly in Paris under the title *Le Silence de la Mer* and later in England as *Put Out the Light*, is only about 10,000 words in length. It tells of a Frenchman and his daughter who have a German officer billeted on them; they receive him, but never speak to him despite all his attempts at friendliness, except once. To tell more of this perfect tale would spoil the pleasure of the reader. It is enough to say that it shows the qualities of French art—simplicity and clarity—at their finest. This is one of the most moving pieces of literature we have had for many a day.

With Miss Robertson's novel it is a case for this reviewer of "All the battalion's being out of step but our Willie." Some critics have gone into raptures, and the Book of the Month Club made it its

selection, but we were frankly bored most of the time. Perhaps we do not believe that adultery is the best cure for "nerves"; perhaps we do not agree with idealizing the Irish. The scene is London and Ireland in 1940; the hero is an airman on convalescent leave; for a change he decides to go to a little seaside village in Donegal that he has visited as a boy. On the boat he meets a French woman, who goes with him eventually. One is never sure what is the centre of the story. Is it about the airman and his views? Is it a picture of Irish village life with all the traditional wit and imagination of the Celt? Is Bridie really the centre and heroine? Certainly the novel is always interesting when Bridie is on the scene, and the reader feels the tragedy of Bridie's death. Nothing seems to be settled by the end of the novel with the departure of the two "foreigners" from the village. It is just this lack of direction that makes the novel suffer in comparison with *The Silence of the Sea*.

Mr. Wilfrid Heighington, in *Cannon's Mouth*, traces the life of Arthur Oswestry from his enlistment in 1914 in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces until his evacuation from France as a Major General in 1940. In the documentary parts concerning the World War of 1914-18 the book is of real value; any veteran will find himself at home in the descriptions of trench warfare. Again, the description of the Vimy Pilgrimage is on the whole well handled. As a lawyer, Mr. Heighington gives a fine scene in a Divorce Court in England. But the rest of the novel is not so satisfactory: it reads much like a cross between a yarn of boys playing at detective and a wish-fulfilment phantasy. One finds it hard to believe in the remarkable choice of the hero for Secret Service work during the First War or in his sudden rise to high military rank. Women are infatuated with him at first sight, and every woman seems to come out amazingly as a fine horsewoman, tennis player, social success or what not. The picture of the "hard-boiled twenties" has been done too often before for Mr. Heighington's attempt to be impressive. The author is most unconvincing in his fictitious names: Lady Yeominster, Sir Lyon Heatherdew, Rivers Jordan, and, for an American city, Modernapolis, and for an English one, Shoeburyness. The plot is marred by the amazing way in which everybody turns up again; for example, a German sniper shoots Sergeant Dale; later he is taken prisoner by Oswestry, but somehow he gets back to Germany and is later sent as a spy to America, where Oswestry is detailed to get his man; Oswestry promptly does so, and the two go on a warship to England, where instead of being shot, the German is conveniently allowed to escape—to turn up in Toronto some years later to do some plotting that never amounts to anything, and to carry on a flirtation with Sergeant Dale's widow, now the wife of Major General Oswestry! Even though the General is out of the country, his faithful batman of former days manages to bring about the German's downfall with the aid of a former love of the General's, who (the lady) has fortunately come to live in Canada. One need not be a Zoilus to find fault with that sort of plot.

British and Canadian novelists can still go to school to French writers, who have never lost the merits of classicism.

B. M.

HISTORICAL GUIDE TO NEW BRUNSWICK. By Dr. J. C. Webster. New Brunswick Government Bureau of Information and Tourist Travel, 1942. Revised edition. Pp. 119. Illustrated.

This handsome volume is dedicated to the pioneer explorers traders and adventurers who made the province known, and to the Loyalist settlers who developed it. It therefore deals largely with the first two centuries of New Brunswick history and the sites or events marked by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, of which Dr. Webster has long been a member and is now chairman. In the last two decades Dr. Webster has made a remarkable collection of historical maps, pictures, portraits and engravings, and has written extensively on the French regime in New Brunswick and on the forts of Chignecto. In this volume he has drawn freely upon his pictorial collection to illustrate his summary account of historic sites and events in the period. The result is a very attractive, informative and reliable guide-book, alphabetically arranged for ready reference.

D. C. H.

I, JONES, SOLDIER. By Joseph Schull. Macmillans in Canada. Pp. 62. $1.75.

Though serving with the Canadian Navy, Mr. Schull, whose delightful *Legend of Ghost Lagoon* will be remembered by readers of the DALHOUSIE REVIEW, has made in this deeply moving narrative poem a fine psychological study of an infantry officer on the eve of attack. Jones was an ordinary young Canadian drawn into the war. As his men are taking their positions for an attack, Jones lies in No-man's Land watching them pass him; all the time his restless, questioning mind flashes back to the days of peace, enlistment, and training down to the present moment, noting the changes in the man and seeking to know why he is here in the ranks of death. He knows something of the workings of the human mind, and is honest enough to discard a reason for his presence when it fails to satisfy his integrity. Finally Jones finds a satisfactory explanation—a reviewer would be doing a disservice by revealing the solution—and the poem comes to an end. The language of the poem is quite simple and direct, and mercifully free from obscenity and vulgarity; the occasional figure of speech is heightened in its effect by the general plainness of tone. The unrhymed, rhythmical, rather than metrical, lines of varying length also add to the naturalness of effect. This is a poem to be read by thoughtful Canadians.

B. M.