

AN AMERICAN DYNASTY, by John Tebbel. \$3.00. *Doubleday*. Here is the first thorough analysis of the careers of the McCormicks, Medills, and Pattersons, and of their newspaper empire. Mr. Tebbel sticks close to the facts — his book is filled with information that will be new to many readers, including a large number of specialists in the field of journalism — but he does not pretend to be without opinions of his own. Indeed, he has very definite opinions. He thinks that the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Washington Times-Herald*, and the *New York Daily News*, together with the Hearst newspapers, the Gannett chain, and the Scripps-Howard chain, "have, at one time or another, used their news columns freely to promulgate editorial policies; none of them has hesitated to distort and slant the news when it suited its political purposes." He admits Joseph Medill's contributions to American political history and he lists them as "factors in saving the Union. Yet, having helped save it, Medill and his *Tribune* did little to preserve it thereafter." Of the present generation of the family, there is little to be said to its credit, for the thinking behind the papers is "to blame at least in part for the continued political existence of such men as Gerald L. K. Smith, Senator Theodore Bilbo, Representative Clare Hoffman and John Rankin; and such institutions as the Christian Front. . . ." Altogether a noteworthy contribution to the realms of journalistic history and criticism. There are many illustrations.

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

ECONOMIC FREEDOM FOR THE WEST, by Wendell Berge. \$2.50. *Nebraska*. By "the west," the former Assistant Attorney General of the United States means the region between the Mississippi and the Pacific coast. As former chief of the Antitrust Division, he is naturally concerned here with combatting monopolies in the expanded Western industries, and he has included in the discussion such problems as a Missouri Valley Authority (which he favors), discrimination in freight rates and the disposal of the industrial facilities built by the government during the war. It is perhaps not unfair to say that Mr. Berge is rapidly becoming the Ellis Arnall of the West.

OUR FAIR CITY, edited by Robert S. Allen. \$3.50. *Vanguard*. Mr. Allen's thesis is that "while our victorious armies are imposing democracy on millions in Europe and the Far East, local government here at home is a reeking shambles of corruption, incompetence, waste, and misrule. There was scarcely a city in Nazi Germany or jingoist Japan that was not managed more efficiently and intelligently than comparable communities in the United States." This is an exaggerated view of American municipal government, but there is considerable truth in it. Mr. Allen has asked a group of able writers to discuss, from every major angle, seventeen of the more important communities of this country — Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Miami, Birmingham, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, Memphis, St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver, Butte, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles. The book as a whole makes lively reading, though some of the chapters are written in the superficial manner of Sunday-supplement newspaper features. A more vigorous and perhaps more knowing editorial hand would have insisted on much rewriting. One of the better chapters, that on Butte, by Joseph Kinsey Howard, has appeared in *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*, in abbreviated form. The volume sadly lacks an index.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE WORLD AND AFRICA, *An Inquiry into the Part which Africa Has Played in World History*, by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. \$3.00. *Viking*. It might have seemed rather futile to try to compress the history of a continent into 261 pages, but Mr. Du Bois' volume has the justification that virtually all of its content will seem fresh to the layman. He begins with a passionate denunciation of the slave trade and then goes on to sketch in the ethnography of Africa and the histories of Egypt, Central Africa, the Sudan and the Gold Coast. Taken as a plea for racial justice or as the story of a continent which is still "dark" to most Americans, the book is well worth reading.

UNDERSTANDING THE RUSSIANS, *A Study of Soviet Life and Culture*, edited by Bernhard J. Stern and Samuel Smith. \$2.75. *Barnes &*

*Noble.* Understanding the Russians is a simple matter for the editors of this anthology: all that one must do is take Soviet claims at their face value. In line with this premise, Messrs Stern and Smith have compiled fifty essays about Soviet life from such sources as the Russian Embassy *Information Bulletin*, the speeches of Stalin and Molotov, and the writings of such "widely respected" authorities as Hewlett Johnson, Harry F. Ward, Maurice Hindus and Edgar Snow. A number of photographs are provided, showing Russian citizens in various attitudes of delight.

THROUGH RUSSIA'S BACK DOOR, by Richard E. Lauterbach. \$2.75. *Harper.* Mr. Lauterbach's second book will probably not achieve the popularity of his *These Are the Russians*, which was offered as a bonus with subscriptions to the *Daily Worker*. Whereas the first book hewed to the Party line consistently, this one effects a sort of compromise: instead of picturing the Soviet Union as a land of unadulterated socialist triumphs, Mr. Lauterbach takes note of a few of the unpleasant realities of life in a police state. But in the end he finds that Communism and democracy can live together in peace; that Russian intransigence is no worse than our own; and that if we had given the atomic bomb to Stalin, Russian "suspicion" of the United States would have evaporated. There are a number of interesting photographs.

## HISTORY

LEARNING HOW TO BEHAVE, *A Historical Study of American Etiquette Books*, by Arthur M. Schlesinger. \$2.00. *Macmillan.* Based on the general thesis that "manners not only make the man but, to a surprising degree, also a people," this brief but amazingly comprehensive survey makes enlightening and, at times, hilarious reading. It is, indeed, as charming and readable an historical volume as has appeared in decades. Dr. Schlesinger has obviously delved deeply into the realm of etiquette literature, and he writes with precision, grace, and clarity. He doubtless has more to say on the subject than appears in this small volume, and it is to be hoped that he will soon favor readers with another book in the same

field. A good bibliography and index round out a first-rate performance.

LINCOLN'S WAR CABINET, by Burton J. Hendrick. \$5.00. *Little, Brown.* Of original material there is probably very little in this book, but it doubtless contains the essence of the individual studies of the men who advised Lincoln officially. Besides, it is admirably organized and the writing is excellent. Mr. Hendrick, an able biographer, who has hitherto generally confined himself to the treatment of people more respectable than truly distinguished, does not contribute much in the way of analysis, either of Lincoln or of any members of his Cabinet. He is properly amazed at Lincoln's shrewdness and diplomacy, and appalled by the cheapness and ambition of such men as Chase and Stanton, but he does not go a great deal beyond amazement. There are many illustrations.

## ECONOMICS

THE COMING CRISIS, by Fritz Sternberg. \$3.50. *John Day.* At no time during the thirties was the United States able to utilize all its productive resources, and the result was chronic mass unemployment. Now, at the end of the war, our productive capacity is 50 per cent greater, and Mr. Sternberg believes it is more than ever unlikely that we shall find enough markets to keep our industry going full blast. As a result, he believes, there will be a worse crash than in 1929, and this one will sound the death-knell for world capitalism. Mr. Sternberg's book could be of great value in dispelling any unthinking optimism about America's future, but in his hosannas to Soviet "socialism," and in his failure to recognize any threat to this country except unemployment he has virtually aligned himself with the totalitarians. In a book whose author continually stresses the connection between political and economic problems, it is rather dismaying that the word "democracy" should not once appear.

OUT OF YOUR POCKET, by Darel McConkey. \$1.00. *Pamphlet Press.* The author, a veteran of three years on the staff of the cartel-investigating Kilgore Committee, explains a complex subject in layman's language with clarity