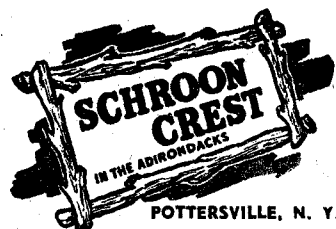




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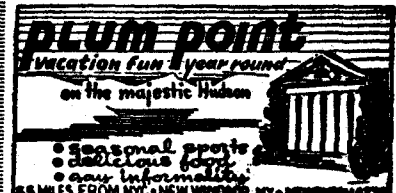
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It is too bad that this portable edition of his work does not do full justice to him. For he is part of our "usable past," a fighter who never allowed his sword to lie between thought and action, who gave his life to show that man should be in the saddle, his own master, riding his own body for all it is worth, and only in that way able to take heaven and earth by storm.

BEN FIELD.

War Novel

THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS, by Robert McLaughlin. Knopf. \$3.

IT is easy to forget the history even of the past few years, and one of the tasks of the novelist is to keep us from forgetting. *The Side of the Angels* reminds us of the nobility and self-sacrifice with which so much of our youth entered upon the war against the Axis. It also recalls some ignoble aspects of World War II: the corporation ads exploiting the soldier—"We don't get time-and-a-half in the fox-holes"—while covering up the rapacity with which these corporations were filling their treasuries and even milking the government to pay for their anti-labor propaganda; the unnecessary military losses and disasters, due to the same kind of selfish plotting carried out within Army strategy itself.

The battle scenes in this novel are not many, but read convincingly. Equally exciting is the conflict of ideas, brought out mainly in the persons of two brothers. One, the older, is an advertising and publicity expert who allies himself with the utmost cynicism to the forces making for a fascist America, and plotting the next war even while this one is hardly under way. He is given a confidential job with the OSS, spreading democratic propaganda behind the Axis lines. The younger, a magazine writer, a New Dealer trying to discover the reality and future of democracy, is in the infantry and fights in the Italian campaign. The two brothers meet in New York, while the younger is on a pre-embarkation furlough. They meet again in what becomes the climactic scene of the book, the disastrous German raid on the port of Bari. Anyone who has been in the Army can confirm the truth of McLaughlin's picture: the cynicism behind the lines which put so unnecessarily heavy a burden upon the

few at the front; the temper of mind that led to waste of lives, from black market dealings with the enemy all the way up to strategic decisions based on narrow political maneuvers. Such tragic losses came directly out of the Army's denial of what could have been a great course of strength, the fact that it was fighting a democratic and people's war. The book ends with a statement of the struggles that lie ahead for a peaceful and democratic world, which every day's headlines are confirming.

Its truth gives the novel its power. It is not quite top-notch. McLaughlin introduces a flock of people, from every nationality and walk of life, who made up the man-power of the Army, and who make up the flesh and blood of American democracy. He sees them, however, only with a journalistic accuracy, and doesn't understand them sufficiently as people. Like his hero, he feels aloof from them, with the result that a slickness of style and vagueness of thought soften the book's impact. One can trace in the varied quality of his writing the experiences which he has thought out deeply and those with which he has insufficiently grappled. *The Side of the Angels* is a fine novel, however, exciting to read and important in the sincerity, courage and brain power which it brings to American literature.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

Year of the Giants

THE YEAR OF STALINGRAD, by Alexander Werth. Knopf. \$6.

IT is not easy to characterize this book. You get the impression of reading almost unedited notebooks, covering the period from May 1942 to the end of February 1943. Described by the dust-jacket as "an eyewitness' intimate and detailed chronicle of the months of strain from which the USSR emerged as the military and political giant of today," the volume is apparently Book III in what will be a four-part similarly detailed chronicle of the whole war period.

The author's *Moscow War Diary* (1942) and *Leningrad* (1944) had much the same character and Mr. Werth says the present tome "will, in due course, be followed by another dealing with the years in which the Germans were finally driven out of the Soviet Union."

Russian-born, a bilinguist, Mr. Werth's notes, taken during four

years in wartime Russia as a correspondent for various British newspapers, are a welcome relief from the quick generalizations we have come to expect from many newspapermen. The thesis of *The Year of Stalingrad* is that Russia was wholly absorbed in a "war of survival" until the end of the Battle of Stalingrad. That great victory opened the way to a war of liberation—the subject of his next volume—and simultaneously brought the Soviet Union forward as "a mighty factor in world politics." Werth recreates a Russia bending every nerve and muscle to survival, thinking of the outside world only in terms of its impatience for the second front.

The author is not trying to prove anything and perhaps he doesn't prove anything. But in these times of the Truman Doctrine and the anti-Soviet hysteria on which it floats, a true book about Stalingrad suggests a great deal. There are so many facts here that, without deliberate arrangement, they do not make for easy reading. But they do add up to the certainty that this is what the mass of Russians thought and did and this is what they were like as late as February 1943. The Russians Werth photographs are not at all like the Russians the bipartisans behind the Truman Doctrine are now describing to us. They never were.

GEORGE MARION.

No Funeral

IG FARBEN, by Richard Sasuly. Boni & Gaer. \$3.

"TO BUILD a sound peace, we must be relentless in identifying and exposing the things that make for war," writes Senator Claude Pepper in his preface to Richard Sasuly's *IG Farben*. "It is the merit of this book that it contributes to the necessary insight as regards the causes of the Second World War." The author, who took part in the American investigation of IG Farben at the end of the war, has done this by showing the direct connection between monopoly and fascism, and between imperialism and war.

In a treatment as suspenseful as a movie thriller, Mr. Sasuly unravels the machinations of the IG Farben empire and then ties up each end with the economic and political development of Germany. Exposing the drive of IG and the other German cartels towards

fascism and their preparations for war, the cordial relationship between IG and the Social Democratic Weimar Republic, and IG's international cartel struggles and agreements, the author provides some glimpses into the dynamics and methods of monopoly capitalism. That fascism pays dividends to big business is evidenced by the fact that the gross profits of IG for 1943 were sixteen times greater than those in 1932.

Mr. Sasuly devotes three chapters to the American connections of IG Farben. The support given by Standard Oil of New Jersey to IG's chemical monopoly all over the world, including the United States, the working friendship of IG with the Ford Company, the cooperation between IG and Allied Chemical and Dye, the joint corporation formed by IG and Alcoa, known as the Magnesium Development Company, and numerous other cases are cited. These were more than merely business connections established for mutual profit. IG never failed to infiltrate into a position enabling it to restrict the production of materials that became vital to American defense. These cartel links were temporarily suspended by the war but now there is evidence that American monopolists are reestablishing relations with IG Farben.

IG contributed toward and became a major weapon in two world wars. It was the main prop of the Nazi state. It would therefore be expected that two years after the collapse of Germany this monster had been slain, dissected and cremated in accordance with the Yalta and Potsdam agreements and the orders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This, Mr. Sasuly discloses, has not been done. American businessmen in Army uniform, who were charged with carrying out these orders, asked: "How can you expect us to punish the Germans for things we would have done in their places?" As a result, IG is producing again—not mustard gas, of course, but anti-freeze, which requires just one added operation to be converted into mustard gas.

There are one or two points in Mr. Sasuly's book which are perhaps debatable—his negative stand on reparations out of current production, for example. But this does not detract from its value as a chart of the road to war and as an aid in identifying the enemies of the people. The book is rounded out by three appendices giving facts about

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