

Marne there was no effective high command on the Western Front except for Captain Mud and General Slaughter. By 1915 the First World War had become a leaderless, endlessly bloody brawl, where the men who came to the top were those whose toughness and good luck enabled them to brawl the longest. The true leaders of the war—as opposed to the commanders—did not sit in GHQs and cabinet rooms. They were the noncommissioned and junior officers who survived the longest in the unending, purposeless butchery of the trenches. They were the Hitlers and the Röhms in the German Army. With good fortune, they could to some small degree control the actions and the survival of the small groups for whom they were responsible, but control on a larger scale was proved impossible in one futile and costly offensive after another.

Where Ludendorff succeeded it was because he studied, analyzed, and revised the mechanics and methods of trench warfare. He became a hero and almost a demigod to the army because he put in the hands of the small-unit leaders the means for success in the small areas in which they fought. Ludendorff failed because he could not, any more than the lower commanders, see beyond local tactical victories to weld them into the strategic success that the Kaiser's armies could have had in the spring of 1918. But Ludendorff's kinship with his troops went deeper than his understanding and development of trench-warfare techniques and tactics. Quite properly, the front-line infantryman lays his reverses, his hardships, and his comrades' deaths at the feet of his superiors. Moltke was overcome by his anticipation and acceptance of this guilt and responsibility. Ludendorff's break with the fundamentally aristocratic traditions and ideals of a Moltke, his link with the Nazi era, lies in his refusal to accept the evidence of his own complete and ultimate failure and his insistence that the entire responsibility lay elsewhere. When his 1918 offensive finally broke down because of his inability to pull it together, Ludendorff was "like a beetle on its back, waving and wriggling furiously to no effect" and blaming everyone but himself.

Appropriately, Mr. Barnett begins and ends his survey with the men who stood at the top of the German High Command, but his studies of the British and the French are equally penetrating and incisive. His portrait of Jellicoe is not only a fine account of the Battle of Jutland but a merciless analysis of the "flawed cutlass" that was the Royal Navy and of the "comfortable, complacent and passive" society that it represented. Pétain, the victor of Verdun, is placed in the context of the slogan of Vichy France: *Travail, Famille, Patrie* as opposed to the French republican ideals of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*.

The Swordbearers should command attention for many years to come for its concept of the full and true role of military history. Mr. Barnett's writing is at all times lucid and absorbing; his analyses cut to the heart of matters, and his conclusions ring true. His book is both military history at its best and much more than that.

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'Vicisti, Galilae'

GEORGE STEINER

JULIAN, by Gore Vidal. *Little, Brown.* \$6.95.

Historical fiction is often the autobiography of a man's dreams. To Ibsen, Julian the Apostate was the incarnation of radical private vision, of ecstatic reform. To Merezhkovsky, he was an Eastern dreamer, uniting Attic and Byzantine ideals in a reverie of imperial power. To Gore Vidal, he is a fighter and politician of cool, amused intelligence; a proud, elegant player in the games of the mind and of military risk. This is a Julian who knows how to leave exits for an adversary, who listens to advice without necessarily hearing, who dies young at the hand of obscure, cynical betrayal. One cannot say that Julian is John F. Kennedy (though there are touches at the poignant end that summon echoes), but this is surely a novel Kennedy would have relished.

First, for its history. Like Robert Graves in *Count Belisarius*—a near model—Vidal has established a lively authority over the facts and mood of a peculiarly tangled historical period, the mid-fourth century A.D. He renders the nervous atmosphere of a waning empire and the sense of private disorder under the weakening grip of Roman rule. We move from Paris and the Black Forest, that dark sea which Roman legions never wholly charted, to the tawny rocks of the Persian marches. Landscapes are kind to the historical novelist; they survive to give the imagination root.

The life of Julian, moreover, is unusually well documented. A sheaf of his letters and reflections has come down to us, as have portraits by contemporary admirers or opponents. Though his sporadic, amateurish attempt to restore the ancient gods failed and scarcely left a trace, he obviously gave Christianity a scare. The phantom of Julian's apostasy burned in Christian imaginings of hell long after his brief life had ended. And it was when Christian orthodoxy faltered, in the new Hellenism of the late nineteenth century, that Julian re-emerged as a symbol of hedonistic intelligence and refined sensuality.

ON THE LATTER, Vidal is hardly convincing. The orgy—obligatory in modern costume fiction—is meager stuff. Julian's resolute indifference to women, according to this admiring interpretation, freed him to indulge his stylish intelligence. He was fascinated by the traps and vistas of political power. Unlike Marcus Aurelius, he did not regard the present as a shadowy blemish on the transcendent futurity of the soul. He knew the world for the bright, treacherous chaos it was, and delighted in the tasks it set him. Above all, he seems to have had a certain Stoic gaiety, a way of giving his sharp, wary mind the poise of laughter. It is this which the novel seizes best, and it is a distinctive note in the whole of Vidal's writing and political stance.

The play of irony is reinforced by the device of outside narrative and commentary. The story is told in Julian's own words and in those of Priscus and Libanius, garrulous

THE REPORTER Puzzle

Acrostickler® No. 106

by HENRY ALLEN

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DIRECTIONS

- 1) Each crossword definition contains two clues. One is a conventional synonym; the other a pun, anagram, or play on words.
- 2) Letters from the acrostic should be transferred to the corresponding squares in the crossword, and vice versa.
- 3) The initial letters of the correct words in the acrostic will, when read down, spell out the name of a prominent person: the Acrostician.

1	A		3	J		5	B		7	C		9	I		11	J		13	J		15	I							
16		17	J	18		19	E	20		21	C	22		23	L	24		25	G	26		27	H	28		29	A	30	
31	J			33	G		35	A			37	N			39	F			41	D			43	G			45	N	
46		47	L	48		49	E	50		51	J	52			54		55	B	56		57	J	58		59	E	60		
61	I			63	K			65	J		67	I			69	J			71	A			73	M			75	E	
76		77		78		79				81		82		83	B	84		85				87		88		89		90	
		92	C			94		95	C	96		97				99		100		101	C	102				104	D		
				107	H			109	C			111	L					115	B			117	G			119	C		
				122	A			124		125	L	126	127				129		130		131	D	132			134	J		
136		137		138		139				141		142		143	E	144		145				147		148		149		150	
151	J			153	J			155	M			157	G			159	M			161	N			163	K		165	L	
166		167	K	168		169	N	170		171	B	172				174		175	G	176		177	F	178		179	J	180	
181	M			183	E			185	D			187	J			189	H			191	H			193	E			195	F
196		197	C	198		199	F	200		201	E	202		203	K	204		205	D	206		207	N	208		209	B	210	
211	F			213	K			215	N			217	A			219	A			221	G			223	I			225	A

- A 35 225 1 71 29 122 217 219 "Which fiddle-strings is _____ to expredge my nerves this night! Dickens, "Martin Chuzzlewit."
- B 83 115 171 209 5 55 A lizard for the stage?
- C 92 197 101 7 21 119 95 109 Nursery song (5,3).
- D 185 104 205 41 131 Hungarian light-opera composer.
- E 59 201 19 193 143 183 75 49 A popular vocal group.
- F 195 199 177 39 211 "_____ obeyed in office." Shakespeare, "King Lear" (1,3'1).
- G 175 117 25 157 33 221 43 "A neat rivulet of text shall _____ through a meadow of margin." Sheridan, "School for Scandal."
- H 189 27 191 107 "Most dangerous / Is that temptation that doth _____ us on / To sin in loving virtue." Shakespeare, "Measure for Measure."
- I 67 15 223 9 61 He was whipped from Aldgate to Newgate and from Newgate to Tyburn.
- J 134 17 51 187 69 11 57 151 3 13 65 31 179 153 A work of the Acrostician (4,2,3,5).
- K 213 203 163 63 167 "But keeps _____ / To the Propontic and the Hellespont." Shakespeare, "Othello" (3,2).
- L 165 23 111 125 47 "Ruining along the il-
limitable _____." Tennyson, "Lucretius."
- M 181 155 159 73 "Thou art noble and _____
and antique." Swinburne, "Dolores."
- N 37 207 161 215 45 169 A kind of beard.

ACROSS

16. Idleplay at Animal Farm? (9,6).
46. The dear sweet is tressed about.
54. The Scottish charm seems impervious to tears.
76. The British gent is found with his hat off, often (Brit. slang).
81. With "The," a work of the Acrostician.
87. So the clergyman evens things up? On the contrary.
94. Draw these for Sodom's husband and namesake.
99. Theater scene in tarred ropes.
124. One of something, made of tin, you know.
129. This building has a bar in it and they never mix the grape and the grain.
136. Kind of joy for a dog, perhaps.
141. The country of the plane.
147. If this pans out, it will bite!
166. A U.N. genie? No, a naïve girl.
174. If you 'arbor one, there will be more web showing.
196. Fatuous remark of a hungry lover (4,6,2,3).
5. Kind of post that's not old at first.
7. Circus tents have large sides, too (3,4).
9. Part of breakfast food that seems stringy (3,4).
11. An honest postal privilege.
13. The wall is evened up in Ur, Fred.
15. Skilled ones have a small department or two.
77. A role with a penny is not as young as some.
79. The loud boor may insult authority.
81. If you sat in something, it may be this.
85. Large kind of energy.
87. Discloses and apostrophizes writers.
89. Street girl who might become a Mason.
127. Is there not a steed on this Aegean island?
129. Riff-raff who stay in their shells? (3,4).
136. Items are no good hits.
138. Man who sounds as though he had no superior.
148. Dentures, or 1964 Presidential advisers, for example (3,3).
150. Tear 3.14 for a man of Penzance.
155. Vacant or not permitted?
161. The seaman dined to ease.

DOWN

1. Dismasts? Almost, when the ship leaves among us.
3. Parts of earth the zealot will go to (4,2).