

## Germany's Past

**HISTORY OF GERMANY.** By Hermann Pinnow. Translated from the German by Mabel Richmond Brailsford. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1933. \$2.75.

Reviewed by EUGENE N. ANDERSON

THE reader need not expect this volume to measure up to the standard set by the short histories of our own country, of England, or of France. Germany has no Charles Beard or George Trevelyan, and her historians have neglected almost entirely the field of popularization. The number of the general histories of the country are surprisingly few, dull, and methodologically mid-Victorian. Up to the present time the Germans have not felt any need for them. History in Germany is still a monopoly of the upper classes, who do not read surveys; while the mob has to be content with the normal run of patriotic legends. The professional historians have nested so safely in the lap of the great God Research that they have not deigned to try their hands at popular writing. Or, when they have ventured out, they have produced a series of essays like Professor Haller's on the high spots of German history only, the sort of thing to stir up the patriotism of a conservative *gymnasium* student or to titillate the mind of a colleague. For the American reader uninitiated in the history of Germany, Haller's sketch is scarcely suitable, less so even than Henderson's two antiquated volumes. The work by Herr Pinnow is greatly superior to either, and provides the American public for the first time with a reasonably adequate introduction into Germany's past.

The author balances economic, cultural, and political history in a way such as we have come to expect, and has achieved an unusually compact volume. The parts on the rise of the middle class, the background of the Reformation, the age of classicism and romanticism, to give examples, are excellent, and show how rich the German past has been. Any one inclined to condemn the Germans as a pack of barbarians or their history as a story of mistakes and failures, should read at least these pages. In no other single book will he find portrayed the extraordinary emotional depth, creativeness, and enterprise of the Germans at certain periods in their past, or the full, natural way in which they have lived and developed. Neither a history of German literature nor one of purely cultural content gives quite the sense which this volume does of the sprawling roots of the greatest epochs, when capitalists, mystics, peasants, artists, religious reformers, every conceivable type, touched life together, cooperated, fought, and made Germany the amorphous thing she is. The author does not divide his material into discreet, text-bookish compartments, each virginal with respect to the other; he sees the connections between Kant and Schiller and the War of Liberation, between the Reformation and the rise of a new society, between Lessing and the bourgeoisie. And in explaining them he makes the reader aware of their complexity and richness without losing him in a fog. The curse of short histories is too many details; in these parts the author avoids that pitfall with rare success.

The same cannot be said of the pages devoted to political history. First, the author covers the barbarian tribes without stumbling over a name. Next come the emperors, and hardly a one is omitted. Otto III is there, Henry VII, Wenzel, and many another worthy only of the tomb. As for counts and dukes and lesser lords, they strut in and out at a bewildering pace, until, by the time Charles IV's nephew, Jost von Mehren, appears, the reader is hot with rebellion. Even a docile graduate student would not be expected to know Jost. Having tucked away the emperors, the author turns to the Hohenzollerns, and we do the last part of the Siegesallee. It seems as though conscience would not permit the omission of any of them. Each ruler is given a character sketch, of a length usually in keeping with his importance and often vividly phrased. Occasionally the author displays

a liking for one of them, like Frederick Barbarossa, and, with a deft application of whitewash, makes him a hero. But since he feels bound to paint the portraits of two or three dozen emperors and kings, instead of two or three, he runs the risk of making them all look like wooden Wodans in a fog. Also the carefree manner in which he hops back and forth, around and across, from ruler to ruler, is confusing; and occasionally a name is offered without introduction. Whether the reader will be able to identify Daun as an Austrian general is a problem which will probably be solved by his not caring who Daun was. The four appendices will be of some help, and the reviewer advises frequent use of them and of a good map by anyone reading about German history for the first time, the second, or even the third.

The overabundance of detail is the mortal sin of Herr Pinnow in the political parts of the book, but there are venal sins, too. These discussions are, in general, not so carefully worked out or so interesting as the cultural and economic ones. They suffer from an omission of connections, a lack of succinctness, a looseness in synthesis. At times the statements are almost cryptic. Only a specialist could make sense out of the author's scanty description of the Prussian bureaucracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; certainly, the general reader will not gather from it the enormous importance of this institution. The summary of the political events in the last hundred years is an exception. It is unusually good, far superior to anything else in English or in German of so short a length. Critical accounts of this century such as Herr Pinnow gives, accounts which weigh the bad against the good and reveal the weaknesses of the pre-war social and political structure, are so rare that only two accepted German historians have really given them. The author's treatment of the post-war period is merely a sketch, and the volume ends with the year 1929. This chapter will have to be rewritten, since events have proved that Herr Pinnow was far too optimistic. About the peace of Versailles he remarks as follows:

The victors added moral infamy and open shame to the crippling, robbing, and gagging of the vanquished enemy. And all this after they had with slight variations subscribed to Wilson's Fourteen Points, which promised a peace of justice and reconciliation as the basis for the conclusion of peace.

It may interest the American reader to know that Herr Pinnow condemns the pre-war leaders and militarism, praises the constitution of 1919 and President Ebert, believes in the League of Nations, and approves of a Pan-European union. This is an attitude which the American public has often failed to comprehend, and the reviewer knows of no other volume which will enable it to approach and appreciate the German people with more understanding than this. When one reads about the intolerance of the Nazis, one should not forget that this democratic, fair-minded book was produced as late as 1929 and that it is still a part of Germany.

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"After standing empty for many years, the small country villa on the shores of Lake Lucerne at Tribschen where Richard Wagner lived from April, 1866, till 1872 has been turned into a Wagner Museum," says the *London Observer*.

"In this house, to which Wagner and Cosima von Bulow fled after the hectic Munich years, the composer finished the 'Mastersingers,' 'Twilight of the Gods,' etc. The many distinguished visitors to this house, where Wagner spent some of his happiest days, included King Ludwig II., Hans von Bulow, Franz Liszt, Nietzsche, and Malvida von Meysenburg.

"Cosima Wagner's 'I like pictures better than books' is reflected in the large number of pictures which fill the walls. There are also many statues, books, and musical manuscripts. A working house jacket and the silk beret of Wagner are here too.

"Siegfried Wagner was born in this house."

## Whose Ox Is Gored?

**MELLON'S MILLIONS, The Biography of a Fortune. The Life and Times of Andrew W. Mellon.** By Harvey O'Connor. New York: The John Day Co. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

THIS book is in the Great Tradition of muck-raking. Harvey O'Connor does not pander to trivial tastes; he is as far from the snickering, "always belittling" school of muck-raking as he is from the puff sheet variety of fawning journalism so popular in the 'twenties, when business was priding itself on business administrations in Washington. The story here unfolded is rightly called "Mellon's Millions, the Biography of a Fortune," for the accent is never very personal. Andrew W. Mellon remains almost as aloof through these four hundred pages as he did in the life before his name was

mentioned in *The New York Times* in 1921 for the first time. Mr. O'Connor merely quotes from the record, dovetails information that may or may not belong together (it is up to the reader to relate cause and effect), and lets it go at that. Underneath the objectivity, of course, one can sense an equalitarian passion that would have offended the Ulster immigrant boy, Thomas Mellon, founder of the fortune. Judge Mellon always

believed in the maxims of Poor Richard; and his son, Andrew, who adapted the mercantile Franklin's philosophy to the age of the giant corporation and the banker in industry, could hardly be expected to voice approval of Mr. O'Connor's philosophy. But for all that, Mr. O'Connor's method is as "scientific" as is humanly possible. It is the method of Ida Tarbell's "Story of Standard Oil"—fully documented, with sources indicated, appendices added, and conjecture set forth as conjecture.

The reading of "Mellon's Millions" is difficult, but it is absorbing. It would take one of Senator Norris's "spider-web" charts to set forth the ramifications of Mellon influence, as indicated by Mr. O'Connor, and only a prodigy could possibly reproduce the interweavings and cross-stitchings of the chapters from memory. But in the end the outlines are reasonably clear. Andrew W. Mellon became rich beyond the most fantastic dreams of his father through simple observance of four of Stuart Chase's sixteen ways of becoming rich in a price-and-profit economy. The Mellon Aluminum Company of America got what Mr. O'Connor describes as a virtual stranglehold on aluminum deposits. "The creation of an artificial monopoly" is Mr. Chase's Rule No. 1. In the early days of commercial production of aluminum, the Mellon interests were aided by control of patents. Chase's Rule No. 2 is "the tying up of a patent or a secret process." Rule No. 9 in Mr. Chase's ironic advice to Young Bulls on America is "speculating in land and natural resources." Thomas Mellon, good mercantile banker, bought and sold Pittsburgh property with assiduity over a period of many years; and the constant predilection of the Mellons for taking "underlying mortgages" on valuable property has assured them of plums in periods of foreclosure and general business distress. Henry George would have read Mr. O'Connor's pages on the growth of land values in Pennsylvania with an "I told you so" to the paragraph. The fourth general

method of becoming rich, as used by the Mellons, is the traditional method of the investment banker, as described by Justice Brandeis in his "Other People's Money." The twelve other methods outlined by Mr. Chase do not fit very well into the Mellon scheme of things. While they are not the methods of pikers, they lack the safety of methods 1, 2, 7 and 9. Andrew W. Mellon, Mr. O'Connor tells us, has always mixed caution with boldness. In the days of his unofficial partnership with Henry Clay Frick, Mellon was ballast to Frick's wide-ballooning sails. The ship sailed far.

"Mellon's Millions" is an excellent literary microscope for those who wish to observe the activity that goes on in a money-culture. One could almost construct a history of the depression from source material in these pages. Virtually every contradiction of the world of modern indus-

trialism is thrown into bold relief by the O'Connor reporting. The Roosevelt administration would do well to investigate some of the problems raised unconsciously by Mr. O'Connor in connection with the New Deal. It may be practicable for the NRA administrators to end brutal competition within a specific industry. The record of the Aluminum Company of America proves that stabilization within an industry is quite feasible.

But the question of competition between industries of a dissimilar nature which have interlocking aspects is going to be difficult, as Mr. O'Connor's pages prove. For example, it is to the interest of aviation manufacturing companies to obtain cheap aluminum. Henry Ford would like cheap aluminum. If it can be shown that cheap mass production cars, manufactured in such volume as to assure adequate consumption of labor power in Detroit, depend on low cost metal, and that low cost metal means hardship for workers in the mines and rolling mills and reduction plants of Pennsylvania and elsewhere, just how is the balance to be struck? It is here that the New Deal encounters difficulty—and Mr. O'Connor's book, rightly welcomed, must go far towards casting the requisite calcium glare on essential problems. Mr. O'Connor is, therefore, a public servant.

It matters a lot, of course, whose ox is gored. Those who wish to attack Mr. O'Connor would do well to fall back on philosophical principles. If the reader believes that taxes in the higher income brackets should be low, in the interests of preserving aggregates of capital for the future development of the country, then why not fight it out along philosophical lines? Philosophical principles being matters of assumption, one set is as good as another for argumentative purposes. If you believe, as Judge Thomas Mellon did, in the principles of individual striving for gain, then there can be nothing very wrong with any of the practices described in this book; competition inevitably breeds Mellon methods. Conversely, when Mr. O'Connor is accused of being party to "literary racketeering," a philosopher of the anti-Mellon persuasion will translate this as meaning, in essence, "I don't agree with your set of first principles."

John Chamberlain covered the Senatorial coal investigation which is the subject of chapter twelve and appendix five of "Mellon's Millions" for *The New York Times* in 1928.



ANDREW MELLON  
Drawing by S. J. Woolf. From "Drawn from Life" (Whittlesey House)

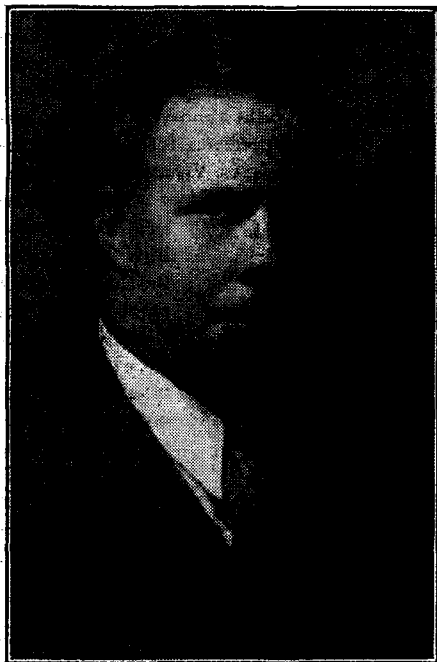


## Before Machado Fell

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despotism, tyranny, and oppression, officially supported by Washington in the interests of certain powerful American financial, sugar, public utility, and mining groups. Ground down into economic vassalage by native overseers really speaking for American capitalists, the Cubans gradually deteriorated into a race of serfs. They looked to the United States for everything, feared to revolt against the slave-drivers lest the "Colossus to the North" disapprove, and developed an inferiority complex which undermined their nationhood.

Some passages in Mr. Beals's book might indicate that he had given way to a



CARLETON BEALS

feeling of despair over this situation, and had come to believe that the Cubans had become so weakened under what he regards as our paternalistic quasi-protectorate, that they could never drive Machado out by their own efforts. If this was so, it must have been only a temporary reaction; for the whole story which he tells of the determined resistance of the Cuban students and the A. B. C. secret society throughout all the years of the Machado reign of terror, points the other way. Cuban youth lost every battle except the last one; but the more they were defeated, the more their comrades and classmates, brothers and friends, were persecuted, hunted down, imprisoned without trial, held incommunicado, tortured, deported, exiled, murdered by the infamous *ley de fuga* of the secret police and La Porra, the more resolute they became to remove Machado. There was no room for defeatism among youth who had endured so many sacrifices, and had shown themselves ready for all sacrifices, for the sake of liberty and freedom.

Finally, when they were allowed to take matters into their own hands without interference from Washington, they showed a capacity for action which must be taken into consideration in the future. They fully justified Mr. Beals's faith, expressed or implied in his more hopeful passages, in their potential ability to solve their own problems in their own way if released from the fetters of non-revolution imposed upon them by this government in the past. If the Cubans had an inferiority complex, they discarded it on August 12, 1933, the day of the fall of Machado.

No American writer is better informed than Mr. Beals on all the causes, political, economic, and social, of Cuba's internal troubles, and of the problems of Cuban-American relations. In his book the reader will find the whole story, all the facts, fully documented, of the Cuban situation, including the links between economic imperialism here and political despotism there.

But the burning indignation of his propagandist zeal for social justice, and perhaps a subconscious disposition to the belief that pessimism is necessarily more realistic than optimism, has led Mr. Beals astray in some of his conclusions. For example, he seriously misinterprets the attitude of the Roosevelt administration toward Machado. Citing the connections of Secretary of the Treasury Woodin, Secre-

tary of Commerce Roper, Owen D. Young, and Norman H. Davis with our economic stakes in Cuba, through complicated interlocking directorates, loans, and investments, he builds up a beautifully logical case that President Roosevelt and Ambassador Welles were really trying to keep Machado in power by economic aids to the sugar industry, in order to further the aims of American economic imperialism.

The trouble with this theory is simply that it ignores the fact that Roosevelt sent Welles to get Machado out, not to "butress him in power." The real logic of the situation was this: peace and order in Cuba were essential to American interests, both moral and material; and there could be no peace and order while Machado remained in power. The Roosevelt administration understood this, as shown by all the acts and statements of the President and Mr. Welles in connection with the mediation, especially by Washington's refusal to grant economic aid until political peace was assured, and by Ambassador Welles's demand for Machado's withdrawal when the crisis came. No doubt it would have taken at least six months longer to remove Machado by mediation, and even then armed intervention might have been necessary; but no fair-minded person hereafter should impute a pro-Machado taint to the Roosevelt administration.

Russell B. Porter, a member of the staff of The New York Times, went to Cuba and made an exhaustive study for his paper of the situation there last January.

## Light, More Light

THE UNIVERSE OF LIGHT. By Sir William Bragg. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1933. \$3.50.

Reviewed by HAROLD WARD

AMONG physicists there is an epigram to the effect that light is the darkest thing in the universe. Dark because of our still vast ignorance of its nature and since, because of the radiation phenomena which it typifies, we actually see so minute a range. On the familiar analogy of a keyboard the "waves" of electromagnetic energy thus far known begin on a "treble" represented by the cosmic rays, so "hard" that they can penetrate sixteen feet of solid lead or nearly two hundred feet of water before being absorbed. Next come about nine octaves of X- and gamma-rays, followed in order by five octaves of ultra-violet light, one of visible light, nine of the heat radiation known as "infra-red" light, seventeen of Hertzian waves, and eleven octaves of the very long wave-lengths used in wireless and radio transmission.

Out of fifty-three, possibly more, octaves of radiation the human eye is sensitive to only one somewhere about the middle of the gigantic keyboard from which, it would appear, nature draws her own authentic music of the spheres. To read about light is, therefore, to get at the very heart of nature's well-kept secrets, and few guides are so competent and so lucid as Sir William Bragg.

The present volume carries one of the highest recommendations possible in any scientific work offered for the layman: the substance of it was given as the 1931 Christman Lectures before the Royal Institution of Great Britain. To say that this series of lectures was inaugurated by Michael Faraday and that the standards he set have been exacted from three generations of the finest scientific talent in England is a guarantee of excellence not only with regard to the material presented but in clarity and charm of treatment. Those who remember Sir William's book, "Concerning the Nature of Things" (also given originally as the Royal Institution Lectures in 1923) will need no further incentive to read the handsomely illustrated volume now before us.

The ground is cleared for leisurely exploration by an initial chapter on the Nature of Light, in which we are introduced to the peculiar behavior of waves in general, the illustrations being taken from the analogy with water waves first popularized by Silvanus P. Thompson. Mirror-phenomena are largely drawn upon, and we learn a little about Images, Reflection, Lustre, and Binocular Vision. This leads

to a chapter on the Eye and Vision, in the course of which physiology and physics are shown playing many tricks upon our "knowledge" of the external world. Next in order comes Color, and here we need all our attention, for it is difficult to realize that, in themselves, wave-lengths are absolutely colorless, deriving this "secondary character" entirely from the response of the human eye to the physical facts of absorption and emission. The spectroscope is here in evidence, aided by two plates in color and numerous diagrams to show the effect upon radiation of crystal formations, atmospheric disturbances, temperature, and other variables. Films and various kinds of surfaces are discussed, illustrating how, from minute causes, prominent effects may come. Such questions as "Why is the sky blue?" are answered; and an entire chapter on the polarization of light will assist the attentive reader to overcome his fear of hard words: although it must be admitted that a capacity for geometrical reasoning is assumed throughout.

Stellar problems are summarized in a brief chapter which tells us how our instruments steal not only fire but light from the furthest depths of the cosmos. Of more immediate interest are the final chapters, in which are discussed Röntgen and X-rays, crystal-analysis, the photo-electric effect, and the theoretical contradictions imposed by the wave-corpuscle dualism in radiation phenomena. At this point, where so many philosophers have gone astray, Sir William remains quite calm: the discrepancy, for him as for all properly trained scientists, is less the result of anything hopelessly irrational in the universe than a product of human limitations, further complicated by technical barriers imposed by our instruments and by the fact that all radiation beyond the wave-lengths of visible light is obviously not susceptible to direct examination.

## Middletown with Trimmings

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chester; deviousness is always a sorrow to Nina, and when finally it results in a murder of extreme sordidness, Nina gives up.



PAUL HORGAN

"The Fault of Angels" is well plotted, well written, well characterized—particularly in the case of Nina; it is emphatically a book to be recommended and read. Indeed, it is so good that one wishes it were altogether first rate, for there are some things in it which do not quite come off. Nina is portrayed with so rich a sympathy that there is very little of it left over for the other characters, and while many of them come to life, a few, like Mr. Ganson, Mrs. Kane, and the unsuccessful hanger-on, George Lane Doore, remain in two dimensions. Mr. Horgan does much more justice to the characters he likes than to those he does not, and his partisanship weakens his satire. This partisanship is embodied in the character of John O'Shaughnessy, from whose point of view the story is told, and with whom the author seems to identify himself; and John's unrequited love for Nina is irrelevant and overemphasized. Other incidents are ir-

relevant to the main structure, but mostly they have the virtue of adding richness to the story.

The extent to which "The Fault of Angels" is a *roman à clef* is a question which will inevitably be raised and discussed by those who are interested in it. Dorchester and the musical philanthropies of Mr. Ganson can hardly escape comparison with Rochester and the benefactions of Mr. Eastman. This reviewer, who has no inside information, gets the impression that the similarity is principally one of situation; that few if any of the chief characters are drawn from life; that certain of the minor characters—the unconvincing ones—probably are; and that in any case it is a side issue, because Mr. Horgan has added enough in imagination and craftsmanship to produce a comedy which applies to American social life generally. The millionaire who runs his musical enterprises on the same business-like basis as his factories; the *nouvelle riche* with the skeleton in her closet; the landlady with a past; the plutocratic social structure which nevertheless includes people of intelligence and charm; all of these, and the whole flavor of the life, are American. So American, in fact, that it raises the question why the scene which has attracted Mr. Horgan has been, in comparison with the farm and the proletariat, for instance, so neglected. For "The Fault of Angels" is one novel which the reader does not feel that he has read before. The Harper prize is a distinguished award, and it has a distinguished recipient.

Edward Corneliuss is a book reviewer who has lived in musical circles both in America and abroad. He has been a contributor to various reviews since 1922.

## Living History

HAVEN'S END. By John P. Marquand. Boston: Little, Brown & Company. 1933. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

PERHAPS because he makes money by writing for George Horace Lorimer, Mr. Marquand has not been taken so seriously by critics as he deserves. This is an admirable and entertaining history of three centuries of a New England town, done with great skill even though it is made up of a dozen short stories which had their magazine publication over a space of three or four years. If Hergesheimer, for instance, had done it, more dully and with an infinite cluttering of detail, it would perhaps be treated with some approach to the proper respect; and the mere fact that its author has not yet won the distinction that Hergesheimer earned by his early work should not deprive him of due recognition.

The bright thread in the woven history of the town of Haven's End was furnished by the Swales, descended from Colonel Richard Swale, Esq., Gent., Armiger, and so on, first magistrate of the original plantation. Through three hundred years the Swales, till at last the male line died out, remained of a piece—stubborn, often stupid, but with instincts and a manner that no one not a Swale could synthesize. Continually tangled with their history is that of the descendants of the rude Goodman Scarlet, whom the first Swale sent to the whipping post for a perfectly correct comment on a Swale blunder; and the Scarlets, human, practical, kindly, never could resemble the Swales, even though they eventually could appreciate them.

Whether the actual history of the rise and fall of families would support a general thesis that gentlemen are likely to remain gentlemen through three centuries of ups and downs, and that yokels cannot get rid of their yokelery through three centuries of gradually rising prosperity, may be doubted. But Mr. Marquand is writing fiction, not statistical sociology; he convinces you that his thesis is true for his Swales and his Scarlets, which is all that matters. "Living history" is a term worn threadbare by overuse, but that is precisely what this book is; sound history, with the ebb and flow of social, economic, and intellectual forces dramatized in generation after generation by the histories of authentic, salient, and spirited men and women.