

## The Plight of German Jewry

**THE JEWS OF GERMANY.** By Martin Lowenthal. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1936. \$3.

Reviewed by BARBARA B. TOLNAT

TO say that Marvin Lowenthal conveys an appalling message of human brutality, would be to limit too closely the scope of this vital, provocative book. Fraught with the burden of age-old oppression, Mr. Lowenthal's pages present an eminently readable if somewhat one-sided account of the plight of German Jewry, from the beginning of the Christian era down to our own day.

"Until recent years, the experience of the German Jews was typical, and to this extent the present book is the story of all Jewry," the announcement on the flap informs us. While this may be true, the question immediately arises as to how nearly the story of Jews in Europe can be divorced from the larger history of the peoples among whom they dwelt. That the oppression of social classes, or of religious or national minorities, is apt to be conditioned by economic considerations, is at this time a generally accepted conclusion, as applicable to the Jews as to large sectors of their Christian contemporaries. The same social forces that kept the Jews confined to their Ghettos, and from time to time precipitated massacres among them, were also responsible for the rising mounds of Lollards and peasants slaughtered during the uprisings that periodically convulsed Europe during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance; the hand that lit the Jewish pyres was no different from that which cast the peasant leaders to their fiery deaths.

The account of pogroms and atrocities perpetrated on Jews runs like a red thread through the history of Europe. Yet here, too, the tragedy of the Jews is only a small part of the general tragedy of fanaticism. History has not forgotten the Christian legions who, preferring *homouision* to *homousion*, died for a letter *i* and an obscure theological principle. The "stiff-necked" Jew who mounted the pyre rather than abandon his faith was a hero indeed. Yet he was neither a greater hero nor a more innocent victim than the Protestant that Mary Tudor consigned to the flames, or the Catholic that her father, Henry, sent to the block.

"There would be little exaggeration in saying that it was Jew hatred which made people Nazis, and not the Nazis who made people hate the Jews. In the realm of ideology it was anti-Semitism which 'sold' Germany the National Socialist platform," Mr. Lowenthal maintains. This statement would seem to be in direct support of the Nazi contention that there can be no peace between Jew and German. It fails, however, to take into account the sufferings of men and women of other faiths, notably Catholics, who like the Jews have felt the heavy hand of Hitlerism; finally it fails in a rational consideration of German history since the World War.

Mr. Lowenthal implies that the difficulties of Jews are to be traced to the fact that they have forsaken their national identity. Yet if the myth of race and blood, which Mr. Lowenthal rightly excoriates, is meaningless and pernicious in the case of the Nazis, it is difficult to see how it can become more valid and attractive when proposed by Jews. That Jews cannot alternately be a religious sect and a nation, stands to reason; yet a latter-day separatism as a solution to Jewish wrongs seems, to say the least, problematical.

## The Real Burghley

**WILLIAM CECIL.** By Alan Gordon Smith. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1935. \$3.75.

Reviewed by MILTON WALDMAN

THE thesis that Mr. Smith sets out to prove is the one so brilliantly put forward by James Anthony Froude in his "History of England": "She (Elizabeth) never modified a course recommended to her by Burghley without injury both to the realm and to herself." But Mr. Smith goes further; much further. The truth, he says, was only partially and uncertainly perceived by Froude, who, "in representing Burghley as the hero of his imaginative 'History of England,' projected an incongruous figure of Victorian respectability into an age that was singularly deficient in that quality." The real Burghley, he urges, was a bootlicker, a liar, a snob, a double-faced intriguer, a coward, a forger, a torturer, a perverter of justice and various other kinds of scoundrel. Mr. Smith does not condemn, he does not even deprecate these various aspects of his hero. On the contrary he calls upon the world to come and admire the succeeding aspects of the man's "genius"—the word is the author's own, oft-repeated.

It is a strange picture that results. Gone are the glories of the Elizabethan Age, which even Froude was feeble enough to accept, gone Elizabeth herself, in whom Burghley's feeble-minded younger contemporaries—Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Francis Bacon—worshipped a rare if wayward greatness. England is a nest of nincompoops who rush about trying—vainly, thank God—to foil the one Great Man; the Queen is a puppet with a wig but no spine who falls into various ungainly or compromising postures until her servant (by courtesy) pulls the strings and straightens her up again. Nothing is left but the Secretary getting away with one bit of dirty work after another.

Anyhow, it is an original picture, and one that would have made Froude gasp as well as more modern scholars, who take a rather different view of the relationship between Elizabeth and her principal minister. Only it is hard to understand why Cecil should have sobbed to his intimates that the Queen would ruin everything if she snubbed France by turning down Anjou and Alençon when he himself drew up the marriage contracts in the conviction that she would marry one and then the other? Or how Mary Stuart managed to survive for nineteen years with Cecil clamoring for her death?

However, these are no doubt debatable points. What is not disputable is that Cecil at Edinburg clamored to accept a good deal less than Elizabeth allowed him to—his letters say so explicitly. No, Cecil was not a figure of Victorian respectability. He was merely a figure of Elizabethan respectability—cautious, careful of the world's opinion, deeply attached to money, anxious to give his family a good start in the world—in short, taking his achievements in government into account, what his wise contemporary Camden called him, "a drudge of genius."

## Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

| Trade Mark  | Label             | Contents  | Flavor        |
|---|-------------------|---|---------------|
| IN THE MONEY<br>Arthur Somers Roche<br>(Dodd, Mead: \$2.)           | Novel             | A Winchell-Sullivan-Sobel gent is Bill Granard. Yeah—he's a newspaperman. Yeah—he's a columnist. Yeah—he knows 'em all and they all know him. And does he marry the boss's daughter? Yeah!                | Tabloid-iana  |
| UNDER PRESSURE<br>George Agnew Chamberlain<br>(Bobbs-Merrill: \$2.) | Adventure-Romance | "Their kiss opened the floodgates of the heart and swept their veins with fire." That's the last part. And the first: Spunky gal—pesky stepmaw—and then off to Mexico for important business and justice. | Tabasco Sauce |
| CANNERY ANNE<br>Morris Hull<br>(Houghton Mifflin: \$2.)             | Novel             | Swift stuff and good stuff on what goes on in a canning factory. Author Hull knows his fruits and vegetables and the gal Anne, well—she's around plenty.  | Choice Pack   |
| THE DARK WATERS<br>William Corcoran<br>(Appleton-Century: \$2.)     | Adventure         | Dex Ward plays bodyguard for pal Teverson who is in the smuggling racket. And believe us, Dex is kept pretty busy what with his work and the fascinatin', captivatin' Stephanie.                          | Lively        |

# A Century of Revolt

**MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.** By George H. Mead. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1936. \$5.

Reviewed by GERTRUDE VERITY RICH

**I**N THE welter of thought characteristic of the 19th century can be found the immediate background of contemporary problems and attitudes. And yet there is no one tendency in terms of which that century can be interpreted. It saw no great intellectual synthesis; men were not united in their thought, they were diversified in their disagreements. The period is one of revolt, and of building in a number of new directions. Hence it is almost impossible to make any valid generalizations that will cover the century as a whole, or to interpret it from an exclusive point of view, whether economic, political, or scientific. An adequate appraisal must weave these varied threads into a real fabric. It is this which Professor George Mead does so richly in his "Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century."

The style in which the material is presented may at first seem a drawback. Professor Mead's death in 1931 saw his work uncompleted, but much of it had been left in the form of stenographic reports of his lectures.

The lectures follow three major lines of development: First, the transition from Renaissance to Revolution, with Kant as the philosopher of the Revolution and the great Idealists Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel representing the birth of Romanticism out of its breakdown. Second, the spread of the idea of evolution, fostered by the Hegelian philosophy and fostering in its turn the industrial revolution and the social doctrines of the Utilitarians and Karl Marx. Third, the social conditions out of which modern science arose, together with its characteristic method and the problems it raises for modern philosophy.

To introduce the thought of the century, Mead goes back into the Renaissance, particularly into Renaissance science. Here his interpretation would seem to be too predominantly theological, for he finds that the mathematical emphasis of Galileo and his fellow physicists was an attempt to explain in scientific terms the rational universe of the theologian with which they started, and that their assignment of a mental status to secondary qualities was largely made possible because of Christianity with its stress on the human soul. But Galileo was protesting against the Aristotelian qualitative rationalism of the theologian, he was not developing a scientific apologetic for it.

Thus the discussion of the early Renaissance seems biased, but in his treatment of the later philosophers, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, and the society which each of these desired, Professor Mead presents a sound analysis. Particularly well drawn is the contrast between Hobbes and Locke, who put social impulses in man's nature and so could build up a society in terms less rigid than those

of Hobbes; and so too is the analysis of the *Volonté Générale* in Rousseau, that *Volonté Générale* which Mead sees developing into the Kantian categorical imperative.

We owe this volume a debt of gratitude for explaining Kant in terms understandable to those who do not specialize in his philosophy. Kant as the culmination of certain social attitudes, and as the apologist for that science which Hume's critique had so brilliantly attacked, is ably and succinctly presented, and his influence upon the Romanticists pointed out. The more abstruse statements of German Romantic Idealism are simplified and its bearing upon the interpretation of the self and the world, so significant for later individualism, are clearly stated.

Though the student of economics and sociology will be interested in the able analysis of the industrial revolution and the rise of capitalism as productive of Adam Smith, the Utilitarians, and Karl Marx, still it is in the author's emphasis upon the development of science that he can contribute most where it is most needed. Science as Newton saw it and as the modern research scientist sees it are two distinct things; and if one can make any generalization about the 19th century it is that it embodies the shift from a static conception of the universe to one in which geneticism is all important, and the dominant idea is that of process. The whole influence of science in this modern age, an influence due to the tremendous ability it gives man to control his environment; the fundamental presupposition that science makes as to the intelligibility of the world; the na-

ture of the scientific postulate, which is always hypothetical in character, and which always welcomes challenge; the influence of evolution and the sciences of biology and psychology, with their interesting blend of the theological and the deterministic, upon the physical sciences; and the breakdown of the rigid and mechanical doctrines in physics, a breakdown which Mead sees leading through such figures as Maxwell, Michelson and Morley and Fitzgerald to the statement of relativity itself,—all these are discussed at length, and with originality as well as accuracy.

After discussing the three philosophical attitudes of vitalism, realism, and pragmatism which grow out of scientific method, Mead turns in his last three chapters to the elaboration of some of his own ideas in the fields of sociology and psychology. He connects the whole evolutionary process with social organization as its most complex expression. The development of the self, taking place in society as the individual is able to communicate and to participate in common activities, is explained, thus making the development of mind a social evolution. The nature of reflective experience is analyzed in pragmatic terms.

With the appendix the book stands as a treatment of most of the major problems of the 19th century. The one considerable omission is the problem of religion. Though Mead has scattered references to the contrast between religious dogma and scientific ideals, and though he stresses the kinship between religious idealism and Marxianism, there is no comprehensive treatment of the religious developments in the period. But the keenness and originality of Mead's viewpoint, and the combination of simplicity, comprehensiveness, and independent thought, should give this volume an extremely wide appeal.



## MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

by  
MASON WOOLFORD

A lively story of apartment life in New York—written by one who is on the inside. Will be heartily enjoyed by city folks and their country cousins alike. \$2.00



THOMAS Y. CROWELL COMPANY • 393 Fourth Avenue • New York