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## The Olive Branch in the Mailed Fist

BRITAIN FACES GERMANY. By A. L. Kennedy. New York: Oxford University Press. 1937. \$1.50.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

THE destiny of Germany, which successive generations of British statesmen have sought to interpret in terms of their historic balance of power policy, remains one unchanging problem in a notoriously changing world. The paralyzing defeat at Versailles merely stimulated a vigorous people to renew their efforts to build a powerful nation east of the Rhine. Even the antipathy of the French, supported by diplomatic and military hegemony on the Continent, failed to check this German renaissance, with the result that large portions of the Versailles Treaty have been unilaterally destroyed. As the unhappy arbiter in western Europe, Great Britain has thus far failed to discover an outlet for German ambitions which would not at the same time menace the precarious balance of power.

It is gratifying to encounter an English commentary upon this dilemma which does not smugly shift the entire blame upon Herr Hitler. Mr. Kennedy, formerly assistant foreign editor of *The Times*, has carefully appraised the post-war sequence of events in an intelligent effort to find a practical basis for agreement. His contribution lies not in the collection of original data, for little is added to the more elaborate studies already available, but rather in his refreshingly impartial

approach to German demands. The increasing intransigence of Hitler, he finds, is due in part to the character of the Nazi movement and its leader, and in part to the ineptitudes of British diplomacy, especially in the hands of Sir John Simon, whose grievous inadequacy at the Foreign Office is sharply criticized. The failure to distinguish between the legitimate and illegitimate demands of Germany has both aggravated the European discord and humiliated Great Britain. On many occasions the British failed, in the face of French opposition, to satisfy the valid claims of Brüning and Hitler to equal status respecting armaments. Submission to the violation of the Locarno Treaty, on the other hand, gave full reign to "gangsterism" in German policy. By thus wavering between concession and coercion, the British have strengthened Hitler without safeguarding their own interests.

The unique contribution which Great Britain can make, Mr. Kennedy believes, lies in a settlement of the colonial question, even though the economic reasoning of Dr. Schacht may not be entirely valid. Relinquishment of Sierra Leone, Gambia, Togoland, and the Cameroons, in return for German concessions on the subject of propaganda, might effect a rapprochement which would permit later negotiations on disarmament and collective security. The colonial olive branch should be offered, however, in a mailed fist of rearmament. If Hitler declines to accept a genuine British offer of friendship, he should understand that further illegal action will be met by force. Concession and coercion are thus effectively combined into a single policy. It is to be hoped that this sensible book will be carefully studied at Whitehall, for it far exceeds the wisdom manifested there in recent years.

## The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
DEATH ON THE BORDER Raymond Holden (Holt: \$2.)	Pvt. Anderson, U.S.A., masquerades as his Colonel, and, with lovely but uncertain lady, clears up killings.	Nefarious doings on both sides of Mexican border keep yarn moving in jig time—both on land and in air.	Satisfactory
THRILLING TRIUMPHS OF CRIME DETECTION George Barton (McKay: \$2.)	Famous factual detective successes described—from classic "Lyons Mail" affair (1796) to Urschel kidnapping.	Interesting (although somewhat pedestrian) rewrite of 18 famous cases which can always stand another reading.	For the data file
BLIND DRIFTS C. B. Clason (Crime Club: \$2.)	Murders in Colo. gold mine claim interest of T. L. Westborough, who uncovers much skull-duggery—and an underground "vug."	Westborough's shrewdly pedantic sleuthing almost equaled by much fascinating dope on mines and mining methods.	Entertaining
MURDER UP MY SLEEVE Erle Stanley Gardner (Morrow: \$2.)	Unsavory Chinatown bond-broker killed with strange Celestial weapon. Terry Clane threads devious paths to unexpected finish.	Clane, Occidental with knowledge of sinuous Chinese mental processes, gets good, if uneven, start on trail P. Mason broke.	Ingenious
DEAD MAN TALKS TOO MUCH Weed Dickinson (Lippincott: \$2.)	Hollywood gigolo and screen queen exterminated. Press Agt. Haley and Detective Calhoun figure out the answer.	Studio atmosphere, blackmail, flip dialogue (somewhat phony), and solution that may elevate experts' eyebrows.	Medium

## The Middle Ages

EUROPE, 300-1500. By James Westfall Thompson and Edgar Nathaniel Johnson. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1937. \$5.50.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

IT is the fashion to bemoan the fact that history has become professional and academic, that Clio is no longer served by a Gibbon, a Macaulay, or a Parkman. However that may be, it is certain that our manuals of history for students and general readers are far more interesting and appetizing than the dreary, unillustrated digests of laws and lists of kings and battles which made history so deservedly unpopular a subject with the schoolboy of yesterday. The admirable and numerous illustrations in this survey of medieval Europe by Professors Thompson and Johnson ought to make it palatable to the most confirmed hater of old-style history. There is, however, plenty of the meat of solid fact in their book; the dates are there, and the Constitutions of Clarendon, and the struggle between Papacy and Empire, and all the rest. But there are also details of the life of the common people, of architecture and sculpture, of monastic life, of chivalry, and of literature which our grandfathers had to seek in Sir Walter Scott. Professor Johnson has taken as his base a survey Professor Thompson wrote some years ago, modernized and extended it, and made of it a thoroughly satisfactory introduction to the study of medieval Europe.

The Middle Ages are a particularly testing period to write about. In spite of the efforts of several generations of trained scholars, anyone who tries to put together the facts they have dug up is bound to be affected by the ideas he has formed of the period as a whole. There are the ardent lovers of an age which seems to them to have sought Beauty and Truth without our materialistic blindfold; and there are the equally ardent haters of an age which seems to them to have been cruel, superstitious, unprogressive, and very unsanitary. Both lovers and haters have written the history of the Middle Ages. Professors Thompson and Johnson have almost managed a balanced attitude, leaning ever so slightly towards affection, as is perhaps normal with men who have devoted their lives to a subject. But they are almost as far from neo-Thomist enthusiasm as they are from the kind of systematic depreciation evident in the work of men like Mr. Coulton or Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes. They weave their "new" history—social, economic, intellectual—in very well with the old political and institutional history. They are aware of the importance of Byzantium and of the fact that the German "Drang nach Osten" was one of the major legacies of the Middle Ages. Their history is therefore not, as so many even of quite recent ones have been, hardly more than a history of France and England, with side glances at the Crusades and the Holy Roman Empire. It is a well-balanced, readable, and thoroughly modern survey of a difficult field.

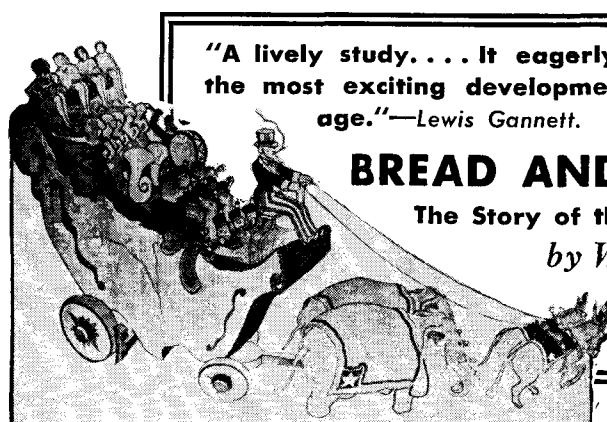
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