

Benjamin commands a separate chapter. Other members are treated chronologically by departments. If this seems at first glance to be an artificial arrangement, it must be said that Mr. Patrick could not have put the sketches together in a history of the cabinet. Except for a few weeks in Montgomery, there could be no cabinet history because there was no cabinet. There simply was a group of departments of somewhat doubtful cooperation.

Davis appears in Mr. Patrick's pages with the hard lines somewhat softened. Treatment is tolerant and on most pages is admiring. Perhaps too little is made of Davis's intense personal loyalties and of his quick response to chivalrous gestures. Mr. Patrick is generous in treating Davis's curious argu-

mentativeness when crossed on some question of prerogative. American history scarcely contains a more amazing example of vindictiveness than that which Davis wrote to a length of 4,500 words, in the expiring months of the Confederacy, to show that Joseph E. Johnston was not and never had been a competent soldier.

The whole story has not been told by Mr. Patrick and could not be compassed in a single volume; but he has written well and has selected wisely from the materials. He has used his sources, particularly the contemporary newspapers and magazines, with so much skill that one hopes this fine first book will be followed by others in the same field. As a historical writer, Mr. Patrick is a man to keep in mind.

erously to leading American economic and political quarterlies.

Except that it has been born of crisis, the present regime in Argentina is not much different from the cattle-baron feudalism that has ruled Argentina, in cahoots with British financial imperialism, for more than a century. If anything it may be a slight improvement in that, despite its non-democratic origin, it has broken down somewhat the cattle-baron opposition to the diversification of industry, and the industrialization of the country. Weighing all the facts that Mr. Weil presents, one comes to the conclusion that Argentina is about as democratic as the State of Georgia or the cattle-barons governments of some of our Midwestern states from 1880 to 1900. Its rotten-borough system is not much worse than that of Connecticut. Censorship is open, often drastic, as in nearly all the rest of Latin America; not secret and unlabeled like that exercised by our State Department here.

Mr. Weil throws some new light on the rise of the Uriburú dictatorship and how oil played a part therein. In that connection I wish he had gone on to touch upon the Chaco War, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, and how they fit into Argentina's industrial planning; how they have been affected, along with Argentina's relations to them, by the activities of British, German, and American capital expansion. He merely gives us some juicy hints. He punctures the fallacy that Presidents Justo and Ortiz were great friends of the United States; and I wish he had told more of our official machinations to undermine the Castillo Government and put the unpleasant Justo back into power. What I'm really saying of course is that I hope Mr. Weil will soon give us another book.

His final chapter, which I shall not spoil by summarizing, is entitled "The Big Chance for the United States," and each paragraph contains more sense and statesmanship than a hundred years of actual official verbal interchange between the two countries. The book has valuable appendices on statistical sources, landholding, foreign companies and investments, industry, farm and manufacturing personnel. A series of fifteen statistical tables show the whole matter easily and clearly; and, we should add, most accurately.

It seems inconceivable that a book which, in addition to discussing current issues, must serve as one of the few adequate reference works we possess on Argentina, should be devoid of an Index.

Inside Argentina

ARGENTINE RIDDLE. By Felix J. Weil. New York: John Day. 1944. 297 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by CARLETON BEALS

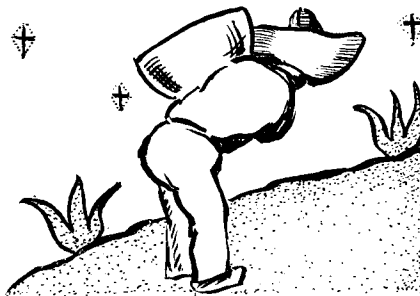
LITTLE of importance, save a few translations, has ever been printed in book form in the United States about the richest and most productive country of South America. In 1926 appeared that fine study by Mark Jefferson, "Peopling the Argentine Pampas." Presently we had some worthless quickies, born of passes on Pan-American Airways or cashing in on war sensationalism, and that fatuous misinterpretation, "Introduction to Argentina," by the former Ambassador, Alexander Weddell. Then in 1942 appeared John W. White's "Argentina," something more than a fine journalistic appraisal; and, shortly, Ray Joseph's intimate picture, "Argentine Diary."

Thus the present work, which covers the economic and political life of Argentina during the past ten years or so, fills what heretofore has been a complete void. Although parts of it are not too excitingly written, it is an accurate, authoritative work, and Mr. Weil's quiet, thorough intellectual honesty and respect for the facts make it indispensable for anyone not reading Spanish and anyone wishing to understand the present rumpus. About the only benefit from our current futile and unintelligent caterwauling at Argentina is the appearance of Mr. Weil's book. If Mr. Hull reads it, his next blast of denunciation of Argentina will likely clog in his throat slightly.

Not that Mr. Weil is an apologist for his native land. He takes the feudal cattle barons and the upstart colonels and the grafting politicians of Argen-

tina over the bumps with the gusto of a gaucho dragging a heifer to the slaughter pen. But at the same time he lets the air out of the official propagandists of the United States with quiet efficiency, takes a sideswipe at Walter Winchell's uninformed blatancy, drops the fly-by-night commentators into the river like so many founding kittens each properly weighted with the damning fact. Altogether, he shows the how and why of Argentina, past, present, and future. It adds up to a lot of tragedy, but also much progress and hope, so far as Argentina is concerned; and pretty much absurdity so far as our own official antics are concerned.

It is doubtful if there is anyone at all in this country who can gainsay Mr. Weil; and there is no one in Argentina who knows the facts better. He writes from the inside. Educated in Europe, he spent ten years of his life managing a large Argentine grain exporting company; he taught in Argentine universities; he held high economic and financial posts in various Argentine Governments; he was one of the shapers of Argentina's plans for industrialization, the so-called Pinedo plan. He is at present with the Institute of Social Research at Columbia University. He has contributed gen-



BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

Division Between the Generations

THE BARRICADES. By Philip Toynbee. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1944. 284 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

MR. TOYNBEE is a young Englishman who has recently made a reputation by his severity as a critic of fiction in *The New Statesman and Nation*. He is clever, uncompromising, and bigoted—qualities of youth which can be forgiven, or at least discounted by his elders and enjoyed (or mocked at) by his contemporaries. "The Barricades" is a clever novel: its only serious fault is that Mr. Toynbee has chosen for his chief character Michael Rawlins, an ex-schoolmaster in his late thirties who never betrays in a single thought or action, more than some twenty-two years. Many of this novel's finest scenes are spoiled for me because throughout the story we are compelled to contemplate Rawlins as, with nervous curiosity, he watches his own rancid adolescence melt heavily to a languid and protracted end.

The story opens admirably with the scene of Rawlins's dismissal from his post as schoolmaster. The period is of the Spanish Civil War. Rawlins is discharged for public drunkenness; but young Markham, an eager socialist schoolboy, prefers to believe that the real reason is Rawlins's advanced political opinions. Hence, when Markham runs away from school to join the Spanish Republicans, he goes to Rawlins for approval, advice, and encouragement: and the luckless, indeterminate schoolmaster is forced into the position of an heroic person, sacrificed to the gods of conservative bigotry. Here is a subject for ironic tragedy, or for satiric and almost farcical drama; one can imagine how Gogol would have handled it, or Goncharov. Mr. Toynbee's model, however, is the early Aldous Huxley with an occasional touch of that strange little master of the underworld of the Côte d'Azur, Ronald Firbank. The result is that the tragic implications of the story are allowed to escape into a mess of social trivialities, and the farcical possibilities are spoiled by the disgusted savagery with which Mr. Toynbee handles his Michael Rawlins.

Of course it could be said that in his treatment of his theme, in the loss and recovery by Markham of his generous enthusiasm Mr. Toynbee exposes the futility of the Spanish struggle, scarifies the calm and cynical abandonment of all heroism, shown on whatever side, by the great nations

in their attitude to the Spanish war; but the futility spreads over the chief characters like a miasma, a poison which the final scene in which Markham gets into Spain is not strong enough to dispel.

While, however, "The Barricades" (the title symbolizes the division between the generations, divisions not so formidable or unsurmountable as young English reds are apt to think) must be judged as a failure, if an ambitious and promising failure, full tribute must be paid to the brilliant and mordant coloring of many of the scenes and most of the characters. It is not irrelevant to remind the reader that, to some extent, the fable of the book is based on actual happenings in England. There was a good deal of excitement in London when a boy, a relative of Mr. Winston Churchill, ran away from Wellington College to join the International Brigade in Spain and eloped with a girl of a well-known family more commonly associated with Hitlerism than Communism. In basing his story on this incident—and

on other Wellington College affairs—Mr. Toynbee's good taste may be questioned. His portrayal of the people involved is, however, sufficiently remote from reality. Rose Palliser, the aristocratic tart, Lord Woodstock, the crippled peer with an aroma of ancient Limburger, Thomsson, the intellectual rebel whose activity is to watch action, Igor, the vile genius of the theater—all these brightly, harshly lit characters exist only in a cunningly introverted world. Never for a moment does the ballet-master allow them an unrehearsed gesture, a spontaneous movement across the stage. Not even in the wings do they relax. In contrast the reality of Michael Rawlins, of David Markham and, to a less extent, of Markham's father and mother, is disconcerting and uncomfortable. For, while it is on a lower level, Rawlins has reality as well as the boy Markham. It is Markham, though, who makes the book memorable, gives it, in spite of his lapses into folly and vice, dignity and a strange beauty. "The Barricades" is a journalist's novel, but only in the sense that Thomas Nashe's "In Time of Plague" is a journalist's poem.

An Ordinary Family in Wartime

MOTHER WENT MAD ON MONDAY. By Ethel Hueston. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1944. 213 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by KATHARINE SIMONDS

THIS is not a review; it is a fair warning. You will find it fatally easy to read the first forty pages of "Mother Went Mad on Monday," which present a cosy and entertaining picture of the Gillespies, an ordinary family, in wartime. With son Larry overseas, Mother has to put up with her husband, who groans about taxes; her daughter Doris, who can't wash the dishes because she's so tired from her war job, but can dance all night; and her other daughter Cherry, aged sixteen, whose presumably bobbysocked feet seldom come straight home from school. Suddenly, Mrs. Gillespie revolts, and issues an ultimatum: everyone is to behave himself or she will have her face lifted and go to the dogs herself. And, furthermore, they are all to start right in "to feel God." Her revolt is of course completely successful and the family is instantly remade.

After this deceptively normal beginning, however, Mrs. Hueston seems to have conscientiously striven for and achieved a new high in sentimentality. Now Steve Delafield, the flying son of a new neighbor, takes on Cherry sight unseen by letter as a

kid sister; when he comes home on leave he wants to be anything but a big brother to her. His mother and the Gillespies eagerly acquiesce; on his next leave, their acquiescence goes to the unusual length of encouraging Cherry to spend night after night on, though not in, Steve's bed. These bundling scenes are clearly meant to be poignant and lovely, but somehow the cosy girlish tone of Cherry's first-person narrative, Cherry's sublime innocence in spite of her experiences in high school before she "felt God"; and Steve's heroic forbearance all combine to make a mawkishness from which the reader wants to tiptoe away in distress. Nor is Mrs. Hueston content with the titillation of their frustration; every character is forever embracing every other one.

Thus it is with a congestion like that which follows too many frappes that one closes the book, noticing with a final hiccup that brother Larry, newly escaped from prison, is going to spend tonight in Cherry's bed to console her for Steve's death in battle.

Mrs. Hueston's publishers suggest that the "old-time religion" she advocates will prove a help to anxious war worn people. But the dispassionate reader must necessarily wonder if this religion which was coke for the Gillespies has really improved their taste or their views on child upbringing.