

good elementary introduction for Miss Thompson who, admiring Croce (as I do), may eventually come to care to comprehend him.

2. Miss Thompson claims that Croce's main thesis in his little book is that there are no German ideas, and that there is no nationality in ideas. This is simply not so. Croce carefully notes that there are German ideas, some good and some bad, some of the bad ones a thousand years old. He carefully distinguishes German from Nazi ideas. He admires certain ideas that are historically (not racially) German and some, as he thinks, that transcend history.

It is Miss Thompson, not Croce, who thinks that ideas have no national origins and no national consequences. A columnist has to write so much she doubtless has little time to read, or to read with any care what she does read.

3. If Croce is more Kantian than Hegelian, as Miss Thompson alleges, I shall gladly (no, not really gladly) eat the collected works of both philosophers.

4. As to "pinning Germanism on Croce," it is Croce who calls the chief essay in his book, "Confessions of an Italian Germanophile."

5. Croce's ideas on Germany, says Miss Dorothy, differ from those of Lord Vansittart and Rex Stout and myself. But by elementary logic (which Miss Thompson transcends or has never met) that does not mean that the ideas of Rex Stout and Lord Vansittart and myself are identical. I published over a year ago in *The New Yorker*, a poem attacking Rex Stout and the Stork Club patrioteers quite as virulent as anything Miss Thompson does.

6. "Ideas," says Miss Thompson, "have a life transcendent to nations." True, and a truism. The classic clarity of Greek thought survives happily in our own day, though unhappily not in Miss Thompson. Does Miss Thompson believe there is any gain in talking such nonsense as that there is no Greek thought and never was any?

7. Miss Thompson triumphantly points out that German thinkers have influenced French ones and vice versa. By her quaint reasoning, therefore, it turns out that there are no French thinkers or German ones. German or French in the tradition and palteur of their thought.

8. Hegel must not be condemned, she says, because he is German. His ideas are true or false. Good enough. But I never did condemn him because he was German. I found fault with him because he was the Hegel that proclaimed the Absolute Movement of history with the Prussian state as its

apogee in time. I found fault with Croce because he condoned Hegel's central exaltation of the Prussian state in his philosophy and did not realize it has a crucial part of it.

9. Miss Thompson correctly points out French roots of Nazism, in Count Gobineau, for instance. She also says it comes from Darwin and his idea of the survival of the fittest. Has Miss Thompson read Darwin with care—or at all? Space grows short and I can only say summarily that Darwin's idea of fitness for survival in a given environment has about as much to do with the theory of a master race as Miss Thompson has to do with philosophy.

10. Miss Thompson thinks it odd that a philosopher should speak "our ideals." And how they differ from German ones. If there are no ideals in the democratic nations different from those of the Fascist ones, what is this war about and what has Miss Thompson been shouting about from platforms these many years? Presumably many Germans have disagreed with Western ideals of liberty and culture, of "humanity and truth." Croce suggests they have been disagreeing for

a thousand years (almost Lord Vansittart is Croce at this point).

11. It is not Kant's ideas on peace that have survived in the German Universities for a century and a half. It is his idea of the categorical imperative, an absolute in morals nicely adapted to absolutism in politics.

12. Finally, I never questioned Croce's zeal for "humanity and truth." I questioned his sentimentality over German culture and his uncritical attitude toward it. This seems to me as useless as ferocity toward it. I called him a high minded Germanophile, and I call Sis Thompson that, too, also a loud mouthed one.

I, too, wish governments would listen to philosophers, but critically. Philosophers, like columnists, can be sentimental, wrong, irrelevant, fanatic, pompous, arrogant and silly. Croce about Germany is the first of these three.

The class is dismissed, and Miss Thompson will please go to the foot of the class, beginning next meeting where she will remain the sovereign of the non-sequitur and the master of the irrelevant.

IRWIN EDMAN.

The Live-and-Let-Lives

OUT ON A LIMBO. By Claire MacMurray. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1944. 191 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by KATHARINE SIMONDS

"IT has always seemed to me that being a woman is lovely work if you can get it," says Claire MacMurray; and this slant, novel to the American housewife, gives warmth and wisdom and pleasantness to the collection of her random essays which have been appearing in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. She likes being a wife and the mother of three boys; she likes her friends and neighbors and the clerk in the corner store and the girl who curls her hair; but most of all she is contented with being a woman. For she recognizes that this status is not, as many think, the dreary condition at which females arrive when they can no longer pretend to be girls, but a positive and proud achievement.

Her book in consequence is filled



not with regret or coynesses but with a mature happiness enlivened by considerable humor and some wit. It deals with the live-and-let-lives of marriage, motherhood, friendship, and retail commerce; with what Frances Lester Warner calls "the unintentional charm of men," with the child's eye view of the world; even with the more venial sins of women, such as "moving heavy objects by proxy."

But what stirs Mrs. MacMurray most, and must stir all those of her readers who are similarly afflicted and blessed, is her feeling for the not quite small boy. She does not romanticize him; she shows him as rude, clumsy, contentious, of demonic energy, monstrous capacity, horrid ingenuity. There he is, in all his intransigence; and yet in the moments when he is not the devil in person he wrings her heart. For as she watches his furious concentration on learning how to live, the gallantry with which he applies a child's tools to a man's problems, she remembers to what uses are being put the application and gallantry of those who are very slightly his elders. It is hard not to be sentimental in wartime, even about twelve years olds!

Much nicer than its made-to-order title, Mrs. MacMurray's book is like a summer morning spent on the verandah in a small town, friendly, comfortable, and reassuring as one's favorite old clothes.

Air Control without Occupation

KEEP THE PEACE THROUGH AIR POWER. By Allan A. Michie. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1944. 196 pp. \$2.

Reviewed by

BRIGADIER GENERAL DONALD ARMSTRONG

MR. MICHIE establishes his design for living in peace on the evidence from Germany's past and on the present power of the air forces in war. He is optimistic enough to hope that we shall this time learn something from history. More than half of his book is needed for the historical survey of German character, motives, and purpose. It is an extremely well integrated but not particularly new statement of the potential threat to the welfare of the world of an unaltered Germany.

He finds that for a long time the German people have been fed the *Herrenvolk* pap and they have thoroughly enjoyed it. Very few Germans found this mess nauseating. It had always a wide appeal and nearly universal and appreciative acceptance. Therefore Mr. Michie holds that Hitler and his Nazi crew are not an isolated phenomenon but are typical of the German people. Getting rid of Hitler is consequently no panacea. The entire nation, save for a pitifully small minority, readily follow the lead of our three hereditary enemies inside Germany—the regular army officers, her industrialists, and the Prussian Junkers. Obviously these three components of German militarism have been recognized previously and named repeatedly as the source of Germany's barbarity. We are all agreed that their power and influence must be destroyed. But how?

The steps by which Germany nullified the treaty of Versailles and, long before Hitler, started to rearm should be a warning to us. Mr. Michie's story is convincing and well documented. It should make us not only cautious, but our aroused cynicism towards Germany should diminish our gullibility to the vanishing point.

We must expect history to attempt to repeat itself. But this time we must meet force with greater force. Idealism is a medicine for which the world is yet too ill. Therefore, if we decide force will keep the peace "who will contribute and wield that force and what shape will that force take?"

Since Britain, Russia, and the United States are equally vulnerable to a renaissance of German militarism, self-interest will fortunately tend to unite the three nations in a common policy. These three nations have the

strength to keep the peace and theirs is the responsibility to exercise the requisite police powers. Mr. Michie would disarm Germany and prevent her rearmament through well defined measures far more drastic and effective than those of 1918. He is skeptical, however, of the efficacy of an army of occupation or a naval police force to prevent rearmament, except at excessively burdensome cost. He admits his present device is not a new idea, but his thesis and the purpose of his book is to advance as forcibly as possible the proposal to use air power to keep the peace.

Mr. Michie regards the use of the RAF in Iraq as a successful laboratory test of "the comparative ease with which a small air striking force, by bombing or the threat of bombardment, can bring about compliance." He describes several methods as "a tried and proven mechanism for the control of future aggression by Germany in Europe and Japan in the Far East."

The advantages of Mr. Michie's program of air control without permanent occupation is its great economy in men and money. The threat of air bombardment of armament factories could and undoubtedly would stop illegal manufacture of weapons. Japan would be a more difficult problem, but the same method should prove equally efficacious in the Far East.

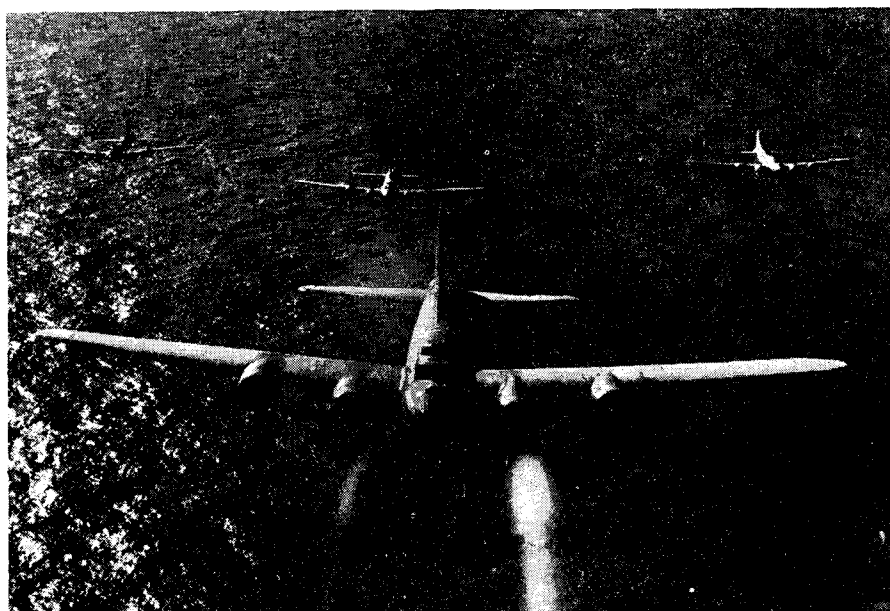
The paradox of maintaining peace by force is only a temporary expedient. The author merely touches on the fundamental need of "the economic, political, social and moral rebirth of these two main enemy na-

tions," that would destroy in Germany the unholy trinity that promises further aggression. Eventually there may be a new society of nations with an international air police. In the meantime each participating nation retains "a great measure of control over its own force."

This book offers one solution for the most pressing problem that faces the united nations after winning the war. Russia's recently announced support of the plan to keep the peace through air power should intensify our interest in Mr. Michie's thoroughly documented and clearly presented project. His proposal and his thoughtful analysis of the real German menace to peace are a most important contribution to sound thinking in the post-war world.

On his recent trip to London, Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, advocated a world circulation library system that would make available important materials to scholars whose regional libraries had been destroyed in the war. Discussing the effects of the large-scale damage to cultural buildings and facilities throughout Europe and Britain, Mr. MacLeish declared that certain losses were absolutely irreparable and that no sum of money, however large, could replace them.

"The only practical way of making materials of this kind available," he said, "is to give them access to materials in the collections of other regions. This would enable scholars in the destroyed areas to draw upon the resources of the great libraries in other parts of the world which still possess their collections."



U. S. Flying Fortresses over the Mediterranean.