

alien uses. It can not be harmonized with authoritarian government of any sort. It is irreconcilable with totalitarianism.

When allowed to survive or perish on its merits, consumer coöperation is the one form of collective liberty which can serve as the "grass-roots" implementation of the free man's peace. It is alone capable of turning a "good neighbor policy" from a policy into a way of life. When the United Nations have won their victory, there will be millions of uprooted, homeless human beings to care for, to settle, to rehabilitate in health, in hope, in self-dependence, and self-respect. On its record, the consumer coöperative technique is the simplest, surest way to attempt this. Whatever survives of coöperative skill and coöperative power can be mobilized and set to work; where none survives, men and women trained elsewhere, can be sent in. Rehabilitation can be thus initiated and carried through at a minimum of economic cost and a maximum of profit in terms of human life and liberty. The same would hold for demobilized soldiers, for farmers, for craftsmen, for wage-earners employed on the inevitable public works of restoration. For all of them, the conversion of money-wages into real wages in terms of food, clothing, shelter, education, protection against disease and crime, and all the other goods of life, by means of the credit union, of the coöperative store, of the coöperative wholesale and marketing-society would serve as a counter alike to the profiteering monopolistic private trader and to debilitating government management. But far more important is the fact that alone the consumer coöperative can provide a discipline in the democratic way of life, labor, and thought for both war and peace. The neighborhood units could be confederated into regional wholesales and unions, the regional into national and the national into world-wide alliances, through which they could pool their financial resources and keep up a continuous free trade of skills, knowledges, goods and services. The cadres of such a world-wide economic collaboration of free men existed and were growing in the free countries before the war. One of the tasks of the coöperative movement entering upon its second hundred years, is to think out in detail how they may be filled and employed to win the war, and adapted to assure the peace. Its other task is to communicate this knowledge as a fighting faith to the peoples and the governments of the United Nations—the faith that the economy of consumer coöperation, based upon management by, of, and for the forgotten men of the world, can channel all the liberties of man into the structure of lasting peace.

SEPTEMBER 9, 1944

## Cause and Cure of Totalitarianism

OMNIPOTENT GOVERNMENT. THE RISE OF THE TOTAL STATE AND TOTAL WAR. By Ludwig von Mises. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1944. 291 pp. \$3.75.

Reviewed by HANS KOHN

PROFESSOR VON MISES has written one of the most thoughtful and challenging books published for a long time. It deals primarily with the cause and cure of the menace which Germany offers to the contemporary world. Many sharp and surprisingly well formulated observations and penetrating judgments will be accepted even by those who, like the present reviewer, regard the author's explanations as rather onesided. Dr. von Mises is an unrepentant believer in market economy and free trade as against government regulation, one of the few remaining Victorian "old fashioned" liberals. "All the oratory of the advocates of government omnipotence cannot annul the fact that there is but one system that makes for durable peace: a free market economy. Government control leads to economic nationalism and thus results in conflict."

In his extreme liberalism Professor von Mises is as utopian as doctrinaire socialists are. In his final conclusion he writes: "Durable peace is only possible under perfect capitalism, hitherto never and nowhere completely tried or achieved. No international conflicts can [then] arise: there are [then] no [longer any] economic causes of war." The same sentence could have been written by utopian socialists, simply replacing the word "capitalism" by "socialism." Unfortunately perfect capitalism and perfect socialism are rational constructions which are not found in reality; and the main causes of war are neither rational nor economic. Nevertheless at a time when government interference everywhere, by necessity, narrows the sphere of the liberty of the individual, a warning like that by Professor von Mises in favor of liberty is more timely than the emphasis upon the community at the expense of the individual. Highest political wisdom will be required to strike the right balance and to achieve, to use Churchill's words, those "much more exact definitions which will be needed of the rights of the individual and of the relations of the individual to the great framework of the state."

**"A superb achievement... A galloping story full of passion, strife and humor... Intriguing and brilliantly written."** —N. K. Burger, N. Y. Times

THE HISTORY OF

## ROME HANKS

AND KINDRED MATTERS

by *Joseph Stanley Pennell*

"A novel about the Civil War, about courage and death and life and love, and about the American dream and the American spirit."

—Orville Prescott, N. Y. Times

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which must have as its highest purpose the safeguarding of those individual rights, and the reconciling of the freedom of each with the broad general interests of the community."

But even if he rejects the author's purely economic interpretation of history, or disagrees with his all-out emphasis on economic liberty, the reader will find the book most clear-sighted and interesting on the present world crisis, written with an incisive clarity which makes the reading of it a pleasure. Professor von Mises shows that the present world crisis has its focal point in Germany, that this present war is a German war as was the war of 1914, and that it is impossible to perceive its fundamental issues without an understanding of the essence and forces of German nationalism. His analysis of the Bismarckian and Wilhelminian empire is extremely keen; with great skill he shows the roots of national socialism in Adolf Wagner and other champions of German protectionism, in those "Socialists of the chair" who were the protagonists of German *Handels und Machtpolitik*. German aggressive nationalism in the nineteenth century was not initiated by the masses nor by the Junkers, not by big business nor by high finance but by professors and writers. They told the Germans after 1870 that their nation was the strongest in Europe, powerful enough to subdue Europe and to lead the

world. The Germans enjoyed the advantage of standing on interior lines in warfare and of being morally and educationally so much superior to all other peoples who were no match for them. Even Britain ruled the waves only because Germany politically disunited, had in the past neglected sea power. Endowed with unique qualities, supported by their minorities all over the world, the Germans under the leadership of the Hohenzollerns would fulfill their world-encompassing mission. After the defeat of 1918 the Nazis assumed the role of the Hohenzollern, this time certain of their final victory for they had freed themselves of all chains of morality and humanity. They argued that if they won the war they would exterminate their foes and thus make a later war of revenge impossible, while, even should they lose the first attempt, the Western victors would impose a treaty like Versailles which would enable the Germans to renew the fighting afterward until they finally conquered a discouraged world.

Professor von Mises is convinced that "the plans and policies of the Nazis differ from those of their predecessors in imperial Germany only in the fact that they are adapted to a different constellation of political conditions. The ultimate aim, German world hegemony, and the means for its attainment, conquest, have not changed. One of the most curious facts of modern history is that the foreigners for whom this German nationalism was a menace did not sooner become aware of the danger. They do not understand that the eternal struggles which shook Germany were disputes among people who were unanimous in regard to the ultimate ends of German foreign policy." Nazism could conquer Germany so easily not on account of some shortcomings of the Weimar constitution but because the Nazi ideas never met any adequate intellectual resistance. Militant nationalism and a deep respect for authority and military virtues were shared by the immense majority of the German people. The great economic depression of

the thirties resulted only in Germany in the victory of a party recommending war as a panacea. The nucleus of Nazi propaganda was not the alleged unfairness of the Treaty of Versailles; it was the fact that the most powerful nation in the world which had shown its invincibility in the Great War had been tricked and stabbed in the back by the Jews and their helpers in the allied countries. If the Germans really want to, and will become immune to Jewish propaganda, they can rout all other nations.

Some of the most brilliant pages of the book are devoted to the Treaty of Versailles, its territorial arrangements and the reparations. As regards the future peace treaty, Professor von Mises points out that the Germans are fully convinced that compulsion applied by them to others is just, while compulsion applied to themselves is criminal. Thus it is vain to expect the Germans to abide by any treaty if conditions for a new war seem favorable. The only solution that should work, provided the victors maintain their alliance after the war, is a complete military and economic disarmament of Germany and her allies.

We must see conditions as they really are, not as we want them to be. It is vain to expect that defeat will change the mentality of the defeated and make them peace-loving. As the victors will not concede them what the Germans want, world hegemony, they will not renounce their aggressive plans so long as the true strategical advantages of high population figures and interior lines remain unchanged. Nazism would be resurrected in a new form and under a new name. They will cling to peace only if conditions are such that they cannot hope to conquer.

It is impossible, in a brief review, to give an adequate picture of the wealth of fertile suggestions and interpretations in the book. Though there are many points, some of them fundamental, in which this reviewer entirely disagrees with the author, he has found even those arguments which he thought wrong challenging and thought-provoking. To the critical reader the book should be highly recommended.

## ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. "The Prisoner of Chillon," by Byron.
2. The Walrus, in "The Walrus and the Carpenter," by Carroll.
3. "The Ancient Mariner," by Coleridge.
4. Sir Joseph Porter, in "H.M.S. Pinafore," by W. S. Gilbert.
5. The schoolmaster, in "The Deserted Village," by Goldsmith.
6. Ah Sin, the heathen Chinese, in "Plain Language from Truthful James," by Bret Harte.
7. Ben Battle, in "Faithless Nelly Gray," by Thomas Hood.
8. Porphyro, in "The Eve of St. Agnes," by Keats.
9. "The Owl and the Pussycat," by Edward Lear.
10. The skipper's daughter, in "The Wreck of the Hesperus," by Longfellow.
11. "Lycidas," by Milton.
12. Belinda, in "The Rape of the Lock," by Pope.
13. "Lochinvar," by Scott.
14. "Maud Muller," by Whittier.
15. "The Solitary Reaper," by Wordsworth.

## Popular Phrase

By Alfred Kreymborg

WHATEVER you ration don't ration this,  
The lad and lass whose bodies kiss  
At a hungry rate because you'll enlist  
The lad and he's killed instead of kissed.  
And if bullets are kisses and then no more,  
His body at least will never be missed  
By love's rash seed or a child's bliss,  
And we'll need the child for another war  
Much like the one we had before.

# Salutary History

THE WAR OF 1812. By Henry Adams. Washington, D. C.: The Infantry Journal. 1944. 377 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by  
BRIGADIER GENERAL DONALD ARMSTRONG

**H**ENRY ADAMS unwittingly supplied a title for one of the most glorious days in the annals of the U. S. Army. While this review is being written, the map showing our armored spearheads in Brittany and heading towards Paris might have been appropriately called "Mont St. Michel and Chartres." To Henry Adams we must go likewise for the best account extant of the most inglorious period in our military history. No one has written a better summary of the fallacies, follies, futilities, and frustrations of the war of 1812 than Adams in his nine-volume "History of the United States," published over fifty years ago. Major de Weerd of *The Infantry Journal* deserves our thanks for segregating and publishing that portion of the history that deals with the all time high in military ineptitude. As he points out, a study of its military defeats is more salutary to a nation than a contemplation of its successes. The war of 1812 is a fertile field for profitable investigation.

In 1812 the Atlantic Ocean offered a barrier to aggression. But it likewise furnished a pathway for invasion. A nation without a military policy, with stupid political and military leadership, watched in a panic as 4500 British troops landed southeast of Washington, and in no hurry at all advanced against no opposition towards the nation's Capitol. Finally, the general responsible for the defense of Washington, a soldier named Winder, bestirred himself.

What manner of man was this Winder? Let Adams describe the general in his inimitable style:

Neither William Hull, Alexander Smyth, Dearborn, Wilkinson, nor Winchester showed such incapacity as Winder either to organize, fortify, fight, or escape. When he might have prepared defenses, he acted as scout; when he might have fought, he still scouted; when he retreated, he retreated in the wrong direction; when he fought he thought only of retreat; and whether scouting, retreating, or fighting, he never betrayed an idea.

Is there any wonder then that the British advanced to Washington and burned the Capitol and the White House with as little resistance, Henry Adams pointed out, as met Cortez on his expedition?

There is one pertinent comment concerning this war that America

must never forget. Mr. Adams wrote:

In the American character, antipathy to war ranked first among political traits. The majority of Americans regarded war in a peculiar light, the consequence of comparative security. No European nation could have conducted a war, as the people of America conducted the War of 1812. The possibility of doing so without destruction explained the existence of the national trait, and assured its continuance.

There is no longer the possibility of preserving our nation if such an attitude persists. The weapons of the aggressor are too potent. This volume should be read and pondered over by all Americans. It is not only salutary history, but also American literature at its best.

## Fulton and Others

STEAMBOATS COME TRUE: AMERICAN INVENTORS IN ACTION. By James Thomas Flexner. New York: The Viking Press. 1944. 406 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN T. WINTERICH

**R**OBERT FULTON was the inventor of the steamboat. So asserts Mr. Flexner in the next to the last sentence of his briskly readable, well-documented recital of as complex and confusing a drama as was ever enacted on the stage of mechanical progress. Much depends, he concedes, on one's definition of the term inventor; it has, he declares, "a meaning only if taken in the sense of a man who was slightly in advance of the procession at the critical moment when his civilization was already on the verge of the discovery he was about to make. Like the winner of a race, he is the first individual to step over the line that separates practical invention from improved application."

There had been an earlier race—a race with two starters and no finishers. James Rumsey died in a moment of triumph as he prepared to explain his model to a committee of English scientists. John Fitch's death was of smaller pathological interest. He hoarded the sleeping pills which had been prescribed for him and washed them all down at once with a copious chaser of whiskey.

Mr. Flexner views the whole fantastic interplay of rivalries in proper perspective as an incident (and the most significant incident to that moment) in the industrial revolution. His is a crowded panorama—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Napoleon, Watt, the great and the little, the credulous and the scheming, the taken-in and the takers-in. It is a fascinating if not an inspiring story, and Mr. Flexner tells it vividly.

## 8 BOOKLETS BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

Bertrand Russell, the distinguished philosopher, mathematician, logician and Freethinker, recently said that he enjoyed writing booklets for E. Halde- man-Julius because he is given the fullest freedom of expression. In fact, it is only in essays written for Halde- man Julius that Dr. Russell can give circulation to the mind-liberating thoughts he feels should be made known to the average person. Most standard publishers are afraid to issue works that are frowned on by the orthodox and conventional. Such a restriction is never encountered in the editorial department of the H-J Publications. In the booklets listed below Dr. Russell offers a feast of reason, information, logic, wit and rollicking humor. We present:

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