

ment of his belief in the Soviet Union. The journey serves merely as a convenient peg.

"Soviet Russia Since the War" must be considered on three levels: as a work of faith, as a commentary on Soviet institutions, and, finally, as a travel account. Since matters of belief are not susceptible of argument, one can only rephrase the words of Heywood Broun—or was it Aristophanes? "This book will appeal to the kind of people who like this kind of book."

Much of the Dean's account is a useful, if simplified, summary of the Soviet interpretation of Soviet institutional life. This is important, for every analysis must begin with the official theory. In every society, however, there is a gap between theory and reality, in the U.S.S.R. no less than in the U.S.A. Dr. Johnson, however, like the Webbs before him, takes no more than a bare step beyond theory. There have been shortcomings; these have been corrected. There are shortcomings; these will be corrected. Just as there is official theory, so is there official self-criticism.

One illustration of the Dean's approach will suffice. He finds Soviet institutional life (with the exception, we suppose, of the army, the navy, the church, and the stage) characterized by democratic centralism. Dr. Johnson asserts that power flows upwards, from the basic rank and file organization, the village Soviet, the party cell, the trade union local, to the highest elected bodies, the Supreme Soviet, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions. The highest elected bodies synthesize the wishes of the governed and then, with delegated authority, proceed to implement these wishes. This theory represents a goal rather than a fact. There is a basis for the belief that a lively political life is to be found in the lowest Soviet organs, but not for any assertion that power or policy flow upward from them.

As a travel account "Soviet Russia Since the War" is commendable for its warm, keen observations as well as for the freshness of its material. Dr. Johnson was afforded facilities reserved for Very Important People and Very Important Friends of the U.S.S.R. He received not only a visa but one which permitted travel in the trans-Caucasus and central Asia. Glimpses of the old and new are given: the election of the Catholics of the Armenian Church, and a new hydro-electric plant, the Iman of the central Asian Moslems, a new cotton mill. "Soviet Russia Since the War" is not a memorable work but it does contain many nuggets.

The War.

Comparatively few of the recent memoirs and histories of World War II have dealt with the Far East. Admiral Halsey's life story, appearing not long after Patton's similar memoirs of war in the West, will supplement C. Vann Woodward's "The Battle of Leyte Gulf" and James A. Field, Jr.'s "The Japanese at Leyte Gulf." MacArthur's Japan is for the first time seriously assessed in Richard Lauterbach's recent "Danger from the East," which reports brilliantly on the impact of our Far Eastern policy. Two personal views of Eastern operations—John Purcell's novel of wartime: "Glass Report," (see page 40) and Elliot Chaze's paratrooper's-eye view of the Japanese occupation will help fill out the meagerly-told story. Watch, too, for an account of "The Marines' War" due in January from that master narrator of Naval operations, Fletcher Pratt.

The Halsey Legend

ADMIRAL HALSEY'S STORY. By Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey and Lt. Comdr. J. Bryan, III. New York: Whittlesey House. 1947. 292 pp. \$4.

Reviewed by ROBERT A. LOW,
LT. COMDR., U. S. NAVAL RESERVE

OCTOBER 18, 1942, is a memorable day for thousands of Americans who were fighting the Japanese in the South Pacific, for it was on that day that Admiral William F. Halsey took command of the area. Announcement of Halsey's appointment almost instantly wiped out the feeling of hopelessness and despair that filled our Marines on Guadalcanal and the Naval forces backing them up. His drastic and daring counterattacks in the next weeks changed the entire complexion of the Pacific war. The Japanese were turned back in their efforts and soon our forces were on the offensive.

"Admiral Halsey's Story" is the life picture of this extraordinary man who when he assumed this important command was already a legendary hero within the service. He went on through three years of fighting to enhance his reputation and came out of the war America's greatest Naval figure since Admiral Dewey. Admiral Halsey was that rare leader who earned the military reputation of a Patton and retained the confidence and devotion of an Eisenhower.

It is well to point to the situation that existed when Admiral Halsey took over in the South Pacific, because it demonstrates so clearly the tremendous respect already held for him even before his overwhelming victories in 1944 and 1945. The name "Bull Halsey" was even then all but a magic name.

Following the landing of Marine

Corps troops on Guadalcanal August 7, 1942, the United States Pacific Fleet had lost in the area a carrier, four heavy cruisers (one Australian serving under our command), five destroyers, and four transports. The Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington ordered the 'canal to be held at any cost to keep the enemy from our lines of communication to Australia. Morale on Guadalcanal and throughout the area had collapsed. The cry went up. "Where is the Navy?"

It took a man of extraordinary ability to transform the picture from one of desperation to one of hope and confidence. Halsey was that man. Out-numbered in men and ships, he had the inspiration to rally his forces and go on to victory.

The Admiral tells the story of his forty-one years in service in "Admiral Halsey's Story" with the assistance of Lt. Comdr. J. Bryan, a former associate editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*, who himself had a distinguished record in World War II. Admiral Halsey calls the book a report ("the only things I know how to write"), but in this book there is nothing stiff, dull, or formal that one might expect in the report of a military man. Halsey has traced his career chronologically, giving particular attention to the three stages of his part in World War II: (1) from December 7, 1941, when he commanded a carrier task force to May 1942 (Halsey was at sea west of Pearl Harbor when the Japanese struck); (2) from October 18, 1942, when he was commander of South Pacific Area and Force until June of 1944; (3) from June 1944 to August 1945 as commander of the Third Fleet, concluding with the Japanese surrender aboard the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

Admiral Halsey reveals dramatical-



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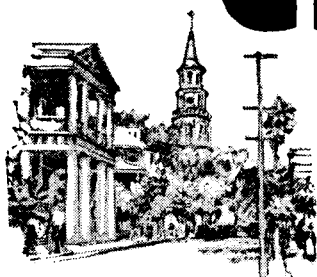
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ly the trials of prosecuting a war under divided command—in this case the conflict with General MacArthur who commanded the Southwest Pacific. Each commanded all the services—Army, Navy, and Marine—within the geographical limits outlined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington. For a time this meant that Halsey was supreme commander east of the 160th parallel cutting through the Solomon area and MacArthur was supreme commander west of this line. Halsey was responsible to Admiral Nimitz in Pearl Harbor; General MacArthur was responsible to the high command in Washington.

"It is vital for the Navy never to expose itself against the perils of divided command in the same area," Admiral Halsey writes.

It was this question of divided command that Halsey blames for the near catastrophe of the Battle for Leyte Gulf when remnants of the Japanese fleet including battleships closed in on a force of our escort carriers whose "heavy" armament consisted of one five-inch mount each. "Although our naval power in the Western Pacific (1945)," he points out, "was such that we could have challenged the combined fleets of the world, the fact that it was not coordinated under any single authority was an invitation which disaster nearly accepted."

This book will make fascinating reading for every American who served under Halsey in the Pacific. To learn what went on behind the wartime newspaper reports, here is an incomparable document. Admiral Halsey has written simply and modestly a book that will further enhance the Halsey legend.

**FRASER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT: No. 233**

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 233 will be found in the next issue.

GFRXWGV WC CF VFFQ UC

WR CBBAC NBD FEBXUGQ.—V.

BZWFR.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 232

Look round the habitable world!
how few
Know their own good; or knowing
it, pursue.

JOHN DRYDEN.

American Wards

THE STAINLESS STEEL KIMONO.

By Elliot Chaze. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1947. 207 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

A FEW years ago the War Department took over from his wife and two children a young reporter for the Associated Press, editing a night wire out of New Orleans, turned him into a tough paratrooper, and sent him to Japan along with seven of his case-hardened and death-defying sky mates. If Elliot Chaze was as used to brutality and as handy with his fists as the rest of them when he was grounded with his mates in the smells



and mud of defeated Japan, at least he had the seeing-eye, a perverse sense of humor, and deep-rooted sympathy for the underdog. He has had the good sense to leave amateur speculation on international politics alone. He makes no attempt to understand Japan or the Japanese as a conquered people but confines himself to what he heard, saw, felt, and smelled. His book, outside of its quality as slightly bawdy entertainment, has therefore a special value. It records the surface impressions of a deliberately case-hardened man who is determined to write a lively and realistic narrative. The first sentence of his foreword illustrates his mood perfectly, "I believe that the reaction of most occupation troops in Japan is that of a person suddenly handed a brimming bedpan and told to guard its contents carefully." He adds, "The occupation troops devise their own methods for forgetting that the thing entrusted to them seems hardly worth the trouble."

The thing entrusted to them, of

course, is a country of some seventy-five million people, which without colonial and world markets could not support fifty million in any degree of well-being. It is a country wrested suddenly from the grasp of a brutal fascist and military despotism, with an hereditary divinity as its emperor, turned over to an occupying army of American boys who had been taught that the Japanese were half savage apes and half toy men and women. There is no indication in Mr. Chaze's book that Japan is one of the most beautiful countries in the world, that its people had hauled themselves out of medievalism in a little more than half a century, had performed prodigies of industrialization, and had at the same time retained habits of docility, obedience, and resignation, and that innate love of beauty in miniature that made their impoverished country one of the most charming in the world.

In Mr. Chaze's book there is nothing left except their obedience, patience, and passive resistance. In spite of the brashness with which he writes the pathos comes through and at the same time the innate and rather shy kindness of the average American toward these strange little people, smelling of fish because they had to eat the loathsome flesh of the octopus, and of dung because it was spread over their fields or because sanitation had broken down.

There is the story, for example, of the starving boy picked up and made into a petted messboy who fell in love with his roller skates; the Japanese night-club performer who lived week-ends with a paratrooper, and who was finally almost killed by returned Japanese soldiers; the story of the girl with shining steel teeth which another bold paratrooper found in his pockets the next morning. Even in his bawdiest tales there is some strain of pathos. The savagery, the brutality is of one uniformed American against another; if the Japanese were beaten or slain by Americans it does not appear anywhere in this book.

Most of Mr. Chaze's story is concerned with the astounding ways in which these bored, homesick, and tough young men managed to survive, to keep sane, and to retain their humanity. If they seem a good deal like Western barbarians playing with half-broken and dirty Oriental dolls the author cannot be blamed for the impression he has created. It is a book to be read for amusement, as he intended, but one in which you will find out something about the lives of Americans abroad and about America's abject and stubborn subjects in Japan.