

late Professor Cross of Harvard University. Professor Cross was one of the most important students of Slavistics in the Western world. His is an uncommonly well-written book, providing, with brevity and clarity, the best introduction to the study of Slavic cultures this writer has ever read.

His chapter on the German-Slav relations is perhaps the most rewarding. The difficult topic is handled fearlessly and objectively. Advocates of the "Slav mission" in the world

are not likely to applaud Professor Cross, who wrote forthrightly: "I submit that this is romantic nonsense. . . . No nation has a mission of aggression at the expense of others."

The author's gifts as a writer equal his profound knowledge of the cultures he analyzed. Whether he wrote of the primitive Slavs or the Balkan principalities, Russian intellectual life of the late nineteenth century or the formation of the Russian state, his pages are free of even a trace of academic ponderosity.

Birth and Death of a Republic

AUSTRIA: *From Habsburg to Hitler.* By Charles A. Gulick. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1948. 2 vols. 1,906 pp. \$20.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

IT MAY seem a truism to say that the birth of a modern independent country presupposes the wish of its inhabitants for its creation. Yet no such wish really lay behind the birth of the Austrian republic in 1918. The overwhelming majority of the peasants and middle-class people who voted the Christian Socialist ticket that year remained nostalgically loyal to almost everything that the defunct monarchy had stood for in its domestic policies. "It may or may not be significant," as Dr. Gulick puts it, that the Christian Socialist president of the state council did not join his three fellow presidents in the public proclamation of the republic. In no part of Austria was the liquidation of the Habsburg empire accompanied by any surge of national feeling—a *staatsgefühl* which would have taken precedence over regional, economic, party, or ideological interests.

Dr. Gulick touches only lightly on this paradoxical situation. On the whole, he takes for granted from the outset that the struggle between the various classes in Austria precluded any general concern for the country as a whole. In fact, it is this struggle which is the chief concern of his detailed study of the Austrian republic. The book is an outstanding performance of painstaking research. Offhand, I know of no other work in which a man not born and bred in a country

has succeeded so well in disentangling the knots of its domestic history, and in presenting his findings so lucidly.

Dr. Gulick quite rightly admires the great accomplishments of the social Democrats in the various fields of public welfare, particularly as city administrators of Vienna; he devotes several richly documented chapters to that oft-discussed experiment in Socialism in a capitalist country and within the framework of a democratic constitution. At the same time he is not blind to the antagonisms which some of those innovations (for example, the revolutionary school reforms) naturally aroused among tradition-bound Catholic citizens.

Gradually the once strongly middle-class Christian Social party fell under the influence of big business, coming into conflict with the Social Democratic party, whose leaders were also the leaders of the great labor unions. The bitterness of the struggle was naturally aggravated by the well-nigh insurmountable economic difficulties of a country which had been carved out of an empire with no respect for economic ties.

Within a few years the stage for civil war was set. The *Heimwehr*, which grew out of local defense corps and state militias, soon became militaristic and avowedly anti-democratic. The *Republikanischer Schutzbund*, on the other hand, originally an expansion of the corps which kept order at Socialist meetings and street demonstrations, remained unquestionably republican in spirit. As these two armies drilled and scrapped, each claimed that "it organized its military

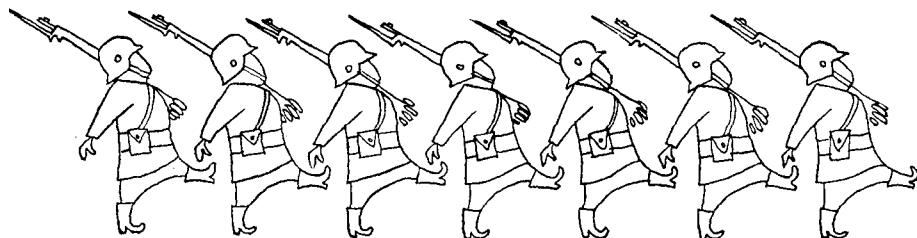
forces to meet the aggression of the other."

Dr. Gulick tells the story of the civil war with impressive accuracy and detail. His presentation of the incidents of July 15, 1927—which ushered in the period of open warfare—is very convincing. The bloodshed of that day was precipitated by the acquittal of some political murderers by a politically biased provincial jury. The Socialist leaders knew that an organized attack on the jury system—plainly called for by that and similar miscarriages of justice—would also further the aims of reaction. "They did not understand that slavish adherence to the ideology of democracy may in certain situations jeopardize democracy itself," and their reluctance to channel and discipline the indignation of their party members gave their enemies their opportunity.

In his second volume Dr. Gulick tells the story of the counter-revolution in Austria, down to the shocking events of February 1934, which left the divided nation wide open to the onslaught of Nazism. The story of how parliamentarianism was destroyed by advocates of a "corporate state" is a sorry one, and Dr. Gulick lets the record speak for itself, without conjectures or moralizing.

In his eloquent condemnation of such contemptible counter-revolutionaries as Prince Stahrenberg and Major Fey, Dr. Gulick includes Monsignore Seipel. With this I cannot fully agree. True, the Austrian-Bavarian-Hungarian bloc which that austere and not always candid prelate offered as the final goal of his political program was "the Vatican's solution." But there can be little doubt that Seipel was fully aware of the dangers that loomed on the European horizon. He recognized what the peacemakers of 1918 did not—that without a strong power in its center, the European continent was destined to fall under either Prusso-German or Slav-Russian domination. The objective of his Socialist adversaries was nobler, but his was the greater. Seipel was the only statesman the hapless first Austrian republic ever had among its politicians.

Dr. Gulick concludes his study by expressing his hopes and fears for the second republic. Today Austria stands rather helplessly awaiting its destiny in the postwar world that is so slow in taking shape. It is not an enviable position by any means, and much of the future of that beautiful country will depend upon forces other than its own. But it appears that during the years they were enduring Nazism, Austrians developed some of the basic patriotic feeling without which no country can survive.



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What Is a Nation?

NATIONAL SELF - DETERMINATION. By Alfred Cobban. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1948. 186 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

THIS plainly written little treatise is a mine of information on one of the outstanding political problems of our time. How many know the connection between the doctrine of national self-determination (which is supposed to be a good thing) and absolute national sovereignty (which is supposed to be obnoxious)? If you concede, however, that a group of people have a right to make themselves into a nation by ballots freely cast, then you cannot, as a democrat, deny them what they have voted for. Popular sovereignty and national sovereignty are indissolubly linked; and the claim that international considerations, whether political, military, or economic, ought to modify the will of the people in this respect, is difficult to maintain without upsetting the idea of democracy itself.

But perhaps I should have said "nation-state" rather than "nation," for this is one of those ticklish questions which makes a man wonder why we have abandoned the old usage in labeling such inquiries. We are still, unfortunately, political philosophers, not political scientists. All we can do—as Dr. Cobban expertly does here—is to borrow the inductive method from science and worry along, constantly re-examining our terms of reference to see whether they are the same terms with which we began.

We should begin with an attempt to define the nation. It is clearly not enough to avoid the issue by saying we know a nation when we see it; there is only too much evidence that we do not . . . [but] to begin with a theoretical analysis would be to endanger the whole historical basis of our study, and to produce an essentially non-historical account disguised as history.

There you have the root of the trouble. If you investigate something without knowing what you will find before you are through, your conclusions may be solid and scientific. But suppose you do know and simply refuse to say until the investigation is completed? Why is the historian who hides something up his sleeve until the last page more scientific than the historian who goes to work with all his cards laid on the table? The method Dr. Cobban has chosen adds nothing to his facts, which are sound in quality and presented in overflowing measure; it only makes the book needlessly dull.

Which is a pity. It would have been wiser to take a leaf from the text that Edward Benes, President of Czechoslovakia, the most self-determined of the European nations, wrote nine years ago. "The principle of self-determination," said Benes in "Democracy Today and Tomorrow," "was misused and continues to be misused in an incredible degree. Everybody gives to it the interpretation that serves his political interests and aims." Then Benes goes on to quote the Nazi philosopher Rosenberg as a horrible example: "We [Nazis] want to support nationalism only in those nations whose development will not conflict with the German nation." Surely there is a moral in the fact that Benes, who overvalued the principle, is currently playing the role of the Prisoner of Prague; and that Rosenberg, who underestimated it, brought ruin upon his nation and death by hanging on himself.

Dr. Cobban's survey concludes with the statement that the dependence of small nations on the great powers is more absolute now than ever before, but that the great powers both can

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 259

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 259 will be found in the next issue.

QJ XNQSHTZNP QPX LJNQ

RVZYGZYZR QUVSYYU, HU

OZTT SVZNX S LZNKVXSYQ,

ZY XWXVU WZTTSRX QPXVX

KSTTZYZR PZLNXTA QPX

BXJBTX.

NZV VJHXVQ BXXT

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 258

The difference between a prejudice and a conviction is that you can explain a conviction without getting mad.

BAPTIST MESSAGE.