

most impassioned hymn that has ever been sung on the magnificence of Petersburg and the glory of Peter" would no doubt have both surprised and amused the poet. More serious is Mr. Weidle's failure to bring to bear on his interpretation the various economic and material factors that so thoroughly conditioned the whole growth of Russian culture.

Mr. Weidle's preoccupation with the influence of Western culture on Russia leads him into the old mistake of exaggerating their identity. Europeans did not come to understand and love the great works of Russian culture, as Mr. Weidle claims, because they found their "own true image" in them. On the contrary, what enthralled Europeans was the discovery of an artistic essence wholly unlike that of the West in the Russian ballet, music, theatre, and fiction. The relation of man to the world and the wonderful dramatization of the universal spiritual and moral problems of humanity in the fiction of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky were unique achievements of Russian art.

When Mr. Weidle reaches the Soviet period in his book, he propounds a rather original aspect of his general theory on the identity of Russian and European cultures. He maintains that the Soviet revolution was the work of men who believed themselves to be Marxists but were in fact the direct heirs of the revolutionary nihilism of the 1860's, a movement entirely anti-culture in theory and practice. And he draws the obvious conclusion from this, that the Soviet system in turn is ultimately destined to produce an anti-culture—a systematic denial of every non-utilitarian value in art.

One may doubt whether such Marxists as Plekhanov and Lenin were really the heirs of Russian nineteenth-century nihilism, but certainly post-war Soviet "cultural" developments seem to be bearing out Mr. Weidle's thesis. The only hope, he declares, is that Russia will once more find her soul, however changed, recognize herself once more in her past, and return to the great European tradition out of which her culture grew.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S  
DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 960)

W. FRANK:  
*BIRTH OF A WORLD—BOLIVAR*  
(In Terms of his Peoples)

He and his world are ours. Now that I have explored . . . his life, it seems to me that Bolivar, if we experience him, may signify (today) as much to the United States as to America Hispania. . . . This conviction was my basic ground for writing this book.



From "The Siberian Fiasco."

Generals Semenov and Graves in Siberia—"to furnish the Bolsheviks with a jagged club."

## A Prophetic Journey

THE SIBERIAN FIASCO. By Clarence A. Manning. New York: Library Publishers. 210 pp. \$3.75.

By HAROLD C. HINTON

PROFESSOR Clarence A. Manning of Columbia University is a noted Slavic scholar whose special field of interest is the history and literature of Ukraine. In his latest book he has tackled a confused and controversial episode which occurred at the other end of Eurasia—the Siberian Intervention of 1918-22. His motive in doing so apparently was to rescue this unpleasant affair from the even more unpleasant propaganda of the Bolsheviks, who still assert that we tried (to borrow Churchill's words) "to strangle bolshevism at its birth."

Unfortunately, Professor Manning's book is a disappointment. It is not well enough written to be of much interest to the general reader, and as a scholarly work it is far inferior to John Albert White's study, "The Siberian Intervention," published by the Princeton University Press in 1950. Much of the introductory material, apparently designed to orient a reader wholly unfamiliar with the subject, is irrelevant, reflects a rather superficial knowledge of Far Eastern history, and contains minor factual errors. For example, Professor Manning assigns the Treaty of Portsmouth, which ended the Russo-Japanese War and

was signed on September 5, 1905, to 1906.

The main portion of the book is an undistinguished factual account of the Intervention itself. Professor Manning's discussion of the motives for the Intervention, and of the cross-purposes at which the intervening powers operated, is not very clear. Briefly, the motives were these: the British and French wanted to bring about the downfall of the Bolsheviks, who had made peace with Germany, and to put Russia back in the war against the Central Powers by bringing to power a White regime; they picked Admiral Kolchak, a brave but incompetent Russian naval officer, as their man. The Japanese, who disliked Kolchak because they no more wanted a unified Russia than they wanted a unified China, were determined to gain control over the Russian Far East, including the Trans-Siberian Railroad, for their own ends. The Americans were there mainly to restrain the Japanese. The fate of some 50,000 Czechs, formerly prisoners of the Russians, and the remote possibility that German prisoners and Allied material in Siberia might find their way into the hands of the Central

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Powers, were pretexts, not motives, for the Intervention.

As for the factors which led to the evacuation of Siberia by the intervening forces (except for the Japanese) in 1920, Professor Manning discusses quite adequately one of the main factors—the defeat of Kolchak by the Bolsheviks in 1919—but somewhat less adequately the other—the end of the war with Germany in November 1918, and the ensuing pressure of public opinion in the Western democracies to “bring the boys home” from a profitless and no longer justifiable operation. With regard to the eventual evacuation of Siberia by the Japanese in the latter part of 1922, Professor Manning grasps one main factor—international diplomatic pressure on Japan at the time of the Washington Conference—but misses another—the increasing hostility of Japanese public opinion toward the Siberian Intervention.

If the book leaves a good deal to be desired as a piece of historiography, Professor Manning's approach to his subject is irreproachably impartial. He denounces the atrocities committed by the Japanese and the Whites, and he holds no brief for the Reds. When he comes to his concluding chapter, however, his understandable desire to relate his topic to the present leads him rather far afield. He is quite correct, of course, in terming the Intervention a fiasco which accomplished little except to damage the prestige of the intervening powers and to furnish the Bolsheviks with a jagged propaganda club with which to beat them. He ventures out on a pretty thin limb, however, when he seems to imply that the Bolsheviks learned from the Intervention the diplomatic tricks which they have been using ever since, including the formation of Trojan horse coalitions with non-Communist left-wing parties. Teheran, Yalta, and the postwar bolshevization of Eastern Europe flow almost inexorably, in Professor Manning's chain of reasoning, from the Intervention. This strikes me as far-fetched and forced.

The United States has intervened militarily on the East Asiatic continent four times within the last half century—in the Boxer Rebellion, in Siberia, in wartime and postwar China and Southeast Asia, and in Korea. The implications and results of these acts of intervention have a great contemporary importance, in view of the possibility that the United States might some day open air and naval operations against the Chinese mainland. Anyone interested in this problem, however, is not likely to be very greatly enlightened by a reading of Professor Manning's book.

## New Prophets on the Lifeline

**CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.** By Hedley V. Cooke. New York: Harper & Bros. 366 pp. \$4.

By HANS KOHN

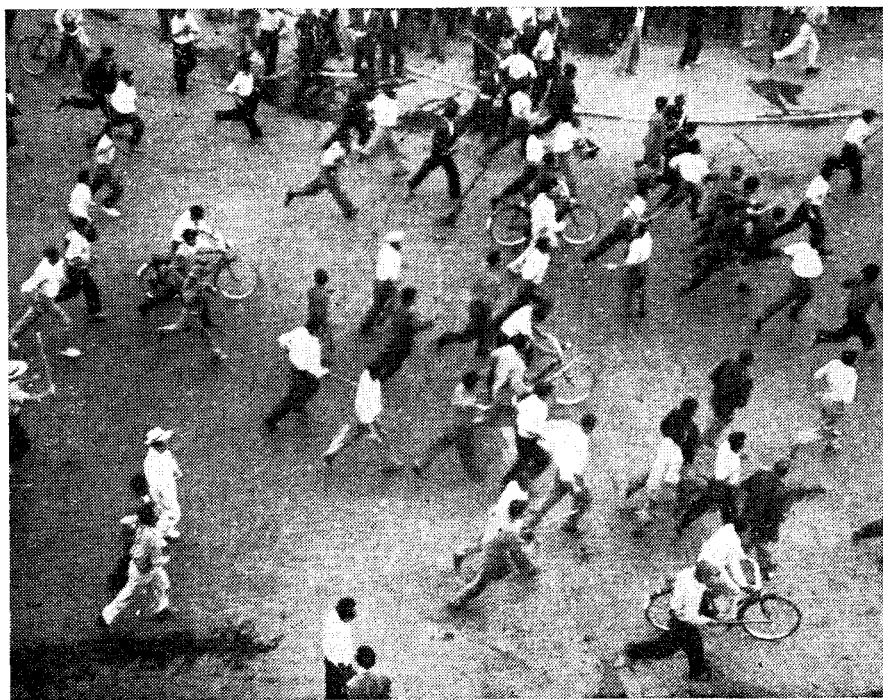
**D**URING the great struggles for the control of the Old World—the Napoleonic Wars, World War I, and World War II—the Middle East represented one of the decisive battlefields. Since then, its importance has even grown. With the richest oil fields of the world within its confines, the Middle East has become an economically decisive area for any contest between the great powers. The upheavals produced by the slogans of totalitarian propaganda, by the temptations of a worldwide conflict, and by the intrusion of ferments like the new state of Israel, stirred the formerly lethargic fellahin, the backward peasant masses of these countries, into action which finds its expression in a fanatical nationalism. Since the end of World War II, a large number of books have appeared in the effort to acquaint the American reader with the conditions of a part of the world to which, until very recently, he paid very little attention.

The present book by Dr. Cooke differs fundamentally from the many journalistic accounts which have recently flooded the market. It brings no stories of personal encounters or interviews, and though Dr. Cooke apparently lived as former United States

consul in Palestine and Turkey, there is little evidence of personal contact with the countries and the peoples. Nor will his way of writing endear him to the reader who wishes to be entertained more than informed. Dr. Cooke, who has been a consultant of the Middle East Planning Staff of the Economic Cooperation Administration, presents a scholarly study of the economic and social conditions of the lands between Egypt in the West and Iran in the East. He has studied all the many documents available and shows clearly the economic foundation of the social and political unrest agitating these lands.

Especially noteworthy are the chapters which Dr. Cooke devotes to Iran and to Jordan. The long common frontier with Russia gives oil-rich Iran special significance. American assistance in the spirit of the Point Four concept has been supplied to Iran, and its prestige there is probably more at stake at present than anywhere else. “The grandiose seven-year plan, which involved intimate cooperation between the Iranian Government and a group of American engineering firms,” Dr. Cooke writes, “is now seriously threatened with failure. A final col-

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—Acme.

The 1951 Teheran riots—“temptations of world conflict.”