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was a reluctant, remote-control killer, and even in the building of his own empire he spent little passion or energy. The assassination of his vicious assistant and potential rival, Heydrich and the failure of the July 20 conspiracy vastly increased his power. Towards the end of the war the S.S. had become "a state within a state." But Himmler's S.S. was no more cohesive and well-organized than was the Third Reich itself. The different organs of the S.S. followed separate, often conflicting, policies, which Himmler only intermittently directed, and each was in competition with rival authorities, the Army, the Foreign Office, and the six other security services that enveloped Germany with a politically useful sense of insecurity. Himmler was too small and mediocre a man to master his power; in the end only the weak and defenseless—the insane, the Jews, the East Europeans, the nameless hostages—suffered the fury of his machine. The strong were not compelled, and the rival intriguers in Hitler's Empire were not subordinated.

The history of the S.S. is indescribably ugly, and the pictures of their massacres which S.S. troops left behind, and which are here published, make this ugliness more inescapably immediate and concrete. Dealing with such material Mr. Reitlinger could not remain dispassionate, and it is to his credit and to the great advantage of the book that on the whole he writes with restraint. He is, nevertheless, harsh on the Germans, harsh on those who pretend that the S.S. alone was guilty and who thus make it the alibi of the nation. His book shows

that the S.S., however, much abetted by other Germans, was the principal agent of Nazi atrocities, and for such atrocities as he relates any nation would stand in need of an alibi.

GERMANY TODAY: The English are so addicted to understatement that even many of their first-rate journalists—of whom J. A. Cole, author of "Germany My Host" (Abelard-Schuman, \$3.50) is obviously one—face their readers with the diffidence of a Dickensian clerk. This deceptively modest book is not merely a leisurely traveler's diary but a sharp portrait of a crucial period in a nation's history.

Mr. Cole's chronicle encompasses the country's fabulous resurgence to industrial and political eminence during the following decade, including the "gold rush" set off by the currency reform in 1948—the turning point in West Germany's post-war history. To the author today's Germany is a highly competitive, yet stratified, society with bloated plutocrats, a cocky middle class, and slum dwellers reminiscent of Victorian England. The desire for conspicuous consumption "is the ideal inspiring so much effort, to which German aggressiveness is at present diverted."

East Germany the author discovers to be an even more fiercely competitive society, with deliberate disparities of income. He offers not only an astute analysis of art and the press, but explains why a people no less industrious than its brethren in the West has been reduced to the inefficiency and slovenliness of the Soviet's Eastern European satellites.

—PETER JACOBSON



Pick of the Paperbacks



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APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA. By John Henry Cardinal Newman. Houghton Mifflin. \$1.05. Cardinal Newman's explanation of his conversion marks one of the foremost intellectual struggles of Victorian England.

What Makes Us Yankees?

"American Nationalism," by Hans Kohn (Macmillan. 272 pp. \$5), is an analysis, by a student of the nationalism of many lands, of our home-grown version. Professor Walter Johnson of the University of Chicago reviews it.

By Walter Johnson

OUT OF his long experience as a student of nationalism in many lands, Hans Kohn offers in his new book "American Nationalism" a stimulating exploration of the domestic version and an interpretation of it in the light of nationalism in other parts of the world. Rather than attempt to write a lengthy history of American nationalism, he has focussed his attention on five problems which he considers to be the most characteristic: its origins in the colonial period, its relationship to England, its functioning in a federal nation, its multi-ethnic character, and its position in relation to other nations.

With deftness and insight, Professor Kohn stresses the English idea of constitutional liberty, the limitation of authority, the growth of the spirit of compromise and moderation as determining factors in the growth of our nationalism. These were a great inheritance, but Kohn adds that in America, the traditions of English liberty were blended with unlimited economic opportunity to a degree unknown anywhere else. This blend of liberty and opportunity produced a mobile society, flexible and pragmatic, free from the blighting hand of caste and class. Freedom and the opportunity for all to improve their lot in life, had created by the time of the American Revolution a growing belief that we were a distinctive people. Then, in the nineteenth century, as the nation turned its back on Europe and spread westward to its continental limits, the illusion of our uniqueness grew. That we were fundamentally a different people from the Europeans became a significant aspect of American dogma. But, as Kohn points out, all during this process the United States was actually the frontier land of modern Western civilization, not only geographically, but also "its field of experimentation and fulfillment." A significant aspect of this experimentation and fulfillment was the growth of liberty and the flowering of the belief

that it was the American mission to spread liberty to the rest of the world. Another aspect of America as the frontier of Western culture, was the great influx of immigrants, representing many European ethnic strains. Kohn emphasizes that the common faith of immigrant and non-immigrant in liberty and equality of opportunity brought a remarkable degree of unity out of this ethnic diversity. The educational system, with its stress on human dignity, equality of opportunity, community responsibility, and the sense of belonging, Kohn believes, deserves much credit for the cohesion achieved among peoples from so many nations.

In both his discussion of the adjustment of immigrants to American life and the development of the federal system under which central authority and local autonomy were reconciled, Professor Kohn surprisingly ignores the role of the two-party system as a blender of diversities and a moderating influence among the competing forces in American society. Moreover, no discussion of the immigrants' adjustment to America can overlook the fact that politics opened the way to upward mobility faster for some immigrants than any other avenue. In "The Last Hurrah," Frank Skeffington's comment that he chose politics as a career rather than business since he could get to the top faster in politics, has widespread application and meaning for any interpretation of our multi-ethnic nation. Mobility, including political mobility, speeded the adjustment of immigrants to basically English institutions and ideas.

Kohn closes his analysis by tracing the difficulties of American adjustment to the blunt fact that in the twentieth century the nation had to become the leader of the North Atlantic Community. As the most modern and western of nations, the United States, which rarely had viewed itself as one of these nations, was faced with "re-learning which involve[s] the discarding of cherished . . . and illusions . . . irrelevant to the new world situation."

There are many perceptive insights in "American Nationalism." It is refreshing to have a scholar with the humanistic understanding of Kohn and with his breadth of knowledge about European culture analyze American nationalism in the larger perspective of Western thought.

Susanne Langer

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