

- BOOK REVIEW -

FRANCE MY COUNTRY

By Jacques Maritan (*Longmans. Green and Co., New York.*)

(Reviewed by Henry O'Shea '45)

Written for the American public in an effort to explain and bring out the principal cause for the capitulation of France, this book is divided into seven chapters in the following order: France in Humiliation; Politics; The People; the Military Knockout; The Armistice; The French in Defeat; Through the Disaster.

The author left France in January, 1940, in order to conduct a course at the Political Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto and to deliver a series of lectures in the United States. He had expected to return to Paris in June, 1940, but, owing to the events which followed he was prevented from doing so. Taking the opportunity afforded him, he wrote this book in which he points out that the disaster was owing to the fact that many independent causes converged in the end on a single effect which spelled ruin. The military defeat of France was owing to the superiority of the Germans both in armament and in numbers; but this superiority was the result of mistakes made by the French, as it was up to them to meet Germany with a much more powerful and better equipped army than they did. The breakdown of France was also owing to military mistakes committed by both France and England. It was the result of the bankruptcy of the governing body, and was accompanied by the demoralization of the people.

The book is a clear, carefully reasoned, and convincing discussion of the principal cause of the French disaster. In view of the present events the time spent in reading this book will not be wasted, and readers will find it interesting and instructive

OUR CASE

by

Christopher Hollis

(Reviewed by A. J. McLeod, '42)

Since the outbreak of the present war there has been much criticism of Britain's European policy during the years previous to 1939. Some assailed her for letting Hitler get so much power without an effort to check him, and others find fault with her for plunging into war when she did.

In *Our Case* Hollis seeks to explain the forces which motivated Britain's policy during these years and the circumstances which influenced her to remain aloof. Britain did not declare war when the Nazis took over Austria because many held that Austria was unable to exist by herself. The Czecho-Slovakia problem was a very difficult one as the country was an artificial grouping of dissimilar territories and contained large minorities desirous of union with Germany. Again, owing to internal troubles, France could not agree to back England effectively, so that not until the Polish issue arose did England resort to war.

Hollis also reminds us that despite her former crimes, Britain is now ranged on the side of Christianity and Justice and all her subject peoples prefer her domination to that of Germany.

Some of the Author's ideas, especially those concerning Russia are now seen to be erroneous, but the enlightening inside story which the reader obtains of European politics during those anxious pre-war years is an ample recompense for reading the book.