Book Reviews

The Rebels. A study of post-war insurrections. Brian Crozier. Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1960. 256 pp. $3.95.

This is a fascinating and extremely informative study of a much-too-neglected subject, the anatomy of rebellion and the art of controlling rebels. Since the end of World War II the world has known no rest from internal wars; and even though there has been much discussion of how the balance of nuclear terror has increased the possibility of limited wars, there has been shockingly little serious scholarship on the subject of such forms of violence. Brian Crozier, Australian journalist and staff member of *The Economist*, has now provided us with an invaluable and lively introduction which takes the form of brief but rewarding conducted tours of almost all the postwar insurrections. These include the struggles by communists and noncommunists against both British and French colonial rule, insurrections against communist rule, and uprisings against the newly independent governments.

With remarkable economy of words, Crozier presents the roots of each rebellion and the key sequences of events so that even the previously uninformed reader can quickly grasp the essence of each situation. The scene moves from the jungles of Malaya and Vietnam to the white highlands of Kenya and the mountains of Algeria with breath-taking rapidity, but without superficiality in treatment. Specialists on particular countries and situations will be able to raise some questions of both fact and judgment—Crozier does seem to be just a bit more understanding of British embarrassments than French ones—but all must acknowledge that, as a broad work in contemporary history, this is a tour de force.

In spite of his accumulation of information, Crozier has some difficulties in advancing either completely convincing or particularly novel explanations of the nature of rebellions. Essentially, he advances the view that rebellions always stem from frustrations; political frustrations stem mainly from bad government; bad government generally means not moving with the times and forgetting that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure—for example, always stay one step ahead of a people's demand for independence; and if a rebellion does break out, only beastly governments can effectively use pure repression while democratic governments must combine a search for a political settlement with their use of force.

No objections can be made to any of these points; indeed, not only are Crozier's values right, but in various contexts, he has much to say of real political wisdom on these matters. The difficulties are the intellectual ones of categorizing knowledge and demonstrating the significance of relationships. We can all agree that there should be less frustration and more good government in the world; but we can feel this way precisely because people are always frustrated and governments are never as good as they should be. The fact that we find these conditions existing at all times, including the periods preliminary to a rebellion, may or may not mean that they are relevant in "explaining" subsequent rebellions. One of the great feats of the human imagination is the ability of political man to find, regardless of the objective circumstances, a public cause for giving expression to his private problems.

The fundamental difficulty Crozier has in arriving at a typology of rebellions is that he limits himself almost entirely to the level of political and rational calculations. People can get mixed up with, and even come to lead, rebellions for a whole host of reasons ranging from the most personal to the most general. This is particularly likely during periods of great social upheaval when people feel adrift. Indeed, during unsettled times, many people may be far less interested in the objectives of a movement than in the simple act of association and participation. They may just want to belong even when bored with the announced goals, and they may want to lead even when uninspired by professed objectives. In short, all problems are not to be solved by such crude methods as administrative programs and good government; in dealing with problems common to drastically changing societies, it is especially important to recognize the tremendous gap that usually exists between personal motivations and public issues.

These observations only suggest that, as we follow Crozier's lead and begin to study rebellions more seriously, we are likely to find that we are dealing with a subject which calls for a complete examination of all aspects of the problems of creating modern men and modern societies. It would be too bad if, at the beginning of such an effort, we were to commit ourselves too strongly to the view that human frustrations are dangerous and that the objective of government should be the creation of a placid and docile population by forward-thinking, manipulative administrative programs. Another alternative, or at least a complementary approach, might be to encourage the expression of frustration, hostility, and aggression, but through socially acceptable channels; for many of the greatest achievements of mankind, from art to politics, have occurred because men have been driven on by their frustrations and even by their aggressions. As a very wise colonial official once observed, when informed that the steam could be easily taken out of native opposition movement by giving the ambitious leaders minor government jobs, "Men should have their inalienable rights to frustrations, and good government should never rest upon the buying off of discontent."

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The Stone Age of Northern Africa. C. B. M. McBurney. Penguin Books, London, 1960. 288 pp. Illus. $1.45.

McBurney's latest contribution in the field of North African prehistory is a pleasant surprise. Too many books of this kind are so overloaded with ponderous and poorly organized masses of

detail that they have a stunning effect almost equal to that of a blunt instrument. In the present case, however, although the author has produced masses of information just as imposing as those served up by any of his colleagues, the material is beautifully organized and is presented with the easy mastery of a champion weight lifter.

The author begins by summarizing briefly what is known about the Stone Age peoples and industries of Europe, Western Asia, and Africa south of the Sahara and about the conditions under which the people lived. He then presents in great detail the evidence bearing on the Stone Age races and cultures of Northern Africa including the Sahara (from the Red Sea to the Atlantic) and on their environmental settings and ecologies insofar as these are known. The resulting broad picture is remarkably coherent and complete. It may seem to some that undue emphasis is placed on the eastern half of the desert, but that is doubtless because this is the area with which McBurney is most familiar personally. There is a good map at the beginning of chapter 1, and dozens of excellent illustrations are scattered through the text.

No book covering so vast and complex a field can be expected to be wholly free from errors of either omission or commission, and so the following critical remarks should not be taken as detracting from the unique, over-all value of McBurney's work. Apparently a considerable time elapsed between the completion of the manuscript and its publication; for I find no mention of the very important palaeobotanical data and radiocarbon datings published in 1956 and subsequently by Pons and Quézel, nor of Hugot's reports on Capsian finds in the central western Sahara. The relationship between the present sedentary agricultural population of the desert and the waves of negroid immigrants who entered it from the Sudan in Neolithic times also seems to have escaped the author's notice, although I discussed this point at length in print in 1957 and 1958.

Some of McBurney's conclusions seem to me to be open to serious question. The "Tibbu" (= Teda) of the Tibesti, for example, are surely not of "Central-African origin" linguistically, at least not according to Greenberg, nor do they seem to me to be so physically. I disagree emphatically, on somatological grounds not to mention technotypological considerations, with the assumption that "the Mechta el Arbi strain is ultimately of western origin . . . [and] brought . . . the basic traits of a backed-blade industry from South-Western Europe. . . ." The skull known as *Dar es Soltan C-1* does not belong, in my opinion, to the "Mechta el Arbi strain" but to some strain rather like that which Angell has called the "Basic White" variety of *Homo sapiens*. Nor was the "Mechta el Arbi type" ever "totally replaced by Mediterraneans," but on the contrary, was absorbed by them so gradually that even today Mechta-like individuals appear now and then among the modern Berber population of the Kabylie Mountains. I still have serious doubts regarding the supposedly neanderthaloid character of the Haua Fteah mandible which, judging by the published photographs and measurements, could easily be lost among the Mesolithic mandibles from Afalou and Taforalt. And finally, the far western trans-Saharan trade route was open not only "in the remote past" but has been in almost constant use, certainly for the last 500 and possibly for the last 5000 years.

A few factual errors have crept in here and there, but they are of only minor importance. Bir el Ater is not "in southern Tunisia" but in southeastern Algeria, some 90 kilometers due south of Tebessa and roughly 15 kilometers west of the Tunisian border; Taferjit, which lies 135 kilometers (not "some 200") west of Agadès, is hardly "in the southern Aïr." And "Akhnet" should be written (and pronounced) "Ahnet." The "Aterian tang" is found outside Northern Africa not only on Easter Island but also in the highlands of Central America. And Aterian industries are distributed far more widely, in, as well as south of, the Sahara, than McBurney leads the reader to suppose.

This rather forbidding list of critical comments and downright criticisms should not be taken too seriously, however, for the flaws noted therein are no more than scattered specks on the surface of a wonderfully complete and polished piece of solid work. McBurney's new book is certainly the standard reference work in its field for everyone who can read English easily, and it will probably remain so for a good many years to come.

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The Intelligent Man's Guide to Science. vol. 1, *The Physical Sciences*. vol. 2, *The Biological Sciences*. Isaac Asimov. Basic Books, New York, 1960. xiv + 853 pp. Illus. + plates. 2 vols. (boxed), $15; $11.95 (until 25 December).

Here, at last, is something new in popular science writing. For once an author has taken the whole of modern science as his oyster, and he has shown himself equal to the task without patronizing the reader, taking him for a babe-in-arms, or doing devilish damage to the contents by culling his material from third-hand sources. For at least one reviewer who started with a considerable allergy towards all popularized science, the world will never again be quite the same. It happens that Isaac Asimov is a professor of biochemistry at Boston University. More important, he is one of the most polished and imaginative writers of science fiction, and he is the author of several previous, more limited popular science books. He writes like a professional, not like a scientist speaking ex cathedra, and in two extensive fields of science, his knowledge is so far reaching that he can draw a synoptic picture far more vivid than any that have gone before.

Asimov's fields are the physical and the biological sciences. For him, physics consists of a complex of astrophysics and particle theory, while biology is a system that proceeds from biochemistry to the associated subjects of neurophysiology and genetics. All else, as they used to say of the nonphysical sciences, is stamp collecting. I happen to agree firmly with Asimov about what is central in science and what is not, and I will defend him to the death against traditionalists who might deplore his not starting with "Heat, Light, and Sound" or his giving short shrift to "Natural History." In fact, my only criticism is that he occasionally departs from the key areas, the growing tips of modern science, and digresses inconsequentially. The most notable examples of this are a piffling and incomplete chapter on technology, "The Machine," which has little to do with the rest of the book, and some over-naive judgments about the early history of science.

The main body of each volume, however, gives the most up-to-date, the most exciting, and the most readable general account of the spur heads of modern science. I would recommend these