tional on a subject often otherwise slighted. After special chapters presenting problems on air defense in the Netherlands East Indies, Australia, New Guinea, and China, the volume closes with preparations for the air war against Germany and as such serves as an introduction for the second volume which is to deal more specifically with that problem.

The casual reader will not be able to enjoy this book as easily as a best seller or as one done in a popular style, but if he is at all interested in air force history he will find it readable, accurate, and interesting. After the first volume the average reader will be more likely to be concerned with the one in which the story of his special interest is presented. The editors and publishers are to be commended for an attractive, informational, scholarly, and readable account.

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The Bending Cross, A Biography of Eugene Victor Debs.

By Ray Ginger. (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1949, pp. x, 516. Bibliography and index. $5.00.)

October 20, 1926, was a sad occasion for the workingman. 'Gene Debs had died! No doubt his many friends remember the words: "Let the people take heart and hope everywhere, for the cross is bending, the midnight is passing, and joy cometh with the morning." Ray Ginger, a candidate for the Ph.D. in American Culture at Western Reserve University, has written the biography of Debs in accordance with the sympathy and sentiment expressed in the above question. The title of the book is entirely appropriate, and it is illustrative of the colorful life of an outstanding man.

Ginger's life of Debs is an example of the new school of "scholarly" writing for the general public. The advocates of this method of writing would seem to approve of a semi-literary style which is all inclusive, with few or no footnotes to disturb the reader. The author, in a typical mid-western spirit, uses first names indiscriminately, particularly of Debs' parents, throughout the book. Moreover, numerous details garnered from documents, letters, memories of those who knew Debs intimately or remotely have been
included in this biography. Unfortunately, the author is neither a master of trivia nor adept at the art of subtly qualifying statements of judgment. The difficulty in this kind of writing is, with its interminable data, in enticing the reader to stay to the end of such a lengthy and often tedious book.

The reader is obliged to search for the larger significances. The table of contents is non-revealing. One might be inclined to ask: What are the relationships between each of the four topics listed in the table of contents and the subject of the biography? These relationships could be clarified by the use of chapter headings throughout the book.

Actually, however, the biography is interesting—if one disregards the occasional illogical paragraphs and inconsistencies in the style.

Ginger's review of the entire labor situation in the crucial period of the 1880's is informative. He explains in detail the reasons for the change in Debs' attitude toward the use of strikes. Debs' managerial ability in the Great Northern Strike as well as his skillful baiting of Governor Knut Nelson is well done by the author. Ginger has carefully evaluated the significance of the Pullman strike and Debs' subsequent conflicts with the federal authorities.

Debs' part (1905-1907) in the radical organization of the I.W.W. and in the dramatic struggles among the numerous leftists and labor leaders is related rather well. Some new information is presented relative to the Haywood-Pettibone-Moyer vs. Idaho case. And the reasons given for Debs' espousal of the I.W.W. principles as well as for his withdrawal from that organization in 1908 are worth noting. Contrary to Ginger's idea, however, the manner in which Debs dropped his membership from the I.W.W. seems to have been characteristic of the man. The latter never hated those who disagreed with him but only the principles for which they stood. Yet, Ginger inadjudiciously affirms that Debs intensely disliked not only Wilson but Samuel Gompers as well. The author, however, does not seem to think that it is possible to separate hatred of personalities from hatred of their actions. Apparently Eugene Debs' great love for humanity permitted him to do so.

In contending himself with sheer biographical narrative, Ginger falls somewhat short of the scholars' goal. The book
is neither analytical in quality nor judicious in quantity. The style is verbose, and in places it is colloquial and ungrammatical. The author, however, shows that he is capable of being objective. One example of his objectivity is shown by his portrayal of Mrs. Kate Debs. This is especially commendable in view of a recent novel in which the wife of Debs is grossly misrepresented.

A further criticism of the book is that by giving all available facts and impressions about Debs it tends to obscure vital issues. There is no doubt, on the other hand, that this biography does supply the data out of which balanced conclusions can be deduced. These possible conclusions would be particularly relevant to present-day problems such as strikes, suppression of opinion, and intolerance.

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*Europe since 1914 in its World Setting.* By F. Lee Benns.  
(New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1949, seventh edition, pp. xx, 770, 103. Select bibliography, maps, illustrations, and index. $5.00.)

The demand for textbooks in recent and contemporary history continues to challenge historians to keep their writing up to the minute. Consequently the question arises as to whether such history can be as objective as that which awaits further sources of information and the attainment of proper perspective. Furthermore, by the time such a book is off the press new events often overshadow what was the latest information at the time the writer completed his manuscript. Despite the criticism of works in this category, it must be admitted that there is excellence in many of them, and that few historians equal and none surpass Dr. Benns in his capacity to produce a text that is so up to date and at the same time so free from bias.

The seventh edition of *Europe since 1914* compares very favorably with the sixth. For one thing, it is much better proportioned. With almost one hundred additional pages, the revision begins on page 490 effecting a drastic reduction of about eighty-five pages in the story of the second world war; this welcome change makes possible a much more comprehensive treatment of the second postwar period with-