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what was still essentially a Vietnamese War. By the time he left office, the deaths of 30,000 American troops and the presence of 536,000 more in the Vietnamese jungles had signalled that the war was not merely Americanised and far from over, but as likely to alter America's perceptions of itself as to change its face in the eyes of the world. Johnson staked his own claim to the White House in a landslide described by Theodore H White, the historian of the modern presidency, as "the greatest electoral victory that any man ever won in an election of free peoples"; as he left it, turning aside his right to run again, the youth of his country stood at its gates chanting "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids have you killed today?" All this, on top of a major social revolution he chose to dub The Great Society, took place in a mere five years.

It is in this knowledge, fortified by Caro's verdict that Johnson's presidency was to be "a watershed in America's history, one of the great divides in the evolution of its foreign and domestic policies", that we read in voluminous detail of the making of the man. A major portion of this book, largely contained in its first few chapters, is a separate work in itself, an important social history of the emergence of Texas not just as a major force in the structure of American political society, but as a self-contained unit, graduating from a life of medieval hardship to an electrified, mechanised agricultural society equipped to square up to the oil boom. These social improvements were in large measure due to the young Lyndon Johnson, apparently to his liberal zeal, in fact to his eagerness to do anything and everything for anyone which would in due time rebound to the betterment of his ambitious self. Caro begins his tale by telling us how Johnson, in desperate need of funds, turned down a quarter of a million dollars, effort-free, from a friendly industrialist, because it would "kill" him politically; by the time the book ends the industrialist has reaped the rich rewards of the friendship of an influential Congressman — and that Congressman, elected on the industrialist's money, is himself well on the way to becoming one of the richest men ever to inhabit the Oval Office.

In his early days as a Congressional assistant, Johnson once rode a Capitol Hill elevator in the company of a lift operator who told him that *he* had once been a Congressman. Caro, uncharacteristically, rather throws away this powerful story: for it seems to have been from this moment that Johnson, reared in a poverty he need not (for once) exaggerate, became obsessed by the need to make money — not merely to finance his political career, not even to avoid having to worry about it any more, but as a quintessentially Texan end in itself. He proposed to "Lady Bird" the first time he met her, not because she was devastatingly beautiful — Caro's researches show her to have been a wallflower at school hops and "an old maid in the making" — but because her father was the richest man in town. Once he'd secured her, he treated her like dirt — and she was powerfully loyal. It all fits the pattern. It was through Lady Bird's homely hospitality in their modest Washington apartment, for instance, that he befriended the powerful Texan politician who more than any other single figure helped him up the ladder: Sam Rayburn.

Rayburn was Speaker of the House of Representatives for seventeen years, longer than any other man in American history. Under Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, he was (as they say) the most powerful man in Washington apart from the President. Johnson recognised what lay ahead even before Rayburn won the post, and behaved with appropriate obsequiousness, so much so that when Rayburn nominated LBJ for the Presidency in 1960, he felt free to exaggerate: "I'm going to present to you today a man that I have known since his babyhood." As this volume ends, Johnson's political career has been unavoidably interrupted by events at Pearl Harbour: he is off to war. But he is shrewdly leaving his political interests (and his wife) in the safe hands of Sam Rayburn.

Rayburn's only ambition — the daydream of his im-

poverished boyhood, apparently, as is the American way — was to mount the Speaker's podium. Johnson's impoverished boyhood nourished bigger ambitions: all the way up "the three-rung ladder" past the House and the Senate to the Oval Office. If you want to be President, he told William O. Douglas in the mid-40s, after his first (unsuccessful) Senate race, "you've got to do it through Sam Rayburn". So Mr Caro ends by giving us a glimpse of the future, some 20 years later, when 76-year-old Sam Rayburn replies with some schmaltzy stuff about reason tells their neighbours "He's been like a father to me". Rayburn replies with some schmaltzy stuff about remembering the young Lyndon running up and down the aisles of the Texas state legislature in his short pants.

Such is the stuff of Texan dreams. Mr Caro's absorbing exposition of them already has me hungry for the ruthless detail in which his next two volumes will make them come true.

IAIN MONCREIFFE

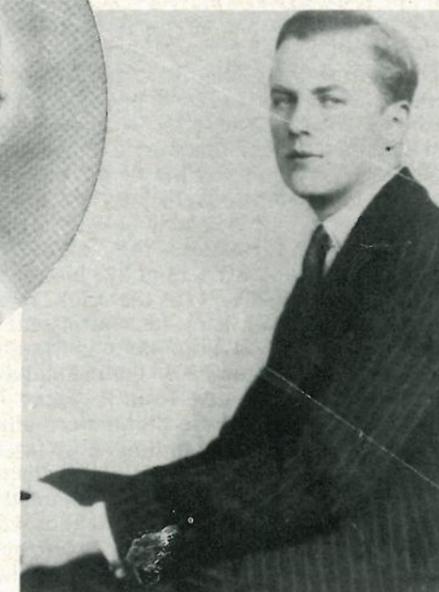
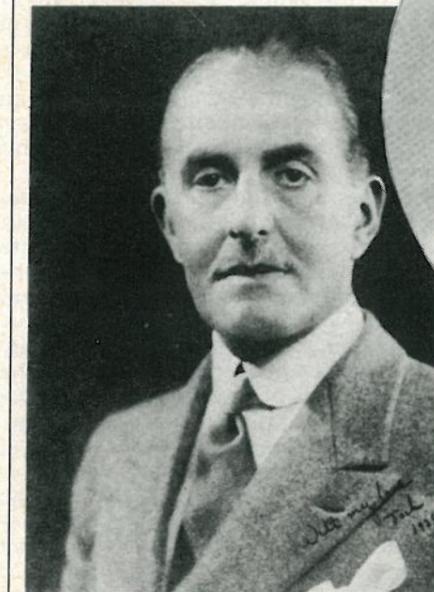
Unhappy valley

White Mischief by James Fox
Jonathan Cape, £8.95

AT CHRISTMASTIDE 1969 the *Sunday Times* published a salacious article about the murder near Nairobi in 1941 of the Earl of Erroll, for which a Baronet was subsequently acquitted. The gory close-up picture of the victim's bloodstained head in the mortuary was the first news that the grandchildren of both the earl and the bart had of the whole grisly business. The article was by Cyril Connolly, assisted by the youthful James Fox, who has now enlarged it into a book.

The facts are fairly simple. The first marriage of Sir 'Jock' Delves Broughton, 11th Baronet (created 1660), having broken up, at the age of fifty-seven he had married in South Africa on Guy Fawkes' Day in 1940 a beautiful divorcée of thirty called Diana, whose eventual enchantment of Mr Fox the author is delightfully described in this book. Being too old to be of use in the Second World War (Mr Fox is so naive that he really believes an obvious birthdate misprint of '1888' for '1883' in *Who's Who* — alone of several reference books — was inserted by Broughton himself), Sir Jock was on his way to Kenya before their honeymoon in Ceylon. The elderly baronet had done two things that were to have a bearing on the case: he'd agreed that if she ever fell in love with a younger man he would consent to a divorce, and he'd settled £5,000 a year on her tax free come what may for seven years, a sum he could ill afford. In Kenya in December they met Josslyn, 22nd Earl of Erroll (created 1452), a dashing captain aged 39 who fell passionately in love with the new Lady Broughton. She returned his love, and by January the unfortunate baronet was asked to honour his agreement.

On 21 January 1941, the bart reported to the police that two revolvers, which he had inexplicably left above the fireplace downstairs overnight, had been stolen. (None of the people later suggested by social gossip as possible suspects in the murder case were anywhere near his house at this key date). On 23rd, he announced at dinner in the Muthaiga Club that he wished Joss Erroll and Diana every happiness: the earl was in uniform on overnight leave from his important wartime Army position, as the Abyssinian campaign was due to be launched next day. After dinner the baronet went home with Mrs Carberry, who was staying with the Broughtons, and not unnaturally he appeared to get plastered. At 2 a.m. on the 24th, the earl dropped Lady Broughton home and drove off. An hour later his body was found in the motor car, not far away: a



The three main figures in the scandal which still raises tempers: left, Sir 'Jock' Delves Broughton, acquitted of murder; centre, the lovely Lady Broughton, erring wife; right, her murdered lover the Earl of Erroll, father-in-law of Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that ilk.

bullet hole near the accelerator pedal and another in his head. Being myself both a Q.C. and father of his grandson the present 24th earl (my first wife was the murdered Lord Erroll's daughter), I've considered the trial evidence carefully and have long been satisfied that these bullets were fired from one of Sir Jock's missing revolvers. Again, none of the gossips' other possible suspects were nearby at the fatal time. Later that day the baronet made a mysterious bonfire that included a bloodstained golf stocking and his gym shoes. Despite a partial alibi given him by Mrs Carberry, which depended on his being nippy on his toes, the bart was duly arrested and tried for murder. The Crown found a practice ground where he had earlier used the revolvers, and matched the bullets to his: but unwisely supposed they came from his *Colt*, which the defence demonstrated to be impossible. The baronet was accordingly acquitted.

The ostensible purpose of this book is a search to determine whether the jury reached the correct verdict. Indeed, Mr Fox has found a new witness whose evidence would certainly have been admissible, but who has not, of course, been subjected to critical cross-examination. However, the author's mentor Cyril Connolly's real purpose would appear to have been to cram in as much unprovable scandal about the defenceless dead as would sell a gossip column masquerading as history. Many readers may be unaware that there is no law against slandering or libelling the dead: you can make up or embellish any stories you like about them. This not unusual case has been high-lighted only because of the rank of the victim and the accused: thus demonstrating the extreme rarity of murder in that particular social group. Nevertheless, the *Sunday Times* serialised extracts from the book under such salesworthy headlines as 'Aristocrats. Alcohol. Adultery'; although neither the earl nor baronet were alcoholics. Having personally conducted a number of divorce cases at the Bar, I've failed to observe that adultery is restricted to any particular class in society. Frequent entry into saloon bars all over the country has equally failed to bring me to the *Sunday Times*'s conclusion that boozing is a class matter either. Doubtless no married woman has ever been seduced by a tipsy journalist. But sadly, Mr Fox has been infected by Connolly's media-style use of facile juxtaposition of unrelated facts, a trick unworthy of a would-be serious historian. So what particularly got my goat about the 1969 article that developed into this book, was their introducing bogus 'wartime' moral

indignation into a tragic tale as old as mankind.

Mr Fox writes in his book: "On Christmas Day, Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that ilk sat down and composed the following letter to the Editor of the *Sunday Times*. I no longer remember his reaction to it, but it was the kind of letter that would have touched Connolly on an exposed nerve.

'Sir, Before regaling us with servants' hall gossip, Mr Cyril Connolly draws 'indignant attention' to the War going on at the time of the death of Lord Erroll, whose only daughter was my first wife. It's as a talented writer rather than a military man that we think of Mr Connolly, which is perhaps why he forgot to mention that Lord Erroll had recently returned from the Eritrean campaign, where as a Captain he had been awarded a mention in despatches.'

James Fox ripostes in the book: "to this day I can find no trace either in print, or by word of mouth — except his own insertion on behalf of his wife in *Debrett's* (of which company he is a director) — of Erroll at any Eritrean campaign, and thus no evidence of a mention in despatches."

Now, here's a puzzlement. It's true I am Patron of *Debrett's*, but it contains no such insertion. What the family does have is the following signed citation, duly framed by Lord Erroll's proud mother: "By the King's Order the name of Second-Lieutenant (Acting Captain) the Earl of Erroll, The Kenya Regiment, was published in the London Gazette on 1 April, 1941, as mentioned in a Despatch for distinguished service. I am charged to record His Majesty's high appreciation. (signed) David Margesson, Secretary of State for War." April Fool's Day to Mr Fox? Our armed raids into Eritrea, followed by the Italian advance on Kas-sala; took place in June and July 1940; when Mr Connolly was safe abed in unblitzed London.

I was myself an ensign at the Tower of London during the Blitz at the time of the murder, but like Mr Connolly doing infinitely less for the war effort than Lord Erroll who was by then already the computer-brained Deputy Director of Manpower and Assistant Military Secretary, East Africa Command: and after a fire had just reconstructed the entire mobilisation scheme out of his own head. That's why I'm so glad my letter "touched Cyril Connolly on an exposed nerve". He deserved it for dragging our real War into his own petty personal wars: his snobbish love-hatred of titles, which mesmerised him and was derived from not having one of his own at Eton, and his sexual vendetta against "the Bonny Earl of Erroll".

Astonished by the venom in Connolly's article towards the murder victim, I had been assured by two of their contemporaries that it stemmed from Connolly's unrequited desire for Lord Erroll while they were boys at Eton. Indeed, the book reflects this. Sir Sacheverell Sitwell is induced to write about Erroll as an object of schoolboy adoration. But, more sadly, Connolly — hardly one's idea of a necrophiliac — appears to have been still in bitter-sweet love with the corpse. This is how he describes that ghastly, bloodstained head in that horrid photograph on the mortuary slab — it reminded me of my having to pass an examination in Forensic Medicine years ago: "I do think it ... brings out the extraordinary beauty of Lord Erroll which was to dog him through his life and lead to his undoing." Unfortunately for Mr Connolly, his lordship was so far from being homosexual (as the book seeks to imply) that he was sacked from Eton for stuffing the boys' maids.

So much for Cyril Connolly's spurious indignation but special interest in the case. Unfortunately, he communicated it in this vindictive form to young James Fox, who was not born when these things were afoot. Mr Fox is a serious historian of this undoubtedly fascinating case; an old Etonian, half American, half British-aristocrat; very likeable, for I have met him; and indeed will be hurt by what I've been reluctantly obliged to observe about his old friend and trusted mentor. Moreover, he did his best to check up on my father-in-law's mention in despatches before dismissing it as fictitious, as I couldn't lay my hands on the citation at the time.

Still, a little "investigative journalism" on his part ought to have turned it up. However, hell hath no gossip like a lover scorned. The dead hand of Cyril Connolly lies across the first part of the book. We are told: "Connolly alerted his friends. He resurrected the gossip network of the 1930s, and with the generous expense accounts of the period, many lunches were arranged." The result is that what one may call the Happy Valley opening section is about as valuable as a true historical record as the gossip columns that have been fibbing imaginatively about you and me for years: I know in particular, having been dogged by the repetition of irritating, silly stories about myself which are not only known to the Press to be false, but are in fact demonstrably incapable of being true. Almost our only defence against the arrogant, spiteful bullying of the media are the plays of Tom Stoppard. Nor should the reader forget in this context that the Broughtons were English visitors: only the murdered man hailed from the Valley.

Moreover, the method Connolly taught Fox is in itself destructive of accuracy: never to use a tape-recorder or a notebook during an interview, but to try and write it up afterwards from recollection. I'm able to give a first-hand example: Mr Fox asked me whether Sir Oswald Mosley had been a boyfriend of my mother-in-law, Lady Idina Sackville, when she was Countess of Erroll. I replied that he had given her a crystal-and-gilt dressing-table set personally designed by Louis Cartier, engraved with her initials and coronet. The book translates this into "Oswald Mosley, who had presented her with a pearl-inlaid dressing table."

Now, I knew Lady Idina well, and she was a great lady, though highly sexed. When she died, her sister-in-law Lady De La Warr, who didn't particularly like her, wrote discerningly to *The Times* that when she entered a room everything became brighter. She was not the lady described by Mr Fox, who never met her: and I rather think he argues from the particular to the general. For example, he tells us that at Lord Erroll's parties the guests had to line up on arrival to watch my mother-in-law having her bath: I wouldn't put it past her doing this once for a prank, but nobody in his senses could believe it was a daily practice.

The way this sort of gossip grows is illustrated by an ill-informed review of this very book in the same up-market Yellow Press. Mr Fox wrote: "One of those evenings, Raymond de Trafford, maddened with drink, went outside and set fire to several of the African houses ... he was forced to pay up." Thus was a snowball set rolling. The reviewer, John Carey, repeating another bit of unlikely

gossip about Lady Idina, generalises the foregoing *solitary* incident into: "An alternative diversion was burning down the houses of Africans." Curiously enough, one of my earliest memories, when I was three years old and living in a native hut adjoining my parents' house near Nakuru, is of just such a native hut accidentally going up in flames. It was that of my best friend, a Nandi boy much older than myself called (phonetically) Naiya; and all that was left was an iron bedstead among the ashes. Our coffee plantation was in Happy Valley, but nobody would have dreamt of burning African huts for fun.

Incidentally, this brings me to my next point. It's impossible to test gossip, which is of its very nature both malicious and exaggerated. But it is possible to evaluate some of the gossip by testing the facts among which it's embedded, to see whether the narrator has at least a firm grasp of the background. Now, Mr Fox tells us of the above culprit that "Raymond came from a grand Irish family from County Limerick", whereas everybody knows on the contrary that the de Traffords of Trafford are one of the oldest of Lancastrian families: his brother Sir Humphrey, whom I knew the better of the two, was the fourth Baronet, so it isn't difficult to look them up in the Snobs' Bible. Again, moving to more important matters, the Duke of Devonshire was Colonial Secretary and not Foreign Secretary when he declared a policy for Kenya that made the natives' interests paramount: the Foreign Office had no authority within the Empire. Nor are we helped through the maze of gossip by curious inconsistencies: e.g. Joss (Lord Erroll) was "quite sober", but his "days were mostly taken up with polo" as a "hangover cure".

But what is notably lacking in assessing the likelihood of the gossips' taller stories is any sense of humour — one wonders who is pulling whose leg — and we are even given as serious evidence this entry in the celebrated Muthaiga Club's complaints book: "I like the military wing. It is peaceful. One is spared the shrill cries emanating from the rooms of married members engaged in beating their wives into submission." The envious nickname 'Happy Valley' seems to have aroused a sort of prurient fascination: it's almost as though a New England puritan were wishing to believe everything he was told during the Salem witch trials. And all this rubbish from someone who is unable to verify, by a single telephone call to the Army Records Office, the *fact* — not a matter of mere gossip — of Lord Erroll's mention in despatches as a soldier in the field.

Let us now consider Lord Erroll's career. That *Sunday Times* reviewer, carrying on the Connolly torch, writes of "the Earl's small calibre brain". As a matter of fact, he had one of the best brains of his time: you had to, to pass the Foreign Office examination between the Wars, then the top examination of all. Before that, he had served 1920-1922 as Honorary Attaché and Private Secretary to the British Ambassador in Berlin (the job I had in Moscow in Stalin's time), a critical post at a critical time. Mr Fox calls him Military Attaché, a post that a Major-General would fill; and supposes the Ambassador to have been his father who, however, although Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin in 1919-1920, became British High Commissioner of the Rhineland in 1921. Unfortunately, as it turned out, after passing the examination for the Diplomatic Service, he was unable to take up a post because he fell in love with and married a very remarkable but divorced lady.

Bred to be a brilliant diplomat, a fine soldier or a statesman, the first two careers were now barred and for the third he was too young. Not at all rich, and possessing not an acre in Britain, he settled down to farming — and to sowing his youthful wild oats — in Kenya. His first marriage ended in amicable divorce, his second wife was a dipsomaniac who died of drugs. By now he was in his thirties and of an age for statecraft. Burning his fingers in his friend Oswald Mosley's party, he turned against it and made his maiden speech in the Lords opposing any concessions to Hitler. Soon he was an elected Member of the Legislative Council (Kenya's parliament), and President of the settlers' own rival Convention of Associations: and was being groomed to succeed able Lord Francis Scott and

earlier the great Lord Delamere as the settlers' political leader. Then came the War, where he did equally bravely and skillfully. One of Mr Fox's interviewees summed it up: "Erroll was good at everything."

At his prime, talented, popular and with a great career ahead of him, he was murdered in uniform while on leave overnight — it would seem most probably all for the love of a lady. The key to this, I suspect, turns on (1) whether Sir Jock Delves Broughton's second missing revolver fired the fatal shot, as no other suspects were about the night it went 'missing'; and (2) whether the deed of covenant of £5,000 a year tax free executed by Sir Jock in favour of Lady Broughton was *absolutely irrevocable for seven years*, which would have placed him in an impossible position financially had she eloped with her true love.

Here, Mr Fox moves out of the gossip column style, a mixture of Hickey and Beachcomber, into an efficient narrative of the events leading up to the murder and then Broughton's subsequent trial. Then he goes on, in yet a third style — reminiscent of Agatha Christie — to describe how his friend Cyril Connolly and he spent years tracking down every clue. It would be a ridiculous and unfair pun to call Fox, Connolly's jackal: he was an honest straightforward bloodhound. Whether he got the right scent, as I tend to believe, is for the reader to judge; I won't spoil the book for him. Somebody was bound to write it, and he has done an enormous amount of work.

But the best passages in the book are those where he uses his own remarkable descriptive style. His interview with the Earl of Carnarvon — incidentally, not Montgomery, that's the other Herbert, Lord Pembroke — is hilarious: a cross between Wodehouse and Waugh. And his vignettes of the African countryside are quite beautifully written. One day James Fox, his detective story finished now at last, will write another best-seller, but this time a jewel of a traveller's tale.

MICHAEL BLOCH

Schizophrenia

The Goebbels Diaries 1939-1941
trans and edited by Fred Taylor
Hamish Hamilton, £9.95

IN A CHARACTERISTICALLY brilliant review in the *Spectator*, Hugh Trevor-Roper, a previous editor of Goebbelsiana, advances four reasons as to why this volume should be treated with suspicion as a historical source. We are not told about the history and provenance of the (as yet unpublished) German text of which this is the translation; if, as is likely, it comes from Russian hands, there is no telling how it may not have been tampered with; it is a curiously incomplete text, in which the periods of greatest interest to historians — the summers of 1939 and 1940 — are significantly missing; and it is consciously written for posterity — Goebbels intended it as the basis for an official history of the Reich — and thus not only the journal of a propagandist but itself propaganda. These limitations must be recognised. Nevertheless, this is a fascinating document which will be of profound interest not only to those who seek to learn about the terrible phenomenon that was Goebbels but to historians of the period generally and, above all, to psychiatrists (one of which profession, we interestingly learn on page 128, was regularly consulted by Goebbels).

Historically there are a number of surprises which emerge from these pages. They show how much Hitler counted on a peaceful accommodation with Great Britain. In the autumn of 1939 he is irrationally excited by Lloyd George's peace suggestions; in June 1940 he is hoping for mediation through Sweden (as a result of Mr R.A. Butler's suggestions to the Swedish Ambassador in London of which, for some curious reason, no trace seems to have

survived in the archives of the British, Swedish or German Foreign Offices). On page 123 we are given a draft Anglo-German peace treaty along fairly well-known lines. The diaries show how surprised the Germans were by French defeatism during the battle of France — as late as 16th June Hitler imagines it may be six weeks before the French sue for peace; they show how quickly the Germans were disillusioned with Franco; and they provide an interesting glimpse of German policy in the Balkans and the breakdown of relations with Russia. What Goebbels says about the war and German foreign policy must however be regarded with care, not only because his remarks are coloured by his own fanaticism and propaganda but because there appear to be many things he was not told. He appears, for example, to have been kept entirely in the dark about the Mechelen affair of January 1940, and could not understand the sudden restlessness of Holland and Belgium during that month.

The diaries are mainly interesting, however, for what they tell us about Goebbels himself, and they present a terrifying picture of a man who above all things is a revolutionary and a fanatic. Fidel Castro or Nasser could have written diaries such as these. There is something extraordinary yet typical about his hatred of the past, his desire to wipe away all that has been and enforce the application of a new ideology. He is far more anti-semitic than Hitler, to whom he constantly complains that the Jews remaining in Germany are being treated with excessive consideration, still receiving (he is horrified to learn in November 1939) the same food rations as other Germans. Next to the Jews, his hatred falls on monarchs and nobles and other such relics of the *ancien régime*. The Kaiser is a Jew; the King of Roumania is "not fit to lick the boots" of a Roumanian fascist; King George VI's idiocy is demonstrated by the dullness of his speech opening Parliament (which Goebbels imagines to be intended as a propaganda speech); Mussolini and Horthy cannot rule their countries properly because of 'Jews and nobles'; the Polish aristocracy must be eliminated as ruthlessly as the Polish Jews. Alongside Goebbels the fanatic we see Goebbels the propagandist, the brilliant schizophrenic. One half of his brain perceives the truth that exists and is capable of extraordinary realism; the other half perceives the manufactured truth which must be sold to the people, which he himself almost believes while aware that it is his own creation. It is fascinating to follow the contradictions which result from this conflict. During the winter of 1940-41 he sometimes writes that Britain cannot resist the German onslaught and will soon be put to the sword; at other times he admits that she is resisting brilliantly and that Germany must prepare for a long and difficult war.

Much of Goebbels' jottings are a eulogy of Hitler and a tale of *camaraderie* with the beloved Fuehrer and other Nazi cronies. This is all rather predictable and boring, but here again it is interesting to observe the discrepancy between what the realist Goebbels knows to be the case and the fantasies of which he must convince himself in order to convince other people. Hess, for example, up to the moment of his flight to England (which provides the only truly humorous episode in this book), is a splendid fellow. Afterwards, one is struck by how clearly Goebbels had been aware all along of the limitations and instability of that character.

After reading these diaries (which are a thoroughly good read), I was left with three particular thoughts. The first was how entertaining it would be to compare them with whatever diaries there might be of Suslov or whoever it was who ran the propaganda for Stalin. There would probably not be much difference. The second was what a pity it was that the world was denied the opportunity to see Goebbels give a final performance at Nuremberg or (even better) at Jerusalem. Drama it would have been of the highest order. The third was that, like so many monsters of the period, Goebbels appears to have had (or rather, to have found it necessary to persuade himself that he had) a sweet and happy domestic life.