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REVIEW OF THE YEAR

From his Cambridge study, where so many learned histories of the past have been written, Professor Trevelyan, Britain's most eminent historian looks back on the greatest year in history. It started with a set-back - Von Rundstedt's offensive in the Ardennes. Germany's last bid for victory; a grim, killing affair, desperate and hopeless even when seen in captured German films.

A month later at Yalta in the Crimea, Allied leaders laid the final plans for victory. Of the three great men who met here, attention focussed on President Roosevelt, then already mortally ill.

After Yalta, events gathered speed. The full onslaught of Allied power fell upon Germany.

At the end of March, Field-Marshal Montgomery was able to say:

SPEECH

With Germany's river barrier behind them, the Allied advance gathered momentum. Nazism was crushed in the rubble of German cities. In these weeks, the full horror of Hitler's "new order" was exposed. Then we learned to shudder at the names - Belsen and Buchenwald.

But the rule of the Nazi party was already almost at its end. On the fifth of May, enemy commanders defending North West Germany surrendered to Field Marshal Montgomery and the British 21st Army Group at Luneberg Heath. The climax of Britain's war effort in Europe and the first of the wholesale German surrenders inside the Reich. The remnants of enemy strength concentrated on the defence of Berlin. Here the Russians completed the destruction spread by bombers of the Royal Air Force.

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Berlin's Brandenburg Gate became the symbol of defeat, while in London a people went wild with the joy of victory.

These V-E crowds were an experience never to be forgotten. The hub of Empire lived up to its name in a round-the-gleek celebration. From a Whitehall balcony the men who organised victory looked down.

But even in the excitement of victory in Europe the nation went soberly to the polls for the first General Election since 1935. A landslide swept Labour to power with a majority unexpected even by its own leaders. The war against Japan was still unfinished, but the new cabinet's main task was reconversion to peace. Then across this prospect of a long-drawn-out war in the East came the flash of the first atomic bomb. Japan surrendered unconditionally. United Nations plans for the campaigns of 1946 became out-of-date overnight. Japan's Army and Navy chiefs went through the biggest face-losing of all time.

Victory was in the air long before the official announcement of total peace. In Piccadilly and Trafalgar Square celebrations went on for days without a break.

From the balcony of Buckingham Palace, the Royal Family led the nation in what was at once a holiday and a Thanksgiving.

Professor Trevelyan writes of the past; but newspapers - the film history-books of the future - will preserve in celluloid a 20th Century rogues' gallery. Dead or condemned to die, their memory lives to warn others. Goebbels - dead by poison.

Himmler - self-murdered.

Mussolini - killed in a gutter.

Tojo - kept alive for trial after attempted suicide.

Quisling - dead.

Pétain, waiting for death, in prison.

Laval - executed.

Kramer - the Beast of Belsen - hanged with his partner in horror, Irma Grese, number nine.

William Joyce, meets a traitor's end.

John Amery - another traitor executed.

And the few left alive; awaiting the justice they refused to others.

And who were the noble men of the year? History is full of great names, to which 1945 has added more than its share. General Eisenhower - a good comrade and a good friend.

Russia's Marshal Zhukov, and the man who led the U.S.S.R. in war. Generalissimo Stalin.

President Roosevelt, who didn't live to see victory.

And our own Winston Churchill.

In a year of soldiers, Field Marshal Montgomery stands out, the man who never lost a battle. Seen here with our own King, President Truman.

In power with a mandate to change the face of Britain, Mr. Attlee. But for all the great names, the man of the year is the ordinary serviceman, now getting into his demob suit; without him 1945 could never have been victory year.

A new chapter has been written by great new weapons of war, which made possible, the mightiest victory of history. Mulberry - the floating harbour - key weapon in the invasion of Normandy.

And Radar, the all-seeing eye of war.

Defence by fire. A shield of flame against the invasion that never happened.

Operation Fide - keeping our airfields free of fog.

Another invasion device. Pluto, the pipeline carrying oil under the Channel to France.

The human torpedo - a duel with death, with the cards stacked against the man. And these weird Wellsian figures, the frogmen. And then the war-winning product of science - the atom bomb.

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The smoke pall of the atom bomb hovers over a new world. A generation has grown up knowing little else than destruction and violence. In five years their realm has been bounded by fallen masonry. The young of our land grew up amid the ugly things of life. This is the world they knew. Mankind has made its mistakes - it can afford no more. Tomorrow's men and women leave destruction behind and face a future of new hopes and new tasks. Again the torch of progress is handed on. In the young reposes the future - The New World is Theirs.