

## China on the Map

*IN September 1925 THE FORUM published two articles on China. In one, prediction of a forthcoming revolution on Bolshevik principles was made by Dr. Hu Shih, — then little known in America. The second article forecast the dawn of a new and self-controlled China. That subsequent events have borne out these prophecies is seen in the following review by Mr. Upton Close, the well-known authority on the Far East whose newest book, THE REVOLT OF ASIA, is soon to be reviewed in THE FORUM.*

**F**OUR books in one week, not to speak of lines of heads and columns of dispatches at forty cents a word in the newspapers, are evidence enough that America has at last discovered China. Let the Chinese kill a few more Americans and we shall actually get interested in them. A great deal more information will have to be disseminated among us, however, before the American people are equipped to grapple in knowledge with the problem of the Pacific Era upon which the world has entered.

At this moment when the chairman of a "Foreign Policy" dinner announces the topic of discussion as "State Department Responsibility, — if any, — to Public Opinion, — if any," and the editorial editor of the New York "World" retorts, "State Department, — if any," Henry Kittredge Norton's book, *CHINA AND THE POWERS* (John Day, \$4.00), comes as a valuable exposition of American trans-Pacific policy. Norton suggests no new line. The principles and attitudes of Webster and Cass and John Hay and Hughes are good enough for him, and he passes over the Kellogg régime without a shrug. But Norton presents that policy as it

might be were it conscious, informed, reduced to consistency, and infused with courageous idealism. In such a policy would lie, according to the author, the salvation of China and the avoidance of world-wide scrimmage, — that is, provided Young China would react to it in the right spirit.

Henry Kittredge Norton is the best stylist among our prophets of the Pacific era. No one since Edmund Burke has made better logic or more lucid sentences out of politics. His maps are always a delight to the eye and first aid to the understanding. Having been the sole historian of the temporary Soviet Far Eastern Republic, he presents dramatically Russia's approach to China. He fails, however, to evaluate the statesmanship which lies behind her "enlightened imperialism", or how unlikely it is that while her present leaders are in power she will slip back into the old-style aggression which would bring her once more on to the plane of the Powers whom she is displacing in Asia. Under the suggestive title "The Interested Referee", Norton succinctly evaluates American interest in Pacific Asia.



The weakness of Norton's book is that he evaluates the situation as it ought to be, not as it is. "The hope of young China lies in her students, in the Young China movement, now most strongly coordinated in Canton. There has yet appeared no other force in China that has the power to save China and the world from a great tragedy." "All they need to do to put China on the road to recovery is to assure themselves that there is no aggressive motive behind the Western assistance, and then to accept it as freely and make as good use of it as they have hitherto of the second-hand Russian article." In view of past performance, this is rather a large amount of faith to ask of Young China. If Mr. Norton were an Asiatic he would smile at the suggestion that Russian aid, compared to Western magnanimity, is a second-hand article. The Chinese do not waste emotion thrilling over the sincerity of either one, but they know which gets results. And regardless of the risk they run of wasting their own substance, they do not propose to remain another instant the wards of a benevolent America or anyone else. Since we can not constrain them, why waste words over how good for them it would be if the guardianship might be perpetuated?

Felix Morley in *OUR FAR EASTERN ASSIGNMENT* (Doubleday Page, \$2.00) does one of the finest pieces of sympathetic reporting I have seen. On the Philippines especially, he presents a welcome relief from the arguments of retired American officers and judges. If one wishes to know how real and living is the independence movement, if he wishes to know why Filipinos ask independence at once and without stock arguments as to the foolishness and hopelessness of their projects, Morley's little book will tell him. The distribution of this tiny, unassuming book is one of the fine things to the credit of the Council of Christian Associations, which should not arouse prejudice.

Crowell puts out a new and timely edition of Professor E. T. Williams's *CHINA: YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY* (\$4.50). This potpourri of observations and researches on many phases of Chinese life by one of America's *oldest* students of the Orient has made a definite place for itself since its first appearance four years ago. Its exposition of guild and peasant com-

munal organization is the best available. Dr. Williams has added a new chapter on art, which he rightfully recognizes is one of the truest indices to the civilization of any nation.

It is good to be able to end this list with a book by a Chinese author, *CHINA AND HER POLITICAL ENTITY* (Oxford Press, American Branch, \$2.00) by Professor Shushi Hsü, of the Tsinghua (Boxer) Indemnity College. The eagerness with which Americans turn to Chinese scholars for an interpretation of the ideals and hopes of the new China, is best seen in the large public attendance at the lectures of Dr. Hu Shih during his recent visit to this country. We greatly need more books on China by Chinese, although it would be encouraging to see a turn to art, social history, and economics, rather than the everlasting writings on diplomatic controversies. However, while the spirit of nationalism governs Young China this must be expected. Professor Hsü's thesis concerns the problems of Korea, Manchuria, and Mongolia, with an especial eye to the now rather *passé* Japanese menace. It strikes out in a different vein from its predecessors with a valuable but too barely chronological background of the histories of these regions.

Summing up these books from the point of view of one who ardently desires the lessening of ignorance about China by the American public, I should say that Mr. Norton's book will be most read, as, indeed, it ought to be. Like Tyler Dennett's admirable *Americans in Eastern Asia*, it shows that, although the United States hasn't the same colonial concern as England and France in the region we mistakenly call the "Far" East, American observers are as perspicacious and as enlightening as their compeers in any other country. They are calling attention to a region which, in future, will play a larger part in world affairs than it has in the past. Our dense and grievous popular unawareness is not their fault, as the great number of recent books on China indicates. Indeed, it is to be hoped that the American people will not long remain in ignorance. Events in China daily call attention to a world in revolt which dares us to understand it, and the material is now at hand for accepting the challenge.

UPTON CLOSE

## A New Sedgwick Novel

**R**EADERS of Anne Douglas Sedgwick have been aware for some books past that she was turning toward what, if you are knowing, you call "the stylistic and decorative", and away from what is variously called (according to your personal taste) "the realistic", "the truthful," or "the materialistically photographic". In *The Little French Girl* one figure at least was certainly a metaphorical one in a fresco, rather than a living member of our mixed-pickles human race. This was the all-conquering siren mother, evidently intended to symbolize pure, unmoral beauty. She was too all-conquering. A siren before whose charms literally everybody fell is not even a conceivable possibility for beings who so long ago recognized the *de gustibus* proverb as one of the aphorisms of our existence.

In the latest Sedgwick novel, *THE OLD COUNTESS* (Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50), not only one character but all the book is done in the allegorical fresco style, and beautifully done if you like that style. If your taste allows you to enjoy it, and if you realize to begin with that this is what the book has to offer, you will immensely enjoy this story, half French, half English, wholly non-realistic, lovely with an unearthly sort of lambent spiritual distinction which has become the peculiar quality of Mrs. De Sélincourt's literary personality.

If your habitual mood leads you to read Theodore Dreiser, shun this book. You will save yourself and those about you an outburst of protest against its "unreality, thinness, sentimentality, impossibility." The comment of the realist in my own circle as he laid down the book was not indignant but melancholy. "It never happened," he said sadly. "Not one thing in it ever happened." As I say, if this thought is one to sadden you, keep away from this story of complex mankind (the husband), torn between sweet, honest, wholesome, healthy human joys (his lovely young wife), and the darker, more potent, more dangerous, more exalting joys and pains of mysticism (represented by the exquisitely saintly and alluring other and third angle of the triangle).

I ought to add a footnote referring to the word "mysticism" as used above, and

protest against our narrowing it always to the meaning of doctrinal or religious mysticism. I do not mean it in this sense, but as referring to all those strange, deep-lying, overwhelming, spiritual gropings in human beings, gropings which not only refuse to be contented with merely human satisfactions, but as part of their essence seem always bent upon rending and tearing asunder merely human satisfactions. That's the kind of book it is; resembling a Sinclair Lewis novel as closely as a Puvis de Chavannes fresco of classic groves resembles a flash-light photograph of a prize-fight. There is spiritual truth in it, — the picture of the compelling power of a soul which has endured and survived and conquered suffering. But it certainly "never happened".

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

## A Short Talk to Belloc

**B**ILAIRE BELLOC'S *SHORT TALKS WITH THE DEAD AND OTHERS* (Harpers, \$3.00) are very short, and the first essay is only mildly amusing. It was a pity to take a title so associated with past brilliance and wisdom, from Lucian to Landor, from Lord Lyttleton to Andrew Lang, and to employ a literary form so full of opportunity, yet make so slight a use of them. The truth is that Mr. Belloc is a little too casual with his readers, by whom he would appear to have become rather spoiled; for he often writes as if anything is good enough for them, apparently taking little pains with his ideas, and dashing down anything that comes into his head in a somewhat lordly fashion. At his best, as we know, he can write very well. If a little oracular at times after the manner of a British Justice of the Peace, he can also be engagingly human, and even boyish. In this volume, too, he writes prose which reminds one how finely he once wrote it, — and, of course, can still write it when he cares to take the trouble.

Putting aside the first paper, which gives its figurehead title to the volume, "*and Others*" contains much that is both amusing and wise. The wisdom is better than the humor, which is too often heavy and labored, except in the occasional nonsense verses of which one wishes there were more. I think the best of humorous