

Harrison Forman knows China well, after years of service as correspondent. *Changing China* (Crown, \$4.00), offers less of that country's present predicament than it does of its past, both glorious and unhappy. Forman has here a veritable handbook and travelogue through 40 centuries of life in the Orient.

Taking up China's history from legendary days, two thousand or more years before Christ, the story of conquerors and mixtures of races and religions is given more or less factually. For anyone desirous of a quick

review of China's historical background, this is a good way to get it. Forman presents his information well; sections of the book are devoted to individual provinces, while other chapters go into details of customs, industries, education, and transportation.

In the part of the book devoted to current affairs, there is some recapitulation of the results of the recent World War, particularly with regard to industry, railroads, and other modern problems. The facts speak out loud for themselves.

BRIEFER COMMENT

WORLD AFFAIRS

What has been happening in Japan and Korea since our occupation began is reflected in *Japan Diary*, by Mark Gayn (Sloane, \$4.00). Gayn's report of two years of observation is disturbing. He is not enthusiastic about our manner of trying to break up the zaibatsu, and he is certain that many Japanese and American officials were busy feathering their own nests while on duty to make over Japanese economy. Above all, there is more than grave doubt that the Japanese are heading for democracy. Gayn's comments are worth study, and he does not omit discussion of the Communists' place in the picture.

Throwing more light on the history of Europe during the war, *The Rape of Poland*, by Stanislaw Mikolajczyk (Whittlesey House, \$4.00), is the record of the former Polish premier's fight against Soviet aggression from 1939 to 1948. The story of his attempts to bargain with Stalin is detailed. According to Mikolajczyk, Roosevelt himself did not or could not fulfill some pledges, and Churchill found it expedient to side with Stalin at times.

David Bradley was one of the monitors whose task it was to watch and report on the results of the Bikini tests. In *No Place to Hide* (Atlantic-Little, Brown, \$2.00), he quotes his diary from May 29, 1946, to October 10 of that year, with details of the experiment, the results on people, animals, and things. It is a warning note on the dangers of misused radioactivity to civilization, and it is also something that should be made known to intelligent people in all lands.

BIOGRAPHY

In *The First Romantics*, by Malcolm Elwin (Longmans, \$3.50), there is a new approach to the biographies of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. The lives and loves of each of these, and the impact of each on the others, reveal not only the poets themselves but the times in which they lived. Elwin writes entertainingly, mixing literary commentary with the facts and fancies of society in England and in France. The French Revolution is the background; the dream of a utopian community in America one of the threads binding the three poets. There is characterization and there is tragedy, as in the story of Wordsworth and his sister.

The glory of Britain's golden era is reflected in the pages of *The Reign of Queen Victoria*, by Hector Bolitho (Macmillan, \$5.00), who has made himself an authority on Victorian matters. Aside from the personal biography, there is plenty of history in its pages, some of it of special interest today because of colonial changes. Some of the source material has never been used before.

The Africa of Albert Schweitzer, by Charles R. Joy and Melvin Arnold (Harper's and Beacon Press, \$3.75), by text and photograph tells the work being done at the Schweitzer Hospital for the African natives. It is the story of an unusual career.

Eisenhower Was My Boss, by Kay Summersby (Prentice-Hall, \$2.75), is surprisingly free of trivial matter. The author was the

general's driver and later secretary through the war years. Most of her recollections are friendly and yet directed to the point, whether about people or events. As would anyone, she made her own estimates of officials she met, including President Roosevelt. One person she definitely did not admire was Montgomery, although she was a Londoner when she joined the volunteers. Well worth reading.

FICTION

Remembrance Rock, by Carl Sandburg (Harcourt, Brace, \$5.00), is epic in ambition and in size, requiring nearly eleven hundred pages to tell its story. Its beginning is briefly in the present, and it then goes back to England in 1607, setting the stage for the emigration to America of the ancestors of the chief characters. It rambles on for three hundred years in the United States. As is usual, Sandburg writes a story that is detailed in its picturization of characters, and is carefully welded to its times. There is a lot of American history and folklore in it, and much of interest for the patient reader.

A group of stories of life in the hot spots of Europe—sometimes they were not so hot—makes good reading in *Sweet and Sour*, by Joseph Wechsberg (Houghton, Mifflin, \$2.75). The tales appeared previously in magazine form.

Dinner at Antoine's, by Frances Parkinson Keyes (Julian Messner, \$3.00), is pleasantly reminiscent of both New Orleans and its famous restaurant, with Sazeracs and oysters Rockefeller thrown in to make atmosphere. Aside from its authentic New Orleans background, it is a mildly exciting story of social amenities, a little mystery and a number of characters, some of whom should have known better. The author has been reading Cabell; "susurrus" is a word I have met nowhere else.

To Seize a Dream, by Virginia Hersch (Crown, \$3.00), is the biography of the artist, Eugene Delacroix, told in fictionalized form. In the background are the political events of the 1820's and 1830's, with the famous names of the day in art, literature, and affairs of state. Mrs. Hersch elaborates on the artistic

whims, successes, and problems of Delacroix, and through his numerous love affairs welds the whole into an interesting narrative.

Howard Fast's *My Glorious Brothers* (Little, Brown, \$2.75), is a tale of the Macabees, made by Fast into a story of a struggle for freedom. The Romans, Greeks, and Jews of Biblical times are the characters, and the lesson is the great love of men for liberty and their own gods.

A tale of Poland in the seventeenth century, *The Meek Shall Inherit*, by Zofia Kossak (Roy, \$3.00), is love story, adventure, and a little philosophy of long ago. In his search for truth, the central figure, a nobleman, learns much about the life of his own poor. The influence of church and priest, always felt in Polish life, is manifest.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Tax Dodgers, by Elmer L. Irey and William J. Slocum (Greenberg, \$3.00), is "the inside story of the U. S. Treasury's war with America's political and underworld hoodlums." Irey was former chief of the Treasury's enforcement branch. Some of the big cases of recent years came to him, including Capone, the Lindbergh kidnapping, Huey Long, Prendergast, and others. It's all intriguing reading, but to me the Huey Long story is the most revealing. I still wonder why Seymour Weiss, Long's No. 1 man, did not have me kicked out of his Roosevelt Hotel when I picked on him.

With love and reverence for his topic, Robert Gordon Anderson writes of Paris in *The City and the Cathedral* (Longmans, \$3.50). Here is France of the Middle Ages, from 1200 to the fourteenth century. Kings, queens, artists, writers inhabit the pages as though they were still living.

The Road to Reason, by Lecomte du Nouy (Longmans, \$3.50), was written before *Human Destiny*, and is composed of chapters on scientific approach to man's problems. In it the author also explains the need for these interpretations as a continuing effort of man. It is not for the general reader.