

to be the most extensive school of novelists in the country: those who reveal and disparage life as lived in mid-continent. West of the Water Tower was the story of a young man in a small town; R. F. D. No. 3 tells what happened in a year of the life of a farm girl. Josie Decker is a half educated, good-looking young woman, dissatisfied with the life on her shiftless father's farm, yet beating her wings in vain, ignorant of means of escape, and unable to use them if she had known them. She studies "fancy dancing," gets third prize in a beauty contest, nearly marries a young farmer of the neighborhood, and then suddenly elopes with a handsome city feller, salesman for a patent silo. Because of a series of accidents, the elopement is not followed by the formality of marriage; and after they have been living together for a week or so, the boy is arrested on the charge (of which he is guilty) of automobile stealing. The girl goes home to her parents, confesses the truth and presently has to add the admission that she is pregnant. From her dilemma she is rescued by marriage with another neighboring farmer, "Bush" Higbee, a rough and brutal Napoleon of the prairie, whose uncouthness is supposed to be compensated by his honest candor and innate fairness. Having long loved Josie, and having seen her snatched from him by the silo salesman, he is glad to take her despite the coming baby.

This synopsis, as unfair as such things always are, may serve at least to indicate the intellectual honesty of Mr. Croy's narrative. He has not prettified his Missouri. In fact, if he errs at all it is in the other direction: the poverty, sordidness, misery of the Decker household are rubbed in until the reader marvels, not that a million farmers move to town each year, but that there are any rural remnants at all. Against this background his characters are sharply and vividly drawn; the girl Josie, her failure father, Higbee the rough diamond, are persons it is hard to forget. If the book adds little to the knowledge of the rural scene which has been imparted by other writers and by Mr. Croy in his own previous work, it is a truthful and competent piece of writing, a credit to its author's desire to make an honest picture of a life which he himself evidently views with some repugnance.

B. B.

## Julie Cane

*Julie Cane*, by Harvey O'Higgins. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.00.

IT is no disparagement to the rest of Mr. O'Higgins's novel to say that the opening chapters are about as good as the opening chapters of a middle-weight novel could be. Arnold Bennett himself could not have put the color of human notions, emotions and absurdities more happily into a drab setting. The author presents Cane, a sallow unsuccessful grocer of Findellen, New Jersey. But he presents him merely to contend that all things are possible, for with a practised pen, which has yet the relish of first attempt, he plumbs the unlikely speculative spaces of Cane, and shows you the real man, the interior man, Cane the philosopher, the thinker, who reads Darwin while his wife complains from bed, who views the universe "scientifically" and holds the negligible human race in scorn. On Cane the genial early chapters dwell because it was he who gave Julie, his daugh-

ter, her notion of herself, who made her what she was, in other words, since for all practical purposes of life people are what they are to themselves. "You're all right Julie," he would say.

. . . You'll get lots o' lickings in this world for things you never did . . . It's only the boobies who expect justice the way things are . . . Don't let 'em scare you. That's all . . . Your mind's your own. It's the one thing you've got to protect yourself with an' it's the one thing they'll do their best to get away from you . . .

Of course Julie understood that her father by sheer force of mind had raised himself and her above the herdish stupidities of "them." They were animals who used their instincts, not their brains.

Emerging from her "ivory tower of silence" above the grocery shop, Julie took her opinion of herself into the world (via Miss Perrin's school), and the world, mystified and put off, confirmed her in it. She found unreasonable things happening. But her father had told her that unreasonable things always happened. She was not surprised.

With the introduction of Allan Birdsall and his mother and the Misses Perrin, the book takes a more serious turn towards what is called a psychological novel. But it has none of the conscientious dreariness of what is called that. It is psychologically convincing without being psychologically self-conscious. The spinster Martha Perrin, with her trembling passion for Julie, is a precarious study; Allan Birdsall, especially in his devious unhealthy adolescence, is a daring one. But Mr. O'Higgins has a sense of humor and a sense of proportion; he has swallowed his psychology and digested it; it reappears firm and well-mastered in his credible characters.

The product of all the moods and motives of the book is Julie, of course. She moves from one situation to another with her mouth shut, for the most part, seldom revealing her mind but always keeping to it. She transcends, as the other characters do not quite, her author and his psychology. Even Mr. O'Higgins does not always seem to know the depths of her young reticence. He has written an accomplished first novel, with humor, lucidity and feeling; but more than that, he has created a heroine.

E. V.

## Policies and Policies in Asia

*Conflict of Policies in Asia*, by Thomas F. Millard. New York: Century Company. \$4.00.

THE American policy of assisting Asiatic peoples to fit themselves for self-government and independence and the European policy—which is to say, British, policy—of repressing them in order that accidental exploitation may be easier and more profitable—there lies the conflict as Mr. Millard sees it. His thesis is that the American policy must be established and maintained, by accommodation with Great Britain if possible and by force through our newly acquired strength if necessary.

There, indeed, the conflict lies, and Mr. Millard has accurately posed the problem of the relation of the white powers to the Asiatic peoples. But I am not so sure that Mr. Millard's premises of American purity are still valid in the light of recent tendencies. Our record in the East has in truth been singularly clean, but it may have been

## Some Macmillan Fall Books

### John Masefield

Urged on by the spurrings of an insistent dream, Sard Harker starts his Odyssey in quest of a girl met and loved years before. From the lonely austerity of a sailing ship to unspeakable terrors and horrors; enduring dangers and tortures breath-catching in their eeriness, Sard wins through to final victory.

"John Masefield's prose takes on the rough, jagged colors of his poetry—in the field of which he seems to me the greatest of living Englishmen. 'Sard Harker' abounds with the vigorous lurid imagination of the sailor. Done with superb effrontery and a high talent it is an exciting piece of reading." Laurence Stallings in *The World*. \$2.50

### SARD HARKER

### William Stearns Davis *The Beauty of the Purple*

The author of "A Friend of Caesar" gives us:

A Dramatic Historical Novel woven about the phenomenal rise of Leo, tender of sheep, to Emperor supreme of the Christian world—a story filled with men of courage and men of cowardice, with heroes and villains, with all the seething tumult of life on the heights and in the depths.

"The most singular achievement of its kind."—*Philadelphia North American*. \$2.50

### May Sinclair *Arnold Waterlow*

"May Sinclair has in her 'Arnold Waterlow' achieved the greatest artistic success of her career. The characters are flesh and blood. The description of child life in the early chapters may without hesitation be compared with the beginning of 'David Copperfield'. So far as England is concerned 'Arnold Waterlow; A Life' is the novel of 1924."—*The Chicago Tribune*. \$2.50

### James Stephens *In the Land of Youth*

The Tailteann gold medal was awarded James Stephens for his novel "Deirdre", published last year. "In the Land of Youth" is its companion volume—a tale of fairies, gods; and fantasies, of philosophies, and delicious fooling.

"As Irish as a shamrock, as fresh as the dew on clover, and as individual as the song of a hermit thrush."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

"One of the most original and interesting personalities that has appeared in literature."—*New York Globe*. \$2.50

### Joseph Pennell *Etchers and Etching*

Joseph Pennell has revised his book on "Etchers and Etching" and has added a new preface on the situation in the field of etching in America today, and a new chapter on the teaching of etching. The volume is fully illustrated. \$12.50

### Sophia Cleugh

#### *Matilda, Governess of the English*

A revel of dukes and duchesses, Lords and Ladies, a marriage by proxy, and Matilda—spunky, sedate, modest irresistible little governess of both English and love.

Sophia Cleugh has written a romance irresponsibly, and spontaneously gay. It has that genial and gusty grace of the nineteenth century, is full of grand people, from the heroine herself to her smallest charge, the precious Lord George, and embodies movement with good humor and wit. \$2.50

### Francis L. Wellman *Gentlemen of the Jury*

This popular author of "The Art of Cross Examination" has written an entertaining book about the court. The material is arranged in the form of narratives, anecdotes, and amusing incidents and should prove a worthy companion to his other book, which has gone into nineteen issues. \$4.00

### Lady Frazer *Leaves From the Golden Bough*

No more fascinating book on the life of ancient peoples has been produced than "The Golden Bough". It is a mine of supernatural lore and legend. Lady Frazer has taken the choicest bits from her husband's book and now presents them in her own interesting style. Sixteen full page illustrations by H. M. Brock. \$3.00

### Herbert Cescinsky *The Old World House*

Written to meet a general demand for a book dealing with decoration and antique furniture, written by a recognized expert on the subject. Here will be found advice on the collecting of furniture, its arrangement, the decoration of rooms, and a hundred and one other subjects of interest to the home lover. In two volumes. Illustrated: \$17.50

Ask your dealer to show you these books. You will find him interested in helping you make the proper selection.

## THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

NEW YORK

CHICAGO

ATLANTA

BOSTON

DALLAS

SAN FRANCISCO

Prices subject to change on publication