

A FAR EAST PROBLEM

MANCHURIA: A Survey. By Adachi Kinnosuké. New York: Robert M. McBride Company.

Can a land have as dramatic a history as a man? One who reads this book, modestly characterized by the author as a survey of the resources and the history of an ancient empire, will find thrilling drama in the many parts the land has played and is playing. Its most fascinating development will be found in its change from battlefield to nursery of the peace of the Pacific, if not of the world. Physically, Manchuria is an irregular inverted triangle, covering 382,627 square miles, with its base in the north along the Amur river, which separates it from Siberia, and its southern apex where Port Arthur thrusts into the Yellow Sea. Korea is on the east, and westward lie Mongolia and China.

Peopled at the dawn of history by the virile Tungus of the Mongol Tartar blood, a race of hunters, herdsman and warriors from whom are sprung the Japanese and Koreans of today, the land has been flooded by waves of immigration from China, and has been the scene of countless battles, notably those of Japan against the Chinese and the Russians. Always it has been rich in forests, grain and coal. Centuries ago it was called the granary of Asia. Today it is serving the cause of peace by providing a vast field for Japanese activities as well as food for the Japanese people. Says Mr. Adachi:

The question of war or peace for Japan will be settled—not in Japan nor on the Pacific, as some of the navy people on both shores of that ocean dearly love to believe. But in Manchuria. The question of food for Japan is being settled there to a considerable extent. And the question of food is one of the aliases of war or peace. This must be of some interest to the people of America, where every time money is needed for a warship the propagandists feel it a moral duty to drag forth the overworked ghost of a Japanese menace. . . .

Japan is about to find in Manchuria the source of life and national peace. For of all the thousand troubles Japan has, two are serious: the lack of food and the lack of vital materials, such as iron and oil. And Manchuria seems to be the answer, to a large extent.

The food products of Manchuria range from wheat to rice, and include the wonderful soya bean. Good lumber is plentiful along the upper reaches of the rivers; enough, if carefully used, to

supply Asia for centuries. Coal, bituminous and semi-anthracite, is present in enormous quantities. The Fushun bed, the thickest seam on earth, is estimated to contain twelve billion tons. It is mined largely by the open cut system. Careful surveys indicate in Mukden and the Anshan district nearly 600,000,000 tons of iron ore. Oil shale to the amount of 5,500,000,000 tons has been surveyed in Fushun, which it is believed will supply Japan's annual need of 6,000,000 barrels of petroleum for the next three centuries.

The chapter on the South Manchurian Railway Company is a tale of modern magic. In less than twenty years of existence this enterprise, shares in which were one thousand and sixty-six times oversubscribed by the people of Japan, has worked a phenomenal improvement in the country and earned undreamed of profits. The Japanese Government invited the Government of China to invest in the company, but the Chinese declined. Of the company's total investment of 536,000,000 yen, nearly forty per cent. has been spent in building and equipping its lines with American mechanism throughout, including two hundred and five bridges, the mile-long tunnel through the mountain at Fuchinling and another of 3,254 feet through Chinkuanshan. The company operates the Fushun coal mines. It has greatly enlarged and modernized Mukden, the capital city, and the port of Dairen, and has created throughout its territory a system of free public schools teachers' training schools, public health bureaus, hospitals, playgrounds and parks, all of which are used as much by the Chinese as by the Japanese people. At Mukden the company has established a university and medical school which occupy four full city blocks of buildings. The company's electric light and power plants deliver to five cities energy rate at 20,000,000 kilowatts a year. In a word, the South Manchurian Railway Company seems to have become the social and economic fairy godmother of Manchuria.

It is cheering to read of the constantly increasing productiveness and commerce of peaceful Manchuria, and especially to note that many of the business enterprises are owned by companies in which Chinese and Japanese stockholders, executives and workmen are pulling together as a harmonious team.

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THE DIARY OF A SOUL

DIARY AND LETTERS OF JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY. Selected and edited by Christina Hopkinson Baker. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

In some ways, Josephine Preston Peabody's *Diary* is her greatest book. We know the artist,—but here is the woman; and since, finally, no artist can ever produce anything greater than her own soul, there is something particularly precious in these more intimate glimpses of the soul from which the songs came. I never saw Mrs. Marks, but she was very kind to me when, in my young college days, I wrote her, boy-fashion, of my enthusiasm for her poetry, and the sharp pang with which I read of her early death has never since wholly left me. In her case there were many good reasons why the soul never did fully express itself, and all of them are made clear in the light of the new book. Her theory of poetry was undoubtedly right. "I don't want to be a 'literary poet.' Heaven forbid!" But only in her passionate motherhood did life give her the intensity of experience that her talent needed, and by the time this came, her poor body was so tortured with pain that writing seemed often very far away.

And the *Diary* can hardly be read now, by the lover of poetry and of life, without a sense of being, many times, profoundly moved. The sensitiveness to beauty that is in it—to Shakespeare and Saint Francis and the Greek language and trees and water; the vague suggestion of tender fluttering wings—all this is very lovely. And the story of her long struggle with illness is extremely touching. "Ye Gods," she would cry, "no wonder the Dumbness of Women is more striking in the history of Poetry than anything else!"

Mrs. Baker's editing errs somewhat on the score of proportion: there are rather too many utterances of youth and not enough of maturity, and the consequent impression is one of "young-girlishness" that is probably not quite fair to Mrs. Marks. Nevertheless this is a noble, a beautiful, and a moving book, for we have little in American literature or life more precious than the quality of such womanhood as was Josephine Preston Peabody's.

EDWARD WAGENKNECHT.