

is still the claimant to the Austrian throne, would lend himself less happily to this sort of biography. But at his most earnest moments the shadowy young war emperor was never quite real; even in the excited headlines of the daily press his peace letter to Prince Sixtus seemed like a student's hoax, and his desperate bid for the crown of Hungary like a rehearsal of costume theatricals. Bathed in a warmly sentimental flood of gossip and anecdote, simplified history, and glorified society-page journalism, Karl and his family in this skillful book become as appealing and as remote as the Stuart pretenders. No doubt that is the right attitude towards them, that their woes make pleasant reading but no longer concern history. Out of the convulsions of Europe almost any monster may be born, but a Hapsburg restoration is one of the least likely.

Mr. Aldington's Satirical Novel

REJECTED GUEST. By Richard Aldington. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. 378 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

MR. ALDINGTON'S new novel is wholly cynical; one remembers that the author is a student and biographer of Voltaire. On the first page is a witty discourse on bastardy, to prepare us for the advent of the hero, David Norris, who is born out of wedlock; on the last page when David, aged twenty-two, leaves for his first job, he receives this advice from his closest friend; "Be artful, mistrustful, selfish, and unscrupulous—as I am—and get to know the law and the stock market. Much more use than biography and poetry . . . But you're a materialist like all your generation. You have no taste for the higher aspects of life." Between the first page and the last the author fires shot after shot at such targets as schools, the Church, the university, the lower classes, the middle classes, the upper classes, romance, love, idealism, Signor Mussolini, and Mr. Chamberlain.

The story itself is serious. David Norris, a 1914 "war baby," is brought up in a dull, ugly, provincial town, tormented by the knowledge of his illegitimacy and the limitations of a stifling environment. Finally, desiring money for his education, he reveals his identity to his paternal grandfather, who grants him a handsome allowance.

How the Chinese Live and Like It

THE CHINESE ARE LIKE THAT. By Carl Crow. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1939. 328 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by T. A. BISSON

IT is pleasant to come on a new and well-written book about China which does not deal with the war. Not as its central theme, that is, for even this stimulating and humorous commentary on how the Chinese manage to live and like it, in the face of difficulties that would submerge a less healthy and sound-minded race, throws off penetrating sidelights on the struggle in which China is now engaged.

The Chinese "way of life" is an absorbing and fascinating subject, as the success of Lin Yutang's "My Country and My People" demon-

strated a few years ago. And Carl Crow proves that it is still a rich mine, only partially worked over, for one who makes the approach with insight, philosophic understanding and tolerance, and an adequate background of first-hand knowledge. To the uninitiated, he presents an excellent introduction to China and its people; to those who have lived for longer or shorter periods in China, he renews an experience.

In this treatment the foibles and inconsistencies of Chinese life, touched upon with a light hand, serve to set off its more serious and substantial aspects. It is relatively easy for us to appreciate the achievement of a people which has farmed the same land for a period of forty centuries, and multiplied in the process; also, the merits of certain virtually self-regulatory restraints on competition set up within a society where the struggle to survive is more than a Darwinian phrase. But the advantages of indirection, of a rather casual attitude toward accuracy and exactness, or of such a phenomenon as banditry, are more difficult to see. These things are comprehensible in terms of their setting—and it is the locale of Chinese life which, in broadest terms, Carl Crow sets before us with an extraordinary degree of success. Stories of his own experiences form the most amusing elements of his genial explanations; in other cases, a certain amount of rational exposition is required to make his point. Where the expense of a cake of soap and the fuel required to boil water must be balanced against the cost of food, and the choices are mutually exclusive, it can be seen that elements enter into the problem of cleanliness that the ordinary run of Americans might easily overlook. In China, the author notes, a good harvest means increased sales of soap. Much of his explanation is done by way of suggestive comparison or direct illustration, and in almost all cases the points are driven home convincingly. A slight miss is, perhaps, registered in the chapter on the "reward of labor," where the wages of the house boy chosen for illustration seem too high—and the outcome of his financial career too perfect—to do full justice to the general standard of living in China.

This book appears at a fortunate time. Its racy and readable chapters will call forth many smiles and some outright laughs, and leave every reader with a deeper and more appreciative understanding of the way one-fifth of mankind lives.

For a year he lives on the French Riviera in colorful magnificence. When suddenly his grandfather dies without having provided for him in his will, his fair-weather friends vanish, his fiancée deserts him, and, completely disillusioned, he accepts a job as office boy in a broker's office.

The flavor of the book, however, is almost uniformly sprightly and comic, and the story does not sag under a burden of truculent fault-finding. In "Very Heaven" Mr. Aldington as a critic of his times was too earnest, often angry; but in "Rejected Guest" he is more amused than indignant, and smashes his idols not savagely but in boisterous high spirits. As a matter of fact, most of the philippics come from David's wordly, amoral friend, Johnny Martindale, opportunist and sensualist.



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Richard Aldington

(One thinks of Alexander Woolcott lying on a couch indolently reciting S. N. Behrman's sybaritic conceits.) Proceeding from such a grotesque, these gibes at conventional morality and the contumely heaped on widely cherished institutions thin into amusing persiflage, and the book successfully keeps to its comic level.

Ten years ago Richard Aldington, poet, essayist, and translator, began his career as an English novelist with his brilliant war novel, "Death of a Hero." With "Rejected Guest" he auspiciously begins his career as an American novelist, for he has now taken up permanent residence in this country.

BOOK PREVIEW*

When Clio Joined the Colors

BY JAMES R. MOCK AND CEDRIC LARSON

GEORGE STANTON FORD, the present president of the University of Minnesota and the 1937 president of the American Historical Association, was forty-four years old in 1917, and held the position of professor of European history and dean of the graduate school at the University of Minnesota. Except for historical reasons, however, he was not interested in Germany as he sat at his scholar's desk in Minneapolis in the spring of 1917. He wanted to build American solidarity. In an attempt to further that end he took a step which must have seemed inconsequential at the time, but which had a profound effect on American scholarship and the thinking of the American people.

As Dean Ford has explained to the authors, this was the sequence of events leading up to his appointment as director of the CPI Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation:

Early in the spring of 1917 I wrote an open letter to school principals about the possibility of using the coming high school commencements for patriotic purposes. I wrote it for the signature of the Commissioner of Education, but he modestly declined to sign it and sent it out, however, over my name. A copy of that fell into George Creel's hands.

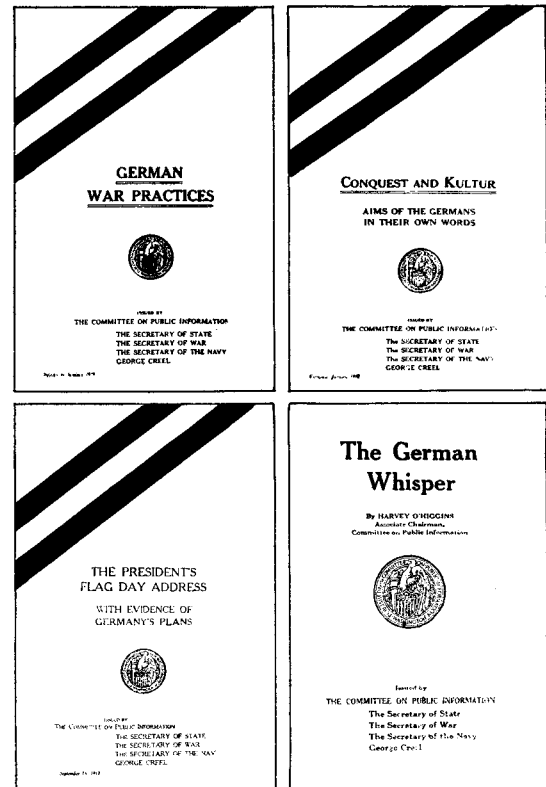
George Creel "made one long stride by a telegram" and called this distinguished scholar to Washington. Dean Ford accepted his assignment and then proceeded to do one of the most stupendous jobs in "popular scholarship" that this country has ever seen.

One purely statistical measure of his work is that the division which he headed put out more than 75,000,000 pieces of literature, ranging in character from the simplest four-page leaflet to an elaborate war cyclopedia and numerous heavily annotated works of research. All this was accomplished without an elaborate administrative machine, for the division never had a large Washington staff. Samuel B. Harding, professor of history at the

University of Indiana, was chief assistant, and James W. Searson, professor of English and journalism at Kansas State University, did editorial work; a few stenographers about completed the permanent personnel. Dozens of scholars from all over the country gave indispensable help, but they were not on the payroll and either worked entirely on their own campuses or came to Washington for brief consultation periods.

The first big job, and the one for which Mr. Creel wished to receive scholarly assistance in the first place, was the pamphlet "The War Message and the Facts behind It," which was the annotated text of President Wilson's speech of April 2, some forty elaborate footnotes explaining America's case against Germany and the outlines of America's foreign policy. "The plan and much of the work are due to Professor William Stearns Davis, of the history department of the University of Minnesota. He is very materially assisted by his colleagues, Professor C. D. Allin and Dr. Wm. Anderson." This pamphlet appeared June 10, 1917. The Government Printing Office alone turned out 2,499,903 copies, and reprints appeared in newspapers and magazines. Probably no man in American history had ever before put to press a scholarly work destined for a larger printing. As Dean Ford reported, on the first day after release of the pamphlet he received "a peach basket" of mail, the next day two bushels.

As the division's pamphlets reached a steadily widening public and more and more people learned, or suspected, the heady circulation figures, Dean Ford's incoming correspondence increased alarmingly. Half the men of learning in the country, it must have seemed to the division stenographers, felt that they had been specially called on by providence to write one of Dean Ford's pamphlets, or else that they had some strategic idea for their improvement. Many folders in



Some wartime publications of the Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation, Committee of Public Information.

the CPI files are fat with essays on every subject from Plato's "Republic" to the insidious influence of Bach and Beethoven. These contributors mailed their productions to the CPI confidently expecting that the Committee would publish and distribute them "by the million."

Very little of the volunteered material was usable in any way, and most of the pamphlets actually printed were first planned in Washington. A wire was sent to the American scholar considered best qualified to do the particular job, and there was never a refusal.

More than a hundred separate publications were issued by Dean Ford's division, but the most important and the most influential were those in the two groups called the "War Information Series" and the "Red, White, and Blue Series." The two were published concurrently and, at least today, do not seem sharply differentiated from each other except by the tricolor band. Each group contained a wide variety of material. Understanding of the work done by the Division of Civic and Educational Cooperation is gained most readily through acquaintance with these famous pamphlets.

The War Information Series ultimately included twenty-one different items, the first of which, "The War Message and the Facts behind It," has already been referred to. The second pamphlet was "The Nation in Arms," by Secretary of the Interior Franklin

*This week The Saturday Review presents an excerpt, somewhat condensed, from "Words That Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information," by James R. Mock and Cedric Larsen, to be published by the Princeton University Press.