



Haru Matsui: "the *haiku* . . . consists in transferring the writer's emotion to the reader . . . by giving a short, clear sketch of the external conditions that aroused it" . . .

the first meeting with the husband-to-be; and many others. The aliveness of the telling may be due in part to this number of "firsts," for the author was not only "inordinately self-willed," as her father called her, but had the temperament that met all new things as adventures. Yet this is an insufficient explanation of the book's compelling appeal, for there is nothing in it more poignant than Mrs. Ishigaki's loss of her second child.

Some of the credit must go to the literary traditions of Japan. These are seen not only in the general plan of the book, the interlarded poems, and the curiously expressive Japanese turns of phraseology, but also in the method used to rouse emotion. This is the time-honored approach exemplified in Japanese poetry, particularly in the *haiku*—those seventeen-syllable poems whose shortness requires the utmost economy of means. It consists in transferring the writer's emotion to the reader, not by describing it directly, but by giving a short, clear sketch of the external conditions that aroused it. This method has been used so successfully that the reader feels that he is seeing Japan from inside, with a Japanese personality, not that he is looking at it from the outside, like a stranger.

In conclusion it must be said that "Restless Wave" is frankly propaganda—propaganda for the people of Japan and fiercely against its present government. Like all propaganda, it must be tested for honesty and bias. The honesty is here, and while bias is here also, it is bias that has been honestly and naturally arrived at. The book is an important one for all who are in any way interested in Japan—or in human nature.

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Drawing-Room Comedy

CAROLINE OF ENGLAND: An Augustan Portrait. By Peter Quennell. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 259 pp., with index. \$3.75.

Reviewed by JOSEPH R. STRAYER

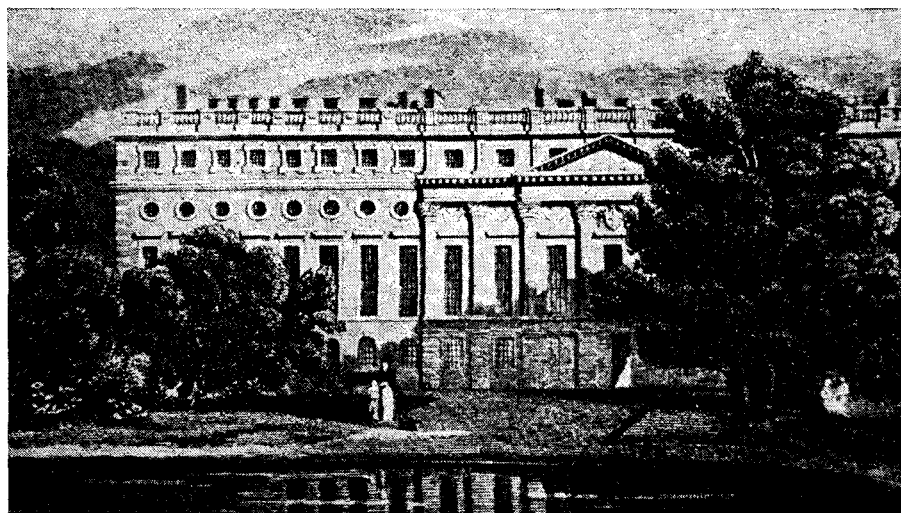
THE Hanoverians were a dull lot, even in their vices. Their family quarrels were vulgar and their amorous adventures were depressingly business-like. It may seem strange that a biographer who has recently studied the vivid personality of Byron should choose the consort of George II as the subject of his next book. But it is this background of dullness which lends interest to the story of Caroline and her friends. Compared to her father-in-law, husband, and son, Caroline was an intelligent and attractive person. Compared to the heavy, Teutonic court, Caroline's friends seem almost Gallic in their wit and sophistication.

Mr. Quennell has not given us a formal life of the queen. Rather we have an eighteenth-century comedy—the comedy of a clever woman who managed her husband for over thirty years and never let him know that he was being managed. George II was stupid, brutal, and suspicious. Yet Caroline, by a remarkable mixture of tact, complaisance, and perseverance controlled almost all his activities, and so gained the power which she desired above everything else. In playing this delicate game she had one great advantage; her husband loved and admired her above all other women. His sentimental life centered in Caroline, while his mistresses experienced all the monotony of matrimony with few of its rewards. The queen encouraged this attitude, and there is something irresistibly comic in the king's complaint that Caroline forced him to pay regular visits to Lady Suffolk, who

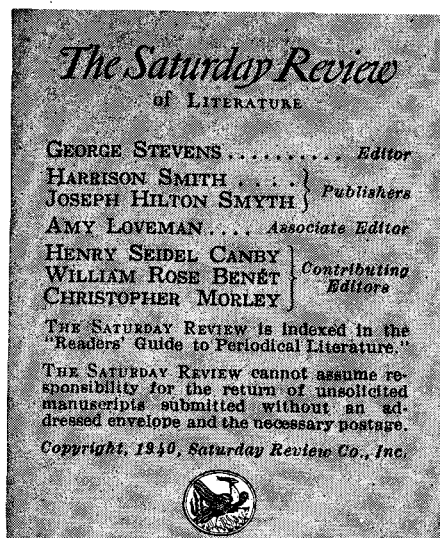
was old, deaf, and ugly, but had been his mistress from his youth.

Caroline was aided in her efforts to control the king by two men who form a strange contrast, the bluff and vigorous Walpole and the refined and effeminate Hervey. Walpole's alliance with the queen is easily understandable. By assisting her he gained the royal support which enabled him to remain prime minister for over twenty years—an English if not a world's record. Hervey, who was a master of intrigue, must have appreciated the skill with which the queen worked, but it is remarkable that he never betrayed her as he did his other friends. Nothing shows Caroline's ability more clearly than the fact that she was able to retain the support of two such different men.

A perfect drawing-room comedy has no place for social issues. Mr. Quennell shows us Augustan England as the court saw it—a unique, but not wholly satisfactory point of view. Events and personalities are distorted; even Walpole appears more a courtier than a politician, and politics is discussed only when it affects the great game which the queen was playing. The people of England were an annoying and incomprehensible element which the court ignored as far as possible. When the people rioted over the collapse of the South Sea Bubble or against the Excise, they had to be considered, for they threatened the intricate system through which the queen exercised power. In ordinary times they were considered unimportant. As in all eighteenth-century comedies the value of the book is not in its plot, but in the brilliant portraits of the characters: George I, George II, Frederick Prince of Wales, Walpole, Hervey, Pope, and Caroline herself, "la grandissime comédienne" of all.



Engraving by Shury after Neale
Hampton Court: from "Caroline of England."



Fiction and Life

A fruitful manifestation of contemporary literary criticism is the attempt to relate literature with life. That attempt gives considerable interest to a new book by David Daiches, "The Novel and the Modern World."* Mr. Daiches looks at English fiction, through some of its eminent figures, during what he considers a period of transition, including the first four decades of this century. The novelists whom he discusses are Galsworthy, Conrad, Katherine Mansfield, Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley. (Why not D. H. Lawrence?) To each of these, except Joyce, Mr. Daiches allots a single chapter; Joyce gets three chapters, including a penetrating analysis of "Finnegans Wake." Fore and aft of these are essays on "Selection and Significance," "Character," and "Fiction and Civilization."

In brief, Mr. Daiches takes the position that these writers, and others of the same period, suffer from a peculiar handicap: the lack of an audience with a fixed set of conventions and beliefs in terms of which writers might address them. Novelists of other periods—Fielding and Richardson, Dickens and Thackeray—have been able to take for granted a prevailing point of view among their contemporaries, a matrix of accepted ideas in terms of which communication was facilitated. Since the Victorian age in England, particularly since the first World War, there has been no general agreement on fundamental values. One result is that the novelists of this era have been obliged to give a great deal of attention to the problems and the technique of communication. Mr. Daiches ingeniously applies this idea to each of the writers under discussion. It explains why Galsworthy was successful in "The Forsyte Saga," where

*THE NOVEL AND THE MODERN WORLD. By David Daiches. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1939. 228 pp., with index. \$2.50.

the background of his characters is stable; unsuccessful in its sequels, where the characters live in a progressively vacuous medium and become progressively vacuous themselves. It is a key to the introspective, impressionistic art of Katherine Mansfield, where the subtlety of the material renders the problem of communication paramount. It is the reason—or a reason—for the development of the stream-of-consciousness in Joyce and Virginia Woolf.

All this Mr. Daiches sets forth ably, often brilliantly. And, in the case of each of the writers under discussion, he has a great deal more to say. Others have, to be sure, pointed out the limitations of John Galsworthy; but among the younger critics, few have been as willing as Mr. Daiches to recognize the value of what Galsworthy could do within those limitations. His comparison of Aldous Huxley as a frustrated romanticist with T. S. Eliot as a frustrated classicist is first-rate. His appreciation of Katherine Mansfield is penetrating and subtle. With an important reservation, one can say a good deal for his chapter on Joseph Conrad. There is not much that is new in the essay on "Ulysses"—how could there be?—but the essay on "Finnegans Wake" is second only to Edmund Wilson's long critique of that work-no-longer-in-progress. And the chapter on Virginia Woolf is as good as some of Mrs. Woolf's own "Common Reader" essays. No one else has shown more clearly the progressive dominance in her novels of form over content.

"To the Lighthouse" represents what one may call the Virginian compromise to perfection. Virginia Woolf has . . . compromised between her refining intellect and the real world by taking into her study aspects of experience which suffer

least in that environment. . . . "To the Lighthouse" represents that state of unstable equilibrium which most really good minor artists achieve but once in their careers.

But when Mr. Daiches leaves off being a critic and becomes a sociologist, he not only loses much of his power to convince; he also perpetrates more than one dubious theory. The lack of persuasiveness derives from a certain assumption he makes, in common with the Marxists (though he is much more intelligent and less dogmatic than most of them). "The history of the twentieth-century novel," he writes, "will always have added interest because of the cultural transition that is taking place in our time—the gap in the background of belief and the paving of the way toward a new background." That is all to the good; but Mr. Daiches assumes throughout the book that the new background will turn out to be Marxist in character. In line with this assumption, which remains unacceptable to many otherwise intelligent people and unprovable in any case, he castigates some of the novelists under discussion for writing in their terms instead of his. This is bad criticism. It emerges particularly in the essay on Conrad, which—in spite of the evidence it gives that Mr. Daiches is perfectly capable of understanding Conrad—is the weakest chapter in the book. "If we agree," says Mr. Daiches, "that two of the main factors that determine human conduct are, first, the nature of the group life and the relations with other men that it entails, and, second, the physical, natural environment in which men live—in other words, economics and geography—we can see Conrad as a rare example of the author who has chosen to consider the latter, considering the former only when it has been modified, even de-

Southern Trip: Buzzards

BY LOUIS STODDARD

THE highway quivers at noon like a ribbon stretched in the wind. There is no wind. In the high hot sky the buzzards swim slow circles. Their shadows flicker along the pines and go before us down the road. The road runs level through barrens and pines, by vacant cabins chinked with clay, their clay-mortared chimneys awry, their full-voiced people, those early morning singers, gone from the fields where no longer the sunrise tints the cotton pink. No wood smoke climbs the ladder of light and shadow from cabins among gold-shafted morning pines. The buzzards are shrewd. They know we are passing by. They pivot away on tilted wings; their shadows tumble over the gullies.