

The Story of Taitou, Shantung

A CHINESE VILLAGE. By Martin C. Yang. New York: Columbia University Press. 1945. 249 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by EMILY HAHN

THIS book, by the very fact that it is a book instead of merely another doctor's thesis, is probably one of the most interesting publications of the decade. Mr. Yang has done an exhaustive job of ethnological research, but to dismiss his achievement with these big words is to do him a crying injustice. Never mind the word "research" if it worries you; "A Chinese Village" is good reading for anybody. It is the story of Taitou, a small village in Shantung Province, in the north of China, not far from Tsingtao.

Most of us at one time or another have come across the works of contemporary anthropologists, men from Cambridge or Yale or Oxford or Columbia who went out to foreign lands, talked to the natives of some chosen community, measured their skulls, recorded their dreams and their family customs, took a few photographs and came away again to publish their findings. Well, "A Chinese Village" isn't exactly that sort of work. Taitou is Mr. Yang's own village and so he was under no necessity to get acquainted with "the natives" before he started to work. The usual anthropologist, by the nature of his job, is apt to fall short of his own hopes in this respect. Mr. Yang already knows his village through and through, all the old wives' tales, the reasons they plant sweet-potatoes in Chen's field instead of peanuts, the sort of implements used in this particular portion of China, and why they are unlike implements used elsewhere. Mr. Yang knows wherein his village is like other villages and wherein—and why—it is not. To read him thoroughly is to know China better than any American has ever yet learned to know it through the printed page.

Most visitors to China are aware that the people of the North are charming in a special way. It is dangerous and unscientific to draw conclusions as to physical type in China; people who are hasty about this often come to grief. But Peking-dwellers still claim stubbornly that their Shantung men are taller, stronger, better-looking than the men of the South, and they feel a special fondness for Shantung. For this reason "A Chinese Village" will have an added appeal for the old China hands who remember Tsingtao affectionately.

Besides, "A Chinese Village" tells



much more than the life of one little typical village of Shantung Province. Here in these rich pages are detailed accounts of the mysteries of *feng-sui*, the science of geomancy. Here is a story, from the inside, of a Chinese peasant's belief in his ancestors and their eternal life. Here is a cool, clear description of the stresses and strains of the Chinese family, that clan which

is so much more intricate and important to its members than is our loosely-hung framework of relatives. We learn why the peasant is prejudiced in this direction, broad-minded in that. For anybody who reads this book it will be inexcusable hereafter to accept the foolish myths we have believed all these years of ignorance. "A Chinese Village" is as absorbing as any novel of Chinese life; for the person sincerely interested in China it is far better.

Above all, Mr. Yang is to be congratulated upon his English. Many an American-born scholar would have made of this work a scrambled, clumsily written piece of knowledge that only the most faithful could get the better of. Mr. Yang's style is so good that the reader remains unaware that he has a style. I can think of no more fervent praise, and it is more than a pleasant surprise that I find myself bestowing it upon a foreign-born writer.

Now that we have seen how it can be done, where is an American who can do the same thing for us, with a typical village of the United States?

Up from Bloomsbury's Studios

ISLAND OF THE INNOCENT. By Madelaine Kent. New York: Harper & Bros. 1945. 302 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

MISS KENT's "I Married a German," published in 1938, was written "to bring home the evils of the Nazi regime to the general public." Of course, she succeeded no better in her intention than did the many others who in those years tried to warn the general public against the troubles ahead. But her noble failure seems to have hurt her more deeply than most of those writers and newspapermen. This, her second full-length book, is again set against the background of appeasement—a milieu painted, this time, with all the satirical colors and shades hindsight affords. As it is, the story could stand on its own feet without benefit of any such background.

Although "Island of the Innocent" is far from being an altogether good novel, its basic plot is interesting, gratifying, and even poignant. On one of those trips to Germany which in England were the fashion not only among the fashionable in the early years of Hitler, Rose Tredinnick, "aged twenty-two and fresh from Cornwall," falls in love with Tom Cowell, a socialist freelance writer of the flower-and-butterfly stripe. Her subsequent marriage takes her from her placid life as a

small-town librarian to the bewildering bustle of Bloomsbury. Only gradually does the reader, as Rose herself, realize of what stuff Tom is made. His Oxford Union pacifism soon lends itself to the policies of a semi-fascist group fittingly represented by a swanky clique dabbling in philosophy, art, sex, and foreign affairs. Tom gets into trouble, loses his income, and wrecks his married life—not least by forcing Rose to accept the advice of one of their Bloomsbury friends and interrupt her pregnancy. Finally Tom leaves Rose, to stay with the very people who have corrupted what idealism he had and all but ruined Rose.

"You get the fancy stuff knocked out of you when you've seen as much of life as I 'ave," she is told by a Cockney woman as she is in the thick of it. And that is what Rose's development amounts to when she has graduated from Bloomsbury studios and Chelsea mews. Although it has been done before, the debunking of the phony intelligentsia through a healthy, decent girl makes a fine story. It is too bad Miss Kent wanted to do more and that she connected Rose's tale with the historic tragedy of British appeasement.

Miss Kent is at her best in dialogue; the repartee of her "intellectuals" sometimes reminds one of Marquand. In intertwining its different themes and episodes her novel is, however, much less satisfactory.

The Morgenthau Plan for Germany

GERMANY IS OUR PROBLEM. By Henry Morgenthau, Jr. New York: Harper & Bros. 1945. 239 pp. \$2.

Reviewed by HANS KOHN

THERE is much talk about what to do with Germany but there are few concrete plans. Confusion prevails in the German occupation, largely because there are no clear-cut directives. Mr. Morgenthau's book supplies a plan and outlines directives without which the Allied task in the former enemy country could fail. Of course, Mr. Morgenthau cannot solve one difficulty of the German problem, the division of the country into zones of occupation with deep differences in political outlook among the occupying powers. But within this limitation Mr. Morgenthau's suggestions are valuable and make good sense.

It is not the task of the victor nations to punish the German people. Nor can it be their task to educate them. No foreigner can change the deep-rooted tendencies of a nation's mind. Outside interference can only create the conditions favorable to such a change. The task of the victors is to make further German aggression impossible, nothing more and nothing less. That they can do; that they must do not only in their own interests but in the interests of the German people themselves for whom a third attempt could only bring utter destruction. Total disarmament of the Germans is the inevitable prerequisite for the creation of a peaceful Germany. Mr. Morgenthau points the way to this disarmament.

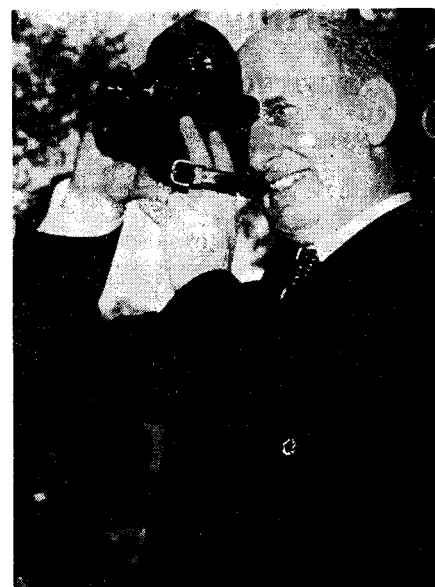
Mr. Morgenthau believes that to disarm Germany in any real sense of the word is to remove the industries that would make rearmament pos-

sible. With heavy industries Germany can quickly convert to war even after complete military disarmament. Without metallurgical, chemical, and electrical industries, Germany cannot make war no matter how strong her aggressive will may be. Deprived of its indispensable instruments the will by necessity must change its aims. The factories taken from Germany would be rebuilt in other parts of Europe and thus constitute some reparation for damage done and help balance Europe better industrially. A strong Europe is better than a strong Germany for all concerned.

Mr. Morgenthau rejects a policy designed to buttress Germany as a bulwark against Russia. He rightly points out that such a policy must fail. Historically, it was the very strength of Germany, the fear of a strong Germany, which brought Russia and her Western allies together—in 1891 France and Russia, in 1907 Britain and Russia, in 1941 America and Russia. A strong Germany was never a buttress against Russia, but the foundation of an alliance between Russia and the free peoples. If a "bulwark" was ever needed, it could be only the union of the free peoples; Germany as an anti-Russian smoke screen is a bogus issue. With regard to Germany we have to ask but one question: Do proposed measures strengthen Germany's war-making potential? It is the merit of Mr. Morgenthau's book that on the whole he concentrates his and our attention on this one fundamental issue.

Even after the war's destruction, Germany remains the genuine "have" country in industrial strength, her neighbors, even Britain, are the real "have-nots." The long-range welfare of Europe and the immediate needs of Germany demand a Germany of light industries and, above all, of intensive farm cultivation. Without heavy industry Germany has the manpower and acreage to feed her people. The Allies must complete the task of the destruction of Germany's war-making industries which the bombing hardly began with the thoroughness which will take no account of the momentary convenience of the occupying authorities.

In addition to the question of disarmament, Mr. Morgenthau makes valuable suggestions on two other points. As regards German frontiers, he accepts the cession of East Prussia and Upper Silesia to Poland; he rejects the amputation of all the lands east of the Oder and Neisse, and he demands the transfer of the Saar to France and the internationalization of the Ruhr and neighboring districts.



—Harris and Ewing
Henry Morgenthau, Jr.'s "suggestions are valuable and make good sense."

A complete disarmament makes the division of Germany into several states superfluous. This disarmament can be carried through in a relatively short time. Then, Mr. Morgenthau insists, American troops should leave Germany, the routine policing of which should be left to our European allies whose soldiers could be kept in touch with their homes by frequent leaves. America would, of course, retain membership in all the commissions and technical staffs supervising Germany and thus share fully in the responsibilities of maintaining peace.

Sleep in Summer

By Louise E. Sweet

CALL sleep and beckon softly,
Drop lids upon the silent light of
rooms,
Make dark the daylight hour.
Call sleep to nestle in the lap
Of nothingness. Lie in the lone
Canoe moored in the reeds, blotting
The blue sky with purple lidded dark.
Call sleep to muffle voices,
Dropping them behind upon the brown
beach
As the voyageur sweeps out and run-
ning
With the wind leaves even the lapping
waves
To follow smoothing and folding si-
lently.
Call sleep within the room
And clasp the wordless breath
In folded arms. The palms are cool
And fingers are uncurled, and memory
Trembles in a dream and glides away;
The perch dart deep and water fronds
Of sleep reach gently with the current,
Wave softly with the breath, and end
In depth.



—Knott in the Dallas News
A Step Toward War Prevention.