

## BOOK NOTES

*Mencius*. Translated by Leonard A. Lyall. Longmans Green & Company. New York, 1932. Pp. 277.

Mencius lived in China at a time when the power of the empire was weak, and the suffering caused by warfare and tyranny of the feudal kings was great. He saw deep into the hearts of the people and collected doctrines from older literature and sayings, approaching national problems realistically, always with an understanding of man's intellectual and moral nature as basis. Though his doctrines upheld the traditional Chinese Society, he accepted the ancient right of the people to revolt against an evil sovereign, and insisted the duty of king was to rule in the interests of the people. "If a prince is benevolent all is benevolent." Feelings, thought, and activity, he found a universal attribute of mankind, and that wisdom and kindness come from within. Individual responsibility is emphasized again and again—reform through the reform of the individual.

How deeply the effect of this social philosophy of the potentiality of the individual is engrained in Chinese thought, can be seen in the way she is now slowly building from the bottom up.

China, however, though accustomed to ideas of communism from her great family system, seems to be emerging now towards a more individualistic system. The continuity of her mental and cultural civilization is still a reality.

Mencius followed the teachings of Confucius. His approach to national problems was psychological and based on his analysis of the individual.

The excellent and direct translation of Mr. Lyall, with the humor and imagination of the original preserved, makes interesting reading, although the teachings of Mencius are scattered and difficult to follow.

Book xiv, Chapters xi, xii, xiii.

Mencius said, A man that loves fame can give up a land of a thousand cars; but if he is not the man to give things up, it will show in his face over a bowl of rice or pea soup.

Mencius said, Without faith in love and worth the land is empty and hollow. Without good form and right, high and low are confounded. Without rule and order there is not enough money for use.

Mencius said, Lands have been won without love, but all below heaven was never won without love.

*Japan's Policies and Purposes*. By Hiroshi Saito. Marshall Jones Company, Boston, 1935. Pp. 231.

Mr. Saito speaks with knowledge as well as authority on the policies and purposes of his country. This volume is composed of a selection of addresses and writings by the Ambassador which contain a consistent interpretation and which explains the Japanese point of view of many happenings which puzzle Americans, such as her relations with China in Manchukuo and her foreign trade policies.

*A History of Western Civilization*. By Harry Elmer Barnes with the collaboration of Henry David. Vol. I. New York, Harcourt Brace and Co., 1935. Pp. xxvi, 911.

Two main convictions of the author have guided his history of the institutions and culture of the western world—making it a contribution to the

"so-called new history,"—namely, that it should be grounded in "biology, anthropology, archaeology, and sociology as well in political, legal, and military history," and that it should tell the "whole story of human development." Though free from moralistic missions the author feels that the significance of a history lies in its power of understanding the present and pointing towards a better future.

*The Supreme Law.* By Maurice Maeterlink. Translated from the French by K. S. Shevankar. New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1935. Pp. 160.

Maurice Maeterlink, poet and mystic, in his latest work, describes his attitude toward life and science. He is not willing to discard the work of Newton for the Einstein theory of relativity, but finds "that men have plunged farther into the dark because they have searched for light more avidly. It is with gravitation as with all the other great problems of the world . . . but an instinct whispers to us that these obscurities are more fertile than the trivial clarities which cradle self-complacent ignorance."

*A Search in Secret India.* By Paul Brunton. New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1935. Pp. 312.

"A quest," says Sir Francis Younghusband in his Foreword, "for that India which is only secret because it is so sacred." The author portrays vividly the numerous magicians, yogi, and holy men against characteristic features of Indian background. Finally under the guidance of the Maharashee of the Holy Hill of the Beacon, he experiences spiritual enlightenment with its transcendent bliss and peace, and a realization of the significance of life.

*The Church of Christ and the Problems of the Day.* By Karl Heim. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935. Pp. xii, 132.

Professor Karl Heim, Professor of Theology at the University of Tübingen, delivered the 1935 James Sprunt Lectures at the Union Theological Seminary of Richmond, Va., which appear in this volume. They consist in a discussion of the position of the church today from the orthodox Evangelical point of view. The church is threatened with being crushed between the two great forces of Communism and Nationalism, each of which is a faith and way of life as well as a political organization. The author makes an inspired plea for the validity of the acceptance of Jesus, the reality of sin and the reality of the Atonement, the power of prayer and the vital importance of the Resurrection.

*The Early Philosophers of Greece.* By Matthew Thompson McClure. With translations by Richmond Lattimore. New York, D. Appleton Century Co., Inc., 1935. Pp. x, 218.

With a short introduction setting the stage of early Greek thinking,—the prehistory of the Greeks, their beliefs about the soul, about the cosmos, about nature and man's relation to nature, Professor McClure has written an interpretation of the early philosophers of Greece. He has considered it essential to include translations of what source material is available. His insight and clearness make this a valuable book for beginner as well as the student of philosophy.

*The Accuracy of the Bible.* The Stories of Joseph, the Exodus, and Genesis confirmed and illustrated by Egyptian Monuments and Language. By A. S. Yahuda. New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc. Pp. xxxvii, 226. Illustrated.

The author, equipped with the knowledge of the languages and cultures of the neighbors of the people of Israel, points out Assyro-Babylonian similarities as well as subsequent Egyptian elements. His object is to prove by tracing

the various relationships of words and customs that the biblical narratives could only have developed by migration from Ur, through Canaan to Egypt and back again. The details of his research and his interpretation of their significance make interesting reading.

*Tangled Hair*, translated from the works of the poet Akiko Yosano by Shio Sakanishi. Boston, Marshall Jones Company, 1935. Pp. xvi, 70.

This is the second volume of the Modern Japanese Poets Series, and is as beautifully printed and bound as *A Handful of Sand* by Takuboku Ishikawa. The author is the only woman represented in the series.

It is interesting to note what tremendous changes the urge for poetic expression makes in the life of a poet. Akiko as a child was rebellious against the drabness and drudgery of her conservative, middle-class life, but found consolation in books of her great-grandmother which she secretly read in the old store-room behind her father's confectionery shop. Later she secured current literature and translations from the French and English. Her meeting with Hiroshi Yosano marked the turning point of her career. ". . . with desperation I staked my whole life, fought and won my love. With this triumph, I escaped from the family bondage, which had so long imprisoned my personality. Moreover, that very moment, I found that I could freely give artistic expression to my inner thoughts and feelings. Thus all at once, I won the three most precious things of life: courage, love, and poetry."

Hiroshi was at this time the leading spirit in the New Society whose purpose it was to instill and to give expression to the experiences a feeling for love and beauty into poetry which had degenerated into a "mere choosing and arranging of words." He divorced his wife and married Akiko.

The creed of the Society was embodied in her first volume of poetry, *Midare gami* (*Tangled Hair*), a passionate exaltation of love and beauty. Conservative readers, at first scandalized by her frank admission of passion and desire, soon began to quote her. Akiko's courage and glamour, augmented by her romantic marriage, caught the public imagination. Her later poetry developed more depth and lost some of its early exuberance. Her creative energy was tremendous. Between 1901 and 1928 she wrote twenty-one volumes of poetry. Unlike less robust poets she has been able to devote thirty-five years of unbroken service to her literary activity. Akiko later has written many essays for magazines and newspapers. She has devoted much time to a girls' school founded by her husband and to her large family of twelve children, ten of whom are still living.

The influence of the Yosanos on the development of poetry in Japan is significant because with their great energy and revolutionary spirit they were largely instrumental in bringing about the renaissance of Japanese poetry and bringing it into closer touch with reality.

## TANGLED HAIR

As my tangled hair  
Unwittingly touched the strings,  
The harp that had been still  
For three long spring months,  
Sounded a note.

Not knowing love,  
I sought beauty in the gods.  
But today I see in you  
The beauty in heaven and earth.

## A LOTUS BARGE

As to good and evil  
Ask those behind me on the bank.  
I, for one, ride and play  
On a hurricane.

## SUMMER TO AUTUMN

Like a holy Buddha  
In a shrine of gold,  
The morning sun rests in the depths  
Of the field of rape-seed flowers.