

BOOK REVIEW

American Imperialism in China, by Tang Leang-li. (Shanghai, 1943, China United Press, 208 pp.)

The purpose of this book by Ambassador Tang Leang-li, President of the Research Institute for International Affairs, is to give a completely new interpretation of America's foreign policy with regard to China. While up to now most literature dealing with the topic of Sino-American relations has claimed an inherently friendly attitude of the United States toward China, the author of *American Imperialism in China* arrives at the opposite conclusion. After tracing America's policy since the beginning of the nineteenth century, he contends that the USA is China's natural enemy and unnatural friend. He writes:

"A study of the Sino-American treaty record shows that America, with a diabolical cunning compared with which British diplomacy is truly angelical and infantlike, seldom figures directly, never appears as the party taking the initiative in extracting privileges from China, but will always insist that she gets an equal share, and often more of the spoils. 'She wept,' said Frederick the Great of Maria Theresa of Austria when Poland was suffering its first Partition, 'but the more she wept the more she took.' No country has been more ready to weep the same crocodile tears during the years of China's agony than America."

The author believes that "all of America's most advertized and, to outward appearances, most disinterested acts of friendship have turned out, on closer examination, to be Trojan horses, diabolically clever diplomatic swindles, America taking with her left hand many times more than what she offered with her right hand . . . It has been this ability to cover up the most aggressive designs, under a mask of friendship, that made America the most dangerous of China's foes."

In particular, the author discusses the role of Americans as promoters of conflicts between China and Japan, describing among other examples the role of the American Consul in Amoy and the American Minister in Tokyo during the Formosa affair of 1874. On the basis of documents published by the US Department of State, Ambassador Tang Leang-li also reinterprets the events which followed the holdup of an express train at Lin-chiang in 1923. One long chapter is devoted to the little-known transactions on the part of Herbert Hoover (later American President) in connection with the Kaiping mines in 1900 and 1901.

The book is intended as the first of a new series of "Tribune" monographs, published by the *People's Tribune*.

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Early Japanese Settlers in the Philippines, by Sei-ichi Iwao. (Tokyo, 1943, *The Foreign Affairs Association of Japan*. 78 pp. Yen 1.00)

Dr. Sei-ichi Iwao, Professor at the Taihoku Imperial University in Formosa, has supplied an interesting study of a little-known subject that has gained in topicality as the result of recent political

developments. Tracing Japanese mercantile activities in Philippine ports as far back as 1567, i.e., to pre-Spanish days, he quotes widely from Japanese and Spanish documents of the next two hundred years. Among many other interesting and astonishing items, the book also contains the facsimile of the title page of a Japanese-Spanish dictionary published in Manila as long ago as 1630.

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Chinesisches Tier-Allerlei (Chinese Animal Lore), by Fritz Secker. (Peking, 1943, Hartung's Verlag. 44 pp., 11 brush drawings)

Written principally for young people, this attractive little volume with its charming Chinese brush-and-ink illustrations introduces us to animals mythical and real, to dragon, phoenix, and fox, to rabbit, rat, and cat. There are anecdotes, legends, and fairy tales which endow each animal with a definite human personality, sometimes similar and sometimes quite dissimilar to the personality taken on by their Western counterparts. The last chapter of the book tells us about the Chinese animal calendar and the animal names for the various hours of the day and suggests an amusing game for children.—V.

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Wolken und Kristalle (Clouds and Crystals), by Elgar von Randow. (Shanghai, 1943, Max Nössler & Co. 46 pp.)

The author has followed up his *Götter und Menschen*, which we reviewed in our issue of June 1943, with a second volume of poems. Outwardly, the two volumes look very alike; but as soon as one opens them, one notices the change which the author has undergone in the nine months since the publication of his first book of poems. Even the appearance of the printed pages shows this change: the sonnets which predominated in the first volume have been replaced by the more severe octave rhymes. And this change becomes even more clear when one studies the contents of the poems. While in the first collection they were the emotional lyrical expression of personal feelings and experiences, the new collection is characterized by the philosophical nature of many of its poems. These poems, too, are subjective; they, too, strongly express the personality of the author. But they are more mature and since they do not speak so much of the author's feelings as of his philosophical ideas, they are likely to appeal to a wider circle than his earlier poems. The titles (On Life, On Death, On Longing, On Truth, On Love, On Faith, etc.) are enough to show that the poems deal with themes which concern everyone. As an example we quote the first of the three stanzas "On Death":

Weil wir nicht wissen, was zu leben heisst,
Ist keine Furcht vor dem Geborenwerden.
Doch der Gedanke, dass sie wieder reisst,
Die Kette dieses Augenblicks auf Erden,
Dass alles Leben nur zum Tode weist,
Wie gross und nichtig wir uns auch gebärden,
Tropft wie ein Gift, vor dem es kein Entrinnen,
Die Todesangst in jegliches Beginnen.