WHEN CLIO JOINED THE COLORS

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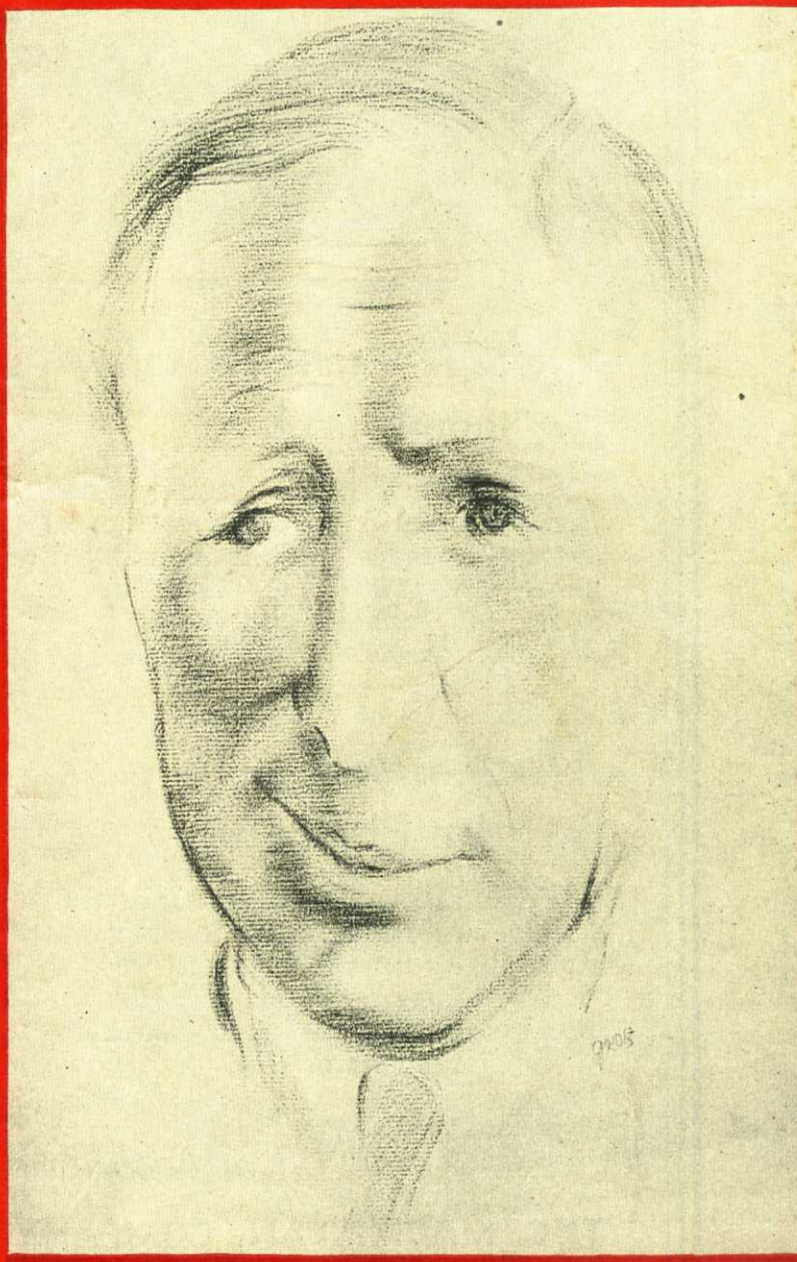


THOMAS CRAVEN (from a drawing by George Grosz): His "book is the result of a gigantic enterprise" . . . *(See page 5)*

Graphic History

MODERN MAN IN THE MAKING. By Otto Neurath. New York: Alfred Knopf. 1939. 159 *pp.* $2.95.

Reviewed by CHARLES A. BEARD

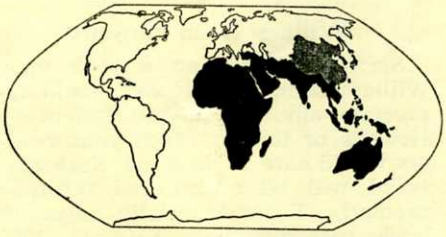
THIS volume represents an effort to give structure to the history of mankind from ancient days to modern times, and to present certain phases of that history graphically, by means of charts, maps, and little pictures—pictures of human bodies, babies, automobiles, telephones, heads of wheat, each standing for some unit of measurement. But the text is not entirely chronological. For example, the first chapter, or group of graphs and text, entitled past and present, opens with a series of symbols showing the mortality rates in a central European town from 1591 down to 1936. Besides tracing the ups and downs of death rates through plagues and wars, the table reveals accomplishments of modern public health in a decline of mortality from about 3.5 per hundred in 1591 to 1.5 in 1936. The second plate in this group pictures the cycles of unemployment in British trade unions from 1853 to 1937. The third plate illustrates the movement of plague control from the medieval villages through the national state to the contemporary international health organization. The fourth table is a map (which must be highly conjectural) showing the menace of nomadic invasions from Central Asia. The fifth table contrasts the varied war garbs of different tribes and nationalities with the almost uniform war garb of all modern armies: "the egalitarian sameness of modern uniforms is symbolic."

The second chapter, or group of graphs and text, is more consistently historical. It is entitled the unification of mankind. It opens with a map indicating the birth places of civilization and includes maps of the Chinese and Roman empires, Roman towns, roads, and walls, the Arabian empire, the Mongolian empire, the British Commonwealth of Nations, the spread of population, and the modern divisions of the earth. Several pages of text elucidate the graphic plates, occasionally with a brevity which meticulous students of history will be inclined to question. For instance, it is stated on page 41 of the text, that the loss of the English colonies in America "must be attributed to a temporary lack of coöperation within the ruling classes of Great Britain." Although that is a part of the truth, it is certainly too simple to be the whole truth or even the known truth.

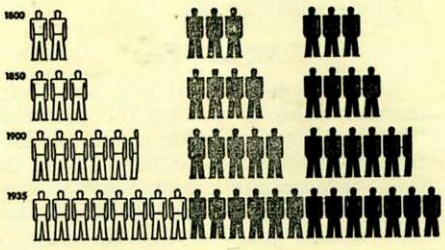
The remaining chapters or groups of graphs and text are mainly concerned with contemporaneous social and economic developments and conditions: Trends toward Modernity, State of the World, Social Environment, and Man's Daily Life. In these sections of the volume numerous striking features of the contemporary world are presented in graphic form. Among these features are: distribution of human beings among employments, such as use of natural resources, manufacturing, distribution, and services; sources of power; population; cotton production; foreign trade in Europe; war economies; distribution of wealth or income; living conditions and mortality; political organization, including authoritarian and non-authoritarian systems; Mississippi floods; extension of railways; political rights of women; football at American colleges; goods used by various income classes; infant mortality; legitimate and illegitimate births; and the contemporary superstition that eliminates the thirteenth floor in hotels and office buildings.

Dr. Neurath's volume may be reviewed at three levels. It may be taken as a collection of interesting and striking graphic presentations showing particular features of civilization, old and new, and considered in respect of successful achievement in the case of each presentation. That Dr. Neurath displays amazing ingenuity in most of his graphic presentation goes without saying. He has won an international reputation for his skill in this field. It would be difficult to imagine, for example, a more effective summary of the growth of population in the great sections of the world from 1800 to 1935 than is given on page 47 by means of a world map, divided into three sections, and little figures of men—white for the Americas, Europe, and the Soviet Union, grey for Chinese and Japanese regions, and black for the rest of the world. Again, the use of electric power per capita in various countries could scarcely be more skillfully presented than on page 49 in red and black symbols. In dealing with mechanization and features of human life for which we have copious statistics, Dr. Neurath is naturally at his best.

The Growth of Mankind



White: the two Americas, Europe, the Soviet Union; gray: region of Chinese and Japanese population; black: the rest of the world. Each symbol represents 100 million men.



What can be said of this method of conveying information and arousing popular interest? Doubtless for the generality of readers, this volume will have an immense appeal. They fairly dote on cross-word puzzles, comic strips, and other diagrammatic illustrations, and will find themselves at home in the pages of this book. They will have sheer delight in reading the brief clues to the diagrams and then puzzling out the meaning given by the long rows of little men, little women, stars, crosses, automobiles, ships, and cotton bales. It is highly probable that thousands of people who take little interest in economics, sociology, or history will use this volume with pleasure as they puzzle their way through the graphic presentations of complex statistical and geographical situations. Just what picture of the whole they will have in their minds at the end of their excursion through the fairyland of presentations will depend upon their previous training and their capacity for integrating disparate items.

But the hardened student of history and sociology who is nimble with his mathematics will probably prefer his information straight. Take as an example the use of telephones in France and Germany shown on page 59. A little picture of one telephone and half of another shows that for every 200 of the French population one and a half telephones were used in France in 1914, while seven little telephones show than seven telephones per 200 population were used in France in 1937. From Dr. Neurath's two rows of little pictures it is clear at a glance that the per capita use of telephones was much greater in 1937 than in 1914. But I must confess that I find it quicker and more satisfying to read the bare figures—1.5 per 200 in 1914 and 7 per 200 in 1937—than to read Dr. Neurath's explanatory legend and then count the little black telephones in a row. Moreover, sticklers

for precision will wonder just how many automobiles per thousand were used in Germany in 1914, when they see the picture of a fragment of an automobile on page 59 showing the use of automobiles per 200 population in Germany in 1914. Is it a fourth, a fifth, or a sixth of an automobile? For general purposes perhaps it does not matter much, but for purposes of exactness, precision, it may matter a great deal. One thing is certain: Any complex of phenomena which may be graphically presented may be described in words or mathematics or both, insofar as it can be described at all. In some cases, for example, a geographical complex, a map is a shorter form of statement, but in other cases words and mathematics provide a shorter form. I may be wrong but I have a deep suspicion that most adult minds will prefer to take their information straight in the shortest form. Graphic presentation gives strong impressions of general and gross situations and helps to fix particulars and details in mind, but it does not take the place of cold facts and figures for the serious students.

The second level on which Dr. Neurath's book may be reviewed is that of a conception of world history and society, for such a conception underlies the text and pictures of this volume. This is conceded in the Foreword: "An attempt has been made to evolve . . . a special picture-text style which should enable anybody to walk through the modern world that is beginning to appear about us and see it as he may see a landscape with its hills and plains, woods and meadows. The aim is to trace the origin of 'modern men' and to depict their behavior and achievements, without presenting any social or economic theory." This idea is reinforced by Waldemar Kaempffert in a statement that appears on the jacket of the book: "The economic, social, and political progress of mankind becomes [in this volume] a pageant that moves before us from primitive times down to our day."

Yet Dr. Neurath's language is the language of metaphorical or literary imagination, not hard, factual description. We can walk through the modern world and see factories, people, automobiles, and telephones, but we cannot "walk through" birth rates, mortality rates, unemployment, immigration, strikes, public opinion, leisure, and political rights of women, and see them as we may "see a landscape with its hills and plains, woods and meadows." Nor do statistics on the number of telephones in use tell us much, if anything, about the effect of telephones on human conduct and society or anything about what is said over these instruments of communication. When we are told that there are so many million radio sets in the United States, we do not get much information about the effect of the noises that go over these sets upon the morals, intelligence, thought, or conduct of the recipients. As for giving a picture of the pageant of progress from primitive times to the present, baffling problems of historiography are raised at once—problems that have long engaged the profoundest students of human history and are dealt with in volumes about as difficult to read and understand as the volumes on higher physics. For present purposes, it is sufficient to say that the profoundest students of historiography are by no means agreed whether history is a pageant of progress, a story of generation and degeneration, or a senseless *pis aller*. For a side light see Th. Lessing, "Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen." In this field Dr. Neurath is not as sure-footed as in the graphic presentation of the measurable.

The third level on which Dr. Neurath's volume could be reviewed is the high philosophical—the ultimate design of the universe (if any) of which historical events and personalities are manifestations. It may not be known to the puzzle-workers who are delighted with this book, but Dr. Neurath is one of the leaders in the Unity of Science Movement, out of which has grown the "International Encyclopedia of Unified Science," covering such baffling subjects as the theory of signs, the foundations of logic and mathematics, procedures of empirical science, and the theory of probability (which latter subject drove a friend of mine to suicide). This school holds that "all biological, psychological, and sociological concepts may be reduced to physical concepts." Its general thesis is fairly well represented by the slogan: "Everything that exists, exists in some quantity and therefore can be measured and statistically or graphically represented." This is not the place for me to discuss that topic. So I shall merely remark that, in my opinion, fruitful research has been and is being carried on under this conception, but I am deeply impressed by the obvious limitations on its procedures and on the meanings of the findings. A mother's love for her child exists; it can be measured; let us say that it is 1.23456789 per pound of her weight. My query is: How much do we know and what, when we have arrived at this result? And I have no more use for metaphysics and theology than the Unified Science Movement has.



Bertita Harding

An Evening with the Hapsburgs

IMPERIAL TWILIGHT. The Story of Karl and Zita of Hungary. By Bertita Harding. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1939. 345 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

HAVING written of Maximilian, "Emperor" of Mexico, in the "Phantom Crown" and of Franz Joseph in "The Golden Fleece," Bertita Harding continues the family chronicles of the later Hapsburgs with a book about the last emperor of Austria, Karl, which brings the annals of the house down to date. They are curiously alike, these Austrians, honest, well-meaning, ridiculously limited aristocrats, stiff in the archaic uniforms of their obsolete tradition, fumbling vaguely with a world which nothing has prepared them to understand; and their impresario has found just the tone to present them to a modern public, a decorous, slightly amused familiarity which almost conceals its condescension and admits a touch of awe. It is not unpleasant to admit a little awe of aristocrats, provided one can also pity them, and it is impossible not to pity a little persons who, in success and failure alike, are shown to be so unequal to the burden of the centuries. An evening with the Hapsburgs under Miss Harding's guidance becomes as entertaining and instructive as a tour of Schönbrunn, as beguiling and as little permanently disturbing as a third helping of chocolate cake and whipped cream at a café on the *Ring*.

It might seem that Karl, whose son