

the habit of reading, and in time they will take another book than his when one of his is not to be had. In fact, he is training readers in a nation which, in spite of our multiplicity of papers and magazines, is emphatically not a nation of readers.

He is making thinkers too. Don't be too ready to laugh at that. He may not make you think, but you are a mere fraction of America. If you want to know America in the bulk read one of Wright's books, and try to get back of it to the men and women who ask for him in their millions, who

want him because he expresses what they need to have expressed. Wright understands them, and he may help you to understand them. They have nothing to do with literature and its standards, but they have a whole lot to do with America and her standards. Wright's creative energy is directed toward them, and the book he writes is a mere instrument to his end, shaped to fit it to its use. That is why he is so popular: not because he cannot give a literary public what it cries for, but because he can give his own public what it really needs.

PORTRAIT OF A RUSSIAN NOVELIST: GOGOL

By Marya Zaturensky

I WHO was born in Ukraina,
The rich red heart of Russia,
Remembered best of all the gipsy dances
That took place after the harvest day.

The hazy blur of scarlet and gold, the sharp quick dying laughter,
The cymbals swift clashing, the last swaying gesture,
While from afar the long river flowed;
Oh the long river kept flowing,
As the last note of the boat song came to us on the night wind!

Now you who have read my books,
Read again between the black lines,
Heard you not even in the midst of my dark laughter
The passionate whirling of scarlet and red ornament?
The stamping of dark feet, the song and the quick dying laughter,
The too loud laughter so suddenly hushed
As a clash of cymbals is hushed?
And slowly, slowly, creeping, slowly the ever winding tide
Of the red incoming river of pain?

So all my gladness was hushed by the sorrow of Russia my mother
And I laughed only through pain and death darkness.

ANDRÉ SALMON AND HIS GENERATION

By Malcolm Cowley

With a Drawing from Life by Ivan Opffer

ANDRÉ SALMON can be seen, if you visit him in Paris, always about nine o'clock in the evening and usually on the terrace of the Café de Montparnasse. You notice immediately that he is not the usual type of literary man. A black derby tilts back on his high angular head. He drinks coffee in quick gulps, punches with his finger at the bowl of a briar pipe, and talks. He talks kindly about his friends and their work, kindly about his enemies even, for Salmon is one of those rare writers who converse on other subjects than their own selves.

About the year 1905, he will tell you, there were six very young men who met daily in a ramshackle immense studio at the top of the Butte Montmartre. Two of them were painters: André Dérain and Pablo Picasso, the owner of the studio. Four of them were writers. There was Max Jacob, and Guillaume Apollinaire, who is now becoming widely famous, four years after his death. There was Pierre MacOrlan, who writes stories of curious adventure, and there was Salmon. For a dozen years everything new in French literature centred about these six young men. They formed a "generation", as the term is understood in France.

Here in America the word "generation" is apt to be misunderstood; this in spite of all the recent discussion. A literary generation is not a coterie or

a society for mutual admiration. It is a group of men whose common age has given them a common point of view, and a common aim which is not necessarily the destruction of every other generation.

American writers are more apt to be influenced by their financial circumstances than by their age, but even here generations are not unknown. For example, there is the generation of hopeful intellectuals who found expression in "The New Republic", followed by the discouraged intellectuals who write for "The Freeman". There was the generation of psychoanalysts — the Stieglitz crowd — who founded "Seven Arts", and latterly there has been the critical generation of "Secession". All this in the last ten years. In France, where society is more closely knit, generations are an older phenomenon, defined more clearly.

The generation of Salmon and Apollinaire was more important than any which has followed, and the literary situation in France today can hardly be understood without them. They founded the new art criticism, the first art criticism which has had much effect on artists. They created a new form of prose and the new French poetry of which we hear so much and of which we read so little. They introduced a new ideal of the artistic life, and it is about their mode of living that André Salmon likes to talk especially.