

BIOGRAPHY

Little Troll, The Reminiscences of Karin Michaelis, (Creative Age, \$3.00), is an autobiography by Karin Michaelis in collaboration with Lenore Sorsby. It is a remarkable book. The Danish author tells of her emotional life with the same cool frankness that she relates her trials and successes in her writing, and, since the book describes a period of famous names, it is of tremendous interest from a literary standpoint. Free of inhibitions, she tells a story of Danish and Norwegian life and letters—and people—that is as delicately worded as it is candidly presented.

The execution of Louis XVI of France is the climax of *The Abbe Edgeworth*, by M. V. Woodgate, (Longmans, Green, \$2.50), a biographical sketch of the Irish vicar who became confessor to the king's sister. Miss Woodgate is interested chiefly in the Abbe, and tells of his conversion to Catholicism, his devotion to the ill-fated king, and his later escape from the Commune's power to safety.

The Roosevelt I Knew, by Frances Perkins, (Viking, \$3.75), is a surprise in its candor and acknowledgement of F.D.R.'s faults and foibles. Admittedly one-sided, as it must be because of her fidelity to the late president, the book is admirably frank and matter-of-fact about some of the politics of the insiders in the New Deal. Madam Perkins disclaims its intent as biographical, but it contains much valuable information about F.D.R.'s personality, and is extremely interesting reading for his admirers and haters alike.

The life of the founder of the religious order, Sacred Heart of Mary, is told in narrative form in *Gailhac of Beziers*, by Helene Magaret, (Longmans, Green, \$3.50). It is a warm and almost passionate tribute to the work of the priest among the poor and sinners of his day.

Lovers of the music world will like *Two Worlds of Music*, by Berta Geissmar, (Creative Age, \$3.00). In it, the author, whose experiences include being secretary to Wilhelm Furtwängler, manager of the Berlin Philharmonic, and later to Sir Thomas Beecham, pictures the music world world in pre-Hitler Germany and during his regime. Some of her pages report on London as well, but the Continental period is particularly interesting, reflecting also the war background.

FICTION

Jules Romains completes his gigantic Men of Good Will series with this fourteenth volume, *The Seventh of October*, (Knopf, \$3.00). It is timed in 1933, and rounds out the picture of France in its retreat under the pressure of Hitlerism. It is not intended for light reading; its characters and plot are designed as a means of expressing the social and political changes in the French people. To that purpose, it sacrifices popular interest for study and evaluation of the times. There is a cumulative index, which requires 96 pages, of all the characters in the entire series.

A novel typically French in its plot and characters makes good reading and offers some moralizing as well.

Blind Alley, by Georges Simenon, (Reynal & Hitchcock, \$2.50), is relentless in its characterization and its insistence on evil paying its price. You might call it psychological, but it is too simply told to need classification on the sterner level.

Life in London during the war, with Hyde Park orators, the blitz and upset emotions, forms the background for *The Listening World*, by Reginald Moore, (Creative Age, \$2.50). It is a brief novel, trying to explain the causes behind the reactions of men and women under wartime stress.

Jan Westcott has produced a clean and excellent historical novel in *The Border Lord*, (Crown, \$3.00), the Lord being Francis Hepburn, Lord Bothwell. The place is Scotland in the reign of James Stuart, with its reflections of Queen Elizabeth's influence. There is action in every chapter, and the late Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., would have loved to fill the role of the suave and swash-buckling hero.

While *Barabbas*, by Emery Beke-sy, (Prentice-Hall, \$2.75), has for its central figure the robber and rebel (against Rome) of Biblical days, it is the story of Jesus, his trial by the rabbis and his crucifixion. The opposite characters of Barabbas, the man of violence, and Jesus, the apostle of peace, are built up to a dramatic climax. The other principal figures of the times appear, the whole making an intense story.

Sholem Asch has written another novel of his own people, *East River*, (Putnam, \$3.00). The scene is East 48th Street in New York, 40 years ago, and the story relates the

vicissitudes and fortunes of a typical Jewish immigrant family and its second generation. There is the intermarriage of a son with an Irish girl, the whole blended into a bitter-sweet melting pot novel that will be relished by the author's many devotees.

Temptation, by John Pen, (Creative Age, \$3.00), is a translation from the Hungarian and concerns a peasant lad who grew up amidst the worst kinds of temptation in old Budapest. It is either realistic or lurid, according to your choice. It is powerful medicine, and, like powerful potions, may have a nauseating effect. Jokai, if I remember, did not find it necessary to label each spade.

A historical novel of the times of Benedict Arnold and Andrew Jackson, with the central figure a loyal Indian, *Holdfast Gaines*, by Odell and William Shepard, (Macmillan, \$3.00), has the merit of adventure and action. It has over 600 pages of lively escape fiction for lovers of pioneer days in Colonial America.

MISCELLANEOUS

The stark realism of the French painter, Toulouse Lautrec, is described and illustrated by numerous photographs of the artist's work in *Toulouse Lautrec*, by Jacques Lassaigne, (Hyperion Press, Paris, distributed by Crown, \$6.50). A number of the paintings are in color; some are not pretty, but represent the people Lautrec knew best in the Paris *demi-monde*.

I Hate Thursday, by Thomas Hornsby Ferril, (Harper's, \$2.50), consists of some of the short pieces