

turies made the creation of a balance of power possible.

What is the division he proposes? Briefly this: the Straits, Constantinople and Armenia to Russia; Syria to France; Palestine to England; Anatolia to what is to constitute an independent Turkish kingdom; the Hedjaz and the Yemen to independent Arabian states; Mesopotamia to be under a protectorate. The discussion of Arabian claims for separate nationality is illuminating. The Arabs of Arabia and the Arabs of Africa have differences in culture and speech which make the formation of a single Arabian nation stretching from Tunis and Algiers across Egypt to the Persian Gulf a mere dream of a future that the European Powers will never permit to arrive. Here, at any rate, the principle of small nationalities runs contrary to all European self-interest. M. Jabotinsky hints that at the Paris Conference France put in a strong bid for Palestine as well as Syria. Thus he practically admits that Russia, with her orthodox Greek church, could not consider the proposal of allowing the French Roman Catholic clergy the guardianship of the Holy places! England, although hardly wishing it for any gain to herself, consented to take over Palestine, consoling herself that at the worst here was another protection to the Suez. Germany's and Austria's Drang nach Osten will be allowed for by giving them practical commercial hegemony over Anatolia—the new, shrunken Turkey, her ally. M. Jabotinsky is naïve enough to believe that this concession will satisfy their energy. That Germany might consider Russian possession of the Straits as bitter a check to her ambitions in the east as Russia feels Turkish possession of the Straits a check to her ambitions for world-trade does not seem to have occurred to M. Jabotinsky. Except for this partisan blindness, the recommendations of the splitting up of lower Turkey seem plausible.

Let no one imagine that "annexation" of this kind necessarily means any great increment of wealth or power to the annexing state. It is rather a concession to the world's peace. Often enough would a great Power waive its whole colonial problems if it could. The burden and worry are far more costly than any increase in doubtful trade could possibly compensate. But empires, like nature, abhor a vacuum. Weak and unexploited territories must succumb in time to somebody. M. Jabotinsky merely points out the most graceful way for Turkey to expire. He is frank in saying that the Allies could wish Germany no more ill luck at the close of the war than by giving her the whole of Turkey to exploit. It would be a hornet's nest. Sooner or later Turkey would again embroil Germany in a quarrel with other powers. What will be the final outcome only the military situation at the close of the war can determine. Certainly M. Jabotinsky has not given the Central Powers' Drang nach Osten an equal position with the claims of the Allies. But his very difficulty in doing so illustrates more vividly than a thousand stock idealistic arguments this fundamental truth—that unless a more decent international organization emerges from this war, an organization in which large claims can be peaceably adjudicated, it will be fought all over again. This book sharply reveals the folly of our working for a mere cheap militaristic "victory" over Germany without constantly keeping in mind the larger ends of international organization for which our war is supposedly being fought. That will be our real failure, and no less a failure if Hindenburg should pass over his sword to Pershing on the streets of Berlin.

H. S.

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A Romantic Ironist

The Created Legend, by Feodor Sologub. Translated by John Cournos, New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. \$1.35.

THE literary method of romantic irony, which Rousseau, with his curious oscillation between a lyrical passage and a page of Zolaesque detail, made almost a French tradition, seems to be singularly attractive to many of the later Russians. This is certainly the case with Artzibasheff. With Sologub, who has heretofore been known to English readers by that one amazing book *The Little Demon*, this method goes much further than a mere trick of stylistic contrast between ugliness and beauty. The whole texture of this novel is symbolic to a degree which is at first irritating and foreign. There is a certain aspect wherein the outer chaos of life is presented in the conventional fashion of mere naturalistic description. Parallel to this, however, runs a counter-existence, what is called "the inner vision." This "inner vision" is the picture which the hero of the book, the poet Trirodov, makes for himself and which is a symbol of the true and happy life which will come to Russia when she breaks through the shackles which have bound her. Elisaveta, the heroine, stands as the symbol of Russian Revolution—with a nudity and boldness that seem more the creative vision of the sculptor than the writer. The emotional background is the so-called "abortive revolution" of 1905, out of which the hero, freeing himself from the Goddess of Chance (Aisa), and entering into the Kingdom of the Goddess of Necessity (Ananké),

erects his utopia or his legend. Perhaps the Russian title to the series, of which this is the first book, meaning "the legend in the course of creation," is more illuminating than any over-exact analysis of Sologub's strange symbols. So, too, is the original title of this specific book, Drops of Blood, the phrase occurring again and again in the book as a symbol of the problem of cruelty in life.

The skeleton of Sologub's fable is comparatively simple. To the small village where lives the bourgeois or open-minded family of Elisaveta comes the poet Trirodov to found his school. At this school the instructresses and the children play and study and work in an atmosphere of freedom and joy sharply contrasted with the greasy and ill smelling public schools and the dirty factory section of the town. The children are ruddy and strong and brown; they are independent, intelligent, naïve about the problem of good and evil. The life of this school stands for the symbol of the utopia the free Russia will make possible for every one. There is considerable emphasis on the beauty of the human body. Page after page is devoted to "chaste" nakedness. Sologub of course merely used this as a means of retaliation on the prigs. For in this strange colony of Trirodov's are the "quiet ones"; children of fantasy who summon the dead on St. John's eve. The living flesh becomes the sign of beauty, the inner freedom, the legend. Nudity becomes almost synonymous with paradise.

Although in moods of Platonic reminiscence Elisaveta occasionally remembers that she was once the Queen of Ortruda, on some beautiful island in the Mediterranean, she is as a whole more realistically described than the hero. She has the passionate convictions which make revolution possible, the eagerness for truth, for life and for honesty. There is a fine imaginative depiction of all the rebellious elements in Russian life—the extreme radicals, the extreme and moderate socialists, the social democrats, the constitutional democrats or cadets, the secret police, the *agents provocateurs*, the cossacks, and the aristocracy. Elisaveta, of course, throws in her lot with the radicals, together with Trirodov. She attends secret meetings and gives speeches with all the fervor of young conviction. Even if Sologub angrily denies that he writes just an ordinary love story, Elisaveta's history is only the history of any imperious, passionate young girl. Yet if towards the end Trirodov accepts her affection rather coldly, the conclusion is not the expected conclusion. "But Elisaveta, musing and burning, was experiencing passionate dreams; and she felt the tediousness of the gray monotony of her dull life. The strange vision suddenly appearing to her in those terrible moments in the wood repeated itself persistently—and it seemed to her that it was not another but she herself who was experiencing a parallel life, that she was passing the exultantly bright and joyous and sad way of Queen Ortruda."

The original exasperation of what seems merely fortuitous and clumsy symbolism ceases to be vexing, and finally becomes provocative. The fantasy is not employed just for the sake of being fantastic, but to express those more elusive nuances of insight for which the merely realistic method is inadequate. Symbols, dreams, the queer nightmarish transpositions from one mood to another, are Sologub's effort to catch the flying fringes of truth. They correspond to the rows of dots in an early Wells novel. They point clearly and sharply to the balked dispositions of a typical genius. Intensity, which becomes almost a fixation of impulse in the Dostoevsky novel, here escapes from what one might call its own excess of introspection. Serving thus as a kind of literary release from his neurasthenic and discordant philosophy, these phantasmagorias

allow Sologub to set his picture of Russian life in softer and gentler and more moving outlines than he might have sketched had they been denied him. The result is amazing in its vividness and verve and color. Nearly all the major characters, except when Sologub describes their loves and passions and nakedness, of which he never tires, have something of the unreality of legendary figures, but the minor characters stand out with memorable clearness. So also does Russia itself, in the queer blend of cruelty and beauty which then constituted its emotional life. Some will say, with the police captain of the story, that Sologub writes every-day pornography, masquerading under high sounding names. But even those who make such a foolish judgment will discover that Sologub did create a picture of Russia and Russian life, the outlines of which not even time can soften or cause to fade.

H. S.

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