

## Books of Special Interest

### Russian Icons De Luxe

MASTERPIECES OF RUSSIAN PAINTING—Twenty Color Plates and Forty-three Monochrome Reproductions of Russian Icons and Frescoes from the Xth to the XVIIIth Centuries. London: Europa Publications, Ltd. 1931.

Reviewed by CHRISTIAN BRINTON

IT seems that a new artistic discovery—the Russian icon—is delighting our dilettante. Apropos of which, nothing has puzzled, not to say perturbed, the outside world more than the attention devoted in the Russia of today to art, literature, and general cultural considerations. In point of fact, that wave of romantic Slavophilism which swept the country during the early and middle decades of the last century cannot be compared either in volume or in intensity with the grandiose and avowedly realistic educational programme inaugurated by the U. S. S. R. Also, it is important to note that the high-pressure mobilization of mass intelligence which looks toward future progress and development, has been paralleled by a singularly able and scholarly exposition of past achievement, notably in the fields of art and archaeology. The remarkable work of Professor Koslov and his field staff in Mongolia and the Gobi Desert has received due recognition in the foreign press. Yet it has remained for a less known group of experts attached to the National Central Restoration Workshops in Moscow to produce results of equal, if not greater, significance in the province of Russian painting.

Beginning before the October Revolution, and continuing their labors down to the present day, such men as Professor A. I. Anisimov, Professor Igor Grabar, Mr. P. I. Yukin, Mr. G. O. Chirikov, and others have, with incredible patience and dexterity, disclosed the hitherto detached and defaced outlines of a truly national esthetic physiognomy. It is the results of their united efforts, extending over the span of a dozen lean, precarious years, which are epitomized in the display of Russian icons now being seen in this country, and in the publication herewith issued in connection with the exhibition.

The roster of English works devoted to Russian iconic art is pitifully slender. Aside from occasional articles we have thus far possessed only Professor N. P. Kondakov's "The Russian Icon," so efficiently translated and edited by Professor Ellis H. Minns of Cambridge. Beyond this, nothing to initiate the English-reading student into a mystic, hieratic realm of visual imagery which reaches back to the eleventh century and stretches in virtually unbroken sequence to the threshold of the nineteenth. For not only is Russian iconic painting one of the most typically national and unadulterated, it is also one of the longest continued schools of art of which there is existing record.

Finding its origins in the rude encaustic likenesses painted on the burial shrouds of the ancient Egyptians, and spreading fanlike throughout Syria, Greece, Byzantium, the Southern Slav states, and also Italy, the icon attained perfect flowering upon the wide-sweeping, heavily wooded expanse of "Holy Russia." The destiny of any art is, in the first, and last, analysis dictated by considerations social and material. And thus, without ardent religious feeling, consummate craftsmanship, and that profusion of available panel wood so characteristic of Russia, the icon could never have reached full development. The great, glowing iconostases, far excelling anything in the Near Eastern churches even, as likewise the most brilliant of those glowing little portable icons or "prayer pictures," were painted upon wood. So intimately was the icon associated with wood that its devotees were in fact sneeringly referred to by the impious as "wood worshippers."

The current publication is the joint work of four well known art authorities. Reflecting the English, and eminently West European, point of view are essays by Sir Martin Conway and Mr. Roger Fry. Incorporating the latest results of expert Russian research and connoisseurship are brief papers by Professor Anisimov and Professor Grabar, the actual notes upon the illustration having been compiled by Mr. Y. A. Olsufiev and Mr. M. S. Lagovsky. It would be manifestly unfair to compare the sincere, if somewhat ingenuous, contributions of Sir Martin and Mr. Fry with the luminous, penetrating exposition of Professor Anisimov. Here, in brief, is one who moves with delicate precision, almost prevision, in a largely uncharted region. No purely European scholar could hope to evince, in the complex province of Russian religious painting, that instinctive capacity for "seeing through" which is the gift of the soft-voiced, mild-

mannered man who daily trudges from his home to the little side door of the Moscow Historical Museum, or across the shining river to the Restoration Workshops. One can but be grateful that Professor Anisimov's writings are at last reaching the Anglo-Saxon public.

### Cooper the Observer

GLEANINGS IN EUROPE. Volume Two. England. By JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. Edited by ROBERT E. SPILLER. New York: Oxford University Press. 1930. \$5.50.

NEW YORK. By JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. New York: William Farquhar Payson. 1930.

Reviewed by FRED LEWIS PATTEE

THE publication of this second volume of Cooper's "Gleanings" is again a major event in the history of our early literature, and the hint in Doctor Spiller's introduction that the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation has become interested in the republication of all of Cooper's miscellaneous writings is of more than passing interest. Cooper's books that lie in their first obscure editions after nearly a hundred years since their original issue number six or eight. The "Gleanings" alone amount to five large volumes. That they never have received the publicity they deserve is a part of the man's peculiar history. The most honest and patriotic of men, with a pen that told the truth as he saw it, cut where it might, he lived his later years in a storm of bitterness that not only kept him in a perpetual rage but made it impossible for him to receive from his countrymen anything like the recognition his work deserved. These volumes were never reprinted because they were considered by Americans as Mencken-like outbursts of vituperation. And America in the '30s was not ready for a Mencken however brilliant his pen.

But read today, the "Gleanings" reveal nothing that seems to us like deliberate vituperation or unreasonable bitterness. They are the work of an honest observer in England, one who had peculiar advantages for observation of the men and manners of early Victorian England, and who worked with a camera-like realism. Everywhere flashlights upon men and manners and scenery. It is as full of wise generalization upon all matters British as is Emerson's "English Traits." In page after page Cooper recounts his observations, his opinions, his anecdotes of men like Scott and Rogers and Coleridge and Wordsworth, of all of whom he saw much. He was entertained often at Holland House when it was in its most brilliant period, and he reproduces with the pen of a novelist occasion after occasion with transcriptions of repartee, and flashlights upon costumes and manners. The temptation to quote at length from this richness is great, but my space is limited. A few chapter titles will show what the reader has in store: "Godwin and Rogers," "Holland House," "Earl Grey and His Party," "The House of Lords," "Scott and Coleridge," "Aristocracy," "The Press," "A Poetical Morning," "Truckling America."

The volume belongs on the shelf that holds Emerson's "English Traits" and Hawthorne's "Our Old Home." In editing it Dr. Spiller has done excellent work. His introduction is a model of its kind: everything necessary, nothing too much.

Still another Cooper reprint enriches the current book lists in "New York," a most distinctive little volume for collectors made of the recently discovered introductory chapter of a work partly finished by Cooper during the last months of his life. The title of the volume was to be "The Towns of Manhattan," but the partially completed manuscript perished in a fire that consumed the printing office and the work was abandoned. One copy, however, of the introductory chapter, a proof sheet that had been sent out to a reader, survived the flames, and it is this fragment of sixty-three book pages with introduction and illustrations that makes possible the present volume.

Cooper's object as he sets it forth was "not so much to dilate on existing facts, as to offer a general picture, including the past, the present, and the future, that may aid the mind in forming something like a just estimate of the real importance and probable destination of this emporium of the New World." The chapter in itself is a valuable addition to that mass of Cooper material now collecting that is bound to result in a reconsideration of the man's place in the literary history of his time. It is fearless in its criticism, cogent, illuminating. Perhaps the essayist Cooper, the philosophic observer, may in time be placed alongside even the Cooper of the American romances.

NOTE: This advertisement appeared in THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE on January 17. Its invitation was accepted by a gratifying number of readers, but our Stock Room reports a few copies still on hand.

# DREAMY RIVERS

An unconventional invitation to 638 Readers of The Saturday Review of Literature

Are there six hundred and thirty-eight readers of The Saturday Review of Literature who can be lured by the mere suggestion of Dreamy Rivers?

Are there six hundred and thirty-eight subscribers to whom the very words are magic?

Are there six hundred and thirty-eight followers of current literature who can be enticed by the unadorned announcement of a book with so languorous a title?

Will one and seven-tenths per cent (.0176) of the clientele of this magazine even consider this unconventional invitation?

The Inner Sanctum has no way of knowing the appeal of Dreamy Rivers, but it is sufficiently romantic to hope for the best, and sufficiently adventurous to risk this advertisement.

As these lines are written, the stock-room reports an inventory of six hundred and thirty-eight copies of a book by HENRY BAERLEIN bearing the title *Dreamy Rivers*. Only a thousand copies had been imported from England, for here was a book difficult to classify, impossible to chart—obviously aimed only at the elect, the blessed, the fancy-free. Let the librarians beware: this mixture of high gipsy imaginings and indiscreet memorabilia from the last sea-coast of Bohemia cannot be card-indexed. It is part novel, part essay, part traveler's tale richly hued with the Romany strain.

*Dreamy Rivers!*

"A name like that sings through the body."

Dreamy rivers, gay winds, uncomprehended longings . . . Dreamy rivers, moon-lit roads that wind around the heart, unschooled violins drunk with joy . . . Dreamy rivers that never find the sea . . .

"It is no dishonour to be mad," muses one of the wanderers in this tale. "On the contrary, the person who is altogether sane is unbearable." The sleek and the respectable, the logical and the smug, will not be able to follow *Dreamy Rivers*. They will not understand the little things that are tremendous. They will be puzzled by people who in this year of grace "get up every morning and hunt for happiness." They will be astounded by strange spools who on inheriting a home immediately make a hole in the ceiling so that

they may watch the stars. In fact, they will doubtless be shocked and sore distressed by some of the tender and unsanctioned proceedings that take place on the banks of these *Dreamy Rivers*.

The book is just beginning to be discovered. "In sober real countries like England," writes CLEMENCE DANE in the *London Book Society News*, "chamber-maids don't abandon their work on the spur of the moment to go on a walking tour with a casual guest; the coming of a tourist is not an event; bishops and mayors don't offer him lifts; and poets and beautiful women do not attach themselves to him as a matter of course. But all of these things happen in this wonderland of Europe. *Dreamy Rivers* is a delicious book."

*Dreamy Rivers*, then, is the book which *The Inner Sanctum* of SIMON AND SCHUSTER is quixotically reserving for the first six hundred and thirty-eight dreamers of dreams who will be daring enough to accept this unorthodox challenge. They are invited to send their wind-swept orders, with \$2.50 in coin of the realm, to their favorite gipsy book-seller, or, if he be wandering along his own dreamy rivers, directly to the publishers, who when these lines appear, will still be found, a lackaday, safely moored at 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

from THE INNER SANCTUM of  
**SIMON and SCHUSTER**  
Publishers • 386 Fourth Avenue, New York



## From a fairy-tale life in the Court of the Czar . . .

a princess was swept into revolution and exile. A dramatic adventure has become an engrossing book, which in turn, has become an instantaneous and overwhelming best-seller. Its author, Marie, Grand Duchess of Russia and one of the last of the Romanovs, writes as intensely as she lived. Through her experiences—experiences which are a part of living history—one witnesses the death of a dynasty. She has written the almost incredible story of her transition from a guarded existence to the chaos of war and revolution. *Illustrated*. \$3.50

## Education of a Princess

by Marie, Grand Duchess of Russia

"I find in it the qualities which have always seemed to me to belong to the great Russian novelists."  
—André Maurois, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*.

"Nothing could be conjured up out of the imagination half so full of romance and excitement and wild, fantastic improbability as this true story, a deeply moving and a gallant book."  
—Alexander Woolcott.

"It is a moving story of a courageous and brilliant woman."  
—Mazo de la Roche.

"It is a compelling, human document . . . permeated by a candor and sincerity which is altogether charming . . ."  
—*N. Y. Times*.



18 East 48th St. • THE VIKING PRESS • New York City  
Tune in on Alexander Woolcott "The Early Bookworm" Tuesday evenings, Columbia System



**Russia's Challenge  
to American Business**

# The Economic Life of Soviet Russia

By CALVIN B. HOOVER

The significance to the capitalistic world of development in the Soviet Union cannot be exaggerated. Whatever your station in life, you are being directly affected every day by what the communist régime in Russia is doing. What is it doing? Inform yourself now through Dr. Hoover's illuminating chapters on every phase of Soviet economic activity: Organization of Industry, Capital Investment, Agriculture, Internal Trade, Foreign Trade, the Banking System, Money, the Co-operatives, Labor, Communism and Human Welfare. There is no other current picture of Russian activities so complete, or so stimulating to thought.

\$3.00

**Best-seller in England and America**

## THE MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE

By SIR JAMES JEANS

Author of *The Universe Around Us*

"The best-seller for some weeks, beating all comers handsomely with the exception of the unbeatable Mr. Edgar Wallace."—*New Yorker*.

"One of the most arresting books in recent years, a real drama of modern science."—*New Statesman*.

"The thinking man who would keep abreast of the trends of modern thought cannot ignore it."—*New York Sun* \$2.25

JANE ADDAMS' New Book

## THE SECOND TWENTY YEARS AT HULL-HOUSE

**Fourth Large Printing**

"There is only one Jane Addams, but there are two of her Hull-House autobiographies. They both are classics. For twenty years her other life story has been read, marked, learned and inwardly digested. The second volume needs a space alongside its elder sister. But don't put it on the shelf for keeps until every one you know has thoroughly absorbed it."—*Philadelphia Ledger*

\$4.00

**Volume III Now Ready**

## ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

The first three volumes of this monumental reference work in the whole field of the social sciences are now ready and the fourth volume will be issued soon. Place your order now for the complete set. Each vol. \$7.50

## LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Edited by G. G. COULTON

The four unique volumes of selections from original documents illustrating life in the Middle Ages, arranged by the greatest living authority on the period, are now collected in one volume at less than half of the former price. More than 1,000 pages, printed on India paper. \$5.50

## THE PLACE OF AGRICULTURE IN AMERICAN LIFE

By WILSON GEE

The latest addition to the World Today Bookshelf, edited by Charles A. Beard. "Compact and learned treatise... considers in simple terms, practical for the lay reader, all aspects and problems of national agrarianism..."—*New York Sun* \$2.00

At All Bookstores Now

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY ~ NEW YORK  
Boston • Chicago • Atlanta • Dallas • San Francisco

## News Out of Scotland

By GEORGE BLAKE

IT seems quite possible that within the next few years the British Government, sorely perplexed already by imperial problems in India and South Africa and Palestine, will have to face at least a devolutionary demand from a closer and, at the first thought, highly improbable quarter. No doubt it will amuse the world to learn that Scotland, whose sons have done not too badly out of the Empire, is in the mood to demand her independence back again, but the Scottish movement in that direction is at this moment much more purposeful than the world can possibly realize. We have in Scotland a National Party with an ever-increasing membership. We have our Clann Albainn, of which the secretive members are sworn to use violence for the Cause if need be. We even have (our crowning glory) Mr. Compton Mackenzie. The author of "Sinister Street" has deserted the Channel Islands and lairds it over an insular domain near Inverness, studies Gaelic, wears the kilt with quite a Stuart air, and orates persistently and persuasively in demand of Scottish independence. This new movement has indeed its comic aspects; but so had that which turned Ireland into a Free State; and as in Ireland, it has its literary counterpart—may, in fact, be said to be primarily a literary enterprise. The most able exponents of Scottish Nationalism are creative writers, and every creative Scottish writer under forty is a Nationalist, if not always in the party sense. So vast, so uncritical, is young Scotland's enthusiasm for the cause, there are scores who talk in terms of a "Scots Renaissance."

It would be the simplest thing in the world to demonstrate that the constant use of this windy phrase arises out of a youthful confusion between promises and performance, but we can just as easily afford to take it as a sign of intellectual health and a pleasing token of high hopefulness. And it does certainly bespeak the fact that our younger writers are taking thought not only as to their own position but also as to the validity of the main traditions in Scottish letters, and as to the importance of the Caledonian gods—Scott, Burns, Stevenson, and the rest—judged according to absolute standards. It is in Scotland just now an age of discontent, revaluation, and revolt; and while it would be difficult to explain just how young Scotland has fallen into this temper, it is easy enough to suggest the spirit in which they are facing the putatively glorious future.

The first signs of this crepitation of interest in Scotland as Scotland manifested themselves immediately after the war. It was as if the young men came back from that experience with eyes not merely unclouded by traditional sentiment but actually focussed so as to see only the shadows that lie heavily on their native land. They looked at Scotland, and lo! the state of it was not good. The vast bulk of the population was huddled in the narrow industrial valley that lies between Glasgow and Edinburgh, while the Highlands were being rapidly depopulated. This urban population lived amid conditions of incredible squalor. At the same time, industrial prosperity was deserting Scotland and drifting southwards in response to the strong centrifugal pull of London's financial influence. The fine old tradition of craftsmanship—in the Clyde shipyards, for example—was in decay, going under before Trade Union rules and a vast invasion of cheap Irish labor. Then the Irish had brought a religious problem with them. And the true spirit of Scotland had been vulgarized by the Burns enthusiasts and patriots of the "Here's tae us, wha's like us" school. And the movies and the radio and state education were standardizing the thought of the people at the lowest of low levels.

In short, Scotland was in a mess; and while it was clearly realized that this sort of decline through intense industrialism was by no means peculiar to Scotland, the young men were baffled and infuriated by the fact that not a single writer of the older generation had written a word in protest against the forces that were undermining the integrity of the nation. They had been complacent, content to provide for the English and American markets novels that exhibited the Scot as either a quixotic Jacobite or a pawky delver in the Kailyard. Scott's torch of romance had been handed to Stevenson, and from Stevenson to Neil Munro and John Buchan. Roughly, the most popular and representative Scottish novels were those that told romantic tales of Jacobites, kilted clansmen, swordplay in the heather and, generally, successful adventures by land and sea in days gone by. On the other hand, the "Kailyard" group flour-

ished a thought too luxuriantly. The humorous realism of John Galt prevailed in a highly dilute form in the prose works of Sir James Barrie, "Ian Maclaren," the Reverend S. R. Crockett, and a host of lesser men. In this sort of fiction, in response to the public's demand for pawkiness and pathos, Scotland was represented as a place where every prospect pleases and not even man is vile. And the young men knew that these Boys of the Old Brigade, skilful literary artists as many of them were, had falsified the issue, sold the pass, and produced nothing but a literature of escape to represent Scotland to the world. Only George Douglas Brown had faced reality when he produced "The House with the Green Shutters"; and his revolt was really an early rumbling of the revolution that is almost an accomplished fact today.

The names and works of the leading revolutionaries are not as yet familiar to the world at large. Prominent among them is Mr. C. M. Grieve, who, if his aims are occasionally obscure and his methods almost always unfortunate, has brought such terrific vitality and intense conviction to the task of revaluation that he can fairly be called the father of the movement. Grieve is in his own right one of the most distinguished of our poets, and his "To Circumjack Cencrastus," just published in Great Britain by Blackwood's over the pen-name of "Hugh McDiarmid," is a full, if occasionally obscure, statement of the case for a New Scotland. Lewis Spence, another poet of distinguished quality, has actually stood for Parliament in the interests of Scottish Nationalism. In another direction, the sanity and wit of George Malcolm Thomson—author of "Caledonia," "Scotland Rediscovered," and "A Short History of Scotland" (Kegan Paul)—have been of invaluable service in goading the complacent into frenzies of self-examination and in correcting the extravagances of the wild-eyed rebels. And, as an example of activity on more purely literary lines, there are Donald Carswell's cool, Stracheyesque studies of various Scots worthies, including even Sir Walter himself.

Work of this kind is not so much part of a true "Scots Renaissance" as a necessary preliminary to it, but even so, it is not too early to attempt some assessment of the creative products of the movement so far. What if they are little known outside Scotland? What if, in their desperate anxiety to show a sound balance sheet, the actuaries of the "Scots Renaissance" have had to count in the works of Norman Douglas and Compton Mackenzie?

The point is that the recent works of Scotsmen working consciously as Scotsmen have been of sufficient merit and interest to satisfy and excite Scotland. Inevitably, the poets have been the most prolific performers. "Holyrood," a recent anthology of contemporary Scottish verse, has quite impressive bulk. To compile a list of their names would be so much waste of space, but it is worth mentioning that women have been in the van of this particular wing of the movement, and that in one of them, Marion Angus, Scotland has found, at the least, her Housman. A collected edition of Miss Angus's poems is one of the hopes of the near future. For the rest, it is the tendency, rather than actual performances, that best indicates the quality of the modern Scottish group; for their swing is away from Burns and intimate, domestic verse and towards the freer realism so happily inhabited by those "makars" who flourished when Scotland was still a proud kingdom. Indeed, a complete edition of the poems of Dunbar represents the most sacred ideal of your modern Scot.

While it is probable that the fullest expression of thought and life in contemporary Scotland will come from some novelist still to be born, certainly still immature, the achievement of our younger novelists has been disappointing so far. Here, for one reason or another, we fumble and hesitate while our brothers and sisters, the poets, go ahead with banners flying. Perhaps it is more difficult to throw off the influence of Scott and Galt and Stevenson than it is to forget Burns. There was a small post-war crop of realism as applied to the theme of Clydeside industrialism, but it harvested poorly and has not been sown since with any confidence. A quite remarkable group of women hailing from Aberdeen—Agnes Mure Mackenzie, Nan Sheppard, and the rest—have staked a claim over a rich enough, but terribly narrow, vein of sombre romance. (It is worth mentioning, by the way, that "Gallow's Orchard," at least a *succès d'estime* in the States, was regarded

(Continued on page 589)