

IN THE WORLD OF BOOKS

Under the title of "All the Russias," Henry Norman has given us a volume which will no doubt prove of great interest to the ordinary reader and of inestimable value to those who are interested in the rapid strides which Russia is making as one of the greatest of world powers. This work represents the results of more than a dozen years of interest in Russian affairs, and contains the material gathered first-hand by the author during four journeys through European and Asiatic Russia, and the neighboring provinces. Conceived first as a series of essays, the subject gradually grew in scope till now, after two years of preparation, it comes forth as a volume of 500 pages, filled from cover to cover with interesting and valuable information.

As in his other works of similar nature, notably "The People and Politics of the Far East," and "The Real Japan," the author has kept constantly in mind that the first requirement for the success of a book of this kind is that it be readable. Accordingly, while he has written with an eye single for the truth, he has not laden his pages with bald, unadorned statements of prosaic facts and columns of dry and tedious statistics, but has contrived to present his facts and statistics in a way that is both impressive and attractive. A thorough knowledge of the people, the customs and the institutions of the Russian people involves a knowledge of not only what is weighty and hidden deep beneath the surface, but also of what is light and plainly exposed to view. Both are important and Mr. Norman in presenting both has not done amiss.

The plan which has been adopted by the author in developing his subject is that of a journey. As an introduction, he asks, "What is Russia?" and answers it by saying that a large part of Europe is Russia, Siberia is Russia, Central Asia is Russia. And to show the importance of this question of "What is Russia?" he says:

"The Eastern question is, How will Russia try again to get Constantinople? The far Eastern question is, Will Russia succeed in dominating China? A question of questions for the British Empire is, Will Russia attempt to invade India?"

It would be easy to say what is not Russia. In world affairs, wherever you turn you see Russia; wherever you listen you hear her. She moves in every path, she is mining in every claim. The "sleeping monster" of the world is her footfall, the "pining dark" is her veil. To the challenge of the nations, as they peer from their borders, comes ever the same reply:

"Who goes there?" "Russia!"

After this admirable piece of exposition, he takes up his plan and guides us to St. Petersburg. This city of Peter the Great affords many things of interest. Its cathedrals and its fortresses, its gorgeous public buildings and its reeking dungeons, its palaces and its hovels, its rich people and its poor, its magnificent nobility and its abashed vulgar—all of these he describes for us. But in spite of the many things of interest which Mr. Norman finds in St. Petersburg, he considers it as made up of incongruities, of mere bits of Russian life mingled with very large elements taken from French, English and German life, a foreign city really, and a hybrid one to boot. The city which is Russian from center to circumference, from the highest rank of nobility to the lowest level of serfdom, is not St. Petersburg, but Moscow—the Moscow of Napoleonic fame, the Moscow of the Cathedral of Assumption where the Tsar of all the Russias, not is crowned, but crowns himself. For speaking of this phase of his subject, the author has occasion to refer to the absolutism of the Tsar and the attitude with which the people regard him.

"Unless you realize," he writes, "that in Russia the Tsar is everything, absolutely everything, that not only is his will law but that it is also himself and his modes of thought, that his land and his subjects are his to dispose of wholly as he will, you will not grasp the fundamental condition of Russia today." The discussion of how this belief influences the Tsar himself, his Ministers and the masses is both entertaining and instructive.

The chapter devoted to Tolstoy, the great Russian novelist, falls little short of being the most interesting in the book. After recounting the circumstances of his life, the distinguished author, and describing the man himself and his modes of life, Mr. Norman undertakes to set before us briefly Tolstoy's views and the effect which the promulgation of them has had in Russia. How is it, he asks, that Tolstoy says "These things I hate, autocracy, orthodoxy, and militarism"—the pillars of the Russian state—he is not arrested or banished? Contrary to the general impression, which is that the government keeps it hands off Tolstoy because of fear of the world-wide scandalous mistreatment of him would create, Mr. Norman thinks that it is because the government considers him an idle dreamer, a theorist, and can best afford to ignore him so long as he exerts no greater influence on practical affairs than he has hitherto exerted. In fact, Tolstoy's influence seems to the author to be greatest outside of Russia; hence, while we foreigners regard him with awe as a man of untold power, the Russian officials regard him with indifference.

Through Finland, the land of wood and water, we are next taken, and have the country, the products, the people, their manners, habits, their mental and physical condition, easily and entertainingly described to us. Then comes the subject to which the reader has been looking forward to, Siberia, a land which, until recently was a synonym for all that is horrible and cruel. To Siberia, the great, desolate, frozen wilderness, the Russian officials regard him with indifference, devotes five chapters, one to the significance of Siberia, one to the great Siberian railway, one to a description of the country, one to Siberian civilization, and one to the notorious convict prison of Irkutsk. Of these the most valuable is the one on the Siberian railway which, when completed, will include the line in European Russia, extend over a distance of 5,000 miles, and will cost approximately \$100,000,000. The author's study is extending her circle of influence will be, in Mr. Norman's mind, that the Powers which have enormous interests at stake in the Far East, if they continue to sleep, as England has done of late, will wake to find a new, solid, impenetrable, self-sufficing Russia dominating China as she has dominated, sooner or later, every other Oriental land against whose frontier she has held her own.

Of all the great railway systems of Russia the Siberian railway, which runs from St. Petersburg to China, we have spoken. The other system, the Trans-Caspian, extends from the Black Sea to India. The political significance of these roads is just beginning to be realized, they are part, and a very essential part, of the net which Russia is throwing over Asia. Into this part of the Russian dominion we are then led, down the great

waterway of the Volga, on into the frosty Caucasus, traveling along the Gorgian Military Road, which connects Europe and Asia across the Caucasus, into Turkestan, the modern Babel, in which it is estimated not less than 20 languages are spoken, the meeting place of Europe and Asia, on to Baku, thence across the Caspian Sea to Krasnovodsk, the western terminus of the Trans-Caspian railway.

Six chapters are devoted to this important phase of the subject, Russia in Central Asia. Of these the one on Russian Expansion in Central Asia and the one on Administration in Central Asia are most valuable. The first step in Russian expansion in this territory is the extension of the railway system. This

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waterway of the Volga, on into the frosty Caucasus, traveling along the Gorgian Military Road, which connects Europe and Asia across the Caucasus, into Turkestan, the modern Babel, in which it is estimated not less than 20 languages are spoken, the meeting place of Europe and Asia, on to Baku, thence across the Caspian Sea to Krasnovodsk, the western terminus of the Trans-Caspian railway.

greatest factors in the movement and development of human society.

"All the Russias," by Henry Norman, M. P. New York: Scribner's. Price \$4. For sale by the J. R. Ewing Co.

"The Right Princess," by George Ade. It was with horror that the incautious reviewer, after carefully settling himself in front of the fire with "The Right Princess," discovered that it was a Christian Science tract. But there was no help for it; the chair was cozy and the book simply had to be read.

The first few pages went all right—in fact, some interest was awakened. Then a little Christian Science was broached, and the book was dropped. Again the thought came that it must be read, either in the present comfortable environment or under less favorable circumstances. So the distracted reviewer picked the volume up gingerly and he has just put it down for the last time.

The main thought that rings in one's mental ears after a perusal of "The Right Princess," is, How in the world did Mrs. Barnham manage to sugar the pill so delectably? Not experiencing any effects from the

George Ade's "The Girl Proposition," or a Bunch of His and She Fables, is a little wonderful, that is, it is not written by R. H. Russell, of New York, which clearly proves that George's stock of fresh slang has not yet become exhausted. These sketches are all on a subject that is dear to the mind of a frugal reader, though at times the afore-said reader would have a hard time finding it. The club-side woodcuts by Holme and McCutcheon would give a horrid hysteresis. ("The Girl Proposition," by George Ade. New York: R. H. Russell.)

"The Shadow of the Rope," by Mr. E. W. Hornung's serial story, published in the year in Munsey's Magazine under the title of "The Shadow of a Crime," has just appeared from Scribner's in book form as "The Shadow of the Rope." Mr. Hornung is famous for his "Amateur Cracksmen," "Raffles" stories, and his readers will prize his latest work with pleasure. ("The Shadow of the Rope," by E. W. Hornung. New York: Scribner's. Price, \$1.50. For sale by J. R. Ewing.)

"An Holmes," by Annie F. Johnston. "An Holmes, or At the Cross Roads," is the title of a little book of scenes of life at a country crossroads. It is by Annie F. Johnston, just published by Page & Co., of Boston. Entitled with the sketches of country life is a simple love story which makes the book doubly interesting. The volume is prettily gotten out and is worth the reading. ("An Holmes," by Annie F. Johnston. Boston: Page & Co. Price \$1.)

Children's Books. One of the most attractive children's books of the year is "Gulliver's Bird Book," made picturesque by L. J. Bridgman. The author is "The Voice of the Sea," as called by Mr. Bridgman, and in the book are recounted more strange adventures of the great traveler. Anyone interested in Gulliveriana should not fail to read this latest edition. The book is printed in