

Book Notes

BATTLE, murder and sudden death are outstanding features in "Unrecorded," by Mrs. R. S. Garnett. Piled with horrors is this book concerning victorious Lancastrians sacking and looting an English town. The unhappy heroine runs the gamut of woe, witnesses destruction of home, her parents are murdered, and she herself handed over to the infamy of Lord Vauncey and his men. As a portrayal of rough and brutal times in English history, the novel has something to recommend it. There is a flicker of possible romance of the more comfortable kind, when a brother of the infamous Vauncey enters upon the stage; but it is merely a passing ray amid the gloom, and the story leaves the impression that some at least of the "good old days" were periods of unrelieved tragedy and terror.

"**SOT**" is written by Leonid Leonov, who is acclaimed as a Russian genius in literature. Ingeniously translated, the novel has a foreword by Maxim Gorky, and an appendix crammed with essential information, without which study of the book would make heavier weather than it actually does. To English tastes the style is diffuse and overcrowded with detail, its interest lying in presentment of certain aspects of new Russia and the never-ending effort to co-ordinate with overwhelming organisation of the Five-Year Plan. The book takes its title from a river upon the banks of which, in place of a monastery, a paper factory is in course of erection, bringing in its train an army of workers with thousands of huts in which to camp. This part of the country, like the rest of Russia, has been revolutionised in its mode of life, but it would seem the worker is still entirely under the heel of his masters, and the world awaits the conclusion of the whole matter. Meantime, as a bright light on present-day conditions, the book by the Russian novelist is of considerable interest.

A NEW book by Virginia Woolf is eagerly welcomed by literary elect, and in "The Waves," which was published recently, her widening circle of disciples will find much pabulum with which to nourish admiration for bearded idol. In this latest excursion into fiction there are six characters, three of whom are men and three women. The method of disclosing plot, if it can be so designated, is that of soliloquy by each protagonist in turn. There is a writer, a meticulous-minded man of commerce who, strangely, is a poet at heart, Neville the scholar; while Eve's daughters are represented by the acutely-observed Susan, an example of age-old courtesan type, and Rhoda who suffers torture by fate's juggernaut until endurance is at an end. Mrs. Woolf's literary method is detached as of yore and often of exceeding beauty, her style in its metier being unrivalled.

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Prize Poem Competition

THE prize of half a guinea in the current competition is awarded to D.P. for the poem entitled "Sky Ways," which, belonging as it does to the romantic rather than intellectual form of expression, appeals in its awareness of beauty, actual and imagined, and finds expression in musical felicity of a high order. Quality of contributions sent in during the past fortnight has been so admirable that it is regretted space limitations permit publication of the prize-winner only. Arresting in freshness and originality is "The Station Homestead" (held for further consideration), in which "Beaumont," a new contributor, captures admiration by virtue of terse and charming simplicity of phraseology conveying vignette of typical New Zealand country.

"Daydream" rhymes with a naive and graceful facility "the deep shady dingle, the fern-bordered rill" of our own land.

G.F.: This contributor maintains high literary level already established by former work, and in "A Sonnet," with skilful manipulation of literary form chosen, expresses, like Shelley before him, his "devotion to something afar from the sphere of our sorrow."

V.S.J.'s lines exemplify beauty of rhythm and considerable felicity of metrical form, slightly marred by one or two unexpected grammatical oddities.

K.M.N. wanders in wistful country of the emotions, her poem breathing the haunting atmosphere of a benison bestowed.

"Love Song of the Lost": Strongly original, instinct with colour and fire.

"Ginger": Your very lovely "Nocturne" conveys with true touch a strangely beautiful impressionistic landscape.

"Francesca": Too, too untrammelled.

"Merely Mary Ann" sends tinkling lines that are pretty and pensive as her pictured prototype.

"Marmaduke" means well, and there it ends.

... Sky Ways ...

*There is a frail, ethereal land of wonder,
Where only caravans of winds may roam,
Among the purple cloud peaks of the thunder,
Along pale strands of dawn,
Where flooding day
Makes jewelled foam.*

*There are lagoons of evening,
Inlets of the sunset,
Spindrift of golden seas on cloudy bars,
Dark shoals awash with silver of the moonrise,
And still blue wastes of twilight
Flowered with stars.*

*Cloud bergs there are
That drift through seas of starlight,
Cloud coasts a-froth with moonlight,
Cloudy floes,
And far horizons chained with windrowed mountains
Flushed to rose.*

*Oh! for a dim dream galleon
To sail the sky always,
Following the swift tide of the day withdrawn,
Past sunset islands, into starlight, on
And then
Up some pale primrose inlet
Into the dawn!*

—D.P.

Cookery Notes

Broadcast by Mrs. Barrington

TRY this way of preparing a steak for grilling, it is excellent: First turn on the top element of your oven. Mince the steak, not too finely, season to taste, add some chopped onion and an egg, or just sufficient to aid in binding the meat. Form into flat cakes of convenient size, smear a little butter over if you like, and then grill in the ordinary way. Limberger steak I believe it is called.

Ginger Buns.

THESE little ginger buns are nice. Cream 3oz butter, add 2oz sugar, then a level tablespoon golden syrup. If you beat the spoon in boiling water and when you have dipped out, cut off the excess with a hot knife, the syrup will slide off the things without you having to scrape and becoming tangled up in long strings of syrup. Sift 6oz flour, a pinch of salt, half a teaspoon soda, 1 level teaspoon ginger. Add to the butter, etc., and put into deep patty holes. Place this about a third of the way from the top of the oven. Temperature no more than 400 degrees; and baked on stored heat only. These cook very quickly underneath, and it evens the baking better if they are placed well up, contrary to our usual habits.

Rusks.

THESE rusks are nice and should please those who like crisp things. Sift 1 cup of flour, 1 large teaspoonful baking powder, saltspoon salt, 1oz. sugar, brown for preference, then add 1 cup fine whole meal, or, if you have a packet of oat in hand, use that. It is very nice. Rub in 3oz. butter and mix with an egg and enough milk to make a dough you can roll lightly.

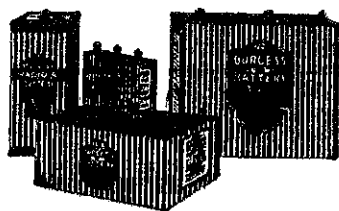
Roll fairly thin, cut out; oblong shapes are nice for this. Sometimes the shape makes more of a difference that is quite attractive. Place well apart on the tray, as the spaces will be required later. Place near the bottom of the oven, with perhaps the bottom and top elements both to low temperature, about 450 degrees. When half cooked, take out of the oven, break in two, and spread out on the tray the broken sides up. Place nearer the top of the oven and bake till nicely browned and dried well out.

Oysters in Breadcrumbs.

THESE are supposed to be served in individual dishes, but for one's own family, of course, each helping can be served from one general dish.

To a small carton of oysters allow about a cup and a half of breadcrumbs, freshly made. By that I really mean made from the inside of a loaf, not crusts which you have dried out in the oven. Soak in milk, just enough to be quite absorbed, add a piece of butter, about a dessertspoonful of salt, a good dash of pepper, and a little nutmeg. Heat this and stir. It becomes quite thick. Then add the oysters, prepared and cut up.

Butter a dish well, put in the mixture, sprinkle with more crumbs, and place under the grilling element until the top is nicely browned and the dish is well heated. This is better grilled in this way, as it should not bubble up in the reheating. Also, of course, it does away with the necessity of heating up the whole oven, if it is not already hot. The mixture then becomes quite creamy.



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