

The editor makes a significant remark. "If," he says, "the writers or compilers have erred from cold impartiality in the direction of sympathy with the common people, they and I have erred deliberately." And he adds, "*Non intratur in veritatem nisi per caritatem.*" Caritas is not always a characteristic of books of this sort, least of all perhaps when they claim a special solicitude for the common people. Mr. Eppstein must be congratulated on his continued achievement.

D.A.

RUSO-POLISH RELATIONS. By Serge Konovalov. (The Cresset Press; 4s.).

"Eastern Poland" is a case in which judgment has been given—if it be suitable to use legal terms in reference to a dispute which has now been resolved by the enforcement of sheer power, without adequate reference to the rights and wishes of the third party, the inhabitants of the territory concerned. In a sense, then, Professor Konovalov's study comes too late; it is deprived of some of its practical value: but its intrinsic usefulness and interest remain.

The book consists of an objective historical survey of the subject over nine hundred years, divided into thirty-six short sections, of which eighteen were written by the late Sir John Maynard, who originally undertook the work. As well as writing the other eighteen sections, Professor Konovalov has added seven appendices by way of documentation and six maps—two or three of which might well have been bigger and therefore clearer. Among the points illuminated are the historical significance of Russia's part in the Polish partitions of 1772-95 (the annexation of "Congress Poland" in 1815 was a very different affair) and the preceding partition of Russian territory by Sweden and Poland at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Here use is made of a very interesting article written by Lord Salisbury (then Lord Robert Cecil) in 1863.

It is a pity that Professor Konovalov does not give more information about the plebiscite conducted by the Soviet authorities in "Eastern Poland" in 1939, for it is a crucial point. Whether Poland's or Russia's claim be justified historically, if it be true that a majority of the inhabitants of the disputed area are closer ethnically (as a majority certainly is culturally) to the Russians than to the Poles, there still remains the question, Which rule, Polish or Russian, would a majority, large or small, of those people prefer to-day? Professor Konovalov does not attempt to answer that question; neither do I; neither, if you are wise, will you. In default of special and intimate knowledge we have no right to claim to answer that question positively: that is the right of the people concerned—and they have not been asked, at any rate in circumstances that beyond doubt provided for a free and unconstrained answer.

D.A.

THE BLACKBIRD OSPO, Stories of Yugo-Slavia. By J. F. Hendry. (Maclellan; 7s. 6d.).

It is not easy to give political problems the colour and shape of

the human situations they exemplify. Mr. Hendry's carefully observed stories of peasant life in the disputed territories of Venezia-Giula and Istria should, apart from their intrinsic interest of character and description, do much to make plain what a minority problem means in terms of *living*. He points no moral, but his method is the more effective for its moderation, and for its skill in allowing the clash between ancient tradition and ruthless power to appear at its most poignant level—among ordinary people, in small villages, doing their jobs. I.E.

VIGNY. Introduction et notes par Fernand Baldensperger.
(Classiques de l'Arbre: collection dirigée par Auguste Viatte.
Printed in Canada. Editions de l'Arbre).

Alfred de Vigny has never been properly appreciated in this country, and it is lamentable that, at a time when *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires* and *Stello* are capable of meaning as much to us as they ever will, they are unobtainable. This publication of selections is evidently to be our wartime ration of Vigny. While thankful that it partially fills a gap, I cannot but feel that the editor might have done well to forego the idea of presenting a historically representative selection of his author in a hundred pages and given us only what would be of immediate interest to us. Of the plays, only *Chatterton* is of much significance now; certainly the Shakespeare translations could profitably have been omitted. We might also have been spared the remembrance that in most of his novels and historical romances, Vigny descended to this:

. . . Cruel! ingrat! reprit son ami, pouvez-vous me parler ainsi? Ne savez-vous pas, ne ne vous ai-je pas prouvé que l'amitié tenait dans mon cœur la place de toute les passions? Puis-je survivre, non seulement à votre mort, mais même au moindre de vos malheurs? Cependant laissez-moi vous fléchir et vous empêcher de frapper la France. O mon ami! mon seul ami! je vous en conjure à genoux, ne soyons pas ainsi parricides, n'assassinons pas notre patrie! . . . "

In reading *Eloa*, we can understand Baudelaire's admiration for Vigny:

"Je suis celui qu'on aime et qu'on ne connaît pas.
Sur l'homme j'ai fondé mon empire de flamme
Dans les désirs du cœur, dans les rêves de l'âme,
Dans les liens des corps, attraités mystérieux,
Dans les trésors du sang, dans les regards des yeux . . .
Moi, j'ai l'ombre muette, et je donne à la terre
La volupté des soirs et les biens du mystère . . . "

But in spite of *Eloa* and *La Maison du Berger*, it is perhaps less as a poet than as the moralist of *Stello* and *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires* that Vigny lives. An interesting moralist is almost inevitably an interesting personality, and from M. Baldensperger's long introduction we can see that Vigny's life is no less significant to us than his work, for he was unique among the solitaires of