

Doctor Roy Temple House and "Books Abroad" are synonymous to the student of foreign literature. The quarterly volume, which is published by the University of Oklahoma Press, holds the distinction of being better known abroad than it is in this country. In England, Germany, France, Spain and in South American countries, "Books Abroad" is considered a remarkable publication. Doctor House, who is head of the department of modern languages, is one of the University's veteran faculty members and one of its most dearly beloved.

Starting the Tenth Year

BY DON GRAVES, '38

BOOKS ABROAD, international clearing house of literature, begins its tenth year of continuous publication with the January, 1936 issue. Produced in Oklahoma, a state that less than fifty years ago was inhabited only by partly civilized Indians and a few cattlemen and squatters, the magazine has gained a position high in the esteem of literary men the world over.

The fundamental nature of the magazine's contents and the make-up of its editorial personnel are without doubt the main reasons for its success. Established in January, 1927, by Roy Temple House, head of the University of Oklahoma foreign language department, to "promote international understanding by disseminating literary information," it may be called a world-wide counterpart of the *Readers' Digest*. *Books Abroad* "is a quarterly publication devoted to comment in English on foreign books and leading periodicals, and is published by the University of Oklahoma Press, publishing division of the university, in the months of January, April, July, and October."

Books Abroad started as a small thirty-two page pamphlet, set on a linotype machine and printed on book paper. At first it was distributed without charge to large libraries, language professors, and others who are interested in the literature of foreign countries.

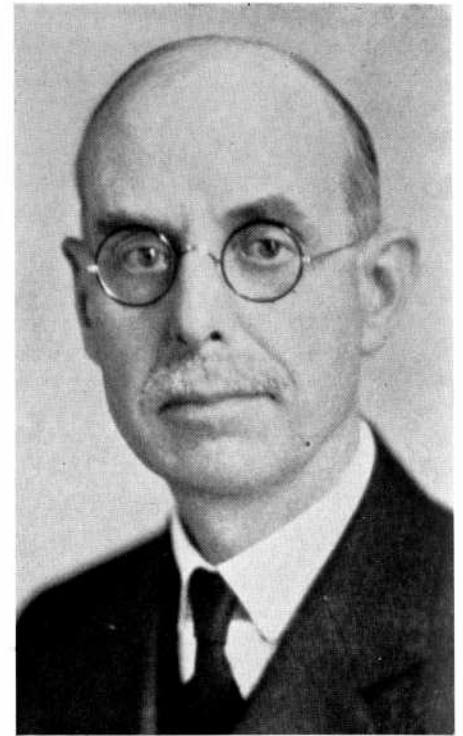
It now has a relatively small, but widely distributed circulation, going to forty nations as well as all over the United States.

Books Abroad is distinctly unusual in

at least three important respects besides that of its unique location:

1. Its sponsors operate, and its contributors write material for it without compensation, in order to further international understanding. As the literature of a nation influences, and is influenced by, the thought of its people, so a knowledge of the literature helps in comprehending underlying causes of social and political attitudes. Thus *Books Abroad* reflects national thoughts and trends.

University faculty members contribute many articles of value merely as a sideline of their work. Besides Doctor House, the editorial board includes Doctor Kenneth C. Kaufman, editor associated with Doctor House, and professor of modern foreign languages, who is also literary editor of the *Daily Oklahoman* and is an extremely able critic; J. A. Brandt, managing editor, who was a Rhodes scholar, and has written a number of noteworthy things, including a political history of modern Spain; Savoie Lottinville, business manager; J. D. McCoid, circulation manager; Stephen Scatori, W. A. Willibrand, L. E. Winfrey, Maurice Halperin, associate editors; Patricio Gimeno, and Mrs. Frances Durst of Oklahoma City, staff artists; and eighteen contributing editors. With the exception of Mrs. Durst and the eighteen contributing editors, the entire staff is comprised of University of Oklahoma faculty members. The contributing editors are scattered over the United States, and in Europe and South America. George Bernard Shaw, Upton Sinclair, Carl Van Doren,



and Henry Van Dyke are among the long list of the magazine's occasional writers.

2. *Books Abroad* is the first and only magazine of its kind in the world, reviewing all language books, and is the only medium which is in such close touch with the world's literature and intellectual thought.

3. It is an entirely catholic journal. It is "neither cold nor hot" on political questions. The magazine reviews books on both sides of major issues with a sincere attempt to be perfectly fair.

The third point strongly reflects the character of the person who is at the head of *Books Abroad*. Doctor House is a widely read man, and his associates say he is one of the best informed, most sympathetic men of letters in this country in so far as European literature is concerned. He was for years the principal contributor on European books in the *New York Herald Tribune's* section entitled "Books," and still submits an occasional review.

Doctor House's name has appeared in the *American Who's Who* since 1908. He was born on a sheep ranch in Lexington, Nebraska, on May 26, 1878, was educated at Miami University in Ohio, and received his Ph. D. degree in 1917 from the University of Chicago. He has taught foreign languages since 1903. "I was never interested in any profession except the study of foreign languages," he said. He was a member of Herbert Hoover's commission for relief in Belgium stationed at Brussels, from January

to June, 1916, serving as custodian and head translator in care of all official documents, and was decorated with the Medaille du Roi Albert (Belgian) in 1920. "I really didn't deserve the medal," Doctor House remarked with a smile. "But it was free, so I accepted it."

Doctor House was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, by the French government, last summer. "I don't know what that was for either, but you don't hear of many people turning down honors; so I took that, too."

"During the larger part of 1918 I was stationed at Fort Sill, trying to teach the soldiers a little French. With the aid of some amateur French teachers, we managed to teach one group something, but for the most part, it was a pretty hopeless task. Illiteracy in the army was high, and of course you can't teach a foreign language to men who can't speak their own."

Doctor House has edited a collection of three short French comedies, and several language text books, histories, critical articles, book reviews, and translations. "I have tried my hand at writing almost every kind of thing, from articles on religious subjects for religious publications, to supposedly witty verses for

such magazines as *Judge* and *Puck*. As editor of *Books Abroad* I am a sort of general handy man, reviewing books in four or five languages. Reading is a hobby with me as well as a profession; so much so that I have time for very little else."

Recently, Doctor House was chosen to be editor of articles on French subjects, in the next publication of the World Book Encyclopedia.

A humorous feature written by Doctor House, entitled "Professor B. Sooner," ran continuously in the *Daily Oklahoman* for some time, several years ago. Professor B. Sooner was represented as an eccentric old gentleman who made random comment on things in general, taking an occasional swat at politics. "That was a mistake," Doctor House observed. "A man in public service should stay away from political comment." Someone drew a caricature of the mythical Professor Sooner, and a picture of the professor is now included among the wall murals of the Copper Kettle.

Doctor House has been a member of the University of Oklahoma faculty for 24 years, and has a reputation for long hours of work. He has not missed a class in 35 years of teaching.

put the towel back over his face and reclined slowly.

"Yeh," he said, "I guess there's something in that."

A couple of philosophers were engaged in a discussion of the wonders of the world during the recent educational conference on the campus.

The topic of conversation shifted from the quaint antics of man to the quaint antics of fish. Doctor Howard O. Eaton of the University philosophy department was telling Doctor Radoslav A. Tsanoff, head of the philosophy department at Rice Institute, about fishing along the Gulf of Mexico.

The scene was the billiard room in the basement of the Faculty club and the two were catching a smoke between formal hand-shakes.

"There's real fishing down there," Doctor Eaton declared.

Doctor Radoslav flicked an ash to the floor and waited for him to go on.

"The sharks in the Gulf often lead the fish a merry chase," he continued. "At times, all a fisherman has to do is walk along the sandy beach with his fish basket under his arm. The sharks chase the fish around the gulf until in self protection they jump up onto the beach. It keeps you busy picking them up before they jump back."

Doctor Tsanoff blinked a skeptical eye and smiled.

"I've heard fish stories like that," he said, "from old dyed-in-the-wool fisherman. But never yet have I heard such a story told as the truth by a reputable philosopher."

Doctor Eaton spent the next half hour trying to convince him it was the truth.

"The French revolution wrote insulting letters to the American revolution," was what the student wrote on her examination paper.

It perplexed the professor, so he called her in and asked, "What do you mean by 'the French revolution wrote insulting letters to the American revolution?' That doesn't make sense."

"But that's what you said in your lecture, professor," the student protested.

"I said that in a lecture, that one revolution wrote insulting letters to another?" he said.

"Yes, That's what you said, and I have it right here in my notes."

"Well, I'd like to see it. It doesn't make sense, and I don't believe I ever said it."

The student thumbed through her notebook, singled out the lecture dealing with the revolutions and pushed it in his face.

"See, here is what you told us," she insisted triumphantly. "You said, the French revolution corresponded in a rough way with the American revolution. So there."

Barber Shop Blues

(SOONERLAND TOPICS)

KING GEORGE PRICE, Soonerland's new assistant director of athletics, has brought an enthusiasm to the campus that has been missing for a number of years.

For Mr. Price works hard at his job, and almost every person he contacts, he meets as a potential customer to Sooner sports events. There is no "come on down to see the Sooners play if you want, and if you don't want to you can jump in the lake" about Mr. Price's attitude.

Just before the football season closed, Mr. Price had occasion to be in Stillwater making arrangements for the Sooner-Aggie game. He found, during his visit there, that he was in need of a shave, so he took himself to the nearest barber shop.

Stretched out at full length, a hot towel

coiled about his face, Mr. Price asked from underneath, "Going down to the Sooner-Aggie football game?"

The barber, as most barbers do, had very definite opinions about the game.

"No," he barked. "I should say not."

"What's the matter?" asked Mr. Price from underneath the towel.

"What do I want to go down there for? The Aggies are going to get beat this year. And if there's anything I don't like it's to see those Sooners beat the Aggies. Why, I hate those fellows down at Norman like poison. The bums. I'd like to get my hands on one of them."

Mr. Price sat up, removing the towel from his face. The barber stood over him, sharpening a straight-edge razor savagely.

Mr. Price swallowed with difficulty,