

B O O K S

C. A. Macartney: "Hungary and Her Successors. The Treaty of Trianon and its consequences." Oxford University Press. London. New York. Toronto 1937. Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Mr. C. A. Macartney, the well-known British scholar and historian who wrote a book on Hungary as far back as 1934 — with which book the "Danubian Review" dealt exhaustively in the issue for February—March, 1936 —, has recently published a big volume — entitled "Hungary and the Succession States" — offering the British public detailed information on the subject. The book contains a vast mass of data; and the author, apart from revealing an enormous store of historical knowledge, — and apart from presenting first-rate arguments, — has in the work under review (and this circumstance lends the book a peculiar importance) based his deductions on *personal* experience — on convictions and opinions which he acquired *in person* both in Hungary and in the regions severed from that country.

By way of introduction the book offers a pragmatic history of the Greater Hungary of pre-War days. The author's historical description of Hungary is a faithful and unbiassed one. The only objection we have to raise — though that objection is a serious one — is that the writer deals with the nationality policy pursued by Hungary in the nineteenth century practically exclusively in the spirit of Dr. Seton-Watson's works, — or rather that in that part of his introduction which treats of this subject he takes over bodily the conclusions arrived at by Seton-Watson in four of his books. As is well known, Professor Seton-Watson made it the chief aim of his life to bring about the overthrow of Hungary; and indeed he succeeded in achieving his object, seeing that the ruthless and persistent literary campaign inspired by prejudice which the Professor carried on for years against Hungary was very largely responsible for the one-sided and unfair treatment to which Hungary was subjected by the Powers which won the Great War. Since then Hungarian scientific literature has succeeded in refuting the many erroneous and tendentious statements made by Seton-Watson. It is true, indeed, — and it is very unfortunate — that most of the relevant Hungarian works have not been published also in world languages; nevertheless, it is to be regretted that Macartney should rather uncritically have given

credence to certain biased conclusions originally drawn by Seton-Watson.

A point very much to the credit of Mr. Macartney's book is the frank and uncompromising method adopted by the author in revealing in their naked reality the malicious perversions and the deliberate falsifications which the politicians of the subsequent Succession States employed for the purpose of misleading the Peace Conference and thereby paving the way for the unjust treatment meted out to Hungary. In his objective description of all these events Mr. Macartney offers a classical example of British *fair play*.

After the historical introduction already referred to Mr. Macartney takes in order the several territories severed from Hungary and writes individual studies on Burgenland, Slovakia, Ruthenia, Transylvania, the Voivodina, Croatia and Fiume. He offers an exhaustive geographical and historical survey of all the territories severed from Hungary; he describes the present economic situation of the inhabitants and compares that situation with the state of things in force prior to the change of rule; he devotes separate sections to each territory when discussing the treatment meted out to the minorities by the present rulers; and in conclusion expresses an opinion as to whether — and to what extent — there is any likelihood of a territorial revision in favour of Hungary? He then describes the condition of Dis-membered Hungary too and summarises the results of his observations.

Space does not permit of our dealing separately with the various sections of the work. We cannot, however, omit discussing briefly the final conclusions arrived at by the author.

Mr. Macartney establishes the fact that the economic situation has greatly deteriorated in Slovakia and even more so in Ruthenia. Nor has there been any improvement of the economic situation in the other severed territories either. The author notes that the treatment of the Hungarian minorities in the Succession States is generally speaking of a revolting character: that treatment is least intolerable in Czecho-Slovakia, but in Rumania it is absolutely barbarian and arbitrary. He stresses in particular the point that the other minorities are being oppressed too, though not by any means to the same extent as the Hungarians. He lays special emphasis on the endeavours being made by the Czechs to absorb the Slovaks. However, — so the author tells us —, notwithstanding the fact that in the Succession States even those minorities which are racially akin to the ruling majorities are being oppressed too, during the period of nearly twenty years that has elapsed since the change of régime the longing felt by the nationalities for re-incorporation in Hungary has considerably abated. According to Mr. Macartney in pre-War days only the Croatians and the Rumanians of Transylvania showed any desire

to be severed from Hungary. The Germans, Slovaks and Ruthenians and even the Serbs of Hungary had no wish whatsoever for a separation; all they desired were certain concessions; and he (Mr. Macartney) believes that if a proper plebiscite had been held at the time in the territories which it was proposed to sever from Hungary, in all the territories outside Croatia and Transylvania the majority would have decided to remain incorporated in Hungary. Today — so Mr. Macartney believes — a plebiscite would show a different result. For — he says — the non-Magyar inhabitants of the severed territories have tasted the sweets of power, while since the separation from Hungary there has been a vigorous advance in respect of national self-consciousness. Nevertheless — so he believes — in Ruthenia, Southern and Eastern Slovakia, in the northern districts of the Banate and the "Bácska" region, and in the districts of Hungary proper severed from that country in combination with Transylvania, a plebiscite would still in all probability show a majority in favour of re-incorporation with Hungary.

Mr. Macartney, however, believes that the present predominance of chauvinistic nationalism will prevent Hungary having any prospect of recovering her full territorial integrity. Yet he considers partial frontier re-adjustments absolutely necessary, — a result which he believes Hungary will undoubtedly attain, though he is of the opinion that autonomy will have to be granted to the non-Magyar nationalities living in the territories to be recovered.

Mr. Macartney believes that the intermixture of nationalities in the territory of pre-War Hungary is so great that it is quite impossible to demarcate absolutely just frontiers on the basis of the national principle or indeed of any other principles. However, seeing that Nature created the territory of pre-War Hungary — the Hungary ringed round by the Carpathians — as a perfect geographical and economic unit, the wisest and most lasting solution of the problem of the Danube Valley and Hungary would be to form out of the territory of pre-War Hungary an Eastern Switzerland based on the principle of equality of nationalities in which each several nationality would find a national home and be able to maintain its national liberty. The author believes that the natural forces impelling the inhabitants of this unit to strive for a union must ultimately triumph, the several peoples living in that territory being prevailed upon to realise that their symbiosis is feasible and at the same time to understand that this is the only possible way for them to live. Mr. Macartney believes therefore that "if she (meaning of course pre-War Hungary) did not exist, it would be necessary to invent her".

Dr. George de Lukács.