

RUSSIAN MEMORIES. By Madame Olga Novikoff. Dutton; \$3.50.

Madame Novikoff's strong reassertion of the might and the right of Russian imperialism strikes a startling note in the revolutionary atmosphere of to-day. She is said to have been in great part responsible for the Anglo-Russian alliance of the present war. It was a peaceful alliance she strove for during forty years, but she is none the less satisfied that a common foe should have brought the two countries to a closer understanding. Her activities won from Disraeli the doubtful compliment implied in the title "The M. P. for Russia in England." Of a more friendly nature was the praise bestowed upon her by Carlyle, Kinglake, and Froude, as well as by Gladstone, who took her side during the tide of Turkish feeling in England during the '70's.

At the time of the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria, her brother, Nicholas Kiréeff, arming himself with relief money and hospital materials, hastened to do his bit in behalf of the southern Slavs. Becoming fired with enthusiasm for their cause, he joined the Serbian ranks as an officer, and was shot in the first charge. His fame immediately spread; he was acclaimed a hero throughout Russia and the Balkans; and thousands followed his example as volunteers. But to his sister's distraught mind it was England that had killed him. "It is England," she wrote, "who prevents our Government from helping our brethren in the Balkans." Upon reflection, she saw that the remedy for such blunders in the

future would be a better understanding between her country and England, and to this end she devoted all her energies, her unfailing charm, and her capacity for sympathy and comprehension. At a time when Lord Beaconsfield and the larger part of England were speaking in the highest terms of their ally, Abdul Hamid, "whose every impulse is good," her self-imposed mission was none of the lightest; nor was Disraeli's epithet the most discourteous she received. The period was one of which modern Englishmen are little likely to boast, so that some of her retrospective bitterness is perhaps unnecessary. Her "Memories" include, besides political material, reminiscences of the musicians and writers of the day, and of other prominent men and women in the two countries. Since it is a chapter of national life that is perhaps closed, it gains in interest at this time. The author has apparently spent little time on the ordered preparation of her book, but her manner of writing is invariably engaging and intelligent.