

# BOOKS AND BOOKMEN

## Unimpressive Young Man Became Leading Statesman

GARNER OF TEXAS, by Bascom N. Timmons; Harper & Bros., New York; \$3.

Pat Dunn, Nueces rancher and political leader, was introduced to an undersized, unprepossessing young man in a limp seersucker suit in the lobby of the Tremont Hotel at Galveston in 1903. He was disconcerted to discover that this unimpressive youngster was the man he was supporting for Congress, sight unseen.

"The next time you ask me to support a man," he complained to Judge James B. Wells, "you'll not get a commitment out of me until I have seen him first!"

But when John Nance Garner walked into the House of Representatives on Nov. 9 of that year and took a back seat in that historic body, one of the longest and most interesting careers in American politics was under way. Now rich in years, honors and experience, Texas' most distinguished elder statesman was again in the nation's headlines recently when President Truman stopped off in Uvalde for breakfast and a chat.

Bascom N. Timmons is especially well equipped to write this personal biography of John Garner. As a Washington correspondent, Timmons saw and covered the events most pertinent to the Garner story. As a close personal friend he knew from first hand the many developments, moves and counter-moves that made the headlines of the day. He has drawn heavily and carefully from this prime source to produce an interesting and accurate account of a period that is among the most important in U. S. history.

John Garner was born in a mud-chinked log cabin in 1868. He studied law at Vanderbilt, but poor eyesight ended his formal education. He "read law" and was admitted to the bar at 21. In 1892 poor health made a move West necessary and young Garner settled in Uvalde. He had \$151.60. His first earnings in his new home came not from the law—but the poker table.

In well-written chapters, Biographer Timmons records how the young man became established, worked his way up through courthouse and newspaper to the House of Representatives.

Most of the book is devoted,



JOHN NANCE GARNER.

necessarily, to Garner's long service in Congress. Through the first World War, when Garner acted as President Wilson's "contact man," the story goes to the Democratic convention that nominated Franklin Roosevelt. The years as vice president and the break with the "New Deal" are fully told. Students will find the whole account most valuable.—AMOS MELTON.

## 'Tolstoy as I Knew Him' Picture of Russia

TOLSTOY AS I KNEW HIM, by Tatyana A. Kuzminskaya. The Macmillan Company, New York; \$5.

Believing that "it is only from books written by Russians and for Russian readers that Americans can obtain an adequate understanding of the Russian's conception of citizenship, of the Soviet Constitution, of the role of the state, of Russian life and culture," the American Council of Learned Societies is endeavoring to make available to the American public "the best and most representative volumes of contemporary Russian literature."

"Tolstoy as I Knew Him" is one of the books chosen. It is