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RECENT NORWEGIAN ACQUISITIONS
IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

Alexander M. Cain

Because of the traditional connections between Scotland and Norway, the National Library of Scotland has long thought it appropriate to maintain strong Norwegian collections.

Contemporary Norwegian literature is in a very flourishing state, and the difficulty for any library not possessed of unlimited funds is to select. As Mr Holland pointed out in an article in the previous number of Northern Studies, the Library is cautious about acquiring the works of new authors until they have proved themselves.

However, a number of new authors have made their appearance in our collections. The feminist Liv Kjøltzow has a volume of short stories, "Øyet i treet"; Leif Bryde Lillegaard has a novel "Draugen: en hverdagstragedie", set on the west coast of Norway; other new novelists include

Steinar Lem, Erling Pedersen, Øystein Lonn and Ketil Bjørnstad.

Some established writers make their appearance among the new accessions: selected poems of André Bjerke, under the title "Sol, måne og elleve stjerner"; and in contrast with Bjerke's basic conservatism, there are the collected poems of Claes Gill, one of the forerunners of lyrical modernism, strongly influenced by Eliot and Yeats. Another poet who has published a selection of his poems is Nils Brantzeg, "Ord mellom oss."

It would seem that new plays are rarely published in Norway. It is interesting therefore to come across "Glassberget", by Tor Åge Bringsvaerd, more famous as Norway's most distinguished writer of science fiction.

Republication of earlier works, generally in paperback format, allows the Library to fill in gaps in its holdings. Some titles are still required to complete our holdings of Tarjei Vesaas, considered by many to be the greatest name in Norwegian poetry in the post-war years; but now we have acquired "Fuglane", originally published in 1957; the realistic "Rød haust" of Magnhild Haalke, which originally appeared in 1941, a story of a young woman whose life is ruined by her duty towards her parents; the very popular Mikkjel Fønhus, whose "Skoggangsmann" (1917) is typical in its descriptions of life in the Norwegian forests; another part of Kristoffer Uppdal's epic series of novels about the growth of the Norwegian working-classes, this time "Kongen", from 1920. Agnar Mykle's "Rubicon", has at last turned up, possibly the best-known contemporary Norwegian novelist with the translation of his succes de scandale about Ask Burlefot.

And from an earlier period still there is a novel by Matti Aikio, Norway's first Lapp author, "I dyreskind", originally published in 1906, a lively, realistic description of everyday life among the Lapps. Adding to our collection of Gabriel Scott, we have a first edition of his first novel, "Aftenrøde" (1896).

Yngvar Ustvedt has brought out a series of "interviews" with Norwegian authors from Holberg to Gill entitled "På klingen". Odd Eidem has a further volume of his "flanerier" called "Flaskepost". And Sigurd Kolsrud contributes to the language debate with "Nynorsken i sine malfore."

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by

A Member

Early one late November morning on Waverley Bridge in Edinburgh a number of Scandophiles were converging on a small brown bus which was to carry them over the Border and far away. Their number was sadly diminished by an outbreak of an unspecified Asian virus which confined some potential travellers to their beds and their books. The brown bus scurried round - alas in vain - to transport these unfortunates who had been lain low. The weather being fine the gallant (and healthy) enjoyed a picturesque and splendidly lit journey over the hills as far as the ancient limes of Scotland, wisely set by the Imperial