

Diary, 1901-1969

Kornei Chukovsky

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A perceptive literary critic, a world-famous writer of witty and playful verses for children, a leading authority on children's linguistic creativity, and a highly skilled translator, Kornei Chukovsky was a complete man of letters. As benefactor to many writers including Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Joseph Brodsky, he stood for several decades at the center of the Russian literary milieu. It is no exaggeration to claim that Chukovsky knew everyone involved in shaping the course of twentieth-century Russian literature. His voluminous diary, here translated into English for the first time, begins in prerevolutionary Russia and spans nearly the entire Soviet era. It is the candid commentary of a brilliant observer who documents fifty years of Soviet literary activity and the personal predicament of the writer under a totalitarian regime. From descriptions of friendship with such major literary figures as Anna Akhmatova and Isaac Babel to accounts of the struggle with obtuse and hostile censorship, from the heartbreaking story of the death of the daughter who had inspired so many stories to candid political statements, the extraordinary diary of Kornei Chukovsky is a unique account of the twentieth-century Russian experience.



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