

THE PARADE'S GONE BY. By Kevin Brownlow. Univ. of Calif., 1976. 593 pp. \$9.95

The author's interviews with 1920s film stars, directors, producers, and others bring back the movies' Silent Era through oral history intelligently recorded in the 1960s. Brownlow is an English film-maker born in 1938 who began collecting silent films at the age of 11. He supplements his own work with reportage from early issues of *Photoplay*, a movie magazine he credits with being as tough-minded about Hollywood as *Variety* is about the entertainment industry in general. His argument is that silent feature films showed greater artistic development, particularly in lighting, staging, and direction, than did subsequent sound films.

RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES. Collected by Aleksandr Afanas'ev. Pantheon, 1976. 663 pp. \$5.95

The tales in this collection began to appear in 1866 and were soon staples of the Russian child's bookshelf. They also became a monument of 19th-century ethnography and provided the occasion for Vladimir Propp's milestone linguistics studies (1928). These stories (of the ambitious mayoress, the "snotty" goat who turned into a handsome youth and married the girl, princes and peasants and crystal mountains) were first published here in 1945 and are now available in a reprint of the 1975 hardcover edition. They are doubly welcome: because of what they say about Russian popular culture and because their magic, violence, and action make them as exciting to modern children as anything on TV.

THE LIFE AND DESTINY OF ISAK DINESEN. [Photographs] collected and edited by Frans Lasson. Text by Clara Svendsen. Univ. of Chicago, 1976. 227 pp. \$8.95

Not the average family's photograph album, this annotated collection, published in cloth in 1970, traces the odyssey of Baroness Karen Blixen (1885-1962), the Danish novelist and humanitarian known as Isak Dinesen. Blixen's constrained girlhood, disastrous marriage, recurring illnesses, 17 exhausting and exhilarating years in Kenya, and struggle to become a successful writer are described in vignettes accompanying over 200 pictures. Despite her experience of life as painful and tragic, Blixen never bowed to her family's counsel, "One must resign oneself to the inevitable," nor to Denmark's apathy toward her work. She persevered to produce *Seven Gothic Tales*, *Out of Africa*, *Winter's Tales*, *Shadows on the Grass*, and other stories, many of them published first in English.

DOCUMENTARY EXPRESSION AND THIRTIES AMERICA. By William Stott. Oxford reprint, 1976. 361 pp. \$4.50

Not since Alfred Kazin's *On Native Grounds* (1942) has the American cultural and literary scene been so successfully synthesized as in this guide to the art, writing, films, photographs, and broadcasts of the 1930s. Stott's thesis is that all of these forms of expression are essentially "documentary" because "each is, or is assumed to be, actually true." He awards highest honors to James Agee and Walker Evans for *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.