

great difficulty that faced him was the distribution of space between different periods and different phases of the subject. To a specialist in the history of the first century A.D. it would undoubtedly be a surprise to find one short chapter only devoted to the Julian and Claudian dynasties. But even a specialist will have to admit that Rostovtzeff is right. He points out the fact that the successors of Augustus felt that they were rulers simply as the inheritors of the popularity, authority, and divinity of Augustus. In the long history of Rome their importance does not bulk large although the temptation for the historian to dwell on the dramatic story of that period is great. Here as elsewhere the sanity and restraint of these volumes is conspicuous. The handling of questions of commerce, agriculture, and manufacture, in fact of the whole social and economic side is thorough and sure without burdening the narrative. In fact it is hard to overstate the ability with which the account of events themselves is blended with the exposition of their causes. The treatment of the religious life is conspicuously successful in this respect.

It must be confessed that what has gone before reads like a eulogy of this "History of the Ancient World" but when a masterpiece of historical literature is also a book approximating mechanical perfection, and when one can discover not more than two or three slight errors in the text, it is hard to do anything but yield it the most unreserved praise and to recommend it confidently to each and every reader.

Civilization à Rebours

DEMONIALITY. By LUDOVICO MARIA SINISTRARI, FRIAR MINOR. Translated into English from the Latin (with Introduction and Notes) by the REV. MONTAGUE SUMMERS. London: The Fortune Press. 1927.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF WITCHCRAFT. By MONTAGUE SUMMERS. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927.

Reviewed by S. FOSTER DAMON

TODAY witchcraft is generally believed to have been a barbarous rationalization of the unknown, which occasional cases of hysteria could rouse into epidemics of mob-delusion. As long as these attacks were accounted for on a theory of supernatural malignity, the epidemics could not be stopped or even controlled,—sure proof of a false theory; but once that theory was dropped, witchcraft vanished as suddenly and completely as an evil dream. "Witches" exist today; but they are promptly removed by psychopathic hospitals, where only the doctors heed their ravings.

Such, however, is not the thesis of the Rev. Montague Summers, in his "Geography of Witchcraft," a complementary volume to his recent "History of Witchcraft," in the series "The History of Civilization," edited by C. K. Ogden. The Rev. Mr. Summers insists that the Church Fathers and the witch-baiters were right, and the doctors wrong. He adopts the position of the modern Spiritists: that where there was so much smoke, there *must* have been some fire—that surely in all that mass of acknowledged fraud and delusion, there must have been *something* true; and on this slender supposition he bases his faith. He defends this faith with a vigorous if indiscriminating display of invective, which serves the turn of argument; and his accounts of men hitherto universally commended for their brave opposition to the hideous delusion of the multitudes, are indeed original. Reginald Scot, who published a famous book to prove that evil spirits worked chiefly by deluding their victims, "was utterly without imagination, a very dull, narrow, and ineffective little soul." John Webster, who published a yet more famous and powerful book to prove that levitation and physical compacts with the Devil were nonsense, is thus briefly dismissed: "In any case, the man was a crass rationalist, a muddled materialist, whose conclusions are hardly worth consideration." Robert Calef, the first American to publish a book against witchcraft, fares equally badly:

He was a man of sceptical and unbelieving mind, whose incredulity went to the same extremes as the fanaticism of the Salem ministers and magistrates. He may perhaps be described as an American Reginald Scot, ready to accept the most far-fetched explanations of events not easily to be accounted for in an ordinary way. It is obvious that when he interviewed Tituba the cunning hag told him just what he wanted to hear. Tituba, one of those responsible for starting the Salem scare, had told him that her master beat her to make her confess!

Indeed, the whole chapter on New England al-

most passes belief for its double virulence, theological and geographical. The Puritans are described as "well primed in every malevolent superstition that could commend itself to their verjuiced and tortured minds," but the Rev. Mr. Summers makes not the slightest acknowledgment that these "muddled, morbid minds and tortured souls" found a mere twenty-eight victims in an entire century (as contrasted with the hundreds in England and the thousands on the Continent); that the great Salem Scare collapsed in but a year; that Massachusetts was the first place in the world to stop executions, and even trials, for witchcraft; that the abolition of "spectral evidence," followed by the public penitence of Judge Sewall, gave the European reformers something to work on. No, no: we learn instead that the Puritans "blundered woefully and abundantly." One might think that the very paucity of material would make the chapter rather slender; but the Rev. Mr. Summers transcribes various trials at great length, quite without digestion, and then pads out his accounts with other cases from all over the world.

To the charge of prejudice we must add that of ignorance of his subject. He speaks of "the few historians of Salem Witchcraft," mentioning the two Uphams, Longfellow, Lowell, and Calef; to these we may add Hutchinson and the two Mathers, from whom he quotes elsewhere; but we cannot say how he came to miss Allen, Archer, Beard, Burr, Cheever, Davis, Drake, Endicott, Fiske, Fowler, Freeman, Gill, Goodell, Gummere, Hale, Kimball, Kirtledge, Lawson, Marshall, Maule, Moore, Mudge, Nevins, Newhall, Noble, Perley, Poole, Putnam, Spofford, Stone, Taylor, Thacher, Ward, Wendell, Wentworth, Willard, and Woodward.

His conclusion is quite his own: he insists "that a coven of witches did indeed exist in Salem is proved beyond all question, and it is, I think, equally certain that George Burroughs was the grand-master, Bridget Bishop and Martha Carrier, high officials. . . . The existence of this coven at Salem has not, I believe, been before recognized." No, it has not, since 1693. The poor Puritans were right for once!

But if we wish to learn what the Rev. Mr. Summers approves of, we must consult his translation of Ludovico Maria Sinistrari's "Demoniality." Sinistrari d'Ameno was "a famous Franciscan theologian," according to the Foreword, although his name does not even occur once throughout the Catholic Encyclopedia or the Encyclopedia Britannica, unless their indices are defective. He is also referred to as a keen psychologist in the hearty Introduction, though his book would seem to prove the exact contrary. This book (there is an earlier English translation published at Paris) is classed by booksellers with the "facetiae" and by librarians as "folk-lore." It deals with the demons who trouble sleep with indecent dreams; and the good friar spares no details in his discussion of their physiology. Of course, some dreams are merely diabolic delusions; "but this is not always the case," for among the resultant children were "that damnable Heresiarch yclept Martin Luther," Plato, and Merlin. All authorities, says Sinistrari, agree that to beget his children the Demon resuscitates a corpse; but here Sinistrari ventures to disagree—the body is surely the Demon's own. The classification of the crime of having so dreamed is discussed at length; the detail is rich and absolutely unquotable here. Witchcraft and sorcery are also dealt with. The "frank confession" of the Sorcerer is essential, but torture may be used under various circumstances.

"Perhaps," comments the translator, "there are some superficial errors, but nothing of moment"; and he expresses himself as "willing to accept, with certain minor reservations" the thesis of the book, at least "until it has been theologically disproved."

To insist that the negative prove its case is the flouting of one of the fundamental laws of argumentation ("he who affirms must prove") and is the great stronghold of the Spiritists. To reduce these principalities, powers, and spiritual wickednesses in the high places to merely another set of beings also inhabiting this world, seems to be an act of the dullest materialism. The Rev. Mr. Summers's position—that he believes because it is *not* impossible—suffers by comparison with Tertullian's magnificent "*credo quia impossibile*." One can add nothing except that we can see no good come of the reissue of this indecent book, except the vast laughter of the pure-minded among heretic and faithful together.

In the Great Tradition

THE MAIN STREAM. By STUART SHERMAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

MR. SHERMAN'S death at the age of forty-six was a loss to American literature in more than one respect. He was brilliant, original, aggressive, but with the background of a scholar, which keeps, or should keep, a man forever unsatisfied with being only brilliant, original, and up-to-date. At first, if not as conservative as Messrs. Brownell, Babbitt, and More, he was very critical of, and on the whole in vigorous opposition to, much of our new schools and tendencies. He clashed sharply with the iconoclasts. Later there was discernible and growing in his successive volumes, first an interest in, then a discriminating sympathy with, more and more of those tendencies. He was becoming, with other men such as Mr. Van Doren and Mr. Canby, an intermediary between the old and the new, an independent intelligence picking its preferences. There was nowhere in America in the nineteenth century any continuous current of good literary criticism comparable to the movement of it in the several European capitals, but during the last ten years in New York there has been something of the kind, and Mr. Sherman was one of its leaders. His weekly article in the *Herald Tribune's Books* was a weekly event.

The essays in the present volume were all among those weekly articles, nominally reviews. They are lifted by their quality to the dignity of critiques; and yet the comparison of them with his earlier work, written under other conditions, reinforces the doubt one feels about the effect on a man's intellectual life and upon his output of such a clamorously insistent task. These essays are, on the whole, thinner than the others; the taint of mortality is on them. How shall one meet the recurring demand and yet never be forced, hurried, and hence perfunctory? Sainte-Beuve did it. His immortality rests on his Monday "Causeries," not on his poetry, or his great "History of Port Royal." He lived for years in monastic devotion to his weekly article. He entered his cell Tuesdays and emerged Monday mornings. His manner and method ought to be studied by every critic with a similar task. He never lost his poise, his style, his "form." In order to work fast and keep going, without losing quality, one must have a good manner and method, and then achieve security in the use of it. He had his prejudices, or convictions, or something in the nature of principles. Mr. Sherman had his. Criticism is public discussion of things of the mind, and we want it done by men whose mentality is worth our contact. New York has not yet any such background of intellect and culture as Paris had seventy-five years ago. French literature has had, more than others, an adequate criticism to go with its creative output. The death of Mr. Sherman means something gone, of which we have more than we once had, but not enough to make us unaware of the loss.

George Macaulay Trevelyan was recently appointed Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. This Chair was founded by George I, and among those occupying it have been the poet, Thomas Gray, and Charles Kingsley of "Westward Ho" fame. Of historians to hold the Chair, the more recent were Lord Acton and Professor Bury.

Robert de Flers, member of the French Academy and one of the most distinguished literary men of France, died recently at the age of fifty-five. He began his career as a journalist, and later became a playwright.

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China Through Gallic Eyes

IN CHINA. By ABEL BONNARD. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. \$5.

Reviewed by FELIX MORLEY

IT is interesting evidence of an over-developed "news sense" among publishers that this notable book, printed in France several years ago under the title "En Chine," should have escaped translation until this year. Undoubtedly we have the recent prominence of China in first-page headlines to thank for this English edition. But M. Bonnard's work must not on that account be regarded as part of the literary flotsam which is cast on the reader's attention by the political gale of the moment. That an interpretive book on China written six years ago should be sufficiently timely for current American reproduction is in itself indication of a permanent value. For those six years have been a cycle of Cathay too strenuous for the thin reasoning of many a hasty commentator.

By clarity of thought and beauty of diction, both of which Veronica Lucas has saved in her Anglicization, we are here reminded of Lafcadio Hearn's subtle studies of Japan, destined long to outlast the period of their composition. M. Bonnard has, indeed, little of the somewhat wearying anxiety of Hearn to idealize the people of whom he writes. Adulation overpowers his critical faculty only when he discusses his own country, whose genius he sees as "almost beyond the understanding of the average among mankind on account of its subtlety." These Gallic enthusiasms, however, are secondary to the interesting thesis that the French are better equipped than other occidentals to understand the Chinese mind and, therefore, capable of an influence in that country more enduring than that of other powers, including the United States.

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"In China" is a "travel book" to the extent that it takes the reader by pleasant stages along the extended itinerary which M. Bonnard followed in leisurely fashion in 1920-1921. But not for a moment is it to be confused with the meticulously detailed diaries of observers like Harry Franck. This Frenchman is philosopher rather than reporter. An obscure village will stimulate him to lengthy digressions on the Chinese character, while the huge treaty-port of Shanghai, regarded by many Anglo-Saxons as the most vital centre in all China, is dismissed in half-a-dozen lines of ill-concealed contempt. "Shanghai," says M. Bonnard, "is of the earth, earthy, a city of bustling trade and modern luxury, and what with its steamboats and its quays and its mammoth hotels, it seems more like the reflection of America than the extremity of China." So much for Shanghai. The foreigners, civilian and military, there concentrated may stimulate Chinese dislike. But one must go "up-country" to find the alien who is doing positive work for the prestige of his native land.

No, it is not from foreign concessions, banks, race-tracks, and treaty-port clubs that M. Bonnard has drawn his picture of this nation which was ancient when the Roman Empire fell. His search is for those characteristics which reveal the enduring national spirit, unmarred by foreign contacts and irritations. Through the wide fields of art, philosophy, poetry, and manners we follow this quest, the way of knowledge so delicately traced by our cultured guide that we scarcely realize how arduously he must have labored to mark the trail.

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Politically, there is much the significance of which M. Bonnard missed. In 1927 we can see what was inevitably obscure to the traveller of 1921. We can discover promise where he found only decadence. But the political scene is not this author's major interest. Had it been so, a book which is now timely would instead have been hopelessly out-of-date. What this clear-visioned Frenchman has done, and for which all who seek a real understanding of forces at work in China should be grateful, is to give us without prejudice the mental background from which the present self-assertive China springs. And this is done with phrase so happy, from knowledge so well-rounded, as to make the reading not merely informative, but highly pleasurable.

Qwertyuiop A Shirtsleeves History

VI. (Concluded)

I PAUSE before the final, fatal plunge! Gentles, I had got as far as the publication of "Ulysses," and now the past five years loom before me. Yet people are still talking about "Ulysses," even though it has become impossible for them to follow without a certain reeling of the brain the continuation of "A Work in Progress," which has been going on ever since and coming over to us from Paris, bound up with Gertrude Stein, Vsevolod Ivanov, Emilio Cecchi, Juan Gris, and all that other strange exfoliation of the transplanted tree of knowledge.

"Ulysses," put forth quite properly by Shakespeare and Company, is still spreading its influence among our younger writers. It appeared as a volume at least two inches thick and at least a half a million words long. Gertrude Stein's most recent tome, that I have seen, approaches this in bulk. But so far and no farther. If ever the term *magnam opus* was deserved by a book it was deserved by Joyce's "Ulysses," in every sense. It is likely to remain the literary event of our time. And the crumbs that fell from his table have furnished forth whole hampers. As for me, I have only "read parts of it," as the young lady said when questioned as to her acquaintance with Keats's "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer." I was an earlier enthusiast concerning "A Portrait of the Artist." That's a book you can read in an evening.

Then along too came one Nikita Baliev from the Bat Theatre of Moscow, and taught us something new about revues. And Joseph Urban, the Viennese architect, completely reinstructed us concerning color on the stage. Dempsey was preparing to meet Harry Wills, but we had also become accustomed to the red slippers, umbrella, shovel hat, and Books and Characters of Lytton Strachey. At which point I must digress with reference to an admirer who has just written me, in what might possibly be characterized as "dudgeon," announcing that he will "kiss a pig" if Strachey is responsible, as I said, for an "entirely new kind of biography and a new school." He bids me look up Gamaliel Bradford. He goes on to say:

I submit that Strachey derives as truly from Bradford as Lindbergh derives from Wilbur Wright. Spicier he may be. He is. Or maybe he is only more malicious. But certainly he is no mutation. I am afraid that Bradford has been outdistanced by his disciples, by Strachey and Guedalla. . . . But he has done one, two, three, four, five corking things, and you ought not to force him to go running around crying, "I gave 'em the idea!"

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Now I have a great respect for Mr. Bradford's achievement. I do not believe that Strachey derives from Bradford, but I am glad to have the opportunity to pay the latter gentleman proper tribute. And America can certainly, in the person of Mr. Bradford, pride herself on the possession of a most astute and cultivated biographer. He, of course, would be the last to claim Strachey and Guedalla as "disciples." But in the new impetus given to the art of biography of recent years Bradford is our outstanding figure for (to borrow a phrase from the race-track) "consistent performance." Today we seem veritably to spawn biographers, few possessing, however, the individuality as well as the scholarship of our modern Gamaliel. My hat is off to him, therefore; and he should have been mentioned in this connection.

In Germany Gerhardt Hauptmann at sixty was given a special theatre week at Breslau,—that is, performances of his plays were given! On the Riviera, d'Annunzio, now quite bald, fell from the window of his villa. In Italy, Mussolini and the Fascisti had given tongue. These men of the "fascies," are a national league more like—no, not our National League—our American Legion, than anything I can think of. Out of our own California, Luther Burbank was seventy-three years old, had invented, among other things, the spineless cactus; and later died with commendable irreligiosity. George Creel was organizing opposition to John S. Sumner's Book Censorship. Edison, the Wizard of East Orange, celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday. January, 1923, introduced us to Karel Capek and

his Robots in the startling play "R. U. R.," of course a Theatre Guild presentation. The "Last Poems" of the great English poet, A. E. Housman, after so many years, caused quite a sensation. They were very nearly as good as "A Shropshire Lad."

And now, as I sit back to think over the last four years, what seems chiefly to emerge? In poetry, of course, there was the case of T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land." If you refer to Mr. I. A. Richards's recent essay in the *Today and Tomorrow Series* on "Science and Poetry," you will gather how significant he thinks Eliot of the changing attitude of modern poetry. For a number of the younger writers Eliot hit the nail on the head. He put on paper a post-war mood of sterility and disillusionment that most had felt. Thomas Stearns Eliot was, and is, a young American educated at Harvard who soon left us to pursue life permanently in England and on the Continent. He has edited for some time in England, the *Criterion*, formerly a quarterly, now a monthly under the name of *The New Criterion*. He is an interesting poet and an interesting critic. To a certain group he is the leading poet of the day. To many people "The Waste Land" was matter for much hilarity. It is a peculiar poem, and fierce controversy once raged concerning it. To me it seems—and the poem has a genuine emotional appeal for me—that, if it does not in some queer way remind you of yourself, it must, necessarily, subside into so much gibberish. This is not so with many of Eliot's other poems. And I exalt his Hippopotamus. Eliot, like Joyce, has spread an influence among some of our younger writers. They have been attracted by his idiom. He is a bad influence, just as Joyce is a bad influence. The two men evolved their different peculiarities out of their own necessities. Such necessities are not to be acquired, the other way round, by adopting their idiom superficially.

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Mr. Cabell went on to write "The High Place" and "The Silver Stallion." Carl Van Vechten, formerly a music critic and essayist of charm, had followed his "Peter Whiffle" with "The Blind Boy," since when he has chiefly devoted himself with wicked amusement to writing fantastic novels. A solid realist in our fiction showed his best powers when Charles G. Norris produced "Bread" and "Brass." His wife, Kathleen Norris, gave us her best in "Certain People of Importance." There was Rupert Hughes. W. E. Woodward began a literary career with "Bunk" and established a reputation for the de-bunking of business sham. Dreiser's "The Genius" was reprinted. Edgar Lee Masters, the poet, turned novelist; "The Nuptial Flight" appeared. Masters has done better with his boy stories of Skeeters Kirby. Christopher Morley blossomed into a fantastic novel, "Where the Blue Begins;" and a new parodist of the first water arose in Christopher Ward by whose later phase as a novelist I set no such store. Among younger people of promise there had been the poetry and novels of Stephen Vincent Benét; and the talented Dorothy Speare now sparkled before us. Elinor Wylie's "Jennifer Lorn" rose as a star. Hendrik Van Loon, a Hollander by birth, had followed his "The Story of Mankind" with "The Story of the Bible" and his satiric historical gift and amusing drawings were long familiar. Don Marquis, a columnist who burst from his shell, was about to see his "The Old Soak" on the stage. Clem Hawley was to become a classic. Don has collected the best of his column work in various books, but has "The Great Goulash Mystery" ever been so collected? If so we have missed it. How we loved it, as it ran in the column! And then there was "The Great Gland Mystery." The synopses of prior instalments took up most of the space, to be followed by, for instance:

CHAPTER LV

Finally her voice broke the silence. It was a well-modulated voice, soft and steady. But there was suppressed emotion in it. "Oliver!" she said in scarcely more than a whisper. "Elizabeth!" he replied. . . . Behind them a panel in the wall opened and a gnarled and bony hand appeared.

(to be continued)

Soon everyone was reading and talking about "Arabia Deserta," by the famous Doughty. The