

mixture of sensuousness, generosity, sentimentalism, and high, vague loyalties. At first indolent, self-indulgent, deceitful, the prey of every emotion, a creature invertebrate and sprawling, she is battered into shape by circumstance until she is no longer its victim but its victor. It matters not whether her final gesture is noble or idiotic, the world can no longer touch her. Zelda moves out of the story triumphant—and into our memories. To lapse into Elizabethanism one might adapt Massinger's lines more closely to the tale:

Virtue's a name that Fortune sometimes takes  
When Fortune Fortune's self would overthrow.

## Democracy at Work

GOD GOT ONE VOTE. By FREDERICK HAZLITT BRENNAN. New York: Simon & Schuster. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

**A** TITLE so magnificent lays a burden on a novel, and it is no particular discredit to Mr. Brennan that he never quite lives up to it. From internal evidence alone one infers that this is the first novel of a City Hall reporter, who will probably write better novels later; for he has an instinctive feeling for vivid and salient character which he has not yet learned to get over to the reader. Two or three of the persons in this book are alive and excellent; the rest are merely personifications of the malign or beneficent forces of human nature. It is valuable chiefly as a manual of municipal politics and a graph of the changes in municipal political practice and ideals in the last thirty years.

The unnamed city in which Patrick Van Hoos rises from hod carrier to boss is obviously St. Louis, but most of the details of local political operations would fit any city in the country. Particularly in the early chapters, when Patrick Van Hoos was only a ward heeler, Mr. Brennan has set down in detail a good deal of material of much historical value; put together his report on urban politics with the account of rural politics in Louis Ludlow's recent "Senator Solomon Spiffledink" and you have a picture of democracy at work that must give considerable pain to the high-minded.

Pat Van Hoos started with the idea that "I'm willing to do dirty work for the party. It's got to be done. But I ain't no crook on my own." And to that resolution he held pretty firmly, despite his enrichment by the honest graft of city contracts. When as a newly married man he let his wife persuade him to run for Alderman, his political godfather Dion O'Mara was gravely distressed. "Office holders," he observed, "have to please all the people all the time an' it can't be done. It gets 'em in the end. If ye'll take my advice ye'll stay on the decent side an' be a boss." Which Patrick Van Hoos did, only to discover after a quarter of a century that "the city owned him. He was not Boss Van Hoos. He was the people's common property, the creature of those who called themselves wets and dries, reformers and liberals or nothing at all but Tom and Dick and Harry. Everybody owned him. He had lost possession of himself entirely."

This is what happens to politicians, as every political reporter knows; and it is also true that there is more honesty and more guts in the average boss than in forty ordinary office holders. Equally truthful is the story of Boss Van Hoos's effort to stand by his principles, and the consequent transfer of popular favor to office holders who endeavored to give the public whatever it wanted. When Mr. Brennan is reporting what he has seen he is convincing; when he essays to editorialize on his observations he will convince only those who agree with him already. One of these is Mr. William Allen White, who is much impressed by Mr. Brennan's idealism—a desperately determined but rather foggy idealism, it must be observed, very much like Mr. White's own brand. Mr. Brennan is convinced that despite the picture of Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne, God stands behind the curtain, etc. The conclusion is hard to draw from the evidence he presents. He has a mystic faith in prohibition but a fine contempt for leaders of the Klan and the Anti-Saloon League; he feels sure that reform on the whole has accomplished much good, but this faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen in his own report. One cannot help feeling that a neutral observer would draw the conclusion from his picture that all reformers ought to be shot, and the earlier you catch them and shoot them the better.

Perrine Block, worst of all these reformers, failed to impress this reviewer as anything but a symbol of the evil effects of sex-suppression; his lifetime friendship with Patrick Van Hoos is theoretically possible, but Mr. Brennan has failed to make it plausible. Mrs. Van Hoos is the conventional type of good woman who spends her life doing evil, but none the less the most lifelike and convincing character in the story. The third member of this unholy trinity is Kirby Allen, the "reform" politician. He might seem a gaudy caricature to a foreigner, but as a matter of fact he is a faithful photograph of an American type which simply cannot be caricatured. Here in these three pictures Mr. Brennan sets down what he thinks of those who call themselves "the moral element," as he has seen them in action. The portraits are considerably more persuasive than the editorial comment by which he attempts to palliate them.

## Changing Architecture

BALBUS, OR THE FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURE. By CHRISTIAN BARMAN. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927. \$1.

Reviewed by AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS

**T**HE American city dweller, particularly the New Yorker, will need no persuading that the future of architecture is as strange and urgent a subject as any that has been discussed in the now famous "Today and Tomorrow" series, of which this volume is one. The architect is the artist who forces his works upon every citizen, however unwilling; his public cannot get away from him. What he has said, he has said for all to see as they go to and fro about their business. If you do not like books you need not read them, if you do not like pictures you can see to it that there is the stout door of the public gallery between them and you; but the architect trumpets his ideas and his aspirations on a sort of vast loud speaker that no citizen can evade. Consider further. All animals, including man, are apt to be changed by their environment. The architect is the man who creates environment.

According to Mr. Barman, the author of "Balbus," a change has now come over architecture, the like of which has never been seen before. His argument is long and ingenious. This change corresponds, he says, to the emancipation of women. The stream of women which issued from "home" some twenty years ago has divided into two parts: one half of the stream goes out to work, the other half goes out to spend money, and more specifically, to shop. To meet the needs of the spending woman a style of architecture has arisen which in its turn affected every other style. There has arisen in short the large department store. Here, as in a great bazaar, the merchant's wares must be spread out in enticing profusion; as far as possible the tempting things must be visible from the street; and above all as many different wares as possible must be visible to the woman who comes in with the laudable intention of only buying a reel of cotton.

But the wares are fragile, and cannot be protected by a series of umbrellas in the Grande Place, as can the eggs, ducks, and butter of the country market-place. And so the shopkeeper sets the architect the task of "covering in" a very large space, which shall differ from the spaces of the past in not being divided up for different purposes. Mr. Barman illustrates his meaning by reference to the buildings of a former age, such as a church or a king's palace. In the latter, for instance, there would have to be a banqueting hall and a throne-room, there would be a long gallery to walk in, there would be privy chambers to conspire in, there would be the room for the men-at-arms, and the great vaulted kitchens.

The difference, then, from the architect's point of view of being set to build a great department store in 1927 and being set to build a palace for the king of 1627, would be chiefly this. In 1627 the architect would have had to produce an interesting plan for his building, as well as an interesting façade. Each of these rooms would have been a little bubble of space enclosed by the walls he had designed. He would have had all sorts of fun with vistas and varying shapes. How much pleasure and beauty an architect could give to this sort of designing the reader can quickly conceive by remembering all the devices he has seen used. Architects have made us oval rooms, cruciform rooms, double-cubed rooms, they have made ceilings that

were barrel-vaulted, or coved, and they have used every kind of rich and interesting resource in the placing and ornamenting of windows, and in the treatment of doorways, fireplaces, and cornices.

But the builder of the department store in 1927 finds all his interior problems cut away. He will have the doors for the elevators to design, and possibly the rarely-seen handrail of the staircase, and that is practically all. All the rest of his energies will be given to a fine façade.

It would not be fair to the rest of Mr. Barman's ingenious argument to try and develop it here. The reader will be very well repaid by following it for himself in this very stimulating little book. Suffice it to say that no citizen of an American town should miss Mr. Barman's amusing description of what he calls "the eviscerated style of architecture" which, following the lead of these stores, has been so largely adopted for apartment houses and offices, that now we associate it with the skyscraper style of architecture.

Mr. Barman is a trained and learned critic of architecture, and is listened to with a good deal of respect in his own country, especially through the medium of his excellent *Architects' Journal*, but I venture to disagree with him most thoroughly in one particular. He does not nearly do justice to the beauty of the modern type of zoned building in New York. This is a review of a book, and not a panegyric of the skyscraper style; but no one who has fallen under the spell of New York can allow a remark like this to pass:

We are often told that New York is a city of high buildings. It is nothing of the kind: it is a moderately low city disfigured by a few high buildings only. Not more than one building in every thousand in the Manhattan Island district, famous for its skyscrapers, exceeds twenty stories in height. . . . But while the upward growth of the two European cities (London and Paris) has by no means been uniform and harmonious, it has not attained to the astonishing irregularity that receives such unmerited praise from English visitors to New York.

To which I can only reply that I strongly suspect that Mr. Barman has never visited New York.

At every turn of the street the more modern New York skyscrapers, such as the Medical Centre, the Telephone building, and the Graybar building, with their honey-color, and their restrained outlines, seen against the hard, dark blue of the New York sky, give the traveler that sharp stab of pleasure which is only produced by that elusive and unanalyzable thing which we call lyrical beauty. I wish indeed that Mr. Barman would see that beauty, would go and subject his trained and sensitive perceptions to it, for he would probably be able to tell us something about it that might help in stabilizing it into a tradition.

For in so cumbersome and elaborate an art as architecture, a good tradition seems generally to have coincided with reasoned analysis. The classic tradition that reached America to flower so charmingly in the Colonial style, was not a matter of feeling only, but had its roots in a highly intellectualized and even academic set of rules. The architectural theorist has a more important work than that of a chronicler.

C. Lewis Hind, English author, editor and art critic, died in London recently. He was an intimate friend of such writers and artists as H. G. Wells, Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, Arnold Bennett, Aubrey Beardsley, and John Sargent. His collection of Wednesday articles which he published for many years in the London *Daily Chronicle* have been published under the title, "Life and You." Among other books by Mr. Hind were "The Education of an Artist," "The Diary of a Looker-on," "The Consolations of a Critic," "What's Freedom," "Landscape Painting from Giotto to Turner."

## The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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## A Moderate Marat

JEAN PAUL MARAT: A STUDY IN RADICALISM. By LOUIS R. GOTTSCHALK. New York: Greenberg. 1927. \$3.

Reviewed by JOHN M. S. ALLISON  
Yale University

"Cavernous Marat . . . living in Paris cellars, lone as a fanatic anchorite in Thebaid; say, as far-seen Simon on his Pillar—taking peculiar views thereof." "Cassandra-Marat" with "this dirk and muff plan of his."

THIS is, by no means, the interpretation of Marat's latest biographer. Nor is Professor Gottschalk an apologist. In fact, the reader is won by his honesty at the very opening of the book: "If the reader finds, upon perusal of the following pages, that he cannot decide whether to admire or to despise Marat, the author will feel that his task has been well accomplished." And, as a matter of fact, the reviewer believes Professor Gottschalk has succeeded insofar as it is possible to fulfill such a difficult task. It is not an easy thing to treat of so positive a character as Marat without a bias.

Jean Paul Marat was of an age that was not given to specialization. There was nothing extraordinary, in those days, in a doctor of medicine who wrote speculative essays on the Human Soul, on Light, Electricity, Politics, and who even attempted novels. These were the avocations of the young doctor while he was resident in England and when, later, he filled the post of an attendant in the retinue of the Comte d'Artois. In all of these writings, there was little to indicate that fury against kings with which he has been so often credited. True, he made acrimonious attacks upon despots, but not a word against good monarchs, and even few words against noble gentlemen. Even, later, this future Friend of the People appealed for a patent of nobility and used a coat of arms! In fact, he appears to have been as complacent to the prevailing condition of things as most of the eighteenth century writers until he, always an omnivorous reader, came upon the works of Montesquieu and Rousseau. When that important discovery was made, however, the obvious did not result. The younger Marat preferred the more restrained Montesquieu, and it was only later that the "Contrat Social" became the source of his inspiration.

In 1780 the transformation of this moderately successful physician began; then the pen became his principal profession. A pamphlet entitled "Plan de Legislation Criminelle" exposed his earlier beliefs: a social regeneration based upon the theory that "the right to possess is derived from the right to live. Therefore everything that is indispensable for our existence is ours, and nothing superfluous can belong to us legitimately as long as others lack necessities." For the practical application of this theory, Doctor Marat advocated the establishment of national workshops, a redistribution of ecclesiastical wealth, free public schools, maintained by the more fortunate classes, and a salary, proportionate to his labor, for the worker. However, he was careful to advise severe penalties for the laborer who refused to be useful. In this last stipulation, he was far wiser than those who preferred to be called his successors during the nineteenth century.

In all this, however, there was not the slightest hint of opposition to monarchy. In fact, a later pamphlet, "L'Offrande à la Patrie," even witnessed to his confidence in King Louis XVI whom he admired for "his love for his people, his zeal for public welfare." Could this have been mere flattery? Professor Gottschalk does not think so, and to prove his point, he traces the apparently very gradual conversion of Marat to an anti-monarchical idea of government.

An important factor in this political transformation of Marat was his distrust of Mounier's plan which sought to give France a Constitution based upon the English system. To this latter system, Marat had already published his objections. The turning point occurred, however, when the doctor established the famous paper *Ami du Peuple*. By the time that he began the publication of this sheet, Marat had become convinced of his mission in life; to defend and enlighten the people, to become the apostle of patriotism, that was his task. To his way of thinking, he could best serve them by saving the monarchy for the people; hence his participation in the insurrection of October, 1789. Following upon

this event, the People's Friend beheld his beloved Monarchy threatened by two extremes, the "English Réformistes" and the Commune. His attacks upon both of these led to his temporary exile.

Shortly after this event, his faith in the King was troubled. "The King means well. Who does not know that? But his Ministers mean only evil." When, however, the King hesitated to sanction the radical reforms that had already been passed August 4-5, 1789, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, Marat's confidence in that monarch began to waver. It collapsed entirely on the occasion of the Nancy episode (June, 1790) when General Bouille put down so harshly the liberal movement in the garrison of that town. Then Marat came to believe the stories of a Counter Revolution fostered by the King himself. "Every prince born upon the throne is the dastardly enemy of the people." Still, however, he continued to advocate a constitutional Monarchy, in spite of the fact that he despised the National Assembly and abominated the Constitution that it finally gave to France. Marat the Moderate was in deep waters. From this position of disgust and despair, it was an easy transition to the advocacy of more harsh measures. With the declaration of war, he ceased to be a partisan of monarchy.

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The King fled, and was returned; he was tried, and received the condemnation of the people's courts. Then Marat declared: "I believe in the Republic at last!" He greeted with enthusiasm the Constitution of 1793. At last, the cause of the people was won! But the Friend of the People was doomed to bitter disappointment; soon his faith in the Republic and his patriotic desire for the success of French arms demanded a further transition. The Convention was dumb, the Republic was poorly run; there were too many officials, and, therefore, was too great a chance for treachery. The people were still in their misery; the armies were unsuccessful. These conditions, thought Marat, "will force the nation to renounce democracy in order to give itself a chief, if the Convention does not rise to the level of its functions." In these words there was the hint of the need for a dictator. The Constitution of 1793 was too beautiful and fragile a thing after all!

Professor Gottschalk implies that Marat probably looked upon himself as the one best fitted to fill the rôle. He interprets Marat's thoughts by making him say: "Put me in a position to arrange matters, and in a few days everything will be all right." Then, the liberties of the Republic may return. Such proposals, although not stated so definitely by Marat himself, brought upon him the attacks of the Gironde, the party then in power. In April, 1793, he was brought to trial by them. Acquitted, he turned his attention to contributing to the downfall of his enemies. On October 30, 1793, the most important members of that party went to the guillotine. By this time, however, Marat himself was ailing, and, shortly after the passing of the Gironde, Marat offered his resignation to the Convention. His last days were spent in writing instructions to the Committee of Public Safety, of whose increasingly dictatorial powers he approved. In his mind, there was apprehension for the security of the Republic; the Counter-Revolution in the Rhône Valley and the Vendée alarmed him. It was, in fact, these very civil wars that ended his sufferings of mind and body, when, in July, 1793, Charlotte Corday, inflamed by the ardor of the reactionaries, came to Paris to assassinate Marat.

The author of this biography has accomplished at least one very difficult task: he has presented a clear and fairly comprehensive history of the political evolution of one of the most spectacular characters in French history. He has not obscured his principal theme in a mass of political narrative. Only very occasionally does his clarity of treatment break down, notably in Chapter II when he does not adhere to the chronological method and the reader finds himself somewhat bewildered. One might wish, too, that Professor Gottschalk had related more in detail the career of Marat in England and had given a further consideration to Marat's experiences, literary and social, in that country. It is, indeed, a milder Marat that he presents, and his arguments are convincing. But, so great is the power of tradition upon the human mind, and so great the influence of his so-called modern followers, that when one turns back the pages and looks again at Marat as shown in the familiar portrait, one asks—Was Marat moderate after all?

## A Northumbrian Poet

COLLECTED POEMS: 1905-1925. By WILFRID GIBSON. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927.

Reviewed by WILLIAM SAVAGE JOHNSON  
University of Kansas

TO read Wilfrid Gibson's volume of "Collected Poems" is to rejoice that one major poet of our time has remained true to his art. For over twenty years he has refused to turn aside to any less exacting literary form or to forsake the quiet sanity of his ways for the sensationalism and acrobatics now so much in vogue. Having once discovered where his true gift lay, he has not since betrayed it.

The present collection makes a powerful and varied impression. In that part of his work first known in America there was a certain monotony in its repetition of character types, the strained intensity of its emotion, its bareness, and its lack of lightness of mood. Beginning with "Borderlands," 1914, a new quality appeared, a rich humor, though often of a grim and ironic sort, and a sympathy not only with hardworking and unfortunate people, but with the utterly unmeritorious wastrel, which has given a new piquancy to his writing. Even in his humor, however, there is little gaiety. One conjectures that the racial strains in him are, as his name would indicate, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian. He sticks to his Northumberland almost as closely as Hardy to his Wessex. And he has the English seriousness, even something of the border gloom that suggests a kinship with the author of "Wuthering Heights."

There have been three stages in Mr. Gibson's development. Up to 1910 he was still enamored of medieval romance and uncertain as to what path to choose. In the "Prelude" to "Daily Bread" he announced at last that his "happy singing-flight" was over; he was resolved to turn from the poetry of escape to the poetry of reality. The change has sometimes been represented as a kind of evangelical conversion followed by a deliberate program of social uplift. It was nothing of the sort. Gibson made no slumming expeditions to gather new material. It was unnecessary to do so, for he had only to turn back to impressions of childhood, absorbed quietly and for the most part unconsciously. "The Lambing," which opens the present volume, a poem of 1905, might easily be mistaken except for the meter for one of the narratives of "Fires," 1912; and "Stonefolds," 1907, presents the Northumbrian rural life with a greater harshness than does "Daily Bread," though between the two came the romantic poems of the "Web of Life." The new interest was then after all an old interest, not in social uplift, but arising from the artist's curiosity about, and sensitive response to, life.

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For most readers Gibson's name means "Daily Bread" and "Fires" and little else. And these two volumes do make an unique claim upon our attention. In 1912 it was not difficult to make up one's mind about their author. A poet just arriving at mature power, sensitive to beauty, idealistic, and sincere in an unusual degree, had become dissatisfied with romantic dreams and turned to life itself, applying to his new material the same gentle spirit that had gone questing after beauty according to the Pre-Raphaelite recipe. The poems were realistic in a sense, but the speech was carefully strained of impurities, and in spite of unflinching fidelity to the physical hardships depicted and even to the deep treacheries of human nature, there was in the treatment a prevailing sweetness, a faith in life, a sense of the solidarity that binds together the poor and unfortunate, and an appreciation of the aids to noble life that lie within us, that removed them far from bitterness and cynicism.

Since the beginning of the war Gibson's poetry has been more disturbing. "Battle," with its fleet but revealing glimpses of war psychology, is full of ironical speech and situation. The plays of "Krindlesyke" and "Kestrel Edge" and some of the quintessential and pungent dialogues of "Neighbors" and "I Heard a Sailor" have an increase of bitter flavor in their character study, and a sense of potential malignity lurking behind the innocent face of things. Always keenly aware of life's power to wound, in this latter work the poet conveys to us an added consciousness of threatening evil, of hidden ambush, lying everywhere in wait for the human traveler. In one of his sonnets Gibson