

by a choice of epithets that is almost faultless. He excels in literary taste, the one thing intolerable to the so-called "children of Nature," and yet so profound is it that a distinguished French writer has said "What is taste? Perhaps it is the soul."

Watson's finest trait is his soaring imagination and it counts most in dealing with things of the spirit. Who than he has touched more poignantly the one most haunting human thought?

THE GREAT MISGIVING

"Not ours," say some, "the thought of death to dread;
Asking no heaven, we fear no fabled hell:
Life is a feast, and we have banqueted—
Shall not the worms as well?

"The after-silence, when the feast is o'er,
And void the places where the minstrels stood,
Differs in nought from what hath been before,
And is nor ill nor good."

Ah, but the Apparition—the dumb sign—
The beckoning finger bidding me forego
The fellowship, the converse, and the wine,
The songs, the festal glow!

And ah, to know not, while with friends I sit,
And while the purple joy is passed about,
Whether 'tis ampler day divinelier lit
Or homeless night without;

And whether, stepping forth, my soul shall see
New prospects, or fall sheer—a blinded thing!
There is, O grave, thy hourly victory,
And there, O death, thy sting.

Here, as usual, he preserves that fine proportion between thought and line which constitutes literature in verse. One may look askance at a "literary" poet, but what does the adjective imply save that every word counts by its force and appropriateness, that there is not a syllable too little or too much, that the offered cup is always full to the brim but never overflows?

Of two metrical forms Watson is master: the pungent epigram and the inspiring sonnet. Here are two of these quatrains:

EPITAPH ON AN OBSCURE PERSON

Stranger, these ashes were a Man
Crushed with a grievous weight.
He had acquired more ignorance than
He could assimilate.

AN IMPOSSIBLE NOVELTY

There are, in Painting, Sculpture, Song,
A few new ways of being wrong;
But it is plain to most men's sight
There's no new way of being right.

Leaving aside the high-minded and courageous sonnets on the Boer War and "The Purple East," by which the "dauntless teller of truths unsweet" stirred England to the depths, we find this one on the approach of middle life finely paralleled in octave and sestet and most subtly human:

THE FRONTIER

At the hushed brink of twilight,—when, as though
Some solemn journeying phantom paused to lay
An ominous finger on the awestruck day,
Earth holds her breath till that great presence go,—
A moment comes of visionary glow,
Pendulous 'twixt the gold hour and the grey,
Lovelier than these, more eloquent than they
Of memory, foresight, and life's ebb and flow.

So have I known, in some fair woman's face,
While viewless yet was Time's more gross imprint,
The first, faint, hesitant, elusive hint
Of that invasion of the vandal years
Seem deeper beauty than youth's cloudless grace,
Wake subtler dreams, and touch me nigh to tears.

In this circumscribed space there is no room to sample the rich quarries of his longer poems—the tributes to Burns and Shelley, "Wordsworth's Grave," "The Eloping Angels," the "Ode on the Coronation of King Edward VII," and others. But the impression is the same throughout, that of a high standard of genuine poetry, admirable in scope as well as detail. While the volume is full of separate lines that rest in the memory as adequate to a hundred experiences, the poet's large treatment and his architectonic sense of proportion give roundness to his thought and a sense of satisfaction to his reader.

May William Watson, still in his vigor, live long to offer to this prosy and indifferent age the inspiration of a man wholly in earnest and wholly a poet.

Yet another Life of Christ is to be published shortly. It is the work of the late Robert Keable, who wrote many books on religious subjects and also on Tahiti, where he died. Sir Hall Caine's Life of Christ, on which he has been engaged for a considerable time, can also be expected soon.

Watson's Behaviorism

THE WAYS OF BEHAVIORISM. By JOHN B. WATSON. New York: Harper & Bros. 1928. \$3.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW

IT is important to distinguish between behaviorism as a psychological position, and the specific tenets of Dr. Watson, who claims a proprietary right to the term. I shall make the distinction by confining the Watsonian variety between the double bars of quotation marks. Behaviorism refers to the generally accepted position of substantially all psychologists that their science deals with human behavior: "behaviorism" is an electric assemblage of doctrines approved by John B. Watson, together with a remarkable set of claims concerning their value, that involves a repudiation of the contributions of his fellow-psychologists. Such are the ways of "behaviorism" in the year 1928.

It was not always thus. Dr. Watson made important contributions to animal psychology and to specific phases of human psychology. He followed and developed the objective method in psychology—a position fully approved by his professional colleagues. At Johns Hopkins University he did important work on the native responses of infants. His "Behavior, An Introduction to Comparative Psychology" is a careful scientific survey containing many original contributions; his "Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist" continues largely in the same temper, but makes some extreme and more questionable statements, which a sympathetic critic might ascribe to an over-zealous advocacy. His "Behaviorism," a set of popular lectures, shows an amazing deterioration. Considering the uninformed clientèle to which it was addressed, its cavalier treatment of what generally circulates as psychology is as questionable in taste as in logic. His recent pronouncements: "The Ways of Behaviorism" and "Psychological Care of Infant and Child" constitute astounding performances.

The "behaviorist's" stock in trade is rather limited, considering the business he claims to do. There is the conditioned reflex (generalized to the response), the nature and limitations of which are still in doubt. Yet the entire range of human habit and acquisition is explained as conditioning, and human conduct however complicated becomes predictable, because it may be spoken of as stimulus and response. "Why do men and women get married—why divorced—and what effect prohibition has on human behavior—woman suffrage? Let us study the problem as we would study the effect of continuous light upon the growth of a plant." Then there is the (by no means new) discovery of the few complete patterned responses in the new-born infant.

On these premises we are informed that everything is acquired by conditioning, though the truth is that if we were generally subject to "behavioristic" conditioning, behavior would be chaos and a rational life impossible. Heredity is declared a myth, and all the scientific workers in this field are dismissed as on the wrong track. The "behaviorist" will make of any ordinary infant whatever you choose to order. Insanity is a delusion of the psychiatrists not of the patient. The subconscious is a figment of another abnormal deviation, and Freud and the phrenologists are of one stripe. "In one sweeping assumption after another, the 'behaviorist' threw out the concepts both of mind and of consciousness, calling them carryovers from the church dogma of the Middle Ages." Instinct is another imaginary creation, likewise imagery; and thought is but verbalized or subvocal behavior. Like the brave little tailor, it is "seven at a blow"; and the "behaviorist" chuckles as the giants fall, for to him they are pigmies. Yet the instrument of the "behaviorist" is not even a sword or a sling; it is merely a waste-basket. With everyone holding a different opinion consigned to oblivion, the "behaviorist" finds himself in full command, with decks cleared and no impediment of crew or cargo.

The intriguing question relates not to the ways of behaviorism, but asks how the "behaviorist" gets that way. His own explanation is that he is concerned with what men *do*. Using what others would call imagination, he becomes an emissary from Mars, hovers over New York, notes the scurrying movements of its inhabitants and brings back the momentous conclusion that these human ants

are going to work. Now all is translucently clear. "Just think what a volume I could carry back to Mars on the behavior of New Yorkers if from some central position I could observe their whole twenty-four hour behavior for a few weeks or months." That volume would be as meaningless as the scratchings on the sand in a barnyard, until it is interpreted by just those instruments of psychology that the "behaviorist" repudiates and the true behaviorist utilizes. The "people are going to work!" Sheer inference! Nobody who didn't know infinitely more than what observers could see, could ever reach any such conclusion. Why not conclude that these creatures, whether by early conditioning or the peculiarities of their equilibrium apparatus, were so built that they couldn't see a hole without, like the rabbit in "Alice," running down it? How can a "behaviorist" ascertain that they are darting down into the subway on the way to work? And why are Washingtonians without this habit?

But why anything? In wonderland you at least know what set of rules you are staying away from; in "behavior"-land, which is supposed to be a land of prediction, the last thing you can predict is what the "behaviorist" will hold on any question. Why does it follow from "behaviorism" that when parents fondle their children, they are breeding neurotics and dependents? Yet Dr. Watson says so. What to make of it all I frankly don't know. So I appeal to others. An eminent scientist tells me it is preposterous nonsense, not worthy of scientific attention; another that it is an exhibition of colossal impertinence, that even granted that Watson is the superman of all times, he could hardly be so uniformly right and everybody else so incorrigibly wrong on so many different varieties of questions. I asked the question some years ago of a group of professional women who had listened to a course by Dr. Watson, and they replied: "We do not take him seriously," though one confessed: "I did so to begin with." I asked a Freudian, and he explained: Watson found early in his career that he had no *flair* for psychology, and so decided that he would call psychology whatever he found he could do; "behaviorism" is a form of compensation. I asked a fellow-psychologist and he sets forth that it is the desire to be different and attract attention; it is modernism in psychology by appealing to the allegedly ultra-scientific. I ask a business man and he says it is advertising. I ask a sociologist, and he says it is just an attempt to put something over, and Watson is laughing up his sleeve—doesn't believe a word of it. I ask a philosopher, and he says that that kind of mind, though shrewd and intelligent, is as devoid of a sense of logic as other able and worthy minds are devoid of a sense of humor. And I ask myself and give it up. But whatever it is in motive, in argument it is sophistry; and the constant fallacy is the fallacy of ignoring. Ignore all the evidence to the contrary on any position, and you can prove what you will, and incidentally disclose the folly of those who hold otherwise.

Perhaps we are all on the wrong scent. On the opening page we read: "There was possibly too little science—real science—in Freud's psychology, and hence it held its news value for only a relatively brief span of years." "Now the newspapers are beginning to feed it ('behaviorism') to the masses, but still in broken doses." Perhaps a new era is upon us and doctrines are to be judged by their news value. Perhaps the historian of the future will record: "In the early twentieth century Einstein put across his doctrine of relativity; much credit belongs to his publicity agent." There is only one man who can solve the puzzle of the ways of the "behaviorist," and he does not choose to tell.

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Whoopie

SHOW GIRL. By J. P. McEvoy. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1928. \$2.

Reviewed by FLORENZ ZIEGFELD

WHILE I have produced many revues this is my premier performance as a reviewer. Perhaps I stand too close to the theatre to be a disinterested and dispassionate critic of a novel dealing with the stage and its people, for I love what is known as "show business" and have given my life to it. It concerns me so closely and so vitally that I seldom read stories of acting and music for fear that I will be mortally offended by a lack of knowledge, sympathy, and intelligent understanding on the part of the authors. I have a few bedside books about music and the theatre that I read and reread and I recommend them as works of genius. To me they are true reports of the lives of singers, musicians, and actors. These novels are "Maurice Guest," by Henry Handel Richardson; "Evelyn Innes," "Sister Teresa," and "A Mummer's Wife," by George Moore; and "A Mummer's Tale," by Anatole France. These great writers tell their fables and stage manage their characters honestly without being cruel or kind or malicious. They have humor and satire, but the humor never becomes hokum and the satire is never bitter. The curious and interesting race of public entertainers is shown to us fleshly for the most part because they are, in spite of their exaggerated emotions and temperaments, materialists. The musicians rise higher into the realm of spirit, but they, too, are human, all too human. Their lives are like April days blended of sun and showers with the tragedy of age always menacing them, for, more than elsewhere, in the theatre, "men shut their doors against a setting sun."

Mr. McEvoy views the theatre as a great joke where clowns and hoofers and singers, chorus girls, authors, actors, dance directors, and composers, meet in a swirl of laughs and gags and whoopie and regard everything as being "all in fun." His new novel, "Show Girl," is a typical volume of American humor. It is the world of the comic strip. Dixie Dugan, the heroine, Eppus and Kibbitzer, the managers, and Doyle, the author, are characterized in a series of amusing chapters some of which would make snappy "blackouts" for current revues. "Show Girl" is show business "hoked up" to the saturation point. It has smart touches of observation, a lot of what passes for wit on Broadway, and above all speed. The action races by and every typographical ingenuity is used to emphasize and amplify the "punch stuff." McEvoy has written a vastly amusing novel. I recommend it for summer reading. It will be, I suppose, a comedy bible of the "Follies," for both the show girls and the dancers give it their approval. McEvoy is a lusty fellow in his fun and writes with gusto. He reminds me of one of those popular comedians who invited to a party feels that he must be entertaining every minute and succeeds in being so. But after reading "Show Girl" and having had your fill of laughter thank the author and then pray that all the folks of the theatre might be as merry as his comedy creations, escaping heartbreak, failure, age, poverty, treachery, ingratitude, change of public taste, dimming of early gifts, loss of creative power, sickness, and all the other pains and penalties of the stage and concert room. One enjoys greatly but one may suffer greatly, too, in a crowded theatrical career, and only the stout-hearted Ulysean type can weather all storms until a late final curtain. For too many the curtain falls early and forever.

I know McEvoy well, having produced a number of his sketches in the "Follies," and I was sponsor for his first revue, "The Comic Supplement." Even when I threw things out of the show he was up there taking a bow. McEvoy and "Bugs" Baer are the only two I ever heard of who would steal bows to hisses. Here's the way he would review "Show Girl" himself:

This is a great book, a wonderful book, a marvelous book, a stupendous book—such speed, such verve, such élan, such such. It's your Broadway and mine. Girls and lights and jazz. All the sounds and the scents, the harshness, the tenderness, the whimsy and pathos, the smiles, the tears, the triumphs, the heart-aches, all and more are in this book. What a book this "Show Girl"! What a writer this man McEvoy!

That gives you a rough idea. And don't think I am exaggerating. I recall one time Augustine Duncan was rehearsing the Back Porch scene in which Fields and Dooley appeared in "The Comic Supplement" and later in the "Follies." Everything was going along nicely and quietly on the stage when suddenly inextinguishable laughter started way back in the rear of the house. One of the stage managers went back and located the disturber and put him out. It was only when he got the intruder into the light he discovered to his consternation he had ejected the author. After that we had to make a rule to keep McEvoy out of the theatre during the rehearsal of his comedy sketches because he laughed so loud at his own stuff he disturbed the actors. Fortunately for me, the audience always laughed, too, so I have forgiven him.

A Schoolboy of Russia

DIARY OF A COMMUNIST SCHOOLBOY.

By N. OGNYOV. Translated from the Russian by ALEXANDER WERTH. New York: Payson & Clarke. 1928. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ARTUUR RUHL

THIS Diary is said to be the work of a Russian school-teacher, Rozanov, who writes under the name Ogniov, and to have been widely read in Russia, and in translation elsewhere on the Continent. It is a work of fiction, in any case, and so far as American readers are concerned, may be taken as it comes, like any other story of a boy—like "Stalky" or "Tom Sawyer."

Its strength lies in its endeavor to present, without argument or any of the political preoccupations which overburden most writing about contemporary Russia, the day-to-day states of mind of a post-revolution Russian youngster of high-school age. And it is such a relief to run across any such artistic treatment of Russian revolutionary phenomena, the whole thing is jotted down with such simplicity, and is so alive with authentic slang and the mood of the moment, that it is likely to be welcomed as something more than it really is by those who are fed up with the usual verbiage or, because of their own adventures in Russia, feel themselves, as they read, back in Moscow again.

Its weakness, I should say, or one of them, so far as the uninformed foreign reader is concerned, is its lack of background and atmospheric texture. If you've seen the sort of quarters the present Russian generation live in; the clothes they wear, the food they eat; seen the red posters and banners, the crowds milling slowly through the boulevards on a warm Sunday afternoon or rowing on the river, and seen innumerable bands of young folks, just like Riabtsov and his schoolmates, starting off for picnics in the country—and of course Russians have seen all these things—the boy may stand out round and clearly enough in his own particular air.

But taken just as he comes, by the reader who doesn't know Russia, he will probably seem a bit flat and thin, and after some two hundred pages of his intensely earnest, adolescent wrangling over this and that, more incredible than in fact he is. In short, fresh and good as the little story is, it is written for a special audience, who must fill in the gaps from their own experience.

Many of young Riabtsov's adventures and worries, and those of his schoolmates, are those common to adolescence. The peculiarly Russian part of the book is, of course, the pupils' habit of managing their own school affairs and discussing everything, including methods of teaching and discipline and personal ethics as if they were a self-governing republic, and the revolutionary "ideology," as the Bolsheviks are so fond of saying, which permeates all their thinking and behavior.

As a matter of fact, the school is almost a microcosm of present-day Russia itself. "Black Zoya," with her hysterical fits and her fondness for graveyards and ghosts, is a sort of childish symbol of the surviving obscurantism of the old days. Lina, a bit further "Left," might possibly be regarded as standing for old-fashioned "sentimental" Liberalism, while Sylva, with her clear-eyed downrightness, represents the Bolshevik notion of the woman of the future. Riabtsov himself, with his impatience for what he regards as sham, his bumptiousness, and his insistence on "thinking things through," according to the true gospel, as he understands it, of economic

determinism, is a slower-thinking, more blundering, but equally vigorous masculine counterpart of Sylva.

This is, of course, reading into the story a little more than meets the casual eye. On the surface, it is a lively, and often amusing, picture of day-to-day schoolboy adventures, worries, and problems. The teachers, also, stand for various trends and wings, and the author has his fun with them, too. There is "Almakfish," as the pupils dub, Soviet-fashion, "Alexei Maksimitch Fisher," whose one comment, on any sort of action, is that "quantitatively, it represents the abundance of the epoch; and qualitatively, it stands beyond good and evil." And there is a frequent recurrence of the word "liquidate"—"liquidate your ignorance," "liquidate difficulties," etc.,—which is actually used nowadays in Russia, just as it is in the diary. You will be amused, and perhaps enlightened, as well, by young Riabtsov's first-hand experiences with the Dalton Plan.

There will be those, of course, who will regard the diary as only a more than usually subtle bit of "propaganda"—"bourgeois" values being run down and "revolutionary" values being run up, through seemingly guileless school-children. It doesn't seem to me necessary to take the book in this way—a writer would need to be almost superhumanly detached to write in Russia today, untouched by the common air. The significant thing about the story is that it is a story, and that its arguments, if any, are inherent in the characters rather than expressed.

Footprints on the Sand

GEORGE SAND, THE SEARCH FOR LOVE.

By MARIE JENNY HOWE. New York: The John Day Company. 1927. \$5.

THE SEVEN STRINGS OF THE LYRE. The

Romantic Life of George Sand, 1804-1876.

By ELIZABETH W. SCHERMERHORN. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1927. \$4.

Reviewed by CHRISTIAN GAUSS

Princeton University

THESE two latest books on George Sand are an index of what has happened not only to Madame Dudevant but to us. Let us first consider George. She has ceased to be a woman of letters and in neither volume is any serious attempt made to reappraise her position in literary history. Her standing as a novelist has been taken by Mrs. Howe for granted, but seems to have been disregarded as a matter of relatively little moment by Miss Schermerhorn. George has become one of the curiosities of the nineteenth century, a sort of campus character in the academy of literature. A good name in letters is no longer better than many adventures. A life is more than many novels and interesting experiments in love than the Victorian fine gold of a literary reputation. George has been stripped of her titles to distinction. The traditional drapery has been allowed to slip from her shoulders and she stands before us in rather sheer femininity. In Miss Schermerhorn's book she is at least still warmly human. In Mrs. Howe's she has become a bit gaunt, a rather chilling symbol of revolt, of woman's rights. She has become a sort of depolitized Shelley of the opposite sex, perhaps for this reason to me less engaging than the author of "Indiana" and "Mauprat," whom we thought we knew in the days before we had become so entirely emancipated.

Considerable new material has become available in the last few years. The fourth and last volume of Mme. Karénine's somewhat over-extended, but otherwise acceptable, life appeared in 1926, as did the "Journal Intime" and nearly all of the material on her relations with Aurélien de Sèze. Some scholars regret that these documents were edited by Mme. Lauth-Sand, the granddaughter of George. There is much more that has not yet seen the light, including the correspondence with Balzac in the Lovenjoul Collection at Chantilly, so ably presided over by that excellent Balzacian and Sandist, M. Marcel Bouteron. This does not seem to have been consulted by either of the new biographers nor would it seem greatly to have interested either of them.

Mrs. Howe's volume is really a protest against man's inhumanity to woman. She tells us that

Unfortunately for her reputation, most of her biographers have been old-fashioned men who regarded her from a viewpoint of established feminine traditions. To the modern mind, it is evident that George Sand's real fault