

Two Stories, by T. F. Powys, on page 6

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Come Into the Office

WITH this issue the *Saturday Review of Literature* enters upon its fifth volume. The editors have now worked together, first and last, for eight years. Their first collaboration was upon the old *New York Evening Post*. When reorganization took place upon the *Post* they founded the *Saturday Review* as an independent journal of literary opinion. They have experienced alarms and excursions, but deep enjoyments as well. They have functioned through several changes of address—not because the censorship was after them! By this time they are entirely familiar with one another's personalities. And they have continually tried to fight against the *Review's* running simply under its own momentum. They have "sat in" at many an informal conference, in discussion concerning new ideas for the *Review*, fresh departures, different things that might be done.

We have tried some "different things." We intend to try more, from time to time. In the main our province has been to furnish you with book reviews that you could trust, coming from people of genuine authority, exercising impartiality without any axes to grind or any publishers to "please." That, in itself, is a task not without magnitude. Come into our office for a moment or so, and sit down with us. We will explain why, and chat of a few other things. Sit down. Have a cigarette.

That manuscript on parchment over Dr. Canby's desk? Oh, that's the holograph of Lord Dunsany, a brief essay on Charon, done in red and black, with a quill pen. It reminds Dr. Canby of mortality. The reproduction of Augustus John's portrait of Thomas Hardy is Mr. Morley's property, and, before they cleaned the walls, he had written a Latin testimonial to that effect in lead-pencil beneath it. Mr. Morley also faces the mortality of all things, but in a more jocular spirit. He used to make up neat epitaphs for everybody in the office and pencil them on the walls. But he doesn't dare do that any more. That tall dark bottle on his desk? It is empty. It came originally from Berry Brothers, London wine merchants. You can read on its label "Eitelsbacher 1921er" or "Karthäuser Hofberger, Wachstum, Hans Wilhelm Rautenstrauch." Mr. Morley keeps it as a totem and souvenir. In the partitioned-off cubbyhole in one corner of the larger office you can hear the tap-tapping of an ancient Underwood. If you try to pry your way in, you will encounter Mr. Benét working in his shirt-sleeves. His walls are covered with a miscellaneous assortment of etchings, broadsheets, and pictures clipped from magazines. He is fondest of the drawing, "A Morning Daisy," and of the manuscript of Vachel Lindsay's "Remarks of a Barber in Deadwood, South Dakota," penned in Room 1129 of the Davenport Hotel in Spokane.

Miss Loveman sits across the room from Dr. Canby. They frequently turn about in their chairs and indulge in stubborn debate. Miss Loveman really runs the *Review* for you. All the other editors come in late of a morning. Mr. Morley, in fact, only comes in twice a week. Mr. Benét has never been known to be on time. Miss Loveman not only runs the *Review* but keeps a drawerful of "Lucky Strikes" and matches for the harassed editors who are always running out of a smoke or of a light. She also lends them money on occasion. They are usually out of money. (This editorial is not written by Miss Loveman.)

The Three Songs

By ROBERT P. TRISTAM COFFIN

THE evening's thrush has three small songs,
Each one pitched the higher
Like three quiet evening flames,
Spire topping spire.

Three slender tongues of amber sound
That make the world grow lonely
Until a man can taste his tears
And hear his heartbeat only.

Why he pauses no man knows,
Nor why he feels the pain.
He knows no more than plants know why
Their leaves foretell the rain.

The pain is there and knows itself
Subtle, strange, and holy,
Symmetric as a serpent is,
Lambent, coiling slowly.

Independent as a star,
No woman's lips or eyes
Had a part in sculpturing
Its clean anatomies.

Somewhere had its beginning
It had its beginning,
And it owes its loveliness
To no act of sinning.

The music of the thrush was there
Before dark was, or light,
Three songs like the tenderest,
First candles of the night.

The Depths and Ellis

Reviewed by H. M. KALLEN

THE men who are in their sixties and seventies to-day were in their thirties and forties in the final decade of the nineteenth century. They are the men who gave that decade its special tone and character, that twist of difference by which it is identified in the tradition of English letters, that twist of difference has been usually described as decadence. To the 1890s are credited artificiality, smartness, and a reticulated fantasy. They are distinguished for perverse passions and a formal cult of Beauty. They are the years when the gospel of "Art for Art's Sake" had its most urgent and elaborate promulgation. Their representative prophets are Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde, and these gentlemen still work on the minds of the successive younger generations a glamor and a strange allure. But that the tradition should concentrate these and no other phases of the biography of that rich and varied decennium is an ironic refraction of the color of life, which is so often most titillating to the attention where it is least significant to the will. The 1890s were rich in diverse faiths and works. A whole laborious generation of the intellect came to maturity in them. They are dated more by the *Yellow Book* and the *Savoy Magazine* and the "Importance of Being Earnest" than by William James's "Principles of Psychology," by works of Nietzsche and Le Gaultier and Freud, by financial imperialism Kipling'd o'er with the refrain of "the white man's burden," by an observable momentum in the social sciences, and the recognition of actual and operative causes in the medical disciplines. Notably, sex is removed from the cellarage into the opener air of scholarship. But in these things, sex excepted, there was no felt discontinuity with past experience, no natural harmony with present emotion. They worked from a quieter and less conscious level than the perplexing passion and despairful estheticism which were so dramatically their alien contemporaries.

In the mind of one figure of the decade, however, these streams seem not to have been alien, but to have met and to have mingled their lights. This figure was Havelock Ellis. By his self-chosen and self-dedicated commitment to the scientific study of the psychology of sex, he belonged to the quieter, in their effects more far-reaching, scientific adventurers of the generation. By his choice of sex as a theme, however, by his literary interests, his friendships and belletristic association, by his philosophic posture and his tastes, he belonged to the lyric phalansteries of the lovers of art for art's sake, the small withdrawn congregations of "the religion of Beauty." If this spiritual compensation dimmed his gleam beside the more brilliant and more transient luminaries of the cult, it has burned with clearer and steadier flame for that, and has brought to the old age of the author of the "Dance of Life" a significance which the very heyday of the author of "Dorian Grey" could not attain. Indeed, it has made Havelock Ellis, and not another, the true voice of the spirit of the 1890s. In him there comes to realization and to utterance the common despair and the rather less common salvation of its protagonists. All the scientists and the empire builders and the poets had this despair in common. All chanted a "De Profundis." Not all won to the same salvation.

HAVELOCK ELLIS, PHILOSOPHER OF LOVE
HOUSTON PETERSON, Boston: Houghton Mifflin

This Week

"A History of Lloyd's."
Reviewed by *H. M. Tomlinson*.

"Black Democracy."
Reviewed by *Arthur Ruhl*.

"Thoughts without Words."
Reviewed by *William Rose Benét*.

Rossetti: "His Life and Works."
Reviewed by *Arnold Whitridge*.

"In Modern Dress."
By *Christopher Morley*.

Next Week, or Later

Machiavelli, the Florentine.
Reviewed by Count *Carlo Sforza*.

There is another room down a little hall. That is our business manager, Mr. Cathcart, who has just turned around. Back of him—that pretty and amiable creature is his secretary, Miss Murphy. Mr. Orton, his assistant, the gentle but effective young man with the glasses, has just come in. Mr. Cathcart is really the publisher of the whole works. The editors all affectionately call him "Noble." Well, he does nobly.

In the other room Miss Silver, the able secretary of the whole editorial department, keeps her-
(Continued on next page)

depths from which they cried were those science had plunged them into. Brought face to face, in their christian settings and with their christian hopes, with the blank determinism of the scientific outlook on life, they were aghast at the prospect. Scientific naturalism seemed to them to deprive existence of all meaning, personality of all dignity and worth; to turn history into an empty dance of circumstance and to coerce conduct into inevitable sequences from which all perspectives of good and evil must be ruled out as illusion. The empire builders, like Goethe's Faust, overcame despair by action and used the philosophy of science to justify the immoralities of political economy. Of the scientists, most rendered unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's so that God might have his own, and lived by turns in nature and in grace, without feeling the need to reconcile the one and the other. But to many the conflict was a tearing of their very lives, and reconciliation became the alpha and omega of their spirits. Such a scientist was William James, driven almost to suicide by despair over determination, and saved by the realization of the naturalness of faith and freedom in the natural world. Into such a scientist grew also the adolescent, sex-troubled Havelock Ellis, lifted up from the depths by a mystic translation of the empty determinism of a world-machine into the overflowing Beauty of a Living Whole of Nature. This translation, which took place in the Australian wilds when Ellis was nineteen years old, was his vision on the road to Damascus, as genuine a religious conversion as any the tradition glorifies. It was effected by a reading of James Hinton, who gave him the bright vision of Nature as Life, in place of the dark gospel he had taken from David Strauss that Nature was only a Machine. Enlightened through Hinton, Ellis discovered that "to see the world as Beauty is the whole end of living." By this discovery Ellis was once and for all joined in his ultimate views with the *literati* rather than with the scientists—with John Addington Symonds and the decade's other heirophants of "the religion of Beauty"; with Nietzsche, with Vaihinger, with Le Gaultier, and the other sick souls who, unable to endure as real

Ellis's new could thus be Ellis's own. His attitude, not his matter, set its worth.

... In no fundamental sense (declares Mr. Peterson) did Havelock Ellis develop after 1878. . . . By nineteen his life work was chosen, his habits of thought established and his attitude toward the universe finally crystallized. . . . Since then he has not suffered from the inner conflicts which naive materialism has sown through modern thought. . . . For a full half century he has been a gracious anomaly in a sulky world.

I wish Mr. Peterson had been in a position to lay bare in its deeps and shallows the stream of feeling and ratiocination which he says came to a mirroring calm of life in 1878. That he could not, is, of course, no fault of his. Partly, the fact that he was dealing with a personality still alive prevented him—while autobiography can be candid, and sometimes is, biography of the living never seems to be; and partly there is the reticence and incommunicativeness of this personality itself. Much of Mr. Peterson's material comes from Ellis himself, but it seems all shining surface, all ideas and ideologies and arguments, without an inwardness. It carries no suggestion of a third dimension, no volume and perspective whence the realization of a personality can come. The externals, the top facets and last terms of the man's quality are obvious and simple enough. So is the movement of his intellect among characters, thoughts, and things. But there is no hint of a living *more* beneath. And it may be that there is nothing more. Ellis's admirers, of course, are properly loth to believe this. Whether there be such a *more* or not, the consequence to Mr. Peterson's book of its lack by implication or suggestion is that it makes an effect of logical rather than psychological insight. We see the man cinematographically, as he moves and speaks, but get no vision of his springs. We note, for example, that he is Henry H. Ellis in his beginnings, H. Havelock Ellis in his struggles; and at last Havelock Ellis in his security; but we are shown nothing of the changes of association and mood, of the modifications of the sense of personality which these apparently trivial yet really crucial alterations in the items of one's name imply.

And so throughout the book. We are shown the spring of a sailor father and a Methodist and very much his mother's son, shy, taci-

turn, frail, and religious, given to prodigious reading and writing,—we are shown prodigious quotations from youthful notebooks—and causing concern about his health. We see him taken on a voyage round the world for his health's sake, but left in Australia, a boy of sixteen, vexed by the problems of his adolescence, in despair of his faith through his readings of David Strauss. We see him on the Australian steppes, teaching school and finding at last through Hinton's "Life in Nature" an anodyne to Strauss. We read that his attitude changes from rebellion to acquiescence; we see him dedicating himself to the study of sex. We see him coming to a philosophy of life in which all things work together to the glory of the Lord, where the perverse and the different are accepted as items belonging as truly in the same "Beauty" as the correct and the customary same. We are shown him, returned to England, teaching school, studying medicine, editing works of belles lettres and science, doing his part with essay, introduction, and review to naturalize fresh and unaccustomed themes and styles and writers in the English-speaking world. We see him trying his hand at reforming society and dropping it. We note a friendship with Olive Schreiner, and his companionate marriage with Edith Lees. We read of his agreeing to collaborate with Addington Symonds in the study of sexual inversion and of the assault by the highly moral British police power upon the careful and reticent book which resulted. We read of his friendship with Arthur Symons and his collaboration with him and Beardsley and others on the *Savoy Magazine*. And all the time he studies and writes on sex, and publishes—now through an American publisher. He assembles his occasional pieces into books—"The New Spirit," "Affirmations," and so on, to "The Dance of Life." Apart from quotations, and the exposition of Ellis's ideology, we learn hardly anything more than we might from "Who's Who." There is nothing in the account to show why and how, though the flaming souls of the esthetic 1890s with whom Ellis came to maturity burn out and die, Ellis's light grows, slowly, steadily, so that to-day he is the sage of a modern generation of—more or less—esthetes.

The reason, I presume to guess, is simply this paradox. It is that Ellis is essentially a man of glowings rather than sparkles, a slow fire, but a steady one. His attitude signifies more, far more than his matter. The bulk of Mr. Peterson's book can well be a quotation if, as I am inclined to believe, that he has in the quotation indeed set forth the man; that in fact there isn't any more than the quotations represent. To me, Ellis's matter is commonplace. On the theme of sex, for example, I find no distillation of an *elixir d'amour*. So far as I can see, Ellis has neither discovered anything nor innovated anything. Mostly, he has assembled and put together the novelties and discoveries of others. But he has done so without excitement and without emphasis. He has acquiesced in the data of experience as they have come under his eye. He has recorded them with sympathy, but without praise or blame. And this attitude of accepting the facts of sex for what they are, as one accepts the weather, is a liberating one in the English-speaking world. Toward the variants and novelties in the arts, his posture has been similar. It can guide those who read him to understand without embracing, to judge without condemning; and to save them from taking particular causes too seriously, even the cause of their own inward lives.

Now to a generation wearied with too much knowing, too effectful doing, and the burnt-out passions of war, the gospel of Ellis is a release. Life comes easier as a dance than as a battle, and the appreciation of its corybantic essence, by one who since he grew up has apparently never himself stepped a measure with his feet, provides an ultimate justification for the moods and modes of a jazz age. But in Ellis himself, as I see it, his attitude is one of surrender. His freedom is a withdrawal, a giving up of the battle. If he is an anomaly it is because he leaves it to the Nature that drew him down into the depths to lift him in the due flood of her tides, to the heights. If he seems gracious it is because he has no will to run away from the one or to run toward the other. Fundamentally, depths and heights are to him *made* things, universal fictions and pretenses, that Nature fabricates for our entertainment and that the initiate who enters an acquiescent harmony with

enjoy for himself. The intellectual formulation of this view Ellis derives from Nietzsche, Le Gaultier, and Vaihinger; its emotional tone is his own. In some moods its quality approaches the supreme nonchalance of Tao; in most it is coincident with the traditional acquiescence in the will of the lord—Thine, not mine, be done. . . . "The mystic explanation of the Universe is the ultimate explanation and the largest."

Which may be so. But so or not, it shares in the history of thought the fate of all formulæ that make a spectacle or an illusion of men's daily lives. The "invented" scene becomes infinitely more important than the inventing force; Taoism, Buddhism, and all of the other religions of disillusion, restore to an infinitely more potent status of reality the panorama of existence which they begin by dissolving into fictions and pretenses. For healthy-minded men and women, for ages and civilizations not too disturbed by fear, we are not such stuff as dreams are made on. To the healthy-minded, the discriminations and syntheses which reason discovers or makes and tradition consolidates, the valuations which feelings set up and convention crystallizes, are reality and not fiction, not illusion. But a generation confused and terrified by too much knowledge, sinking in the depths of an experience so rich and varied as to feel overwhelming, a generation fear-ridden and weakened in will, seems always to require some mystical hidden reality, some all-uniting All to guarantee security without effort, salvation without work. It is to such a generation, sinking in such depths, that Havelock Ellis is in our time a light.

Come Into the Office

(Continued from preceding page)

self extremely busy. To comment upon her capacity one has only to state that she can take Mr. Morley's dictation without spoiling a single pun. Mr. Morley excels in dictation. He becomes expansive. He is apt to say the most astonishing things. He makes all sorts of rare quotations, which Miss Silver patiently pursues. When he has

Hollender, who most amiably and competently takes on where Miss Silver has left off. Miss Hollender has as neighbor the most constantly bombarded member of the staff, Mr. Blaney, the book-keeper, whose good humor is proof against ever repeated demands on the petty cash box!

That is Miss Force, out at the telephone desk. She is the model to whom all telephone operators should repair. She actually never loses her temper. Miss Force will also send telegrams for you, and cablegrams (Mr. Benét is always cabling England), and get you a messenger. Well, there you have most of us. But we were going to tell you why it is hard to get you good book reviews.

In the first place, look at those shelves. At this season of the year they don't look so formidable. But by the early Fall they will be groaning. Each book has to be considered on its merits. Someone qualified to handle it has to be thought of. Then there are two considerations. If the person is an untried authority,—no matter how great an authority he is, can he write so that you will be interested in reading what he writes? Will he have time to write a book-review? Will he be one of those low, mercenary characters who want large prices for their work? Will he send in his copy before next February? There are many other cognate questions to be considered.

There is the question also of the drastic discarding of books, one has to weed them down to a number of important ones, and one has to keep in mind that manuscript file (Miss Loveman's bane), which, unless one keeps the number of books sent out for review down to a reasonable number, is sure to fill up with manuscripts that it will take months to run off in publication. Then there is the question of timeliness. The editors are always reproaching each other about this. "How about so-and-so's book,—Good Lord, that ought to have been reviewed *months* ago!"

Then there are our visitors. We love them. We love them too well. We love to sit and talk of anything and everything. So do they. We love to go out to lunch. So do they. After all, one must live as well as read books. Thus much pleasant

(Continued on page 5)

Foursquare to All the Wids

A HISTORY OF LLOYD'S. By CELES WRIGHT and C. ERNEST FAYLE. New York:

Reviewed by H. M. TOMLINSON

THIS is an official history, but it ou not to be dismissed as we rightly dismissory officially breathed into us as the il of stuff which officials suppose is good enough freaders who will accept whatever bears an officiaamp. This history is different. The Corporan of Lloyd's, though more circumspect than moadmiralities, and though it shows an odd preferere for the evidence of skilled surveyors, actuaries, ; navigators over the warm imaginings of mereinterested people, has an unusual reputation to intain. Its book must be as good as its bond. Forloyd's, though it guards its sanctuary from curioeyes as jealously as a banker his strong room, has ner forgotten that it grew out of the humane aciations of a coffee house, where there was tobac smoke, and talk of ships and commerce.

Lloyd's, after Lombard Street, went to e Royal Exchange; and now from there it has ne to a new palace on the site once occupied byie headquarters of the East India Company. (here are two references to Elia in this book, whic includes also the reproduction of a laconic ge from "Lloyd's List of 1912" concerning th *Titanic*, and of a gem of a drawing by Thomas alton the younger, showing Leadenhall Street in Lnb's time, with the front of the famous house, andie ghostly tower of St. Michael's in Cornhill in e distance, and a tavern on the spot now occupied l the home of the P. & O. Company—where thenit is plain, one could get Choice Pine Apple Rus; the last rare illustration by the leave of the cretary of State for India, who is indeed, on this ount alone, a right honorable gentleman.)

There was, I remember, an air of mystery and exclusiveness about Lloyd's in the Roy. Exchange, which suppressed even the cheerful abadon of visiting shipping clerks, a breed not givei in any part of the world to taking no for an aswer. But Lloyd's dried them up. They were difdent enough inside that building. I myself used to eel it would be impious to venture within the barrier; indeed knew I should be put outside if I did No. You gave the name of the underwriter you desired to meet, and then you heard his name rolled sonorously down courts and corridors, by a functionary with a noble voice from a ros'um, much as you will hear a name called of some'ne at the Last Judgment. Since then I have been' lloved within the barrier, and have been even fav'ed with peeps into documents which made me fee' I was profane to turn them about, and I envie' then whoever would have the privilege to explor' Lloyd's for its history.

Here it is, and done in the way' it deserved. It satisfies one's informed interest, bu it does not recognize the eagerness of vulgar c'iosity; yet, beginning in the tobacco smoke of a lace where ships were sold "by the candle," it is arm and human, and properly fastens on any perso ality whose original activities did something to b' d up the character of a community of men wh a was devoted to a peculiar task; we ought not to withhold the tribute of genius from some of th far-seeing men, such as John Julius Angerstein, rederick William Marten, and Cuthbert Eden He.

But it is much too long and tricate a story for a brief summary here. Everybc' knows of the beginning of Lloyd's, and that th' name now is commonly used as an assurance o he virtue of anything that is above doubt; jus we use the word "sterling," which comes to us' can a much earlier association of merchants whose okens or coins once set a sound standard in traffi ing. To-day the name of Lloyd's is used to des gnate the just character and superior work of many shipping companies flying the flags of man nationalities, a fact which would surprise the ori ginal Edward Lloyd, who began with a coffee ho use in Tower Street, somewhere about 1680, and l moved to Lombard Street in 1691.

If there be any doubting person who resents the position now occupied by the Corporation of Lloyd's Register (wholly distinct and independent bodies, yet with a common origin) in the world of shipping, and occupied with su

authority, and who supposes that this honorable position is but a matter of chance which might be easily rectified by a body of energetic rebels with plenty of money and brains, then he had better carefully consult this history. It will free him of an illusion.

It was chance, if you like, which put Lloyd's where it is, a long row of chances, but they were all taken and established in a way which at least seems to be immovable. The truth is, Lloyd's is more than a great body of special knowledge having peculiar privileges, gained by long experience, and exploited by the gentlemen who now control its affairs. It is not easy to-day to imagine another body which could hope to rival it, for though knowledge and experience cannot be monopolized—anyone may have them who can gain them—an honorable reputation, which has stood more than two centuries of shattering tests, cannot be got along with brand-new business premises. To obtain it means much more than keeping a bond; for Lloyd's has shown, not merely that it will keep its word, but that, because of its name, when a searching time arrived, it would go further than the bond would exact. Therefore to-day merchants and others who would rather not carry their own risks in bold chal-



*SPEAK, Oman, less recent 'Fragmentary fossil.
Primal pioneer of Pliocene formation,
Hid in lowest drifts below the earliest strata
Of volcanic tufa!*

*Older than the beasts, the oldest Pulaotherium;
Older than the trees, the oldest Cryptogamia;
Older than the hills, those infantile eruptions
Of Earth's epidermis.*

*No-Mio-Plio - whatever the "cene" was
That these vacant sockets filled with awe and wonder*

Facsimile of the first page of the original manuscript of "The Pliocene Skull," by Bret Harte.

(From a catalogue of the Anderson Galleries.)

lenge under the hanging sword of fate—wise men—prefer to shield themselves under Lloyd's, where the general average of risks and accidents has been so well estimated that, whatever happens, fate surely can be met, if not mocked.

Woe, all the same, to the cunning who imagine that, within the privacy of an unbroken horizon, we will say, with no eye but that of Heaven to obscure them, they may play the fool with a ship, and then appeal to Lloyd's to be borne up on their policy. It may, as we say—no doubt it has—occasionally—"come off," but there is an amusing account in this book of the foundering of certain Greek and Spanish ships after the war, and these wrecks do not give one much hope that Lloyd's with its eyes of Argus, and a very unfriendly understanding of the ways of anarchs, would fail to notice one's clever mishandling, apparently well out of sight, of a venture secretly bound to perversity. Another thing which becomes plain, in the reading of this book, is that—how one's ignorance or half-knowledge feels the slight!—an understanding of ships and maritime commerce which can act on instinct is no more easily acquired than the gait and complexion of a mariner of the fourth generation.

"Bernard Shaw's new book ('Communism and Socialism for the Intelligent Woman') certainly adds something to the literature of the Index," says the London *Observer*. Here are a few of the headings under which the contents are classified:

Actresses, Acrobats, Baked-potato merchants, Blacklegs, Bogies, Calcutta sweep, Charwomen, Devil, Eugenics, Fox-hunting, Gin Lane, Harakiri, Infallibility, Krupp's, Lunatic asylums, Mormons, Nightingales, Plumbers, Polygamy, Prima donnas, Prize-fighters, Restaurants, Silk stockings, Tariffs, Thugs, Vacuum-cleaners, Yahoos, Zanzibar.

A Tragic Story

BLACK DEMOCRACY. By H. P. DAVIS.

New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. 1928. \$5.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

IT was high time somebody did the job Mr. H. P. Davis has had the energy and public spirit to do here—give a brief, comprehensive history of the little-known republic of Haiti; an objective account of the American intervention and occupation; and a reminder to an indifferent American public and a dilatory government, of promises made and responsibilities undertaken and still unfulfilled.

Mr. Davis went to Haiti during the war in connection with an ambitious project to grow cotton on the island. The cotton grew right enough, but an unsuspected pest grew with it, and a potential fortune was eaten up almost overnight. In the twelve years since then, during which Mr. Davis has lived in Haiti, as representative of the American syndicate originally interested, and head of the American Chamber of Commerce in Port au Prince, he has had ample time to indulge his taste for burrowing into all sorts of Haitiana and acquainting himself with the history and conditions, past and present, of that charming, if unhappy, isle.

"Black Democracy" is one of the results. The first part traces the history of the island from Columbus down—its spacious days as the richest French colony; the black revolt and independence under Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe; and on down through the long string of presidents, most of whom were killed or driven out by their successors, until that final explosion which resulted in the hacking to pieces of President Sam, on July 28, 1915, after he had been dragged from the French Legation, and the landing of the American Marines. Against this background, of which the average American newspaper-reader knows nothing, Mr. Davis traces the story of the occupation until the late winter of the present year, and concludes with a close-up examination of just what the Americans are doing in Haiti to-day, and some suggestions of his own as to what ought to be done.

It is a tragic story, and a story which could be splashed with all sorts of Afro-French and ribbean color, tropical sunshine, tears, and blood, but Mr. Davis, although the brother of the redoubtable dramatist, Owen Davis, who is said to have written more melodramas than anybody in history, states only what seem to him the bare facts, and his narrative is as impersonal and concrete as an engineer's report.

Briefly, he takes a middle-ground, as is likely to be the case in any bitterly controversial issue of which one knows the real facts, between those who hail the intervening Americans in Haiti as liberating angels and those who damn them as devils and bloodthirsty conspirators. In general, as has happened so often in our Caribbean adventures, our errors, he believes, are those of omission rather than commission; our mistakes not so much those of policy as of lack of policy, of drifting and muddling along without any plan or any suitable machinery. The result, as he sees it, has been, that in spite of the good roads, sanitation, economies of all sorts, and the fact that the great mass of Haitians—the ninety per cent. or ninety-five per cent. of inarticulate peasants who have always been regarded as so many negligible domestic animals by their own small but often highly-cultured élite—now enjoy more real liberty than ever before, almost nothing had been done toward preparing the conscious minority for governing the island themselves.

This lack of plan and suitable machinery and of any continuing intelligence in Washington has characterized our interference in Haiti's affairs from the very beginning. "The United States assumed definite obligations toward the Haitian people but failed to incorporate in the treaty specific authority for the responsible agents nominated by the President of the United States." During the six years of the occupation that had elapsed up to the time the Senate Committee made its report in 1922, there "had been half a dozen chiefs of the Latin-American division and many changes in the office of the chief of the gendarmerie of Haiti." It was several years before any action was taken toward the promised loan, and still longer before anything was done to change the antiquated Haitian customs law. The