

unity of Western civilization is more significant than its differences, the world-wide influence of the machine age is more important for thinking than its particular effects in America, and it is more profitable to consider the American as a modern man, differentiated in his environment, different in his outlook, and yet subject to the same cultural and social influences as the European, than to make of him a new invention, strange to the world. Skies change but not the man—at least not so much as Count Keyserling thinks.

## Sherman, Soldier and Man

SHERMAN: SOLDIER, REALIST, AMERICAN. By CAPT. B. H. LIDDELL-HART. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1929. \$5.

Reviewed by A. HOWARD MENEELY  
Dartmouth College

IT is not often that one comes upon a biography that is so well done as this book. Nearly every page bears evidence of the fact that it is the product of painstaking and exhaustive research, mature thought, and an expert understanding of the subject in hand. There is no attempt to jazz up the narrative, no withholding of criticism, no effusive laudation. Frankness is as characteristic of the author's presentation as it was of Sherman himself. One has the feeling that this is precisely the sort of a study that the redoubtable old soldier would have most appreciated.

Captain Liddell-Hart presents very convincingly the thesis that throughout his life Sherman was a hard-headed realist. At a time when many, perhaps a good majority, of the public men in America, were being governed by instinct, passions, political expediencies, or ambition, Sherman with unfailing consistency insisted upon using reason as his guide. Whether the problem concerned California Vigilantes, slavery, foreign affairs, war, or what not, his approach was always by the same route. "His consistency," says Captain Liddell-Hart, "is seen to be almost unparalleled among the great figures of history, and for the reason that none was more governed by reason and less influenced by instinct."

In the spring of 1861 when Washington was full of talk of a ninety-day war, a sort of military picnic, Sherman was "more statesmanlike than the statesmen." Fresh from the South he knew the temper of its people and was convinced that the country was in for "a long war . . . much longer than any politician thinks." The calling out of three-months' militia struck him as ridiculous, and he declined to have anything to do with them. Not until three-years' volunteers were called for would he accept a commission, and when he did enter the service it was with no illusions that the war would be "an impassioned and glorious adventure." "War is cruelty and you cannot refine it," Sherman once said, and from the beginning to the end he prosecuted it on that premise. He directed his military force with unrelenting severity primarily against the civil population of the South, not because he bore any ill-feeling against the people, but because he believed that the end to be attained—a restoration of peace and order—could be most quickly reached by bringing to the very doors of Southern homes the terrors of war. Of the general's reasoning in this connection, the author says:

It was logical, and due to reasoning that was purely logical, that he should first oppose war; then, conduct it with iron severity; and, finally, seize the first real opportunity to make a peace of complete absolutism. He cared little that his name should be execrated by the people of the South if he could only cure them of a taste for war. And to cure them he deliberately aimed at the non-combatant foundation of the hostile spirit instead of at its combatant roof. He cared as little that this aim might violate a conventional code of war, for so long as war was regarded as a chivalrous pastime, and its baseness obscured by a punctilious code of war, so long would it be invested with a halo of romance. . . . In Sherman's view law and war were two opposed states, and war began when law broke down. In other words, war was primarily an anarchical state of mind and only secondarily a matter of physical blows. Here we see the deeper meaning underlying Sherman's phrase "war is only justifiable among civilized nations to produce peace." In logic and in fact, people make war, armies merely end it. The corollary of this deduction was expressed in Sherman's declaration "Therefore, I had to go through Georgia and let them see what war meant."

Just as Sherman's realism led him to the conclusion that the grand strategy of the war lay in striking at "the non-combatant foundation of the hostile spirit," so also it led him to the conclusion that the blow should be struck from the West. His

campaigns in the Mississippi Valley and his march to the sea were directed to that end and it is undoubtedly true, as the author asserts, that Sherman's work in 1864 was largely responsible for the saving of the Union in that critical election year and the collapse of the Confederacy early in the next.

Captain Liddell-Hart has traced Sherman's movements in the field from the first Bull Run débâcle on through to the surrender of General Joe Johnston in North Carolina in April, 1865. In many instances, notably in the case of Shiloh, he presents fresh critical analyses and observations which will be of particular interest to students of military history, but so smooth and clear is the narrative that even the lay reader will find the accounts of battles, marches, and strategy of absorbing interest. The description of Sherman's march to the sea, "the greatest march in modern history," is the best account of its kind that this reviewer has ever read.

While the major portion of the book is necessarily devoted to military affairs, Sherman himself is never lost sight of. In fact, the character and personality of the man stand out very vividly. Many will be surprised to learn that he was really not the devil in a blue uniform after all! Despite his hard, realistic philosophy of war and his ruthless invasion



GENERAL WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN.

of Georgia and the Carolinas, he had a tender, even lovable, side and was generous, honest, and loyal. He commanded the affection of his troops as well as their respect and confidence. He was no seeker after popularity and honors as were most of the Civil War generals. Lincoln himself was no more chivalrous and charitable in victory than he, and General Johnston's presence as a pall-bearer at his old enemy's funeral was a touching tribute to Sherman's magnanimity in granting terms of surrender. He wanted no punitive measures to follow the laying down of Confederate arms.

. . . it is only those who have never heard a shot, never heard the shriek and groans of the wounded and lacerated (friend or foe), that cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation. . . . I declare before God, as a man and a soldier, I will not strike a foe who stands unarmed and submissive before me, but would rather say—"Go, and sin no more."

No one deplored more the outrageous processes of reconstruction than Sherman; no one had a more unwavering contempt for the vengeful politicians who engineered it.

It is to be hoped that this book will have a wide reading in the South as well as in the North, for it is by all odds the best analysis of General Sherman and his work that has yet appeared. It may not make friends of those who have been his foes, but it will at least afford a better understanding of the man and his motives.

"Some of the adventures described in Richard Hughes's 'Innocent Voyage' sound almost incredible," says *John o' London's Weekly*, "but they are nevertheless founded on fact. Furthermore, they are founded on the same facts as Joseph Conrad's 'Romance,' although Mr. Hughes did not know it at the time."

## In Greenwich Village

I THOUGHT OF DAISY. By EDMUND WILSON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

IT seems that there are some advantages—advantages of detachment from current literary gossip—in being a provincial person. At any rate, Mr. Wilson's novel found its way to the present reviewer rather because of his provincial innocence, or ignorance, than because of any critical faculties he may now and then be supposed to possess. For this novel, it was not too darkly hinted, is a *roman à clef*—which it would perhaps be wiser to have judged on other, less personal, grounds.

So be it.

"I Thought of Daisy" is a carefully composed, somewhat sluggish narrative, written in the first person, directly under the influence of the late Marcel Proust. It contains four admirably realized major characters: the "I" of the narrative, a young editor and writer; Rita Cavanagh, a distinguished poet; Hugo Bauman, a radical novelist; and Daisy, a former chorus girl, and immediate drifter among the coiling eddies of a swirling sexual emancipation. The portrait of Daisy is brilliantly executed. She exists in three dimensions, quite independently of the derivative analysis and involved stylistic pattern that flows viscously around, yet cannot submerge, her. Moreover, there are three or four minor characters—types of the Greenwich Village of day before yesterday—which contrive to wriggle forth unscathed from the boa-like convolutions of Mr. Wilson's not too happily borrowed style.

Mr. Wilson is an excellent critic of contemporary life and letters; he makes just and subtle discriminations; he has an interesting mind. Furthermore, he sees men and woman not as trees walking but as individuals, and he can sharply project them before us. He has traces of humor, too, and a pretty wit. In short, this is one of the most promising and at the same time most annoying first novels which have lately been given us. When he has thoroughly digested his Proust, and recovered his equanimity, there is every reason to believe that he will give us a novel, or novels, worth cherishing—because entirely his own.

## At Last—Colette

CHÉRI. By COLETTE. Translated by JANET FLANNER. New York: A. & C. Boni. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE M. PURDY, JR.

COLETTE is something of an institution in France, and it is perhaps more than ordinarily surprising that she is so little known in English outside the pages of *Vanity Fair*. Holding a special position, half literary, half social, and depending wholly upon her unique personality, her work has been for years more popular than that of any other woman in France. "Chéri" is one of her best books, belonging to the pre-war vintage, and containing all the qualities which make her work notable. The tale is simple enough and though it caused some little excitement in its day will scarcely be considered shocking at this late date.

Chéri is the son of a dancer at the Opera more notable for her business ability with her lovers than for her choreographic prowess. At an early age Léa, a near contemporary of his mother, becomes interested in him, takes the spoiled youth to the country, and more or less reclaims him. Eventually she falls in love with him; their liaison, in which she, of course, furnishes all material inducements, lasts for several years. Finally he makes up his mind to marry, only to find that the attraction exerted by this woman so much older than himself is too strong to permit any happiness with his young wife. He returns to Léa,—but the spell is broken and he sees her as she is, an old woman in love, with neither charm nor dignity.

The taste of all this is bitter-sweet, and might have been unpleasant without the undoubted magic of Colette's style. The types are good, the atmosphere is incredibly good, and Chéri himself is one of those admitted marvels that come but once in a career even to such authors as Colette. Miss Flanner's translation retains with surprising success the very *article de Paris* tone of the original, and ought to do much towards making a unique person known in America.



## A Worker of Ill

BORGIA. By ZONA GALE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by DONALD DAVIDSON

IN her essay, "Beauty and the Commonplace," Zona Gale wrote: "The fiction of the future will realize angels in the commonplace," and she wisely qualified the prophecy: "But unless the novelist looks alive he is going to express merely the grotesquerie of the effort to seek it (the beauty of the commonplace)." With all possible respect for the scrupulous fineness of her work, it seems necessary to say that Miss Gale's new novel strikes nearer to the grotesquerie than it does to the angels. A novelist theorizes at his peril. He is in danger not only of having his maxims quoted against him, but of letting preoccupation with theory corrupt his practice. Whether or not this has happened to Miss Gale, "Borgia," at any rate, reads as if the novelist were determined for pure sake of argument to illustrate her principles with the most unpromising material available.

In one thing "Borgia" is refreshing: it reverses the stock situation of the modern novel, in which young men and women commonly go around being hurt by the universe. The Marfa of this book, an egotistic little beast of the Middle West, gives far more wounds than she receives, or so she imagines. It is her unhappiness innocently to strew harm wherever she goes. Should she so much as cough inadvertently, a big strong man falls dead.

Though Marfa was "a glorious child," evil was in her from the first. Other children fell off porches and broke their own legs. Marfa fell off and lamed the dog, herself remaining intact. Her runaway pony injured her mother, not Marfa. Her jack-o'-lantern set a neighbor's porch on fire. When she dressed up as a ghost, she frightened a pregnant woman and caused a still-birth.

Adult disasters were more serious. Paul Barker, a nice young man, went to Stella's house with Marfa. He caught diphtheria from Stella's children and died. To Max Garvin she said, "Oh, don't wait. Come on over tonight." Max's car ran into a truck, and Max was left paralyzed for life. Marfa engaged a woman to clean house. The woman was captured into tragical marriage by a loitering mechanic. Marfa argued the family into going to the Dells for a picnic, and little Cousin Ben got drowned. Marfa told Lina Burwell to stir the fire. Out flew a spark into Lina's eye and finished the eye. Even when Marfa, recognizing her dangerousness, tried not to influence anybody, results were still fatal. She declined to interfere in the life of the rook's daughter. Disconsolate, the poor negress moped about and finally killed herself. (This must be the sole instance in literature of negro suicide.) Marfa flirted with Mr. Bartholomew, who straightway divorced his wife. Marfa tried not to run over the squirrel in the road, but when she looked back, there he lay dead. Marfa destroyed her father's faith in himself. Marfa made Maud Brand so furiously jealous that she died of heart failure; but this instance ought not to be counted, for Maud, poor splenetic thing, was better off dead.

Yet Marfa was not a true Borgia, because she had a conscience. Dutifully she blamed herself for the tale of misfortunes, nobly refusing to let anybody else take the credit. Her awful ways worried her. She bothered friends and family by asking, almost too proudly, "Why am I like that?" Nobody could answer satisfactorily. The amorous Mr. Bartholomew murmured Freudian speculations. Max Garvin said, "Get your body polarized to draw the good and not the ill." Laurence Brand, sensible male, said "I love you," and presumably embraced her—though the book leaves the matter in doubt and gives no absolute assurance that Marfa's fatal activities are destined to be made less fatal by love.

The novel tempts one to think that Miss Gale may intend to burlesque the moderns who, as Stark Young says, whine about life. But the book is too solemn for parody, and too much skill is lavished on it. More probably there is some ethical intent. It may be the high problem of whether one wishing to do good may involuntarily produce ill, in which case we should have something like a Sophoclean irony, reduced to a humdrum Mid-Western scale. Or it may be a study of the modern fault of taking

oneself too seriously, for Marfa is incapable of understanding the operation of contingency in mortal affairs.

Under any interpretation "Borgia" does not discover the tragedy or the beauty of the commonplace. The case is too hypothetical, and it is overstated. We may be fully prepared to believe that Main Street is romantic, but sheer technique plus protestation will not alone convince us that a grocer's daughter is a queen of tragedy. Fine craftsmanship only makes matters worse, in this case. It is like using a steel crane to hoist a package of chewing gum. For that matter, the style like the argument is overdone. It is appalling to be afflicted with terrific niceties at the most banal moments, to be burdened with the intricacies of unimportant acts, to be obliged to notice that people wipe their feet on the doormat with a profound expression. Even a lump of sugar becomes painfully dramatic: "She accepted with the fervor of some escape, and took three lumps, as if in sheer refuge." Such a to-do over nothing only makes grotesque what was intended to be exact and perfect, and one is alarmed with the thought that Miss Gale is enamoured with the technique of science, not of art.

## An Outline of Adventure

(Continued from page 437)

Mr. Kipling and Mr. Chesterton who would pretend that adventure lies all about us. Alas! no. As Tom Sawyer saw so clearly, "Adventure must start with running away from home." Yet everyone is born an adventurer and hence our heartfelt if sneaking sympathy with the great villains.

Mr. Bolitho gives the adventurer much. Adventure he sees standing at the beginning of states, institutions, civilizations as of most careers. There is thus a sociological slant to his study. "History is jolted along with great breaches of law and order, by adventurers. . . ."

The first adventurer was a nuisance; he left the tribal barricade open to the risk of the community when he left to find out what made that noise in the night. I am sure he acted against his mother's, his wife's, and the council of old men's strict orders, when he did it. But it was he that found where the mammoths die and where after a thousand years of use there was still enough ivory to equip the whole tribe with weapons. Such is the ultimate outline of the adventurer; Society's benefactor as well as pest.

He develops the grammar of adventure, rule by rule, each subject yielding a new principle. Casanova, for example, contributes as his gospel and policy: *Fata viam inveniunt. Volentem ducit, nolentem trahit*. Or, Fate finds the way. Life leads its lover, betrays its rebel. The first, and less important, stems from the Stoics. The second comes, as might be suspected, from a high source, a lost tragedy of Euripides. Mr. Bolitho finds in them the best epitome "of the purest tradition of adventure." Here is "all the comfort of fatalism without its enervating effects."

The essay on Columbus—one of the best in the volume—leads to a full-length examination of the nature of this Fate who presides over the lives of adventurers. Mr. Bolitho has it in for Christopher and if his version lacks something in justice it more than compensates therefor in wisdom and entertainment. By electing to believe at critical points the most unfavorable versions of the great discoverer's career, he reduces his real adventure to one fact—that he was a "tremendous outsider." "Until his last voyage it is very doubtful if he could even use a quadrant. He knew no more of navigation than any able-bodied seaman." "His was the triumph of the unqualified . . . the man who pushed his way in and did what others with the right were soberly, competently, conscientiously planning to do; the patron example of the crank and the amateur." It is his genius for salesmanship which most impresses Mr. Bolitho who laments that the world will never learn to beware of "these stately gentlemen with the fixed, calm look straight in your eyes, who never joke, and never waver." The first triumphal trip of Columbus across Spain in 1493 from Palos to Barcelona, with his procession of Caribs and parrots, was a great and successful show. When he tried to repeat two years later he was jeered at or ignored. Which leads Mr. Bolitho suddenly to come to grips with this Fate which he has been observing off-stage. He cries:

It is time to stop and be indignant. Not content with her disgraceful choice of a swollen-headed, lying, incompetent, and utterly unsuitable soft-goods salesman for the greatest favor she ever showed to her favorite Europeans, this Fate

we are studying after allows herself to be caught outside her cloud playing such an odious joke upon him. There is a schoolboy bad taste, a giggling irresponsibility about the way he has been made a fool of, which, so far from being funny, fills us with deep panic, since we, too, are mortals and ask of our gods at least to be grown-up.

And for a conclusion upon this interesting effort at identification, he reaches the theory that coherent injustice was the presiding genius of this career. For what else can explain the choice of this unqualified one for the greatest of voyages, the killing off of the mild Caribs and their baleful revenge wreaked not only in the veins of their enemies, the Spaniards, but equally upon the innocent German, English, and French who never had a chance to harm them.

What if this injustice were the very life of adventure? The man who puts his stake on the roulette board does not want justice, or his stake back unaltered. Justice for Christopher is a small shop in Genoa, or it may be a foot of wall in a Portuguese jail for fraudulent bankruptcy, or a hole in the ooze at the bottom of the sea, somewhere a few leagues out from the Canaries. Justice for Alexander is another dagger such as killed his father; for Casanova a horse-whipping, or a lifelong judgment of alimony. In this light, adventure is an excited appeal for injustice; the adventurer's prayer is "Give us more than our due."

A juster and surely a singularly acute essay on Woodrow Wilson concludes the volume. Perhaps we should admit that William Bolitho is our favorite, we had almost said our only, writer on the Great War. We must admit, too, that Mr. Bolitho at times oversimplifies his material to make his point. But, after all, that is the universal process of history, and it is a tribute to the greatness of Wilson that an English writer should thus soon begin this process. The essay is a good example of the Bolitho method. It begins rather slowly with much divagation upon democracy—and better analysis thereof it would be hard to find—proceeds somewhat wandringly, almost, for a page or two, turgidly, through the early career of the President, and then suddenly, not by any trick, but by sheer artistry of imaginative drama focuses the whole long introduction upon a single point of time, the moment when Wilson arrived in Paris:

If Wilson stepping off the boat had announced, in the tone he once possessed, world-disarmament, British fleet and German, French army, and Italian submarines, Gibraltar, Malta, Aden dismantled, and with that the abandonment of all the tariff barriers of the world—those of his country first—as his unalterable terms, I am at perfect liberty to believe that he would have won through, and, with a larger destiny than any human being who ever lived, opened the doors to a new and fascinating prospect for the whole of his fellowmen. The common people wherever he walked screamed for him to do it; there was certainly a scream.

No one has ever had such cheers; I, who heard them in the streets of Paris, can never forget them in my life. I saw Foch pass, Clemenceau pass, Lloyd George, generals, returning troops, banners, but Wilson heard from his carriage something different, inhuman—or superhuman. Oh, the immovably shining, smiling man.

The reader is at liberty to believe that Mr. Bolitho's imagination here passed beyond the bounds of the possible, but he cannot avoid the sense of a great historical imagination creating the very stuff out of which great history is written.

Mr. Bolitho doubtless took an innocent pleasure in forming his squad to face the gods—Casanova elbowing Alexander, Mahomet cheek by cheek with Lola Montez, who helped make Munich the paradise that it is—Cataline between the two Napoleons, and Isadora Duncan (perhaps the most obvious choice in the volume) preceding Woodrow Wilson. Nor should the chapter on Charles XII be overlooked—it is one of the best, revealing perfectly that combination which is Bolitho, a romantic in his zest for what is new and fresh, in his unleashed imagination, in his readiness to sacrifice every minor grace for a living line, and a stern realist in his clear look upon the sins and virtues of men and gods.

## The Saturday Review of Literature

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