

his powers, and laid bare the poverty of his soul. . . . His courage did not consist in the fortitude of his mind: no great man was ever more pitifully dependent upon externals. He could recognize in others, as in Sir Thomas More, the virtue of being slow to ask for favors, but he could never refrain from asking for himself. In this he was typical of a shamelessly acquisitive age.

He was typical too in that he belonged to the "new men" who were "barely emerging from centuries of servitude, and the freemen of history have ever been the aptest servants of a servile state." "Yet he had a vision of better things and a mind and intellect to achieve them." "Few men . . . have afforded so striking an illustration of the demoralizing effects of irresponsible power." Yet one feels that Pollard is not condemning, rather that he has a certain pity for Wolsey and no little admiration for his skill. There is not a trace of that mocking exposure of those who lived before us that is the smart manner of our day, and so easy. It would have been simple for Pollard by one insinuating phrase after another to have made of Wolsey another such devil as Bacon has been made. Pollard is too old an historical hand not to make allowance for the difficulties and temptations of men in great position, not to see them as creatures of their time.

Pollard shows that in his earlier administration Wolsey did much for the development of the chancery, the star chamber, and the court of requests. But his

rank among English statesmen is due less to what he chose to do than to what he did in his own despite. In fact though not in form he was the first who wielded sovereignty in England because he ruled both church and state, but the monopoly he created could only accrue to the crown: and the greatest Roman of them all unwittingly conveyed the plenitude of papal power to an English king in an English parliament. Human design plays little part in human achievement: "he goes farthest," said Oliver Cromwell "who knows not whither he goes," and the fame as well as the infamy and perhaps the forgiveness of men depends not seldom on the fact that they know not what they do.

But while service to an England that was growing young as well as old redeemed both him and others from baser servitudes to meaner things, he never rose to service which is perfect freedom. . . . He craved not for a heart of grace but for the husks of glory. "Glorious," says Sir Thomas More, "was hee very farre above all measure, and that was great pitie: for it dyd harme and made him abuse many great gyftes which Godd had geven him."

". . . . For Thoughts"

PANSIES. By D. H. LAWRENCE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

FOR those who followed the tortuous—and tortured—progress of D. H. Lawrence, "Pansies" is one of his most significant books. Not poetically, for as poetry in any accepted sense, it is valueless. Not dramatically, for the struggle projected is the same as that which had preoccupied the sex-ridden genius since "Sons and Lovers." The novelty and the significance are in Lawrence's manner, in his abrupt change of style, and in the implied change of attitude toward his art.

The reader will have much to overcome before serious appraisal of this serious though casual catalogue of thoughts. He will have to swallow the title—the rendering of "Pensées" into "Pansies"—a word-play that made even this pun-addicted reviewer gag. He will have to live down his resentment of Lawrence's dubious mysticism and worse his downright didacticism. Most difficult of all, he will have to overcome his dislike of the graceless speech and bald idiom which Lawrence, fashioner of some of the loveliest passages of poetry-prose, uses throughout. For here, if ever, the style is the man. Here, in his first book of new poems in six years, Lawrence turned not merely away from grace but, snarlingly, upon it. Deliberately, with a disturbing persistence, he brought to a head—or a *reductio ad absurdum*—the argument begun in "Women in Love" and carried on more desperately but no more satisfactorily in "Aaron's Rod"—and in every novel since. Readers of these works will be familiar with the homiletic: The world has gone stale, feebly promiscuous, prettily fetid. Small spurts of lust instead of a long passion; talk instead of acts. The world has ceased to be masculine. Its discontent, like its nervous art, its soft-rotten culture, its middle-class malease, is all the outcome of womanishness. Women, pretending to need us, have used us up; women have destroyed us with merciless softness. All we cherish has become

effeminized, vitiated with the white poison of their approval and the black venom of their jealousy:

FEMALE COERCION

If men only fought outwards into the world women might be devoted and gentle.
The fight's got to go in some direction,
But when men turn Willy wet-legs,
women start in to make changes;
only instead of changing things that might be changed
they want to change the man himself
and turn the poor silk glove into a lusty sow's ear.
And the poor Willy wet-legs, the soft silk gloves,
how they hate the women's efforts to turn them into sow's ears!
The modern Circe-dam!

Elsewhere the note of revulsion is still more roughly communicated. These "palms" (Lawrence called them that) are not so much thought out as spat out. It is as if he were saying that, before we can be fully realized, free and masculine again we must get rid of the exquisite, the esthetically derived, speciously charming. Rhyme (so he seems to imply) is one of the effeminizing decorations; choice language is another; so is any intricacy of measure, delicacy of metre. Thus we find Lawrence writing as inelegantly as possible; running from metaphor except in a way that would delight Chic Sales; using rhyme only in rowdy music-hall stanzas. For example:

I read a novel by a friend of mine
in which one of the characters was me,
The novel it sure was mighty fine
but the funniest thing that could be

was me, or what was supposed for me,
for I had to recognize
a few of the touches, like a low-born jake,
but the rest was a real surprise. . . .

Or this, the conclusion of "Fight! O My Young Men—"

Think of the world that you're stifling in,
think what a world it might be!
Think of the rubbish you're trifling in
with enfeebled vitality.

And then, if you amount to a hill o' beans
start in and bust it all:
money, hypocrisy, greed, machines
that have ground you so small.

The defects here are obvious. But the chief trouble is neither the trumpery tune nor the crude syllables, but the attitude which prompted them. It is his conscious maleness which disturbs and threatens to pervert the artist. It is not, I add hastily, Lawrence's maleness which is harmful so much as his consciousness of it. In "A Room of One's Own," Virginia Woolf considering the matter of writing from a totally different angle comes to much the same conclusion. "It is fatal," she says,

for any one who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple. . . . The whole of the mind must lie wide open if we are to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness. There must be freedom and there must be peace.

It is the lack of peace which Lawrence instinctively resented and which kept him enslaved to his narrow freedom.

What, then, is significant about "Pansies?" Not the predetermined, bull-in-the-cultural-china-shop manner. Not the factitious "lighter" tone as the publisher calls it, for Lawrence was never more earnest. The significant thing was the new spirit that, wedged between the author's assertive vagaries, pointed to a new Lawrence. "A man should never earn his living; if he earns his life he'll be lovely." "Everything new and machine-made sucks life out of us and makes us lifeless the more we have." "The body of itself is clean but the caged mind pollutes." "If you want to have sex, you've got to trust, at the core of your heart, the other creature." "Great is my need to be chaste and apart, in this cerebral age." "From all the mental poetry of deliberate love-making, from all the false felicity of deliberate taking the body of another unto mine, O God deliver me!" "To-day we've got no sex—we have only cerebral excitations." "Mind-perverted, will-perverted, ego-perverted love." "Shall I tell you the new word of the unborn day? It is Resurrection."

Here we have had one of the most gifted and disintegrated writers of our day crying out for integration; here a genius of disorder reached out toward a new order and those old unities on which religion itself is based. If that is not significant what is?

Louis XI Again

THE SAINTS, THE DEVIL, AND THE KING. By M. L. MABIE. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB

Author of "The Life of Giovanni Boccaccio"

THE writer of a historical novel possesses one inestimable advantage over the writer of biography. In his delineating of some great character of the past he is not held in check by the all too frequently numerous lacunæ in the evidence. Not limited to known fact, he is much freer to reach out toward truth.

That this is so, is very well illustrated by Mr. M. L. Mabie's excellent portrayal of King Louis XI of France in his novel "The Saints, the Devil, and the King." Mr. Mabie has conceived Louis as a cold, ambitious, level-headed, and scheming character, as unscrupulous as a Borgia, as cowardly and at the same time as inwardly resolute as one of the later Visconti, moving as relentlessly and as fatally toward his objective as snake poison through a bitten person's veins. Legend supports him in this concept, and legend is, in turn it must be admitted, supported by tolerably credible evidence. But in history not all of this evidence is proven, and the conscientious historian would be handicapped thereby. The novelist, however, need not care for conscience. Louis, for example, is said to have poisoned his brother, Charles, Duke of Berry, and Louis did actually, in all probability, at least connive at the poisoning of his brother. It tallies with what is known to have been his character. Very well, let it be written, then, that he *did* poison his brother. This is a novel we are writing. If you want doubts and conjectures, go seek out your historians. There exists a plenty of them. We are writing romance. We are telling a story. We are not concerned with what we could take before a jury and convict on. Our interest is to be true to our character as we have visualized him; it is to be convincing; it is to seem real.

Of course these sentences may give a false impression of Mr. Mabie, for in the main his book not only rings true but also actually follows the documents. Only on a few occasions is he positive where there is, actually, controversy. And in these instances he follows a good logic. He is persuading, therefore. In a day when historical romance seems likely to come into favor, he has written a vivid, quickly moving, and readable historical romance. The only difference is that where the old historical romances were sentimental, this romance seems to have gained something from the régime of realism. One is reminded of William Morris by the unflinching way, for instance, that Mr. Mabie visualizes the hardness and the cruelty of the period. This, actually, is France at the end of the Middle Ages, and not a tableau from the Beaux Arts Ball!

Mr. Mabie has only one serious fault and that is an unfortunate habit of using some modern colloquialism in just such a way as to make it stand out like a patch on a velvet cloak. As a biographer, he may fall slightly behind some of those who have written recently about the same man. As a romancer, however, he is first class.

Prince Wilhelm, the second son of King Gustav V of Sweden, has again appeared in the literary field by publishing a series of short stories, called "Tales from the Village." The village referred to is situated on the slopes of the Alps above the French Riviera, where the Prince owns a beautiful villa at Eze, and he pictures the life of the wine-growers, farmers, and farm-hands, who lead their simple lives on the edge of Europe's luxury resorts. The Swedish critics award high praise to the Prince's narrative talent and his gift of imagination.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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Published weekly, by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry S. Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid: in the U. S. and Mexico, \$3.50; in Canada, \$4; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere, \$4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 6. No. 34.

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Marriage in America

STEPHEN ESCOTT. By LUDWIG LEWISOHN.

New York: Harper & Brothers. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

Author of "Clash of Angels"

ONLY as a matter of formalism can Ludwig Lewisohn's new book, "Stephen Escott," be called a novel. It is essentially a treatise, an impassioned treatise on the institution of marriage in America. One has the sense that the only real character in the book is its author. He speaks forthrightly, brilliantly on every page. And as he speaks—pressing eternally upon the spiritual tragedy of marriage as he sees it—there is never any sense of the suffering of his characters but always a deep sense of the passion of Mr. Lewisohn.

For it is Mr. Lewisohn's passionate reaction against the emotional inadequacy of so many American marriages that gives color and power to the luminous rationalization in "Stephen Escott" of the spiritual values in love and marriage. The story, as it shapes about the theme, is a man's story of loneliness and seeking and frustration. Women in it are only figures, potent for tragedy, in the lives of the men whose marriages to them are portrayed. Mr. Lewisohn seems occasionally to have allied himself with his sex in an altogether masculine restatement of the once-called "war of the sexes." But the general spirit of the book belies this, for throughout there is the continually suggested truth that not only the men who fail in marriage to find what they are seeking but also the women, who in the men's eyes seem to create the failure, are caught in a stifling formula which thwarts their emotional lives before they are begun. In Mr. Lewisohn's book the only successful marriage is one among people whose racial heritage and tradition of love and marriage keep them apart from the conventional American attitude.

Mr. Lewisohn has made his study broad enough to include not only marriage in America in the so-called Victorian period but marriage in modern America when, as he conceives it, moral attitudes were changing at the outbreak of the World War. It is Mr. Lewisohn's thesis that while attitudes have changed, the modern attitude is as much an aspect of debasing Puritanism as the Victorian position which expressed itself in repression and a sense of shame in love itself. It is in the modern Puritan feminist type that Mr. Lewisohn is most interested. To give it background he presents three marriages in the Victorian formula, one after the design of modern radical Puritanism, and one which reaches perfection in America apart from the American tradition.

First there is the grim marriage of Stephen Escott's father and mother and the flight of the father after his wife's death into tawdry licentiousness. There is the story of the sterile marriage of the rich Oliver Adams Clayton of Massachusetts and the aristocratic Harriet St. Preux of South Carolina. And there is the story of Stephen's own marriage which followed like a pattern the marriage of his father. Stephen could say of himself and his wife, Dorothy, the product of a small Middle Western town: "We were normally and ancestrally predestined to emotional inadequacy." Yet when, as his father had done after his wife's death, he sought what he had lost in a purely physical affair with the modern Beatrice Loth, he turned away from it sick in his stomach and his heart.

Beatrice, he saw, was no more exotic than Dorothy had been; she was as much as Dorothy a victim of Puritanism. Only she was rich and free and belonged to the feminist generation. She had begun by outraging her Puritanism, by ecstatically lashing her sense of sin. . . . She had, in addition, like all the women of her type and generation, a compensatory contempt for the male, which hid an unnatural envy of him. She wanted to be like him, to be him. She wanted, that being impossible, to dominate him, to wreak herself upon him, to enjoy and abandon him even as, in the Victorian version, men had been wont to enjoy and abandon women. . . . She wanted both to be the male and to humiliate the male. Her love was self-enjoyment and vengeance. She was not even a great lover nor even a courtesan. She was a Puritan feminist with auto-erotic tendencies.

It is in the dramatic story of Paul Glover, radical poet who killed his wife's lover, that Mr. Lewisohn develops the full philosophic implications of this modern Puritan feminist attitude toward love and marriage. Through Stephen, he showed how the Puritanism of the Victorians, which they called romantic love, cheapened the functions of the body by transforming them into something else. Now Glover sees in his own tragedy that modern radicals in demanding that love and marriage be comradeship with

sex-freedom and without jealousy are cheapening sex to a function like eating. They are trivializing love and robbing it of all its by-products such as poetry and art and music and philosophy. The spiritual culture of the West, Glover insists, is definitely integrated with the over-valuation of the love-object and if that love-object is made trivial our civilization is destroyed.

Mr. Lewisohn has no remedy for the failure of these Americans in marriage. There is a way, he says, to emotional fulfilment but he has no confidence that it is a way to be followed by men and women in America. It is the way of a race and a tradition. In "Stephen Escott" the single successful marriage is among Jews. Mr. Lewisohn seems more sentimental than convincing in this elevation of Jewish marriage for in the book the characters who make that marriage are the characters who in love and in life are most intelligent. One feels that their marriage grew out of intelligence rather than race.

Mr. Lewisohn's preoccupation with his theme has some ill effects upon the book as story. His characters are too definitely framed to show every side of the problem which he is discussing. At times they seem not like living men and women but rather like puppets put into a dialogue by a philosopher to voice the variant ideas about a problem. Only Mr. Lewisohn's consummate skill, only his fecundity in the invention of the little details which make characters into personalities, could give these figures, each drawn to show a phase of a problem, the life which at times they undoubtedly have. There is reality and brilliance always in the argument; often the story and the characters are pallid by comparison.

And yet, packed as it is with discussion and philosophy, shaped as it is in a rather artificial plan of presentation, Paul Glover's story of his life and tragedy and the final red moment of murder is magnificent drama. That scene in which Glover kills his wife's obscene lover is, in the midst of a book shaped for idea rather than action, at once moving and exciting and full of artistic truth.

Kentucke

THE GREAT MEADOW. By ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS. New York: The Viking Press. 1930. \$2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

SOME months ago Mr. Krutch wrote in this *Review* that the novelist who was an artist also would not be realistic in the cruder sense, but would create a world whose reality was that of a realized imagination and not a mirror of anything on earth. That is what Miss Roberts has done for the earliest of our several Southwesterns, Kentucke the desired, the romantic, and the beautiful. Her story is an Exodus of a bride, whose heart yearned from Virginia to bring new life into the wilderness, as Daniel Boone yearned "to prepare it for civil men"; and like the first and greatest Exodus it is full of overtones and undermeanings, a rhythmic movement of a people rather than the mere narrative of Diony Hall and her husband, the long, silent Berk Jarvis.

In accordance, the style is lifted above the plain prose of narrative into a poetical diction which is often homely but sometimes almost a chant. The problem of dialogue, always troublesome in historical romance, she has solved by taking what seems to be the living speech of the Kentucky hills, with strong emphasis upon its archaisms and its racy figurativeness. Thus it is elevated above the familiar while keeping its native rhythms. And finally the story itself is organized upon impulses much deeper and stronger than the accident which makes Diony the mother of children by two living husbands. For Miss Roberts has managed a rhythmic symbolism of attraction and repulsion, the powerful attraction of a new world of hope and beauty, the repulsion of the savageries of the wilderness, with minor harmonizings as of the two young girls, Betty of Virginia and Betsy of the Wilderness, and the passing on of the torch of life from Elvira Jarvis when the Indians attack them to Diony, her son's wife, whom she saves. Indeed this whole novel is contrived so that its motivations are the desires of man in joint love and conflict with nature, and its movement the movement of the strong spirit of a race slowly fighting down weaker spirits and organizing a wilderness. To these motives and to this movement everything in the book is subordinated, so that there is no real personality but only character in the elemental sense, no objective description, but the white cliff of Cumberland, the canes, the woods of Kentucke as seen

by the inward eye of those to whom they were symbols of a hope. These symbols—the "great high house Deer Creek," the cliff on the Cumberland, the salt licks, the meadows of Kentucke, and Boone himself—seem like themes in music, repeated in description or reference again and again.

Miss Roberts's first book, "The Time of Man," had some of this prophetic character. There too the characters, and especially the girl who was its heroine, acted under the influence of inner dreams. But "The Time of Man" was less organized than "The Great Meadow." It was simpler, more natural, less complete. There was a vigor of beauty in it which impressed all its readers.

If there is a criticism to be made of "The Great Meadow" it is that some of this vigor has gone. The artifice is much more able, the craftsmanship finer, the organization far more subtle and complete. But the book for all its perfection goes a little dead. It is to my thinking somewhat self-conscious, too much cerebrated, over composed. This is by no means to damn it, even with faint praise. It is a fine achievement which can be read only with pleasure by the discriminating in good fiction. Yet for all its excellences, there is something missing, something gone a little stale in the final execution, no spark where there should be a flash.

My own feeling is that Miss Roberts has been (O rare fault in America!) too concerned with the execution of her work. The feeling of infinite pains taken to get it right, comes through and the book just fails, when all is ready and done, to shake itself alive. And yet regarded as narrative, regarded as essay, regarded as imaginative construction, regarded any way but as fiction of the kind that leaps into a life more enduring than history, this novel is excellent. Only—its load of contriving just keeps it from rising into free air.



Cape Hatteras

By HART CRANE

*The seas all crossed, weathered the capes,
the voyage done. . .*

—WALT WHITMAN

IMPONDERABLE the dinosaur
sinks slow,

the mammoth saurian
ghoul, the eastern
Cape . . .

While rises in the west the coastwise range,
slowly the hushed land—

Combustion at the astral core—the dorsal change
Of energy—convulsive shift of sand . . .

But we, who round the capes, the promontories

Where strange tongues vary messages of surf

Below grey citadels, repeating to the stars

The ancient names—return home to our own

Hearths, there to eat an apple and recall

The songs that gypsies dealt us at Marseille

Or how the priests walked—slowly through Bombay—

Or to read you, Walt,—knowing us in thrall

To that deep wonderment, our native clay

Whose depth of red, eternal flesh of Pocahontus—

Those continental folded aeons, surcharged

With sweetness below derricks, chimneys, tunnels—

Is veined by all that time has really pledged us . . .

And from above, thin squeaks of radio static,

The captured fume of space foams in our ears—

What whisperings of far watches on the main

Relapsing into silence, while time clears

Our lenses, lifts a focus, resurrects

A periscope to glimpse what joys or pain

Our eyes can share or answer—then deflects

Us, shunting to a labyrinth submerged

Where each sees only his dim past reversed . . .

But that star-glistened salver of infinity,

The circle, blind crucible of endless space,

Is sluiced by motion,—subjugated never.

Adam and Adam's answer in the forest

Left Hesperus mirrored in the lucid pool.

But the eagle that dominates our days, is jurist

Of the ambiguous cloud. We know the strident

rule

Of wings imperious. . . . Space, instantaneous,

Flickers a moment, consumes us in its smile: