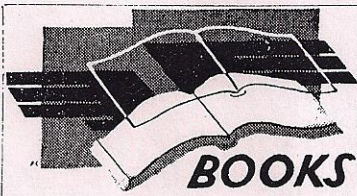


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by D. H. Lawrence

COLLECTED NOVELS AND STORIES. (Secker. 3 6 each).

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER. (Secker. 7/6).

TWILIGHT IN ITALY. (Traveller's Library. 3/6).

COLLECTED POEMS. (Secker. 10/6).

STUDIES IN CLASSIC AMERICAN LITERATURE. (Secker. 10/6).

WHEN the published correspondence to a journal becomes fierce and caustic it is not unlikely that the general reader will wonder, like a man coming suddenly upon a dog-fight, what it is all about. Few authors have caused in correspondence columns such hot indignation as D. H. Lawrence, yet it would be safe to say that the general reader, the un-literary, time-pressed reader, knows as little of him as of the pedigree of dogs who squabble with pointless ferocity at street corners. When he chances to hear of Lawrence at all it is likely to be as the author of some books of the type he would not wish his daughter to read but which he would very much like to read himself. He forms the impression of a hot, suggestive, exotic writer.

There exist, however, two other types of reader to whom Lawrence is more than a name. To one he is a symbol of nauseating sexual eroticism, the supreme mud-wallower, the author of the "Best book in English literature"; to the other he is the Christ among writers, a philosopher with a new thought, a prophet with a new message and a way of deliverance. Miss Olive Moore, herself a novelist, declares her intention of writing a biography of Lawrence in order to save him from "an immaculate conception." Looking over the recent literature on Lawrence one realises the desperate need for such a salutary book.

There exists, therefore, a great Lawrence myth. Founded equally upon blind hatred and blind love that myth has steadily obscured the real Lawrence, until we are in danger to-day of handing on to posterity a misconception of him as grave and stupid as the picture of Keats being killed by criticism.

That misconception might very easily be strengthened by the details of his life, and one can imagine how, in the hands of some future biographer with a romantic mind, his life might become a false-coloured, sentimentalised, poor-boy-to-fame kind of story.

Lawrence was the son of a Derbyshire miner; he became a clerk and later a school-teacher, always painting a good deal, loving colour and light—but all this one may read in one of his earliest and finest novels, "Sons and Lovers," in which one may detect most clearly the great qualities and great weaknesses that are evident in every book he wrote.

Before "Sons and Lovers," two other books, "The White Peacock" and "The Trespasser," had appeared, both evidences of a new force in English letters. In the first a sound critic noted a "frank and unabashed imaginative fecundity and luxuriant colouring... an extraordinary intimacy with the feminine love-instincts," and also "a certain over-bold and rash immaturity, a certain sprawling laxity of taste." The youthful artist evidently did not know when to be silent.

## By H. E. Bates A Note on D. H. Lawrence

These words, a little modified, remain true of almost everything that Lawrence ever wrote. It is idle to criticise him, declared E. M. Forster. This, too, is true. It is as idle to criticise Lawrence as it

philosopher, whereas in these very things lie his limitations.

How great, for instance, is his contribution to philosophy? On the other hand, his contribution to art, to poetry, is immense. He was the greatest imaginative novelist, said a critic, of our time, and his imagination burned so intensely that his work is nearly always religious in its fervour, so religious at times that it becomes hysterical and incoherent. His later work was full of a thin, desperate, dying cry. As he ceased to win us by poetry he sought to make us believe by screams of anger, ferocious repetitions.

To me he is most significant as a poet. Portions of "The White Peacock," "Sons and Lovers," "The Rainbow," many of the short stories, isolated passages of "Lady Chatterley's Lover," almost all of the travel volume, "Twilight in Italy," odd paragraphs and pages in any book he wrote—in them one finds prose as quivering and lucent and rich with colour as Keats's poetry. The descriptions of the funeral in "The White Peacock," of spring in "Sons and Lovers," of the old woman spinning in "Twilight in Italy," all these are the true Lawrence, the poet.

There is, as Richard Aldington has pointed out, a strange, inexplicable quality of "interest" in all that Lawrence wrote. He had only to begin to describe an object, a scene, a conversation, a woman, for one to see it clearly at once and become absorbed. There was something electric in his touch, illuminating his material wonderfully. His people move before one with almost embarrassing intimacy. His scenes quiver with veracity. It is not unlikely that posterity may accept him not merely as the greatest imaginative novelist, but the greatest novelist of our generation.

Chants for Socialists

No. 6

### Seventh Heaven

There once was a worker who lived on the dole

(Oh, he lived on the fat of the land),  
He had plenty of victuals and plenty of coal,  
And he bought a piano—a grand.

He went to the pictures: he betted and drank

And he'd nothing to work at all day.

To national duty his mind was a blank.

He'd a far better time than those persons  
of rank.

Who have terrible taxes to pay.

This worker who lived on the dole like a Duke

(But without a Duke's troubles to bear),  
Far be it from me to condemn or rebuke,

For enjoying a life without care.

Though just how he managed it all on a quid—

That's about what he got, more or less—  
What with rent to the landlord, and milk

for the kid,

I confess I don't quite understand; but he did

For it says that he did in the Press.

DOUGLAS COLE.



would be to criticise a preacher so desperately passionate and believing that he could weep and snarl, cajole and bully, soothe and sneer in order that his listeners should believe as he believed. And all this Lawrence was continually doing. He believed, and through his novels, poems and stories he sought intensely and sometimes hysterically to make others believe as he did.

It was natural that only few should do so and that many should misunderstand and misinterpreted him. When he formulated the greatest belief of his life and was ready to sacrifice everything to it he was astonished and embittered to find that it was regarded as indecent heresy. "The Rainbow," perhaps his greatest novel, was banned, and the word "sex" was pinned to him as the badge of supreme indecency. Lawrence, seeking to be a prophet, shared the common fate of prophets. He was disbelieved and derided on one side, and no sooner had that happened than he stood a fine chance of being worshipped on the other.

In a recent essay Richard Aldington referred bitterly to the Lawrence detractors, but he did not mention the Lawrence worshippers, whose attitude is even more pernicious. To them Lawrence has become a kind of Christ, a great prophet crucified by a stupid public.

It is not enough for them, apparently, to regard Lawrence as an artist and a poet. To them he must be the great preacher, the great thinker, the great