

achieved the impossible many times, and failed, in the end . . . from something which had nothing to do with arms nor with the men who bear them." That is precisely how Moorehead writes of it.

**T**HERE are two elements which give his work more vitality and greater dimension than others. What was happening on the other side of the hill, to the men who ruled Turkey, to its people and to the forces carrying their fight by sea and along the shoreline, is at all times as visible as the struggle of the expedition. There has been exhaustive search of the enemy sources; their half of the experience is done justice. Moorehead's other excellence is that he is an artist in writing about the human family, individually or in the mass. He understands troop emotions and he writes of man in battle with a sure touch, passionately or with fine restraint, according to the circumstances. Personalities pop right out of his narrative, so true to life that one expects to see them cough, sweat, or strut. And he does it with a few strokes of the pen. Consider this, on von Wagenheim, the German Ambassador: "He was a man at once dangerous, accomplished, and ridiculous: the animal in a tight sheath of manners." And there are these words on Rupert Brooke: "One feels that he was destined to be there, that among all these tens of thousands of young men this was the one who was perfectly fitted to express their exuberance, their secret devotion, their half joy of life and half readiness to die." The quotes are not carefully culled passages; they are an average of Moorehead's inspiration where he writes of men.

In his role as author he is scrupulously the reporter, not the historian unscrewing the inscrutable or the armchair critic weighing and damning strategy with the certitude of hindsight. Moorehead tells what happened in infinite detail, why it happened, and what came of it. He also defines the possible alternatives, whence they were supported and what personal influences or material considerations caused their rejection. And he lets it go at that, blames and shames no one, and uses his gentlest tone when writing of the most tragic blunders, the slackest performances, and the worst lapses through indecision. By this method, he reveals considerably more than the most virulent critic has said of the Gallipoli failure, if not more than he himself fully understands.

Generalship and statesmanship have been taken to task on many counts over this venture. The argument usu-

ally develops around strategy, whether the concept itself was not a fantastic diversion away from the main line of decision. The collateral criticism is that once the risk was dared there was no excuse for supporting it piecemeal.

But I have not before seen it adequately documented, beyond requirement of a direct statement, that the Gallipoli army was cheated by the fundamental ignorance of its commanders and planners, from Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton on down. Moorehead does a nice job on the top man. "In the long tradition of British poet-generals Hamilton remains an exception of an extremely elusive kind. One knows everything and nothing about him. Whether one is dealing with the poet or the general at any given point it is almost impossible to tell."

**T**HAT says it—almost. But when one tries to make Gallipoli scan it comes clear that as a tactician Sir Ian wasn't even a good poet; he lacked the essential rhythm. Soldiers under battle stress have definable physical limits. This governing reality went unrecognized by Hamilton and his lieutenants. Invariably they asked more than the best trained troops may give. Their plans broke at the seams right at jump-off because they were sighted on the impossible. Just think of assigning to an army which has to be amphibiously landed against heavy fire first-day objectives which lie six miles inland past high, sharp-backed ridges! For men under full pack that is a day's work when the air is free of danger. And this kind of thing went on and on, with the command never learning its primary lesson. No wonder that invariably by the second day of attack it became impossible to tidy up anything.

It has happened before. It will happen again. Generalship which deludes itself that there is some higher art, some special secret, apart from more intimate, accurate knowledge of troops, is but a leasehold on heartache, disappointment, and failure at the threshold of success.

Should the schools run a staff study on this book, thereby to make indelible its main tactical lesson, it will be enough to make Moorehead's time well spent. However, it would be better to table that motion than to leave here any faint suggestion that this is a book for soldiers rather than for anyone who finds rapture in a tale of supreme courage beautifully told.



## How Man Killed

*"Men in Arms," by Richard A. Preston, S. F. Wise, and H. O. Werner (Frederick A. Praeger, 400 pp. \$6.50), is a survey of two thousand years of warfare. Our reviewer, Gordon Harrison, is author of several volumes on military operations.*

By Gordon Harrison

**W**HY MEN fight has always been a central interest of moralists, general historians, and even general readers. How they fight is more often left to the erudite examination of specialists who for the most part have reached only professionals wishing to know how to fight better. In the typical textbook history wars appear as breaks in the narrative of progress. However minutely detailed may be their causes and consequences, when the nation's young men go to battle they march out of the pages of history.

"Men in Arms," by Richard A. Preston, S. F. Wise, and H. O. Werner, marches them back again. Although by no means the first attempt to relate the history of military institutions and operations to social environment, it is an unusually schematic and comprehensive look at warfare through the ages as a social institution shaped by, and in turn shaping, man's moral, political, and economic course.

Instead of pages on the causes of the Peloponnesian War, for instance, one reads here at length about the significance of the phalanx as a unique expression of the needs and limitations of the Greek city-state. In one of the hilliest countries in Europe the Greeks developed a battle array—heavily armed infantrymen fighting shoulder to shoulder—suitable only to flat ground. Greeks could fight that way because the cities were so dependent on a few arable fields that the threat of devastating them could force the defender to battle on the attacker's ground. It was a satisfactory way of fighting (until the final defeat) because it fitted Greek society and its aspirations.

Morale, on which the tight formations depended, was high in citizen armies. Reliance on a single mass formation which prevailed solely by weight and individual courage, not by generalship, was congenial to classless freemen. Honor was conspicuously available and bloodshed was light enough to insure that honor could be sought and enjoyed. And finally there was virtually no alternative because the horses which might

PERSONAL HISTORY

## Noble Prince on a Dark Road

have made armies mobile could find little forage. When the forces of Macedonia overran the phalanx and with it the Greek city-state a decisive ingredient was cavalry. The cavalry of Philip and Alexander was formed by an elite class and perpetuated that class. It also reestablished generalship by supplying a basis for maneuver. Horses, particularly in combination with a more versatile infantry force, extended the scope of war by adapting armies to any kind of terrain and by permitting the pursuit and destruction of the beaten enemy.

So war on horseback broke out of its Western chrysalis, destroying one civilization, spreading another. But through a series of technical and social developments it would go back to something like its Greek childhood with the medieval knight and then again break free under the impetus of the longbow and citizen levies. If the authors of "Men in Arms" have a thesis—and theses are hard to find or maintain in a two-thousand-year history—it is the regular vacillation between limited and total war ending at last at the atomic brink, when for the first time the choice appears to be between deliberate forbearance among nations and chaos.

The portrait of civilization in arms does not give one much reason to hope. The happiest of man's years, when his wars were relatively infrequent and limited, were times for the most part when he lacked the technical means or social organization to kill more efficiently. On the other hand, of course, our present dilemma has never before been faced. One may, indeed, conclude from the summary of war in the Western world that no more lessons remain to be learned. War as a social institution, the normal expression of political man in his discontent, has finally become obsolete. That obsolescence, however, needs still to be recognized in time.

Military history is not likely to be much help. The impassioned pleas for understanding through knowledge with which "Men in Arms" begins and ends seem actually to have little relevance to the body of the book, which for all its interest is chaste and antiquarian. Perhaps the final irony is that the study of military history, neglected during the centuries when it might have furnished guideposts and warnings for peoples and their leaders, will come into its own only now when its chief usefulness is to fill out the unflattering portrait of our ancestors.

*"The Man Who Lived Twice," by Eric Wollencott Barnes (Charles Scribner's Sons. 358 pp. \$5), is a biography of a successful American playwright who served as an inspiration for many writers and artists during the many years in which he was severely paralyzed. Margaret Webster, the stage director who reviews it here, was one who knew the warmth of his personality.*

By Margaret Webster

EDWARD Sheldon was among the golden youth of the golden age before World War I, the last of the *preux chevaliers*. He had looks, charm, wealth, and enormous zest for life. In 1907, with a Harvard degree *magna cum laude* immediately behind him, his first play was accepted by the great Mrs. Fiske herself. "Salvation Nell" became a smash hit. Half a dozen others followed it, of varying merit but considerable good fortune; Ned lived his brilliant success generously and to the hilt. In 1913 he wrote the fabulous "Romance," which ran, broke records, toured, broke more records, was revived and re-revived in New York, London, Paris, and all over the world. He was then twenty-seven.

Before he had reached his thirty-fifth birthday he was completely paralyzed, stricken by a virulent and (then) incurable form of progressive arthritis. He was never able to move again. Ten years later he became totally blind. He lived for a further

fifteen years, threatened towards the end by the imminent loss of speech and hearing. Yet during these twenty-five years he became the listener-extraordinary, consultant-in-chief, and spiritual *accoucheur* to almost all the greatest figures of the American theatre; his influence on its development was tremendous. Much more important, he brought courage, understanding, and a vital creative stimulus into the lives of many hundreds of people. In them and through them he lived, and lives, not twice, but a thousand times.

The facts are epic, heroically impressive—and very simple. Sheldon himself, a skilled craftsman and acutely constructive critic, would have been the first to point out that the "plot-line" is very thin. His victory of the spirit over physical disaster does not result in a "story." Here is no Helen Keller, active and indomitable over the whole world; no legless Douglas Bader, flying his plane into battle at the head of the splendid young men. Here was a "sculptured Crusader," lying "like a living corpse on his catafalque"; he talked to the unseen visitors who sat beside him; he dictated letters and telegrams; above all, he listened. Eric Wollencott Barnes's book "The Man Who Lived Twice" is full of excerpts from what he said; it is full of the tributes of those to whom he wrote and spoke. As a memorial it is admirably comprehensive; as literary biography it does not escape the sedative properties of reiteration.

Many famous people step onto these pages from the penthouse apartment on 84th Street. Scarcely a great name in the American theatre is missing. There are English actors and writers too, celebrated doctors and scientists and poets and statesmen. Pictures of some of Sheldon's friends emerge vividly, revealed in a fresh light because of what he discerned in them. John Barrymore and Mrs. Pat Campbell cry out to him, Alec Woolcott laughs with him; there is a tiny, tragic, glimpse of Emily Stevens; and always the haunting, elusive ghost of Doris Kean. All of them loved and honored Ned. But the pattern involves the perils of repetition.

FOR all Mr. Barnes's fidelity there remain two unknown factors to which Sheldon alone held the key. Why was the writer so much lesser than the



Edward Sheldon—"victory of the spirit."

**KEY AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF:** The idea of Walter Bedell Smith's lately published book. (Continued on page 40)