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Disraeli: A Picture Of The Victorian Age, Collector's Edition



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Disraeli is a huge figure, and this biography is written in what was at the time a new style, much more readable and interesting, not dry and dull! After finishing this, I read *Endymion*, one of the last books written by Disraeli and the only work of his I have read to date, and it was a most enjoyable novel, somewhat, it appeared, following his own life experience.

A Bit disappointing in the printing, on some page's Yet Delighted, with the Fact that I had a chance to read this Original Work, at all, after so many years, I would say Read it, Disraeli, is One of Life's and Humanity's Great Hero's.and Individual's I Loved it. Thanks Andre Maurois, please excuse my spelling, Hugs

Excellent Bio.

Having read many biographies of Benjamin Disraeli, I find Andre Maurois's a must-read for students of the Victorian era. It's a literary biography, to be sure, but it's a great portrait of the time-- very colorful, very illustrative, very smart. For a romantic decoration of Disraeli's life and time, read Andre Maurois; for a long and thorough detailed analysis of Disraeli's political career, read Robert Blake instead.

Emile Salomon Wilhelm Herzog was born in 1885. After WWI he set aside his German-sounding name, choosing instead Andre (after a cousin killed in action) Maurois (a village near an important battle of that war; he liked the *œ* sonority of the name); he legalized the change in

1947. He firmly established himself as an old-school man of letters, a now nearly-vanished species. Although he seems to be unjustifiably out of fashion these days, by the time of his death in 1967 he had an ironclad reputation as a biographer, essayist, short story author, and novelist; he even turned out creditable, stylistically pleasing histories of England, France, and the United States! His often sardonic sayings and maxims still have a unique power to sum up and encapsulate a situation: "We appreciate frankness from those who like us. Frankness from others is called insolence." Or "We owe to the Middle Ages the two worst inventions of humanity—romantic love and gunpowder, for instance." His well-turned biographies include Disraeli, Byron, Proust, Balzac, Shelley, George Sand, Alexander Fleming, and others. The Disraeli biography being reviewed here was the second biography that he wrote and is notable for its smoothly flowing novelistic technique. Widely translated and possibly the most lasting of the Maurois biographies, its stylistic approach, erudition, and the colorful character of Disraeli himself promise continued longevity for this work. The subtitle, "A Picture of the Victorian Age," is fully and faithfully justified, particularly in the portrayal of the flowering of the British Empire. Representative of Maurois's style, a couple of brief felicitous passages centering on religion follow: "The ^marvellously tender^ voice of [John Henry] Newman was beginning to ravish souls. For forty years the Church [of England] had shown a greater dread of faith than of indifference." (pp. 160-161) "[Disraeli] believed that man is more than a machine, and that over and above the matter submitted to physical and chemical reactions, there exists a different essence, which can be called the soul, the divine, the genius, an essence altogether of the angels." (p. 260) (This title is available in many editions. This review is based on the 1928 Appleton edition translated by Hamish Miles.)

Well written and informative take on the man who destroyed England .

Maurois writes in a lovely, almost poetic, style. He is able to present the flow of Disraeli's life very clearly and prettily. He picks lines from letters or snippets of conversation that are evocative, so the book presents Disraeli's life in a warm, non-pedantic manner. It may be a bit old fashioned, but it is very easy to read and rich in word pictures. He presents the historic debates and decisions of Parliament and does not get bogged down in background information.

I liked this book. It is an interesting primary piece of the Victorian Age. A viable and cogent picture of Disraeli emerges--however, the writing at too many times is very purple and one is left

guessing--what is the writer really saying? And sometimes you have to guess and keep reading--never really knowing for sure. That is why this book is also a study or primary source on the Victorian Age and all of the euphemisms used to talk about delicate subjects such as sex, anti-semitism, and skepticism born of Darwinism. This is a good book for someone who knows little of Disraeli. It is a good book if someone wants a sense of the Victorian Age and all of its seemingly genteel ways.

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