

November 10, 1936

Dear Mr. Dillard:

5/20/37

I came back to New York today after a fortnight's absence and found on my desk your fine letter and along with it what I regard as a ~~fine~~ birthday present - your review of my recent book in Doctor Schlesinger's Series.

WTS

I am gratified that you know this Series, feel that the Volume fits in with the scheme. I felt ever since I signed my contract to do the book that I was something of a bull in a china shop, a journalistic historian among academic pundits but as you know him would expect Doctor Schlesinger has been both kind and severe with me and between us the Volume arrived.

WTS

You see the points I aimed at. I think they deserve emphasis. I am always amazed at how little we learn, repeating the same old errors generation after generation. I hope some of the youngsters who will be expected to read this book will get a glimmer at least of the notion that past experience is a teacher worth listening to. Just now I am not too optimistic about this generation, its willingness to experiment without considering whether the experiment was ever tried and failed before or if they do consider that studying the reasons why it failed.

Well, if I took the present day too seriously I would be a bit disheartened, but I am not. I went through it before, as I try to tell in this book. We have learned some things and we are in a good way now to learn more even if the learning is going to be a bit expensive.

But I did not intend to write a thesis on my own book, only to tell you how pleased I am that you are willing to give it this fine review.

And thank you for telling me that it was from your Mother that you first heard my name and that she told you about me before she told you about Martha Washington. Of course I understand why. Martha's name was not on the table of contents of the ten cent magazine and mine was, but my name and the ten cent magazine will have gone into discount long before Martha's.

Thanking you again for your letter and the review believe me, dear Mr. Dillard

Very sincerely yours

W. D. Howells

Mr. Irving Dillard
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