

**THE SPHERE
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The World of Books.

The Norris of MR. NORRIS AND I, by Mr. Gerald Hamilton (Wingate. 15s.), is the hero of a book by Mr. Christopher Isherwood called *Mr. Norris Changes Trains*, published in 1935. In a coy introduction Mr. Isherwood declares that when asked if Norris is "based on my old friend Gerald Hamilton . . . sometimes I answer 'No,' sometimes 'Yes'—according to my mood."

Mr. Hamilton is equally equivocal so that, not having read the Isherwood *opus*, I can have no idea what they are being coy about. This book is presumably meant to be a self-portrait and the figure that emerges seems to be a sort of poor man's Aleister Crowley except that Crowley was not, to my knowledge, imprisoned in France and Italy or decorated by the King of Bulgaria. He appears to have known every notorious character in his long life, from Casemont to Guy Burgess and to have been intimate with the goings-on in the night haunts and stews of pre-war Berlin, Paris and London.