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## Book Reviews

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## Book Reviews

### WOMAN, GOD, AND NEW MEXICO

*Starry Adventure*—Mary Austin—Houghton Mifflin Company. 1931.  
\$3.00.

Gardiner Sitwell, by his own admission a "sentimental ass," is followed by this story through a large part of his life. The chronicle seems to fall into three parts: His reactions to the stimuli of his environment, which is God and New Mexico; his encounters with men, and most exciting, his encounters with WOMAN.

The theme is the oft-used search for *something*, in some cases the "blue bird" of happiness, in others contentment, and in this case the *starry adventure*; but by whichever name, pretty much the same thing. As is usual in such plots, the search is carried hither and yon, and ends by the seeker finding what he wants within his own heart.

The story is a good one, the situations hold attention, the characterizations are convincing and sympathetic, but above all, to us who live in and know New Mexico, the descriptions are superb.

Young Sitwell came to New Mexico quite early in boyhood. His father, a college professor from the east, was tubercular, furnishing the reason for the migration. In the glorious sunsets of this mountain region, Gard sees God among the tops of the aspens. He hears voices such as Indians hear, in Nature. He bears with him through life, the conviction that he is cut out for some particular kind of adventure, a *starry adventure*.

The most fascinating part of the book deals with Gard's encounters with all the elements which go to make up his natural environment. He feels that the towering Sangre de Cristo mountains will fall upon and smother him; in the chamisal he is conscious of the process by which mountains

are ground by time to dust, only; through corn to enter into the making of men, who in turn return to the dust to make more corn—in the continuous life process.

In his contacts with men, Gard's reactions are vague. Whether he, through his sentimental nature, is unable to meet men on common ground, or whether the writer, being a woman, is less confident here, it is difficult to say.

Certainly there is no lack of the master's touch in the various encounters of Gard with women. Here, in every case, the situation is well in hand, the mechanitions subtle, the effects well defined. The women in the book are numerous. There are Gard's mother, his sister, Jane, Eudora, Rosita, and several others. Each of them knows what she is about, each stands for something, and each leaves a clear imprint in the life and soul of Young Sitwell. Like his environment, women baffle him at times, at others helping to clarify his vision.

The story carries him through boyhood to young manhood and marriage. It includes the period of the World War, which Gard fails to take active part in, staying home instead to help at the ranch. There are poignant touches, reflections of the great catastrophe overseas. After the war period, the tone of sophistication enters, and one feels the urge of youth, rising to lay hand on the reins.

Significance of the story lies largely in its background. The New Mexico depicted has not been as faithfully pictured before, with all its possibilities of mystic beauty and appeal. The religious dissertations, which are numerous, are too chaotic to mean anything, except, perhaps, to express just that chaos. Sociologically, there might be read into some of the passages an interpretation of New Mexican life in a transition stage; certainly there are hopeful notes of prophecy.

Mary Austin, the writer, has a deep conviction that things should not be written which do not *have* to be written. So there must be somewhere in the story something

which *had* to be written. It was not the plot, not the personality or sentimentality of Gard; he was unworthy of that. None of the other characters cry out for expression.

So we find that it is more the setting, the complete sympathy of author and her environment which demanded expression, and which is so beautifully portrayed in the book.

PAUL WALTER, JR.

### THE RHYTHMS OF EARTH HUNGER

*The Good Earth*—By Pearl Buck. John Day Company. \$2.50.

During nearly forty years of reading all manner and varieties of books, I have fallen into the bad habit of side-stepping novels immoderately praised by the critics. Of best sellers I am especially suspicious, and it is with reluctance that I read such books. Curiously enough, the habit persists in spite of my almost invariable experience that those books which I avoid longest usually prove to be the most entertaining. Then, too, I don't like the word "good" in a title. It sounds depressing. Not that I didn't thoroughly enjoy *The Good Companions*, the least depressing of novels. But I knew that this novel was about China, and I am completely fed up on Chinese bandits and Chinese problems. On chop suey, too. So, I determined not to read *The Good Earth*.

But I had not reckoned on the tenacious spirit of my friend who has his book dispensary near the University. Finding that I refused to take this novel home with me and being determined that I should read it, he left it in my room one day, without saying anything to me about it, knowing that I always read a book that I have to pay for. Shrewd young rascal. And now I thank him for forcing me into so much delight. For *The Good Earth* is a remarkable novel and most pleasingly disappointed all my fears.

*The Good Earth* is not merely a novel with a Chinese background. It is a Chinese novel, although written by an

American woman. With a most insignificant exception, the characters are all Chinese, the settings are Chinese, the manners and customs are Chinese, even the rhythm seems Chinese. I believe I may speak with some assurance on these points, for I spent nearly twenty years in the Orient, had many Chinese friends, and made many trips to China.

The plot strikes one at first as being of the "success" type, made notorious by certain of our popular magazines. The story begins on the wedding morning of the nominal hero, a Chinese peasant, with a fierce hunger for land, carries him through his successful struggle to add to his ancestral acres, during the course of which he accumulates a fairly large family, several of whom are the cause of much grief to him, and leaves him, calmly facing death, a worn-out old man proudly looking out over his laboriously built-up estate, happy in the belief that his sons will keep his acres intact, and happily ignorant of their determination to sell and divide the land so soon as he is dead.

Now, here is a book whose chief character seems more like a symbol of the urge for land than a real person, a book which has few exciting or memorable episodes, in which wit and humor are almost lacking, and in which there is little pathos, all of these qualities which we have come to believe are necessary ingredients of a good novel, and yet it holds the excited interest of the reader, compelling him, in fact, to call it a remarkable novel. What is the secret of its undoubted charm?

It lies, I think, in two things. First, in the intense reality and even passion of its earth hunger, and second, in the beauty of its rhythms.

It is this last quality, it seems to me, which constitutes the great merit of the novel. In most respects, *The Growth of the Soil*, to which it has been compared, is a greater book, but its style definitely puts it above the Norwegian novel. Its rhythms are subtly varied, their tempo being always in harmony with the march of the story. Now slow and

leisurely, now quick and intense, unadorned, seemingly unlabored, yet constantly artistic. There are no "purple patches" which might serve as examples. Every page of the book is an example of this fascinating and pulsating rhythm.

One is forced to wonder at the writer's profound knowledge of the most intimate Chinese habits and customs. Where, particularly, did a woman, and an American woman at that, learn so much about Chinese tea houses and their enticing, though not exactly moral, female inmates? But this is merely *one* of the puzzles of the book. How did she catch that rare rhythm? That's my chief question.

*The Good Earth* is a novel to be read at one's leisure, savored and enjoyed, and then read again. A Good Book.

The author has lived much in China and has another novel of China to her credit. But it made no such stir as has *The Good Earth*.

GEORGE ST. CLAIR.

*Survey of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.* U. S. Bureau of Education.

The United States Office of Education has published two portly volumes, each of more than 900 pages, embodying the results of a very comprehensive and thorough survey of the sixty-nine colleges and universities established in the several states under the Act of Congress of July 2, 1862.

The nineteen main divisions, under which the study is classified, include Control and Administrative Organization, Alumni and Former Students, Staff, Library, Teacher Training, Summer Session, Research, Graduate Work, etc.

Statutes of all the states have vested the general authority of the land-grant colleges in the Governing Boards, with considerable variation of practice in their legal status as to property and funds. In all cases, the Governing

Boards appear to have jurisdiction over the election of the president, the employment and discharge of teachers, the prescribing of courses of instruction, the fixing of entrance requirements, the conferring of degrees, and the making of rules for the conduct of students, functions which are naturally in practice delegated to faculties to a large extent.

Five institutions have Governing Boards, ranging from 31 to 50 members. One college has but three, and in the case of twenty, the Board consists of 5 to 10 members. Of 644 members for 45 colleges, 34 are women; 238 are former students. Thirty-one institutions have alumni membership. In three states members are chosen by popular election. In nineteen, the governor appoints the entire Boards and in five, he appoints a part of it; in twelve other states, the consent of the senate is also required. The term of office is more than four years in 35. In one institution, members of the Governing Board serve for life, and in two others this is true of a part of the membership. One institution reports that the longest time any member of its present Board has served is three years. In one case, there are 23 standing committees, while in seven institutions, the entire membership acts as a unit.

Chapter III deals with the Chief Executive Officer and his immediate associates, later chapters dealing with deans, directors, registrars, etc. The tenure of the president is one year in eleven institutions, indefinite in thirty-one and for life in one, but, where the term is limited, re-election is a "mere formality." The total number of presidents in forty-four of the land-grant colleges since their establishment is 308, of whom 228 resigned, 34 died, and 44 are still in service. One hundred and sixty-seven served less than five years, including twenty-five still in service. A great majority have held their positions less than ten years. The median age is 55. Forty-two of 48 for whom information was obtained have had actual teaching experience. Eighteen have not been the authors of any publications.

Part VII deals with the staff, including nearly 21,000 men and more than 5,000 women. The questionnaire was so extensive that much of it, as might well have been anticipated, has not been analyzed for the published report, but is said to be available for study at the Office of Education. The tax on the time of the 12,000 people who have co-operated in furnishing excess information is hard to estimate. The tables give salaries for 1928 and 1929 in fifty-one land-grant colleges, with classification by rank from deans to instructors and by salaries at intervals of \$250.00 from \$1,500 to \$8,999. Two hundred and thirty-six fall below this range, 28 above it, out of a total of 35,000. Similar tables follow by groups of states. The median salary for deans in the United States as a whole is \$5,193, for professors \$4,278, for associate professors \$3,342, for assistant professors \$2,738, for instructors \$2,205 (taking those in each case on a nine-month basis). Tables are also given of prerequisites, additional earnings, and outside earnings.

Table 14 shows the highest degree received by men at various salaries; Table 17, the percentage of time devoted to undergraduates with reference to salary range. Similar tables follow for time devoted to graduates, to research, to administrative work and to extension work, to creative work other than research, and to public contacts. The delicacy of the distinctions involved for percentage purposes will be apparent.

Tables 24 and 25 give the salaries of staff members according to sex, marital status, and the number of children, with separate groups for divorced males and divorced females. In 281 cases out of 12,032 there were five or more children, and in 13 of these the yearly salary was less than \$2,000. Outside earnings are also tabulated according to sex and marital status and according to the number of children, but the significance of the table seems slight in



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view of the fact that more than 10,000 of the 12,000 furnished no information.

Passing to other than financial details, an attempt is made to deal with training, experience, affiliations, activities, and academic advancement of staff members. Table 28 shows degrees earned according to major geographic divisions. Of 12,032, most of whom answered this question, 18% report the doctorate, with a range from 12% in the South Central states to 23% in the North Atlantic. Of the same total, about 10% had had no professional training in Education, while nearly half made no reply. Table 40 gives the percentage of time staff members are employed by their institutions according to geographic divisions. Full time is reported in about 80%, half time or less by about 2%.

Table 41 aims to show the distribution of time between the seven headings, undergraduates, graduates, research, etc. Among more than 9,000 replying, no time at all is reported for undergraduates by 2,554, for graduates by 6,725, for research by 5,922, for creative work by 7,440, for administrative work by 5,255, for extension work by 6,401, and for public contacts by 6,190. More than 90% of time is devoted to research in 321 cases, to creative work in 169, to public contacts in 21. A further analysis takes account of the highest degree received.

The tabulation of age shows that for the United States as a whole the great majority of staff members became instructors between the ages of 20 and 29, assistant professors between 25 and 34, associate professors from 30 to 39, with a wide distribution for the attainment of full professorships.

"Local limitations of finance, legislative or executive indifference or opposition, may make it impossible or at least very difficult to secure sabbatical leave for the staffs of some of the state-supported higher educational institutions. Every effort needs to be made by administrative officers to overcome these difficulties. Well-considered plans designed

conservatively to build up the character of the teaching body may, in many instances, provide an economical means of educational development.

"In this connection it is interesting to note that 19 of the land-grant colleges and universities report that sabbatical leave is provided for in part in their institutions, 24 that it is not provided, while 1 indicates that although there is no regular provision for sabbatical leave, a member of a department may be granted 6 months' or a year's leave of absence with full or partial pay, provided the department is able to carry his load during his absence."

Five institutions have faculty unions, presumably not of the protective type; 14 faculty club rooms, 9 faculty lunch rooms, 7 faculty reading rooms, 3 provide golf courses, 10 faculty housing.

Part VIII deals with Library facilities; Part IX with Agriculture; Part X with Engineering; Part XI with Home Economics.

Volume II opens with Part I on Arts and Sciences.

Of the 18 land-grant institutions which are state universities, 16 have "single major divisions, in which are included practically all the liberal, social, and scientific subjects appropriate to the college of arts and sciences which has as its function the provision of a general education.

"Of the 18 separate land-grant colleges, only 3—Purdue University, Iowa State College, and Kansas State Agricultural College—have so concentrated arts and science departments in a single division as to make it possible that the division exercise the general educational functions of the traditional arts and science college. However, none of these institutions grant the degree of bachelor of arts which is characteristic of the general cultural purposes of the college of arts and sciences. In every other case either separate divisions exist for the arts and for the science departments or departments essential to the conception of the unified

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college of arts and sciences are scattered in technical divisions.

"It is apparent that among the 39 land-grant institutions for which data are available, there are only 16 that are both organized and granting the degree appropriate to the general educational objective of the traditional isolated college of arts and sciences.

"In the separate land-grant colleges the conception of the unified, isolated college of arts and sciences has been completely broken down and everywhere is found the tendency to scatter the arts and science departments. This tendency is manifested in the frequent creation of separate co-ordinate divisions of arts and of sciences and less frequently by general distribution of the departments among a number of technical divisions. In some instances both these methods of disintegration seem to be in use.

"More than one-fifth—21.8 per cent—of all resident undergraduate students in the entire United States were enrolled in the 52 land-grant colleges in 1927-28. This does not include students in summer schools, secondary divisions, or extension or correspondence courses." Of nearly 160,000 undergraduates in 1928-29, 34 per cent were registered in arts and sciences, 20 per cent in engineering, 9 per cent in agriculture.

"It is interesting to note that 40 per cent of the four-year resident students are freshmen, 27 per cent are sophomores, 19 per cent are juniors, and 14 per cent are seniors. In spite of the fact that enrollments increase from year to year, these proportions have remained sufficiently constant to justify the estimate that, roughly, there are three times as many in the freshman class as in the senior class, that one-third of the freshmen drop out before the sophomore year, that one-half leave before the junior year, and that two-thirds are eliminated before the senior year.

"Prior to 1925 there were more degrees granted in home economics than in education, but since that time ed-

ucation has outstripped home economics so that in 1929, while 1482 degrees were granted in the latter, 2,266 degrees were awarded in education. But arts and science awarded a total of 3,802 degrees to women."

The conclusions and recommendations of this Part open with a statement that, "The united, independent college of arts and sciences with general education as its purpose has practically disappeared from the land-grant institutions.

"There is little probability of return to the four-year college of arts and sciences as the instrument for satisfying this need (of 'some form of general education appropriate to modern conditions') in the case of students who have or develop intentions of ultimate specialization for purposes of vocational employment or scientific scholarship.

"The orientation course is an attempt to provide the general viewpoint required to give specialization perspective and to provide the standards demanded by the fact that the specialist lives and works in a social situation.

"The task undertaken by the orientation course cannot be accomplished in the time usually given. Its chief contribution lies in the new selection and arrangement of the materials of knowledge which its purpose make necessary.

"The Junior College as a period of general training cannot accomplish its purpose if it retains the introductory subject matter and methods of presentation now ordinarily used since the selection and methods are designed to prepare directly for specialization in the areas with which the individual courses deal."

Part II deals with Commerce and Business; Part III with Teacher Training as a function of the land-grant institutions, including a special Chapter XII on Improvement of Instruction.

"The existing concept in some institutions of the preparation of teachers as an incidental function of the academic work in arts and sciences or of the technical work in agriculture, home economics, or similar subjects must be re-

placed by the concept of teacher preparation as a professional activity worth while in itself, and comparable in importance to the work of the other professional schools of the institution. The doubling of the enrollments of the state teachers colleges during the past ten years, despite the handicaps faced by such institutions, should be significant to administrative officials of land-grant institutions who aspire to leadership in training public-school teachers.

"Teachers of courses in education do not yet compare favorably with teachers in other major fields, in respect to their professional training in the field of their specialty. The median of one year's training of staff members in professional education is less than one-half year more than that of the average graduate of teacher-training curricula in land-grant institutions. Teachers of education should have more than one semester's work in professional education above that of the prospective teachers whom they instruct. Progress in this respect may rapidly be attained by insisting upon more training in professional education on the part of entrants into positions on the education staff.

"Courses in professional education are susceptible of great improvement. Such improvement should follow increasing research and experimentation. No one is sure how much professional work should be required, nor has any exact measure of its value been devised. Stabilization of content in such courses has not yet been attained. Variations in course requirements are too large. Course nomenclature is confusing. Sequences in courses taken are not sufficiently uniform. Undesirable duplications in content of courses exist. Present wide divergences in requirements and practices in respect to educational courses should be continued only for the purpose of controlled experimentation."

Part IV deals with Military Education; Part V with Veterinary Medicine; Part VI with the Summer Session; Part VII with the Extension Service; Parts VIII and IX

with Research and Graduate Work, the former connecting itself mainly with the work of the Agricultural Experiment Stations.

Certain anomalies in connection with the occasional natural but erroneous use of the membership list of the Association of Universities as identical with a list of strong graduate schools are justly emphasized. It is noted that in 1928, 19 of the land-grant institutions were not accredited as to their undergraduate work by the Association of American Universities and that all but two of these conferred the degree master of science in one or more fields and several conferred the Ph.D. It is urgently recommended that all land-grant institutions qualify for undergraduate accrediting by this association and that any technical reason barring the institution from the accredited list be removed as promptly as practicable.

Part X deals with Negro land-grant colleges.

S. P. NANNINGA.