

full should not extend beyond the sixth year following graduation."

(5) Further study should be made of variations in the teaching loads, salary scales and consequent unit costs of instruction in the various institutions with a view to rationalization.

(6) The overlapping and duplication of functions among the several institutions demands a reallocation of the functions respectively to be performed by each. However, the abolition of no institution is recommended.

(7) The University of Virginia school of education should be discontinued unless some reorganization is effected to bring down the costs of instruction to a reasonable level. This should be done either through enrollments sufficient to justify the present expenditure or through direct reductions in the instructional staff. In any event, "the charge to students in this department should immediately be raised to a level more nearly comparable with the costs of the service."

(8) For simplicity in accounting records, all charges imposed for the purpose of providing instruction should be combined into a single "tuition fee." Where special charges exist, unrelated to instruction, they should be kept separate.

(9) The practice of remitting college fees to students for services rendered should be discontinued, and payment made on a strictly commercial basis.

(10) Charges to out-of-state students should be materially increased in order that they may cover in all cases the costs of instruction to this group.

(11) Instruction charges to Virginia students, which range from nothing at all in some cases to 152 per cent of the cost in others, should be more nearly equalized.

(12) More complete records regarding all phases of the fiscal operations of the institutions of higher learning should be prepared for the information of the Governor and the General Assembly.

## THE READING TABLE

### FOOTPRINTS, RUNNING AWAY

LUCY GAYHEART. By Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1935. 231 pp. \$2.00.

The more a writer has to say, the less space he may take to say it. Thomas Wolfe, trying to compete, apparently, with Theodore Dreiser in elephantinity, takes 912 pages to record what the average person, busy with his own life, would prefer in 200. Robert Nathan's *Road of Ages*, a miniature epic in theme and significance, and reading almost like poetry, runs 232 pages; Thornton Wilder, writing *Heaven's My Destination*, one of the really important as well as most intriguing books of last year, uses 304 pages of large print; Willa Cather in flexible and gentle prose, employs 231 to tell the story of *Lucy Gayheart*.

If the book is romantic and dramatic, as some critics, more concerned, perhaps, for their own cleverness than for an honest review, assert, its romance and drama are afire with conviction. And life may be both romantic and dramatic; one knows it through Miss Cather if he does not in his own experience.

Not that Miss Cather strives for an effect. She is reporting, not producing, one. Yet every word counts. While her art is artless in its quiet convention, she never fails to be vivid and compelling. Her phrasing is simple and flawless, gleaming with its own inner light. Listen to this:

... When she looked off at that soft promise of spring, spring already happening in the colours of the sky before it had come on earth, such a longing awoke in her that it seemed as if it would break her heart. That happiness she had so lately found, where was it? Everything threatened it, the way of the world was against it. It had escaped her. She had lost it as one can lose a ravishing melody, remembering the mood of it, the kind of joy it gave, but unable to recall precisely the air itself. And she couldn't breathe in this other kind of life. It stifled her, woke in her a frantic fear—the fear of falling back into it forever. If only one could lose one's life and one's body and be nothing but one's desire; if the rest could melt away, and that could float with the gulls, out yonder where the blue and green were changing!

It is not a book to be read lightly. But though it leaves your heart sad, it also leaves it compassionate towards all who must live and die. And it is good for the human heart to be made to feel. It does feel, keenly, for all of them whose lives produce and suffer the tragedy here recorded, even for those in the background—good, fussy, tiresome Pauline Gayheart, whose face could “clabber, the flesh curdle,” like milk, when she was disagreeable, who resented everything that was most individual and characteristic in her sister but was loyal to whatever she thought was Gayheart; her father, who had nice tastes, but lacked the moving energy which would have got him somewhere; and Mrs. Ramsay, whose house had the color and warmth of her own personality and who said to Lucy, “‘Nothing really matters but living. Get all you can out of it. I’m an old woman and I know. Accomplishments are the ornaments of life, they come second.’”

To those in the foreground the response is still stronger: to Sebastian, the singer, with his simplicity that must have come “from having lived a great deal and mastered a great deal,” whose life, if you brushed it ever so lightly, responded as to a tapping on a deep bell—“you felt all that you could hear;” and whose destiny was summarized when he thought, leaving Lucy, “‘Ein schöner Stern ging auf in meiner Nacht;” and to Lucy, who could be wildly happy over trifling matters, tingling, expectant, like a wild spring shower, who annoyed her sister by spending what money she had gaily, refusing to be poor in spirit, who preferred to burn herself up in the city than to smoulder alone on the edge of the prairie, though she loved her little town with a “heart-breaking love, like loving the dead who cannot answer back”—the poignancy of that!—who found in her love an authority for liking and disliking, for taking what was hers and rejecting what was unimportant, who was to have only one golden month

of love—some people got very little in this world—and who hadn’t taken it in that after Sebastian sailed “the days and hours would no longer carry her anywhere,” who was finally defeated though she had triumphed over her own despair, and with her father and sister passed into oblivion, her most permanent record being three light footprints made in the wet cement sidewalk before her house when she was thirteen—three light footprints, running away.

The reader’s pity is no less, perhaps greater, for Harry, with the professional geniality “gleaming over his eyes like a pair of spectacles,” Harry, to whom the truth about a feeling meant nothing, who had “to be clubbed with a situation,” who acted like a common fellow but wasn’t one, finding in Lucy the one person he had known who was mysteriously lovely, all the others being more or less like himself, who, while punishing her, knew that when the hour struck they two would be together again, that nothing would stop him—but it did—and who remained in his home town to grow old facing his disappointment while he lived a good and outwardly successful life.

The book leaves a total impression that is the strength of all its individual portraits and of the maturity and grace of personality of the author. That impression lingers in the mind and in the heart, a haunting nostalgia, which is the soul of beauty.

*Lucy Gayheart* is one of Willa Cather’s best novels, belonging, in this reviewer’s list of her best, with *My Antonia*, *A Lost Lady*, and *Death Comes to the Archbishop*. With it Miss Cather fortifies an already substantial claim to being America’s foremost novelist.

EDNA TUTT FREDERIKSON

HEIDI. By Johanna Spyri. Edited to fit the interests and abilities of young readers. By Edward L. Thorndike, New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1935. 360 pp.

Careful examination of Thorndike’s *Heidi* in comparison with other translations shows that the story remains unchanged,

but that the sentences are arranged and worded in a simpler, more natural manner for children. This is an inexpensive edition, lacking the beauty of some of the other editions, although there are some unusually good illustrations by Hildegarde Woodward.

M. V. H.

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THE COMMAND OF WORDS. By S. Stephenson Smith. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1935. 290 pp. \$2.50.

A workmanlike presentation of fascinating problems and thoroughgoing exercises in the use of words, this volume is aimed at the reader who "wants to build a wide vocabulary and have it under ready and sure command." The author points out that the spelling bee, the game of anagrams, and the cross word puzzle are not enough; he holds to the sound notion that words should be studied in context.

In general his treatment is modern and authoritative, resting on the Fowlers and the Oxford English Dictionary. He recognizes the potency of slang in a living language, points out that it does not cast a social stigma on its user (as the pedants in the schoolroom would have us believe), and urges that slang must not be "dismissed with mere tut-tutting."

A chapter on the Use of the Dictionary contains a valuable sheet presenting in comparison sample pages from the Concise Oxford, the Winston Simplified, Webster's Collegiate, the College Standard, and Roget's Thesaurus. The book also includes keys to the many serviceable exercises.

Intelligent recognition of various levels of usage for various occasions characterizes the chapters on "The Art of Conversation," "The After-Dinner Touch," and "When to Write as You Talk." Throughout, there is vigor and sprightliness as well as sound scholarship.

C. T. LOGAN

## NEWS OF THE COLLEGE

The Hedgerow Players of Rose Valley, Pennsylvania, will present Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* as a matinee performance and Eugene O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon* as an evening attraction in Wilson Auditorium on January 29.

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Newly elected officers in the three literary societies for the winter quarter are the following:

*Lanier Literary Society:* Rosalie Fowlkes, president; Alice West, vice-president; Elberta Rice, secretary; Sophia Rogers, treasurer; Laura Prince Morris, sergeant-at-arms; Helen Irby, chairman of the program committee; and Eleanor Holtzman, critic.

*Lee Literary Society:* Annie Glenn Darden, president; Ann VanLandingham, vice-president; Adelaide White, secretary; Margaret Hottle, treasurer; Aileen Goalder, sergeant-at-arms; Helen Shular, chairman of the program committee; and Betty Hodges, critic.

*Page Literary Society:* Catherine Carree, president; Margaret Byer, vice-president; Alice Thompson, secretary; Adelaide Howser, treasurer; Marian Sampson, sergeant-at-arms; Margaret Peak, chairman of the program committee; and Ettie Henry, critic.

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Ethel Cooper, Winchester, and Susan Quinn, Richmond, have been chosen as first and second assistant editors, respectively, of the 1936 *Schoolma'am* by Evelyn Pugh, Edom, editor.

Other directing members of the annual staff are Margaret Newcomb, Formosa, business manager, and Helen Madjeski, Elizabeth, New Jersey, snapshot editor. Ethel Cooper has also served as art editor.

Miss Newcomb's appointments to the business staff include Frances Ream, Margaret Peak, Christine Newcomb, Goldie Cohen, Louise Ellett, Elizabeth Cosby, and Irene Collins.