

choosing against itself," "You taught me waiting with myself," "Longing is like the seed that wrestles in the ground," "After great pain a formal feeling comes," "There is a languor of the life more imminent than pain," "There is a pain so utter it swallows Being up," "At leisure is the soul that gets a staggering blow." This is no willing surrender to circumstance.

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Then calm. Then looking forward to death, to reunion; backward to the minutiae of life magnified by him. (It is for this reason that the divisions in the earlier volumes are arbitrary and misleading. "Life," "Love," "Time and Eternity," were not separate or sequential to Emily; one impinged upon and became part of the other.) Never has her poetry been more explicit, more definitely circumstantial. Recalling him to herself and herself to him, she ties her hat, creases her shawl, puts new blossoms in the glass, weighs the "time 'twill be till six o'clock." She makes the scene more and more vivid. We see the very angle at which she crossed the floor "where he turned—so—and I turned—how—And all our sinews tore."

But though the love poems form the most revealing section of "Further Poems," they do not unbalance the new volume. Never have the moods been so various; the gamut ranges from irresistible playfulness to abnegation and a faith that is "larger than the hills." Here again are "syllables of velvet, sentences of plush"; here are verses that will be quoted until they become familiars, and here are individual lines that cannot be forgotten. "Location's narrow way," she says, "is for ourselves. To the dead there's no geography." Speaking of the impossibility of divulging the divine, she writes, "The definition of melody is that definition is none." She alludes, after a tragedy, to a day that "unrolled as huge as yesterdays in pairs." She tells how childhood takes "rainbows as the common way, and empty skies the eccentricity." Reminiscent of "The Song of Honor," she sounds the great overtones in the small praise of the wren: "Twas as space sat singing to herself and Man." She summons defeat in "shreds of prayer and death's surprise stamped visible in stone." She recalls the "transatlantic morn, When heaven was too common to miss, Too sure to dote upon." She fixes the breathlessness of outdoor beauty with a quatrain.

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Questions still remain. The introduction is detailed in its analysis of the new poems, disappointingly vague as to their discovery. In all these years did Mrs. Bianchi, who inherited and lives in the Dickinson home, never make a thorough search of the relics? Did Lavinia actually "suppress" these poems, and if so why did she keep them where they could be found? If Emily's sister hid them, as the publishers imply, because the love-poems are too frank, how are we to account for the withholding of a hundred "general" poems on poetry, prisons, birds, flowers, women, creation, God? The arrangement is so apt, the sequence so dramatic, that one ought to know whether Mrs. Bianchi found the verses in the order printed or whether the editors gave the book its particular design. Small defects have crept in here and there. The spacing too often is arbitrary; the line divisions of many of the poems are as disturbing as:

Three times the billows tossed  
Me up,  
Then caught me like a ball,  
Then made blue faces in my  
Face—  
And pushed away a sail.

Such an arrangement shows either a lack of courage or a too literal editing. A Cummings might enjoy this typography, not Emily. The quatrain is implicit here as in most of her work. I suspect that had Emily supervised her own manuscript she would have printed such poems as orthodox four-line stanzas, and that they were written thus only because Emily's paper was not long enough to give the quatrain its customary shape.

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These quibbles aside, our debt is obvious. The buried manuscript has become a living monument. Had Emily Dickinson been unknown until the publication of "Further Poems" and had she written nothing but this one book, she would have to be reckoned among the indisputably major poets. Frail in build, fine in texture, hers is the "colossal substance of immortality."

## Ancient Culture

THE SUMERIANS. By C. LEONARD WOOLLEY.  
New York: Oxford University Press. 1929.  
\$2.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND P. DOUGHERTY  
Yale University

FOR a long time there had been complacent satisfaction with the view that civilization, particularly in its outward forms and artistic ideals, sprang from the Greeks. Vestiges of older influences upon human development in self-expression were recognized, it is true, but they were not regarded as representing an appreciable impact of eastern refinement upon western culture. Gradually, however, with the recovery of cuneiform records and works of art long buried in the Tigris-Euphrates valley, a new concept as to historical beginnings has been emerging. This is due to the fact that earlier patterns of man's cherished achievements have become available.

Less than a century ago the first real study of a ruined Assyrian metropolis was undertaken. Since then many other crumbled cities of Mesopotamia have been searched with painstaking care for light upon the nature of vanished dynasties. During recent years a large share of the archaeological interest of England and America has been focused upon a district which played an important rôle in the national efforts of the Sumerians. About midway between the site of Babylon and the northern part of the Persian Gulf lie the impressive elevations of Ur. Nearby is a small mound called Al-'Ubaid. The debris of the latter, partially examined in 1919



"I'll tell you how the sun rose."

Illustration, by Prentiss Taylor, for a poem by Emily Dickinson.

by Dr. H. R. Hall of the British Museum, was completely investigated in 1923-24 by Mr. C. Leonard Woolley for the Joint Expedition of the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Beginning in 1922 annual campaigns of excavation have been carried on at Ur under the direction of Mr. Woolley for the same Joint Expedition. These delvings into Sumerian ancient remains have furnished unexpected criteria for the appraisal of cultural origins.

The excavator of long experience gains a unique perspective. Working from year to year at a particular place, he at last comes to breathe the very spirit of the community whose habitations and sanctuaries he traces; he develops familiarity with the intimate life of the individuals whose documents he rescues from oblivion; he acquires skill in estimating the capabilities of the artists whose handiwork he retrieves from houses, temples, and tombs; that he is therefore the one best fitted to interpret his finds is obvious. Mr. Woolley is not a disappointment in this respect. In the volume under review he presents in lucid manner and attractive style the impressions which he has gathered from the arduous yet romantic task of resurrecting the civilization of the Sumerians. At the same time he seeks to make his conclusions more valid by incorporating results obtained at other sites.

Scholars differ considerably as to the identity of the earliest inhabitants of the land of the two rivers. Some, like Professor Eduard Meyer, claim this distinction for the Semitic Akkadians who came from Amurru, the land of the Amorites in the west. Others believe that the non-Semitic Sumerians, of

unknown original habitat, but apparently from the east, were the first to found cities in the Tigris-Euphrates alluvium. Professor Meissner of Berlin University has recently collected data which he construes as substantiating this view. Aside from the question of priority, the direction in which culture moved deserves consideration. Did the Sumerians impress their attainments upon the Akkadians or was the overwhelming trend in the opposite direction? There can be little doubt that the intermingling of the two peoples induced some interchange of ideas and accomplishments. It is generally agreed that the Akkadians learned the art of cuneiform writing from the Sumerians. Notwithstanding this fact, the late Professor Clay of Yale University in his exhaustive treatise holds to the opinion that the Sumerians rather than the Akkadians were the main borrowers. Mr. Woolley submits a reconstruction of events which is both in agreement and at variance with certain phases of the preceding generalizations. The Semites—civilized clans from the uplands of Amurru and wild tribes from the deserts of Arabia—were the first to colonize lower Mesopotamia when its river deposits had become habitable; after a time came the Sumerians by way of the sea and imposed their culture and religion upon the Semites.

The complexity of the problem is accentuated by the sparsity of decisive data. Moreover, ambiguity is entailed by the possibility of deriving divergent inferences from some source materials. The hypothetical character of Mr. Woolley's deductions should not be overlooked. Early painted ware of the kind found at Al-'Ubaid figures largely, and rightly so, in his attempted correction of historical conceptions. However, the provisional nature of his association of these ceramic remains with the Akkadians is demonstrated by his own statements. "An Akkadian Mesopotamia" prior to "the incoming of the Sumerians" is made contingent upon the supposed Akkadian production of an unusual type of pottery. Nevertheless, it may well be that future discoveries will verify this ingenious theory.

Despite the tentative basis for some of his propositions, no hesitancy need be felt in ascribing high praise to Mr. Woolley for the immense amount of light which he has thrown upon the preëminent antiquity of civilization in Mesopotamia. Undoubted proof of extremely advanced culture in the region of Ur as early as the middle of the fourth millennium B. C. has been unearthed by him. His exposition of the thesis that the Egypt of that time had made less indigenous progress in art and architecture is convincing. In fact, that the early denizens of the Nile valley were imitators rather than initiators, and that the ancient residents of the lower part of the Tigris-Euphrates basin were inventors of standard and abiding forms of culture, cannot be questioned. The cogent reasons for this far-reaching conclusion are presented in a book which combines the direct practical approach of the excavator with the vivid creative power of the historian.

## Investment Technique

A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT. By DWIGHT C. ROSE. New York: Harper & Bros. 1929. \$5.

Reviewed by W. BARRETT BROWN

MR. ROSE'S book swings through a wide arc, touching on the economic theory of pure rent, analyzing the investment experience of insurance companies, and giving some broad advice for investors in general. No doubt a volume of this sort is designed to a considerable extent for readers outside the banking business and therefore a good deal of rather elementary and laborious explanation is permissible. No matter how much he may enjoy such a book, the inexperienced investor cannot judge it fully; on the other hand, the professional analyst in contemplating the book must not allow himself to be annoyed by some rather elementary exhibits. Nevertheless, from the purely practical standpoint, the great value of this book lies in the collection of extensive records concerning insurance company investments and the analysis of their operations. Not the least interesting is the series of letters from prominent bankers on the prospect for bond yields in the next ten or twenty years. Written in 1899 these letters addressed to a large insurance company have a quaint significance, but it may be asked whether they are any more erroneous than last year's market forecasts. Inasmuch as interest rates had been falling for some time, these



eminent financiers were almost unanimous in believing they would continue to do so. However, T. Jefferson Coolidge said "I give my opinion with great diffidence as it is impossible to foresee many events, such as a European War, which would upset my calculation."

The book begins with a dialogue between an elderly banker and his militant nephew. The familiar clichés of investment banking are chased about the decks of an Atlantic liner and into the ship's bar. There, everyone but the reader having had several cocktails, the financial world is left to itself till morning with the hope that investors will soon have somebody to represent them who is as wily and sophisticated as the security dealer with whom they must do business. Crossing from the middle of page 28 to the top of page 29 the reader may be somewhat surprised to find that the scene has shifted to "before the dawn of civilization." In a few paragraphs equilibrium is restored; it develops that the author is merely sketching his views on the origin of the capitalistic system.

Certain modern writers have developed a habit of writing novels which are largely economic dissertations and histories that are partly fiction, but it may be suggested that a business book can hardly hope to benefit from the extensive use of divergent methods. It does not strengthen an economic theory to fold one's hands and dream of a cave-man as a capitalist because he may have had more acorns than he needed. Much less to assume that he thought himself one!

After wading through the centuries, the author calls attention to the problems confronting the investment of capital and turns to the insurance companies for study "because no other business has so well succeeded in superimposing a structure of certainty upon a base of uncertainty." Inasmuch as insurance companies have developed a skilful technique in handling their problems, the general investor should do likewise. Immediately a distinction will appear. The insurance company has two great sources of income—premiums on policies and income from investments. Restating in a slightly different way the ideas of the author, we can arrange an analogy by comparing the "riskless rental value of capital" for the investor with the premium receipts of the insurance company. In other words, just as the insurance company can expect certain receipts from its insurance in force, so can the investor expect a minimum return on his money whether he risks it greatly or not.

As a matter of fact, while the measure of investment success for both insurance companies and individuals is the ability to earn more than a "safe return," the circumstances of each are not exactly similar. It is hoped that no offense is rendered insurance companies by saying that the study of "risks" is largely the study of expectancy. No life insurance company insures ailing men; its mortality tables are concerned with the length of time it will take well men to die. Furthermore, the insurance company establishes a rate that will amply protect it under most conceivable circumstances; the investor when he lends his money has no corresponding control over interest rates.

The steps by which the insurance companies mounted to their present knowledge of investment values are nevertheless worthy of careful study. The author believes many insurance companies might have made more profitable investments and that individual investors have "been lulled into a false sense of security."

Inasmuch as money may be placed in sound securities with a minimum of risk, the measure of investment success should be something more than a moderate yield percent. The author believes that money can obtain a return, with practically no risk, represented by the average yield of 4-6mos. two name prime commercial paper and U. S. Treasury certificates of similar term. This he calls "the riskless rental value of capital." Investment acumen must produce a greater return than this to justify itself.

No quarrel arises with this contention, but it seems like an unnecessary complication to deduct "the riskless rental value of capital" before determining the relative success of two simultaneous investment programs. After all, while the purchasing power of the dollar may vary and interest rates may rise or fall, the measure of investment success at a given time is simply this—Did the project make money? Should one say for example in a year when "the riskless rental value of capital" was two per cent that an investor who lost twenty per cent on his in-

vestments lost a total of twenty-two per cent? Here is a problem for the sophomore class in logic and the freshman class in mathematics. And some passing obeisance should be paid to the old school investor who thought it better to . . . "Bear what ills we have, Than fly to others that we know not of. . . ." and left his heirs a collection of gilt-edged 3½s and 4s that never failed to meet margin requirements at their brokers.

The author believes that the greatest success among the insurance companies was occasioned by the employment of an investment research department and an appropriate emphasis on common stock investments.

This brings us to familiar ground. After all, in the current opinion, there is no investment like a good common stock because it can grow and no common stock like an industrial common stock because it grows so fast. A greater proportion of stock investment would, in the opinion of the author, make possible a more flexible type of insurance with a tendency to counteract fluctuations in the purchasing power of the dollar.

## The Seamiest Side

DAUGHTER OF EARTH. By AGNES SMEDLEY. New York: Coward-McCann. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

AMERICAN life, Howells once wrote, cannot be interpreted in Russian terms; it is too sunny, prosperous, and hopeful. As a broad generality this was true, though when he made the statement the younger American realists—or as Hamlin Garland called them, "veritists"—were already studying the depressing shadows that crossed the sunlight. Though Miss Smedley's grim document has little value from the artistic point of view, it is a rather remarkable addition to our literature of American bitterness. Apparently autobiographic in the main, it has obviously been touched up with fictional elements; and all the touches accentuate the notes of rebellion and social resentment. It is a highly interesting and often shocking revelation of what a working-class American girl can meet and endure. It is also a piece of social propaganda which by its frequent savagery of tone tends to defeat its own purpose.

The book is distinguished from most other human documents of the kind by the manner in which the two elements of objective hardship and subjective torment constantly intertwine throughout its chapters. Take a girl reared in extreme poverty in the West, with a dissolute, reckless, violent father, a broken-spirited, illiterate mother, and an aunt who is a prostitute. Drag her through the life of a tenant-farmer's impoverished and toilsome round, that of a "mover-family," that of the Colorado mining camps, and that of crude and frowsy ranch towns. Let her see her mother, brothers, and one sister die in various stages of misery. Let her emerge upon her independent career uneducated, mannerless, and with no standards but those of defiant self-protection, to find that nearly every man she meets looks at her in a predatory spirit. This is the external life of Marie Rogers, and some of its details are of a sort not often put down in cold print. But there are simultaneously other causes of suffering which only a psychoanalyst could properly estimate. The sight of her mother's sufferings has given her an intense repugnance to the idea of marriage; her numberless buffets have made her hard and suspicious; she is hungry for affection, but no human contact can melt her into responsiveness. She torments herself and finds no way out.

The best part of the book is the first half, with a genuinely vivid picture of the partly industrialized West. There were security and a certain amount of content for the family on the shabby Missouri farm, but these dissolved when they went to the mining regions. Doubtless the harsh picture of the Colorado mining-towns is overdrawn in spots, but doubtless it is also accurate in essentials; it carries the stamp of truth. Trinidad, Tercio, and Delagua, their Company tyranny, their polyglot, discontented workers, their strikes and clashes with the militia, their saloons and gambling-joints, the poverty that compelled even children to thievery—these pass in review, described by one who really lived the life. The scenes of domestic discord and misery have the same grim effectiveness. Later both the lights and shadows of the heroine's life became stronger. She finds it possible to get away to school, first at an Arizona normal college, later at the University of

California; she meets people of culture, lives a life of normal decency, and finds some true comrades.

The propagandist note becomes stronger, the bitterness still more overdone, when the heroine in the last chapters lands in New York, working on the *Call*, denouncing the war with Germany and the Wilson Administration, and hobnobbing with a set of Hindu revolutionaries whom she seems to find attractive but who strike the reader as repulsive. Why heroines are always brought to New York, why Socialist doctrines appear so unconvincing in novels, and why some novelists find febrile-minded and unkempt gentry from Moscow or Delhi so romantic, are questions which it is probably bootless to ask. But at any rate, a book which is impressive and absorbing in its earlier chapters here runs into conventional and sandy wastes. It is for the individual reader to decide whether the latter part of the book condemns the earlier part, or the earlier part redeems the closing chapters.

## Hoover and Literature

(Continued from page 769)

power in a few hands and for the benefit of a few that characterized the last stages of earlier cultures. On the contrary, after the satisfactions of wealth for a minority have been secured, this energy is to be kept for the creation of a state where all are to be relatively prosperous. For motives of self-aggrandizement and self-superiority are to be substituted a kind of hedonism—comfort for everybody as the price which the few must pay if they are to be rich. The ideals of socialism are to be realized in a capitalistic state.

But this is an abandonment of laissez-faire, this is a revaluation of prosperity! It is idealism come back through the office door after it had been rudely pushed out of legislative chambers, universities, and popular opinion. This is to call upon the imagination of men, for only imagination can expand human motives to include a care for other's welfare. It is not philanthropy, not reform, not romantic altruism,—just as the new literature is not romance, not sentiment, not emotionalism. Yet Mr. Hoover's project clearly raises ideas above facts, creates a purpose from statistics, and gives prosperity a meaning so much broader than it has now, that if he realizes his desires he is likely to need as much idealism as science for his task.

The resemblance between the state of literature and the state of the country is by no means accidental. We are slowly passing in all our faculties from the cycle of mechanistic advance to the cycle of spiritual and emotional adjustment. And this adjustment concerns engineering as much as the imagination, the personality as much as politics. The philosophers and statesmen of the old type are for the moment quite out of their depth. No one can write about modern society who does not understand psychology and sociology as well as the technique of literary composition and the history of thinking. But little more can be done with psychology and sociology in literature without a new and controlling imagination. And very little more than is good (though much that is pernicious, destructive, even horrible) can be achieved by machines without high imaginative conceptions of man in all his capacities—as idealist as well as realist, as a soul and heart as well as an industrialized brain. In default of a Messiah or a prophet—and it is a bit early for so cataclysmic a personality—an engineer who is also an idealist may be what we need most. He has a job on his hands, in which many will be proud to help. There will be struggle and clash and disappointments, but a real objective in the reign of Hoover. Vivat Caesar!

## The Saturday Review of Literature

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