It should be said in conclusion that the good features of this very useful volume exceed its defects.

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John D. Barnhart


On a canvas stretching from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi River, and from New York to Virginia, during the half-century following the close of the Civil War, the author of _Drivin' Woman_ has sketched the broad outlines of what might have been a great story; but she has not written a great book. The beginning, a series of scenes in the South of the early reconstruction period, combines the familiar ingredients of impoverished southern aristocracy, faithful Negro servants, newly-freed blacks, renegade whites, and "damn Yankees." Had Margaret Mitchell not previously blazed the trail through this period and blazed it well, Mrs. Chevalier's account of reconstruction as it affected the Moncure family might have bulked larger in literature treating the post-war South; but as it stands, the latter adds little to a superior original.

Comparison of _Drivin' Woman_ with _Gone with the Wind_ is inevitable. The main characters of both novels spring from the same southern soil; they are the products of the same set of circumstances. Yet Scarlett O'Hara is a woman of flesh and blood, while America Moncure, the "Drivin' Woman" about whom the present story revolves, is a thing of paper and ink—the stuff of which Victorian heroines are made. Fant Annable, the river boat gambler with whom America falls in love, is at best a shadowy figure, a pocket-sized Rhett Butler, with none of Rhett's peculiar brand of honesty and courage to redeem him.

Touching the high points of America's career after she leaves, in 1865, the smouldering ruins of the Moncure plantation, one follows her first to the rolling plains of Kentucky, where she teaches school and eventually, as the result of a rather incredible bargain, marries Fant Annable. The birth of their son finds Fant a fugitive from justice, having killed a man in a brawl; and America mistress of Foxden, a farm in Kentucky which a member of the Annable clan willed to Fant's first-born. Through the years, America raises tobacco on the Kentucky land, shields Fant, believed to be
dead, from discovery on his visits to Foxden, and bears two more of his children. Ostracized by neighbors who question the parentage of her daughters, America escapes the drudgery and loneliness of the years at Foxden only during her infrequent trips to New York to visit her sister, Teena, and her brother-in-law, Tugger Blake, in their Fifth Avenue mansion. Tugger, a "Tarheel" who peddled tobacco along the country roads of the South after the war, went to New York, and through a series of shrewd moves, became one of the group of eastern financiers who were attempting to control the production of tobacco products. In due time, Fant Annable, ill and penniless, comes home to Foxden. With America, he plans to leave Kentucky, but his presence is discovered, and he is killed as he attempts to escape. Vindicated by Annable’s death, America again goes to New York, this time to supervise the double wedding of her youngest daughter and the daughter of Teena and Tugger. Returning to Kentucky, she marries Stone Moncure, a wealthy tobacco grower, who with other growers is being forced by the tobacco trust to accept starvation prices for his crop. Thus the paths of America and Tugger once more cross, this time as America fights side by side with her husband in the war against the industrialists intent upon establishing a monopoly of the tobacco market. As a result of the efforts of the Kentucky growers, and of the Supreme Court decision which outlaws the trust, America and Stone win their final victory over forces of a new era in American life which threaten their happiness.

Drivin’ Woman shows clearly the influence of the author’s years in Hollywood as a writer of scripts. She is adept at creating and sustaining the action-packed situation. By her emphasis upon the externals of a complicated plot, however, Mrs. Chevalier has, in the main, sacrificed the depth of characterization which would have lifted the book from the realm of a good story to that of good literature. The main events in the life of this “Drivin’ Woman,” together with many lesser incidents, which might have been packed with intense and genuine emotion, seem to move past as on a screen, and in spite of a rather lengthy acquaintance with the characters, one has at the end no great understanding, no deep sympathy for them. Even in the interpretation of America Moncure, where the author most nearly approach-
es a full-length portrait, she concerns herself too much with what happens to America, rather than what happens within her. As a far-flung, fast-moving motion picture, *Drivin' Woman* might become one of the ten best movies of the year, but as a story spread over 650 pages, permitting a more critical analysis, it leaves the reader too often dissatisfied with sketchy, superficial characterizations. The technique of the scenarist is not that of the writer of "the great American novel," and one might almost wish that the author had not set down the material for this story until she had more nearly perfected her skill as a creative writer.

In spite of any weaknesses as a piece of literature, however, the book is valuable as an historically accurate summary of an important period in the development of the tobacco industry. The author displays a thorough knowledge of the various phases of the industry, and presents it in an interesting and readable form. For the average reader, this information will no doubt provide the background for an increased appreciation of the romance and drama in the growth of one of our leading American industries. *Drivin' Woman* is a book for those who enjoy a successful combination of fact and fiction, historical authenticity of background, and a rapidly-moving story, broad in its scope as the era it portrays.

Indiana University Margaret Frances Riggs


When Robert Owen sailed from Liverpool in October 1824, in search of a site for his proposed New World Utopia, Donald Macdonald was one of his companions. Before this eventful trip was concluded, in the following August, Harmonie was visited and purchased from the Rappites. Again in October of 1825 Macdonald was a member of the Owen party which sailed from Liverpool to launch the New Experiment on the distant banks of the Wabash. The diaries Macdonald kept on these two trips reveal much concerning the genesis of the Owen community at New Harmony (as Harmonie was renamed), and they also contain considerable valuable material about the Rappites.

The diaries were discovered about a decade ago by Mrs.