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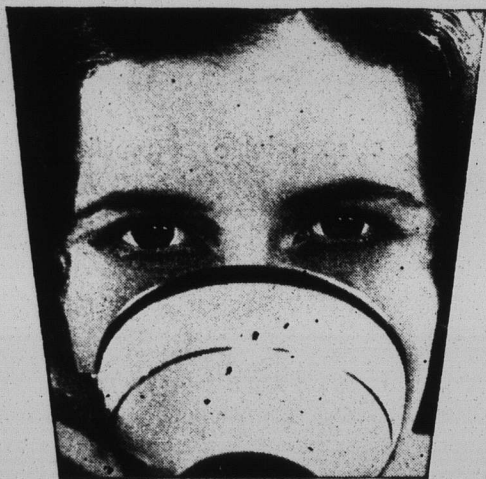
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## COMMENT on BOOKS and AUTHORS

### A Truly Great Woman

ANN VICKERS. By Sinclair Lewis,  
Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Ann Vickers is Sinclair Lewis' first novel since he received the Nobel prize. It will be widely read not only because many people admire Lewis, but because many others are eager to see what he has done now. After the first tiresome pages, the story is interesting whether its readers approve of it or not.

Ann Vickers is born in a small town in Illinois. All her life she bears the impress of that environment. Her father who was a teacher had certain principles of living that formed her character. "Sobriety, honest work, paying his debts, loyalty—and a pride that would let him neither cringe, nor bully, these were her father's code."

Ann goes to a college in New England, studies nursing in New York, labors in the cause of woman's suffrage in Ohio, works in settlements in New York and Buffalo, and studies sociology at Columbia.

#### Tries to Reform Prisons

Because she is deeply interested in prison reform, she wishes to go to the "worst possible pen" to learn about "penology as it really is." She becomes educational director of the Women's division at Copperhead Gap in a middle western state. When she is ready to enlist sympathy and aid for reform of the infamous place, she finds to her horror upon what deaf ears her tales of the prison can fall. She becomes an authority on vocational training in women's reformatories and finally is superintendent of the "Stuyvesant Industrial home for women, the most modern prison in New York city." She becomes a truly great woman in her grasp of social needs and in her passion to right the wrongs of wretched and helpless people.

She marries a man who is also a social worker and who expects his wife to play the part of a "little woman." Naturally her marriage is a failure and while we have no admiration for her husband, neither can we admire her treatment of him. She who hates prisons has to live through the trial that sends her lover, a judge of the supreme court of New York, to prison for receiving a bribe.

#### Ann's Private Life Irks

There will be much criticism of the book because of Ann's private life. A great woman in public affairs, she falls far below our accepted standards in her own life. Whether or not Ann is a true picture of a woman is a question. To me she is too energetic, too dynamic, too eager and intense, too emotional to be real. She is all things in too great a degree. She lives and accomplishes at an exhausting pace that seems impossible to be true.

In style Lewis is, as always, vivid and interesting. His humor, as always, is apt to be smart and unpleasant.

Anna K. Whitchurch.

ABE LINCOLN: FRONTIER BOY, by Augusta Stevenson, is a story of the boyhood days of Abraham Lincoln for little children to read for themselves and enjoy.

Miss Stevenson is a teacher in the grammar schools of Indianapolis and for a number of years has felt the need of such a book suitable for young children. Unable to find it, she began writing herself little stories of Lincoln's boyhood experiences for use in her classroom. The

### Apropos of California

LOS ANGELES. By Morrow Mayo.  
Knopf.

All California and converging tourist trails will like this tale, which is suggestively subtitled: "A History with Side-Shows from the Conquistador to Aimee Semple McPherson." Those of us who don't like Los Angeles will like it (the tale); those who feel bound to like Los Angeles will be amused by it, and Los Angeles, upon the theory that to succeed is the greatest proof of success, will recognize the advertising value in it. A city that in 1932 outdid previous Olympiads without going into the red can rest secure amid its archives of reading notices.

Beginning his story with the founding in 1781 of the pueblo or town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels, and describing its subsequent growth to a "hellhole of the west," Mr. Mayo engagingly offers information upon the booms and budgets, the men, manners, and methods that have converted into an inland seaport of first rank on the coast, a community in which only five percent are native born citizens, and 80 percent of its other boosters imports from the small-town and rural purities in a back home east. Mr. Mayo, one-time a California newspaper man, predicts that after Los Angeles's present area of 442 square miles fills up, the phenomenal activity of the populace will yield to the soporific effects of the mild climate. But the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce—a most energetic body—has arranged for that, and they are already adding more letters to those quarterly 90,000,000 pieces of advertising matter in which, you can bet on it, the name Los Angeles somewhere appears, further epistles designed to show the superiority of the climate of southern California to that which is experienced "back east."

### President Roosevelt Writes of Own Theories

Publication of *Looking Forward* by Franklin Delano Roosevelt was advanced from April 16 to March 20. This action was taken by the John Day company immediately upon receiving the manuscript, the final revisions in which were made by Mr. Roosevelt within the week preceding his inauguration. The publishers felt that the book was even more urgently important than they had anticipated, and that it should be issued as quickly as possible after Mr. Roosevelt's assumption of the presidency.

The book is no mere collection of political papers, but is a carefully reworked presentation of Mr. Roosevelt's major theories of government and of the political necessities of the present moment and the responsibilities of his administration. There will be included, as the final chapter, the inaugural address. This was not placed in the hands of the publisher until the morning of March 4 and the book was rushed to the presses.

sketches became so popular that her friends urged her to put them in book form. The idea appealed to her. She visited the scenes of Lincoln's boyhood and saturated herself in the literature of frontier days in Kentucky and Indiana. She has permitted some play to the imagination, of course, but has held the narrative true to the spirit, and faithful to the known facts, of frontier life.

### American Politics

HIZZONER THE MAYOR. By Joel Sayre. John Day Publishing Company.

A satire crude but brilliant as to style and enlightening as to content is Joel Sayre's new novel on municipal politics. "Hizzoner the Mayor" depicts the struggle and ultimate triumph of an idealist to "clean out" the city hall and install city management in place of the corrupt partisan method of government. Due to such circumstances as a pony shoe murder and the negro population's holding a revival on election day, the identity of "Hizzoner" changes several times throughout the story, but, until "Dearsie" Dorsay is enabled to realize his dream of city management through the bankruptcy of the Greater City of Malta and his capture of the pony murderer, one of these changes are for the better.

This is just the type of book which the American voting public needs to make them sit up and take notice of the candidates whom they are electing to office.—MARY JANE CURTIS.

### The C. W. Washburnes Write Children's Book

Mr. and Mrs. Carleton W. Washburne of Winnetka have written a comprehensive book on astronomy and geography for children, entitled "The Story of Earth and Sky." It will be published by the Century company about the first of June, and will contain 400 pages. There will be ninety drawings and thirty full page photographs.

Mrs. Washburne is now writing another story, the hero of which will be a true character, a little boy from Kashmere, India, son of the man who owned the houseboat in which the Washburnes lived when they were traveling through India several years ago. The experiences and adventures that the little Hindu boy will have are to be based partly on fact and partly on fiction.

### To Give Lecture Lessons on Short Story Writing

John T. Frederick, lecturer at Northwestern university, will present a series of lecture-lessons on short story writing during March and April.

The series will be given Friday evenings at 6 at the Education studio of the Young Women's Christian association, central branch, 59 E. Monroe street, Chicago, March 24 and 31, April 7, 21 and 28. The lecture-lessons will be given on the same days at 11 a.m., at the Harriet Hammond McCormick residence, 1001 N. Dearborn street, Chicago.

Mr. Frederick is editor of the Midland magazine, published in Chicago, and credited by literary critics with the publication of many short stories of distinction.

### A PHILOSOPHY OF SOLITUDE.

By John Cowper Powys. Simon & Schuster.

"A Philosophy of Solitude" is not a progressive argument; it is more of a notebook, a miscellany written connectively, written with charm and finish and felicity, on a truth that is perennially true, and has been variously stated these twenty-five hundred years. But it is particularly appropriate at times like the present when people are beginning to feel, more than perhaps they have been, "fed up" with crowds, noises, and worries.