

at least eighty-five retired Cargill executives. Professor Broehl presents a fascinating, in-depth story of the trials, tribulations, and successes of a complex family and the growth of a modern, and still privately held, global corporation.

The completion of a book of this magnitude and detail was a major accomplishment; the task of reading it was similarly challenging. The book has 877 pages of small-print text plus 65 pages of endnotes. In some places it is so detailed and copiously documented that one loses the broader threads of the argument. The author's meticulous care in documenting his work is laudable, but surely this fascinating story could have been told in fewer pages. The author properly sets the story in the context of rapid changes in agriculture and in the economy of the upper Midwest. He also attempts to chronicle the evolution of U.S. agricultural policy, but here he is clearly in less familiar territory, often appearing to confuse Cargill's stand on policy with what was actually going on. In the end, though, this is a book well worth reading. Anyone with an interest in midwestern agriculture, the grain trade, or commodity transportation must read it. The best part of the book is a superb concluding chapter called "Cargill's Culture." It pulls together the strengths and weaknesses of the three principal characters—W. W., John Sr., and John Jr.—and shows their clear but different imprints on the corporate giant.

Man and Mission: E. B. Gaston and the Origins of the Fairhope Single Tax Colony, by Paul M. Gaston. Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1993. xiv, 161 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$20.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY H. ROGER GRANT, UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Paul M. Gaston, a professor of history at the University of Virginia, has written a modest study of his grandfather, Ernest Berry Gaston (1862–1937), who helped to launch and to guide one of the most durable utopian experiments in the country, the Fairhope Single Tax Colony. The focus of this work is not on this successful settlement, which took shape after 1894 on the eastern shores of Mobile Bay in Alabama, but rather on E. B. Gaston's pre-Fairhope years, which were spent in Des Moines, Iowa. Gaston graduated from Drake University in 1886, then followed a variety of pursuits as a young adult, including work on the *Iowa Tribune*, a local reform organ. He was a person of good hope, a seeker after a better way of life.

During the time he spent in his native Hawkeye state, E. B. Gaston became intrigued with several of the reform panaceas of the day. As his grandson writes, "Gaston and his associates read and learned from [Edward] Bellamy, [Henry] George, [Laurence] Gronlund, and others, drawing inspiration and insight from all of them, all the while choosing freely what suited them best" (33). But it was Henry George's single-tax notion that held the strongest appeal. Gaston and a group of Des Moines uplifters liked George's "individualist route to the cooperative commonwealth" (67), and that surely explains why Fairhope prospered.

Man and Mission is a nicely crafted work. It is gracefully written, well researched, and thoughtfully organized. It is useful to learn more about minor reformers and "crackpots" of the late nineteenth century. In this case Gaston was a toiler about whom little has been written. Author Gaston places his grandfather in the proper historical context, and he does not unduly glorify him. Yet Gaston, the grandson, assumes that the nation badly needed a major housecleaning. Like his grandfather, Gaston believes that businessmen were generally greedy and not interested in serving a public interest. Railroad titans, in particular, were considered to be bad citizens. But the historical literature on these individuals does not suggest that interpretation. They were builders, not destroyers. Even Jay Gould, "the most hated man in America," was hardly an evil businessman. Gaston would have surely benefited by considering the conclusions recently reached by Maury Klein in his superb biography of Gould. But the "robber baron" nonsense refuses to die, notwithstanding the works of such scholars as Klein, Thomas Cochran, Albro Martin, and Richard C. Overton.

From Prairie to Prison: The Life of Social Activist Kate Richards O'Hare, by Sally M. Miller. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993. Missouri Biography Series. xv, 252 pp. Illustration, bibliographical essay, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARILYN DELL BRADY, VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

In the early 1900s Kate Richards O'Hare was among the most popular orators and journalists of the thriving midwestern socialists. Although a variety of scholars have told of this larger movement, attention to O'Hare has been limited. In *Prairie to Prison*, Sally M. Miller has given us the first book-length study of the life of this significant woman.

Born in rural Kansas in 1876, O'Hare always traced the roots of her activism to her personal knowledge of the problems farmers faced

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