

GERTRUDE BUCK

1871 - 1922

The recent death of Gertrude Buck is felt by the Faculty as a vital loss. A distinguishing trait in her character, influencing and co-ordinating all her activities, was an unusual union of the instinct for intellectual experimentation with spiritual steadfastness and courageousness - a union which rendered whatever her critical spirit deemed worthy of keeping not an ephemeral but a permanent possession. All fields of modern thought and life - scientific, philosophical, religious, social, aesthetic - interested her and from them she gleaned harvests of suggestion which, in due time, perpetuated themselves in modification of her teaching material and method. This sensitiveness to stimulus resulted, however, in far more than eager assimilation of ideas. It was joined with a constructive power of which conspicuous results may be seen in the growth under her initiative and fosterage of a flourishing Community theatre in Poughkeepsie, in the present trend of the writing courses in Vassar College, and in the series of books in which she has embodied her educational method and theory.

In the more purely aesthetic fields of literature Miss Buck did much experimentation, publishing from time to time a poem or a play, but, because of her crowded life, leaving unfinished others whose merit is known only to those to whom she turned, from time to time, for suggestion and criticism. In connection with The Community Theatre it may be said that its whole atmosphere bears witness to a distinguishing social attribute of its founder - a certain quiet, disinterested, impersonal friendliness of spirit springing from the same root of genuine humanity out of which grew her more intimate personal relationships - lasting memories to her closer friends.

It is moved that this recognition of her services to the community and to the College be engrossed in the Minutes of the Faculty and that copies thereof be presented by the Secretary to Miss Buck's family and to Miss Wylie.

Christabel F. Fiske

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