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A Friend to God's Poor: Edward Parmalee Smith. By William H. Armstrong.

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*Faces in the Moon*, then, follows a narrative path familiar in many women's autobiographies. It is focused on the domestic—the kitchen table provides the venue for most stories—and on the oral tales through which women, at least in current essentialist stereotype, pass culture down through generations. At the same time, Bell's comic voice and her rare insight into the confusions wrought by mixed blood and perhaps even more by parents' decisions to "pass" for white, make this novel an authentic original.

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**A Friend to God's Poor: Edward Parmalee Smith.** By William H. Armstrong. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1993. 518 pages. \$50.00 cloth.

William Armstrong's biography of Edward Parmalee Smith takes on a monumental task. A natal humanitarian, Smith's varied career included service with the budding Children's Aid Society, seeking to ease the privation of New York's indigent children in the 1850s; advocating and securing supplies for wounded Civil War combatants; as well as founding and furthering Black education throughout the post-Civil War South. The importance of these early achievement should not be understated.

The biography, however, is foremost the story of Smith's dedicated role in the American Missionary Association's attempt to administer an Anglo-Saxon sense of order to Indian Country during Ulysses S. Grant's administration. Known as the Peace Policy, Grant's idealistic Indian program eloquently illustrated the pervading beliefs of the United States as it sought to conclude its expansion and jurisdiction over remaining groups of autonomous tribes. During this uneasy and chaotic time, Smith served as Grant's commissioner of Indian affairs for two-and-one-half years, enduring five departmental and one Congressional investigation into his or his agents' management of Indian assets. Exonerated officially, if not in the minds of some, Smith was the symbolic scapegoat for incensed critics of the Peace Policy.

President Grant, in agreement with the significant Christian humanitarian movement considered so successful in the Reconstruction South, and impressed by Quaker work among eastern

tribal peoples, became convinced that church administration of Indian affairs was the answer. Previous administrations had favored political spoil appointments, which resulted in reported widespread corruption of the Indian Department. Alternating bad management with military solutions, the United States failed to find peaceful or honest answers to native-U.S. consolidation. This abuse of native people continued, pushing them further into conflict and confrontation with the rampant expansion of white settlement. Thus Grant's program reflected an ideal held dearly by a good portion of the citizenry: the ethical superiority of Christianity. If the churches were in charge, corruption would cease, and expansion over native lands would be peacefully executed. Existing and newly created reservations were divided up among various Protestant denominations for appointment of personnel who would oversee the network of treaty assets negotiated for the tribes. Catholics were included later, but Jewish and Mormon congregations were not.

A proven administrator, an ordained Congregational minister, and a reform advocate with a faultless record, Edward Smith entered a web not unlike those of modern political arenas where intrigue, accusation, bureaucracy, and media hounding abounded. A sensitive and honest man, Smith was deeply wounded by the ongoing controversy in his term as commissioner of the Department of Indian Affairs.

Smith, drafted as commissioner from his position as agent for White Earth agency, was paternal and confident. Though well-meaning, he was also known to be impulsive. Although he found Indians enigmatic, he nevertheless worked diligently for their welfare—always under the assumption that, because they were wards of the government, whites must make the important decisions about native resources and land. His beliefs were consonant with the insatiable economic climate of the towns and settlements in competition with Indian populations, both on the reservations and still mobile. Most citizens of the time believed that native people were naive or of lower mental capacity and thus incapable of determining their own future. "Saving" beleaguered Indians from sheer extermination became a crusade of the Christian middle class, and Smith was in the mainstream. Believing that white greed for Chippewa timber was a major obstacle in bringing Indian-white confrontation under control at White Earth, he sold fifty thousand acres of prime pine belonging to the various Pillager and Pembina bands. This action, although meant to bring

money for improved agricultural equipment and schools, was made with no tribal consultation. Such actions were Smith's usual practice during his tenure as Indian commissioner.

The economic system of the United States in the 1870s, firmly embedded in capitalism and cresting like a wave, was anathema to the government's stated goal of protecting Indian land. Armstrong, as a biographer, does not convey the larger economic picture, although he handles the details of the incongruence between stated policy and economic need for Indian land with some sense of complexity. Christian ideals, goals, and policy are often lost in the actual daily confrontation between native peoples, who ill fit any preconceived notions, and white settlement and development. Armstrong clearly explicates the ambiguity of a peace policy that promoted military force as a response to Indians who would not comply with the government's wishes.

This biography covers important accounts of the internal motivation and working environment of the Department of Indian Affairs during several crucial interactions with Western tribes. Particularly explosive were the relations with bands of Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne, and Lakota who sought to elude U.S. control. Smith's responsibility for Indian affairs began with the Modoc War of 1870-73 and ended with authorization for the first geological survey for minerals in the Black Hills, as well as the beginning of negotiations for the removal of the Paha Sapa from Lakota ownership. *A Friend to God's Poor* also contains many anecdotes of the rich exchanges between visiting delegations of native leaders and government officials.

The full-scale entrance of the Protestant churches into the political mechanism of the Grant administration is not taken up by Armstrong and may not have been within the scope of this study. The book's silence, however, begs deeper questions about the close relationship of a largely Protestant effort with U.S. economic expansion, a duo that has never been wholly inseparable from U.S. actions with non-Western cultures. Certainly the separation between church and state was very tenuous in the late nineteenth century.

The daunting task of bringing literacy, Anglo-Saxon agricultural habits, individuality over tribal loyalty, and a belief in Christianity as the primary alternatives to extermination for native men and women fell to well-meaning people such as Edward Smith. Smith's life and work are part of a greater context. It helps to keep in mind that, besides the somewhat straightfor-

ward goal of humanitarian service to native people, other ends were accomplished. Such measures furthered the removal and reduction of native groups from their homelands at a time when removal was strategically advantageous for the expanding United States. Zealous faith was the balm and accomplice in this process, since a belief in Christianity was inseparable from a belief in Western culture's moral ascendancy. Armstrong asks that we remember Edward Smith for his heart and his good intentions, rather than for his mistakes of judgment. He also asks us not to judge a different generation by our current perspectives. Although judgment of the past using contemporary hindsight may be ineffective in containing and understanding the past, historians should not be precluded from asking harder questions.

The biography effectively conveys, through the life of one man, the ideals and difficulties of a marriage of faith and service in the hearts and minds of the men and women involved in nineteenth-century humanitarian work. Most importantly, the biography illuminates a key figure in Grant's administration of Indian affairs. In this way, Armstrong's work adds further dimension to prior work in the genre such as Francis Paul Prucha's *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1976) and Robert Keller's *American Protestantism and U.S. Indian Policy, 1869-1882* (University of Nebraska Press, 1983). For those interested in reading more about Protestantism and expansion, some suggestions are *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* by Ernest Tuveson (University of Chicago Press, 1968) and Reginald Horsemans's *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Harvard University Press, 1981).

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**The Hunt for Willie Boy: Indian Hating and Popular Culture.** By James A. Sandos and Larry E. Burgess. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994. 182 pages. \$21.95 cloth.

Willie Boy lusted after fourteen-year-old Lolita Boniface. He was a trouble-prone Paiute; she was a Chemehuevi who dreamed