

## REVIEWS

### PSYCHOSEXUAL APATHY: A NEW STUDY OF WEST

NATHANAEL WEST: *Ironic Prophet*. By Victor Comerchero. Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press. 1964. \$5.95.

The great interest and attractiveness of Nathanael West's four short, sinister novels is always worth affirming. To rank West among "the dozen finest writers America has produced in this century," as his critic Mr. Comerchero proposes, is unnecessary and misleading because as an entertainer West may rank higher while as a serious thinker it is enough just to say that he commands respect. It was a disturbed and somewhat desperate mentality that conceived those four well-known fictions. West engaged gallantly with grave and timely problems employing his own best weapon, a particular sense of humor, to generally satisfactory effect. His books continue to commend themselves as probably the best literary expression of that seemingly cruel and unmistakably American form of buffoonery best exemplified by the styles of his near-contemporaries, Groucho Marx and S. J. Perelman. As entertainments they need no apology.

Mr. Comerchero's study is announced as almost "exclusively critical" in character. "I have merely written a lengthy introduction," this critic explains, which may "act as a catalyst in rectifying West's critical imbalance" (meaning that there should be more published criticism on West) "by convincing other critics that West is worthy of their serious, careful attention." While recognizing that his short study is nearly as long as West's four novels taken together, he seems to conceive some community of "critics" who refrain from serious reading of real books until some work by another "critic" changes their minds. Perhaps there are such people.

If so, Mr. Comerchero is not likely to move them very much. West's four "flawed works" remind him of a difficult "jungle," and "one without much variety" (all the foregoing quoted matter is from the Foreword). The Dream Life of Balso Snell is in basic ways "immature," "arty," "sophomoric" (51). "As a work of art" A Cool Million is "a paste jewel," "hardly worthy of sustained comment" (103). "Measured by conventional

novelistic standards" The Day of the Locust is "a failure" (121); it is a failure anyway, because in writing it

West failed to realize that those intangible qualities -- apart from style and character -- which made him such a fine writer were tension and intensity. These he sacrificed by writing a novel which lacks focus, brevity, and unity.

Mr. Comerchero frequently, perhaps normally, qualifies such strictures, and he sometimes does so by a technique of exact negation, as in the sentence which immediately follows the one just quoted:

When West is basically serious -- as he is in Miss Lonelyhearts and The Day of the Locust, and as he is not in Balzo Snell and A Cool Million -- his novels are rooted in tension and charged with intensity. From the beginning the reader is treading on high voltage wire. (130)

There are enough examples of comparable self-contradiction in the study to raise some extraordinary questions. Did our critic have the benefit of a single friendly and close reading of his manuscript? Was there adequate editorial attention to it before publication? In other words, was Mr. Comerchero denied what ought to be normal protection against the bad fortune of having a radically unripe product exposed to public view?

His book may have its small role, along with the reviews of it, in partially "rectifying West's critical imbalance." It will come to the attention of large numbers of English teachers and a few general readers. Good or bad, it might (as Mr. Comerchero gloomily seems to foresee) find very few readers; good or bad, it will find a place in the stacks of so many hundreds of college and university libraries (the figure would be of interest) and be occasionally consulted by students. Priced at \$5.95, it may well prove a sound venture for its publishers. These things can be said for it.

The case against it can only be suggested. It brings to West's eccentric fictions a great deal of less than satisfactory analytic apparatus (see, e. g., the critic's discovery in Miss Lonelyhearts of Francis Fergusson's "tragic rhythm of action" [73]). Mr. Comerchero, while noting the inadequacy of "conventional novelistic standards" in the case of one novel, nevertheless has little else to go on. It is by exactly those standards that he finds three of the four novels so unsatisfactory; and his gesture toward exemption of The Day of the Locust is questionable because that novel, of the four, is West's own single attempt to perform the sacred rite of constructing a "conventional" well-made novel. The apparatus which the critic employs to supplement that muddle of ideas associated with the idea of a "conventional novel" is a fairly random group of concepts such as reader identification, cumulative and incremental effects, and assumptions leading to games of "find the author" (the critic reads most of West as thinly disguised autobiography); but in his hands theoretical equipment becomes problematic. He failed to grasp one of the clearest implications of James Light's study --

that Nathanael West was as devious and secretive as any writer well can be. His psychoanalytic observations appear to rest on a single source, Fenichel's Psychological Theory of Neurosis, 1945. Blameworthy or not, his neglect of Eric Hoffer's True Believer seems to this reviewer disabling; and his failure to explore systematically some of the elements of technique which contribute a whole dimension of interest to West's books (e.g., the debt to silent-film devices of narration, the consequences of conscious employment of New Testament archetypes, the generic character of the first three novels) is disappointing. Again, the community of scholars who have published on West may properly be disconcerted by a critic who conceives his function as a form of free-booting rather than as a sober project in understanding with the backing of a small and serious community. This is an implication of Mr. Comerchero's often unsatisfactory practices in textual references and source acknowledgments, and more broadly of the spirit in which the study was conceived. Any why is there no bibliography?

Finally, our critic is crippled by problems of language:

I have not written this study to assert that belief [in West's high rank among recent novelists] but merely to establish it. (xii)

In the face of such imagination and complexity, the failure of [The Day of the Locust] to achieve the stature of Miss Lonelyhearts is not easy to explain; facile or superficial explanations are inadequate. (122)

It is this self-consciousness of existence and this awareness of what life, as West saw it, really means that increases [Westian men's] sense of entrapment and their frustration, two obvious symptoms of the neurotic syndrome. (165-166)

If Faye represents the born dreamer in society, Homer represents the sleeper. In being psychosexual, his apathy is like that of the crowd. (136)

Unlike those at the top, who are incapable of almost all feeling, Harry Greener, at the bottom, is incapable of all genuine feeling. The theatrical pose becomes congenital . . .

Like every other character in the novel, Harry must artificially stimulate feeling. (138-139)

Etc.

Portions of the chapter on Miss Lonelyhearts are competently managed, and people who write about West in the future may wish to cope with and make some sense of the concept of "Westian Man" advanced by Mr. Comerchero. They might be advised that the idea reaches a degree of clarity not in the chapter of that name but in the one that follows.

The University of Kansas

Edward L. Ruhe

THE MACHINE IN THE GARDEN: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America. By Leo Marx. New York: Oxford University Press. 1964. \$6.75.

Pastoralism used to bring to mind sarcasms like D. H. Lawrence's: "The poets dress up a few fauns and nymphs, to let them run riskily . . . in their private 'grounds.'" And most of us did find these tame guinea-pigs boring. But the work of Greg, Kermode and Empson, to name but a few, has changed the view all of us take of this ancient mode and has given us complex pastoralism and new insights into it. Professor Marx of Amherst brilliantly shows how from the beginning men viewed American ambivalently: sometimes as a garden, sometimes as a wilderness. Once technology appeared, particularly in the form of the industrial factory or the railroad, a further element of diversity entered the already complex American pastoral. Professor Marx's detailed analyses of Walden, Moby-Dick and Huckleberry Finn in these terms show great perception. His treatment of "Ethan Frome" is less convincing, but he regains lost ground in a fine brief discussion of The Great Gatsby.

This is an important, perceptive, valuable book.

Oklahoma State University

Samuel H. Woods, Jr.

WASHINGTON IRVING: An American Study, 1802-1832. By William L. Hedges. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1965. \$5.95.

Professor Hedges surveys Irving's writings from the Oldstyle letters (1802) to The Alhambra (1832) to demonstrate that, on careful reading, they do not support the stereotype of the gentle humorist of Sunnyside. The Irving discovered here is complex and contradictory, with a dark side, a sense of estrangement and a strong satiric thrust. His search for a style and his experiments with masks, especially with Knickerbocker and Crayon, are shown in the fuller context of a newly-developing and somewhat problematical American literature.

In this corrective work Professor Hedges sometimes digresses rather widely when he considers other American authors. He remains generally stimulating, however, and his relating of Irving to Cooper, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville and others is one of the more valuable features of his study. The discussion of Irving as historian of Columbus is another. This is a sound book, and certainly one that was needed in Irving criticism.

Kansas State University

Walter H. Eitner

THE CAUGHT IMAGE: Figurative Language in the Fiction of Henry James. By Robert L. Gale. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1964. \$6.00.

Gale's study of Henry James' imagery is a disconcerting book in that it attempts to turn the most serious condemnation of it into a mere matter of taste. When Gale admits that Caroline Spurgeon's method is "somewhat out of fashion," but that he will nevertheless "follow Caroline F. E. Spurgeon's method," what is disconcerting is that such a decision blithely dismisses the major developments in imagery study since Miss Spurgeon as though nothing really had happened in the area since 1936. Furthermore, to ignore the techniques of stylistic analysis developed by modern linguistics is, in the 1960's, desperate; even if we dislike the use of linguistics in criticism, we must at least acknowledge that the techniques exist.

Abstracting about 17,000 figures from the entire James canon, Gale arranges them into six major categories and nine minor ones. And that's it. Gale does not study the fiction chronologically; in fact, his appendices show little significant variation in either the amount or the density of imagery from the 1860's to the 1910's. Nor does Gale relate the imagery in any way to either theme or fictional structure. Instead, after plowing through pages of barely readable listings, we are treated to conclusions that either are so self-evident as not to be worth making ("James was most imagistic when writing quite short stories and rather long novels") or are absurdly irrelevant ("James was no chess player, and it must be said he was somewhat naive sexually"). That parts of the book were published in The American Imago, Chess Life and The Optometric Weekly indicates the book's failure; it is functionally useless to literary criticism. Completely without any meaningful method, the book makes no points beyond a few statistical confirmations of simple intuitions. In the end, The Caught Image ignores every literary concern so as to adhere to its own categories, thereby proving once again that, as Stevens' connoisseur of chaos says, a violent order is disorder.

University of Wisconsin

Donald Sheehan

WILLIAM FAULKNER: Art in Theological Tension. By John W. Hunt. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 1965. \$5.00.

By analyzing The Sound and the Fury, Absalom, Absalom and "The Bear," Mr. Hunt attempts to prove that Faulkner's characters, while searching for a meaning in life, reflect the tension between Stoicism and Christianity. In his initial premise the author assumes that almost all novelists consider theological problems since any discussion of morality is

really an exposition of theology. Although Mr. Hunt has written a fine commentary, especially of Quentin in The Sound and the Fury, he has failed to prove his hypothesis. A problem of organization also mars this study: the philosophical theorizing occurs at the conclusion of each section rather than arising naturally as an integral part of the whole work.

Kansas State University

Laura J. Greene

NEW PAPERBACKS IN LITERATURE

CONRAD AIKEN. By Reuel Denney. AMERICAN HUMORISTS. By Willard Thorp. SHERWOOD ANDERSON. By Brom Weber. JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. By Robert E. Spiller. HART CRANE. By Monroe K. Spears. RALPH WALDO EMERSON. By Josephine Miles. JOHN P. MARQUAND. By C. Hugh Holman. ARTHUR MILLER. By Robert Hogan. ALLEN TATE. By George Hemphill. ROBERT PENN WARREN. By Paul West. All Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (Pamphlets on American Writers). 1964-1965. \$0.65. FOUR SPIRITUAL CRISES IN MID-CENTURY AMERICAN FICTION. By Robert Detweiler. Gainesville: The University of Florida Press. 1963. \$2.00. STENBECK IN GERMAN TRANSLATION: A Study of Translational Practices. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press. 1965. No price noted.

As the several uniformly bound series devoted to American writers grow, readers and reviewers in their frantic quest for novelty are likely to neglect late additions. A pitiable situation, for as ten new titles in the University of Minnesota series demonstrate there need be no diminution in the force, variety or interest even of essays tailored to a rigid formal pattern. The authors of these pamphlets -- designed to provide rapid but thorough surveys for non-specialists at home and abroad -- have been skillfully chosen to refute the often justified calumnies about the dullness of American academic prose; and such studies as Robert Spiller's of Cooper and Robert Hogan's of Arthur Miller provide models of the ways in which to place a little read but much discussed author in historical perspective and to illuminate the obscure background of a contemporary celebrity. Only comprehensive surveys like Willard Thorp's of humorists accomplish too little by attempting too much.

The danger of such a series, however, is always that a great work will be obscured by the general competence and superficial sameness of its company. This group contains such a book, Josephine Miles' evocation of

Emerson, the response of a distinguished contemporary poetic sensibility to a still living and meaningful past sensibility. Emerson's guiding principle was that the past is of value only if it is a living revelation to the present; Josephine Miles drives us back to see that Emerson can indeed provide such a revelation.

Other monograph series that resemble the Minnesota pamphlets in format arise from a quite opposite necessity for more outlets for specialized scholarly studies of narrow professional interest during a period of rising printing costs.

The first number in the new Humanities series from Southern Illinois University serves this useful function. Helmut Liedloff's exhaustive analysis of German translations of four Steinbeck works illuminates for scholars of comparative literature the fundamental problems plaguing the translation of contemporary works, but it is designedly not comprehensive enough to provide a definitive survey of the way in which an important writer has reached the German audience.

Robert Detweiler's study of novels by William Styron, John Updike, Philip Roth and J. D. Salinger is something else. The first in the Florida series to be devoted to contemporary literature, it is -- like others in this series -- of far wider interest than the customary monograph. Examining the four novels in relation to contemporary existentialist-oriented theologies, Detweiler points out "the propensity of certain young contemporary novelists toward the use of the religious crisis as the focal point of their treatment of man and his situation." His conclusion that whether critics like it or not, "the teleological dimension has returned to American fiction," should provoke speculation among not just teachers of literature, but all students of modern American culture. I hope that its unassuming format will not cause anyone concerned with American studies to overlook this brief, crisply written, well informed study.

W. F.

THE GERMAN HISTORICAL SCHOOL IN AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP: A Study in the Transfer of Culture. By Jurgen Herbst. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1965. \$5.75.

Professor Herbst succeeds in demonstrating within this slender volume something of the complexity of cultural transfer. The many ideas which came to nineteenth century America from Germany proved difficult to assimilate. When scholars sought to change these ideas, they found that their scholarly apparatus was largely useless when deprived of its ideological setting. What proved necessary, therefore, was a new context of ideas, one emerging principally in the sociological ethics of Albion Small and the instrumentalism of John Dewey. Although this development destroyed Ger-

man historicism in America, it came only after some lively episodes in American intellectual history. These episodes are briefly reconstructed by Professor Herbst in the framework of philosophy, theology, history and social science. This book, therefore, is a thoughtful contribution to the history of American ideas.

University of Kentucky

Paul C. Nagel

SANTAYANA: THE LATER YEARS. By Daniel Cory. New York: George Braziller. 1963. \$7.50.

This record of the last twenty-five years of Santayana's life is not merely the tribute of a personal secretary to the philosopher he served and admired; it is the story of the European returned at last to the continent which feels most like an intellectual home. Through scattered comments, reminiscences and visits by touring Americans, one catches glimpses of Santayana's discomfort at Harvard and indications of the impulse responsible for The Last Puritan. America is always distant, yet stubbornly a part of Santayana's thinking, a fact which partially accounts for the considerable space devoted to the composition of his novel. This emphasis may be due to Cory's participation, but nevertheless the haphazard tracing of the progress, publication and success of the novel is probably as strong a structural thread as the memoir contains. For the student of American studies, the chief merit of Cory's book is that it organizes, with authorial status, some excellent critical perspectives for the examination of The Last Puritan.

Besides the American memories of his past, there seem to be more than enough Americans in Europe to haunt Santayana. Cory fends a few of them off, gives others short space, but seems to push Santayana, who does not move eagerly, in the direction of Eliot and Pound.

Kansas State College of Pittsburg

Walter Shear

THE PROGRESSIVES AND THE SLUMS: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917. By Roy Lubove. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. 1962. \$6.00.

Roy Lubove, Assistant Professor of Social Work and History at the University of Pittsburgh, has made an important contribution to the growing literature on the Progressive movement -- a movement that had its impact on all aspects of American life, not merely on politics. Nothing concerned the progressives more than the inadequate housing of the urban poor, nothing gave them more hope than the thought of changing the social environment of millions through housing reform. Nothing disturbed them more after



1917 than the realization that they had accomplished so little to improve housing.

The two most important names in Lubove's story are Jacob Riis and Lawrence Veiller. Riis, humanitarian reformer, advocate of neighborhood parks and playgrounds, author of How the Other House Lives, did more than anyone else to arouse the nation to the need for housing reform. Veiller, organizer of the Tenement House Commission of 1900 and the New York Tenement House Department, was the technician of the housing reform movement and the author of restrictive codes adopted in New York in 1901 and copied across the nation. Together Riis and Veiller combined the humanitarian concern and the scientific efficiency that were both a part of the progressive movement.

Lubove focuses his book on New York but he is always aware of the national implications of the local story. He concentrates on the period from 1890-1917, but he has two important chapters of background and is aware of the implications of his story for the present. His major concern is housing reform, but he also deals with attitudes toward the city, city planning, ethnic conflict, tenement house design and the development of social work. Sometimes the focus is blurred, but the book is significant.

University of Missouri

Allen F. Davis

BEATRICE WEBB'S AMERICAN DIARY 1898.

Edited by David A. Shannon. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. 1963. \$4.50.

In 1898 Beatrice Webb and her husband Sydney (co-founder of the Fabian Society) visited the United States as part of a round-the-world journey that also took them to Australia and New Zealand. Beatrice kept a diary on her journey and thus joined the many other European travelers who have commented on American life and society. The portion of her diary here edited by David Shannon has never before been published.

The diary is interesting and entertaining but not profound. The Webbs were interested primarily in American municipal government and they sought out and talked to important Americans like Theodore Roosevelt ("a short, thickset, bullet-headed man with an extraordinary expressive face"), Woodrow Wilson ("attractive-minded man -- somewhat like a young John Morley"), John Peter Altgeld, Jane Addams, Lillian Wald, Seth Low and many college professors and writers. They discovered that it was "an unfortunate time to be in Washington" for "all the politicians to whom we have introductions are completely absorbed in Cuba." Occasionally Mrs. Webb's upper-class, English background colored her observations. She was annoyed by the "ultra lower-middle class" ways of some of the college professors, and even more concerned by the "queer, well-intentioned or cranky individuals" she met at Hull House. Yet in her analysis of the ineffective-

ness of good government movements and her understanding of the reasons for municipal corruption she anticipated Lincoln Steffens. Neither as perceptive nor as important as de Tocqueville, Bryce and several other European observers of America, Mrs. Webb is well worth reading especially for those interested in the American urban and university scene in the late nineteenth century.

University of Missouri

Allen F. Davis

SYMBOLIC CRUSADE: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement. By Joseph R. Gusfield. Urbana: University Illinois Press. 1963.

This is an interesting and very worthwhile attempt by a sociologist to examine the American temperance movement as a reflection of the conflicts between rival social systems, cultures and status groups. Thus the early temperance, or more accurately the total abstinence, movement "represents the reaction of the old Federalist aristocracy to loss of political, social and religious dominance in American society. It is an effort to re-establish control over the increasingly powerful middle classes making up the American 'common man.'" The post Civil War crusade "represents the efforts of urban, native Americans to consolidate their middle-class respectability through a sharpened distinction between the native, middle-class life styles and those of the immigrant and the marginal laborer or farmer."

Gusfield has read the secondary historical literature carefully but unfortunately was not able to utilize the two best recent books on the prohibition movement because they appeared too late: Andrew Sinclair, Era of Excess and James Timberlake, Prohibition and the Progressive Movement. He has also read widely in the pamphlet and newspaper sources. Gusfield's interpretation is persuasive. It is encouraging to find a sociologist who can write readable English, and who is interested in something more than the literature of the behavioral sciences. But his thesis is too simple. Like other attempts to explain reform movements in terms of status conflicts (i. e., Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform), it fails to explain significant exceptions, for example, the immigrant temperance societies. In addition, the over-emphasis on status conflict plays down the importance of religious conviction and reforming zeal in explaining the temperance movement. Yet this remains an interesting and important book for anyone who wishes to understand the American penchant for legislating prohibition, certainly one of the unique and intriguing aspects of the American character.

University of Missouri

Allen F. Davis

AN EPISODE IN ANTI-CATHOLICISM: The American Protective Association. By Donald L. Kinzer. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1964.

This is a careful and detailed study of the most important American anti-Catholic organization. Although it adds little in interpretation, it fills in the detail not present in John Higham's more general account of political nativism, Strangers in the Land. Kinzer makes little attempt to explain why militant anti-Catholicism and fear of a Catholic conspiracy reached a peak in the 1890's, yet his careful study of the A. P. A. will be valuable for anyone interested in studying anti-Catholicism as a historical or contemporary force in American life.

University of Missouri

Allen F. Davis

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN: The Last Decade, 1915-1925. By Lawrence W. Levine. New York: Oxford University Press. 1965. \$7.50.

In this reassessment of Bryan's career in World War I and after, Levine confirms the traditional views of Bryan as a fundamentalist endorsing crusades such as that for prohibition in the name of righteousness, an ardent advocate of popular rule, an irrepressible optimist and consistently the representative in outlook and commitment of rural America. Yet a new impression of Bryan emerges from this superbly executed volume, for the widely accepted image of a somewhat ridiculous old-fashioned orator pursuing a shoddy career of bigotry and financial opportunism is not found in Levine's book. Rather, in this reconstruction, solidly based on the manuscript sources, Levine discovers in Bryan a man who remained true to the reforms which he had advocated as a younger man at the height of his political career. Twentieth century writers have found it difficult to avoid caricature in dealing with nineteenth-century moralists such as Bryan, and Bryan has been one of the chief victims of this fact. Levine has succeeded admirably in presenting a sympathetic yet objective picture of Bryan, drawn in understandable human dimensions.

University of Illinois at Chicago Circle

Stanley L. Jones

NAUVOO: Kingdom on the Mississippi. By Robert Bruce Flanders. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1965. \$6.50.

Nauvoo is a result of Robert Bruce Flanders' Ph.D. dissertation in history at the University of Wisconsin. It successfully probes the twin his-

torical problems of municipal and church history. Nauvoo was an attempt by the Mormons in 1839-1846 to establish a utopian community in Illinois. Flanders' central thesis is that Nauvoo was a pilot community for the permanent establishment of the Mormons in the Great Basin. The author adds the often-neglected areas of economics, state politics and immigration while he avoids the mistakes made by most writers of Mormonism, who make an apology for or exposé on Mormon theology.

The University of Kansas

F. Mark McKiernan

SHELBY M. CULLON: *Prairie State Republican*. By James W. Neilson. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press. 1962.

A full-length study in depth of Shelby Moore Cullom has been long overdue: he was a participant in the framing of the Interstate Commerce act, public office-holder for more than half a century and connecting link between an agrarian United States and an industrial nation. Knowledge of his career is of particular importance.

In addition to synthesizing a good deal of information concerning Cullom the man as well as Cullom the practicing politician, the author has added significantly to the body of historical literature that deals with the regulation of interstate commerce. Using relevant manuscript material and an impressive body of newspaper sources Neilson concludes that Cullom "held to his basic tenet of regulation of business affected with a public interest by a body of experts."

Quite reasonably the monograph under review will be of particular interest to students of Illinois political history. In thirteen chapters and a few more than three hundred pages the author has described successful campaigns for the state legislature, the governorship and United States Senator (five terms), as well as several instances of presidential ambitions. Having threaded his way through complex issues and troubled political situations from Lincoln's day until the eve of World War I, Cullom found his political career terminated at age eighty-two partly because he became inextricably involved in the Lorimer case. In spite of its many excellent qualities, it is not likely that this study will receive the wide circulation which it merits.

The University of Kansas

George L. Anderson

THE NEGRO COWBOYS. By Philip Durham and Everett L. Jones. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1965. \$5.00.

This is the first book on an interesting and long neglected subject. In all capacities -- as cooks, horse wranglers, cowpunchers and foremen,

thousands of Negro cowboys were an integral part of the western cattle industry in the decades following the Civil War. As slaves, they worked the Texas ranges; as freemen, they later took part in the long drives to railheads in Kansas and Nebraska and were active on the Northern Plains. Some were wild horse hunters, some turned outside the law, some were spectacular performers in the rodeo and wild west shows. And all, as the authors explain in their Epilogue, have been ignored by writers of standard western fiction.

Despite a bit too much blood and thunder and an artificial striving for effect through the use of incomplete sentences or trite expressions ("Meanwhile, back at the ranch" [57]), Durham and Jones have done a commendable job. They write well, but occasionally digress to follow the careers of Negroes like badman William Finch, post tailor at Fort Sill, who could by no stretch of the imagination be classed as a cowboy. Likewise, in the sixteen pages of illustrations we find Negro mountain men, miners, soldiers, jockeys and a family of Nebraska sodbusters -- all unconnected with the story.

University of Illinois

Clark C. Spence

THE ROOSEVELT-LITVINOV AGREEMENTS:

The American View. By Donald G. Bishop.

Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 1965.

\$7.50.

Here is a detailed record of the making and subsequent violation (by the Soviet Union) of most of the agreements concluded by Franklin Roosevelt and Maxim Litvinov in 1933. These agreements (dealing with such points as mutual noninterference in internal affairs, freedom of worship and legal protection for Americans in the Soviet Union and Russian debts to the American government or American citizens) were prerequisites to the granting of U.S. diplomatic recognition to the U.S.S.R.

Since Robert Browder has analyzed satisfactorily the period 1917-1933 in The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, Professor Bishop devotes most of his attention to the agreements and their implementation, particularly through 1940, after which few government documents or private papers are yet open to scholars. Because official Soviet sources are not available, it has been necessary to rely upon American sources.

Bishop believes that on balance the U.S. gained more than it lost by establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, but he stresses that American leaders expected much more genuine cooperation than it was realistic to anticipate. In his opinion, "probably no satisfying explanation will ever be made as to why the American government was not more cautious when it knew so much about Soviet performance."

Although Bishop presents nothing startling in this book, a thorough, scholarly monograph has long been needed on this important subject. We now have it.

Kansas State College of Pittsburg

Fred B. Misse, Jr.

THE LITERARY VOYAGER OR MUZZENIEGUN.

By Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, edited by Philip P. Mason. Michigan State University Press. 1962. \$5.00.

This collection of articles on Indian lore (principally that of the Chipewas) includes legends, myths and history. In addition, it provides a glimpse into the life of a pioneer Michigan settlement during the winter of 1826-1827. It also contains numerous examples of neoclassic and pre-romantic verse exercises on Indian subjects by the author, members of his family and certain of the more cultivated settlers. One unusual fact about the collection is that the articles in it appeared originally as issues of a manuscript magazine. The author, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, was a well-known nineteenth-century explorer and student of Indian culture. The interesting but not remarkable legends and myths he had for the most part from the family of his half-Indian wife. He was himself a scholar of the Chipewewa language and compiled a dictionary of that tongue.

The history which the book chronicles is not likely to gratify the tastes of those who thirst to read about savagery and bloodshed. Indeed, Schoolcraft employs an almost minor key in describing Indian ways. The Indian emerges as a pathetic figure, gifted chiefly in the ability to hunt and fight and placed in an environment where game was scarce and where a culturally and militarily superior adversary inexorably pressed in on him. His energies were dissipated in intertribal wars, and whatever he could assimilate of the Christian religion or European civilization did not incline him to "get ahead" in either.

Professor Mason has done a scholarly job in editing the book, which is primarily for the ethnologist although the general reader will find much interesting matter in it.

Centenary College of Louisiana

Lee Morgan

THE ARTIST'S WORLD IN PICTURES. By Fred W. McDarrah. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1961. \$2.45.

Photography has been recognized as an important documentary medium from its earliest years. At times this document was a byproduct of other and more material objectives, but on occasion a photographer has set out deliberately to create a systematic record of historical or technical

significance. In either instance photography represents a rich resource for the historian provided that he is willing, and is capable of using it. However, there are several problems associated with this use, not the least of which is the need to learn to "read" the photograph as a document. Then, too, the frequent publication of the photographic "non-book" has placed the significant compilation at a disadvantage in gaining the attention of serious students. Quality of production is not a good criterion since the non-book can range from the deluxe hard-cover picture book (with some lip service to culture), to the sleazy paperback designed for an hour's amusement.

The Artist's World in Pictures comes too close to this last category to justify ordering it for a public or college library, yet it does make a serious attempt to document (with photographs by Fred W. McDarrah) the special world of the New York avant garde artist (c. 1960). As such it is an important cultural document, but regrettably the quality of the printed pictures severely limits the book's value as a document.

Steichen's The Family of Man was published in a quality, hard-cover edition, as well as in at least two paperback versions. The McDarrah book is a paperback original; consequently we can assume that unless the original photographs are deposited in a museum or library, it is likely that McDarrah's efforts will serve primarily as a glimpse, rather than as a definitive pictorial record, of what has been called the New York School of art.

GE

THE NEW AMERICAN ARTS. Edited by  
Richard Kostelanetz. New York: Horizon  
Press. 1956. \$6.50.

This book is intended to be an informative description of new trends in the contemporary arts through a series of evaluative essays by seven young critics. The trends, as illustrated in these essays, remind one of Dadaism: the disclaiming of any relationship to past creative art or to historical artistic standards, the emphasis upon chance and innovation (now called "happenings" and "random creation"), the lack of sequence of events or of points of reference. Without any historical framework for evaluation and comparison, the critic must become the interpreter of the artist. Unfortunately, however, many of the essays in this book suffer from the overuse of abstruse jargon (such as: "non causal and spatial rather than syllogistic and narrative-linear") which tends to defeat the critic's purpose and to confuse the reader.

University of Missouri at Kansas City      Mila Jean Ehrlich

ART GUIDE/NEW YORK. By A. L. Chanin.  
New York: Horizon Press. 1965. \$5.95.

Brief paragraphs on significant paintings in New York museums; brief paragraphs on the painters as well. Chanin generally answers the questions we want to ask; a most useful little volume.

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TWO AMBITIOUS REPRINTS

AMERICA'S LOST PLAYS, Volumes 17, 18, 19 and 20. Edited by R. H. Ball (17), Glenn Hughes and George Savage (18), Napier Wilt (19) and Catherine Sturtevant (20). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1941. Reissued, 1965, in two volumes: Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Twenty-five years ago the Princeton University Press published twenty volumes of America's Lost Plays. Edited by the foremost scholars of American drama, these approximately one hundred plays offered to interested teachers in American literature more readily available material for a criticism of a most neglected aspect of America's literary past: the drama. Scholars, however, did not take immediate advantage of these hitherto unpublished plays; and interest in an historical treatment of American drama still lags behind the other literary genres. The reasons for this lack of scholarship are obvious to anyone who has read many nineteenth century American plays. On the other hand, however, many scholars now feel the necessity for adequately assessing America's drama before World War I. For their value as social history, as a part of the development of modern American drama, as another view of some literary figures, as illustrations of successful theater and, in a few instances, as effective drama, these plays deserve serious critical attention. Today, in greater numbers than in 1940, scholars are being attracted to the entire scope of American drama.

It is, then, a very welcome task that the Indiana University Press has undertaken. These two books, which include four of the original volumes, reprint the following plays with introduction essays: Vol. XVII, The Main Line by Henry C. De Mille and Charles Barnard, and The Wife, Lord Chumley, The Charity Ball and Men and Women by De Mille and David Belasco; Vol. XVIII, David Belasco's La Belle Russe, The Stranglers of Paris, The Girl I Left Behind Me (with Franklyn Fyles), The Heart of Maryland and Naughty Anthony; Vol. XIX, The Virginian, My Partner, The Galley Slave, Fairfax and The White Slave by Bartley Campbell; Vol. XX,



## Reviews

Man and Wife, Divorce, The Big Bonanza, Pique and Needles and Pins by Augustin Daly.

The University of Kansas

Walter J. Meserve

MISSISSIPPI, AS A PROVINCE, TERRITORY,  
AND STATE. By J. F. H. Claiborne. Baton  
Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 1964.  
\$10.00.

This is a reprint of a hitherto unavailable history of Mississippi which, although first published in 1880, reflects concern with many issues which are still vital today. Tracing the story of the area from the time of Spanish and French explorations, the author indicates sources and development of such problems as state versus federal authority, the status of the Negro, injustice to the Indian and moral responsibility for the underprivileged.

Claiborne, a native of Mississippi and the descendant of men influential in the territory's affairs since its early settlement, was a diligent researcher and had access to private documents and reports as well as public ones concerning the events and personalities of which he wrote. Having received a liberal education, and having lived close enough to a portion, at least, of the time he describes to catch the spirit of it, he presents a well-documented, factual account interspersed with a commentary which attempts to weigh the record and to interpret it. The events unfold in an easy, narrative manner, with detailed treatment ending with the years immediately preceding the Civil War. The result is, according to the Mississippi Historical Society, "the best history of the state ever written."

In republishing the volume, the Louisiana State University Press has answered twentieth century critics who, like William G. Brown, have complained that the South is not recognizable as painted by outsiders and, like Ulrich Phillips, have charged Southerners with neglect in providing materials from which a balanced history might be written. Claiborne's history adds weight to the arguments of those concerned with the loss of states' rights, deficit government spending and the use of force as a weapon by pressure groups. His comments support those of Fletcher M. Green that the cause of trouble in Southern society was not slavery but the presence of whites and blacks in almost equal proportions; and, as he briefly treats the status of the Negro during the Reconstruction period, he presages John W. Caughey's prediction that if, in the push for civil rights, the civil liberties of the people of the United States are impaired, the Negro will be no better off in the resulting society.

For the general reader, some passages of the book, such as a long discussion of Indian customs at the end, may seem unduly prolonged although they are within the author's stated purpose "to preserve time-worn

papers and documents." Since much of the material is striking and colorful, one could also wish that, in republishing, advantage had been taken of modern research and methods of reproduction so that additional illustrations could be included.

The University of Kansas

Margaret Yeates Robertson