

ground of Foster's My Old Kentucky Home," which not only puts the famous song into its historical context, but also speculates about specific influences on the songwriter himself; Nancy D. Baird's scholarly analysis of the impact of cholera on antebellum Kentucky; Nicholas C. Burckel's summary of William Goebel and railroad regulation; and Robert J. Leupold's study of the impact of the Works Progress Administration on the gubernatorial campaign of 1935. Likewise of special note are Charles G. Talbert's account of the British and Indian War of 1781-1783; Lowell Harrison's summary of Cassius Clay and the *True American*; Louis Hartz' study of John Marshall Harlan's pre-Supreme Court years; and Joseph F. Wall's revisionist interpretation of Henry Watterson and the presidential election of 1876.

Other articles concern Indian place names, an early history of Bullitt's Lick, the notorious Harpes, the code duello, antebellum milksickness, General James Taylor and the beginnings of Newport, the Indiana-OHio raid of John Hunt Morgan, Quantrill's bushwhackers, Louisville during the first year of the Civil War, Civil War Shakers, Frank Wolford, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad during the Civil War, some background of constitutional revision in 1890-1891, Louisville's labor disturbance of 1877, Stoney Point, the BancoKentucky story, the night riders of 1907, best selling women authors, Paul Sawyier, and folklore.

Mostly anecdotal rather than broadly interpretative in nature, these essays will appeal more to historical buffs than scholars—eleven of the articles were initially presented as after-dinner papers to the Filson Club. In their introduction the editors note that for the first three years of its existence the *Quarterly* enjoyed an editorial board, an institution inexplicably abandoned in 1929. Since most academic institutions only reward faculty for articles published in refereed journals, the *Quarterly* would be well-advised to revive its editorial board. So doing, its centennial anthology will be of even higher quality.

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Robert M. Ireland

An Emerging Entertainment: The Drama of the American People to 1828. By Walter J. Meserve. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977. Pp. x, 342. Notes, selected bibliography, indexes. \$17.50.)

Unfortunately, few scholars have shown much interest in American drama prior to World War I. For all too many stu-

dents of American culture, the history of this art form does not begin until the work of a playwright such as Eugene O'Neill because, supposedly, he alone had the rare ability to create drama that sprang from truly indigenous roots. Walter J. Meserve, a professor of theater and drama at Indiana University, takes issue with this academic myopia. In *An Emerging Entertainment*, he argues a convincing case for the significance of American drama in its early centuries, specifically up to 1828—the year that marks the beginning of Edwin Forrest's Prize Play Contests (advertized in the *New York Critic*), the first time that American playwrights were invited to contribute plays in a competition and promised to be remunerated for their achievements.

In his opening chapter, Meserve outlines his objectives for his study of this long neglected aspect of American history; they are fourfold: a) to provide a chronological study and critical evaluation of the plays written and published in America to 1828; b) to explore the kinds of drama written during particular periods and the relationship of drama to the cultural and historical progress of the country; c) to provide biographical material on important dramatists and historical information on relevant plays; and, d) to determine the development of American drama as a literary genre and its contribution to American theater. In the main, Meserve succeeds in his multi-purpose task, and his book fills a gap in our understanding of the American creative arts.

Carefully distinguishing himself as a historian of the drama as opposed to a historian of the theater, Meserve provides an intellectual history of early America through the prism of Indian treaty ceremonies (dramatic enactments that were often printed), farces, melodramas, and ephemeral plays. He acknowledges the benchmarks of early American drama—Robert Hunter's *Androborus* (the first play printed in America, in 1714); Thomas Godfrey's *The Prince of Parthia* (the first drama written by an American and produced by professional actors, in 1767); Royall Tyler's *The Contrast* (the first native American comedy to be professionally produced, in 1789)—but does not overemphasize or distort their impact. Instead, like the "new" social historians, Meserve explores American dramatic art as a medium through which educational, religious, and cultural history can be written. In his discussion of early American dramatic literary criticism (the first extended analysis that this reviewer has seen in recent scholarship), he moves

comfortably among eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century theories of aesthetics and epistemology.

Although this history of American drama ranges over 230 years of the American past, the book concentrates on the brief era of the New Republic. Meserve focuses his interpretation on the five decades between 1787 and 1828. Chapters seven and eight, for example, form the bulk (128 pages) of his evaluation and insightfully trace the rise of nationalism and political ideology as exhibited in various American dramatic genre.

Meserve's book also serves as a major reference work on American drama. It has two excellent indexes, one of names and the other of plays, and an extremely thorough bibliography. Moreover, the book is but the first installment of a complete, scholarly, and authoritative historical assessment of American drama that Meserve now projects in several volumes.

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Thomas J. Schlereth

The Wolf by the Ears: Thomas Jefferson and Slavery. By John Chester Miller. (New York: The Free Press, 1977. Pp. xii, 319. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$12.95.)

Why another book on Jefferson and slavery? Winthrop Jordan has investigated Jefferson's presuppositions, Fawn Brodie has questioned Jefferson's sexual behavior, and Robert McColley has examined slavery in Jeffersonian Virginia. What remains? For John Chester Miller the unfinished task is to explain how Jefferson consciously dealt with the disparity between his preachments and practices. Miller's question is important. How could Jefferson proclaim human rights to a candid world while he owned slaves and even promoted slavery in later years? Miller's answer is disturbing: Jefferson concealed his prejudice from himself by denying the dignity and abilities of blacks and by ignoring slavery's debilitating effects on its principal victims. For example, since Jefferson could not endure the thought of enslaved men and women of letters, he readily responded to black intellectual achievements with "scepticism or open incredulity" (p. 77).

Apparently, Miller is even more intrigued by slavery's impact on Jefferson and his politics. For Miller, Jefferson's defense of slavery had ironic effects. He adopted the substances of Federalist policy toward Toussaint L'Ouverture, purchased the Louisiana territory for yeoman farmers (although its fresh lands reinvigorated the peculiar institution), and abolished the