

losses primarily because of the Senate's passage of a strong civil rights bill, Gillette unjustifiably downplays the voters' reaction to the severe economic depression. Indeed, he generally gives too little notice to the role of economic factors in the abandonment of Reconstruction by northerners. But if his explanation of the defeat is correct, why did House Republicans return to the 1875 lame-duck session and fight desperately to pass the civil rights bill, albeit in modified form? Gillette is hard pressed to reconcile this action with his portrait of the Republicans as politicians who rated expediency above principle. Many scholars will question his answer that the ever-pragmatic Republicans simply saw the measure as an "opportunity to rescue their party" (p. 260) by enlisting "black support in a future bid to regain power in the South" (p. 261).

The book concludes with chapters on the election of 1876 and Hayes' new departure policy. Others have treated these topics, but their inclusion here is significant in that it divests the so-called Compromise of 1877 of the image of having destroyed the Reconstruction experiment. As this book demonstrates, that resolution was merely the final act in a decade-old process. Although Gillette's points are occasionally overargued and undersubstantiated, his work is an important contribution that no serious student of the period can overlook.

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*Journalism's Unofficial Ambassador: A Biography of Edward Price Bell, 1869-1943.* By James D. Startt. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1979. Pp. xiii, 260. Frontispiece, notes, bibliography, index. \$15.95.)

The subject of James D. Startt's well-written biography is remarkable from many points of view. Born in Parke County, Indiana, in 1869, Edward Price Bell became a reporter at fourteen, editor of his own newspaper five years later, and, after graduation from Wabash College in 1897, editor of the *Terre Haute Express*. As a reporter in Chicago the following year, Bell was a key figure in the exposé of Charles T. Yerkes, Chicago's infamous "king of traction." Within two years Bell had earned such a reputation that the publisher of the *Chicago Record* and the *Chicago Daily News* sent him to London to build what became the best of the early foreign news services, that of the *Chicago Daily News*.

While in England, Bell established a reputation as "the dean of American correspondents" in London and developed the journalistic form that became his hallmark, the high-level interview. Startt possibly exaggerates Bell's significance as an effective advocate of Anglo-American cooperation during World War I, but there is no doubt that his journalistic work, especially his interviews with Richard Haldane and Sir Edward Grey, attracted the attention of highly placed persons on both sides of the Atlantic.

Bell's career after 1922, when he returned to the United States, was more ambiguous. Startt has captured much of the tragedy of the frustrated idealism of those who championed the causes of international cooperation and peace during the 1920s and 1930s, only to watch their disintegration under the impact of economic depression, the rise of totalitarian dictatorships, and the advent of World War II. Bell's principal vehicle in his search for international understanding was the high-level interview, and he traveled far and wide to interview such figures as Benito Mussolini, Ramsay MacDonald, Chiang Kai-shek, Manuel Quezon, and Adolf Hitler. Like many American peace-seekers of that period, Bell was naive; he readily accepted the sincerity of Mussolini's intentions and the now-incredible assertions of Hitler that the Nazi dictator was also interested in furthering world peace.

For his journalistic work and personal advocacy of Anglo-American cooperation in the late 1920s, Bell was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and the Nobel Peace Prize. Both eluded him, and it was soon after these events that the journalist's fortunes began the decline which continued until his death in 1943. By then Bell had become a sad and embittered figure whose frustrated attempts to foster peace led to his break with the Roosevelt administration and his participation in the isolationist (and hardly Anglo-American) America First Committee.

Startt's research in archival and manuscript sources in the United States and England is thorough, but his use of secondary studies is less satisfactory. There is no mention, for example, of the recent studies of Walter Hines Page, ambassador to the Court of St. James's, who like Bell was a journalist and who campaigned perhaps too vigorously for Anglo-American cooperation during World War I. The author's research seems to have been completed several years before publication, as there are no references to books published after 1974. Despite this weakness, and despite a tendency to exaggerate its sub-

ject's significance and character strengths, this biography is a competent and professional study of the originator of the now-commonplace high-level interview.

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*Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information.*  By Stephen Vaughn. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. Pp. xiv, 397. Illustrations, notes, essay on sources, bibliography, index. \$21.00.)

During the past decade several worthwhile books and articles that treat domestic aspects of America's involvement in World War I have appeared. Stephen Vaughn's  *Holding Fast the Inner Lines* , a highly detailed institutional history of the Committee on Public Information (CPI), is an important addition to that list. The CPI, a short-lived agency created by executive order in April, 1917, had as its task the mobilization of public opinion in support of World War I as a crusade to save democracy.

The thesis of the book is clearly articulated. Vaughn argues that the organizers of the CPI, as well as the high-minded journalists, academics, and social workers who carried out its program, were progressive liberals who saw the agency not merely as a propaganda ministry but also as an instrument for national reform to educate citizens in their responsibilities in a democratic society at war. George Creel, who promoted himself as the chairman of the agency, is the major figure in Vaughn's account. A journalist with little formal education, Creel infused the CPI with his own naive faith in America's democracy, its citizens, and the justice of its cause in the war against German militarism and authoritarianism.

After recounting the origins of the CPI and the relationship of the reformers to its purposes, structure, and personnel, Vaughn describes the literature the agency's several divisions produced to define democracy, justify American intervention, and indict "the German menace." In Creel's view, the task of the CPI was to be approached positively. Unassimilated immigrants, including German-Americans, were not to be threatened or harassed. Instead he hoped to lead them to strong loyalty to America and its democratic ideals through the agency's educational programs. Nevertheless, much of the CPI prop-