

coverage of the chapter, and briefly sets each critical work in context" (p. x). The essays also contain information about other authors and books and limited biographical information about many of the writers. In addition to the usual bibliographical data, there are annotations and suggested reading levels for every entry.

Although the book covers a wide variety of subjects, there are fields not included, religion for example; and, with the exception of history, there is no section on the social sciences.

Ruth Jeannette Gillis did not intend to provide an exhaustive list of books in any category: "As for the overall selections, I was guided by the idea of producing a work that would introduce the State of Indiana to someone who had little or no knowledge about the Hoosier state" (p. xii).

Gillis's guide provides excellent information for teachers, librarians, university professors, students, general readers, indeed anyone interested in books for children and young adults. Based on the *Directory of Indiana Children's Authors* edited by Sara Laughlin and published by the Stone Hills Area Library Services Authority, Bloomington, Indiana, it may well be used as an example for other states.

DONALD E. THOMPSON is librarian emeritus, Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana. He is the editor of two volumes of *Indiana Authors and Their Books, 1917-1966* (1974) and *1967-1980* (1981) and is editing the collected letters of Lew and Susan Wallace, to be published by the Indiana Historical Society.

A George Jean Nathan Reader. Edited by A. L. Lazarus. (Rutherford, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990. Pp. 408. Notes, illustrations, glossary, selected bibliography, index. \$45.00.)

George Jean Nathan, like fellow Hoosier Cole Porter, spent most of his life in Manhattan. Porter put together sophisticated song lyrics. Nathan became one of America's most influential and satirically deft drama critics. For over a half century the vanguard press and journals of opinion were pleased to promulgate his views. Brilliant and caustic, Nathan openly confessed "a prejudice against playwrights who seek to palliate their emotional immaturity with anonymous injections of the borrowed mature thoughts of others" (p. 35). This bold critic praised whom he would and deferred not a whit to those literati and progressives who favored others he himself often ridiculed: among them T. S. Eliot, Noel Coward, Maxwell Anderson, and Clifford Odets. Nathan (who won a gold medal in collegiate fencing) developed a rapier wit. And he took risks. As early as 1917 he announced the genius of Eugene O'Neill; in later years, when the Nobel laureate was all but dismissed by such powerful voices as Eric Bentley, Francis Fergusson, and Bernard De Voto, Nathan took a characteristically uncompromising stance:

"O'Neill is the only dramatist in the history of the American theatre who has achieved real world status" (p. 135). Eager to deflate whatever appeared to him pretentious, he lampooned all Broadway buncombe claiming to serve the cause of "high art."

Nathan, born into privilege, cultivated a patrician way of life. He was the son of Charles Narét-Nathan, international merchant, and Ella Nördlinger Nathan of Fort Wayne, college classmate of Ella Quinlan, who would later marry the matinée idol James O'Neill and become the mother of Eugene. Given every advantage, Nathan enrolled in the late 1890s as a special student in such universities as Bologna, Paris, and Heidelberg. In 1904 he was graduated from Cornell.

This history is competently summarized by professor of English emeritus A. L. Lazarus, who has organized a splendid anthology of Nathan's dramatic criticism, his "profiles" of players, playwrights, and "other writers" (Theodore Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, W. Somerset Maugham, F. Scott Fitzgerald, *et al.*). Nathan's ubiquitous sarcasm, no doubt hilarious in once-a-week installments, can become a bit tiresome in this prolonged *tour de force*, but his columns, showcased for decades, made already good magazines a little racier: *Harper's Weekly*, *Smart Set*, *The American Mercury*, *Saturday Review*, and *Scribner's*. Nathan began his famous partnership with H. L. Mencken in 1914, coediting *Smart Set*. In it he gave first exposure to young O'Neill, to James Joyce (two of the *Dubliner* stories were printed here for the first time), Maugham, Fitzgerald, and others. Over a long career (and with the help of his friend Alfred A. Knopf) Nathan published over forty books of criticism and reflections. In 1953 Indiana University awarded him an honorary doctorate, an occasion prompting one of his few visits to the native state after his mother's death in 1932.

Nathan's life was not in every respect a smashing success, of course. He knew the sadness of friendship made even more poignant by unrequited affection. A little like Yeats with Maud Gonne, perhaps, Nathan could not seal in marriage his love for the beautiful Lillian Gish. Later he found a sophisticated partner in the much younger actress, Julie Haydon, whom he married in 1955 (three years before his death). He forged other fascinating associations: best known, no doubt, his celebrated liaison with Mencken. Just as important, it may be, was Nathan's friendship and correspondence with O'Neill (the subject of another Fairleigh Dickinson volume, *As Ever Gene*, 1987).

Here then is a book for both theater buff and the student of dramatic history. In addition to the main content, moreover, the author provides a helpful bibliography and index, as well as an interesting "photo gallery." Flawless books defy probability, of course; nor does this volume defeat the odds. What possessed Lazarus to construct a 138-page glossary? He disavows any intention

to insult the reader's intelligence; he wishes merely to identify persons and events known to the erudite Nathan. But many entries seem condescending, if not wholly unnecessary. Here Lazarus introduces Freud, Marx, Mozart, Shakespeare ("England's greatest dramatist"), Woodrow Wilson, and so forth.

One should not end on a quibble, however. All in all, the *Nathan Reader* stands as a worthy contribution to scholarship.

EDWARD L. SHAUGHNESSY is Edna R. Cooper professor of English, Butler University, Indianapolis. He has published articles on Santayana, Yeats, O'Neill, and James T. Farrell. In 1988 Greenwood Press published his study, *Eugene O'Neill in Ireland: The Critical Reception*.

Steel Valley Klan: The Ku Klux Klan in Ohio's Mahoning Valley.

By William D. Jenkins. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1990. Pp. xii, 222. Illustrations, maps, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$27.50.)

The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, which flourished in states like Indiana and Ohio, is commonly regarded as a fanatical movement based largely on religious, racial, and nativist animosities. Historians have been steadily moving away from this generalization, acknowledging the reality of such prejudices yet finding other considerations at least equally important in explaining the organization's success. William D. Jenkins takes this path in his study of Klan activities in northeastern Ohio's Mahoning Valley, which includes Youngstown and Niles, the site in 1924 of a violent confrontation between Klan members and incensed opponents.

Utilizing such sources as local press accounts, personal interviews, and church records, as well as a partial Klan membership list for Mahoning County, Jenkins rejects claims made in Kenneth T. Jackson's *The Ku Klux Klan in the City* (1967). In particular, Jenkins questions the assertion that Klan members typically were lower-middle-class individuals fearful of immigrant and black threats to their jobs and neighborhoods. He maintains that, at least in the Mahoning Valley, Klansmen represented a broad spectrum of the general population, and he doubts the significance of economic concerns. Drawing on the scholarship of Richard Jensen and Paul Kleppner, the author sees the Klan as part of a pietist Protestant effort to impose a "conservative moral code on American society" (p. ix). He views the Klan not so much as a peculiar jazz age phenomenon as a long-term "consequence of a cultural conflict that resulted from the overly rapid mixing of divergent cultures within a society already undergoing the wrenching changes of industrialization" (p. ix). The Klan was able, briefly, to gain a political foothold in the Mahoning Valley because of genuine concerns over political corruption, Sabbath violations, and effective law enforcement, especially in the area of prohibition. Ultimately,