planatory commentary gives meaningful detail about speaker, audience, and occasion for each of the selected twenty-three speeches. The texts reveal a rhetorical artistry that flourished in contributing to the legend. Two of the leading eulogists, like Lincoln, spent significant periods of their lives in frontier Indiana. Henry Ward Beecher's first pastorates were in Lawrenceburg and Indianapolis, where his Lectures to Young Men attracted nationwide attention. Bishop Matthew Simpson, onetime president of Asbury (DePauw) College in Greencastle, was selected to deliver “the final benediction” at the open vault in Oak Hill Cemetery, Springfield. Lincoln's rail-splitter heritage became a cherished feature of the mythology. Ralph Waldo Emerson emphasized this frontier influence “upon the American character,” anticipating the thinking of Frederick Jackson Turner (p. 28).

Four presidents are included among the selected ceremonial orators (James A. Garfield, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and William Howard Taft). Four others ran for the presidency. Democrats, unlike eulogists in the immediate postbellum period, became entirely acceptable as public sentiment shifted, ultimately enabling Democratic Governor Mario Cuomo in 1986 to proclaim before a Springfield audience of scholars and politicians that honoring Lincoln was “beyond the scope of partisan politics.” In an eloquent address Cuomo proclaimed, “We have lifted Lincoln to the very pinnacle of our national memory. . . . We have chiseled his face on the side of a mountain, making him appear as a voice in the heavens” (p. 233).

Ceremonial oratory resounds with sainthood, martyrdom, and “epic grandeur,” but seldom is there a whisper of the apocalyptic cost of warfare. Elihu Root came closest to describing the cost when he quoted the words of Lincoln to Mrs. Bixby, mentioning “the solemn pride” of having “laid so costly a sacrifice” as five sons “upon the altar of freedom” (p. 201). Braden's excellent book illumines not only Lincoln but the thought of postwar generations that followed him.


This is a pleasant little book, an exercise in nostalgia. H. Roger Grant has assembled twenty-one first-person narratives devoted to travel by train in the United States. Some are from the early days of railroading, but they continue to the present with accounts of travel on Amtrak's Metroliner over the famous north-
east corridor. The nicely illustrated text is enlivened by a large and inviting typeface.

Among the accounts reprinted are two by notable foreign travelers, Charles Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson. There are several good accounts of the transcontinental route with all of the expected color of the trans-Mississippi West. It is particularly pleasing to find in this select company the reappearance of Christopher Morley, so well known to rail fans of an earlier generation. Morley’s charming literary effusions are well represented by an essay entitled “A Ride in the Cab of the Twentieth Century Limited.” William D. Middleton’s “A Dirge for the Doodlebug,” and “Troop Train” by David P. Morgan are also enjoyable. There is a lively account of riding on narrow-gauge lines in Colorado and New Mexico.

Residents of the Midwest, where interurban railways made a powerful impact in the first few decades of the twentieth century, will be especially entertained by “The Electric Way,” which contains two narratives of interurban travel in the lush years. One of these contributions, “Riding the Interurban,” is a 1909 account of a trip over electrified lines between New York and Chicago. It has been alleged by some historians that you could actually ride electrics and street railways all the way from New York to Chicago (however slow and foolhardy this may have been). This account probably exposes the impossibility of the attempt. By the time the author had arrived at Rochester, New York, he had travelled 387
miles but only 233 of these miles on electric roads. Elsewhere he had to resort to steam railroads. What a nuisance such all-day trolley riding must have been—but can one imagine anything more delightful?

Perhaps the only complaint that might be made against We Took the Train is that it does not have nearly enough accounts of railroad travel. The number of chapters might well have been doubled without the reader’s getting gorged.

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Of the three aspects of American modernism’s trinity—liberty, equality, fraternity—the last might be the most difficult to realize. Liberty, as freedom from restraint and as self-generated activity, is well known in the nation’s past and present. The historic struggle to define equality remains current too. Fraternity or community, however, is difficult to trace from the past to the present, except in some form of nationalism.

Now Casey Nelson Blake has investigated the problem of community in the writings of four well-known intellectuals from the first half of the twentieth century. The result is a finely crafted book up to a point; the only criticism is the choppy presentation of biographical and literary material. A chronology of each man and his major books would have been handy along with the old mundane business of birth and death dates.

This critical comment is not fatal to Blake’s presentation. The chapters are well organized with a strong clear theme. The book is well written. And the thesis is of historiographic importance. Bourne, Brooks, Frank, and Mumford were radical critics who sought a “communitarian vision of self-realization through participation in a democratic culture” (p. 2).

Blake’s argument is advanced along two interpretative lines: romantic critique of capitalism and civic republicanism (another popular theme in American scholarship today). He does a better job of exploring the first line of inquiry. Finding examples of civic humanism among twentieth-century writers is a very difficult task, especially among progressives who were displeased with Marxism and also with the culture of consumerism that debuted in the 1920s.