

petitions which followed the same melancholy schedule), letters from the governors and secretaries, from the judges, occasional letters relating to Indian and military affairs, and petitions from merchants who had difficulty in getting their goods into the country without double payment of duties. Opposing political factions are well illustrated.

Many papers deal with the complicated French, Spanish, and British claims that had to be settled before the United States could begin disposing of lands, the group of claims under Georgia's act of cession, the differences in interpretation of the general laws in different districts of the territory, and the problem of opening unclaimed lands under a system liberal enough to prevent inhabitants from moving into Spanish territory. Writing of the solicitude of the people on these matters, Secretary Thomas H. Williams said, in 1805, that it was "a Subject on which hang if not all their affections, at least all their anxieties." Judge Thomas Rodney wrote about the same time: "The Land business here has certainly been much more Troublesome and Difficult than Congress apprehended—The Testimony required to establish different Claims has put the people to great Trouble difficulty and Expence—and has produced great delay beyond what Congress seems to have contemplated."

In addition to the large body of well-selected papers printed, readers will find careful and voluminous citations to other Mississippi materials published by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History or other agencies. The Index is excellent. Each volume of *Territorial Papers* that appears increases one's eagerness for the publication of the volume on Indiana. It will be Volume VII and is scheduled to appear this year.

NELLIE ARMSTRONG.

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*American Frontier*. By Elizabeth Peck. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Garden City, New York. Pp. ix, 195.

This little volume is made up of a series of poems relating to the pioneer life of a period extending from 1780 to 1875. As a teacher of history in the Academy of Berea College, Mrs. Peck conceived the idea of visiting the homes and schools of the students who had been in her classes. These visits, made on foot or on muleback, furnished the opportunity to learn many of the facts on which she has based her poems.

While traveling in the southern mountains, many areas of which are truly retarded frontiers, she gathered up old wills, deeds, letters, journals, and newspapers. Though a reader and lover of poetry, the author first tried to tell her story in prose, but the attempt was abandoned. The subjects suggested by the accumulated material on pioneer life called for portrayal in verse, and the result is a book of poems.

Of the volume, Mrs. Peck says in her "Foreword": "It was not written for professors of history. Why trouble them with one more book? *American Frontier* is for anybody who enjoys rich, full-flavored life, even though he knows little about the history of American pioneering". Of the success of Mrs. Peck's effort to express her conception of the frontier in poetry, Stephen Benét says: "She's dug up some beautiful material and told it with a very effective readable directness."

Only a few of the selections in the volume can be noticed in this brief review. In the first poem, "White Man", the Indian, Black Hoof, ponders deeply the coming of settlers to his forests. Comparing the new type of man with his own race, he concludes that—

The Spirit never meant him to live in our forest.  
 If he possessed it, he could not live in it.  
 He is too weak and full of fear,  
 Too lazy and woman-bound.  
 If he possessed it, he would straightway hack it down.  
 The Spirit never meant him to live in our forests.

The poem "Walthena" reveals the longing of a pioneer woman for some touch of denied beauty in her home, a longing satisfied by giving her daughters symbolic names:

But I chose names for loveliness alone.  
 Fair-Anna is a spoon of silver bright,  
 Lizelle a silken gown, Morene a china bowl,  
**And you, Walthena, are a candle white,**  
 A tall, smooth candle white,  
 Walthena.

"Between the Walls of the Valley," presents humorous stories pertaining to mountain people and mountain ways, among others using the old tale regarding the planting of corn in a mountain-side field:

It's odd, stranger,  
 I saw a farmer loading  
 His shotgun full of corn  
 As I went by.  
 Could you tell my why?

*He shoots his corn in, row by row,  
Between the walls of the valley.*

There is a camp-meeting poem and one dealing with the old wagoner of Indiana in 1850. Johnny Appleseed is not missed, nor the Arkansas Traveler. Texas, Old Man River, Mormons, gold-seekers and trappers all have their innings, in turn. The range is from Ohio to the Gulf and from the Gulf to the golden West. The dangers, the fears, the longings and the democracy of the people of the advancing frontier are the themes of the poems in *American Frontier*. The leveling effect that frontier conditions exercised on newcomers is well set forth in some lines that relate to a group of Michigan colonists of about 1835:

Back home they never would have met  
Even at church.  
Out here they neighbor side by side,  
Knowing well  
The sweetness of each other's bread  
However raised.

But why write more? The poems must be read in order to appreciate the book.

BERTHA THOMAS LYNCH.

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*A History of Kentucky.* By Thomas D. Clark, Ph.D. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1937. Pp. xvi, 702, illustrated, maps, \$5.00.

Kentucky has had a long history. It has been a history marked by the development of a high civilization, by bitter conflicts and by stirring events. Reaching from the Cumberlandlands to the Mississippi, the state is made up of sections with diverse interests. The commonwealth has always been both western and southern, while, at the same time bound to the North by strong ties. Much has been written on Kentucky, but the time was ripe for a single-volume history of the state that would bring the story down to the present, and furnish a balanced account of the middle and earlier periods. The new volume is, therefore, timely.

The first chapter is devoted to geography and the economic factor is stressed throughout the volume. The state's history to 1865 is given over four hundred fifty pages, leaving about one hundred twenty-five to the period since the Civil