

selves, including twelve lions roaring (in Indiana!), ten lords praying, four collie birds, and three French hens.

The most intriguing phrases appear in "Lasso Town for London," *satchel* for *psalter*, *catfoot broth* perhaps for *catnip broth*, and blood that comes "tinkling o'er my knee." In the old song, "The Drowsy Sleeper," the lover says:

"From North Carolina to Pennsylvania

I've crossed the ocean for your sake."

This piques the imagination.

The "Derby Ram" is given in two variants which show the exuberant American imagination feeding fat on the tall tales. Among the numerous nonsense rhymes, "Keemo-Kimo" in three choice variants is the most nonsensical.

But there is no end to the delights of this charming collection. It is a valuable addition to the scholarship of folklore; better still, it is the essence of literature, a refreshment to the fagged spirit.

ELISABETH PECK

*Zachary Taylor: Soldier of the Republic.* By Holman Hamilton, The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis and New York, 1941. Pp. 335, illustrated, \$3.50.

General Taylor, one of the several Americans to become President of the United States because of his military fame, has waited long for a biographer. The present volume does not complete the story, dealing with "Old Rough and Ready" only to the termination of his services to his country as a soldier. A second volume which is to cover the political campaign of 1848, the preliminaries of that contest and Taylor's period as President is in the offing. The biographer of General Taylor, Holman Hamilton, is an able young journalist of Fort Wayne. Like many other men of his calling, he has undertaken to write history. Not only has much history been written by journalists, but it seems to have been easier for publishers to sell the output of journalistic writers than the works of historians trained in the *seminars* of the Universities. It became apparent a few years ago that technically prepared writers of history and biography must pay more attention to style, while journalists must do more careful and extensive research. Fortunately, both schools of writers are now making desperate efforts to overcome their handicaps and with considerable success. Certainly,

any reader will discover that Mr. Hamilton has not only produced an engaging narrative but every page attests the fact that he labored long with the sources before he was willing to write the life of Zachary Taylor.

About half of the present volume is devoted to the life of Taylor before the Mexican War, and the remainder covers the comparatively short period from 1844 to the end of 1847. Because of the importance of the General's Mexican War activities this is a fair division. To write the first half of the story was very difficult. The scene shifted often and over and over the author was obliged to re-set the stage. The geography of many parts of the country had to be studied and elusive documents sought for far and wide. Having undertaken the task, Mr. Hamilton refused to be balked by any obstacle until his work was done and well done.

When he had covered the long years that involved so many parts of the United States, the author took up the work of tracing the activities of General Taylor during the Mexican War. The theater of action did not change so much but the physical factors must be studied more intensively and the multitude of activities handled more critically. From Palo Alto to Buena Vista, the narrative is colorful, detailed and dramatic. Handling raw troops under hard conditions in a foreign country against larger forces tested the prowess of Old Rough and Ready. He was not a perfect general, but he made a great name for himself. The climax of his career came at Buena Vista. Greatly outnumbered, not ready, even arriving rather late at the spot where he was so sorely needed, he yet won the battle. The author rises to the occasion in his treatment of this engagement. The circumstances are adequately portrayed. The parts played by Taylor, Jefferson Davis, Santa Anna and others are impartially set forth. One naturally expected more in relation to the Indiana troops engaged, but perhaps this topic will receive more attention in the next volume. There was much said and written about General Taylor's criticism of troops from the Hoosier state, especially in Indiana during the campaign of 1848.

The reviewer highly commends this first of two volumes on Taylor to Indiana readers. Such readers will be interested to know that there is a special, autographed Indiana edition of the book. Since Taylor was active in so many

areas of his own country, rose to such great fame in Mexico, became President of the United States, and was withal a most unique and attractive character, the volume should make a very wide appeal. Not only general readers will find it instructive and entertaining, but scholars will also find it useful because of the exhaustive research done by the author.

WILLIAM O. LYNCH

*Three Virginia Frontiers* by Thomas P. Abernethy of the University of Virginia is made up of three essays presented at the Louisiana State University in February of 1940. These essays constitute the Fourth Series of The Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History. The three titles of the Abernethy lectures are: "Tidewater," "Piedmont and Valley" and "Kentucky." This study of the early history of three geographic areas that were within the boundaries of Virginia until 1792, is marked by an attempt to give due emphasis to the different factors that shaped the life and institutions of each successive frontier. The author stresses especially "the conflict between European institutions and frontier conditions" in the three Virginia areas that developed successively. The first essay is confined to the Tidewater belt, the second includes not only the Piedmont Plateau but the Virginia portion of the Appalachian Valley, while the third covers not only Kentucky but the present West Virginia.

Virginia furnished a vast number of colonists to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Tennessee and a smaller though considerable number to the Lower South, but Professor Abernethy was not interested in the general westward movement from Virginia. His object was to present case histories of three successive frontiers that were actually a part of Virginia. He has held rigidly to his purpose with the result that we have a definite study of the operation of the forces that contributed to the outcome in the three selected areas. The facts and conditions discovered in connection with each of the three frontiers prove that the influences that shaped the civilization of each were complex. Conflicting interests were always present. People carried to each new area customs and traditions and were in each instance under legal restraints exercised by a distant gov-