

product of the peculiar combination of talents and experiences of a man such as Graham Hutton: a fine scholarship in languages, literature and history, wide travel, a curious mind, a traveling man's disposition, a businessman's experience, a facile pen, and the artist's intuition.

The author draws upon his firsthand acquaintance with much of the world for many comparisons, contrasts, and allusions; he gives the Midwest a kind of valuation which a Midwesterner could not give it. There is no malice or prejudice in the book; nor is there the slightest striving for the spectacular or an attempt to flatter us. Of the author's sincere liking for the region there can be no question. In fact, the Midwest being, as it is, a state of mind, Hutton must have been a Midwesterner long before he came here; his ancestors, by some quirk of fate, just happened to have stayed in England.

Midwest at Noon and Era Bell Thompson's *American Daughter* (1946) were sponsored by Newberry Library fellowships in Midwest History. These first two publications by Newberry fellows have set a high standard for the projects still under way.

The book with its end maps, line drawings for chapter heads, and neat typography makes an attractive volume, as well as an important one.

Indiana University

R. Carlyle Buley

The Lincoln Reader. Edited by Paul M. Angle. (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1947, pp. xii, 564. Illustrations. \$3.75.)

Preparing a biography of Abraham Lincoln is a difficult and involved task. The literature is extensive and the varied career of Lincoln requires a writer to know much about the United States from 1809 to 1865. A greater difficulty is found in the traditions and reminiscences that have grown around the great man. In an effort to glorify him, his humble origins have been exaggerated and his parents and wife subjected to very questionable treatment. Writers seeking to make the man human have succeeded in picturing him as more eccentric, romantic, and melancholy than he probably was. A true biographer needs to be a hardboiled scholar who will not hesitate to declare that reminiscences

written twenty and thirty years after the fact are scarcely reliable, that myths based upon such evidence hardly deserve to be dignified by the attention they have received, and that there is a body of authentic Lincoln material from which an adequate biography can be written.

The present work is not such a biography, but it is a highly interesting and very useful substitute for a new life. It is Lincoln's career pieced together from the writings of many authors. Contemporaries of Lincoln, modern writers, prominent officials, relatively unknown authors, historians, literary figures and even Lincoln's writings are drawn upon for these selections. At the beginning of each of the twenty-four chapters is an introduction by the editor, and before each selection is a brief comment about the event to be described or the author whose description is reproduced. These introductions and comments are excellently done. They give evidence of the ability and knowledge of the editor. Like his *Shelf of Lincoln Books* (reviewed in this magazine in volume XLII, 413-414), they establish his familiarity with the literature about Lincoln. Sometimes they are more critical than the writing which follows. Generally, the selections are well chosen. Almost any reader who is interested in Lincoln will find several hours of instructive and fascinating reading in the volume. Because of its brevity, its arrangement, and its low cost, its readers will probably be quite numerous. It represents a very creditable performance.

In evaluating its place in historical literature, it is necessary to note that its chief value will probably be as a popular, but satisfactory brief account of Lincoln's life. From its nature it cannot contain anything new. In bringing together accounts of so many authors there could not help but be some inconsistency in approach and treatment. This the author has skillfully kept at a minimum. The most glaring instance, perhaps, is the editor's introduction to the chapter "Romance and Marriage," which is scholarly and unemotional, but followed by a selection from Carl Sandburg which is an emotional acceptance of the Ann Rutledge story with all its romantic details. The servant's view, pp. 190-192, is probably unfortunate for it gives evidence of a servant's prejudice against any one who attempted to rise in the world. The picture of Lincoln's visit to Richmond has a mythical ring about it and was probably written several years after the

event. In the final chapter, too much attention seems to be devoted to dreams. In general, the readers might have been given more information upon which to base an evaluation of each selection.

One might also ask whether or not the editor has met the standards which an adequate biography should meet. He is well informed and scholarly, and obviously well-prepared for the task he has undertaken. This volume is generally quite excellent, but it contains a small amount of material of questionable worth, and some of the myths that surround Lincoln. Isn't it time that someone should rescue one of the nation's greatest leaders from the fogs that somewhat obscure him. Angle appears to be one of a very small group of scholars who possess the necessary requirements.

Indiana University

John D. Barnhart

Motherhood on the Wisconsin Frontier. By Lillian Krueger.
(Published by the Author. 330 N. Carroll Street, Madison, Wisconsin, pp. ix, 44. \$1.10.)

This is a reprint of two articles in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. It is a review of the process of settlement on the frontier from the woman's point of view. Original sources have been used and real people and their actual experiences have been woven quite skillfully into the narrative. Building the cabin home, caring for travelers and new settlers, religious services, teaching school, working out, marrying, rearing children, and nursing the sick are topics that are treated in a simple yet effective manner.