

the view that Lincoln eludes their "prosaic documentation." Sandburg, he believes, has come closest to capturing the real Lincoln, though he lets the poet's reviewers speak for him.

A bibliography is appended composed of manuscript sources and books and articles about both Lincoln and his biographers. Perhaps the chief omissions are the more recent writings of professional scholars on national aspects of Lincoln's career. This is explained apparently in Chapter XI by the number of such productions.

The character sketches, the descriptions of the physical appearances of the biographers (helped by drawings by Romaine Proctor), and the accounts of their methods of research and writing make entertaining reading. Paul Angle's *The Lincoln Reader* and this volume together provide an excellent approach to the vexing Lincoln problem.

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Abraham Lincoln & the Widow Bixby. By F. Lauriston Bullard. (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1946, pp. xiii, 154. \$3.00.)

The minuteness and intensity of the interest in Abraham Lincoln is demonstrated by the publication of this small volume about a letter which some have felt was not a genuine Lincoln letter. It also reveals the fascination which some privileged people find in history by studying the evidence on all phases of one of its unsolved problems and by trying to reach a tenable conclusion about it. It is a detective story about a famous American, a story which will repay many different types of readers for their attention.

The letter which has received so much attention was one which President Lincoln wrote to a widowed mother who was thought to have lost five sons in the federal armies during the Civil War. It was a beautifully worded condolence. The quality of the letter is not lessened by the discoveries that only two of the sons were killed in action, that one was honorably discharged, and that two may have been deserters.

The author clears away the misstatements about the letter, presents the ascertainable facts about the mother to whom the letter was written, and shows that Nicolay and Hay considered that it was bona fide. He rejects the idea that John Hay wrote it for Lincoln as has been suggested. Fur-

thermore, he believes that Hay could not have composed the letter for Lincoln but admits that he cannot prove the point conclusively. Facsimiles that have been manufactured and sold he, together with John Hay, regards as forgeries.

The book is an enjoyable piece of reading, which reveals a little of the depth of Lincoln's character.

A Bibliography of George Ade, 1866-1944. By Dorothy Ritter Russo. (Indianapolis, Indiana Historical Society, 1947, pp. xv, 314. Illustrations and index.)

In the year of George Ade's death the Committee on Bibliography of the Indiana Historical Society sponsored the publication of a bibliography of James Whitcomb Riley. Under the editorship of Anthony J. Russo and Dorothy R. Russo, this volume appeared in handsome format and became immediately not only a useful literary tool but a collector's item. Now, three years later, Mrs. Russo has edited a bibliography of George Ade which in appearance and general value rivals its predecessor.

To be of maximum utility a bibliography must meet several requirements. It should be clearly arranged, consistently presented, meticulously checked. Chronological order should be maintained within each section, works about as well as works by the author should be accurately listed, and an overall index should be included. It should go without saying that clear typography on good paper stock adds to the merit of the completed volume.

On almost all these counts Mrs. Russo's volume is a superlative achievement. Physically attractive, it is both detailed and comprehensive. A section of 154 pages is given over to descriptions of George Ade first editions, and a section of 100 pages to the periodicals in which Ade items first appeared. Other sections list reprint editions of Ade's works and enumerate books and periodical articles containing discussions of Ade. Conventional bibliographical practice probably justifies the omission of any biographical data, but one wonders if a short sketch of Ade's life with important dates included would not augment the value of such a book as this.

To the reader who knows George Ade only as the man who discovered a new kind of fable or as the writer of several comic operas which won considerable popularity almost half