

ing philosophical tidbits; there is a villain counterbalancing the hero; and there is the mentioning of sex, but passion is restrained and is not offensive to good taste.

The reader definitely gets an impression of the atmosphere and life of the times by the author's accuracy in time and setting, by realistic descriptions of houses and dress, and by the use of idiomatic language. Comic relief is attained by the witticisms of Goosehead, the Negro janitor at the City Hall.

Historians will recognize much of the Hoosier phase of Morgan's raid which Wilson has incorporated in this book—so much so that some may wish that the author had definitely located the fictitious Crescent City at a particular spot in southern Indiana instead of leaving the geographical location somewhat indefinite. The novel indicates that the author is well acquainted with the Civil War along the Ohio River. The historical background has been adequately reproduced for the plot and story. But historians and critics should remember: the author's purpose was not to record an episode in history but to study the reactions of a peace-loving and thoughtful man in a moment of violence and action. This reviewer suggests that Professor Wilson admirably achieved his objective.

Indiana University

Gerald O. Haffner

America Takes the Stage: Romanticism in American Drama and Theatre, 1750-1900. By Richard Moody. Indiana University Publications, Humanities Series No. 34. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955, pp. xii, 322. Illustrations, bibliography, selected play list, and index. Paper, \$3.75; trade edition, \$5.00.)

America Takes the Stage is an interesting exposition of the development of romanticism in American drama and theater from 1750 to 1900. Since the prevailing spirit in a nation to be conceived, born, and started on its vigorous way was essentially one of "restless eagerness," as Moody indicates, and since the American dream of the freedom of opportunity for each individual was often close to reality, it is not surprising that American drama and theater reflected the spirit of a new age of hope and expectancy. Theater managers are in the business to present popular fare before the eyes of an entranced public, and it was

only common sense that dictated that this predominant spirit and interest should be encouraged from the stage.

Moody recognizes these important considerations in the one hundred and fifty years of American drama which he covers in his work. At times, it is true, the author over-emphasizes a pervading romanticism in all aspects of national life in order to re-enforce his thesis that the romantic was the compelling motivation in all American drama and theater. There is no question but that economic depressions and the aftermath of war brought people into closer contact with a realism which was not always part of the idealism of the growing nation, but, as Moody points out, the drama and the theater, except in a few instances, did not recognize the reality or else touched on it only superficially. By the end of the nineteenth century, there was an increasing desire to bring about changes and reformation, but the results of such evolution are not within the scope of *America Takes the Stage*.

The chief emphasis in Moody's book lies in the section concerned with "Native Themes and Characters," in which there are discussions of Negro minstrelsy, the Negro, the Indian, the Yankee, the wars, the frontier and the folk. These subjects are related to the plays of the nineteenth century in so far as they are used as plot, character, and idea material. Moody has carefully avoided repetition in his treatment of his subject matter, however, and the editing of a vast amount of factual material is well done. Some of the conclusions to be drawn from the facts are not so completely developed as they might be. Since Moody is attempting to present so large a canvas and the editing is obviously necessary, there are several instances where the focus is blurred. For example, John Bernard, who wrote *Retrospections of America, 1797-1811* (1887), and whom Moody uses as reference, has some rather penetrating observations to make concerning the Yankee, dividing him into three species: the swapper, the jobber, and the peddler. Although Moody is concerned primarily with the stage creations of the various native characters, he at times might have made more clear the relationship between the actual American types and their representations on the stage.

A number of histories of American drama and theater have included much of the material to be found in Moody's

book, but in the standard reference works of the past many important plays are ignored or given slight treatment. The contribution made by *America Takes the Stage* is that the scattered references have been gathered together into a comprehensive whole. In addition to this cohesion, there is a sense of dramatic development which attracts and holds the interest of the reader. The section concerning the various wars in which the United States was involved during the nineteenth century and the plays which evolved as the result of those conflicts furnishes the best of the new material on American drama.

Chapter III on "Romanticism in Acting and in the Traditional Drama" is the weakest section of the book. The author does not discuss the romantic mode of acting as much as he might, and therefore treats it superficially, being more interested in discussing the romantic plays in which famous actors appeared rather than acting techniques.

America Takes the Stage is, in spite of a certain unevenness in its emphasis on various aspects of nineteenth century American drama and theater, an important addition to the increasing library on the subject. Written with obvious enthusiasm for the material and injected with an obvious eagerness to bring to life another time and people, the book has a fascinating appeal and makes clearly evident the kind of theater which attracted a majority of those who professed to be part of a romantic and revolutionary experiment among the nations of the world.

Stanford University

Norman Philbrick

Disciples of Christ in Georgia. By J. Edward Moseley. (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1954, pp. 400. Appendices, bibliography, and index. \$3.00.)

The Tinkling Spring, Headwater of Freedom. By Howard McKnight Wilson. (Fishersville, Virginia: The Tinkling Spring and Hermitage Presbyterian Churches, 1954, pp. xviii, 542. Illustrations, appendices, bibliography, and index. \$8.00.)

Barton Warren Stone, Early American Advocate of Christian Unity. By William Garrett West. (Nashville,