

health. But race and segregation slow down progress, and leadership is required to break down the barrier. All these writers have unity in that they recognize slavery, race, and economic backwardness as major characteristics of the South.

George B. Tindall takes a different and new approach to the problem of understanding the South. He does not attempt to analyze the South himself but rather suggests an analysis of the various myths that have been developed to explain the South. He analyzes briefly such topics as the myth of the aristocratic planter society based upon slavery, the South of the poor white trash, the Agrarian South, the New South Creed, and suggests at least a dozen others. His thesis is that by a study of the origin, development, and acceptance of these myths the historian can better understand what the South has been and still is. It remains to be seen whether his thesis is correct or not, but at least it is a new and original approach to southern history.

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From the New Freedom to the New Frontier: A History of the United States from 1912 to the Present. By André Maurois. Translated by Patrick O'Brien. (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1963. Pp. xii, 365. Bibliography, index. \$5.00.)

André Maurois has long been in the forefront of contemporary French interpreters of the United States. A frequent visitor to these shores, he has had a lifelong interest in American history and institutions and has written several books interpreting America for the European public. In the present work Maurois has written a warm and sympathetic history of the United States from 1912 to 1960. Designed for the average European reader rather than the scholar, this work provides a clear narrative of American history, with many apt quotations, and several sharply etched vignettes of American leaders. The author's own personal recollections and his conversations with prominent Americans add color and immediacy to the narrative of events.

The author modestly claims to have made no contribution to scholarship, and the factual narrative is based on standard secondary works. But many Americans will be interested in the image of their country as reflected by the mind of this civilized Frenchman. For the convenience of such readers the bulk of the interpretative comments are contained in three insightful chapters surveying the state of America in 1912, 1939, and 1960. The United States is, in Maurois' view, above all an idealistic nation. Three sets of ideas have shaped American history: "moral puritanism," enlightenment liberalism, and faith in progress. American history represents the interaction between these ideas and the hard facts of twentieth-century life. Idealism, in Plato's sense, accounts for both the strength and weakness of American foreign policy. Maurois finds that Americans have concentrated on essences such as liberty and democracy to the occasional neglect of concrete realities. In domestic policy American ideals were challenged by the power of big business, leading to social injustice. Despite the rigidities

of an eighteenth-century constitution, Americans have met these problems by a peaceful revolution, evolving a pluralistic society with six independent power centers: the White House; the Congress; the managerial elite; the Pentagon; the opinion makers; and the labor unions.

The author's intention was to present the history of the United States "with clarity, with affection, and without prejudice" (p. vi). He has admirably fulfilled the first two goals but not the third, for Maurois is biased in favor of America. He stresses idealistic and generous actions from the fourteen points to the Marshall Plan, while ignoring or sliding over some less happy facts. His heroes are democratic leaders in the tradition of Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. He is evasive and unconvincing with less enlightened leaders. His attempted explanation of John Foster Dulles' policies in the Suez crisis is less than satisfying. Maurois is excessively optimistic in viewing the successes of American domestic policy. It is questionable whether American giant corporations have become "private public services" to the extent that there is "scarcely any real difference" between them and Renault, a state-owned enterprise (pp. 328-29). Many Americans will doubt whether a 5 per cent rate of unemployment may be dismissed as merely normal for "so great a body of workers" (p. 329). It is perhaps significant that Maurois, who has taught at several American universities, is rather uncharacteristically pessimistic about American education, the aspect of American culture with which he is most intimately familiar.

This is a first-rate popularization; it should provide a healthy corrective to the anti-Americanism so rife in the author's own country. One can only hope that it will be widely read there.

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The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640. By F. Smith Fussner. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962. Pp. xxiv, 343. Notes, index. \$7.50.)

The thesis of Professor Fussner's book is that the period from 1580 to 1640 in England represented nothing less than a "historiographical revolution" which "helped to create those historical attitudes and questionings that we recognize as our own" (p. xxii). Fussner has chosen the 1580's as the beginning of significant changes in English historical writing because in that decade "more adequate facilities for research became available, and the antiquaries began to question their medieval authorities" (p. 300). For example, many of the scholars who published in the post-restoration period worked long hours in the library assembled by Sir Robert Cotton in the first half of the sixteenth century. Or again, the Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries was founded in order to answer many of the "what and when" questions which were so important for the "why and how" questions asked by the Society of Antiquaries founded in Queen Anne's reign. The most obvious characteristic in this revolution in historical writing, according to Fussner, was