

distinctives than the pew. Unsophisticated religion tends to be explicit while sophisticated religion tends to be implicit.

The success of the revivals spoiled the unity of the denominations. The Baptists and Presbyterians moved away from the joint revivals first or at least gave cautious support and then turned away. Calvinism is clearly not the only culprit. Perfectionism, geography, and personalities all played their part. Paradoxically, the effort to effect a new union of Christians under Barton W. Stone led to yet another division. A brief examination of the antirevival sentiments of the non-evangelical groups would have proved interesting and may explain at some points the tack that the revivals took.

Boles is to be commended for a careful, thought provoking study. There are few real weaknesses in this book, but the suggestion that the religious people of the South were ready and expecting a revival and it came appears too simplistic. Many times in Christian history the people of the church anticipated and anguished for a revival that never came. A comparative examination of the Great Revival of 1787-1805 and the revivals in the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century would be a fruitful study.

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*Midcentury America: Life in the 1850s.* Compiled and edited by Carl Bode. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972. Pp. xix, 236. Illustrations, secondary sources. \$15.00.)

This is a collection of literary and graphic fragments which illustrate American thought, feeling, and behavior as they were during the 1850s. Its panoramic view ranges from church to kitchen, from farm to exhibition hall, from counting-house to bedroom. The book aims to convey various and concrete impressions of what ordinary people were like, and it succeeds.

Professor Bode's compilation gains bite and unity from his candidly stated opinion that the "average white American" living in the middle of the nineteenth century was "worse off physically and better off mentally" than is his present day

counterpart (pp. xiv, xiii). Although he realizes that Americans have not changed utterly, that they maintain the old belief in progress and the old restlessness, it is nonetheless clear to Bode that his countrymen are less firmly supported by faith and family, less at ease in their patriotism, and less confident of their public institutions than they were a century ago. He does not disguise the decade before the Civil War as a golden age, but he does present it as a relatively decent and comfortable time in which to have been an American.

The first of the book's seven chapters offers a series of impressions of how Americans looked and thought of their country as looking. Its breadth is exceeded by a later chapter on "The Pleasures of Life," which includes selections on fine arts, games such as "Hot Cockles" (which could be taken to impeach the mental well being of the period), Jenny Lind, and travel, as well as discussing how people acted at beaches while wearing costumes unsuited to swimming (pp. 165-206). Those pleasures which do not fit into the generous confines of that chapter are taken up—very delicately—in a chapter on home life. Work, education, religion, and slavery are all treated in chapters which are at least broad enough for their thirty or so pages.

Each chapter offers selections by familiar writers such as Walt Whitman, Adam de Gurowski, Wendell Phillips, and Anon. Less famous writers are represented, too, as are popular artists, especially those whose works were made widely available through lithography. Essays of a page or two introduce each selection, sometimes leaving questions—about a minister's denomination, for example (pp. 135-36)—to be answered at the reader's initiative. If less than exhaustive, the introductions are invariably helpful, and some of those about pictures are delightful. Bode's presentation of "the closest thing to pornography" (p. 91) that the period had to offer is particularly instructive. Such edification, of course, is only to be expected from the author of *The Anatomy of American Popular Culture, 1840-1861* (1959).

This book will be appreciated by those who have read Bode's earlier works, though it will make only modest additions to the knowledge they have already received from him. One hopes its attractive format and its very accessible style will surmount the barrier of its price to win him new readers

among undergraduates and others who get pleasure from books.

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*The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents: From Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt.* By George Sinkler. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1971. Pp. xvii, 413. Notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$8.95; paperbound, \$2.50.)

George Sinkler attempts to ascertain and explain the racial views of American presidents from Abraham Lincoln through the first Roosevelt. Although this book has merit, it has many serious weaknesses. The awkward prose and the poor organization make the book difficult to read. One has to question the author's failure to include Woodrow Wilson's presidency. Not only was Wilson the first southerner to hold presidential office since Reconstruction, but also his presidency marked the nationalization of the race question. This is seen in the Great Migration and the extension of segregation practices to federal employment. In the chapter on James A. Garfield and Chester A. Arthur, Sinkler includes Grover Cleveland. The only reason seems to be that he wishes to have a chapter of forty pages instead of sixteen. But Cleveland must be studied independently of his Republican predecessors because he represented the Democrats who generally held a different racial attitude than most Republicans. In the next chapter the author devotes only twelve pages to William McKinley's attitude toward blacks. Yet the nineties are extremely important years in black-white relations. In examining the twenty per cent of the book given to documentation, one has the impression that Sinkler spent a lot of time taking notes but little time in culling them.

Sinkler also fails to define race. Certainly he is to be commended on his effort to see the racial issue beyond white attitudes toward black Americans. However, the sources which he used make it difficult to judge the role of non-black minorities. Nineteen pages dealing with the Indian are scattered throughout the book. Even much of this material is repetitious