

one point admits that he really loves the wild, dashing life of a soldier.

Unfortunately, Part I of this volume is not as outstanding as the Starks letters. The first section, written by McKee, consists of brief accounts of such varied topics as the Wilder Battery, the Lightning Brigade, and the cavalry of 1861. The research is spotty with too much reliance on Francis T. Miller's *Photographic History of the Civil War* and no reference to *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. The treatment is so sketchy that few will find much value in this section; yet, if the reader will skim through Part I quickly, Part II, the Starks letters, will bring ample reward.

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Letters of George Ade. Edited by Terence Tobin. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Studies, 1973. Pp. xi, 251. Illustrations, notes, index. \$9.75.)

When George Ade died in 1944, he and his huge literary production could soon have been forgotten because much of his work, such as his fables, could be considered dated. But despite his breezy and often slangy portrayal of a different era, interest in Ade has continued in several forms. The present book is an example of that interest, and in making available for the first time a good selection of his letters it fills a gap in Adeana.

Ade was a voluminous letter writer, sometimes writing or dictating thirty letters a week, but through modesty or a desire for privacy he kept few carbons of these letters; thus, the editor had to collect them from many sources. From the thousands of extant Ade letters 182 are printed here along with ample footnotes giving sufficient background material, sometimes even including an excerpt from another Ade letter. As the editor says, "the primary concern has been to include letters of biographical, literary, and historical interest" (p. 12).

The book contains a foreword by Paul Fatout and a short autobiography of Ade. An introduction, although it does not contain a full biography of Ade, describes the man and his work effectively from his early days of journalistic writing during the Chicago Renaissance through his period

as one of the leading American dramatists to the time when he established his headquarters at his famous country estate, Hazelden, near Brook, Indiana. Ade never claimed to be an entertainer or humorist but rather a realist; and although he was at home anywhere and though he was a friend of actors, authors, and other great men and women, he remained at heart a reserved, rather shy, small town Hoosier.

The letters are arranged by date into four groups—1894-1910, 1910-1920, 1920-1930, 1930-1944—and are written from many places, although the majority were composed at Hazelden. The recipients include particularly Ade's friends and many of the famous of his era: James Whitcomb Riley, John T. McCutcheon, William Howard Taft, Will Hays, several governors of Indiana, Charles G. Dawes, Grantland Rice, Franklin P. Adams, Hamlin Garland, William Allen White, George M. Cohan, Theodore Roosevelt, and Claude G. Bowers. Subjects of the letters disclose the serious Ade more often than the satirical, fun loving writer of fables and smash Broadway hits. They cover such items as arrangements for writing or publishing, much about politics (he was a Republican, later a member of the Progressive party), many aspects of his alma mater (Purdue University), the filming of his fables, favorable remarks about the work of other authors, how to write, Prohibition (which he disliked), and Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (which he opposed).

What these letters indicate is that although Ade was a humorous satirist in much of his writing, still he was modest, kind, sincere, much concerned about the civilization of his day, and more serious, lonely, and complex than is generally realized. They give an excellent insight into contemporary culture and problems and provide enjoyment to the student not only of Ade but of the era.

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Arthur W. Shumaker

From Shelter to Self-Reliance: A History of the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School. By Walter B. Hendrickson. (Jacksonville, Ill.: The Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School, 1972. Pp. 235. Illustrations. \$6.00.)

This book is an example of old fashioned institutional history. It is almost a chronicle of the Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School from its beginnings in 1847 to 1970. It is re-