

## Book Reviews

*Democratic Opposition to the Lincoln Administration in Indiana.* By Gilbert R. Tredway. *Indiana Historical Collections.* Volume XLVIII. ([Indianapolis]: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1973. Pp. xv, 433. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. \$10.00.)

This diligently researched study faces a hazard of its own making. Its substance may be overlooked or discounted because of its obvious bias, polemical argumentation, and ungenerous treatment of fellow historians. More than a decade after the publication of Frank L. Klement's well received study of midwestern Copperheads, and almost a quarter of a century since Kenneth Stampp began the historiographic process of their redemption from the stigma of treason, there is no need to approach the subject as the champion of a lost cause. There is even less reason to insist that rehabilitation of the Democratic opposition must rest upon the transmutation of the Republican president into "the man of blood and iron that was the true Lincoln nobody knows" (p. 277). And in a 1973 publication, with an author's foreword dated July, 1972, and a final chapter that includes a critique of Wood Gray, James G. Randall, Stampp, and Klement, there is no excuse for the paucity of references to relevant scholarship published since 1960, particularly the omission of work by V. Jacque Voegeli and Richard O. Curry.

Tredway's methodology is traditional, but the intensity of his pursuit of evidence gives his volume a distinctive character and scholarly significance. Particularly impressive is his use of county newspapers, a number found only in county courthouses and local libraries. Whereas Stampp's bibliography lists twenty-six newspaper files with seven covering the war years beyond 1861, Tredway cites forty-three and thirty-two, respectively, including twenty-nine papers used neither by Stampp, Gray, or Klement. Tredway has shown like industry in going beyond Benn Pitman's published record of the 1864 treason trials to examine the original complete transcripts, citing them extensively and making a comparative analysis of the two records. Footnotes fill over 118 pages with their small but very readable print. Here is a book to be mined and included on any shelf of standard accounts of Civil War dissent.

The most interesting aspect of Tredway's sympathetic treatment of Indiana Copperheads is that his conclusions combine sturdy repudiation of the traditionalist view of Democratic dissent as disloyalty with equally firm support for the existence of a treasonable "Northwest Conspiracy." Moreover, he contends that there actually existed grave danger of a popular insurrection. His evidence for the conspiracy is not based primarily upon the Thomas H. Hines and John B. Castleman accounts that Klement and Curry have discredited. He finds conclusive a combination of the testimony of responsible Democratic leaders, Confederate correspondence published in *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* and in a House of Representatives report in 1866 on the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, and the Hines manuscripts in the University of Kentucky Library. The Hines papers and the House report apparently have not heretofore been examined in this connection.

Tredway's view of the danger of popular uprising rests upon evidence of widespread and potentially explosive hostility to the administration. He sees this as justified, arising from basic wartime policies, the military record, and most especially the administration's use and ideological defense of arbitrary arrests and military trials which threatened free institutions. The spark for an explosion, he contends, could have been set off by arrest of Clement Vallandigham upon his return from his enforced exile or by administrative interference with the Democratic nominating convention or its delegates at Chicago. Confederate agents and cooperating second string leaders of the secret societies were on hand to exploit an outbreak, the latter intent not upon treason but upon protection of their freedoms. One can be impressed with Tredway's argument and evidence without accepting his belief that the Democratic view was fully justified or that Lincoln was quite capable of forcefully interfering with free elections in the Midwest, and quite willing to do so, had his party required such high handed action to insure victory in the 1864 elections.

This study can serve a useful purpose but not by rekindling controversy over the existence of conspiracy—all authorities are agreed that very few Democrats were involved in overtly treasonable cooperation with the Confederates.

The work's importance may rest upon what it contributes to an awareness that each side in the northern "war within a war" was sustained by a sense of righteousness, that each version of patriotism not only held elements of inexcusable partisanship, hysteria, and violence but also contained a valid perception of national values. Sound historical scholarship does not convert readily into an unambivalent morality play. Tredway's scholarship is sound even though his righteous indignation is out of place in its company.

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*Indiana Historical Society Lectures, 1972-1973: 1876, The Centennial Year.* By Lillian B. Miller, Walter T. K. Nugent, and H. Wayne Morgan. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1973. Pp. 58. Illustrations, notes. Paperbound, \$1.50.)

This is a pleasant trio of lectures about the centennial celebrations of the United States in 1876. Two are about the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia; the third is a report on the state of American society on its hundredth birthday.

The most substantial lecture is by Lillian B. Miller, historian of the National Portrait Gallery, and is called "Engines, Marbles, and Canvases." According to Miller, nobody has ever denied the splendor of the engines in Machinery Hall, but the marbles and canvases have been dismissed as products of America's "Dark Ages." The American contributions may have been too numerous and too indiscriminate, but Miller maintains that they do not deserve the sneers they have received. While admitting that the *Iolanthe* carved in butter and some other offerings were "ridiculous" (p. 6), she finds many paintings worth attention. Americans excelled in landscape painting, and if they painted only the surface of life, it was good to record that beautiful surface before it grew ugly. In short, the centennial artists were perfectly respectable representatives of a developing tradition.

Walter T. K. Nugent, the author of a previously published, short, lucid explanation of the debate over gold, silver, and paper money (*The Money Question during Reconstruction*, 1967), is just the person to paint a portrait of America as the first centennial arrived. Congress was already wrangling