

“historical account of” or even “A Novel About the Harmonist Society.” The events of the history of Father George Rapp’s Harmonist Society—real and imagined—serve basically one purpose, as a vehicle for the presentation of the inner conflict of Hildegarde Mutschler. Events and people generally are presented as Hildegarde’s perception of them and interpreted in terms of her. There are glimpses of Harmonist life accurately portrayed, but this is in reality a romantic tale about a young woman torn between the celibate life of the Harmonists and life with a husband and children. Many women would agree with the author’s (Hildegarde’s) reasoning and her ultimate choice. Considered in these terms the story is a success. In addition the book is very readable.

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*Abraham Lincoln: His Story in His Own Words.* Edited by Ralph Geoffrey Newman. (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1975. Pp. 117. Frontispiece, notes, bibliographies, index. \$6.95.)

Ralph Newman has searched Lincoln’s autobiographical observations, arranged them chronologically, and provided transitions and notes. The result is a very brief account, revealing Lincoln’s genius for precise phrasing as well as his modesty, humor, and tragic sense of life. Some quotations have contemporary relevance. “I thought the act of sending an armed force among the Mexicans,” Lincoln said of President James K. Polk, “was *unconstitutional*, because the power of levying war is vested in Congress, and not in the President” (p. 40). After the unsuccessful contest with Stephen Douglas in 1858, Lincoln announced: “The cause of civil liberty must not be surrendered at the end of *one*, or even *one hundred* defeats” (p. 49). Newman fails to include Lincoln’s opposition to suffrage for blacks and his parenthetical support for woman’s suffrage during his campaign for the Illinois legislature in 1836: “I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage, who pay taxes or bear arms, (by no means excluding females.)”\*

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\* Roy P. Basler, ed., *Collected Words of Abraham Lincoln* (8 vols., New Brunswick, N. J., 1953), I, 48.

Scholars will find nothing new, but general readers will be engrossed with the familiar eloquence of Lincoln's sparse prose. He went to school "by littles"; his store "winked out"; his marrying was "a matter of profound wonder." His election to Congress, he said, "has not pleased me as much as I expected" (p. 39). After assuming a task "greater than that which rested upon Washington" (p. 60), he wished that "war was an easier and pleasanter business than it is; but it does not admit of holidays" (p. 73). Responding to a serenade after Appomattox, he asked the band to play "Dixie," claiming it as "our lawful prize" (p. 90). That same week, like those heroes memorialized at Gettysburg, he paid "the last full measure of devotion" (p. 92).

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*Tennessee: The Dangerous Example, Watauga to 1849.* By Mary French Caldwell. (Nashville: Aurora Publishers, Inc., 1974. Pp. xv, 384. Illustrations, maps, selected bibliography, appendixes, notes, index. \$11.95.)

Mary French Caldwell is an enthusiastic history buff with a "lifelong devotion to her Tennessee homeland" (p. ix) who has attempted in *Tennessee: The Dangerous Example* to write a popular account of the exciting early years of her state's history. Regrettably, the result does not do justice to her obvious good intentions.

With the lack of discrimination that has become characteristic of the bicentennial celebration, the chairman of the Tennessee American Revolution Bicentennial Commission praises this book as "an eloquent narrative" which was "thoroughly and profoundly researched" (p. xi). The eloquence, however, would have been better ascribed to George Bancroft, long sections of whose *History of the United States*, written during the nineteenth century, infiltrate Caldwell's narrative at frequent intervals, as do equally lengthy selections from the works of various only slightly less eloquent Tennessee historians of the same century. It is unfortunate that in the writing which connects the well rounded phrases of those venerable authors Caldwell was unable to free her own prose from the well worn stereotypes and stock phrases of historical romance. Her Indians, for example, never hide,