

gle as the British were soon to be involved in in South Africa. It was a brush-fire war that almost got away from the firemen.

Its proximate cause was the sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, with the loss of 260 of her crew—and to this day it is not known whether the explosion that ripped the vessel apart was caused by a Spanish agent, or by a Cuban eager to embroil America, or by some mischance in her magazine. "Remember the *Maine*!" became the cry of the hour. The war produced one other nugget for the quotation books. At the battle of Santiago on July 3rd a gun crew on the *Texas* yelled as one of their shells went home in a Spanish ship. Captain John Woodward Philip reproved them with the words, "Don't cheer, boys, those poor devils are dying." Captain Philip was a devout and pious man, but his chaplain was even more so, for the chaplain always insisted that Philip had said "fellows," not "devils."

The victory at Santiago virtually brought hostilities to a close, and Mr. Freidel's book itself concludes soon after that climactic event. (He does see the troops off to the Philippines, where their travail would be "long and difficult" and "more costly" than the splendid little affair in the Antilles.) Mr. Freidel's main concern is he fighting itself, and he reports it largely in the words of eye-witnesses, chiefly combatants and correspondents. For the Spanish-American war was certainly the most abundantly correspondented war in the history of the world up to 1898. Eighty-nine of them sailed out of Tampa with the first contingent of Cuba-bound troops.

Mr. Freidel's heavy reliance on quotation makes for a somewhat choppy presentation, but it keeps the action vividly alive. The text is supported by a pictorial accompaniment which can only be described as magnificent. The more than 300 illustrations (largely photographs, with numerous drawings and a scattering of maps) constitute by themselves a running history of the war. The 10½" x 8¼" page is exactly the right size to give this great gallery perfect play. No official or professional photographers accompanied the fleet, but amateurs among the crews found or made time, even in the heat of battle, to take snapshots. Captain Robley D. ("Fighting Bob") Evans of the *Iowa* detected "a cadet, lately from Annapolis, deliberately tilting a camera at the *Oquendo* while the machine guns of that ship were making the air sing. He will," he remarked, "probably remember for many years to come the few words I addressed to him." But the cadet got the pictures.

Piloting a Nation to Its Destiny

"The Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 1900-1912," by George E. Mowry (Harper. 316 pp. \$5), is a study of T.R. and of his role in the politics of reform. Our reviewer, Eric F. Goldman, is a professor of history at Princeton University and the author of *"Rendezvous with Destiny: A History of American Political Reform."*

By Eric F. Goldman

LIKE everything else, history has its styles and in no phase of American history is this clearer than in the treatment of the pre-World War I reform movement. During the New Deal enthusiasm of the 1930s historians usually wrote about the progressivism of the early 1900s in a glow of approval. Amid the disenchantment of the 1950s they have tended to treat the Roosevelt-Wilson years with sharp criticism or at least with tongue in cheek. The latest study of early twentieth-century reformism, George E. Mowry's "The Era of Theodore Roosevelt," has neither tone. It is favorable without ecstasy and critical without sarcasm or denunciation.

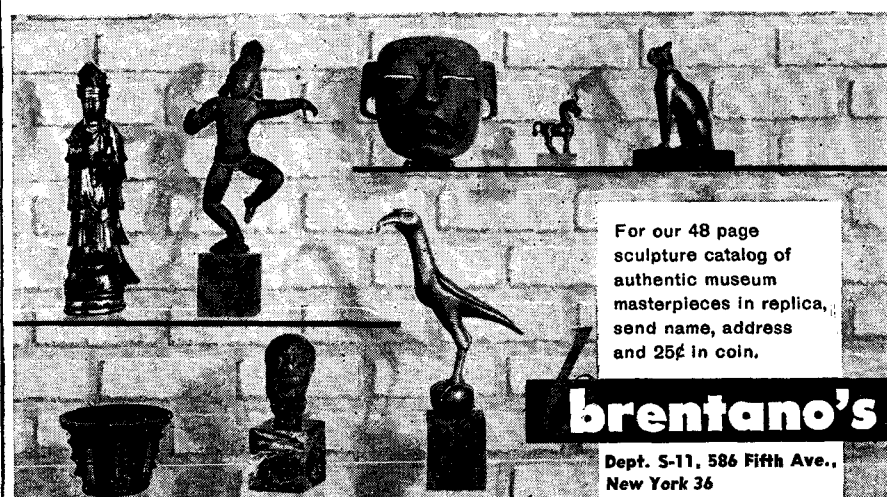
Mr. Mowry, professor of history at the University of California in Los Angeles, brings to the book years of research in the pre-World War I period. From this intimate knowledge he first depicts the United States of 1900—a wondrously burgeoning land but one with economic and social ills so serious that they threatened the very unity of the country. Mr. Mowry then moves on to a political and in-

tellectual analysis of the rising progressive dissent. These chapters skillfully synthesize what others have said, and contribute many fresh insights for the reader.

All of this is background for the central figure of the volume—the redoubtable Teddy Roosevelt. T.R., too, has gone through his cycle in historical interpretation, and here again Mr. Mowry holds firmly to a middle position. He makes plain that Roosevelt cannot be accepted at the estimate of his more rapturous devotees, who have made of him a noble progressivism incarnate. On the other hand, the volume argues convincingly that T.R.'s canny politics, his remarkable instinct for assessing public sentiment, and his hardheaded visions made him a tremendously important figure in successfully taking America over the bridge from its agrarian past to its industrial destiny.

Summarizing the Roosevelt role, Mr. Mowry writes:

Measured against the world-wide socialism of today perhaps Roosevelt was a conservative. What American statesman would not be? But in the context of American history and of his own times his conservatism, to say the least, was a most peculiar type. . . . If occasionally he felt a horror of extremes, that did not stop him at other times from going a long way toward the polar positions when public ends and personal ambitions were pushing him. If at times he criticized radicals, he was also vociferous in his criticism of conservatives. The truth is that Roosevelt, the politician,



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often called himself a conservative when he was going in a radical direction and a radical when he was headed the opposite way. Likewise, when writing to his more conservative friends, he was a conservative, and to his more progressive supporters he was a progressive. To the middle he was usually the practical man dealing in justice.

Mr. Mowry is not as felicitous in handling T.R.'s successor, William Howard Taft. The treatment is too obvious an attempt at fairness rather than the subtle portrayal of a real

human being and a pathetically complex political figure. Yet even here the volume provides a serious and sensible treatment of a President who has usually been brushed aside as the man who happened to occupy the White House between Roosevelt and Wilson.

"The Era of Theodore Roosevelt" is a notable addition to Harper's lengthening New American Nation Series. Deeply informed, thoughtful, often provocative, and always readable, it has a good deal to say to the expert and it provides rich reading for the layman.

colonel under Washington in the face of imminent enemy landings. Benjamin Franklin, gout-ridden but ever affable, is borne through the new morning in a sedan chair by "trusties" from the city jail. John Adams nervously takes time to be shaved and his barber chatters on about the temper of the city. Adams listens carefully, though part of his mind is concerned with the health of his cousin Sam. John Hancock, president of the Congress, bowls up in a fine coach, a little late as his detractors note.

The debates roll on, sometimes dragging, sometimes scorching with acrimony or ablaze with inspiration. Sessions end and the delegates scatter to lodgings or taverns to argue on in knots and clusters, striving to bolster up weak points or to swing some doubtful member to one side or the other. All this the reader shares, lives, just as he participates in Silas Deane's amazement in Paris at Beaumarchais's quick tender of material, if unofficial, French support for the Colonies. With Lord North he is horrified as George III slowly dissolves before his eyes in a fit of recurrent insanity.

All this is fast-paced, but Mr. Lengyel sustains it throughout a long book. There are many moving passages, but none more so than the conclusion where he shows another July 4, fifty years later. The two chief architects of the immortal Declaration—Thomas Jefferson and John Adams—slowly ebb out with the day, their last vestiges of consciousness clinging to their memories of 1776 and of the men of that year. Many will find this a difficult passage to read aloud with a steady voice.

Mr. Lengyel is less sure-footed when he touches on matters military. His text is ever alive, but marred by factual errors. He speaks often of John Burgoyne leading swarms of Hessians up Champlain against Benedict Arnold in 1776. This invasion was under Sir Guy Carleton, and his force was a hundred per cent British, save for a few Hesse-Hanau gunners, and Arnold was a mere brigade commander. The South Carolina *coup* was not part of a "three-pronged attack," but a side-venture by Admiral Sir Peter Parker and General Sir Henry Clinton. Richard Montgomery's Quebec assault never even got started and Arnold made the lightest of penetrations into the Lower Town. Other miscues may be noted, but since this book is about the Declaration of Independence and the men who fought for or against it, they do not detract in any important measure from a story that, as Christopher Ward wrote of Valley Forge, "has been told and told again, but not once too often"—and now admirably by Mr. Lengyel.

The Struggle and Spirit of '76

"Four Days in July," by Cornel Lengyel (Doubleday. 360 pp. \$4.95), is an account of the Declaration of Independence and of those men who, in 1776, fought for and against its adoption. It is reviewed by Bruce Lancaster, the author of many books about the American Revolution.

By Bruce Lancaster

CORNEL LENGYEL seeks to recreate those few awesome days of '76 when the Continental Congress battled over and finally adopted what the author rightly terms "the proud and noble declaration" of independence. By means of the "hour-by-hour" technique he has succeeded admirably. The delegates, their debates, quarrels, hesitations, misgivings, fears, withholdings, and forthgivings spring vibrantly to life. They are real people wrestling with a very real problem. Just as alive are the rose-brick city of Philadelphia and the high-towered State House that was the arena for the intense struggle. Vivid, too, are the uncounted men and women, great and small, who swarmed about the banks of the Schuylkill or watched the comings and goings of the delegates. In fact, Mr. Lengyel's main characters gain much of their immediacy from his excellent use of lesser folk, known or anonymous. The whole scene is deftly tied into the outer world by transitions in time and space that unveil earlier years and other sections and other lands.

Action is set forth partly through exposition but chiefly through carefully reconstructed dialogue based on what given men and women are known to have said or thought or

hoped or feared. The net result is to make the reader a contemporary of the actors of 1776, to project him into those days of magnificent daring when it became "necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another." Through those days and with those people he lives intensely and intimately.

Here is Thomas Jefferson, leaving his lodgings in Graff's house on July 1, eager and at the same time apprehensive over the thought that on this day the great Declaration, largely his own work and words, must be brought forth in the paneled hall of the State House for a debate whose outcome he dares not guess. His mahogany writing-box is under his arm and in the hall he will consult the box's built-in thermometer and note that it reads 81.5 F. Up at his estate, Fair Hill, "Farmer John" Dickinson breakfasts with his family on the terrace, having reached a wracking decision. He cannot support the Declaration, so he will go north to New York to serve as

