

cronies of the once awesome Algonquin Round Table, but her own theories show little insight into the psychic dislocations of a one-shot success in an age of Ballyhoo.

Warren French

EMILY DICKINSON'S POETRY. By Robert Weisbuch. Chicago. The University of Chicago Press. 1972 and 1975. \$10.00.

Weisbuch intelligently illustrates how Dickinson's poetry reflects a compound vision, most notably of two worlds (the certain and the uncertain) and two kinds of self ("visionary celebrant" and "skeptical sufferer"). The study is too narrow and cautious to throw much light on Dickinson's relationship to her culture, although Chapter 7 ("Poetry from the Power Station") is an interesting and helpful attempt to place her more precisely within the American romantic tradition. The most serious shortcoming of the study is the devotion of two chapters to the "Typology of Death" without sufficient awareness of the depths of American religious typology revealed in recent studies of the subject.

TRH

A HAZARD OF NEW FORTUNES. By William Dean Howells. Introduction by Everett Carter. Notes to the Text and the Text Established by David J. Nordloh et al. Bloomington. Indiana University Press. 1976. \$20.00. YEARS OF MY YOUTH AND OTHER ESSAYS. By William Dean Howells. Introduction and Notes by David J. Nordloh. Text established by David J. Nordloh. Bloomington. Indiana University Press. 1975. \$20.00.

These definitive editions are the 16th and 29th Volumes of the Selected Edition of William Dean Howells in the series of editions sponsored by the MLA Committee on Editions of American Authors. The textual apparatus of both is well up to the exalted standards of the CEAA and the texts represent what Howells wrote, not what an editor thinks he should have written. (Poor Stephen Crane!) *Years of My Youth* gives charming and intimate glimpses into ante bellum life in Ohio. *A Hazard of New Fortunes* is much weightier stuff, the product of Howells's social awakening in the 1880's.

University of Kansas

Edward F. Grier

transportation

THE CAR CULTURE. By James J. Flink. Cambridge, Mass., and London. MIT Press. 1975. \$14.95.

This book started out as a continuation of the author's excellent study of the origins of the automobile revolution in the United States, *America Adopts the Automobile, 1895-1910* (1970). And the heart of the present book carries the story up to the end of the 1920's. Flink traces the growth of and the increasing consolidation within the industry during those years, gives insightful and perceptive appraisals of the two giants who in their differing ways left their indelible stamp upon the industry, Henry Ford and Billy Durant, and shows the far-reaching economic, social and cultural impact of the automobile in the 1920's.

Unfortunately, Flink decided—or was persuaded—to broaden his coverage to attempt a comprehensive survey of the history of the automobile in the United States from its beginnings to the present. Thus, his first two chapters are simply a summary of his first book; he gives only ten pages to a review of developments from the New Deal through the late 1950's; and he devotes his final chapter to a rehash of the conventional present-day complaints about the automobile as "a major social problem."

University of Nebraska

John Braeman

THE AMERICAN HERITAGE HISTORY OF RAILROADS IN AMERICA. By Oliver Jensen. New York. McGraw-Hill. 1975. \$29.95.

Jensen is the *American Heritage* editor, but this book is much better than most in the company's series. It seems more than the others to be the work of one loving pair of hands, and not of an editorial committee. It has failings: for instance, Jensen editorializes overmuch; he unaccountably, and, I suppose, inexcusably, fails to discuss adequately the railroads' queer racial policies; he focuses most sharply on the things buffs enjoy. On the other hand, he uses plates more intelligently and less sensationally than is the usual *American Heritage* practice, and tells many aspects of American rail history extremely well. The reader finds himself making connections to other aspects of national development. Although it is in a "popular" series, then, this is a volume from which a scholar can learn, and which would be very useful in many teaching situations were it not so damned costly.

Would that the author had some interest in broad theories about our national experience, for his grasp of the texture of railroading is so sure that one sees ways it could be used to test or substantiate theory.

SGL