

"education as a whole" Jefferson detailed a proposal for free elementary education for all, and an increasingly selective education for poor boys (through scholarships) and the wealthy intelligent, on the secondary and university level.

Dr. Conant's thesis is that Jefferson's views regarding selectivity and scholarships were not needed in the nineteenth century because large government and an educated class were not imperative--opportunity without education was a reality. Therefore, only his ideas of a university and free elementary education made headway. In the 1960's Jefferson's selective and scholarship proposals are accepted because of the urgent need for highly trained scientific manpower from poor and rich alike.

This is a thoughtful and well-written summary of Jefferson's ideas in particular and American educational history in general. Appended are Jefferson's major statements on education.

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PATRIOTIC GORE: Studies in the
Literature of the American Civil War.
By Edmund Wilson. New York: Oxford
University Press. 1962. \$8.50.

If this is not a major book, it is at least a very interesting one. One could say with some justification that Mr. Wilson's thesis is simply an excuse to hang some essays on; the thesis is, indeed, sufficiently obvious (nations at war, ourselves in particular, assume God on their side and become blind to their own ugliness) to give this accusation some force, and in truth some of the essays hang a little loosely. But then the thesis has never been presented in more effective total blackness than it is in Mr. Wilson's "Introduction," and the essays, if sometimes only peripherally related to it, are themselves uniformly satisfying entities.

Mr. Wilson still dislikes the Sut Lovingood tales, and his feelings, if a little wrong-headed, are at least refreshingly different than the current wave of rather uncritical admiration for every aspect of "the southwestern humorists." Also refreshing are his dead-serious studies of works and authors too often dismissed with a well-worn cliché or two: Harriet Beecher Stowe, Thomas Nelson Page or Oliver Wendell Holmes. His discussions of Grant, Sherman, Mosby, Lee and Alexander Stevens both in terms of their careers and his thesis and (for those who wrote memoirs) as literary personalities, strike me as perhaps the most important, useful and original things in the book. Mr. Wilson's broad and literary intelligence certainly deserves title to whatever land it chooses to explore. The accusation that he is wasting his talents on little men and little minds seems unfair: for one thing, as Mr. Wilson presents the drama of personality, General Grant for instance does not seem a little man or a little mind.

Indeed, the chapter on Grant is perhaps the best brief account of the man we have, and the techniques of interpretative literary criticism applied to Sherman's writings produce our most plausible account of the genesis of his blood lust. Wilson's main concern seems the creation of emotionally satisfying essays (appended to the Sherman chapter is a brief account of the strange career of his Jesuit son. Artistically the two function together splendidly).

What we have then is an odd but successful marriage of the brief biography ("little buckets") form of Eminent Victorians--though Wilson's work is far more honest, far less apt to distort for sake of effect, even though effect is a major goal--with the techniques of literary and historical scholarship. And because the conclusions are broadly cultural, the work seems another document to demonstrate that at its best American Studies needs no special formula: intelligence and breadth of knowledge are all that are required.

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GEORGE LYMAN KITTREDGE: Teacher and Scholar. By Clyde Kenneth Hyder. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press. 1962. \$4.50.

Professor Hyder had done in this volume what many biographers of Kittredge could not have done: written a factual, scholarly and thoroughly delightful life. Kittredge's eccentricities, his enormous prestige, the body of classroom legend which has grown up about him--and has indeed become part of the American academic heritage--all of these have defined for his biographer a task demanding discrimination, meticulousness and insight. In accomplishing it, Professor Hyder has been completely successful. The account, as the title indicates, concentrates on Kittredge's professional career--his almost unrivaled reputation as teacher and lecturer; his brilliant studies of medieval literature, balladry, Shakespeare, linguistics, colonial America and witchcraft; and his overall contribution to Harvard and scholarship throughout the world.

One of the strongest points of the book is that it assesses Kittredge's achievement accurately and still portrays the picturesque personality of the man, and it is this latter feature that the generality of readers are most familiar with and indeed love best. Professor Hyder has put the total image in proper focus. By including only stories that could be documented and by pointing out some of the most famous apocryphal anecdotes, he has corrected--for those who need it--the opinion that the most noteworthy fact about Kittredge was his colorful personality, that he was, above all, an academic "character."

Perhaps no other American scholar received the recognition and acclaim which Kittredge did in his lifetime, yet he was not without his detractors,