

tainly served as equally important contributing forces in shaping the foundation of the emerging middle class. One should also consider, for example, the evangelical women who worked for temperance in the earliest years of organized antialcohol reform and drew their purpose from the millennial promise. And, at the end of the day, the majority of women who lived through those years remain anonymous, as do their personal experiences. These minor points aside, *Devil of the Domestic Sphere* is an intriguing addition to temperance history, one that provides a persuasive interpretation of the social and cultural context in which middle-class women lived, worked, and raised their families.

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*What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848.* By DANIEL WALKER HOWE. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. xviii, 904 pp. Maps, notes, bibliographic essay, index. \$35.)

A train carried John Quincy Adams's body from Washington, DC, to his home in Massachusetts in February 1848, giving the venerable ex-president the distinction of being the first politician to take that posthumous ride by railway to his final resting place. Adams had collapsed in the House chambers a couple days earlier, stricken while speaking out against a resolution thanking the generals who had brought the United States victory against Mexico in a war that he had opposed from the beginning.

Daniel Walker Howe punctuates his sweeping history of America between 1815 and 1848 with similar telling anecdotes, facts, and stories that will enliven many a survey lecture. But these brief paragraphs on Adams's final days also reflect Howe's broader story. The particulars of Adams's death highlight the grand political and cultural clash between a Whig Party intent on moral and economic improvements and a Democratic Party aggressively seeking territorial expansion—a transformative clash that was a harbinger of the sharper conflicts that lay ahead.

The train that carried Adams's body also serves as a symbol of the transportation and communication revolutions that both bound the nation together and exacerbated the tensions that would ultimately break it apart. While Howe revels in detailing partisan ideologies and legislative battles, he never loses sight of the broader social context. He devotes considerable attention to the expansion of the cotton kingdom and the intensification of industrial development, religious revivalists and social reformers, the artists of the American Renaissance, and utopian experimenters. Howe has written a superb book on a crucial period in American history.

While the Mexican-American War looms large at the end of the study, it is

the War of 1812 that kicks things off, specifically the Battle of New Orleans. Contrasting the roles played by western riflemen and the artillery in the victory over the British, Howe sets up his major themes. Would America's future lay "With the individualistic, expansionist values exemplified by frontier marksmen? Or with the industrial-technological values exemplified by the artillery?" (18). In the years following the battle, it was the celebrated "Hunters of Kentucky," not the professional soldiers and New Orleanians who manned the cannons, who received the lion's share of glory. And it was those frontiersmen's champion, Andrew Jackson, who laid claim to the decades that followed the battle, marking them, in the eyes of many historians, as his "age."

Howe is intent on correcting that tendency, and he does so in two primary ways. First, he exposes the racist and imperialistic underpinnings of a Jacksonian egalitarianism built on the dispossession of Indian land and the expansion of slavery. Second, he elevates the Whiggish world of reform, religion, education, and economic diversification—one that offered an alternative path and at times stood in opposition to Democratic expansionism—to a central place within the story of America's nineteenth-century transformation. It was that "Whig vision" of improvement and modernization that eventually prevailed, Howe argues, "but only after Abraham Lincoln had vindicated it in the bloodiest of American wars" (853).

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*Tragedy at Avondale: The Causes, Consequences, and Legacy of the Pennsylvania Anthracite Coal Industry's Most Deadly Mining Disaster, September 6, 1869.* By ROBERT P. WOLENSKY and JOSEPH M. KEATING. (Easton, PA: Canal History and Technology Press, 2008. xvi, 191 pp. Illustrations, appendices, references, notes, index. \$19.95.)

The 1869 Avondale disaster was Pennsylvania's deadliest and most influential mining tragedy. Robert Wolensky, of the University of Wisconsin, and the late John Keating provide a fresh look at the fire that killed 108 workers, most of whom were Welsh, and spurred Pennsylvania's first statewide mining legislation.

On the morning of September 6, 1869, fire burst from the shaft of the Avondale colliery, igniting the breaker that stood directly above the mine shaft. The breaker collapsed into the shaft, trapping the workers, and most died from asphyxiation. A coroner's jury declared the event an accident, accepting the explanation promoted by the Workingmen's Benevolent Association (WBA) that sparks traveling over three hundred feet, horizontally through a brick flue and vertically up a wooden shaft, ignited the shaft at an intersecting mine tunnel forty feet below the surface. Some inquest witnesses presented a competing