desert rather than face the Germans — a fairly close parallel to this situation) that such an action would indicate a weakness in the general who led them. Not infrequently Kopperman bowls over evidence against his view by simple statements, like, "I have previously pointed out that [some contrary indication] may have been possible." Possibility is not evidence.

*Braddock at the Monongahela* is not likely to be counted among the great works on its subject, such as those of Sargent, Parkman, Pargellis, and Gipson. But it is a convenient handbook of well-ordered materials on its subject.

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It is somewhat misleading to suggest that this "is the first published book dealing with the Stamp Act Congress" (p. 12), for in doing so Weslager implies that the historians who have previously dealt with the Stamp Act crisis, including Edmund S. Morgan, have paid no attention to the congress itself called in 1765 as a response to the acts of Parliament — a judgment that is not correct. Nevertheless, it is the author's intention to fill a perceived gap in the historiography of pre-Revolutionary America. Weslager regards the congress as a decisive first step by the separate colonies toward a unified American perspective, a development essential for later efforts at the time of the Revolution. He has written this book for the general reader interested in events contributing to the origin of the American nation. Weslager's volume is one of the products of the bicentennial celebration, and as such is neither the best nor the worst of that era.

The organization of this study is simple and straightforward. The congress held in New York City during October 1765, is the focus. Accordingly, Weslager successively discusses the events leading to the assembly, the participants in it, the deliberations themselves, the formal resolves of which a copy is printed in full in the journal, and the results of the meeting. The Stamp Act Congress, he judges, was not a convocation of rebels attempting to foment or engineer a rupture with England, but rather a gathering of concerned but loyal colonists who hoped for a more advantageous economic and political relationship
with the mother country. The members regarded their remonstrance against the ordinances as a reasonable and measured response, calculated to achieve their objectives. They were protesting Parliament's right to raise revenues from the colonies without their consent, and they were worried about the rising threat of the Vice-Admiralty courts. Aggravating these fears was a deteriorating economic situation, in part the result of the decline of English specie in the colonies. Therefore, the stamped paper which the colonists were to purchase represented more than a symbol. It was also a genuine economic challenge to merchants, publishers, and other men of affairs, as well as a hardship to all who paid higher prices for various goods. The Stamp Act riots were one response by the Americans to the situation, the congress called by Massachusetts another.

Despite the simplicity of organization, this volume is far from a total success. Although Weslager's account of the procedures used to select delegates from the various colonies to the congress is instructive, his brief biographies of the participants are wooden and not very revealing. The attempt to reconstruct the nature of the deliberations, for which there is little evidence, is flawed. Weslager's case is made no more convincing by his willingness to use secondhand sources from the nineteenth century to document certain judgments. On the other hand, it is helpful to have a full text of the journal, including the various resolutions addressed respectively to the king, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons.

Perhaps the most disappointing part of this book is the last chapter where Weslager deals with the aftermath of the congress. In it he dismisses the convocation as having little immediate effect and points instead to the impact of the growing network of economic boycotts which began in New York City during the same period as the congress was meeting. Weslager, however, makes little serious effort to link the two movements. At this point, his exposition becomes disjointed and remains incomplete. The book carries the reader to the threshold of an explanation and flirts with an intriguing idea, but suddenly leaves him standing outside the door. It is clear that the last word has not been written about the congress.

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