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Aspects Of Pre-Civil War Historical Drama

Elizabeth Ernestine Coles
Kansas State Teachers College of Hays

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Aspects of Pre-Civil War
Historical Drama

The thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Kansas State Teachers' College, Hays, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

by
Elizabeth Ernestine Coles, B.S.

K.S.T.C.
Approved by
May 22, 1920
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This thesis is an attempt to present in a general way some aspects of the pre-Civil War historical drama. The plays chosen cover the years from 1766-1830 inclusive. Arthur Hobson Quinn and Montrose J. Moses, writers on early American drama, have endeavored to treat the entire field in its social, political, historical, and economical aspects. I have limited my attempt to the historical phase in which there are at least five distinct groups. The following topical analysis of the plays I have used will present these more clearly.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Witchcraft</td>
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<td>1 Puritan colonization (Indian elements in both)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commemorative</td>
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<td>1 Land and naval battle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Land battle</td>
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The subject matter of the Colonial group was not popularly dealt with at this early time. Those plays that were written dealt with the early explorations, with the Indian, and with witchcraft. The Indian play, popular for a time, particularly as regards the Pocahontas story, soon passed away. There was lack of reality in the character depiction and too much sameness in the plot. The Revolutionary War proved to be a most appealing subject, due to its memorable events, its outstanding men, and its contemporaneity. Throughout the entire period came also the treatment of vital subjects of the moment such as: the United States bank, the boundary disputes, the War of 1812, the war with Mexico, the Mormon emigration, and the slavery question. Unfortunately few of these latter plays have survived. Their merit would have perhaps been questionable from a dramatic standpoint for the fact is generally accepted that history lends itself better to fiction than to drama, unless the subject matter is so far removed that the playwright can make use of his dramatic license without fear of undue criticism.

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge the courtesy of the librarians of Columbia University, the University of Texas, and the Kansas State Teachers' College, Hays. I also wish to express my appreciation of the help given by all my graduate professors, and in particular Dr. R. R. Macgregor, and Mr. F. B. Streeter. I am also indebted to Miss Helen Christie Malcolm for the translation of Megia's La Fayette en Monte Vernon.
The first American comedy was written in 1787 by Royall Tyler, one-time Chief Justice of Vermont. It was called The Contrast and was first produced on April 16th of that year. However, it was not printed until 1790. Tyler in all probability began his playwriting as a protest against the prevailing Puritanical attitude toward the theater, and he was successful in actually dispelling much of the prejudice.

The character furnishing the comedy is Jonathan, a Yankee, and it is he who is the fore-runner of our present day Uncle Sam. Jonathan's wholesome personality, blunt ways, and downright honesty, contrasted with the high-flown social ambitions of the society group, with their hypocrisy, and mercenary ideas, which Tyler cleverly satirizes, furnish the title for the play. Jonathan represents the first attempt at American characterization on the stage and marks the initial performance of Yankee dialect and anecdote. Montrose J. Moses says of The Contrast, "The play in the reading is scarcely exciting. It is surprisingly devoid of situation. Its chief characteristic is 'talk'... 'The Contrast' is not, strictly speaking, a very dramatic representation." Another interesting point in connection with this play is the fact that its prologue is the first American declaration of independence.

1 Moses, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, I, 436.
2 Ibid, 439.
The Prince of Parthia
-- Thomas Godfrey

The first American tragedy, The Prince of Parthia, was written by Thomas Godfrey in 1759. However, it was not published until 1766, two years after the author's death. It was produced upon the stage in 1757. While there is nothing in itself memorable or lasting in Godfrey's play, yet it is rather a remarkable production for a young man who had no precedent in this country, and was therefore obliged to rely on English models -- Shakespeare, Pope, Beaumont, Fletcher, and Young -- noticeably the first of these. His highly colored, poetical lines and flexible, dignified verse contain no element of comedy. The play is a tragedy in its entirety, based upon the fundamental human qualities of love and self-preservation pitted against love, lust, and jealousy. Pattee says of it, "If one reads the last act of the drama one need read no more. The act is really complete in itself, needing little explanation to make the plot clear. Moreover, it is complete in another way: it presents all that is necessary to be known of the strength and the weakness of Thomas Godfrey as a dramatist."

1 Pattee, Century Readings in American Literature, 53.
Section II

Analysis of Plays Pertaining to Early American Literature

**Rogers, Major Robert (1727-95)**

Rogers, Robert, soldier, b. in Dumbarton, M. H., 17 Nov., 1727 (Appleton's Cyclopaedia says Londonberry, M. H.); d. in South London, England, 18 May, 1795. He entered the military service during the French and Indian war and commanded the "Roger's Rangers", a company that acquired a reputation for activity. He took possession of Detroit and other western posts that were ceded by the French after the fall of Quebec. In 1775 he confessed his allegiance to the Crown, though to all appearances he was in sympathy with America. He joined General Howe's forces and commanded the "Queen's Rangers". Since he was an extensive landowner in New York and New Hampshire, and thus knew the country well, he was invaluable to Howe. After various experiences, one of which was that of serving a term in prison, he went to England where he spent the remainder of his life. He published 'Pontiac; or, The Savages of America', a tragedy in verse (1766); 'A Concise Account of North America' (London, 1766); 'Journals', giving an account of his early adventures as a ranger (1755; Dublin, 1770); and 'Diary of the Siege of Detroit in the War with Pontiac' (Franklin B. Hough, 1860; new ed., 1885).
Synopsis of

Ponteach, 1766--Robert Rogers

The Indians, cheated by the traders, murdered by the hunters, scorned by the soldiers, and unjustly treated by the governors, decide to declare war. All the chiefs, save Hendrick of the Mohawks, join their leader Ponteach. Chekitan, Ponteach's son, loves Hendrick's daughter Monelia. His brother Philip plans to obtain Monelia for him and at the same time win Hendrick over to aid Ponteach. In reality Philip desires revenge on Chekitan who once refused to give him the maid he loved. He plans to kill Monelia and her brother Thorax, say it was done by the English so Hendrick would be won over to avenge their deaths, and then wound himself to say he was hurt in assisting them. War is declared. The traders, soldiers, and one hunter are killed. The other hunter and his family are captured. The family is saved for ransom, but the hunter is tortured to death. Philip's plan succeeds in everything save that unknowingly he had only severely stunned Thorax, not killed him. Thorax discloses his treachery. Chekitan kills Philip and then himself. The Indians are overcome, and Ponteach the warrior, though unconquered in mind, is forced to flee.
"Pontiac (1720-1769), a chieftan of the Ottawa Indians...

In 1762 he formed an alliance of Indians throughout the West, known as Pontiac's Conspiracy. It was arranged that each tribe of Indians should attack the British post in its vicinity on or about the same date. Pontiac conducted the attack on Detroit in person." He planned at first to take the fort by strategy but failed. He then proceeded to lay siege to the fort, waylaid ships with provisions and reinforcements, used ambuscades to decoy British troops, and succeeded in capturing eight of twelve posts attacked. "In the following year Colonel Bouquet made a successful expedition against the Indians of Ohio. Pontiac's allies, perceiving the contest to be vain, fell away from him and made peace with the British... Pontiac, however, haughtily refused to yield. He took refuge in Illinois, where it is said a British trader bribed a Peoria Indian to murder him, the compensation being a barrel of rum..."

In speaking to his Indians before the opening attack Pontiac said, "The English sell us the merchandise twice dearer than the French sold them to us, and their wares are worth nothing... When I go to the English chief to tell him that some of our comrades are dead, instead of weeping for the dead, as our brothers, the French, used to do, he makes fun of me and of you."

There is also a strong resemblance in this play to the
historical account of Philip of Pokanoket and his famous rebellion against the English in 1675, particularly to those portions dealing with his name, his non-Christian beliefs, and his unsuccessful attempt to engage the Mohawks in the contest. Another resemblance is found in the fact that the Indian raids were largely instigated by French missionaries.

1 Standard Reference Work, VI (pages not numbered).
2 Ibid.
3 Michigan Historical Collections, VIII, 274.
Hugh Henry Brackenridge, author, b. in Cambeltown, Scotland, 1748; d. in Philadelphia, Pa., 25 June, 1816. His father, who moved to America in 1753, was a poor farmer, and Hugh supported himself by farming and teaching while preparing for college. He was graduated from Princeton in 1771. After his graduation he tutored there, meantime taking a course in theology. He then became teacher, and later principal, in a Maryland academy. In 1776 he went to Philadelphia where he was editor of the "United States Magazine". The following year he became a licensed minister and enlisted as a chaplain in the Revolutionary army. As he could not agree to all the tenets of the Presbyterian faith he took up the study of law. In 1794 he figured prominently in the Whisky Insurrection. As a judge, his term of office ran from 1800 to the day of his death in 1816. He wrote 'Incidents of the Insurrection in Western Pennsylvania' (Philadelphia, 1795); 'The Rising Glory of America', a poetic dialogue (1772); 'The Battle of Bunkers-Hill' (Philadelphia, 1776); 'Eulogium of the Brave who fell in the Contest with Great Britain' (1778); and 'Modern Chivalry, or the Adventures of Capt. Farrago and Teague O'Regan, his Servant' (1796).
Synopsis of

The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, 1776--Hugh Henry Brackenridge

Gage has failed to release the American prisoners as he promised so the Americans decide to fight. Their plan is to reach Bunkers-Hill by boats and fortify themselves there at night. In the morning the rest of the Americans will meet with them for a combined attack. Meanwhile the British decide to try another attack rather than to endure the ridicule which now besets them. The officers promise the soldiers the confiscated property of the rebels if they are victorious. The American soldiers are fighting for freedom, for home, and for country. Their probable reward is only death. During the first attack, which is successful for the Americans, Warren is killed. During the second, which is again successful for the Americans, Gardiner is severely wounded. A third calamity befalls the valiant Americans when their ammunition gives out. Yet in spite of this they fight on, and the third attack, which is successful for the British, is dearly bought with the lives of their men. The British officers praise and honor the valiant Americans who have fallen in a glorious encounter which shall probably never be equalled until the great Judgment day.
Historical Background

"... When Gage received his reinforcements at the end of May, he determined to repair his strange neglect by which the hills on the peninsula had been allowed to remain unoccupied and unfortified. As soon as the Americans became aware of Gage's intention they determined to frustrate it, and accordingly, on the night of June 16, a force of about 1,200 men, under Colonel William Prescott and Maj.-General Israel Putnam, with some engineers and a few field-guns, occupied Breed's Hill (to which the name of Bunker Hill is now popularly applied). When daylight disclosed their presence to the British they had already strongly intrenched their position. Gage lost no time in sending troops across from Boston with orders to assault. The British force, between 2,000 and 3,000 strong, under (Sir) William Howe... were fresh and well disciplined. The American force consisted for the most part of inexperienced volunteers, numbering about 1,500 men. The village of Charlestown, from which a galling musketry fire was directed against the British, was by General Howe's orders almost totally destroyed by hot shot during the attack. Instead of attempting to cut off the Americans by occupying the neck to the rear of their position, Gage ordered the advance to be made up the steep and difficult ascent facing the works on the hill... the American volunteers... delivered a fire so sustained and deadly that the British line broke in disorder. A second assault, made
like the first, ... met the same fate, but Gage's troops had still spirit enough for a third assault, and this time they carried the position with the bayonet, capturing five pieces of ordnance and putting the enemy to flight.

4 Encyclopaedia Britannica, IV, 383.
Among the elusive figures of early American Drama stands John Leacock, author of 'The Fall of British Tyranny', published in 1776, in Philadelphia. Even more elusive is the identification, inasmuch as his name has been spelled variously Leacock, Lacock, and Laycock. To add to the confusion, Watson's 'Annals of Philadelphia'... declares that John Leacock penned 'The Medley'. 'He wrote also a play, with good humour', says this authority, 'called "British Tyranny"'... The dedication to 'The Fall of British Tyranny' was signed 'Dick Rifle', but there is no information to be traced from this pseudonym."

"... Though Sabin takes for granted that Leacock wrote 'The Fall of British Tyranny', Hildeburn, in the 'Issues of the Press' (ii, 249), states that it is 'said to have been written by Mr. Laycock of Philadelphia'. If the John Leacock, whose name appears in the Philadelphia Directory of 1802, is the one who wrote 'The Fall of British Tyranny', following that clue we find his name disappearing from the Directory in 1804. Hence, he must either have died, or have moved away from Philadelphia."

5 Moses, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, I, [279].
Paramount, who is desirous of usurping the throne, plans to do it by causing strife between England and America so that England will send her forces to fight America, thus become undefended, and leave an opening for the Scotch to advance on London. In council with his followers they decide to shut up Boston's ports and disannul her charter. The American citizens, informed of the injustices imposed on them, decide to fight for their rights. They defeat Smith at Lexington and Concord, although they lose at Bunker Hill. The British are practically destitute. They are obliged to enlist negroes, to whom they promise freedom, in order to strengthen their ranks. Hungry and dissatisfied they are ready to fight among themselves. Major Allen, who led the victorious Americans at Ticonderoga, is captured by the British and ill treated. Meanwhile the American generals are informed of the death of General Montgomery and the wounding of Colonel Arnold at Quebec, and are requested to supply new reinforcements and heavy artillery. Generals Washington, Lee, and Putnam, swearing lasting allegiance to their country, determine that Quebec shall fall, England shall be taught humility, and America shall be freed.
Historical Background

"Meanwhile the country was aroused; and when about noon ... after destroying such stores as he could find... Colonel Smith began the return march, he found his troops menaced in flank and rear by the provincials, who had gathered from many towns. From the shelter of rocks, trees, and fences, during a retreat of six miles to Lexington, an irregular but deadly fire was poured in. The regulars showed no lack of courage, but they were without necessary supplies and fought at a terrible disadvantage."

"Benedict Arnold... had started an expedition against Ticonderoga and Crown Point... A like expedition was at the same time planned in Connecticut, and Ethan Allen, the eccentric leader of the 'Green Mountain Boys', was placed at its head. Arnold overtook this latter band, and when they refused to recognize his commission he joined them as a volunteer. Hurrying on, they surprised and took Ticonderoga without a blow (May 10, 1775). If Allen, as he later asserted, demanded its surrender 'in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress', he had no right to do so, for his commission was from Connecticut..."

"Richard Montgomery, with about fifteen hundred men, moved down Lake Champlain, took St. John after a long siege, and entered Montreal November 13, 1775. Arnold, meanwhile had made a terrible march through the main forests, starting up the Kennebec with 1100 men and coming down to Chau-
dière to the St. Lawrence with about 500 survivors. After making an ineffectual attack on Quebec, Arnold awaited Montgomery, who arrived December 3 with a small body of men. Taking a desperate hazard, they attacked Quebec in a blinding snow-storm, December 31, 1775. Montgomery, leading the main attack, was killed, while Arnold, wounded, was succeeded by Morgan, who was overpowered, and the attack was repulsed...

7 Ibid, IX, 40.
8 Ibid, 46.
9 See Burk, Bunker-Hill, on page 30, and Brackenridge, Battle of Bunkers-Hill, on page 11.
"Parke, John (1754-1789)

"Parke, John, poet, b. in Dover, Del., 7 April, 1754; d. near there, 11 Dec., 1789. He was educated at the College of Philadelphia. At the beginning of the Revolutionary war he entered the Continental army, and he served in the quarter-master's department, and was with Washington's army till the close of hostilities, attaining the rank of lieutenant-colonel. After the peace he lived for some time in Philadelphia, Pa., and afterward in Virginia. Col. Parke published 'The Lyric Works of Horace, translated into English Verse, to which are added a Number of Original Poems' (Philadelphia, 1786). The volume was issued under the pen-name of 'A Native of America'. The work was dedicated to Gen. Washington, and the translations, which are in rhymed verse, are paraphrased by the substitution of American public characters for the Roman worthies to whom Horace addressed his odes, and by the application of descriptive passages and allusions to local and contemporary conditions. The ode that celebrates the return of Augustus from Spain is made to apply to Washington's victorious return from Virginia..."

10 Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography, IV, 548.
Synopsis of

Virginia, 1786--John Parke

Shepherds and shepherdesses, hunters and huntresses, all celebrate the birthday of the glorious Daphnis (Washington) who has secured for America peace and safety. A new dawn has been ushered in with the overthrow of Thyrsis (George III), and all are now free to love and be loved. As they sing and dance Daphnis appears in a triumphal approach. The Genius of Virginia proclaims his glorious actions, and the Ghosts of Revolutionary War chiefs appear to welcome him whose name shall be revered throughout the ages. Astrea, goddess of justice, through the power of Daphnis, has again come to rule mankind.
Dunlap, William (1766-1839)

William Dunlap, father of the American theater, b. in Perth Amboy, N. J., 10 Feb., 1766; d. in New York City, 28 Sept., 1839. During the Revolution he frequently attended the British plays given in this country. In 1777 he began to paint portraits, and in 1781 went to London, where for several years he studied with Benjamin West. On his return from Europe, he was engaged in various artistic, dramatic, and other literary works. In 1796 he became connected with the management of the old John Street theater, and in 1798 assumed the management of the Park theater where he stayed for several seasons until he was overtaken by financial ruin. To him belongs the credit of having first introduced to the American stage the German dialect. Dunlap wrote, translated, or adapted during his career sixty-three plays. As to his artistic work, he is known as the founder of the National academy of design. He wrote 'Life of George Frederick Cooke' (London, 1813); 'Life of Charles Brockden Brown' (Philadelphia, 1816); 'A History of the American Theatre' (New York, 1832; London, 1833); 'The Modest Soldier; or, Love in New York' (1787); 'The Father' (1789); 'Darby's Return' (1789); 'André' (1798); 'The Glory of Columbia--Her Yeomanry' (1817).
Synopsis of

André: 1798--William Dunlap

Major André, a captured British officer, is to be hanged as a spy. Bland, an American officer whose life André had once saved, entreats the General to spare him, but is refused even though his father, a British prisoner, is to be killed if André dies. Bland in anger tears the union cockade from his hat, but through the General's graciousness it is later returned to him. André's only request is that he be allowed to die as a soldier, but it is refused. Thankful that none will be dishonored by his death and happy now that his love Honora has married another, he writes his farewell. Honora, who in reality is not married, arrives with letters which she hopes will save André's life. André, on hearing that Colonel Bland is to die, requests his general that he does not retaliate. The request is granted, and Colonel Bland is saved. Honora, finding her letters of no avail and knowing André must die, becomes temporarily deranged, André is led to his death which McDonald, an officer, prevents Bland from witnessing. As the cannon, signal of death, booms out, Bland sinks to the ground crying that André's death is an act accursed.
Historical Background

"André, a British soldier... When Benedict Arnold, in command of West Point, was meditating the surrender of that important fortress to the British, André, then Clinton's adjutant-general, was sent up the Hudson in a ship to arrange the details with Arnold. He entered West Point under a flag of truce. His ship, being fired upon by an American fort, dropped down the river, and André was obliged to return to New York by land. Arnold provided him with passports which carried him beyond the American lines. At Tarrytown, almost in sight of the British outposts, he was seized by three prowling American militiamen. He offered them a large sum to let him go free, but finding Arnold's traitorous dispatches in André's boots, they carried him to an American commander. The disguise and the traitorous correspondence left no doubt whatever that André was engaged in forwarding Arnold's infamous business. He was sent before a court-martial and was condemned to be hanged as a spy. His youth, popular ways, and influential family connections, were urged in vain. Washington offered, indeed, to exchange him for the traitor, Arnold, who had fled to the British. This Clinton refused. Washington felt that André must be executed as a warning. Finding that there was no hope, André met his fate with firmness. He asked as a last favor that he be permitted to die the death of a soldier to be shot instead of hanged, but his request could not be granted. André was buried at the foot of the gallows...."
Synopsis of

A New World Planted, 1803--Joseph Croswell

The Puritans, under Governor Carver, succeed in making friends with Massasoit through Tisquanto and Samoset, Indians friendly to the whites. The Narragansett Indians, through the instigation of Lyford, a suspended preacher in favor of Roman Catholicism, proclaim war on the Puritans. Missaries of the colonists to Massasoit report favorably, and a treaty is subsequently drawn up between Carver and Massasoit in which peace, aid in war times, and free trade are the main points. Lyford and his associates choose open warfare in preference to intrigue in the hope of establishing British rule and Roman Catholicism in the colonies. They make the signing of the treaty the direct cause for complaint. With the aid of the friendly Indians of Massasoit and the kindness of Captain Jones and his sailors who brought the Puritans to America, Captain Standish wins the victory. Lyford and his men, whose guilt is assured by letters they had written to England, are banished from the colony on pain of death if they return. The play closes with rejoicing for the colony's deliverance. The love element is carried out in the parts of Hampden and Massasoit's daughter Pocahontas.

13 Unable to find any biographical material on Croswell.
Historical Background

"At last, in March, 1621, an Indian came boldly into camp, and, in broken English, bade the strangers 'welcome'. It was found that his name was Samoset, and that he came from Monhegan, an island distant about a day's sail towards the east, where he had picked up a few English words from the fishermen who frequented that region. In a short time he returned, bringing Squanto, or Tisquantum, stolen by Hunt seven years before, and restored to his country in 1620 by Sir Ferdinando Gorges, who could speak English stated that Massasoit was near at hand, and on invitation that chief appeared, and soon a treaty of peace and friendship was concluded; after which Massasoit returned to his town of Savams, forty miles distant, while Squanto continued with the colonists and made himself useful in many ways."

"West of the Pokanokets were the Narragansetts, a tribe of two thousand warriors, whose chief, Canonicus, sent to Plymouth in January, 1622, a bundle of arrows tied with a snake's skin, signifying a challenge of war. Bradford knew that it was fatal to hesitate or show fear, and he promptly stuffed the snake's skin with bullets and returned it to the sender with some threatening words. This answer alarmed Canonicus... and he did not pursue the matter further."

"In January, 1624, arrived another miscellaneous cargo, including a minister named John Lyford. Upon his arrival
he professed intense sympathy with the settlers... Nevertheless, he joined with John Oldham, who came the year before, in a conspiracy to overturn the government; but was detected and finally banished from the colony...

14 Ibid., 165.
15 Ibid., 170.
Barker, James Nelson (1784-1858)

James Nelson Barker, dramatist, b. in Philadelphia, Pa., 17 June, 1784; d. in Washington, D. C., 9 March, 1858. He was the son of the Honourable John Barker, one-time Mayor of Philadelphia, and ex-Revolutionary soldier. His education was received in Philadelphia, and he must have entered literary and political circles at an early age. At the outbreak of the War of 1812, he received a commission and won distinction as a Captain of Artillery. At the time of his resignation from the army, April 1, 1817, he was assistant adjutant-general with the rank of major. He was elected Mayor of Philadelphia after the close of the war. He was a vigorous participant in Andrew Jackson's presidential campaign, and in 1829 was appointed collector of the port of Philadelphia, holding that position until 1838. After Van Buren appointed him comptroller of the treasury, March 1, 1838, he moved to Washington, and from then on was connected with the highest offices in the department. He wrote 'The Spanish Rover' (1804); 'America', a masque (1805); 'Tears and Smiles', a comedy (1806); 'The Embargo; or, What News?' (1808); 'The Indian Princess' (1808); 'Marmion', dramatization of Scott's work (1812); 'The Armourer's Escape' (1817); 'How to Try a Lover' (1817); and 'Superstition' (1824).
Synopsis of

The Indian Princess, 1608 -- James Nelson Barker

Captain Smith and his men set out on an exploring trip. Smith is captured by the Indians in spite of the protests of Mantaquas, the brother of Pocahontas. He is taken to Powhatan's court and condemned to die but is saved by Pocahontas who, with her brother and other Indians, conducts him back to the colony. They are met by Smith's men who have come to rescue him. Rolfe falls in love with Pocahontas who returns his affections although she is promised to Miami, an Indian prince. Miami declares war on Powhatan, and is overcome by the king who is aided by the English. The latter on their return from an exploring trip are bidden to a banquet at which Miami and the priest plan to massacre them. The priest succeeds in gaining the consent of the frightened Powhatan by deceiving him about the English and about his own spirit. Pocahontas overhears the plot and warns the remaining English who arrive in time to avert the tragedy. Miami stabs himself, Smith forgives the repentant Powhatan and expresses his hope that in time this will become a civilized world, free from tradition and savagery.
Pocohontas (c. 1595-1617). She is first mentioned by Captain John Smith as "a child of ten years old, which not only for feature, countenance, and proportion much exceedeth any of the rest of his [Powhatan's] people, but for wit and spirits the non-pareil of his country". She seems to have formed an attachment for the whites, especially for Smith. She was converted to Christianity in Jamestown where she had been lured and taken by Argall as a hostage for the return of several white prisoners. In April, 1613, she was baptized Rebecca. In April, 1614, she was married to John Rolfe, with whom, two years later, she went to England, there to be received with great enthusiasm as the daughter of an American king.

"Argall, appointed to be deputy governor of Virginia, sailed to Virginia about the first part of April, 1617, taking with him Pocahontas's husband, John Rolfe, as secretary of state. Pocahontas was to go with him, but she sickened and died, and was buried at Gravesend March 21, 1617. She left one son named Thomas, who afterwards resided in Virginia, where he has many descendants at this day."

16 New International Encyclopaedia, XVIII, 759.
18 See Custis, Pocahontas, on page 42.
Burk, John Daly (17(?)–1808)

"Burk, John Daly, historian, b. in Ireland; d. near Campbell's Bridge, Va., 11 April, 1808. He was of the same family as Edmund Burke, the orator. While in Trinity College, Dublin, he published articles in the Dublin 'Evening Post', which caused his expulsion on a charge of deism and republicanism. He afterward made himself obnoxious to the government, and fled to this country about 1796. In October of that year he established a daily paper in Boston, called the 'Polar Star', which met with little success, and was discontinued in 1797. He afterward edited another paper in New York city, where he was arrested under the sedition law for publishing a libel. He then removed to Petersburg, Va., and devoted himself to the practice of law and to literature. He was killed in a duel with Felix Coquebert, in consequence of a political dispute. Burk was at one time master of ceremonies at the Boston theatre. He published 'Bunker Hill', a tragedy; 'Bethlem Gabor', an historical drama (1803); 'History of the Late War in Ireland' (Philadelphia, 1799); and a 'History of Virginia from its First Settlement to 1804' (3 vols., Petersburg, 1804). An additional volume, by Messrs. Jones and Girardin, was published in 1816..."

19 Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, I, 453.
Synopsis of

Bunker-Hill, 1817 -- John Daly Burk

The British under Smith have been routed by the Americans at Lexington, and have suffered great loss. Heartened by their victory the Americans have decided to attempt the capture of Boston, provided Warren will lead them. After some hesitation, he consents, and is received by Generals Putnam and Prescott, the latter who unfolds the plan of crossing the isthmus at night and fortifying Bunker-Hill so that by morning they will be ready for the British. Warren commands the battle. He allows the British to disembark so that they may be taken by surprise. After three unsuccessful attempts the British succeed in defeating the Americans, although with heavy loss. Warren, mortally wounded, dies and is buried with honors. The love element is carried out in the character of the young British soldier Abercrombie who sacrifices his love for Elvira, the daughter of an American patriot. Abercrombie is killed in the battle, and at his death Elvira becomes mentally deranged.
"Meanwhile the country was aroused; and when about noon ... Colonel Smith began the return march, he found his troops menaced in flank and rear by the provincials... At Lexington they were nearly exhausted, and probably must soon have surrendered had they not been received in a hollow square by a strong force under Lord Percy, whom Gage had sent to their relief."

"After a short rest, Percy, who now had about eighteen hundred men in his command, began the retreat."

"The only way to drive Gage out of Boston was to seize one of the commanding hill-tops either in Dorchester or Charlestown, whence they might open a cannonade on the city. Gage saw this danger, and with the arrival of reinforcements under Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne a plan was made to get control of the dangerous hill-tops... After trying to terrify the rebels by threatening with the gallows all who should be taken with arms, and offering to pardon those who would lay them down, Gage prepared to execute this plan. The patriots forestalled him by sending twelve hundred men under the veteran Colonel Prescott to seize Bunker Hill, in Charlestown."

"... At dawn the British ships in the harbor opened an active cannonading, but reinforcements had arrived and the work of fortification had so far advanced that an attack by land was necessary. It was perfectly easy to attack in the rear, but the natural contempt of the British regulars for
the raw militia prevented so sensible a solution. A direct
attack in front was decided upon. The folly of such tactics
was realized when two charges up the hill failed because of
the Americans' deadly fire, and a third was successful only
because the defenders' powder was gone...

21 Ibid, IX, 32-3.
Mordecai Manuel Noah, journalist, b. in Philadelphia, Pa., 14 (19?) July, 1785; d. in New York City, 22 May, 1851. He was of Portuguese Jewish descent, and early in life was apprenticed to a carver and gilder. Fond of journalism, he became a political reporter in 1800. He went to Charlestown to study law, but before he practiced became the editor of the Charlestown "City Gazette". In 1811, he declined the position of Consul at Riga, but in 1813 became Consul to Tunis. On his return he settled in New York where he resided for the rest of his life enjoying such political honors as surveyor, judge, and sheriff. In 1820 he endeavored to rehabilitate the Jewish nation at Grand Island in Niagara River, intending to call his city Ararat, and to himself become the "Judge of Israel". However, the project never materialized. He wrote 'Travels in England, France, Spain, and the Barbary States' (London; New York, 1819); a large mass of miscellaneous addresses and essays, political and religious, a collection of which appeared under the title 'Cleavings from a Gathered Harvest' (New York, 1845); and many successful plays, among them 'She Would Be a Soldier; or, The Plains of Chippewa' (1819).
Synopsis of

She Would Be a Soldier, 1819—Mordecai Manuel Noah

Lenox, who loves Christine, gives her a miniature when he departs for battle. Her father, Jasper, has promised her to Jerry whom she refuses. To escape him she dons men's attire and follows Lenox. She finds him with Adela, the general's daughter, and, thinking him faithless, she enlists in the army. She is followed by Jasper and Jerry, the latter who is thrust into jail after causing a riot. Christine, guarding the tent in which the general, Adela, and Lenox are, loses control of herself and endeavors to enter. She is captured by the soldiers when she attempts to flee, is tried as a spy, and condemned to die. As she sits in her cell thinking of Lenox and his faithlessness, she flings away the miniature which is found by the soldier who leads her to execution. He sends it to Lenox who arrives in time to save her. She rejoices to find Adela is but his friend, and with Jerry's permission is given by Jasper to Lenox. The humor is found in the characters of Captain Pendragon, a Britisher, and his valet who are forced by an Indian chief to don Indian dress and lead his warriors to battle.
Historical Background

Battle of Chippewa—"July 5, Scott's thirteen hundred men met Riall's fifteen hundred at Chippewa, and won a signal victory, the American loss being 297, the British loss, because of the superiority of the marksmanship of the Americans, 515."

"Exposed, taken by surprise, and outnumbered, Winfield Scott and his regiments were nevertheless equal to the occasion. A battalion was sent to cover one flank in the dense woodland, while the main body drove straight for the columns of British infantry and then charged with bayonets at sixty paces. The American ranks were steady and unbroken although they were pelted with musketry fire, and they smashed a British counter-charge by three regiments before it gained momentum. Handsomely fought and won, it was not a decisive battle and might be called no more than a skirmish but its significance was highly important, for at Chippewa there was displayed a new spirit in the American army."

Synopsis of

Superstition, 1824—James Nelson Barker

Ravensworth, minister of the Puritans, decides to condemn Isabella and her son Charles, two non-Puritans, on the charge of witchcraft. Charles meets the Unknown who swears him to secrecy concerning his presence. Charles is in love with Ravensworth's daughter Mary whom George, nephew of Sir Reginald, ambassador of King Charles, seeks to embrace. A duel is fought between George and Charles, and George is wounded. Indians attack the village but under the leadership of the Unknown are overcome. Isabella, summoned to court, plans to flee though she is about to discover her long-lost father. Charles visits Mary in her room and begs her to go with them. He is discovered by Ravensworth and taken to immediate trial where he is accused of acquaintance with the Unknown, of attempted murder on George, and of contemplated rape on Mary. He refuses to plead and is sentenced to death. The Unknown, Isabella's father, arrives too late to save him. Mary, a raving lunatic, and Isabella die by the side of the bier. Sir Reginald warns the Puritans that they have murdered King Charles's son by his secretly espoused wife, Isabella. Ravensworth, responsible for the tragedies, sinks overcome by the side of the bier.

24 See above for Barker's life, on page 25.
Historical Background

"The basis of the witchcraft idea was the belief in a personal devil who, through his agents, the witches, was constantly conspiring against the welfare of mankind. This dogma was almost universally held by the Christian church in its various branches for two centuries after the Protestant revolution and was definitely recognized by the law of the land. In the Massachusetts Body of Liberties of 1641 witchcraft was made a capital offence, and in 1692 the general court enacted a law, taken almost verbatim from a statute of James I, imposing the same penalty for witchcraft in its more serious forms."

Charles II (1630-85) had several mistresses and quite a number of illegitimate children, several of whom were named Charles. None of his mistresses, however, was of the name Isabella. His wife was the Portuguese Catherine of Braganza. "He had no legitimate children; the most important of his many illegitimate children were: By Lucy Walter, James Scott, duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch (1649-1685); by Lady Castlemaine (later duchess of Cleveland), Charles, Henry and George Fitzroy, dukes of Southampton, Grafton and Northumberland, and the countesses of Sussex and Lichfield; by the duchess of Portsmouth, Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond; by Nell Gwyn, Charles Beauclerk, duke of St. Albans; by Catherine Peg, Charles Fitz Charles, earl of Plymouth; by Lady Shannon, the countess of Yarmouth; by
Mary Davis, the countess of Derwentwater. Nell Gwyn, an actress, was the most popular of the mistresses and Charles appreciated her wit."  

26 Encyclopaedia Britannica, V, 273.
Synopsis of

Lafayette, 1825--Felix Megia

Hamilton, an old soldier, and his wife Margaret plan to attend the great celebration which is being held that day in honor of Lafayette who is returning to America once more, this time to pay homage to the memory of Washington and to visit the general's home and tomb. Lafayette affectionately greets Hamilton and is presented by Margaret with a laurel wreath. Feeling unworthy of the honor, he places it on the tomb of Washington. Here he is given a ring symbolical of the union between France and America. Lafayette in his speech compares the joys and privileges of the present time with the hatreds and oppressions of the past. He speaks of the liberty of America and of the great achievements of the man who made it possible--Washington, who lives now where all is joy and happiness and where no hate and discord ever penetrate.

27 Unable to find any biographical material on Megia.
"Destined in the minds of the American people to head this roll of illustrious foreigners was Lafayette, who, with youthful enthusiasm, left wife and fortune and great social position to serve freely the cause of liberty. No other foreign soldier entered so completely into the spirit of the Americans and viewed with such sympathy all their shortcomings. Lafayette's services in America proved as effective in winning American hearts to France as did Franklin's mission in securing for America the friendship of that nation."

"He then revisited America (July 1824-September 1825), where he was overwhelmed with popular applause and voted the sum of $200,000 and a township of land."

Two of the authors included in this thesis, George Washington Parke Custis and James Nelson Barker, participated in the reception given to Lafayette. Custis was chairman of the ceremonies and chief speaker on behalf of the Americans. Barker was the author of an ode which was distributed during the parade to the crowds from a press mounted on a wagon.

29 Encyclopaedia Britannica, XIII, 459.
George Washington Parke Custis, author, b. at Mount Airy, Md., 30 April, 1781; d. at Arlington House; Fairfax Co., Va., 10 Oct., 1857. He was the son of John Parke Custis, stepson of Washington, whose early death brought his two younger children under the direct care of President and Mrs. Washington at Mount Vernon. He was educated at St. John's College and at Princeton. In 1799 he was appointed a cornet of horse in the army, but did not see active service until the War of 1812. After the death of his sister in 1832 he was the sole surviving member of Washington's family. He married Mary Lee Fitzhugh in 1804 and devoted himself to the care of his large estate which was for many years a favorite resort of the public, owing to the interesting Washington relics which it contained. The estate was confiscated during the Civil War and is now the site of a national soldiers' cemetery. Custis was a successful writer of orations, plays, and verse. His works include 'Conversations with Lafayette' (1824); 'Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington'; 'Pocahontas; or, The Settlers of Virginia' (1830); 'The Railroad' (1830); 'North Point; or, Baltimore Defended' (1833); and 'Eighth of January' (1834).
Synopsis of

Pocahontas, 1630 -- George Washington Parke Custis

The English, under Captain John Smith, arrive in Virginia to place there the British flag of possession. Barclay, sole survivor of former English enterprises, had been saved by Matacoran, Indian prince, who is betrothed to Princess Pocahontas. Pocahontas is the friend of the whites and falls in love with Rolfe. Smith invests Powhatan, the Indian chief, with the emblems of authority under King James. Inspired by Matacoran, the Indians decide to massacre the whites. An attempt is made by them to forcibly carry off Pocahontas and her maid, but it is frustrated by Rolfe whom Barclay had warned. Pocahontas overhears the plot of the Indians and warns the whites. During the battle both Smith and Matacoran are taken prisoners. Smith is condemned to death by Powhatan but is saved by the timely intervention of Pocahontas. Powhatan releases Smith whose men enter and proclaim victory. Smith in turn releases Matacoran who rushes out to live forever far from the haunts of white men. Powhatan gives his daughter to Rolfe as a pledge of the future union between England and Virginia.
Historical Background

Smith sailed from London, December 20, 1606, and Michael Drayton wrote some quaint verses of farewell, of which perhaps one will suffice:

"And cheerfully at sea
Success you still entice,
To get the pearl and gold
And ours to hold
Virginia,
Earth's only paradise!"

The destination of the colony was Chesapeake Bay. The numerous tribes of Indians who inhabited this region belonged to the Algonquin race, and they were members of a conspiracy, of which Powhatan was head war chief or werowance. His capital, or "werowocomoco", was on York River about fourteen miles from Jamestown.

"Smith was brought to Werowocomoco and ushered into a long wigwam, where he found Powhatan sitting upon a bench and covered with a great robe of raccoon skins, with the tails hanging down like tassels. On either side of him sat an Indian girl of sixteen or seventeen years, and along the walls of the room were rows of grim warriors, and back of them two rows of women with faces and shoulders painted red, hair bedecked with the plumage of birds, and necks strung with chains of white beads."

"As Smith's entrance those present gave a great shout,"
and presently two stones were brought before Powhatan, and on these stones Smith's head was laid. Next several warriors with clubs took their stand near him to beat out his brains, whereupon Powhatan's 'dearest daughter', Pocahontas, a girl of about twelve years old, rushed forward and entreated her father to spare the prisoner. When Powhatan refused she threw herself upon Smith, got his head in her arms, and laid her own upon his. This proved too much for Powhatan. He ordered Smith to be released, and, telling him that henceforth he would regard him as his son, sent him with guides back to Jamestown. 30

Richard Penn Smith, author, b. in Philadelphia, Pa., 13 March, 1799; d. in Falls of Schuylkill, Pa., 12 Aug., 1854. He was the grandson of William Smith, D. D., first Provost of the College of Philadelphia. Early in life he evinced fondness for literary pursuits and contributed to the "Union" a series of essays entitled "The Plagiary". He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1821. He was editor and proprietor of "The Aurora" from 1822-7, during which time it was one of the chief journals of the country. He resumed practice in 1827, but devoted much time to literary pursuits. He was the author of several poems and many plays, fifteen of which were placed on the stage in Philadelphia and London with decided success. The largest group of them may be called romantic comedy or melodrama. His popular successes, however, were in the field of historical drama. He wrote "Caius Marius", a tragedy (1831); 'Quite Correct'; 'Nighth of January'; 'The Disowned'; 'The Deformed'; 'The Sentinels'; 'The Triumph at Plattsburg' (1830); 'The Forsaken', a novel; 'The Actress of Padua'; 'Venetians'; 'Life of Davy Crockett'; 'Life of Martin Van Buren'; and many tales. His complete works in four volumes were issued in 1888.
Synopsis of

Triumph at Plattsburg, 1830—Richard Penn Smith

Andre, the miller, fearing the British will fire his mill, requests Corporal Peabody that it be guarded. He also informs him that he is to marry Lucy whom the Corporal once courted. Elinor, Major McCrea's daughter, who six weeks before had secretly married Captain Stanley, a Britisher, seeks him as she has heard nothing from him since their marriage. Major McCrea, who seeks Elinor, is pursued by Captain Stanley and his soldiers. He poses as Andre in the latter's absence, and the plan is successful although it is nearly ruined when the real Andre appears. The British leave after posting a sentinel. Elinor enters and is united with her father. Andre who has meanwhile learned the Major's identity aids them in escaping the sentinel. They later meet with Stanley in an inn. Recognizing Major McCrea as the miller, he is about to arrest him when Elinor appears, discloses her father's identity, and is happily restored to her husband. The Americans win the battle at Plattsburg, and Stanley, although a prisoner, rejoices in the fact since he will no longer be separated from Elinor.
Historical Background

"Plattsburg, a city and county seat of Clinton Co., N. Y., 167 miles north by east of Albany, on Lake Champlain... During the War of 1812 Plattsburg was the headquarters of the United States forces on the northern frontier, and on Sept. 11, 1814, in Plattsburg bay, Commodore Macdonough defeated a British fleet in the famous battle of Lake Champlain, while on the land General Macomb repulsed a superior British force..."

"... It was announced as the intention of the British government to take and hold the lakes, from Champlain to Erie, as territorial waters and a permanent barrier. To oppose the large and seasoned army which was to effect these projects, there was an American force of only fifteen hundred men, led by Brigadier General Alexander Macomb..."

"On the 6th of September Sir George Prevost with his army reached Plattsburg and encamped just outside the town. From a ridge the British leader beheld the redoubts, strong field works, and blockhouses, and at the anchor in the bay the little American fleet of Commodore Thomas Macdonough..."

"The decisive battle was therefore fought by four ships, the American Saratoga and Eagle, and the British Confiance and Brimnet. It was then that Macdonough acquitted himself as a man who did not know when he was beaten..."

"... the Royal Navy had ceased to exist on Lake Champlain. For more than two hours the battle had been fought with a bulldog endurance not often equaled in the grim pages
of naval history. And more nearly than any other incident of the War of 1812 it could be called decisive."

31 New International Encyclopaedia, XVIII, 719.
Section III

Linguistic and Literary Workmanship

Quotations

The following quotations have been chosen, some for their sheer beauty, some for their philosophy and wisdom, and some for their personal appeal. They were not chosen for their rhythm or metrical perfection.

It is interesting to note that those authors of plays containing quotations which may be cross-referenced to famous literary men and works, are either graduates of colleges, have attended college, or from early youth have showed a fondness for literary pursuits (with the possible exception of Leacock. See above, on page 13). These authors are: Barker, Brackenridge, Burk, Custis, Leacock, and Smith.

The following is a list of the literary men and works to whom quotations from these thirteen plays have been cross-referenced. The numbers indicate the number of times the particular author or work was cross-referenced.

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1. "In the Creator's works, perfection shines,
   And is discovered in exact proportion."
   --Crossett, A New World Planted

2. "...............ere the night
   Shall o'er the dawn her dusky mantle draw."

3. "Liberty will ne'er be woo'd by halves,
   But like the jealous female, must have all
   The lover's heart or none."

4. "One soul appear'd to animate them all."

5. "And leave my soul a night,
   So thick and black, that thought doth lose its way."
   --Burk, Bunker-Hill

6. "O patriotism!
   Thou wondrous principle of godlike ac-
   tion.
   Wherever liberty is found, there reigns
   The love of country."
"I hope my every act
Has been the offspring of deliberate judgment;
Yet feeling seconds reason's cool resolves."

"Man runs the wild career of blind ambition,
Plunges in vice, takes falsehood for his buoy,
And when he feels the waves of ruin o'er him,
Curses, 'in good set terms,' poor Lady Fortune."

"honor, with me,
Is worth; 'tis truth; 'tis virtue; 'tis a thing
So high preeminent, that a boy's breath,
Or brute's, or madman's blow can never reach it.
My honor is so much, so truly mine,
That none hath power to wound it, save myself."

--Dunlap, André
10. "The murkiest night must fly before the day;
Illusion, strong as Hell must yield to Truth."

11. "It will but shew how weak he deems his proof
Who lays such stress on prejudice."

12. "If reason in a mind like yours, so form'd,
So fortified by knowledge, can bow down
Before the popular breath, what shall protect From the all-with'ring blasts of superstition
The unthinking crowd, in whom credulity,
Is ever the first born of ignorance?"
   --Barber, Superstition

13. "Like Lightning from the Summer's burning cloud."

14. "For Wisdom cannot form a Scheme so well,
But fools will laugh if it should prove abortive."

15. "To desperate Wounds apply a desperate Cure,
And to tall Structures lay Foundations sure."
16. "'Tis not a Time to grieve
For private Losses, when the Public calls."

17. "As the sweet smelling Rose, when yet a Bud,
Lies close conceal'd, till Time and the Sun's Warmth
Hath swell'd, matur'd, and brought it forth to View,
So these my Purposes I now reveal."

--Rogers, Ponteuch

18. "O guilt, thy blackness, hovers on the mind,
Nor can the morning dissipate thy shades."

19. "The grenadiers stand thinly on the hill,
Like the tall fir-trees on the blasted heath,
Scorch'd by the autumnal burnings, which have rush'd,
With wasting fire fierce through its leavy groves."

20. "The good and bad alike thou rangest,
Undistinguish'd in the grave."

--Brackenridge, Battle of Bunkers-Hill

21. "Along the bay,
How gay and lovely lie its skirting shores,
Fring'd with the summer's rich embroidery!"
22. "Women! they're made of whimsies and caprices, so variant and so wild, that, ty'd to a God, They'd dally with the devil for a change."

23. "Holy Religion! still beneath the veil Of sacred piety what crimes lie hid!"

24. "Long, Oh! long

I was the savage child of savage Nature; And when her flowers sprang up, while each green bough Sang with the passing west wind's rustling breath; When her warm visitor, flush'd Summer, came, Or Autumn strew'd her yellow leaves around, Or the shrill north wind pip'd his mournful music, I saw the changing brow of my wild mother With neither love nor dread. But now, Oh! now, I could entreat her for eternal smiles, So thou might'st range through groves of loveliest flowers, Where never Winter, with his icy lip, Should dare to press thy cheek."

--Barker, The Indian Princess

25. "Matrimony is like an old oak; age gives durability to the trunk, skill trims the branches, and affection keeps the foliage ever green."

--Noah, She Would Be a Soldier
26. "None sleeps so sound as those by conscience blast."

27. "Don't you know there's such sweet music in the shaking of the treasury keys, that they will instantly lock the most babbling patriot's tongue?"

28. "Deeds of darkness must be done by night, and, like the silent mole's work, under ground."

29. "He who spurns fear, and dares disdain to be, Mocks chains and wrongs—and is forever free; While the base coward, never safe, tho' low, Creeps but to suff'ring's, and lives on for woe!"

--Leacock, <i>Fall of British Tyranny</i>
Classical References

Eight of the thirteen plays have from one to four classical references, one play has twelve, and four have none. The one having twelve is Farke's *Virginia*. This is due in all probability to the fact that he based it upon Horace's ode *On the Return of Augustus* (See above, on page 17). Of the authors of the eight plays, three were college men, two pursued literary tastes though they did not attend college, and three are unknown (See above, Croswell on page 22; Megia on page 36; and Leacock on page 13). There are thirty classical characters and places alluded to. These represent a variety of the Roman and Greek mythologies, e. g., war: Astraea, Mars, and Bellona; joy, mirth, and marriage: Hymen, Hebe, and Hylas; literature: the Muses, Apollo, and Daphnis. References to classical places include: Elysium, Mt. Ida, and Hesperides.
Humor

Six of the thirteen plays show decided humor of one type or another. Two more contain passages probably having a slight amount of humor, although this depends somewhat on the reader's interpretation. The other five plays show no traces of humor. This may be attributed, in some degree at least, to their subject matter. Two of them are commemorative, Lafayette and Virginia; two deal with the war, André and Bunker-Hill; and one with colonial affairs, A New World Planted. Of the two plays whose humor is in doubt, one is also a war play, The Battle of Bunkers-Hill. The other is the Indian play, Pocahontas.

There are several classes into which the humor of the eight plays may fall. First, that of good, wholesome, laughter-provoking humor; second, that of raw, grisly humor; third, that of coarse and dull humor; and fourth, that of which there may be question about as to whether or not it actually is humor.

Following are examples of each of the above types and the plays from which they are taken. There are two plays containing the first type of humor; one, the second; three, the third; and two, the last. It is interesting to note that the two plays coming under group one are both Barker's.
1. "and then I dug up this neat jewel [Shows a potato]; you're a little withered to be sure, but if ever I forget your respectable family, or your delightful dwelling place—may I never again see any of your beautiful brothers and plump sisters!—Ooh! my darling, if you had come hot from the hand of Maty, how my mouth would have watered at ye; now, you divil, you bring the water into my eyes."

2. "I've been certain of a long time, that master Robin's a little bit of a big rogue."

3. When Larry is asked if he would not perish in the good cause of finding Smith, he answers, "By Saint Patrick, it's the thing I would do, and hould my head the higher for it all the days of my life after."

---Barker, _The Indian Princess_

4. After George is wounded, he soliloquizes thus,

    "I wonder, now I think on't,
    Who'll write my epitaph. My uncle can't,
    He has no genius. I would do't myself,
    Had I an amanuensis: let me see—
    Hic Jacet—"
When he is carried out on the bier, he says,

"Head foremost if you please, my
worthy friends;
'Tis but fair play—heels first perhaps,
to-morrow."

--Barker, Superstition

Raw, grisly humor

1. After the hunters kill and scalp the Indians, one hunter says,

"Now let them sleep to-night without
their caps."

2. When Philip is informed that the soldiers' heads are split and the dogs eating their brains, he says,

"If that be all they've eat, the
hounds will starve."

--Rogers, Ponteatch

Coarse and dull humor

1. Andre Macklegraith, the ignorant miller, links himself with the two great men of the day in the following toast:

"Macdonough, Macomb, and Macklegraith, three as brave men as ever trod in shoe leather."
2. Andre. "...for you must know that the General and myself are cousins."
Corporal. "It's the first I heard of it. How do you make it out?"
Andre. "Plain enough, man. He's a Macomb and I am a Macklegrath, and that's sufficient to make us Scotch cousins all the world over."
Corporal. "And what do you say to Commodore Macdonough?"
Andre. "I have no doubt that he is one of the same family..."

---Smith, Triumph at Plattsburg

3. When Jerry attempts to explain why he failed to fight in the enemy's country, he says, "it were contrary to the constitution of my country, and my own constitution to boot--"

4. "Bears meat! the honourable captain Pendragon, who never ate anything more gross than a cutlet at Molly's chop-house, and who lived on pigeons' livers at Verly's in Paris, offered bear meat in North America! I'll put that down in my travels."
5. When Le Role discovers the spy to be a woman, he says, "Farbeful! it is a little woman without de petticoot. Suppose she take a man von prisonier, 0 quell disgrace!"

6. "Well, I vow, Miss Crissy, you look very pretty in pantaloons, and make a fine sager; but after all, I'm glad to have escaped a wife who wears the breeches before marriage--"

--Noah, She Would Be a Soldier

7. The Officer: "His ancestors were brave, sir."
Lord Boston (the coward): "Aye, that's no rule--no rule, Captain; so were mine..."

8. The men are talking of the British singing "Yankee Doodle". One says he has a ram and an ewe "that, whenever they sing 'Yankee Doodle' together, a skilful musician can scarcely distinguish it from the bass and tenor of an organ."

The other man replies, "and why not, as well as Balaam's ass, speak? and I might add, many other asses, now-a-days..."

--Leacock, Fall of British Tyranny
1. "'Tis here--'Tis there--I could philosophize--
Eternity, is like a winding sheet--
The seven commandments like--I think there's seven--
I scratch my head--but yet in vain I scratch--
Oh Hute, and Dartmouth, know ye what I feel,
You sure would pity an old drinking man,
That has more heart-ache, than philosophy."

--Erackenridge, *Battle of Bunkers-Hill*

2. Omaya. "Tell me, Namoutac, whether the English
maiden wear their plumes as high as we do,
and whether in painting they use most, the
red or the yellow."

Namoutac. "Indeed girl, I believe the English
dames carry their heads to the full as lofty
as ye do here, and they have quite as much
red on their cheeks, tho' the yellow is not
admired."

--Custis, *Pocahontas*
Rhythm and Rime

The majority of the thirteen plays are written in iambic pentameter form. Four are written in prose, and one in tetrameter verse. (I am not taking into consideration Megia's Lafayette which is written in the Spanish language). This also seems to be true, that the earlier written of the plays are in iambic pentameter. The last two, both written in 1830, are in prose. The plays written in prose, and all but one written in iambic pentameter, are uniform throughout though they may occasionally be interspersed with songs. The one exception to the iambic pentameter group is Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunkers-Hill. Its scheme is as follows:--

1. Drama itself................iambic pentameter
2. Prologue and Epilogue......iambic pentameter, one triplet
3. Ode..........................trochee tetrameter in quatrains, abab
4. Speech.........................iambic pentameter
5. Military Song................trochee tetrameter with quatrain stanzas

The sole example in the tetrameter group is Farke's Virginia. It consists of three scenes written in the following manner:--

Scene 1................trochee tetrameter
                        ..........iambic tetrameter
Scene 2.............iambic tetrameter
..........................anapestic tetrameter
..........................trochee tetrameter

Scene 3.............iambic pentameter
..........................iambic tetrameter

The rime of the plays is occasionally faulty as is shown in these examples taken from Croswell's *A New World Planted*: 'display' and 'America', 'stood' and 'God', 'wrath' and 'earth', 'come' and 'gloom'.
All the plays studied, with the exception of one, are written in English. That one, Megia's Lafayette, is written in Spanish. Croswell's A New World Planted is printed with the old-style 's', ʃ. The letter 'f' is printed as ñ. There is only one confusing example, and that occurs in the expression "Endor's Soro'reja" where the figure represents neither an 's' nor an 'f' correctly. However, this may be a printer's error as an 's' is evidently intended. Two of the plays make rather odd use of capitals and small letters. In Roger's Ponteuch, each important noun is printed with a capital letter, while in Bunker's Bunker-Hill each nation and each title is printed with a small letter.

In four of the thirteen plays the authors have given the characters names indicative of their callings or representative of their character. In Croswell's A New World Planted, two of the sailors are named "Maintop" and "Binacle". In Roger's Ponteuch, the governors are called "Catchum", "Gripe", and "Sharp", while the soldiers are "Cockum" and "Frisk". In Barker's The Indian Princess the name "Grimesco" is given to the priest, and the stem of the name, 'grim', is typical of his character. Leacock in his Fall of British Tyranny uses the same plan, but there is a difference as each of his characters represents an actual historical person, and this is not so of the other plays. I am reproducing the list here as it is an interesting index of Englishmen as seen by the Americans of the time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lord Paramount</td>
<td>Mr. Bute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Mocklaw</td>
<td>Mr. Mansfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Hypocrite</td>
<td>Mr. Dartmouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Poltron</td>
<td>Mr. Sandwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Catspaw</td>
<td>Mr. North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Wisdom</td>
<td>Mr. Catham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Religion</td>
<td>Bishop of St. Asaph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Justice</td>
<td>Mr. Camden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Patriot</td>
<td>Mr. Wilkes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold Irishman</td>
<td>Mr. Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judas</td>
<td>Mr. Hutchinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charley</td>
<td>Mr. Jenkinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazen</td>
<td>Mr. Wedderburne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Mr. Barre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Boston</td>
<td>Mr. Gage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admiral Tombstone</td>
<td>Mr. Graves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elbow Room</td>
<td>Mr. Howe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Caper</td>
<td>Mr. Burgoyne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Kidnapper</td>
<td>Mr. Dunmore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following outline contains unusual words, spelling, and contractions taken from the thirteen plays. I have put the meaning after each to avoid any question in the mind of the reader.

**Unusual Words**

1. boggle................hesitate
2. soop....................sweep
3. night by-past..........last night
4. pasquinades............abusive satires
5. shrouds................ropes, part of vessel's rigging
6. mussulmans..............belonging to Moslems
7. sARBacand..............blowgun
8. praties...................[dial. Irish] potatoes
9. trolls.....................singing in a free manner
10. junto.....................meeting for council
11. sneezer..................snuff-box
12. nostrums................quack medicines
13. carman...................man employed to drive goods in a cart

**Contractions**

1. shou'd..................should
2. incend'ry................incendiary
3. tu'tress..................tutoress
4. burft....................bury it
5. shou'l...................soul
6. tir'd........................tired
7. ty'd........................tied
8. lour'd........................lowered
9. of't........................often or oft
10. prepond'rates...............preponderates

Spelling

1. tyger........................tiger
2. expence........................expense
3. chace........................chase
4. heart-ake......................heart-ache
5. equipt.........................equipped
6. uncontrolluable.............uncontrollable
7. extasy........................ecstasy
8. disgrace.......................disgrace
9. compleatly....................completely
10. chuse........................choose
11. antient.......................ancient
12. choak........................choke
13. gulph.........................gulf
14. risque.........................risk
15. defeature.....................defeat
16. wo............................woe
17. centinels.....................sentinels
18. phrenzy.......................frenzy
19. sitiation......................situation
20. beveridge.....................beverage
Section IV

Dramatic Technique

Prologues, etc.

The prologues of the various plays deal in general with the theme or central spirit pervading the play, while the epilogues foretell the future destinies of America. The prefaces usually are complimentary to the authors or deal with the drama and literature of the time. Various poems, odes, songs, and advertisements deal with the plays with which they are associated. The dedications are in three cases to individual men, while the fourth is to an assemblage of persons. They are as follows:

(a) Brackenridge's The Battle of Bunkers-Hill --to Richard Stockton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.
(b) Parke's Virginia --to George Washington.
(c) Burk's Bunker-Hill --to Aaron Burr.
(d) Leacock's Fall of British Tyranny --"To Lord Boston, Lord Kidnapper, and the innumerable and never-ending Clan of Macs and Donalds upon Donalds, and the Remnant of the Gentle-men Officers, Actors, Merry Andrews, strolling Players, Pirates, and Buccaneers in America."
Stage Directions

All the plays use Latin terms for their stage directions such as: 'exit', 'exeunt', 'exeunt omnes', 'sola', 'solus', 'manet', and 'finis'. Noah's She Would Be a Soldier also uses English words such as: 'retire', 'return', and 'enter'. The larger number of plays has short, simple, concise, and in most cases numerous directions. Occasionally full directions are given as in the case of Noah's She Would Be a Soldier. Here they deal with the marching and formation of the soldiers, and with the execution-to-be of Christine. Burk's Bunker-Hill also has very full directions. In Creswell's A New World Planted we find these rather unusual directions: "Pause one quarter of a minute between each speech"; "a pause for half a minute"; and "Samoset hands a glass of wine to each of the Sachem's who drink silently" (it means 'who drink without giving toasts'). In Megia's Lafayette there are a great many emotional directions. This is probably due in part to the nationality of Lafayette and the joy of the occasion, e.g., "...embraces the tomb, kisses it, waters it with bitter tears, and remains in an ecstasy of sentiment..." And in Leacock's Fall of British Tyranny there are directions evidently given only to enlighten the audience and not to be acted, e.g., "Frequent town-meetings and consultations amongst the inhabitants;--Lord Boston arrives with the forces and ships;--lands and fortifies Boston."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Name of Play</th>
<th>Acts</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rogers</td>
<td>Fontanech</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1st 3 acts only 1 scene each; 5th act has 10 scenes, the last one called 'Scene X and Last'. 8 scenes are nothing but 1 soliloquy each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brackenridge</td>
<td>The Battle of Bunkers-Hill</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 scenes, no acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leacock</td>
<td>Fall of British Tyranny</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Only the 1st scene is numbered; rest are designated by change of scenery, e.g., &quot;Scene, the Prison&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parke</td>
<td>Virginia: A Pastoral Drama</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3 scenes, no acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunlap</td>
<td>André</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Acts 1, 5 no scene divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croswell</td>
<td>A New World Planted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1st scene in last act not numbered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>The Indian Princess</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Last act should have been 'Act Fifth' but is 'Act Five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burk</td>
<td>Bunker-Hill</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moshe</td>
<td>She Would Be a Soldier</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>Superstition</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megia</td>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Triumph at Plattsburg</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custis</td>
<td>Pocahontas</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>'scene last' used for closing scene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is interesting to note from the above table, in which the plays are given chronologically, that with the exception of Parke's Virginia all the eighteenth-century plays have five acts. Barker's The Indian Princess is the first of the thirteen plays to have less than five acts. It was written in 1808.
Section V

Historical Evaluation and Criticism

As can easily be seen by the historical backgrounds given in Section II, these plays are all based on, if they do not deal directly with, actual history. In several cases the history serves only as the background; in others, it is the predominant feature—in fact, it is the historical event itself retold in dramatic form; and in still others, it is the uniting of various historical events to give a general impression of the period. This will perhaps be more easily seen if the plays are treated in groups as given in the introduction (See above, on page 1) and at the same time any criticism offered that may be necessary.

The first of these groups is the Colonial which includes two plays, Superstition and A New World Planted. The first of these is merely suggested by history and is in itself fictitious. The second is based on the general history of the times but is not in all details historically accurate. This undoubtedly is due to the fact that the continuity of the drama would be interfered with if the actual history were adhered to in every particular. One example of its many inaccuracies will show this. Governor Carver died in the spring of 1621 and was succeeded by William Bradford. It was he, not Carver, who dealt with the war challenge of the Narragansetts and the succeeding events. Both of these plays deal with the Colonial and Indian life in New England in the seventeenth cen-
The second group, The Indian, consists of three plays: Ponteasch, The Indian Princess, and Pocahontas. All three are based on historical occurrences, although the plot of the first is fictitious. Ponteasch is the first American tragedy to be written on an historical subject. In it we find an interesting portrayal of Colonial frontier life with its governors, traders, and hunters. Here also we find the Indian, dignified and endowed with language often superior to and much more beautiful than that of the whites. In Ponteasch we have a play written not primarily to tell a story but to portray the unjust treatment the Indians received at the hands of the English who colonized America at that time. It was natural that the Indian should be used as a subject for dramatization. The French and Indian war, the Indian raids on the early colonists, and the Pocahontas type-story provided ample material. Of these the last was perhaps the most appealing. Pocahontas and The Indian Princess are two very excellent representatives. Though both deal with the Pocahontas story, there are important differences. Custis's play (Pocahontas) has as its central theme the hatred of the Indians for the English, and he reserves the rescue of Smith by Pocahontas until the last scene, thus disregarding historical accuracy, but heightening dramatic effect. Barker, on the other hand, centers his theme around the love of Pocahontas for Rolfe, and the revenge of Miami, her Indian lover. This play was the first Indian play
written by an American to be performed. Fontenac never saw
the stage.

The fourth group consists of four Revolutionary War plays: 
André, Bunker-Hill, The Battle of Bunkers-Hill, and Fall of
British Tyranny. Dunlap, in writing André, was seeking to
bring before the American audience a story which would rep-
resent the Federalist point of view. He was writing on an
event which was still vivid in the minds of the people, and
it was necessary for him to combine dramatic license with
historical accuracy, a thing not easily done. He has succeeded
in establishing an even balance between the English and the
Americans. As Quinn says, he has been fair to England with-
out underestimating the worth of the American heroes.

Bunker-Hill and The Battle of Bunkers-Hill deal with the
same event while the Fall of British Tyranny also makes use of
the battle as one of its four military engagements. There
are radical differences between the first two plays. Bunker-
Hill has a distinct love story in it while The Battle of Bun-
kers-Hill has not the slightest hint of one. The love story
in the first is, of course, fictitious. The second play is a
dramatic presentation of the actual battle itself. On the
other hand the two plays are alike in that they make the same
outstanding mistake. Both have General Warren as commander
of the attack while history tells us that he went there merely
as a volunteer although he had been offered the higher post
by both Prescott and Putnam. The Battle of Bunkers-Hill is
likewise deficient in that the author, Brackenridge, fails to
mention the famous Colonel William Prescott who in reality commanded the attack. This seems rather odd when one takes into consideration the fact that the play was written in 1776, soon after the actual event. In spite of this, however, the play is better that Burk's. Brackenridge pictures Warren as a much finer character than does Burk. It is Warren who suggests that they fight to free the patriots who are Gage's prisoners; who suggests that they gain the hill under cover of the night; who inspires the men to fight for liberty; and finally, who in his mortal agonies bids his soldiers fight on until they gain that greatest attribute—Freedom. On the other hand, Burk's play, as President Adams has said, represents Warren as a "bully and a blackguard". Warren, summoned to battle, fears lest he lose his portion of the glory; refuses at first to go preferring to write; needs must talk a great deal to convince himself he is right after he pledges allegiance to his country; says egotistically that if he dies he will "swell the glorious list of patriots who have died for suffering virtue"; and even when dying he bids his soldier tell that he—

"died without a groan:

That, smiling, midst the agonies of death,
His darling country occupied his thoughts:

... That Warren did his duty."

Brackenridge's play is a splendid expression of courage and written patriotism in a serious tone with suitable, dignified, yet flexible verse.
Quinn has called the *Fall of British Tyranny* the most ambitious as well as one of the most interesting of the patriot dramas. It also is the first literary piece in which Washington appeared as a character. The play in itself is much better for reading than for acting. There are several reasons for this. The first, that the play is too verbose; second, that there is practically no action in the first two acts which serve merely as the setting for the cause of the revolution; and third, that the play is too rambling. There are four distinct military engagements, any one of which would have been sufficient for a complete drama. The scope of treatment is apparently unlimited as scenes take place in England, America, and Canada. It includes not only the militaristic phases of colonial life, but also the religious and the political.

The fourth group, Commemorative plays, consists of two, *Lafayette* and *Virginia*. The return of peace after the revolution naturally inspired men to write odes and commemorative dramas to the nation's foremost men, and leading the list are the two mentioned in these plays, Lafayette and Washington. The first has a story element entering into it; the latter is merely an appreciative expression of gratitude though it is called a pastoral drama. *Lafayette* is written in such a way as to call to mind the various battles the famous marquis actively participated in, as well as to bring far more vividly to our minds his return to the United States in 1824.

The fifth, and last, group contains the two plays repre-
sentative of the War of 1812, Triumph at Plattsburg and She Would Be a Soldier. The story element in each of these is fictitious though the plays are based on actual land and naval engagements. The War of 1812, with the exceptions of the Battles of Chippewa and New Orleans, had no famous engagements which would make suitable material for dramatization. She Would Be a Soldier, which deals with the Battle of Chippewa, as far as action is concerned keeps the actual engagement in the background. Triumph at Plattsburg has an even less susceptible subject in its naval battle, and it too was kept in the background. This latter play is one of the few remaining important plays dealing with the War of 1812.

In conclusion we would say of these plays that though they may have no lasting dramatic qualities yet they are the expression of a few playwrights who in the early days of our country's formation, with its problems, trials, and temptations, gave to posterity in the form of drama the history of their country, and treated with skill and fidelity its romance, its actions, and its glory.

1 Quinn, **A History of the American Drama**..., 86.

2 Ibid, 48.
Bibliography


New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928.

Excellent reference. Grouped together historical plays, society plays, etc., at end of volume.

Sabin records this play in English (no. 47381) as printed by Stavely in 1825, so there is a possibility that there were both an English and Spanish edition.


A few lines on each of the following plays: "The Prince of Parthia", "The Contrast", "Ponteach", "The Battle of Bunkers-Hill", "The Fall of British Tyranny", and "André". Moses makes the following statement in his article, p. 799, "When Dunlap wrote his André, the Major was still alive, pointing to a contemporaneity not often equalled". This is very evidently a mistake on his part even though in his book, Representative Plays by American Dramatists, v. 1, p. 504, he gives the date of André as being 1798 which is correct. The facts are, Major John André died in 1780, eighteen years before Dunlap wrote his play, and though we allow Dunlap's own statement that he began the play nine years before, in 1790 (Ibid, 508), yet it was even then ten years after the Major's death.

Moses, Montrose J. Representative Plays by American Dramatists. New York, E. P. Dutton & Company, 1918. 678 p. 3 v. v. 1, 1765-1819, was used in the preparation of this thesis.


Good article on "The Prince of Parthia".


Excellent article on "The Contrast".


"Ode to Washington", p. 143.

Good biographies and criticisms of Thomas Godfrey, p. 63, and Royall Tyler, p. 155.


After the publication of nineteen volumes and two installments of the twentieth it ceased publication at the end of the name Smith, H. H. The first new installment carries the alphabet through Smith, John, and the sequel is in progress.

The Chronicles of America Series. ed. by Allen Johnson and
Gerhard R. Lomer and Charles W. Jeffreys, assistant editors.
New Haven, Yale University Press, 1921. 50 v.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica. 14th ed. London and New York,
The Encyclopaedia Britannica Company, 1929. 24 v.

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Mead and Company, 1923. 24 v.

The Standard Reference Work. Minneapolis and Chicago, Stan-
dard Education Society, 1923. 10 v.

Drama. Chap. XI., p. 241-3. Short comment on "The Con-

Wegelin, Oscar. Early American Plays, 1714-1830. New York,
The Dunlap Society, 1900. 113 p.
The plays used in the preparation of this thesis, other than the three here included, may be obtained from the following sources:

Quinn, Arthur Hobson. Representative American Plays.

(This volume may be obtained in Forsyth Library, K. S. T. C., Hays, Kansas.)

The Prince of Parthia.................. Thomas Godfrey
The Contrast........................... Royall Tyler
André........................................William Dunlap
Superstition............................. James N. Barker
The Triumph at Plattsburg............. R. Penn Smith
Pocahontas; or, The Settlers......... G. W. P. Custis of Virginia

Moses, Montrose J. Representative Plays by American Dramatists.

Ponteach; or, The Savages of........ Robert Rogers America

The Battle of Bunkers-Hill............ H. H. Brackenridge
The Fall of British Tyranny........... John Leacock

The Indian Princess; or, La............ James N. Barker
Belle Sauvage

She Would Be a Soldier; or, The........ Mordecai M. Noah
Plains of Chippewa

Columbia University, New York City

La Fayette en Monte Vernon............ Felix Megia
en 17 de Octubre, 1824