

Commager is above all a stylist. His lavish citations of Enlightenment thinkers (Manasseh Cutler of Ipswich, von Haller at Göttingen, Linnaeus at Uppsala, "the intrepid Van der Kamp" at Leyden) lend a tone of animated omniscience to this volume.

YOUNG MAN THOREAU

by Richard Lebeaux
Univ. of Mass., 1977
262 pp. \$12.50
L of C 76-44851
ISBN 0-87023-231-2

At a time in his own life and in American history when other young men and women were following the lure of the Western frontier, David Henry Thoreau (as he was christened) was discovering his inability to stray far from his native Concord and the hearth of his domineering mother. In this psychobiography, Lebeaux, assistant professor of American Thought and Language at Michigan State, cites Thoreau's early journals to show how the young man gradually came to see his fixation on the familiar as an opportunity for unique artistic and spiritual growth. The book covers the period from Thoreau's Harvard graduation (1837) at the age of 20 to his decision to take up residence at Walden Pond eight years later. Had it not been for neighbor Ralph Waldo Emerson's friendship and transcendentalism's liberating rationale for an outwardly sedentary life, Lebeaux suggests, Thoreau's talents as a writer and naturalist might never have matured. Although he lapses too often into the jargon of psychology, Lebeaux brings into human focus the "traveller in Concord" who inspired Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. and became a cult figure in the United States during the 1960s.

THE BOSTON MONEY TREE

by Russell B. Adams, Jr.
Crowell, 1977, 320 pp. \$11.95
L of C 76-27338
ISBN 0-690-01209-8

How Boston money has been made, invested, and preserved. Journalist Russell B. Adams, Jr. begins with the early 17th century and progresses through the years dominated by the great names—Faneuil, Cabot, Boylston, Lowell, Lee, Hancock. In the 1960s, the "New Boston" of urban developer Edward L. Logue and technology's "Golden Semicircle" (Route 128) spawned its only New York-style "go-go" financier: Shanghai-born Gerald Tsai, Jr.,

a 1949 economics graduate of Boston University. Tsai became a stock market superstar, but he was an atypical exotic in a city whose conservative modern bankers favor a safe return. It was not always so. Adventure, risk, and profit all ran high in the days of the slavers and the China trade, before Boston's old Yankee blood cooled and turned blue.

**THE HISTORY OF THE
GERMAN RESISTANCE
1933-1945**

by Peter Hoffman
M.I.T., 1977, 847 pp. \$19.95
L of C 76-0824
ISBN 0-262-08088-5

World War II had scarcely ended when the story of German resistance to Hitler began to come to light. Each successive memoir and monograph brought the intricate picture more sharply into focus. But since the resistance was, during its most critical phases, organized in closed compartments, and since those persons most knowledgeable about the whole were executed by Hitler, the task of historical reconstruction has been difficult. Hoffman's absorbing account, first published in German eight years ago, spans the period from the 1938 Sudeten crisis to the final abortive attempt by Colonel Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944. It makes sense of the tangle of evidence that has come down to us. Is it the last word on the techniques of conspiracy and the complex personalities of the men and women who overcame their own hesitations and took up arms against the Führer? Very few key survivors have not been heard from. Unless new diaries or reminiscences come to light, as seems unlikely, this will become the classic work on a heroic failure.

**THE BIRTH OF
SAUDI ARABIA:
Britain and the Rise of
the House of Sa'ud**

by Gary Troeller
London: Frank Cass, 1976
287 pp. £8.50
ISBN 0-7146-3062-4

Until the independence of India in 1947, British policy in the Persian Gulf was tied to London's need to maintain the entire Arabian Sea area as a secure link between England and its most important overseas possession. For many years, reliance upon sea power was accompanied by a hands-off attitude toward tribal rivalries in the Arabian Peninsula. But when, in 1902, 'Abd al 'Aziz Ibn 'Abd al Rhaman Ibn Sa'ud captured Riyadh, the ancestral capital of the House of Sa'ud, from the ruling Ibn