

BOOKS and REVIEWS

The Marble Palace
By John P. Frank. 302 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. \$5.00.

Reviewed by **FRED MALLENDER**

The jacket of "Marble Palace" describes it as a "lively, informal book about the Supreme Court—how it does its work, reaches decisions, and enforces them—seen from the inside, as if from the Justices' chambers and their conference room." This is about as close as anyone can get in describing the book.

No general theme emerges from "Marble Palace" rather it is a series of ideas, conclusions, and opinions with illustrations. There is a little bit of history, a touch of politics, a drop of sociology, a sprinkling of biography and a few appropriate anecdotes held together by mild critical comment.

THE Supreme Court has had an

important role in many aspects of American life, as witness the current integration problem. Mr. Frank has attempted to show what this influence can be and to define its limits in a very general sense, he realizes success.

It is of interest to note his opinion of the current justices. In particular, the opinion is to be gleaned from a reading between the lines and an awareness of things left unsaid. However, great admiration for Justice Black, for whom he served as law clerk, and his tolerant disposition of Justice Frankfurter are quite clear.

As for the other justices, Mr. Frank delivers guarded comments. At this time he is willing to venture approval of the chief justice's handling of the administrative problems of the court, but he attempts no sweeping predictions on his place in history.

FEW informative books are written with such a flare for holding the reader's attention. In this respect "Marble Palace" may have merited scholarly criticism for superficial effect, but it is a good introduction to the workings of the Supreme Court.

The American Heritage Book of The Revolution
By Dr. J. H. Plumb and Bruce Lancaster. 376 pp. New York: Simon & Schuster. \$12.50.

Four Days in July
By Cornel Lengyel. 322 pp. New York: Doubleday. \$4.95.

Reviewed by **FRED BAHR**

Although the market is not yet saturated with books about the Civil War, it is refreshing to note that two books have been published recently dealing with an equally important phase of our history: the American Revolution. It is to be hoped that this ground, fallow for so long, will be plowed again in the near future by authors as expert as Messrs. Lengyel, Lancaster and Dr. Plumb.

Very broad in scope, "The American Heritage Book of the Revolution" does, first, with "The World Beyond America," Dr. Plumb's Cambridge lecturer in history, outlines the economic, intellectual and political atmosphere in Europe and its influence in incubating the Revolution.

The remainder of the text, by Bruce Lancaster, is oriented in North America. Starting with a description of the colonies on the eve of revolt, through the first armed conflicts in New England, the bulk of the text is devoted to the events, military and diplomatic, and economic, that advanced or delayed the happy day at Yorktown.

WASHINGTON'S and the other major leaders and campaigns are more than adequately covered. However, the most interesting part of the book concerns the lesser known campaigns in the Carolinas. Nathaniel Greene's, recently appointed commander at West Point following Arnold's defection, was Washington's personal choice to take charge of the war in the South, following the virtual de-

November Halloween

According to researchers, children in eastern cities used to celebrate Thanksgiving by parading through the streets in costumes, begging from passer-by.

struction of the Americans under Gates at Camden, S. Car.

General Greene, with few reliable troops and no supplies, proceeded to break every rule in the military text books. Waging a combination guerrilla-orthodox warfare, General Greene and his lieutenants preserved the army at all costs and reduced Cornwallis' strategic hold in the Carolinas to tenuous occupation of Charleston and Savannah. This brilliantly executed campaign was immeasurably important in producing the final surrender of Cornwallis.

THE text is extremely well written and is magnificently supplemented by color and black and white prints, all contemporary. The margins of the text are filled with small insets, and at the end of each chapter are as many pages of colored pictures. In fact the reader must be cautioned not to regard this history as a picture book, tempting as that course may be.

"The Book of the Revolution" is the finest possible starting point for anyone interested in this period of our history. Because of its scope, it cannot be sufficiently detailed to completely satisfy one particularly interested in any phase. However, the book has achieved its purpose. It has made one of the most important events in history come to life.

LENGYEL'S book, "Four Days in July," covers less ground in

greater detail. As the title implies, this book tells the story of the creation and signing of the Declaration of Independence. While in most ways a journal of July 1 through 4, the author manages to convey the important background leading to this eventful Monday through Thursday.

For July 4, 1776 was not the start of the Revolution, however, but was rather in media res (middle of things). Lexington, Concord, the British evacuation of Boston, and an unsuccessful British attempt to invade Charlestown had all preceded. However, politically, the unanimous joining of all 13 colonies in the signing of this great document was both the cause and effect of many forces which jolted a united front against the British.

AUTHOR Lengyel has combined

immense amount of research with an outstanding writing ability to re-create the scene almost word for word. From old documents and contemporary reports, the legendary figures of Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin and others again emerge, struggling and maneuvering to set a history of the delegates from each colony to approve.

The background and causes of the breach, the attempted solutions by both sides, and the political efficacy of complete independence are redetailed.

Lengyel's account of this nation's launching is a stirring one. It is history that is told far better than any historical novel. It will be impossible to read this book without increased awe at and pride in the compounded greatness of the men, who dug the foundation for our nation.

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