activities provided him with an adequate living. He was most interested, however, in defending his military record against the charges that he was guilty of so many blunders. The final tragedy in his life came in 1879 when both he and his wife died of yellow fever during the terrible epidemic of that year. In addition, one of his eleven children preceded him in death and the others were orphaned.

McMurry, a Civil War historian who teaches at North Carolina State University, tries to show that the very qualities that made Hood famous as a superb brigade commander—personal courage, elan, consummate horsemanship, constant readiness to attack and conduct bold assaults, plus an over reliance on luck—in the end proved to be his undoing in upper echelons of command. He paid too little attention to planning and often violated the key principle of coordination of command. Hood was, indeed, something of a hopeless romantic. Along with so many products of the militant South he believed "any one Southerner could lick any ten Yankees," and failed to understand that the Civil War was a stepping-stone to total war wherein the material resources of the North foredoomed the total defeat of the South. In a sense, the decision to attempt secession under such circumstances was just as rash a gamble as was Hood's attempt to gain some astonishing victory in Tennessee or Kentucky, in the aftermath of the fall of Atlanta and Sherman's subsequent march to Savannah. In the final analysis, the issue of defeat or victory in the Civil War was decided not so much by generalship as the ability of one side or the other to replace its manpower, material resources, and monetary losses more adequately than the other in the desperate quest for total victory.

There are a few typograpical errors in the book. Despite such minor faults, and a need for more attention to the Gettysburg campaign, the book was delightful to read. Particularly enlightening and enjoyable was the section on Hood's activities in pleasure-driven Richmond in the winter of 1863–64. It reads like the last effort of members of a society to live the good life before the final disaster befalls them.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA — ALVIN R. SUNSERI

God and General Longstreet: The Lost Cause and the Southern Mind, by Thomas L. Connelly and Barbara L. Bellows. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982. 158 pp. Note on sources, index. $12.95 cloth.

According to the authors of this little book, the southern mind cannot unburden itself of the memory of a lost civil war. Obviously, the term

"lost cause" has deeper meaning for them since the familiar southern states' futile effort for independence over a century ago. In four essay-like chapters the authors trace their expanded version of the theme through its two major phases and explain its impact on the South and the nation. Connelly, an authority on Civil War military history from the Confederate side, takes up some ideas in the present volume that he had discussed in his 1977 study of *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society*. Bellows is listed as a research fellow in the department of history at the University of South Carolina, where Connelly is professor of history.

Chapter one explains the origins of the lost cause idea; the authors call this phase the "inner lost cause." Right after the war former Confederates needed desperately to understand the calamity that had befallen them. For a simple religious people who took Divine Providence seriously, they could never accept the Yankee conclusion that winning was the obvious test of truth. After much soul searching southern spokesmen worked out an answer satisfactory to the pietistic needs of their region. Seizing upon the popular Robert E. Lee as a prime example, expounders of this initial view concluded that sometimes the Lord allows even a righteous people to suffer defeat. Just as Christ had his Gethsemane, Lee had his Appomattox. Only a noble society could have produced such Christian knights as Lee. That paragon of rectitude, courage, and military invincibility never really lost a fight; he merely succumbed to sheer numbers of Yankees. Unfortunately, at first the Gettysburg debacle seemed to mar Lee's perfection. Former Confederates, mostly Virginians, therefore rewrote the battle account and made General Longstreet the scapegoat for defeat; thus the book's unusual title.

Chapter two explains how the lost cause rationale gained a sympathetic national audience by World War I. Beginning in the 1880s, southern writers such as Thomas Nelson Page avoided all defensiveness and instead concentrated on an appealing dual theme: the romance and the tragedy of Virginia. They emphasized the romantic qualities of antebellum Virginia in a positive fashion—noble masters, splendid estates, happy servants. But tragically, Virginians such as Lee, who hated slavery and opposed secession, felt compelled by a code of honor to fight with their section.

In chapter three, "Robert E. Lee and the Southern Mind," the authors show how the entire nation finally accepted Lee as the epitome of duty, humility, and even a selfless love of country. No longer a mere military hero, he became an almost unapproachable saint. The national lost cause writers had unobtrusively justified the rebel cause by exalting its chief leader. Far from the well-propor-

tioned qualities of his new popular image, the real Lee, the authors contend, had owned slaves, showed a hot temper on occasion, performed audacious feats in combat, and in other ways displayed extremes of southern-like behavior. Even his extreme commitment to a code of duty and religion became more like an opiate for the paradoxical chieftain who felt alienated from both the planter oligarchy and the American success story.

The last chapter, "The Enduring Memory," is the most wide ranging. In arguing the lost cause's continuing relevance the authors boldly stretch the term's meaning to its very limits. They point to it in southern works of fiction and history; they see it in movies, in television programs, in recorded country music, and finally in the person of Elvis Presley. At some deep, almost taken-for-granted level, they contend, Southerners know the constant reality of defeat, evil, and mortality; even the best people can lose. This state of mind, of course, contrasts sharply with the standard American myths of progress, success, and innocence.

Whether or not the South wants to eradicate its lost cause memory, the rest of the nation will not let it rest. Those outside the South use the image as both a contrast and an alternate to middle-American values. During the Depression of the 1930s, for example, the entire nation could read *Gone With the Wind* and empathize "with that southern sense of piety that viewed life as a classical tragedy—the unbending human endeavor struggling with impossible odds, with knowledge of man's limitations, with an order of coexistent good and evil" (131). During the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, however, the nation saw the Dixie image as a contrast to the American self-image of innocence and fairness. By the 1970s a less confident nation again responded favorably to the lost cause mystique as it manifested itself in such cultural phenomena as country music, because "the core of this music is continual striving amid perpetual disappointment—that is at the heart of the Lost Cause" (146).

The authors' analysis of the lost cause theme down through the early twentieth century seems most convincing; they perhaps make it account for too many southern traits and attitudes in recent decades. Inevitably, this is the fate of all central theme interpretations. Nevertheless, their spare, tightly argued style makes for fascinating reading and stimulates fresh thinking about an important subject.

MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY — JAMES R. CHUMNEY

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