

Sumner, Charles



CHARLES
OF

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Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, fought strongly in the anti-slavery cause. His oratory had much to do with Lincoln's success.

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Photographs.

1961

*Pierre L. Edward =
memoir + letters of
Ch. S. 1893, 4 vols,
(in Vol 3, p 265-72
ab. Kossuth + his
mission, welcoming
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CHARLES SUMNER AND THE COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR, by David Donald (Knopf). A biography of the frenzied abolitionist and pioneer Republican senator from Massachusetts. Sumner was an almost insufferable man—pompous, petulant, mendacious, ungenerous. Lincoln, at their first meeting, found him “my idea of a bishop,” and Carl Sandburg has described him as the “perfect impersonation of what the South wanted to secede from.” He was, additionally, more a politician than a statesman, and more a hyperbolic orator (in one of his marathon flights he referred to the Kansas-Nebraska bill as “a soulless, cycless monster—horrid, unshapely, and vast”) than either. He was, however, a ferociously influential figure, and an extremely fascinating one. It is our good fortune that he has succeeded in fascinating Mr. Donald. For Mr. Donald is a rarity among American historical biographers, be-

ing not merely a man of irreproachable scholarship and balance but an interesting writer, and he has given us here a study that is, on every count, superb. He concludes his book with the firing on Fort Sumter, in 1861. The remaining thirteen years of Sumner's life, he notes, will be the subject of a companion volume. Photographs.

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