

BOOK REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES

William Penn. By C. W. Vulliamy. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934. Pp. 303. \$3.00).

Brailsford, Dobrée, Pound and now Vulliamy, 1930-1934, cluster closely enough around the 250th anniversary of Penn's arrival in America (1932) to be called the anniversary biographies. This one by Vulliamy probably completes the crop. We hope so. Not that the crop has been without merit—quite the contrary. But it is now big enough. Further contributions would be superfluous unless some genius could improve the quality beyond ordinary measure.

It is questionable whether the present book was needed, after Dobrée. The latter is better balanced and better written. Brailsford is of high class but covers only the "Making of William Penn," not his whole life. Pound is good but he shortens his story of the Founder to tell of other members of the Penn family.

One dislikes to stumble at the threshold of a book, but there are some things in Vulliamy's preface that have not quite the right ring. There is at least a strong impression given that the author has had access to important Penn manuscripts in Friends Library, London, that have not been accessible to his predecessors. As if Friends Library in London had not been the Mecca of every modern student of Quaker history and biography! As a matter of fact there are no new facts of high importance revealed in this volume, from Friends Library or from any other collection of Penn materials.

The two new Penn letters hailed in the preface and printed in the book (pp. 196, 282) are not new. Both have been in print for more than a century, one of them in several different publications (e. g. *Memoirs Hist. Soc. Pa.*, II, Phila. 1827, pp. 241-243; John Kendall, *Letters*, II, London, 1806, p. 122). About the Penn portraits, authentic or spurious, he is much surer than many students, including artists, who have made special studies of the question. His "Select Bibliography," both as to inclusion and exclusion, makes one wonder about the principle of his selection.

The body of the book is well written, in a good journalistic style. The background chapters, at the beginning, are a well done picture of the religious and political conditions that lay back of Penn's life. Throughout the book the author keeps the reader well in touch with the pertinent facts of English politics. He seems to work himself into a great rage against Admiral Penn, calling him the "devoted Trimmer" of Charles II, and repeating all the nasty slanders of his enemies while careful not to underwrite them. Seasoned historians do better than this by the Admiral.

The author's kindest chapter toward Penn, the Founder, is entitled "Shackamaxon." Here he concedes that Penn treated the Indian problem

"more seriously and more intelligently than any other colonial governor." Yet here also Penn showed "both the nobility and the limitation of his outlook." The author goes on to rail at the painting of the treaty by Benjamin West, "the most false picture ever painted, . . . the clownish tableau of President West." Yet the famous painter at least had an artist's license for idealization. The historian, in this case, goes on to give such details of the treaty as cannot be proved by a scrap of contemporary evidence. He is even sure of the date of the treaty.

Throughout the book the author wins his spurs more as a criticizing than as a critical historian. When he says anything good about his subject he hurries to balance it off with something bad. Near the end he has a summary: "Then what was he? A Quaker leader; but never a steady effective leader like Fox or Whitehead. The founder of a State; but he was never able to govern the State or to give it the form he desired. A Puritan; certainly, but a Puritan who drove to Court in a coach and four and loved a bottle of Madeira. A writer on religious themes; but who cares a scrap for his writings now? We are sure that he was a good man; we may ask ourselves whether he ought to be described as a great man. And here we pause."

Perhaps the reviewer may pause long enough to mention that Dobrée (1932), while blinking none of Penn's weaknesses and mistakes, could yet assign him a place in history "as sure as it is unique." The most careful American historians count Penn one of the greatest colonial founders. The great English historian, Lord Acton, called him "the greatest historic figure of his age."

RAYNER W. KELSEY

Benjamin Rush, Physician and Citizen, 1746-1813. By Nathan G. Goodman. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934. Pp. 421. Illustrations. \$4.00).

A new monograph in the Pennsylvania field is refreshing after seeing so many "varieties" on Washington, Hamilton and Jefferson. Especially is it pleasant to have one so difficult and so long needed as this work on that great Philadelphian, great Pennsylvanian and great American, Benjamin Rush—one that the world has had to wait for nearly a century and a quarter. No doubt the reason for this long delay is like the similar delay in producing lives of James Wilson and David Lloyd, namely, the difficulty and complexity of the subject. This holds true also for a definitive life of William Penn and for a history of the colony and state.

Mr. Goodman has had the courage and ability to attack the difficulties of his subject, with resulting success in management, treatment, judicial attitude, accuracy, style and literary quality. He has struck a proper proportion, too, as is indicated by his title "Physician and Citizen," for Rush was so much like a machine-gun that it would have been very easy to have made it "Citizen and Physician." One wonders, however, whether a little more emphasis on the desire of the youthful Rush to be a Christian minister.

which was replaced by the final acceptance of the medical profession instead, would not have given a more interpretative unity to a life that was so dominantly missionary, even in his accepted profession. A sense of a mission on earth burst forth in almost every field of his endeavors, always carrying with it conviction and generally wisdom as well. Holding this idea while reading this excellent life is a source of much illumination.

The work is distinctly a biography, for while it touches sufficiently on contemporary history, that history is decidedly subordinated to the life of Rush. The work does not belong to the school of biographical history. As a consequence, some of the sixteen chapters tend to overlap somewhat, separating the different movements instead of unifying them. It is no small problem, however, to unify the life of "a leader in many fields," as pointed out in Mr. Goodman's last sentence: "He was a great physician, a talented teacher, a competent scientist, an able organizer, a felicitous writer, a vigorous social reformer, an earnest philanthropist, a creative scholar and a devoted patriot."

There are sixteen pages of footnotes and authorities, and twenty-seven pages of bibliography, including manuscript sources, contemporary newspapers, Rush's published writings, contemporary sources, and secondary sources. In this last division of the bibliography, however, is an oversight, reminding one of the bridegroom, who invited everybody to the wedding but his "best man," namely the omission of *The Standard History of the Medical Profession*, edited by the late Dr. Frederick P. Henry, Honorary Librarian of the College of Physicians. This body valued the work so highly as to ask for the original manuscript, which now lies in its archives.

BURTON ALVA KONKLE

Long Remember. By Mackinlay Kantor. (New York: Coward-McCann, 1934. Pp. 411. \$2.50).

Swords of Steel, The Story of a Gettysburg Boy. By Elsie Singmaster. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1933. Pp. 262. \$2.00).

Two more books to add to the many hundreds derived from the Gettysburg scene! They are noticed here together, but are not strictly comparable, having just one common element—they are both works of fiction projected against the same background. They are the two latest works on this perennially fruitful theme.

This reviewer is interested in them only as they contribute to a description of the local setting. In this respect *Long Remember* is not to be highly recommended, while *Swords of Steel* is really a little gem. The former is a sophisticated book, done in the manner of "stark realism"; the latter, at the order of the publisher, is a "juvenile" in the best sense.

The author of *Long Remember* in so far as his writing, descriptive of the horrors of the invasion and the battle is concerned, has done a fine work and one which has real historical value. Warfare is shown as it is and the feeling of revulsion against it is indeed secured, even as the author wishes.

The author of *Swords of Steel* has a different purpose in mind but she also has not failed to show the terror and unloveliness of war.

Long Remember tells the story of one month of life in and about Gettysburg; *Swords of Steel* carries the reader through six and one half years of experiences which came to John Deane, the "Gettysburg boy." The former has no value as an interpretation and description of the life and spirit of this historic community; the latter is the best work available for an interpretation and description of the life, the spirit and the people of the quiet town which, by accident of war, came to be a famous place. The author of *Long Remember* could as well have chosen to tell his story against the background of another town; the author of *Swords of Steel* has made her Gettysburg the real Gettysburg indeed.

Long Remember, because of its realism in both plot and language, is not to be recommended for school libraries, but no school library should be without *Swords of Steel*, and every student of Pennsylvania history will find it invaluable as an interpretation and a description of one Pennsylvania town and its life from 1859 to 1865.

ROBERT FORTENBAUGH

Twelfth Colony Plus. By C. M. Bomberger. (Jeannette: Jeannette Publishing Company, 1934. Pp. 197. Illustrations. \$3.00).

Mr. Bomberger has taken for his task the writing of an "interesting" history of the beginnings of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, one that will stimulate attention in the schools and among the public in general. He has therefore adopted a very "popular" style, and in lively and somewhat erratic fashion tells the story of Pennsylvania's early years to about 1800. He has also included some chapters on town building, coal and iron, and the influence of the Pennsylvania Germans. He concludes with a sketch of Pennsylvania's only president, James Buchanan. To this biographical account he brings a number of unpublished anecdotes of interest and a few letters. The book is illustrated with a number of maps, for the story of the delineation of the boundaries of the state is one of Mr. Bomberger's chief interests.

ROY F. NICHOLS

The Valley of the Delaware and Its Place in American History. By John Palmer Garber. (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1934. Pp. x, 418. Illustrations. \$3.50).

The importance of the Delaware Valley in the history of our country cannot be disputed. Many great men including William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Robert Morris and a long list of others have contributed to the early fame of the region. The writer of this book has successfully undertaken the task of presenting the story of the general developments in the Valley of the Delaware during the formative period of

American history. The various racial groups, industry, transportation, government, education, science, literature, art and religion are considered in some detail, while personalities are given proper emphasis. The work contains excellent illustrations, references to printed sources are given, and the index is adequate.

History of Potter County, Pennsylvania. By Victor L. Beebe. (Coudersport: Published by the Potter County Historical Society, 1934. Pp. 280. Illustrations. \$2.00).

Many varieties of county histories have appeared during the past fifty years. Unfortunately a large number of them have been written solely for commercial purposes with little regard for the type, accuracy, or organization of the material included. It is therefore gratifying to record the appearance of this county history, sponsored by the Potter County Historical Society, and written "to present a fairly complete account of the really significant events" of the county. The work is based largely on local newspapers and on other printed sources of the history of the county. It contains more than seventy illustrations.

Historic Newtown. By Edward R. Barnsley. (Newtown: Prepared for the Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of Newtown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, 1934. Pp. 146. Illustrations. Paper covers. \$0.50).

This interesting booklet, which tells the story of the important phases of the history of Newtown, does much credit to the author and to the anniversary committee. The history of the historic town is traced from its origin to the year 1896. The work is based largely on the voluminous manuscript, now in the library of the Bucks County Historical Society, which was written by Josiah Betts Smith, the historian of Newtown.

