Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings. Selected and edited by Carl Van Doren. (New York: Viking Press, 1945. Pp. xvi, 810. $5.00.)

The publication in 1938 of Carl Van Doren's Pulitzer Prize Benjamin Franklin: A Biography made available to students the most comprehensive life of that remarkable man. This has now been supplemented by the Autobiographical Writings. The two books made available in a uniform format should be considered an inseparable unit; neither standing alone can easily convey the fuller meaning of the life of the philosopher-statesman-diplomat to his own times and to later generations—at least to the degree that this can be done when standing together.

It is a fortunate circumstance that Mr. Van Doren was in position to undertake the new task now under review; for surely no other individual of our generation has gone more fully than he has into those sources that throw light on the multifarious activities of Franklin. In fact, one is led to wonder whether he will not be persuaded to crown his labors in the field of Franklinia by undertaking and carrying to conclusion the publication of a new and far more inclusive edition of Franklin's writings than any heretofore issued. That there is need for this is quite apparent. A. H. Smyth's edition, the latest, published between 1905 and 1907 in ten volumes, certainly has points of superiority over that by John Bigelow, also in ten volumes, published between 1887 and 1889; just as the latter's edition can be favorably compared to that by Jared Sparks, likewise in ten volumes, that appeared in 1840; yet Sparks made an advance, in some respects at least, over William Duane, who issued six volumes of writings between 1809 and 1818, and also over W. T. Franklin, whose Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin in three volumes was printed in 1818. No one of those editors aimed at comprehensiveness; each seemed to have relied on his own judgment, as well perhaps as his own convenience, in his selection of materials. Indeed, some Franklinia could not easily be reached and only gradually were uncovered and still more gradually gravitated into public or semi-public depositories; as a result, hundreds of pieces identified as the handiwork of Franklin have never been collected; other pieces, the authorship of which is less clear, are being subjected to careful analysis to determine this point by such competent students as Professor Crane of the University of Michigan; and the famous Autobiography is in the process of a thorough editing at the Huntington Library. When the work of collecting, identifying, and special editing has been carried out, a really critical edition of the writings will not only be possible but will be considered a

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matter of the greatest urgency by all students of American history. Here Mr. Van Doren may well come in.

As to the present *Benjamin Franklin's Autobiographical Writings*, of its some three hundred and ten documents almost one hundred of these were not included in Smyth's edition and forty-nine have for the first time been printed. Of the total, more than fifty have to do with the period before Franklin was sent to England in 1757 to act as the London agent of the Pennsylvania Assembly; almost a hundred are concerned with his long residence in London; well over a hundred cover his protracted stay in Paris; and somewhat fewer than fifty cover his last years, from his return to France in 1785 to the spring of 1790 when, with a clear mind, he wrote to Jefferson nine days before his death in his eighty-fifth year regarding an important boundary dispute involving the United States and Great Britain. While each document has been given a careful but brief introduction by Mr. Van Doren so as to provide a proper setting for it, and there are few that cannot today be read with the keenest interest, yet without the aid of the *Biography* many readers who lack a close familiarity with the period may feel a certain bewilderment in moving from one document to another, in spite of the lucidity of the supporting comment. This limitation of the usefulness of the *Autobiographical Writings* is of course a necessary limitation of all books of sources if permitted to stand alone.

As to the success of Mr. Van Doren's task of selecting materials out of a great mass of writings that might be considered distinctly autobiographical in nature, there can be no question. This is not to indicate that all available autobiographical material was included, but rather that with few exceptions the most striking as well as most characteristic has been chosen. Those who yearn for more of the same thing are shown the way, if it is not already clear, to supplement the rich offerings.


In the three centuries since white men established permanent settlements on the Atlantic seaboard, three labor systems have been tried: free labor, bound labor, and slave labor. None of them has proved entirely satisfactory. They have all been marked by revolts and strikes of the laboring people; and it took a civil war to get rid of the slave system. Free labor is now accepted as the most desirable, but the recent strikes tying up completely industries like coal, steel, and rail transportation have again made the question of curtailing the freedom of working people a live political issue.

The great obstacle to development of a satisfactory system of labor relations seems to be the tendency of each generation to consider its labor problems unique. Thus there is now a general impression that government participation in labor relations began with the New Deal laws protecting labor organizations and encouraging collective bargaining, while the more ardent New Dealers are inclined to think that American labor history began
Professor Morris' *Government and Labor in Early America* makes this fact abundantly plain. His book embodies the results of an exhaustive study of the legal and economic bases of the systems of free and bound laborers down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. He does not attempt to cover slave labor, which has been the subject of many treatises, but mentions it only incidentally in its relations to the free and bound labor. His study is the first thoroughgoing inquiry into the institution of bond servitude as it existed in Colonial times and during the period of the Revolution. It is the first also to treat adequately the legal foundations of free labor in this country, and the methods early governments used to limit and control the liberties of free workers. A separate chapter is devoted to the special problems of maritime labor relations.

The book is based almost entirely on original sources. "Some twenty thousand cases, largely unpublished, have been reviewed in the course of the investigation of which this volume is the end product. The principal source has been a field largely unexplored—the unpublished inferior court records of the American colonies.” These were supplemented by statutes, town ordinances, and vestry books, as well as contemporary newspapers, travelers' accounts, diaries, letter books, and business papers.

The treatment of the material is thoroughgoing and careful, and the documentation is complete. There is an introductory chapter, “The Mercantilist Background of American Labor Relations,” which is essential to understanding colonial labor problems and which throws much light on our present-day problems. A concluding chapter discusses “Persistent Problems of Labor Relations in the Light of Early American Experience,” but this is sketchy and leaves a good deal to be desired.

Historians, economists, and students of social institutions will find much in this volume to illuminate dark spots in their fields. The book ought to be required reading for everyone who aspires to expertness in the field of labor relations. But those who could profit most from familiarizing themselves with the experiences examined in this study are the legislators and government officials whose business it is to enact laws and administrative regulations governing labor relations. They, unfortunately, are least likely to read it.

There is room here for but bare mention of possible lessons to be learned from early American experiences in governing labor relations. The first strikes were called by bound workers, not by free laborers. Apparently, compulsory servitude under enforceable contracts, even when labor unions were outlawed, proved no remedy for discontent and strikes. Despite court penalties, employers continued to complain, much as our employers today are complaining, of absenteeism, slow-downs, shiftlessness, refusal to work, and faithlessness to contractual obligations. Free laborers, on the other hand, were accused of charging "oppressive" (meaning excessive) wages for their services, a practice which fines and other court punishments were
equally helpless to stop. And, as for punishing strikers, a report of the British General Campbell during the Revolutionary War seems appropriate today. When mechanics employed by the army authorities at the King's Works in Pensacola went on strike for higher wages, the colonel in charge proposed to punish the strikers for mutiny. But General Campbell restrained him, for the reason that “punishment would not answer to the forwarding of the Public Works.”

The Johns Hopkins University

WILLIAM M. LEISERSON


The sixth volume of Professor Gipson's important and painstaking work, The British Empire Before the American Revolution, has recently appeared. It relates the difficult and perilous situation of the English-speaking people in North America during the first three years of the French and Indian War. An introductory chapter presents the theme. It is that in spite of our national tradition "historical evidence . . . points to the fact—something doubtless that may hurt national pride—that if America is great today it is because Great Britain made it possible for her to be great. It is because thousands of men recruited into the regular British army from all parts of the British Isles were carried to America to fight and to die in support of the colonies." The author makes it clear that without Britain's help—regardless of reasons—the colonies could have come under the domination of France. He reaches the conclusion that the great duel for Empire fought between England and France from 1754 to 1763 might be best called "The Great War for the Empire."

The narrative begins with the youthful Washington's march to the Ohio in April, 1754. It ends with the accession of William Pitt to power in 1757, following British reverses in the war, which by that time had become world-wide. In the important events discussed between these two dates, many fresh viewpoints are set forth. These are based on the results of careful research, judicious interpretation, and solid scholarship.

The battle on the Monongahela where Braddock was defeated and received his mortal wound is discussed in detail. Much of the blame for the disaster is placed on Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Gage for not taking proper precautions as leader of the vanguard. The different aspects of the controversy over the tragic event and the various viewpoints are presented. The persistent American legend—that had the troops been encouraged to post themselves behind trees and fight in Indian fashion they would have won—is clearly dispelled.

The essay on the dispersion of the Acadians is admirable. It brings into short compass the sad story of these victims of the war, some of whom oftentimes were participants in marauding warfare. The account of their exile in 1755 is sympathetically told. But the author states that there are
no grounds for questioning the expulsion of the Acadians in view of the great Anglo-French struggle for dominance on the North American continent.

The last chapters of the volume present the successive steps by which the crisis in America developed into a world war. The European origins of what is usually called the "Seven Years' War" are analyzed broadly. The reversal of alliances in 1756, the French invasion and capture of British Minorca, the execution of General Byng, and the Prussian invasion of Saxony were the prelude to the war fought all over the globe.

The volume is a noteworthy contribution to the history of the period. It measures up to the high standard set in the earlier volumes of this work. With dramatic touch, Professor Gipson presents his story in a clear, forceful, and interesting manner.

University of Pennsylvania

ARTHUR C. BINING


Volume I of The Horn Papers contains the Diary of Jacob Horn, covering the years 1735-1777; Notes by Christopher Horn, son of Jacob Horn, touching upon events between 1772 and 1795; and the Diary of John Horn the Elder, a son likewise of Jacob Horn. To the brief diary of John Horn the Elder, for the years 1768-1774, is appended his Day Book, 1782-1818. The remainder of Volume I is devoted to the Horn Papers, a series of papers dealing with Spanish and French Explorations, the Ohio Company, Christopher Gist, Early Forts, and numerous other subjects. It is with Volume I that the student of the westward movement is primarily concerned.

The authenticity of the diaries has been called into question. The diary of Jacob Horn, who settled on the North Branch of the Potomac in 1740, and subsequently moved to southwestern Pennsylvania, is clearly not a record of events set down at the time they occurred. The entry of April 4, 1740, six pages, is a detailed recital of events covering more than a year. It contains extensive dialogue, numerous dates, and a variety of incidents that could hardly be reported with accuracy at such a distance in point of time. While it is fair to assume that the diaries have at least been revised, there is no obvious reason for entirely discarding them. They deserve to be treated as a witness of doubtful character is treated in a court of law. The real question is whether he is telling the truth at the particular moment. When we read in an entry of May 1, 1754, "Cut off six Pine trees in opposition to the will of King and Parliament. I, Jacob Horn first, Virginia next, and Parliament when it is good to my will," we may suspect that the diary is accurate. Jacob Horn was behaving as a Virginia backwoodsman might be expected to behave. Some parts of the diary may be un-
historical, but for the simple doings of every-day life the pioneer does not need “a muse of fire that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention.”

To the extent that the diaries are authentic, and this cannot be exactly determined, they justify in some measure the claims of the sponsors. They add to what has been known about the dark ages of Virginian settlement, 1740-1750, on the headwaters of the Potomac. As the student of the westward movement views the record, life begins on the distant Virginia frontier at 1750, or at the earliest with the Washington diary of 1748, and there is little historical material that bears on the preceding decades. Here we find information concerning the life of Christopher Gist before 1750, and on the use of trails leading directly from the back country of North Carolina to the headwaters of the Potomac by routes not hitherto described so fully. In regard to the larger matters of western history, the claims of the sponsors are not so well established. There is little if any original material that adds to our knowledge of the rivalry of British and French at the Forks of the Ohio, or even of the clash between Pennsylvanians and Virginians in the southwest corner of what is now Pennsylvania. The first reference to Braddock comes not in 1755, but on January 20, 1770, when the diarist asserts that “the Trent, Washington, Gist contention for leadership in 1753, cost Braddock his life, and utter ruin to the English Controll at the Forks in 1755.”

Of the remainder of Volume I, papers dealing with topics relating to the West, little need be said. The papers are not impressive. They depart at times from the accepted version, as on page 197, where it is asserted that “On October 12, 1753, young Washington presented himself to Governor Robert Dinwiddie and made a personal application for the appointment of envoy to the French headquarters near Lake Erie.” This may be true, but the editor presents no evidence that warrants abandoning the customarily accepted view.

Volume II, largely devoted to biographical sketches, must be lightly passed over. The sketches are such as are found in any county history of the eighteen-eighties.

Volume III contains the warrant, survey, and patent maps for Fayette, Greene, and Washington Counties, the three southwesterly counties of Pennsylvania. These maps, showing the original grantees of land in the three counties, comprise the most valuable and probably the most reliable portion of the history. Nowhere else, in published form, save possibly in the Domesday Survey undertaken by Joseph Schafer for the Wisconsin Historical Society, has there been presented such basic information concerning the persons who first secured government title and the amount and location of their holdings. Originally prepared for abstractors and other business people concerned with a complete chain of title from the first patent to the present holder, these maps have much value for the local historian, the genealogist, and the student of land policy.

Cornell University

Julian P. Bretz
Paul W. Gates
Professor Randall, in delivering a series of the Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History at Louisiana State University, has presented Lincoln in a light that should have clarified several misconceptions in the minds of his hearers. The material which he selected was apparently intended to focus attention on those aspects of Lincoln's background and thinking that are most often misunderstood in the South. He "suggests certain trends," based for the most part on generally known facts, and the lectures should be read with this purpose in mind.

Summarizing Dr. Randall's views, in a popular sense Lincoln was not an abolitionist, only partly a Northerner, and not always a Republican. The Emancipator's conservative views on dealing with slavery are sufficiently well known, even in a section that is not enthusiastic about him, to place him in a category different from that of William Lloyd Garrison or Gerrit Smith, but his sympathy for the South and his conflict with the leaders of the Republican party are less well understood.

Lincoln's feeling for the South was based on something more tangible than his broad friendliness for human nature in general. The author calls attention to his ties of birth, kinship, marriage, language, personal observation, and political friendship, particularly with Southern Whigs. His parents were Virginians, his wife an aristocratic Kentuckian. He was referred to as a "Southerner" by himself, by Secretary of State Seward, and by at least one prominent journalist of his day, George Alfred Townsend.

Perhaps the chief value of the lectures lies in the implicit warning that Lincoln's mental processes cannot be categorized simply by comparing him with members of his own party, or by contrasting him with his opponents. Thus his differences with Douglas are minimized and his disagreements with the radicals in his own party are underlined. The true meaning of the "house divided" speech is explained in a way that should class this phrase, lifted from its context, with Lincoln's ill-considered idea of Negro colonization as a source of one of the two most popular misunderstandings of his views.

The War President's handling of the delicate and extremely important Border-States question is a tribute to his statesmanship and one that paid great dividends. His "Design for Freedom" of the Negroes and his "Design for Peace," or plan for Reconstruction as most of us term it, are also well regarded in the light of later events, although Lincoln, as the author maintains, would apparently have had little better success than Johnson in carrying them out.

Professor Randall's lectures are pleasant and stimulating reading. Those of us who feel that some eminent historians have not mastered the technique of preparing lectures for subsequent publication should find a notable exception in this case.

Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg, Pa. J. WALTER COLEMAN

Josephine Perry has produced another of her "America at Work" books and this time has scrutinized the oil industry. Written for youths, the volume commences with the history of the early Pennsylvania oil regions and progresses through the various phases of the industry's development up to the present time.

Her early history of petroleum errs on several counts. For example, the date and the parties concerned with the first oil lease are incorrect; the lease was made on July 4, 1853, rather than 1854, and it was between the firm of Brewer, Watson & Co. and one J. D. Angier rather than Messrs. Bissell and Eveleth, law partners. On the early refining of crude oil by distillation, she represents Dr. Abraham Gesner as an American, whereas he was a Canadian.

The book states that Charles P. Hatch conceived the idea for the first tank car in 1864, but Hatch refutes this in his memoirs, when he writes: "... I noticed a firm shipping oil from a private siding at Miller Farm station, which was using a few cars equipped with two tanks each, thereby eliminating the use of barrels in making shipments." He goes on to say that this was in 1866 and that he induced his firm to make similar cars; they did so and put three tanks on the cars instead of only two. Previous to this time, in September, 1863, Charles Scott of Lawrenceville, Pa., had invented a car having tin-lined compartments, much like a bulk boat, and suitable for shipping petroleum.

The author has M. E. VanSyckel conceiving the first pipeline. Actually, it was built by Samuel VanSyckel, who was general manager of the line after the construction. His son, M. E. VanSyckel, was the superintendent.

The best part of the treatise is that dealing with refining. Here a difficult subject is treated carefully and clearly, and the reader is brought up to date with a discussion of the Houdry catalytic process, high octane gasoline, tetraethyl lead, and other petroleum products, including synthetic rubber.

The general format of the book is excellent. The illustrations, thirty-three in number, are above reproach, although all are of 1946 vintage. It might have been well, if for no other purpose than that of comparison, to have used several early "oil-day" scenes.

Inasmuch as this volume will probably not be used by historians or research workers, the errors that it contains will not cause much trouble. High school libraries and larger grade schools having library facilities will find it of value.

Warren, Pa.

Ernest C. Miller


For the first time the main versions of the legend of the founding of the Long House have been brought together in a carefully prepared syn-
thesis. The story of Deganawidah and Hiawatha in carrying "the Mind of the Master of Life" to the tribes of Iroquoia is told with simplicity and tender appreciation. In the realm of history the familiar terms of the constitution of the League of the Five Nations are reinterpreted with assertions of the Iroquois' "profound understanding of the principles of peace." These consist in various freedoms plus such "realistic" devices as controlled discussion, dominance by a Big Three, inter-clan marriages, and a certain administrative thick-skinnedness. ("When you administer the Law your skins must be seven thumbs thick.")

In dealing with history the author is less felicitous than he is in dealing with legend. Fourteen hundred and fifty may be the year of the founding of some kind of League, but it is well known that real unity of action did not begin until mid-seventeenth century. Before that, seldom did even two of the Five Nations join for offensive purposes, and never for self-defense. To say that the peacemindedness of the Iroquois was rooted chiefly in the examples of their cultural heroes and symbols and in their "will to peace" is to ignore the effect of the extinction of their beaver supply in causing them to try to divert some of the trade of the French-controlled tribes—i.e., to extend the "Great Peace" by treaties and alliances with the Hurons and others. It is naive to say that these tribes and the French were unready for "Deganawidah's vision" and that the Iroquois were prophets of tree trade. It was essentially a case of the "have nots" asking the "haves" to take pity on them and of uniting against them when they did not do so.

As a synthesis of legend this book is excellent; as history it makes no contribution.

Smith College

RANDOLPH C. DOWNES

_Brady's Bend, and Other Ballads._ By Martha Keller. Illustrations by Edward Shenton. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1946. Pp. 142. $2.50.)

There are two poems in Martha Keller's _Brady's Bend_ which in my opinion represent the best qualities of this collection. The first is a lyric, "Garland":

At Valley Forge, in clouds, the dogwoods drift
    Over the hills like snow.
Down to the Delaware, half to the Chesapeake,
    In flood—
Rivers of redbuds go.

The hills repeat the past. The woodlands lift
    Their branches for a sign
Of onetime once when snow was on the Valley Creek—
    And blood
Was on the Brandywine.
Here imagery, metrical forms, and artful simplicity of diction combine to express genuine feeling with dignity and beauty.

The second poem is the ballad, "Cock of the Woods," a fine song that only an American could sing with appropriate intonation:

The sparrow sticks to the streets and alleys.
Lark eggs lie on the grassy ground.
The bobwhite wails in the river valleys—
But the logcock builds where the wind is found.

For I got a man and one man only.
The man I'm liking he likes it lorn.
The man I'm loving he loves it lonely.
He's a Lord God Woodpecker, bred and born.

I have quoted the last two stanzas of five. The sharp tune and the lusty rhythm of this ballad give it the reckless exuberance and peppery savor of authentic folk song.

"Garland" and "Cock of the Woods" are touchstones of the best poetry in the volume. They are in harmony with themselves. That is to say, they are beautifully designed, significantly realized forms of clear imagination. From both a technical and an aesthetic point of view they represent genuine poetic achievement.

There are other poems in which the harmony of the poetic art has given way to exercises in technical virtuosity. One of these is "Liberty Blues" in which there is what I should call a confusion of dialectal rhythms and grammatical patterns with the traditional modes of the philosophical lyric. Perhaps this confusion is intentional and my ear has missed a fine dissonance. In "No Quarter, No Quarter" I hear the same, or almost the same stylistic incompatibility between the metrical pattern and the diction.

This poem does not move with the assured pace that its subject, even though it be the terrifying story of the Alamo, deserves. Even the title poem, "Brady's Bend," suffers, I think, from the over-fastidious production of a tricky metrical pattern which is not so simple as it looks on the page. In reading the poem aloud one is likely to have too much technical trouble to make it "go" into a tune which would make possible the re-creation of the poem in one's own image. The result is likely to be the memory of a series of episodes, intensely interesting in themselves, which do not join in a singleness of impression.

The more than seventy poems of this collection are intelligently arranged in ten divisions: Lonesome Land, Wilderness Road, American Rurals, Center Square, Lincoln Memorial, Dead March, Drum Music, Firing Squad, Office for the Dead, and Search for Tomorrow. These well-conceived subtitles suggest a grouping both thematic and loosely chronological to catch the moods of American history from colonial days to the era of the "Manhattan Project." I found myself attracted especially to the divisions American Rurals and Center Square. Here I found, in American Rurals, such poems as "Headstone," "Widow," "Herbs and Simples," "Mrs. Mc-

It's a-mizzling and a-drizzling
And a-making something down.
And its four o'clock in the morning.

These poems, although thoroughly original, recall and are therefore reënforced by a strain in American poetry which is familiar to the admirers of Stephen Vincent Benét, Robinson, and Masters; for Martha Keller's studies in genre are similar in their power of revelation to the rich and often ironical observations of the personae of John Brown's Body, Tilbury Town, and Spoon River.

It would be discourteous, I think, to overlook the superior taste in design and execution represented by the typography and format of this book and by the symbolic illustrations of Edward Shenton. Together they compose a handsome and appropriate setting for the poems of Brady's Bend.

Bucknell University
C. WILLIAM SMITH


As a general rule it may be considered advisable to leave book reviewing to the specialists in their respective fields. There are occasions, however, when the non-specialist reads a book and experiences the impact of a new discovery. That sense of discovery has been mine as I have been reading Henry Kauffman's Pennsylvania Dutch American Folk Art. Such being the case, I feel impelled to pass my enthusiasm for it on to others like myself, whose knowledge of the subject may be very limited but whose interest may be greatly increased by contact with Mr. Kauffman's book.

On its physical side a book may be either ugly or beautiful. This one is, in my estimation, a work of art about works of art. The jacket is in fine character and thoroughly effective, the binding is excellent, the typography is first-rate, and the proportions of the book make it inviting to handle. One is impressed by these factors and cannot help feeling that an unusual sensitivity was working hand in hand with a conscience in the making of this book.

The contents of Mr. Kauffman's book are divided into two sections—text and illustrations. The text is concerned with the background from which this most important folk art sprang, and includes separate chapters on its architecture, metal work, glass ware, furniture, pottery, etc. These items are described in terms that anyone can understand. Too many authors in their attempt to exhaust their subject end up by exhausting their readers. Mr. Kauffman was aware of this danger, for he has balanced his material in such a way that one is led from one subject to the next with no sense of being hurried or of being weighed down with so much information that he suffers from brain fag.
There are some 275 illustrations devoted to the material at hand. Several of these are in color, most of them are large and clear, and they are all so placed on the pages as to be a constant joy to the eye. One finds everything in character here, for there is no sense of supercilious preciousness on the one hand or dull cataloguing on the other as one turns these beautifully illustrated pages. A mean has been struck that projects a full sense of the character of the material being illustrated.

I do not know whether or not Mr. Kauffman has made an important contribution to his subject. I do know, however, that he has made an important contribution to me. There must be many others who would react to this book in much the same way as I have reacted to it if it were to come into their hands. It is my sincere hope that that very thing may happen.

Cornwall Landing, N. Y.

HARRY WICKEY


(Privately printed by the author, Mrs. May A. Seitz, 30 West Chesapeake Ave., Towson 4, Md., 1946. Pp. 63.)

"Genealogies make dry reading," says the author of The History of The Hoffman Paper Mills in Maryland in her preface, and, therefore, she has tried to write a history of the Hoffman family in Maryland only from the point of view of its contributions to the manufacturing of paper. She has succeeded in creating a minor saga of the rise and fall of a family of artisans and manufacturers from the time that the founder, Frederick William Hoffman, arrived from Germany, to the flooding of the ancestral land to make room for a reservoir for Baltimore's water system.

Several qualities distinguish this book from the generality of privately printed works of local historians and genealogists. These are that the slender volume is adequately documented and leanly written. I wonder whether the author would have had the same economy in style if some commercial publisher had been interested. As it is, the book lacks much of the moralizing and dismally fine writing found so frequently in local history. And, in spite of the fact that the Hoffmans, although from Maryland, may be called technically Pennsylvania Germans because of their provenience and marriages, Mrs. Seitz does not attempt (as local historians of Pennsylvania Germans almost invariably do) to give the whole history of the Palatine immigration, together with much moralizing as to its ethnic, religious, and economic values. Mrs. Seitz sticks to her paper-making. The only passages out of place are not her own, but the quoted effusions of the Baltimore historian J. Thomas Scharf, which would have been better condensed into a few sentences in Mrs. Seitz's own words.

The paper-manufacturing career of the Hoffmans in Maryland started in 1776 and ended after four generations, when the mill wheels at Gunpowder Falls stood still in 1893. Two members of the family, Frederick William, the founder, and William H. Hoffman, who went into the business in 1841, were the outstanding members of this manufacturing family. Others lacked their ability or were content to be rural mill-owners of the
type of business men so often seen in the countryside of Maryland and Pennsylvania, where the contractor becomes merely the neighborhood carpenter.

Fire and water are given by Mrs. Seitz as the reasons for the rapid decline of the Hoffman mills. Floods and fires destroyed equipment, and the losses were only partly covered by insurance. Before the mills could recover, competitive paper mills, particularly in the New England states, had captured the customers. In regard to the fires, Mrs. Seitz, in one lone sentence, mentions the usual chitchat at the time of such disasters, "there were several indications that the fire was of incendiary origin," but hard-headedly adds: "No evidence could be produced, however, to furnish sufficient material for an open charge." Transportation difficulty also played a part in the decline.

After the Hoffman family lost control of its property at Gunpowder Falls and elsewhere, it established several other enterprises of short-lived duration. When the city of Baltimore on January 5, 1925, secured title to the former Hoffman land, activity thereon had been long restricted to agriculture. The new dam was completed in 1933. As Mrs. Seitz writes, "It was the water that brought the Hoffman mills into existence . . . five generations later the water had become more valuable than the land." Muhlenberg College

RALPH CHARLES WOOD

A Letter by Dr. Benjamin Rush Describing the Consecration of the German College at Lancaster in June, 1787. Printed, with an Introduction and Notes, from a Newly Discovered Manuscript, now in the Fackenthal Library at Franklin and Marshall College. Edited by L. H. Butterfield. (Lancaster, Pa.: Published by order of the College, 1945. Pp. viii, 37. $2.50.)

This beautiful and scholarly booklet, of which four hundred copies were printed by the Princeton University Press, is an item that should be highly prized by collectors in the field of Pennsylvania history. It is built around a letter, written from Philadelphia on June 19, 1787, in which Dr. Benjamin Rush described for his mother-in-law, Mrs. Richard Stockton, of Princeton, New Jersey, his visit to Lancaster to participate in the exercises at the dedication of Franklin College. Accompanying the printed letter are four facsimile pages of the manuscript, together with a reproduction of a newspaper article describing in part the dedicatory exercises. An informing introduction and copious notes by the editor complete the work.

To characterize this booklet as a collector's item only would be to underrate its value. It is a positive contribution to the social and intellectual history of Pennsylvania, for the letter that it makes public for the first time is not only a prime source for the history of Franklin and Marshall College, but is as well a document that every student of the career of Dr. Rush will welcome with eagerness. It contains information about Rush's educational concerns that the reviewer did not come by in Nathan G. Goodman's Benjamin Rush, Physician and Citizen, which was published
in 1934, ten years before Franklin and Marshall College acquired this letter as a result of the sale of the Alexander Biddle Papers. Only the most critical reader of Mr. Goodman’s book would suspect that Rush ever gave any thought to the “German College” at Lancaster; in fact, the only mention of Franklin College that the reviewer could find in it is in a brief annotation of one title of Mr. Goodman’s bibliography.

Bucknell University

J. ORIN OLIPHANT


The latest annual report of the Archivist of the United States, like those which preceded it, is crowded with information of value to students of American history. Of the accessions during the year of this report, the Archivist, Dr. Solon J. Buck, writes as follows:

“Accessions for the year were notable for quality, not quantity. . . . Only 73,951 cubic feet were received in the fiscal year under review as compared with 111,612 in the preceding year. This brought the total amount of records in the custody of the Archivist on June 30, 1945, to 689,195 cubic feet.”

A statistical summary of the accessions for the fiscal year 1945 is printed on pages 15-16, and a brief description of them appears on pages 62-80 of the report.


This attractive pamphlet preserves in convenient form an address delivered at the “1946 Schuylkill Valley Luncheon” of The Newcomen Society of England, held in Mr. Brown’s honor at Pottsville, Pa., on June 26, 1946. Mr. Brown is president of the Reading Company.


This booklet, intended to be a “pictorial and textual record of locomotives operated by the Reading,” is a contribution to the history of transportation in Pennsylvania. It is an illustration of the fact that promotional literature can be put to good historical use.


In this volume is reprinted, under the title of “From Lewisburg to California in 1849,” the diary of William H. Chamberlin, who, with five companions, set out from Lewisburg, Pa., on February 6, 1849, for the west coast. This diary was first published in the Lewisburg Saturday News in 1902.
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