BOOK REVIEWS


This volume is the product of careful research and will be of great value to the student of the theatre and of considerable interest to the casual reader as well. It is pleasantly reminiscent of the days when Philadelphia was the undisputed home of American drama, for it was not until after the Civil War that New York began to usurp first place in this field. Philadelphia long had precedence, even from pre-Revolutionary days. The first American play was written and produced in this city, namely, The Prince of Parthia, by Thomas Godfrey, the younger, the son of the Thomas Godfrey who either invented or improved upon the quadrant. Young Godfrey was apprenticed to a watchmaker but paid more attention to poetry than he did to watches, and soon became, through his literary tastes, the friend of Francis Hopkinson, Benjamin West, and Benjamin Franklin. He fought as a lieutenant in Braddock's campaign against Fort Duquesne, and died in North Carolina in 1763; he was only twenty-three when he wrote The Prince of Parthia, but he did not live to see his tragedy produced in April, 1767, at the theatre in South Street. This was the same theatre in which Major André and his fellow British officers acted later on, and for which André painted a drop curtain. To quote an article of mine on "Some Philadelphia Men of Letters," I may add: "The play belongs to the old fashioned school of tragic drama, and is typical of the time when every young author who wrote for the stage sought to imitate Shakespeare, but without getting within sight of him. 'The Prince of Parthia' is not to be sneered at but it is as far away from the modern drama as is 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' from a fantasy by Maeterlinck." Some years ago a company of college students admirably revived this old play.

Nor must we forget that the first American grand opera, Leonora, was produced in Philadelphia at the old Chestnut Street theatre in June, 1845. The score was by William H. Fry, and the libretto, based on The Lady of Lyons, by Joseph R. Fry—two talented brothers of a distinguished family. Joseph R. Fry was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, and it was he who translated the Italian of Bellini's Norma for its first presentation in America, in November, 1840, at the Chestnut Street theatre. He also adapted the libretto of Donizetti's Anna Boleyn which was sung in English for the first time in April, 1844, at the same house. In this opera, we are told, was first introduced the air of "Home, Sweet Home," as a part of an operatic entertainment. William H. Fry, the composer of Leonora, was an accomplished critic and musician, who wrote many pieces for the voice and orchestral music as well.
Francis Courtney Weems, the actor-manager, says of this opera in his memoirs: "Had Mr. Fry selected New York instead of Philadelphia for the first field of his operations the whole United States would have teemed with praises. . . . The sin he committed was daring to present the first lyrical drama ever composed in America to the citizens of Philadelphia for judgment before New Yorkers had an opportunity of passing upon its merits."

In January, 1920, nearly seventy-five years after the première of Leonora, at the lecture on grand opera delivered in the hall of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania by Mr. John Curtis, the tenor aria which Fry wrote for the score was sung by Mr. Joseph S. McGlynn. The manuscript of the opera is now a cherished possession of the Society.

Professor Wilson's volume takes one back to the days when travelling "stars" were usually supported by the stock companies of the cities where they played. A whole book, by the way, might be written on the old stock companies of Philadelphia, from the early days of the Walnut, Arch, and Chestnut Street theatres down to the later organizations of William D. Gemmill (at the Chestnut), George Holland (at the Girard Avenue theatre), and the Orpheum Company. Nowadays Philadelphia obtains most of her attractions from New York, whose managers dictate the theatrical policies of America. The volume of Professor Wilson is filled with a wonderful array of data as to plays, players, and playwrights, with fine chronological records, so that great names of the past rise up and greet us like welcome ghosts.

Philadelphia

Edward Robins


Perhaps no period in American history has so thoroughly engrossed the historian and general public as the decade and a half following 1850, "when two sections of the nation, grown deeply different, profoundly disagreeing as to loyalties, mobilized first argument and then armed men and set out to destroy each other on the battle-field. . . . Northern publicists accounted for it in terms of incompatible moral codes. . . . Southern writers, on the other hand, saw an irreconcilable difference between two schools of constitutional interpretation, one stemming from the doctrine of Jefferson, the other from that of Hamilton" (xiii).

In Professor Cole's comprehensive and magnificent study, he has not only included the foregoing thoughts, ideas, and forces at work—permeating, controlling, or influencing the actions of the American statesman, but he has presented almost every phase of American life and human activity throughout the era included in this study. To be more specific, he has contemplated and recorded the life of the planter and the slave, the poor white and the middle class, the northern manufacturer and the laborer, the speculator and the politician, the mud and filth of the city, and the dust and drought of the country. He has further dealt with the progress in railroad development, turnpikes,
plank roads, transportation of mails to the Pacific, steamship companies and their speed and service.

Professor Cole's study also includes the rise and development of free public education in the South and West in particular, and incidently in the North. He shows, moreover, that the American people were becoming educationally minded, and that between 1850 and 1860 a hundred schools of higher learning were established which included technological and scientific education. Free libraries were established; lyceums and public lectures attracted thousands of people; and debating clubs flourished in every town and village. It was also an age of renowned writers such as Emerson, Melville, Hawthorne, Whitman, Parkman, Motley, Prescott, Holmes, Hildreth, Bancroft, and others. In addition, newspapers and periodicals were widely read. There was likewise a growing interest in good music, opera, drama, painting, and sculpture.

The author likewise shows the influence, development, and activity of the church. Religious organizations were expanding so rapidly that over a thousand frame churches were built annually and the itinerant minister or "circuit rider" traveled many miles in order to attend to the religious needs of his growing congregations. To supply the religious field with more and better trained workers, denominational colleges and theological seminaries sprang up to meet the demand. The churches, however, divided on the issue of slavery. The ministers in the South rushed to the defense of slavery, but many in the North opposed the institution, some were indifferent, and others defended it. When the Civil War began, nevertheless, the northern clergy aided materially in rallying a divided North to Lincoln and the Union.

Professor Cole does not, however, embrace in his study the military campaigns of the Civil War; he leaves that phase of the period to the military expert. But he includes the war propaganda that was carried on in the North and South, and emphasizes the fact that each section believed these tales of horror and barbarism.

The reviewer feels that the author has succeeded in accomplishing his purpose in presenting a comprehensive and true picture of American life from 1850 to 1865, out of which emerged present-day America. For the undergraduate and general reader the value of the work is its comprehensiveness; for the specialist this inclusiveness is its greatest weakness because the author is naturally unable to treat all phases of human and governmental activities fully and adequately. Nevertheless he has performed a difficult task well and the study deserves high praise.

Lehigh University

George D. Harmon

The Money Supply of the American Colonies before 1720. By Curtis Putnam Nettles, Professor of History in the University of Wisconsin. University of Wisconsin Studies in the Social Sciences and History, no. 20. (Madison, Wisconsin, 1934. 300 p. Paper, $2.00.)

We have been reading Professor Nettles' various articles on the monetary situation in the colonies and the commercial background of the same; now
we have them in slightly revised form with a number of added chapters. The result is a full and effective statement of colonial and imperial economic interests and the clashes involved during the period about 1680–1720.

Any one who deals with the subject must work more or less with G. L. Beer in the background. Professor Nettels does not agree with Beer that until 1745 the British colonies were regarded by the British chiefly as the providers of the raw materials; he emphasizes the export of manufactured goods from Britain to the colonies, pointing out that Britain was well advanced in industry before the Industrial Revolution, particularly in the manufacture of woollens. The author also disagrees with Beer's view that the South was preferred to the North on the ground that it was the better source of supplies; he argues effectively that the South was also the better market for British manufactures of one sort or another.

The production of American staples increased more rapidly than the British power to consume at home and to market abroad, the author points out. This caused prices to decline in the colonies, with all the distress that comes from diminished purchasing power. Both the North and the South needed more manufactures from Britain than they could pay for in their own products, particularly at a time of falling prices. Hence the inevitable drainage of currency to the Mother Country. Well, these facts are clear enough; and the author takes the logical next step in pointing out that Britain did nothing to meet the situation. The colonies were driven to help themselves in monetary matters.

Various devices were adopted by the colonies to meet their need for currency. The value of foreign coins was raised by provincial law. Massachusetts issued its pine tree shillings. Paper money was put forth in increasing quantities during Queen Anne’s War, and even more in the years that followed. That inflation (a raising of prices through the increased amount and more rapid turnover of money) should occur was inevitable.

One of the pathetic themes that recurs in American history tells the story of confusion and conflict whenever money becomes a public issue. When the British merchants saw what was happening to colonial money, particularly in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, and South Carolina during the period 1713–17, they raised their prices so that they might not be forced to take less for their wares sold in America. To the colonists this seemed unfair. As prices went up, at the same pace that money value went down, local debtors rejoiced and creditors wrung their hands. The British government finally developed an attitude of hostility to the whole monetary process: it sided with British merchants and colonial creditors. At this point the author leaves the story. Who more qualified than he to deal with the period 1720–64?

Now, in connection with the inflation of the period beginning in 1713, we should like to have a lot more information concerning trade, both local and imperial; for we know that it is hard to make an excess of currency “take,” unless there is a very brisk demand for goods. Certainly there was demand during the preceding war. Either this continued during the years immediately following or the output of currency was so great as to bring fear into the situation as a dominant factor.
We have here a learned and judicial monograph, based upon a study of manuscripts in English and American archives and on articles and books printed in various places. The author is clear cut in statements but neither insistent nor aggressive in his arguments. His great service lies in his presentation of monetary conditions about 1700 and in his analysis of the commercial conditions that lay behind them.

Harvard University

N. S. B. Gras


To students of Revolutionary history the source of supply of cannon, shot, rifles, and other munitions for the Continental Army has often been a stumbling block in their researches. "Few people realize that nine days after the Battle of Lexington, Connecticut made preparations for obtaining a supply of cannon," the author states in his subscription circular for this most valuable work, which, like the many others from the same pen, is replete with authentic information of the source material from which the book was compiled.

The making of cannon, the supply of iron ore, the methods of casting, finishing, and mounting such implements of warfare—for both the army and navy—as well as the guarding of the plant are all graphically and authentically described and illustrated by the author. Not only were the many New England regiments equipped with cannon from Salisbury, but many naval vessels from that territory were likewise supplied from this plant.

This well-documented volume not only tells us where the ore was obtained, gives the ground plan of Salisbury and its cannon factory, but also locates the source of wood and charcoal, items so necessary in a plant of this character, and describes the delivery of the product to both the army and navy of New England.

The "Exercises of the Great Guns" is also given, and an adequate index is included. The book is too short for such an historically important subject and the edition (of 202 numbered copies) entirely too limited, since it is a work that will appeal to many others besides students of cannon-casting.

Philadelphia

Harrold E. Gillingham


Mr. Weelen's purpose, evidently, has been not so much to write the much needed definitive biography of Rochambeau as to stimulate an interest in his hero. Consequently, his method is the artist's rather than that of the compiler of data—careful selection, emphasis, and lucidity. The result is a charming biography which gives the main outlines of Rochambeau's life and paints unforgettable pictures. It is obvious, however, that it is impossible to compress Rochambeau's numerous exploits in the War of the Austrian Succession, or the period from 1757 to 1762 in two short chapters of thirty small pages
without omitting a great deal. This is likewise true of the other chapters. Consequently, a student of military history will still find the Mémoires and Dr. Keim’s book indispensable. On the other hand, Mr. Weelen’s book will supply him with the long needed biography of Rochambeau, a book that is about Rochambeau and not a history of Frederick the Great, the rise of the United States, or a history of the French Revolution. Though Mr. Weelen’s space is too limited to permit him to discuss controversial points, or do more than present his conclusions, the book is of value. The author has worked extensively with the manuscript sources in France and gives a valuable list of them. It is regrettable that there is no bibliography and no index.

William L. Clements Library

EDNA VOSPER


The “picture rocks” where pre-Columbian aborigines left carvings must be scrutinized for light on the American scene before the era of such useful sources for history as family Bibles, attic trunks, newspaper files, and public archives. Donald A. Cadzow has done valuable service in studying Pennsylvania pictographs in their original positions, in photographing them and taking casts, and in removing them to the State Museum at Harrisburg. Now he has presented the results of several years of careful work. The copious illustrations, from photographs and drawings, provide opportunity for all to try to help unravel many puzzles still unsolved. Mr. Cadzow discusses convincingly his conclusion that the more recent of these carvings were made by some tribe of Algonkian Indians. He expresses belief that the older carvings are highly conventionalized, executed with skill, and the work of a people superior to the Algonkian tribesmen to whom he ascribes the later carvings.

It would be well if the valuable material he has assembled now could be worked over by scholars of specialized training in comparative linguistics and epigraphy, in the archeology of primitive peoples and in the origins of the decorative arts. Perhaps specialists acquainted with the earliest background of mankind’s attempts to leave records or create interpretable symbols could hazard some valuable suggestions on just what these long-ago Pennsylvania rock-carvers were trying to do—to decorate, to placate evil spirits, to leave messages, to create records—or whatever the real explanation may be.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

VICTOR HENDERSON


This volume is a mine of antiquarian wealth, both in matter and illustration, and will be welcomed by all who love “Old Philadelphia,” and all related to her. While it is an account of a legal title’s history from Penn’s time to the late
1860's, with the later titles down to Mr. Lewis' own ownership of his law office site, it is as though he has made the successive owners and their associates come to life again in incident and illustration. It is the first time that such men as Charles Chauncey, Moses Levy, and such leaders of their generation have come to life again, with pictures of the public places that were dominant in their respective periods. One is impressed by the wealth and rarity in illustration—as though they were the prized collections of a lifetime by a loving antiquarian hand. Not the least of these treasures is the appearance of Cecelia Beaux' portrait of Mr. Lewis himself not heretofore well known to the general public. Few men have done so much for several great institutions like The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and The Historical Society of Pennsylvania as has the late president of these two organizations and his portrait should be better and more widely known.

The material and illustrations both are made more easily accessible by twenty-two pages of careful index and over five pages of an elaborate table of contents.

Swarthmore

Burton Alva Konkle


xxx. The Beginnings of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. By Origen Storrs Seymour. (32 p. $0.25.)

xxxi. The Loyalists of Connecticut. By Epaphroditus Peck. (32 p. $0.25.)

xxxii. The Beginnings of Connecticut, 1632-1662. By Charles M. Andrews. (84 p. $0.75.)


In casting about for a proper form of publication with which to celebrate Connecticut's Tercentenary, those in charge of the event may have hit upon an original and highly valuable idea that can be adapted to permanent as well as anniversary uses by other states. This idea, as is evidenced by the four essays just published, is to issue "during the next few years, a series of small pamphlets upon a great variety of topics, selected for the purpose of making known among the people of Connecticut and others as many of the features as possible of the history and life of Connecticut as colony and State." In what better way could the Pennsylvania Historical Commission serve the people of this commonwealth than to emulate the high standard set by Connecticut in adapting its publication program to this modest but effective medium? These essays are not issued chronologically but merely "at any time and upon any subject that seems to be of interest and worthy to be made a matter of record."

This mode of elucidating the history of a state has several advantages over the publication of a ten- or twelve-volume co-operative work, such as has been done in Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York. It requires less burdensome underwriting, and it can be more widely circulated. A selective purchase ac-
cording to the taste of the reader can be made. Moreover, new discoveries can be brought to public attention by the mere issuance of a pamphlet, whereas under the older method nothing but a revised edition of a large work would suffice. Finally, one cannot pack a five-volume royal octavo set in his pocket for reading on a commuters' train; but these pamphlets are ideal for such purposes. Other states would do well to imitate the inexpensive but typographically attractive pamphlets issued under the supervision of Mr. Carl P. Rollins of the Yale University Press.


This bibliography, presenting a varied and rich source of material, contains more than 1800 entries, examples of every type of traveller. The items are arranged alphabetically by authors and anonymous items by title. In addition there is a selected chronological list of travellers and an index of subjects and names of persons and places. Most of the materials here listed were first gathered in Paris. In America the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress were diligently searched and where two copies were not located in these libraries an attempt was made to locate copies in other American libraries. The abbreviations employed in locating copies are the abbreviations used by the Union Catalog of the Library of Congress, that recent and very valuable work which has not as yet been discovered by many, nor its possibilities of usefulness fully realized by scholars. This bibliography in its own naturally more restricted field should prove equally as helpful and it is to be hoped that soon these two works will earn deserved appreciation.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Corona E. Kerns

A Hugenot Exile in Virginia, or Voyages of a Frenchman Exiled For His Religion, with a Description of Virginia and Maryland. With an Introduction and Notes by Gilbert Chinard. (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1934. 189 p. $4.00.)

The judgment which led Professor Chinard to translate and publish this travel-narrative of a Hugenot Refugee named Durand, who fled from his native land after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, is to be commended. Such descriptions of the American colonies written by Seventeenth Century visitors are rare, and new editions of those that exist are to be welcomed. These tales of persecutions patiently endured, of suffering stoically accepted, of greedy ships-captains grudgingly patronized, of lazy rascally American planters, and of wealthy landed widows seeking husbands should serve as jumping-off-places for the nimble imaginations of historical romancers. Yet this account has merit more intrinsic; it is one of the first descriptions of Virginia to be published on the Continent, and it throws a small beam of light on the causes that led to the settlement of the American wilderness.
This narrative consists of the record of the adventures of Durand of Dauphine, who fled from France to Italy and thence, by a devious route, to London and America. The heart of the narrative is the almost pulsating description of Virginia, enhanced to our minds by naive errors of fact. Professor Chinard has rendered the account into tolerable English; it is fairly easy to read. His introduction, though brief, is helpful; his notes, though scanty, illuminating. This book has a special interest this year because it is the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

Princeton University

John Joseph Stoudt

A Bibliography of Notes and Queries; The Works of Dr. Egle; Historical Register; &c. By A. Monroe Aurand, Jr. (Harrisburg: The Aurand Press, 1934. 64 p. Limited edition. $3.00.)

Dr. William Henry Egle needs no introduction to students of Pennsylvania history. His contributions to it, as well as the stimulation his interest and enthusiasm gave to students and societies, are well known. As editor of Notes and Queries and author of numerous books, articles, and addresses he has preserved valuable history of the Province and the Commonwealth. The monumental work he did in editing state papers and documents, forming the Pennsylvania Archives, second and third series, is invaluable. For these accomplishments he is probably better known than for the service he rendered the State Library during the three terms he served as State Librarian, being appointed first by Governor Beaver in 1887.

In the task of preparing this bibliography of Dr. Egle, the compiler has not followed a strictly bibliographical method. Under works of Dr. Egle he has included some books in which Dr. Egle had no more apparent part than that of assistance to the author, acknowledged by him in the preface. A chapter is devoted to some twenty-four scrapbooks kept by Dr. Egle, bearing his signature and notes in his handwriting. Only a few of these seem to be made up of clippings from the writings of Dr. Egle, although they have undoubted historical value. More questionable is the inclusion of the scrapbooks and diaries, kept by Augustus Burnett, and presented by him to Dr. Egle.

Philadelphia

Susan E. Black

American Plays Printed 1714–1830. A Bibliographical Record. Compiled by Frank Pierce Hill. (Stanford University: Stanford University Press, 1934. xii, 152 p. Illustrated. $3.50.)

Based upon Wegelin's standard Early American Plays, 1714–1830 and upon the Atkinson collection of plays in the University of Chicago, this bibliography lists for the first time plays known to have been written and published by Americans. The term "American" is broadly defined to include the works of foreign authors living in America and American authors living abroad. The list is given first in an alphabetical arrangement of authors and anonymous titles; then follow alphabetical and chronological lists by title. Some
possible danger may lie in the compiler's decision to abandon the brackets around an author's name when, in the case of an anonymous play, several libraries have agreed in attributing it to the same author, but this danger is not great. So carefully has the compiler done his work that it was not quite necessary that he should have forestalled criticism by saying: "Possibly some titles have been included that should have been omitted, and probably some omitted that should have been included." During the period covered, 405 plays are listed; of these the University of Pennsylvania has 189, while Harvard College has the highest number, 244. As was to be expected, Philadelphia led in the printing of plays in the period covered. This bibliography is a painstaking and thorough piece of work which should prove of great value to students of the American theatre.

Princeton University

HARRY W. PEDICORD


This little volume, embracing the addresses occasioned by the presentation of Borie's portrait of Professor Cheyney to the University, is made really significant by the inclusion of a bibliography and the academic last will and testament of one of America's outstanding historians. The bibliography is impressive even to those who have been familiar with Dr. Cheyney's half-century of teaching and writing, and the academic will is a summation of the wisdom and experience that have been of such marked influence on two generations of students. Dr. Cheyney's testament is concerned wholly with the place of the university in society and not with the function of historiography; thus room is left for an important codicil which it is hoped he will attach to this document in the future. What amounted to such a codicil was Dr. Cheyney's Law in History and other Essays, but since its appearance in 1927 the high hopes of the school of scientific historians have been challenged by Croce, Beard, and others, and it would be instructive to have Dr. Cheyney's present philosophy.

Facsimile of the Olive Branch Petition, 8 July, 1775. From the Original in H. M. Public Record Office, London. (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1934. 8 p. $0.65; 2s.)

This beautiful reproduction is a collotype facsimile of the petition signed by John Hancock and forty-eight representatives of the American colonies which was presented to George III. in a last effort by the moderate party under John Dickinson's leadership to secure a peaceful settlement of the points at issue. This reproduction leaves no doubt as to the superior excellence of the continuous tone collotype process for making faithful facsimiles; even the light reflected from a tiny grain of blotting sand in one corner of the dot of an "i" is caught. Copies may be obtained from the British Library of Information, 270 Madison Avenue, New York City.