BOOK REVIEWS


These two volumes magnificently inaugurate a resurvey of one of the most important periods in our national history. Utilizing the wide array of monographic material that has made its appearance in the past half-century, and ranging widely in special collections of source material (especially those yet unpublished), Mr. Nevins has been able to achieve a synthesis which brings his readers down to date on the developments of the pre-Civil War era. Both his material and his interpretation are thoroughly catholic; his efforts to be impartial will be recognized by all but special pleaders for the one side or the other. While many of his findings are influenced by his conclusion that political-mindedness was a paramount factor in American attitudes, he does not fail to note the importance of economic forces as determinants of the roles played by both northerners and southerners. Economic determinism in the philosophical sense is conspicuously absent, but economic causation is carefully evaluated in its relations to specific situations.

In this spirit he gives due emphasis to the significance of the growing industrialism of the North and of the increasingly intransigent agrarianism of the South, each supplemented by other economic forces that re-enforced sectionalism. "Sectional interests with all their economic and social components, determined theory," he writes. He specifically points out that in 1849 "Southern ill-temper was aggravated by the fact that this was a year of distress among many of the cotton growers," and that the general flush of prosperity in the South in 1850 was a main factor in bringing about the rout of the apostles of disunion. In other cases, too—as, for example, Pennsylvania and the tariff—he indicates that economics and politics were closely correlated. But he also finds other more fickle forces that sometimes determined the ebb and flow of currents of opinion.

The author's analysis of the sectional controversy over slavery extension is penetrating and effective, if not particularly novel. He carefully evaluates the forces that lay behind the disunion crisis of 1850 and its aftermath. Paramount in the situation was the different approach of the two sections toward "the terrible problem of race relationship," with various forces contributing to the inability of each side to understand the other. The idea
of white domination, which U. B. Phillips proclaimed the "Central Theme" of southern history, was cardinal to southern thinking, but a point of complete misunderstanding in the North. On the other hand, foes of slavery, Mr. Nevins indicates, offered no satisfactory answer to the question of interrace relations, even in their own home states. Neither side worked out a valid pragmatic solution for the Negro's place in the American scene. Indeed, extremists supplied fuel to the flames of sectional passion until, with both sides as much at fault, a violent solution of the problem became increasingly probable.

In his analysis of the economics of slavery which he, like others, finds was paving the way for its own exit, Mr. Nevins helps considerably, with a formidable array of source quotations and citations, to clarify the issue. Slavery, he submits, finds its historical justification not "as an immutable discipline," as its southern champions thought, but as "a progressive and evolutionary system, leading by regular gradations to freedom" in the interest of both the South and the Negro. The Negro's steady progress toward fitness for emancipation is calmly but firmly indicated. One is impressed that, on this point and others, Mr. Nevins does not make his case on a formidable structure of abstract logic, but on the basis of a dispassionate analysis of the materials which he has gone to great pains to collect.

One of the author's special fortes is his analysis of intricate political issues and currents. His evaluations of the actors upon the political stage—especially Presidents Polk, Taylor, Fillmore and Pierce—are vivid and pungent. He makes a contribution to the understanding of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, after following others in rejecting any monistic interpretation of Douglas' action, by adding to the conventional array of motives Douglas' desire as a political strategist to rescue the inept Pierce administration from a disintegration that was evident on every hand. Not all students of the period will entirely agree with all his points of interpretation or emphasis. His analysis of the forces which brought about the original equivocal acceptance of the legislation of 1850—though seldom under the simple formula of a "compromise"—does not indicate the natural advantage of a fait accompli, which he submits as one of the reasons why the later repeal of the Missouri Compromise stood in the face of widespread indignation. He seems in but passing references to give unduly short shrift to such items as the Allison letter, the Free Soil platform of 1848, the Pittsburgh Convention of 1856 and the Raleigh Conference of the same year, as well as to such significant factors as land reform and slave hirings. On the whole, however, with only a rare slip, he gives a comprehensive and accurate coverage of the complex array of forces that operated in this decade of sectional tension.

Brooklyn College

Arthur C. Cole

Bishop John Williams of Connecticut once remarked that nonconformist America regarded the Protestant Episcopal Church as a “piece of heavy baggage which the British had left behind them when they evacuated New York and Boston.” It might have been possible, in New England, or wherever the Established Church was a relative latecomer, to have held fast to such a sentiment. But in this volume which treats the story of the Established Church in Virginia between the years 1607 and 1727, Dr. Brydon has undertaken to demonstrate that the English church in Virginia could not have been considered as easily removable upon departure. Two other volumes are proposed, one of which will cover the years from 1725 to 1814, and the other, from 1814 to the present.

The Historiographer of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Virginia has departed from the practice by which churchmen write church history as the story of an institution existing in a vacuum, uninfluenced by the composite impact of its cultural environment. He has employed, in addition to the traditional accounts, the records of the London Company and the journals of the two houses of the General Assembly of Virginia, of the Council of State, and the General Court. He has followed the Anglican church through its struggle to adapt its peculiar genius to colonial accommodations, and has suggested throughout how social, economic, and political factors contributed toward evolving an institution, loyal to the spirit of its heritage, but not so involved in the mechanics of its existence that it would destroy itself rather than compromise its practices. The book should be of particular interest to scholars of political and ecclesiastical history, while at the same time it has its strong appeal to the casual reader.

Dr. Brydon finds the genesis of this success story in the Puritan ideal of freedom which Sir Edwin Sandys emphasized in the little colony, but which was never carried to the extreme in the fulfillment of Puritan objectives within the institution itself. Such liberty permitted a church so dependent upon episcopacy to function in an environment where civil authorities exercised the nonsacramental functions of the office of a bishop. To meet the whole needs of a scattered people, parochial and political boundaries were made coterminous, and a lay organization, the vestry, permanently organized in each parish and self-petpetuating, took over the selection of the clerical incumbent. The vestry protected itself and the moral health of each parish by making virtually all clergymen locum tenens, by which they held office only during good behavior, and by means of which dissenting clerical affiliates might be utilized in times of clerical dearth. During the period of the Commonwealth, it was the stabilizing influence of the vestry which
maintained the fidelity of Virginia parishes to the Prayer Book and its practices; in the time of Governor Alexander Spotswood, it was the tenacity of these laymen, supporting the contention of Blair, that prevented the disruption of a well-established tradition relative to the nomination and induction of the parson in each parish.

Almost from the very first years, the church in Virginia was conscious of two needs—an educational institution and episcopal oversight. The dream of the college of Henrico was destroyed by the Indian massacre of 1622, the renewed hopes bred by the Restoration were dissipated by financial difficulties. The college of William and Mary finally brought the beginnings of the education of an indigenous ministry. Plans for the episcopate, talked about in 1672, came to naught, but were compromised by Henry Compton, Bishop of London, with the appointment of Commissary Blair in 1685, whose career was to be associated with both needs. As college president, James Blair has won the gratitude of all; as commissary, Blair proved to be the creature of his age, unadaptable, and in the eyes of Dr. Brydon, blind to his strategic opportunities. Angels and perfect men are always desirable, and history, written as a result of their achievements, makes good novels. Blair was only human, which is not to absolve him. He did bring the clergy together, made it possible for them to talk over their respective problems; his officiousness brought the inevitable reaction. Though his motives were not single, he did join with the clergy against Spotswood; he certainly made a contribution to the corporate life of Virginia's Mother Church.

This volume is copiously annotated; one turns to the notes on each chapter in anticipation of the many side lights therein. Appendices give some of the documents and the sources to which reference is made. This reviewer awaits with interest the two volumes yet to come.

The University of Pennsylvania

RUSSELL E. FRANCIS

American Painting: First Flowers of Our Wilderness. By JAMES THOMAS FLEXNER. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1947, xxii, 368 p. Illustrations, appendices, index. $10.00.)

In the foreword of this book about "The Pioneers and their Painters," as it is termed in the subtitle, Mr. Flexner points out that many of our colonial painters were recognized and esteemed in Europe at a date appreciably earlier than any similar distinction accorded our writers. He goes on from this to note that in many so-called social histories of our country in recent times our pictorial tradition has either been disregarded or so seriously misinterpreted that it might perhaps better have been ignored. It was with the praiseworthy intention of attempting to restore an understanding of the importance of the art of painting in the interpretation of our culture that this book was written.

There is much that is familiar in Mr. Flexner's survey and interpretation
of American painting to the outbreak of the Revolution, for it has been his primary purpose to revaluate that which is known rather than to engage in the search for new material. Yet he has made some contribution in this respect as well, in his discussion of the puzzling problem of Robert Feke and his antecedents, and even more in his definition of the style and accomplishment of the so-called Patroon Painters of the New Netherlands. Not so successful in this reviewer's opinion is the effort in Chapter Seven, "Painting in All its Branches," to establish the case for landscape and figure painting as important types in pre-Revolutionary American art, where, apart from citation of numerous literary references, the burden of proof is placed on works which are relatively late in date or are of topographic rather than artistic purpose. Yet even this serves as a reminder that there still remains much to be done by way of basic research, and that the simple facts of our early artistic history are signally lacking in many and large fields.

An extensive listing of general and detailed source references makes the book indispensable to students of American colonial painting. The quality of First Flowers of Our Wilderness which distinguishes it most notably from previous discussions of the same material is the emphasis laid by the author upon the importance of the paintings he discusses both as works of art and as reflections of the social and cultural forces which shaped the thinking of the times that produced them. It is genuinely illuminating, for instance, to have pointed out the fact that Copley's painting was great beyond that of his contemporaries because the intensity and clarity of his vision was concomitant with a sensitiveness to the changing social order of the new equalitarianism of the years immediately preceding the Revolution.

It is regrettable that the publishers did not assure the book a distinction of form and appearance comparable to its content. Many pages of text and illustrations are out of alignment, and the black and white reproductions are frequently characterized by overemphatic contrasts of light and dark. Those of the color reproductions that have been compared by the reviewer with the originals are completely misleading in detail and overall effect. Even with printing costs at their current high level, it would seem that a book as expensive as this could have been produced with more attention to details of production than it appears to have received.

University of Pennsylvania

David M. Robb


By Eleanor Davidson Berman, D.S.Sc. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947, xviii, 305 p. Illustrations, bibliography, index. $3.75.)

This monograph was first prepared as a doctoral dissertation at the New School for Social Research, and as now published it bears conspicuous marks of its origin. Dr. Berman's graduate work was in esthetics and was
conducted under the guidance of Professor Horace M. Kallen, who wrote
the commendatory introduction for this volume and who is quoted with
great frequency in its pages. The book is, in fact, an expansion of an article
by Professor Kallen on "The Arts and Thomas Jefferson" which appeared
in the July, 1943, issue of Ethics. Its theme is "that the artist in Jefferson
is not to be separated from the philosopher-statesman and the revolu-
tionary."

This is an important and promising theme for a book. Jefferson deeply
believed that the exercise of our creative faculties—whether in the useful or
fine arts, in scholarship, or in science—is an essential element in human
happiness. His public career and the great mass of his writings were dedi-
cated to removing the obstacles to, and increasing the opportunities for,
enjoyment of this kind of happiness by his fellow-Americans and their
posterity. From Dr. Berman's study the reader will get an idea of how
devoted and wide-ranging Jefferson's efforts were toward this noble objec-
tive. In her later chapters she outlines Jefferson's views on painting,
sculpture, architecture, gardening, music, rhetoric and literature. For the
reader not familiar with Jefferson's writings these chapters are worth read-
ing because they bring together scattered materials. To the reader familiar
with Jefferson's writings they will bring little, for the materials are gathered
from the standard editions, garnished with frequent quotations from the
army of Jefferson's biographers and commentators.

One is tempted to enlarge with some severity on the early chapters of the
book, which study the "sources" of Jefferson's "esthetic." Chapter IV, on
"The Hogarthian Influence," is particularly strained and pretentious, for
here a survey of the major philosophical and artistic developments of the
Enlightenment prefaces a demonstration that Jefferson's design for a
serpentine wall at the University of Virginia was drawn from Hogarth's
Analysis of Beauty, the "definitive formulation" of "rococo naturalism."
Here a mountain has labored and brought forth a mouse. Dr. Berman does
not think so, for she concludes this chapter as follows:

"In this transformation [of European into American standards of taste]
the pillars of the Greek city states, the domes of the Roman republic, rose
afresh in what Jefferson and his associates envisaged as the new home of
man's freedom, their severity tempered by the graciousness of that specific-
cally eighteenth-century scenic sinuosity which we have come to know as
serpentine."

From passages like this one turns with relief to the drawings and memo-
randa of Jefferson himself, who was not an esthetician.

Princeton University

L. H. BUTTERFIELD
James Madison, the Nationalist: 1780-1787. By Irving Brant. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1948, 484 p. Illustrations, notes, index. $6.00.)

This is the second of a series of volumes on the life of the Father of the Constitution. The first, James Madison, the Virginia Revolutionist: 1751-1780, appeared in 1941. The present volume begins with Madison on the road to Philadelphia in March, 1780, to take his seat for the first time in the Confederation Congress. It ends with another journey to the same city in May, 1787, for the opening session of the Constitutional Convention. Throughout it is a work of prodigious scholarship—detailed, analytical, and closely reasoned. Despite a few imperfections of style and interpretation, it is by far the best study we have of this period of Madison's life.

The volume contains two theses. The first is the contention that the United States under the Articles of Confederation was a nation and not a mere league of independent states. The Articles themselves provided for a true government with sovereign powers, not just an instrument for carrying into effect the sovereignty of the state governments. As evidence, the author cites the facts that the Confederation Congress originally had the power to issue money, and that it maintained a ferry at Trenton, established government-owned tanyards for the manufacture of shoes and exercised a few powers during the War for Independence that bore directly upon individuals. But the author seems to overlook the point that these were not the sort of tests which Madison generally set up to distinguish between a state and a federation of states. In the Federal Convention he insisted that a state must be founded upon the consent of the people and not upon the will of governments, and that it must have a constitution which the courts would recognize and apply as a law. He referred to the Articles as little more than a treaty of friendship and alliance among sovereign states. The distinction is still important. In our own day it makes a great deal of difference whether we shall go on trying to solve the problem of world organization by a league of independent nations deriving its authority from sovereign governments, or whether we shall eventually establish a world state with a constitution emanating from the people. It is pertinent in this connection to recall that Madison refused to approve ratification of the Federal Constitution by the State legislatures, fearing that this would tend to give it the character of a mere treaty.

The second thesis which the author presents is the idea that Madison was a thoroughgoing nationalist until after he came into conflict with Hamilton over social and economic issues. Indeed, the author contends that, during the 1780's, the Virginian's belief in consolidated government was just as strong as that of Hamilton. There is considerable warrant for this conclusion. Madison advocated coercion of recalcitrant states by the government of the Confederation, and went so far as to insist that the Articles conferred such a power by implication. He approved of a United
States Bank and of the assumption of state debts by the national government, and thought that it would be an act of wisdom, for the small states especially, to promote a system "which would most approximate the States to the condition of counties." Yet on the eve of the Philadelphia Convention he announced his opposition to any plan that would consolidate the states into one sovereignty. To the end of his life he maintained that the people in the states were the parties to the constitutional compact, and that they retained all of the sovereignty not delegated to the central government.

*Rutgers University*

Edward McN. Burns


Alexander Dallas Bache, great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin, was another of the nineteenth-century scientists whose achievements illustrate the fact that in the history of American science one must look for outstanding work in fields other than the classical ones of physics, chemistry, and biology where the main discoveries were being made in Europe. In addition to his scientific work, Bache was also an educator, and his contributions to the organization of secondary schools along modern lines were pioneering in his day.

Bache was educated in Philadelphia and at West Point, which at that time was America's only engineering school. After a short taste of military life, he accepted appointment at the University of Pennsylvania as Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry, a position he filled well for eight years. At the death of Stephen Girard he was chosen first President of the projected Girard College for fatherless boys, and was sent to Europe to study foreign educational systems. The resulting *Report on Education in Europe* (1839) had considerable influence upon educators and, while waiting for Girard College to be organized, Bache used his knowledge in helping to set up and start the new Central High School in Philadelphia. At the end of 1842, he left Girard and once more became Natural Philosophy Professor at Pennsylvania, but this connection did not last long, for the next year, on the death of Ferdinand Hassler, Bache was made head of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, and his career as an educator ended.

As a scientist Bache did outstanding work in the field of terrestrial magnetism. He set up the first magnetic observatory in America at Girard College in 1840, and in the following years made a magnetic survey of the State of Pennsylvania which was the first of its type. His greatest work, however, was done in connection with the Coast Survey, and the annual reports of the undertaking, which he wrote between 1844 and 1860, not only illustrate his skill as an administrator in making a success of the work begun by Hassler, but show also that he conceived the term "survey" in the
broadest sense, so that it included geomagnetism, oceanography, and any other study pertinent to a better knowledge of the American coasts.

Dr. Odgers, President of Girard College, has written an interesting and readable biography of Alexander Dallas Bache. Bache's work as an educator is ably presented. Students of the history of science may be disappointed that there are not more details of his work in the Coast Survey as science. In fact, the only weak point of the biography is that this part of Bache's career is not explored sufficiently to make clear exactly what was his contribution, through the Coast Survey, to science. His work on the magnetic survey of Pennsylvania, which is highly significant, is scarcely touched. Aside from these points, which involve a question of emphasis, the book is an admirable example of how a biography should be written to interest the general reader. A handsome binding by the University of Pennsylvania Press makes it a particularly attractive volume.

University of Pennsylvania

Phyllis Allen


Quakerism in America got its start in New England; so did the Earle family. The first Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends was held in Newport, Rhode Island in 1661, antedating London Yearly Meeting. By that time the Earle family had been well established in Newport, for Ralph and Joan Earle had settled there on arrival from Exeter, England, in 1634. Later generations of the Earles migrated to Leicester, Massachusetts. Leaders in the community and among Quakers, it was on their property that the Friends Meetinghouse was built.

Thomas Earle was born in 1796 in the Town of Leicester, County of Worcester, Massachusetts, the second of nine children of Pliny and Patience Earle. His father was one of the first to manufacture cotton and wool cards for the textile industry. The influence of the home on young Thomas was that of Federalism in politics and Quakerism in religious belief.

At the age of twenty-one, Thomas Earle left home for Philadelphia and business ventures of his own. He went back to New England two years later for his bride and joined his life there in the Friendly manner with Mary Hussey of Nantucket who was related to the Coffins, the Folgers, and the other Quaker families in the settlement. Thomas and Mary Earle made their home in Philadelphia, and their children Phebe, George, Henry and Caroline all later married and lived in the Philadelphia area.

One of the ancient Queries in the Book of Discipline of Friends reads: "Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances, and to keep to moderation in their trade or business; are they punctual to their promises, and just in the payment of their debts; and are such as give
reasonable grounds for fear on these accounts timely laboured with for their preservation or recovery?" When the business of which Thomas was a part was forced into bankruptcy, the Overseers of his Meeting laboured with him. Not being satisfied with his actions, even though the Earles were active Friends, Thomas Earle was disowned by the Meeting in 1824. But that did not mean that he stopped going to Meeting. In fact he continued attendance at Meeting, and the other members of the family retained their membership. But he did give up business and began to read law. And it was as a lawyer that Thomas Earle found the outlets for his zeal as a reformer.

He plunged into antislavery work as a crusader. He agitated for the reform of the Pennsylvania Constitution. When the Constitutional Convention finally met, he was styled the "Father of the Constitution of 1838." He turned to political action. Although he came from a Federalist family, he had always been a follower of Jeffersonian democracy, and in 1840 he ran for vice-president on the Liberty Party. He suggested the revision of the penal code for Pennsylvania. Much of his time was spent in legal work on various antislavery cases. Thomas Earle was only fifty-three years old when he died, but he left his mark by attacking basic evils of American civilization of his time. "His inherent belief in the Common Man, his acceptance of Jeffersonian democracy, and his faith in the New Testament teachings" rightly earned for him the tribute of the "Reformer." The author of this new study has done well to use it as the key to the life and work of one of Philadelphia's great civic souls of a century ago.

Philadelphia

RICHMOND P. MILLER


There is an intriguing and not always too apparent relationship between what a man does and the reasons which he later gives for doing it. The necessities of any moment can induce actions which may before long become not only habitual, but, in due course, the bases for theories of policy. When the inevitable changes in the conditions of action, likewise demanding new programs occur, the well-established theories will usually be in the way. The policy makers, therefore, have the difficult problem of devising new policies in the face of hallowed theories.

In democracies where public opinion and public consent are often vital factors in shaping policy, the policy makers upon occasion find it more practical to explain new programs in terms of old theories, frequently by resorting to ambiguities. One of the most important of the questions involved in this complexity is the extent to which government may interfere in the economic life of a democracy devoted to free enterprise.

One of the widely held views regarding the relation of American demo-
ocratic government to economic life is that the interference of the former in
the latter is of comparatively recent origin. It is averred that prior to the
last decade of the nineteenth century there was a long period of glorious
laisser faire in which the individual had the full enjoyment of free enter-
prise. Only with the rise of Populists, Progressives, and New Dealers have
governmental agencies and officers, it is somewhat frequently asserted, be-
come concerned with the conduct of "private" business. In no area is the
belief more widely held, probably, than in Pennsylvania.

Professor Hartz analyzes the complex relationship of economic behavior,
political policy, and intellectual rationalization in Pennsylvania, 1776-1860,
and produces some very interesting conclusions. The most intriguing one
punctures this tradition of the halcyon days of laisser faire. The author
shows that from the earliest of the colonial years the government watched
closely over the economic behavior of its citizens. It set standards of quality,
fixed prices, and controlled production in various ways. When corporations
came into vogue, the state legislature granted only individual charters,
scrutinizing each application; it likewise subscribed to stock, revised char-
ters on occasion, and even went into the transportation business itself. The
Commonwealth abolished private property in slaves, passed labor legisla-
tion, interfered with the liquor traffic and quite generally asserted the power
of the state to be concerned with private enterprise. Interestingly enough,
this right, as far as theory was concerned, was taken for granted. The
simple fact of the matter was that private enterprise was not strong enough
to do what the great resources and the needs of Pennsylvania demanded,
whereupon the state naturally stepped in, and arguments against this
interference were based upon expediency.

The rise of democracy and the developing canons of democratic thought
in the 1830's and 1840's emphasized this assertion of government authority,
as part of the proper sovereignty of the people. Corporations were tyran-
nical, they destroyed liberty and equality, the legislature representing the
people must protect them. And at length the state went into business itself,
in part at least, rather than create corporations sufficiently large to become
rivals of state power. It was all part of the democratic process.

It was only after decades of state activity that business interests began
to evolve a protective theory, and not until their resources had grown to a
point where they could take over the big task of developing the Common-
wealth. Corporation and business spokesmen appropriated ideas from Adam
Smith and others stressing the need of individual enterprise, competition,
and laisser faire, and pointed out the superiority of the businessman in
enterprise and efficiency, contrasting his virtue with the inefficiency, cor-
ruption, and ignorance of a public service made up of frequently changing
political amateurs. Antagonists of government interference took the very
arguments used to express government opposition to corporations to break
down government interference with them.

The truth behind it all lay in the fact that the rapid growth of population,
the invention of machinery, and the great rewards which the wealth of national resources offered meant that American enterprise would not be limited by ancient theories, and popularly chosen lawmakers and officials succumbed to the great force of awakened enterprise. Theoretical concepts were tardily adjusted and then sanctified by the blessing of the courts.

Dr. Hartz’s keen analysis is based upon a comprehensive study of the economic, the political, the legal and the intellectual history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the years mentioned. It shows a capacity for searching out different material and for bringing together into an expert synthesis the yield of several classes of data too often kept separate. Professor Hartz is to be commended particularly for his capacity to bring action and thought into proper relationship and to grasp the “curious artificiality of much of the . . . controversy.” He shows so clearly how theory lags behind and resists the forward rush of expediency.

The volume is one of the Studies in Economic History prepared under the direction of the Committee on Research in Economic History of the Social Science Research Council of which Arthur H. Cole of the Harvard School of Business is chairman. The work is introduced by an appropriate and enlightening foreword written by Professor Benjamin F. Wright of the Government Department of Harvard. The study is a splendid example of a broadly conceived contribution to social science not trammeled by the barriers erected in so many instances by the narrowness of outlook of the various departments in the social sciences.

University of Pennsylvania

ROY F. NICHOLS


Professor Paul Giddens, the recognized authority on the history of petroleum, has come forth with another valuable contribution—this time a collection of documents, letters, diaries, observations of travellers and a selected collection of contemporary newspaper articles. Most of the material comes from the Library of the Drake Well Memorial Museum, Titusville, Pa. Dr. Giddens has organized his material under five major headings: (1) petroleum in Pennsylvania before 1859; (2) contemporary accounts of Drake and the Drake Well; (3) letters and documents relating to the Drake Well; (4) Col. E. L. Drake after 1863; and (5) contemporary accounts of the oil region, 1859–1872. Most of the newly discovered material in this volume has never before been published, and much of the other material that has been published is “buried deep in inaccessible newspaper files and in old books now out of print. . . .” The earliest known document indicating the presence of oil in Pennsylvania is found in Lewis Evans’ Map of The Middle British Colonies in America, 1755. The latest “document” which Dr. Gid-
dens included is dated May 18, 1872. Between these two dates (1755-1872), he has included a total of 172 documents. Each one was selected to shed light upon some significant phase of petroleum history. Collectively, they record dramatic chapters in the industrial history of our country. Here one reads the original records, accounts which bear upon every conceivable phase of the petroleum industry.

A limited sampling of these interesting documents reveals a many-sided development of this mid-nineteenth-century industry. Early travelers like Zeisburger, General William Irvine, Thomas Ashe and others had noticed the appearance of petroleum many years before E. L. Drake drilled his first well. Following these observations of the early travelers is a series of interesting accounts, collected (1892) by a newspaperman, L. E. Stofiel. Mr. Stofiel interviewed a number of citizens who remembered the trouble which the owners of salt wells around Tarentum, Pa., had with petroleum, and what they did about it. There were articles on the work of S. M. Kier in first introducing petroleum as an illuminant, and on the relationship between Kier and E. L. Drake during the years immediately preceding Drake's success in bringing in the world's first oil well in 1859.

Parts II and III comprise a total of seventy-two articles, contemporary accounts, letters and documents relating to Drake and the Drake Well. Some of these are contradictory, but taken as a whole, they tell an interesting story of those hectic years during and following the drilling of the first oil well. These are followed with a collection of letters and documents dealing with Col. Drake's desperate plight during the later years of his life. They do not make pleasant reading. The final collection of documents (Part IV) relates to contemporary accounts of the oil region, 1859-1872. Here, one relives that stirring period. And what a period! Oil was produced faster than it could be used. Refineries sprang up on all sides. People by the thousands rushed into the oil region. Fortunes were made and lost. Mus- room towns appeared overnight; and disappeared almost as quickly. But out of all this stirring period, a great industry was born. The Petroleum Age had arrived.

Documents, when carefully edited as in this volume, still give us our best histories. And Giddens has contributed another valuable work to the history of petroleum.

University of Pittsburgh

John W. Oliver


The general belief that the growth of "lightning lines" of communication in the United States was a dramatic and romantic process will be dissipated
by Mr. Thompson's flesh-and-blood account of the painful spread of the telegraph wires from region to region in the years between 1832 and 1866. Wiring the continent was no easy task, as Samuel F. B. Morse, Ezra Cornell, Francis O. J. Smith, Alfred Vail, Amos Kendall, Henry O'Rielly and a host of other people were soon to discover. The trials of the experimental years (1832–1845) did not lead into a period of substantial and uneventful growth. Since relatively small amounts of capital were required in the construction of lines and the purchase of equipment, great numbers of local companies seeking profits sprang up and stretched their wires as far as their limited funds would permit. The "systems" that developed before 1852 were for the most part merely co-operative agreements among various of these feeble ventures. Petty bickerings, failures, defaults and even personal greed were ever in evidence, and consolidations and dissolutions were common. Only after 1853 did aggressive corporations begin to weld the unstable and frequently hostile independent units into a whole.

Technical troubles as well as organizational problems faced the builders of the telegraph empire. The railroads were at first not interested in the new means of communication, and the resultant difficulty in securing rights of way made circuitous routes unavoidable. Copper wires broke, overhanging limbs grounded the lines, poles rotted quickly, glass insulators proved irresistible targets for gunmen and rivers could not be crossed. Poor service was universal, and messages, even when they could be sent, arrived sometimes in unrecognizable form. "Write Brigland, Sons & Jeffrey, Liverpool, Lady Huntley abandoned at sea. Captain at Mobile," for instance, became before it arrived at the final station "Write Bigland, Sons & Koffrey Liverpool, Lady Hunnly Abin died at sea at Mobile." Civil War prosperity was a powerful factor in bringing efficiency and unity into the disjointed telegraphic structure.

Mr. Thompson has told his story with care and with detail. Though no outstandingly new material is presented, his account of the growth of the "magic wire" from a few isolated lines to the beginning of one great system is especially valuable because of its thoroughness, particularly concerning financial and administrative problems. Wiring a Continent is a solid but not a glamorous book. No tense moment such as the joining of the wires of the transcontinental line at Salt Lake City in October, 1861—nearly eight years before the driving of the golden spike tied the nation together by rail—stirs the author's pen to vivid pictures. Contrary to the jacket claim, no "breathless race of uncoiling wire" is depicted, but there is ample justification for saying that Mr. Thompson "follows the trend toward monopoly from Amos Kendall's original plan for organization of Morse patentees, through Henry O'Rielly's dream of a democratic council, to Hiram Sibley's famous Six Party Contract, and analyzes the delicate negotiations by which the 'irrepressible conflict' between Western Union and the American Telegraph
Company was resolved.” A second volume covering the period from 1866 to the present is in preparation.

Temple University

JAMES A. BARNES

Saga in Steel and Concrete: Norwegian Engineers in America. By KENNETH BJORK. (Northfield, Minn.: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1947, vii, 504 p. Illustrations, index. $4.00.)

Few specialized studies have appeared that treat the migration of technical leadership from foreign countries to the United States. Saga in Steel and Concrete, by the chairman of the division of social sciences and professor of history at St. Olaf College, is an important chapter in the migration of European engineers and technologists to the United States. It presents the story of Norwegians, educated in the schools of Europe, who came to America and made significant technical contributions to American civilization. Since the Industrial Revolution did not affect Norway until the middle of the nineteenth century, the movement did not begin until late. The half-century from 1879 to 1929 was the period of greatest migration.

The rise of young Norwegian engineers, the problems they had to face in the New World, together with the success of many and the disillusionment of some who returned home, is told in a readable style. The list of those who succeeded and contributed to the development of America’s bridges, tunnels, roads, skyscrapers and industrial techniques is a long one. Representative of them are Tinius Olsen, the modest inventor of testing machines; Olaf Hoff, designer of tunnels; Edwin Ruud, inventor of the automatic gas water heater; and Joachim G. Giaver, outstanding structural engineer. The study not only recounts the careers of these men, but shows their relationship to the advances that were being made on the technical frontiers of the United States in a period of revolutionary economic change. It also discusses the social background of these trained leaders, their professional organizations, and their attitude toward their new environment.

A brief chapter on the social philosophy of Norwegian-American engineers is enlightening, especially their reactions to the ideas of such men as Thorstein Veblen. Interesting, too, is the summary regarding the education of those preparing for technical pursuits, as well as the role that engineers should play as leaders in American life. This section could well have been expanded; nevertheless, it is a valuable chapter.

This study is well documented and possesses a good index, but lacks a bibliography. The author has been thorough in his research—he has used manuscript and printed sources, and has sought much information from individuals whose achievements he records. The volume should stimulate interest in similar studies relating to the migration of technical leadership from other foreign countries and the contributions to American development made by those who found a new home in the United States.

University of Pennsylvania

ARTHUR C. BINING

This is not another history of the Battle of Gettysburg, but a collection of eye-witness accounts of various high lights in the three-day struggle. It takes the reader from the opening shot on July 1 at Willoughby Run to the fleeing remnants of Pickett's Division on July 3. The whole forms a mosaic with just enough editorial comment to carry the sequence for the reader to whom Gettysburg is just the name of a battle in the Civil War. For the student of Gettysburg, on the other hand, old favorites of descriptive writing and new anecdotes and incidents appear, and some of the blunders on both sides stand out in sharp relief.

It is not from the formal reports of generals or of partisan historians that one finds "what really happened," but more often a letter of a wounded soldier or a civilian observer may clear away the fog of self-interest or prejudice and give true insight on a disputed point. In Gettysburg, the editors have played no favorites in their selection of material but give both northern and southern accounts of some of the more important actions, which together compose this titanic contest. To this reviewer, a very creditable work has been produced—a valuable addition to the voluminous writings on this particular battle.

No anthology pleases every reader; many will regret that certain well-known accounts have been omitted from this volume, particularly a description of the events on July 4, while, on the other hand, some matter of questionable value has been included.

The most important events of the three days are covered, and their summation is most important to a proper understanding of this contest. On the First Day came the early death of Reynolds which threw the Federal defense out of gear, and, as a sort of balance, the "discretionary order" to Ewell from Lee which resulted in the failure of the Confederates to follow up their victory which might thus have been decisive. Freemantle, of the British Army on Lee's staff, gives the description of events on the afternoon of the First Day.

The high lights of the Second Day again provide a rude balance by fate. Longstreet's long delay in attacking the Federal left was offset by the incredible advance of Sickles and his Federal Third Corps to find a battlefield of their own, an action which broke the continuity of the Federal defense line. The "Wheat Field," the "Peach Orchard," "The Devil's Den" and the "Round Tops" follow and are given dramatic treatment by the stories narrated by men on both sides, men who shared in the terrific fighting of that afternoon.

Perhaps no better description has ever been written of hand-to-hand-conflict than that of Lieutenant Haskell of the Federal Second Corps in his story of the repulse of Pickett's Charge and the desperate fighting at the
"Angle" in front of the Second Corps. This is given in full and is a "must" for all who would live again that fateful July day when Americans of equal sincerity of belief died that a newer and greater nation might be born.

_Paoli, Pa._

_Kent Packard_

_A Union Officer in the Reconstruction._ By John William De Forest. Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by James H. Croushore and David Morris Potter. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948, xxx, 211 p. Index. $3.75.)

This book on reconstruction is a logical sequel to the study by De Forest entitled, _A Volunteer's Adventure: A Union Captain's Record of the Civil War._ The editors have now made available two excellent studies—one pertaining to the Civil War, the other to Reconstruction. De Forest had the unusual ability of writing vividly and accurately of his experiences and observations. He tells forcefully the events of the early days of reconstruction in western South Carolina and of his duties at Greenville as an officer of the Freedmen's Bureau. De Forest is one of very few individuals who understood the political, economic, and social implications of reconstruction. He wished to heal the wounds with as few scars as possible.

De Forest's writings of this period should be read because of their excellence as literature and because of their historical value. He had the gift of recording conditions as they existed so clearly that the reader often finds himself unconsciously living again in the reconstruction period and either enjoying or hating the people of western South Carolina.

The author describes the manners and morals of "the low-down people" or poor whites; the negroes; "the semi chivalrous southerners," or whites who were mostly poor, but who remained loyal to the Union; and, finally, the manners of the former wealthy planters.

The poor whites did very little work; they did considerable begging for a living, but they did not as a rule drink excessively. "The pugnacity of the low-down people included indifference to human life."

The Negro seemed to enjoy locomotion:

For nothing were the Negroes more eager than for transportation. They had a passion, not so much for wandering, as for getting together, and every mother's son among them seemed to be in search of his mother; every mother in search of her children. . . . Others desired me to find out where their relatives lived, and send for them.

In short, transportation was a nuisance. . . . It seemed to me that if the Negroes wanted to travel they should not insist on doing it at the expense of the nation, but should earn money and pay their own fare, like white people. . . .

The negroes alone were ravenous after Transportation.

_De Forest described one of the semichivalrous union men as "a man of about twenty, a lean, leathery, wild-looking youth, with a curiously stealthy and springy gait like that of a panther. . . ."_
These words paint the picture of the old planter:

There certainly is or was more sauvity of manner at the South than at the North. It is delightful to see two high-toned gentlemen of the old Virginian or Carolinian school greet each other. Such gracious bows and insinuating tones! Such mellifluous compliments . . . ! Such sunny and, one might almost say, equatorial blandness! You feel as if you were in Paradise, hearing Dante address Beatrice as “gracious lady.” The moral thermometer rises to summer heat; your humanities expand and bloom under the influence; you are a kindlier and, I think, a better man for the sight.

These are the words describing the females of the low-down people and of the well-to-do ladies:

Women of the low-down breed, in the coarsest and dirtiest of homespun clothing, and smoking pipes with reed stems and clay bowls straddled by with so mannish a gait that one doubted whether they could be hipped after the female model. The young ladies of the respectable class were remarkably tall, fully and finely formed, with good complexions, and of a high average in regard to beauty.

The terrible economic situation which existed in the South is graphically presented:

I have known land to go at auction for a dollar and twelve cents an acre, which before the war was valued . . . at seven or eight dollars the acre. Labor was equally depreciated, able-bodied men hiring out at seventy-five cents a day if they found themselves; at twenty-five cents if found by their employers. The great mass of farmers could not pay even these wretched wages and were forced to plant upon shares, a system unsuited to a laboring class so ignorant and thoughtless as the Negroes.

In warning the Congress against the inauguration of a punitive reconstruction policy, De Forest wisely wrote:

Let us remember in our legislation the law of solidarity: the fact that no section of a community can be injured without injuring the other sections; that the perfect prosperity of the whole depends upon the prosperity of all its parts.

The book is composed of ten excellent chapters. The first six give in considerable detail the duties pertaining to the Freedmen’s Bureau, and the last four chapters are devoted to the customs, manners, and morals of the people who lived in western South Carolina.

Lehigh University

George D. Harmon


This volume examines third parties in American history to show why none of them, although serving useful functions, has become a major party. The author, in addition, outlines the concepts he considers fundamental to the formation today of a successful liberal party. His material is based chiefly on articles originally appearing in the weekly Progressive and on
several lectures delivered at the University of Maryland under the auspices of the Committee on American Civilization, but has been revised and expanded for this publication. Most of the discussion is devoted to recent history, with the first chapter covering the ground from Anti-Masonry through the Populists, but the nineteenth-century roots of later third parties are in most cases examined. After dealing with the Bull Moose party, the Progressives of 1924, the Socialists and other third parties (with only occasional mention of the Communists), four chapters are used to examine the past and the present of the Republican party and of the New Deal. Professor Hesseltine's judgments are definite and caustic. With little respect for party idols, he shows why he believes both Republicans and New Dealers have failed to meet the standards of a truly progressive party. The Republicans, he concludes, have recently been nothing but a negative political force, while the New Deal failed to be truly liberal because it was primarily a political movement and departed from the fundamental concepts of American progressivism, inevitably collapsing with the death of its leader.

After denying the claims of the Wallace party to be considered the liberal party of the future, and after describing the obstacles, mainly financial and legal, to the formation of such a party, the author states that a successful liberal party, which must unite farmers and laborers, should rest on the four fundamental concepts of opposition to the police state idea—devotion to democracy and democratic procedure, a sense of responsibility, civil liberties, and the need to stress research and regionalism.

There will be little unanimity concerning Professor Hesseltine's views; many readers will wish more precise definitions of those much abused words "liberal" and "progressive." But all will agree that for an election year publication of this sort this volume sets a high standard for readability and content. Furthermore, all may, if they so wish, find aids for fuller analysis and thought in a carefully selected bibliography.

Merion Station, Pa.  

JOHN J. REED

_A Journal by Thos. Hughes. For His Amusement, & Designed only for his Perusal by the time he attains the Age of 50 if he lives so long._ With an Introduction and Notes by E. A. BERRIANS. (Cambridge: The University Press, 1948, xiv, 188 p. Maps. $2.50.)

This is a journal of a young ensign in the 53rd Regiment of the British Army, first serving in Canada and then under Burgoyne in the American Revolution. Hughes' story is one of a prisoner on parole for four years, of his return to England in 1781, of a stay in France, and of his rejoining his regiment in Canada in 1784. His careful observations on all occasions, frequently recorded with wit, are those of a loyal British officer for whom the rude and equal conditions in America created little appeal or sympathy. Offering little new information, this engaging journal adds substance to this phase of the eighteenth-century picture in America.

Reading, Pennsylvania, is this year celebrating its bicentennial. Founded in 1748 by Thomas and Richard Penn, colonial Reading reflects much of the development of Pennsylvania—the German settlements, the Indian problems, the proprietary land settlements—and across its history pass the names of the great provincial Pennsylvanians, not the least of whom are the Penns and Conrad Weiser. In 1752, Reading assumed even greater importance as a western town by becoming the county seat of the newly designated Berks County. In both the French and Indian War and the American Revolution Reading played a significant part.

The nineteenth century brought to Reading, as to most towns, the increased activity which expanded it into a city. Industrialization, transportation advances in canals and railroads, the multiplication of the social and cultural phases of the city's life, increasing participation in state and national developments—all worked to make old Reading Town one of the important cities of Pennsylvania.

Raymond W. Albright has done a fine job in presenting this history of two-hundred-year-old Reading for wide and popular reading. The multiplicity of names and statistics, inevitable in such a work, are capably handled, and appendices do much to consolidate other bodies of information for easy reference.


This correspondence between William Maclure, principal associate of Robert Owen and founder of the Workingmen's Institute at New Harmony, and Marie Duclos Fretageot, Maclure's adviser, "constitutes the only continuous contemporary record of the genesis, culmination, and dissolution of Owen's social experiment and of the steadier advance of the scientific and educational programs connected with it." Background material for these letters is supplied in the continuous, narrative text.

Princeton University Press has announced that in October it will publish the Autobiography of Benjamin Rush, edited by George W. Corner, for the American Philosophical Society. The Autobiography will consist of Rush's Travels Through Life, the manuscript of which was kept for many years within his family, and of his Commonplace Books. Dr. Corner is Chairman of the Department of Embryology of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.