Benjamin Rush is here in person, stepping down from the heavy gilded picture frame of his historical portrait to tell us in his own words the story of his life and work. He is not alone but surrounded by his contemporaries. Boyhood friends growing distinguished are here, and, of course, his dear Julia—Mrs. Rush—and their children. Many adoring students are in the crowd, too, and grateful patients. We see college presidents and ministers, Revolutionary generals and statesmen. We recognize George Washington himself and Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, as well as some of Rush’s enemies, whom he calls adversaries. The Negro leaders, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, are seeking his advice. We spot an Indian chief with Count Rochambeau. We hear “Americans and Frenchmen, Englishmen and Scotchmen, Germans and Irishmen conversing with each other like children of one father.” It is an assemblage which includes both the illustrious and the lowly, for Rush loved people. His real power lies in human associations rather than in the realm of thought.

For fifty years Dr. Rush’s pen was never idle. He had information to impart, plans and projects to unfold, theories and opinions to advance, an answer to every question raised, advice to give away. Writing seemed to clear his views and stimulate the growth of new ideas. He wrote engagingly in a flowing style, often hastily, in moments snatched from a busy practice, but always forcefully. It is more than a hundred years since the ink dried on these letters, yet they still glow with their writer’s personality. Reading them today in the twentieth century we feel closely in touch with their author. His sentences still convey his boundless energy, his enthusiasm for countless causes and enterprises undertaken “for the Good of Mankind.” More than Rush could ever guess, however, he displays between his lines the paradoxes of his nature.

For this collection six hundred and fifty-odd letters have been selected with discrimination from sixty different sources through the tireless efforts of their editor whose scholarship pervades the volumes. Samuel Johnson in securing the services of Boswell was not more fortunate than Benjamin Rush in his posthumous association with Mr. Butterfield as the interpreter of his utterances. In acquiring information for his valuable annotations, Mr. Butterfield has worked with the ingenuity of a skillful detective, following trails to out-of-the-way sources to make discoveries. A complete list of the
volumes he has consulted, if compiled by some industrious reader of his footnotes, would make an incomparable bibliography for students of American social history, adding unusual items by forgotten authors to background works of recognized authority. An admirable explanatory section prefaces and introduces the Letters.

We have here, in effect, an "American Processional" of scenes and personages, to borrow the title of an exhibition of pictures shown last season at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington. The exhibit, in this case, is strictly a literary one and more compact, confined as it is to the years 1761 to 1813, when Dr. Rush was writing constantly to his friends. Rush has depicted eighteenth-century Philadelphia, then the chief city in this country, more vividly than any of his contemporaries, some of whom were greater men, perhaps, but less ready with the pen. Modern Philadelphians will, of course, find what Dr. Rush has to say especially rewarding, since in many cases their forebears took active part with him in the great enterprises he records. One may sample this collection of letters judiciously for enjoyment, but to appreciate the many-sided Rush and what Mr. Butterfield has accomplished, the volumes should be read in their entirety.

By publication of these two handsome volumes for the American Philosophical Society, of which Rush was a member, the Princeton Press pays tribute to an early Princeton graduate who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a doctor prominent among the founders of the first medical school established in this country, and one of our few colonial leaders, outside the field of politics and the army, to win during his lifetime an international reputation. The Rush Letters are embellished with well-chosen illustrations, including some amusing cartoons showing Edinburgh friends and teachers of Rush, and using as frontispieces reproductions of privately owned portraits of Benjamin and Julia Rush, painted in their years of vigor by Charles Willson Peale. An excellent index, a useful "Chorographical Map of the Country Round Philadelphia" made in 1778, and appendices which detail the controversies with Washington and Shippen, as well as the attack on Rush's professional practices made by William Cobbett as Peter Porcupine in The Rushlight, add to the scholarly resources of these volumes which should find a permanent, honored place in every library where historical studies of the American colonial period are treasured.

Baltimore, Md.  

Betsy Copping Corner


In one of the most lucid and thorough monographs on the Confederation interlude that has yet appeared, Professor McCormick has corrected in
some measure the traditional view that the "critical period" was one of chaos and confusion. While Fiske and his successors stressed the ineffectiveness of the Federal government under the Articles of Confederation and highlighted the need for a stronger central authority, a new school of historiography exemplified by the writings of Merrill Jensen has placed its emphasis upon reconstruction within the several states. In confining himself to the small state of New Jersey, the author uncovers solid gains accomplished by the legislature in bringing some order out of financial chaos and in dealing with other problems growing out of the painful transition from war to peace.

For such an investigation no one is better qualified than Professor McCormick. His activities as chairman of the Conference of New Jersey Historians and his constant encouragement to the cause of local history and archival preservation give the reader assurance that the author is exceptionally well equipped to deal with the area he has chosen. His study is based upon an exhaustive examination of the pertinent manuscript collections in the middle states, supplemented by printed documentary collections and newspaper sources.

From the welter of controversial and at times inconclusive evidence, the author comes to conclusions which are both cautious and judicious. He recognizes that New Jersey is not "typical." The substantial progress achieved in economic reconstruction in that state contrasts favorably with the less impressive record of states like Massachusetts. Nonetheless, the same basic problems were found almost everywhere. Heavy taxation was necessary to meet interest payments on public securities held within the state. As in Massachusetts, the effect was deflationary, and the response, as in the Bay State, was a widespread demand for paper money. To meet this exigency New Jersey adopted a seasoned remedy—the loan office plan. Unlike Rhode Island which faced the same economic problems in more acute form, New Jersey was favorable to a stronger central government, and that sentiment was found among all sections and among all groups. Jerseyites held that their tax burdens would be lightened if the federal government could secure revenue from the sale of public lands and a tariff.

Sectionalism is the dominant theme in the history of colonial New Jersey, and the effects of this deeply rooted feeling were manifest throughout the critical period. Mr. McCormick finds the main basis of political alignment in the peculiar cleavage between East and West Jersey inherited from colonial times. Down to 1785 he reports neither section possessed clear-cut control of the government, but between that year and 1788, East Jersey edged into dominance. This victory for the so-called radical group was destined to be short-lived. The adoption of the Constitution caused the pendulum to swing to the western section of the state, which now allied itself with the conservative minority in the east. This conservative triumph the author chooses to label "The Counterrevolution," but save for such deflationary moves as the crippling of the loan office, the adoption of hard
money legislation, and the repeal of debtor relief laws, the swing to the right was mild and peaceful. Interestingly enough, while New Jersey moved to the right, Massachusetts, as a result of the reaction against the harsh suppression of Shays' Rebellion, moved to the left. Such differences serve to support the author's thesis that, while the problems which beset New Jersey were perhaps typical of all the thirteen states in this period, the methods employed to meet them and the swing of the political pendulum were not necessarily duplicated elsewhere.

Columbia University

RICHARD B. MORRIS


When there are so many scholarly biographies of important Revolutionary characters crying to be written, biographies of men like Knox, Morgan, and Moultrie, and with so many titles available on Lafayette (Stuart Jackson lists more than two hundred in his bibliography), it is surprising to find another biography of the Marquis. To be sure, D. S. Freeman is in the midst of his great biography of Washington, but Freeman's work is well annotated and gives new evaluations on many obscure points. Mr. Loth gives no notes, and offers very little information that is new.

There is no doubt that Mr. Loth has an easy, friendly style. He knows his subject thoroughly and gives one confidence, yet for a student it is unfortunate that the author does not take him into his confidence and tell him his sources. After reading Gottschalk, who spares no detail, this new biography is quite a change. Of course, there are many people who will not spend the time to read Gottschalk's notes, but who will read Loth much as they would read a novel (and it is just as exciting as many novels). For them, the book is excellent. I have made a few notes of points that Loth dwells on, which are interesting, if true.

Emphasis on Lafayette as "a General at Nineteen" is not impressive. Of course he was a major general, but Washington would have made him a full general and served under him, if he could have been assured of France's active assistance. It is true that Lafayette did a creditable military job, but goodness knows he had enough help, even though Steuben and Wayne did not like serving under him. Although Lafayette loved recognition more than his life, he deserves a lot of credit. Somehow he made men like him, and succeeded in becoming the "adoptive son" of the cold Washington, who had mighty few intimate friends of his own age.

The description of Broglie's office and the subsequent account of his desire for command of the American army is not new, and although I will admit that Loth makes the story realistic, the whole scheme appears so impractical that I agree with Doniol that it was mostly chimerical. Inas-
much as young Lafayette had so hard a time leaving France, one wonders
how Broglie could have done it. Had Broglie served in America, he would
have hurt rather than helped the colonies, and it is doubtful that Louis XVI
would have appreciated his efforts.

The story of Lafayette thanking Chabannes for portraying him in his
drama (name not given) as "a young man of nineteen seeking glory in
another hemisphere, at the same time being in love with a beautiful widow
of twenty-two" is new to me, as is also the story of the Prince de Ligne
finding out that both he and Lafayette were paying the bills of the beautiful
d'Humolstein. The authorities for these episodes would have been of real
interest to me.

I would like to know on what Loth bases his statement on page 161,
"Washington . . . was willing to grant . . . the full honors of war," but
Lafayette objected. The point is too unimportant to dwell on, but it is my
understanding that Washington supported Laurens and de Noailles, who
were the commissioners who made the terms of capitulation. Laurens, who
had been taken prisoner at Charleston and whose father was a prisoner in
the Tower of London, consequently made the terms as severe as possible.

Again, on page 133, Loth states that "Troops by the tens of thousands
had been poured into the eastern seaboard, as well as whole convoys of
supplies, with ships by the dozen." If one excepts the American Tories
fighting on the English side, I doubt if the Germans and British ever ex-
ceeded forty thousand combatants. Certainly Clinton and Cornwallis were
continually calling for more men; Clinton even offered to resign because he
did not get them. As for the ships, any student of the Revolution knows
their use was much impaired because of their poor condition. Had they been
seaworthy, the result of the war might have been different. Nevertheless,
they did bring in supplies for the British army, but it might be hazarded
that this was to some degree unfortunate. Had the British been less well
supplied, the temptation to remain in New York might not have been so
great.

The last quarter of the book is very interesting, well written, and concise,
but concerns subjects on which I do not feel qualified to comment.

Philadelphia

Frederic R. Kirkland

Two volumes. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1950. xvi,
632 p.; x, 686 p. Illustrations, maps, bibliographical essay, index.
$12.00.)

It is becoming increasingly apparent that definitive study of much of
national history must wait upon more adequate and abundant work in
regional and local history. Regional history has had a certain degree of
attention in New England and the South, but elsewhere interest has been
less marked. Not only have the Middle Atlantic States suffered greatly from neglect, but other regions also have not fared too well. The region first given definition by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 has played a great part in our national development, but until now its history has been given little systematic study.

Professor Buley of the University of Indiana has been seeking to remedy this situation by a most intensive study of the growth of the communities in this region between 1815 and 1840. He has made a most careful reading of the press of that period, as well as countless other sources, and has uncovered a vast mass of detail about the people and their ways.

These findings he has presented in two substantial volumes, which have received the high honor of the Pulitzer Award in 1951. No phase of human behavior has been neglected; all have been illuminated.

Professor Buley traces the migration of people to this "Old Northwest" and presents a very complete description of the growth of political organization there. He explains the distribution of the land, the problems of the pioneers in establishing homes, their ills and high mortality. The reader lives among them and observes their customs, their play, their dress, their morals and their character.

The problems of trade and travel, growing industry, the hectic character of their speculative finance and the complications of politics are elaborately described. The panic of 1837 exposed the crazy structure of their banking system without teaching these expansive speculators much in the way of a lesson.

There are revealing chapters on the growth of the political machines in the states and territories of this period. We see personalities emerge, feuds develop, and significantly different patterns of behavior in adjoining states. We learn much of the political obsession of the pioneer to whom politics was as much a sport as any game.

Finally, there is the story of culture, of literature, art, religion, education, of the emotions and thought processes of the pioneer. We learn much of newspapers and their place in the community. Obscure literati of the frontier are given new life. Frontier schoolmasters carry on their travesty of education which somehow seemed to accomplish a pedagogical purpose. The curiosity of the frontiersman and his zeal for reform are portrayed.

This great factual presentation is made lively by the author's gift of trenchant expression and happy turn of phrase. These two volumes are a veritable gold mine of easily accessible facts in satisfying quantity. Other scholars will find here so much of what they will need for a long time to come. All this has been presented in a very attractive format, beautifully illustrated, with unusually good maps, in as fine an example of bookmaking as has been seen in many a long day. The Indiana Historical Society has set other societies a splendid example.

University of Pennsylvania

ROY F. NICHOLS

Few today are familiar with the career of Gulian Crommelin Verplanck (1786-1870), politician, scholar, humanitarian. During his own age, however, he played a commanding role in our political life and with surprising versatility made a significant contribution to American letters. He represents a type of individual, well-born and well-bred, with a universality of interests that unfortunately is not found as often in this century as in the nineteenth.

Robert W. July's interesting biography should help restore Verplanck's place in history. With meticulous care the author describes Verplanck's colorful career as a New York Assemblyman, a Congressman for two terms, a state senator, jurist, spokesman for American Romanticism, and Shakespearean critic. He traces Verplanck's activities as a literary figure and analyzes his philosophical and religious works.

The author is at his best in describing the stirring political events in which his hero took part. Without losing sight of his major purpose, he outlines the chief issues in the tariff and bank struggles during Jackson's administration. Verplanck's vacillating political course, called by Philip Hone "unsteady as the wind," is carefully charted. His unsuccessful campaign in the 1834 mayoralty election in New York and his varied efforts on behalf of humanitarian reform are dealt with at length.

Although his brief portraits of Jackson, Calhoun, and Van Buren are noteworthy for their fairness, Dr. July seems a little too critical of De Witt Clinton and a little too kind to Nicholas Biddle. While he underscores Old Hickory's inconsistency toward the United States Bank and while he clearly indicates the reasons for Verplanck's break with the President on this issue, he might have gone into greater detail concerning Biddle's loan to Verplanck and its possible influence on the Congressman's later defense of that unpopular institution. He succeeds well, however, in avoiding the pitfall of overestimating his subject's political prominence. Verplanck's failures emerge just as clearly as his accomplishments.

Verplanck's literary achievements are examined with the same scholarly candor as his political activities. His contributions to The Talisman are assayed, his close friendship with William Cullen Bryant is carefully drawn, and his place among American men of letters is clearly indicated. Furthermore, the author's study of Verplanck's edition of Shakespeare's plays puts him in the ranks of modern scholars like Esther C. Dunn and Alfred Westfall in re-evaluating Verplanck's place in American Shakespearean criticism.

Something of the spirit and flavor of Verplanck's times lives in this book. The author paints a detailed picture of New York City in the early years of the nineteenth century. The excitement of the Columbia College Com-
mencement Riot of 1811, in which alumnum Verplanck, himself a graduate at the age of fourteen, took part, is here in full measure. The club life of the thriving metropolis is dealt with in passing. Two minor errors might be noted here. The formation of the Calliopean Society (described on page 91) did not follow but preceded that of the Friendly Club, and the latter sponsored three periodicals, not just one.

In considering Verplanck's social and economic ideas, the author finds a paradox in his optimism, his humanitarianism and faith in progress, and in his affection for the gloomy determinism of Ricardo. In this respect, however, Verplanck seems to follow many in his generation—men like the Reverend John McVickar, the Reverend Francis Wayland, and Henry Vethake, for instance, who softened economic liberalism and who sought to harmonize classical economic thought with traditional religious principles.

In a sense this book is not only a biography of an interesting though little known figure, but also a tribute to that sort of individual who combines outstanding ability with a wide range of intellectual interests, a species said to be disappearing in our specialized society. Both Gulian Verplanck and Robert July make a strong case for the universal man.

_Columbia University_  
CHARLES C. COLE, JR.

**Pioneer American Gardening.** Compiled by Elvenia Slosson. (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1951. xiv, 306 p. Illustrations, bibliography. $3.75.)

When Elvenia Slosson became president of the National Council of State Garden Clubs for the term 1949-1951, she chose as the theme project for her administration, "Early American Garden Traditions." Sketches along this line were contributed by the state federations making up the Council and published in the Council magazine. Later these sketches, the work of some sixty authors representing forty-one states, were collected into a volume and issued as a selection of the organization.

The make-up of the book does not follow any conventional grouping, but rather is in keeping with the geographical sections into which the Council is divided. Each area contains reports on the individual states, with a sketch or sketches of early gardeners and individual plants. None of these is long, and each is a complete unit, with the subject matter the selection of the author. This, while admirable for magazine articles, detracts somewhat from the book, for there is not enough coherence to or development of a theme to make for smooth reading or sustained interest: the compiler herself remarks that it is a kaleidoscope, conforming to no set pattern. The absence of an index is also regrettable in a book of this type.

The general history of the states is emphasized, the native flora well enumerated, the rise of great fruit industries traced, many well-known and more obscure explorers included. This results in a repetition of material, unavoidable, perhaps, since the subject matter is not confined to any one
area, but a little editing would have made such repetition less noticeable. In several cases articles, supposedly treating of different subjects, but nearly identical in material, are side by side.

"Pioneer" has been widely interpreted to mean either early, unrecorded history, or the first appearance of any significant movement or event; of gardening there is all too little to justify the title. A great deal of the material is standard, but here and there local legends and recollections of eyewitnesses are included; more of these would have given a distinct flavor to the book, set it apart from the general run of garden histories.

The chapter on California gardens, with data noted from the author's memory, is most valuable, as are the accounts of various flowers brought from the East by their determined owners, and the uses of purely western herbs and plants. It is interesting to have the legends of old gardens, to note the progress of botany among feminine Vermont settlers, and the reactions of a Dakota bride of 1837. Her particular rueful reflections should sound a keynote for a book on "pioneer" gardening.

The Indians, the babies, the chickens and the mice seem leagued to destroy the flowers, and they well-nigh succeeded . . . you may wonder why I bestow any of my precious time on flowers, but the principal reason is that I feel my mind needs some such cheering relaxation.

Williamsburg, Va.

Sarah P. Stetson


American civilization is nowhere better reflected than in the growth of its public schools. Egalitarianism, the democratic nature of American political life, the absence of an established church, and a unifying nationalism developed a demand for equal education that would avoid rigid class stratification. The author traces the growth of this ideal of the common school as a free institution of high quality. The educational reformers prior to 1850 thought of the common school curriculum as a morally founded preparation for everyday living and for the exercise of political responsibilities.

The creation of community support for the common school, the evolution of community control, and the changing philosophy of the curriculum are traced with great thoroughness in this excellently documented and very readable study. The New England tradition in education, the pre-eminent leadership of Massachusetts, the "Greek Democracy" of Virginia, the place of the Free School Society of New York City, and the early educational history of Ohio, illustrating western developments, are presented with great clarity. Pennsylvania is not overlooked: the Philadelphia workingmen's organizations' report of 1829 on public instruction in Pennsylvania, Thaddeus Stevens' salvaging of the year-old Pennsylvania Common School Law of 1834 when repeal was demanded, and the consideration by the
United States Supreme Court of the will written by the founder of Girard College, form part of the Pennsylvania story.

This notable historical study ends at 1850, and since that time public education has advanced—for example, in method, which John Dewey calls "the adjustment of subject matter to the nurture of thought." The future? If "our free schools both reflect the ideals of the nation and ensure the perpetuation of our special forms of democratic living," as President Conant says, then public education will not remain static. Problems, such as the revived religious education issue, that make the common schools what Dr. Cremin calls "the center of a storm of controversy," will be resolved. The "non-revolutionary development of our nation . . . determined by our educational system," to use Conant's words again, will probably find a higher percentage of our national income spent on education, teachers enjoying a higher professional status, and our more able children receiving better attention. We may even have a revival of the proposal of the Philadelphia workingmen and of Robert Dale Owen, who were part of the intellectual ferment in which Stephen Girard lived, that the state maintain boarding schools, for the British, always partial to "public" schools, are now operating several state boarding schools.

Dr. Cremin's study enables us to interpret better the realization, in the century since 1850, of many of the early aspirations of the proponents of the common school. The study demonstrates how and why "their faith in its ultimate success had already become a cardinal American ideal."

**Girard College**


This second part of Fritz Redlich's history of banking in the United States before the Federal Reserve System begins with 1840 and concludes with 1910. This period of seventy years is one of the most significant in American economic history and has never yet received adequate study. During these years the prime aim of all economic activity was speculative profits, largely because no central banking institution was in existence and government had withdrawn as a matter of principle from any attempt at control of economic activity. The costs of this almost unparalleled experiment in unregulated enterprise were staggering, not only in terms of wasted human capacities and natural resources, but also in the basic insecurity and high rate of failure of business enterprises.

Banking not only shared in this general instability, but also added to it by contributing to inflation when business activity was increasing and adding to deflationary pressures whenever a decline began. In addition, the national economy was divided during these same years into two separate economies, one in urban areas and the other in rural. Two currencies were
present. For merchants and manufacturers in towns and cities an elastic currency was provided by created deposits and checks, while for farmers there was only an inelastic currency consisting of national bank notes—based on government bonds—greenbacks, with a fixed limit, and silver certificates.

Mr. Redlich is aware of all these facts, but these aspects of economic history do not interest him. He has little concern with the functional aspects of banks as suppliers of credit and currency to all other forms of economic activity. His interest is with the "men and ideas" which, in his own terminology, molded American banking. The book, as a consequence, requires the reader to bring to it a detailed knowledge of general economic history and considerable information about the technical aspects of banking for it to have value.

Once this basic requirement is met, however, the specialized student will find a large mass of facts about banks, bankers, and banking gathered together in this volume. Most of these facts are valuable. Many are to be found in no other place. But the author has made little differentiation between those facts which are important and those which are of little consequence. One searches in vain for any clear statement of what banking was for, what it accomplished, what its strengths and what its weaknesses were. Each of the separate chapters is almost an unrelated essay, but future students will find those on the origin of clearinghouses, investment banking, and co-operation among American banks an effective introduction to these important subjects. But the book's greatest value is to be found in its footnotes and in its bibliography, because no one else has ever gathered together in one place so much information as has Mr. Redlich. Historians for a very long time will be aided in their tasks by his pioneering work.

University of the South

THOMAS P. GOVAN

Two Hundred Years in Cumberland County. Compiled by the Historical Association of Cumberland County. (Carlisle, Pa.: The Hamilton Library and Historical Association of Cumberland County, 1951. 388 p. Illustrations. §3.50.)

It is probable that upon first looking into this book one will have a feeling of disappointment, as the reviewer did, when he discovers that this is not an organized, conventional treatment of the history of Cumberland County in the past two hundred years. Knowing that the story of one of the oldest counties in Pennsylvania would offer the writers opportunity to do a fine piece of historical narration, he must feel that these writers truly missed their opportunity. Studying the book more closely, and reading the first-hand accounts which it contains, will, however, convince him very quickly that his first reaction was wrong. Rather than being disappointed, as he reads, he will find that he is delighted with this novel treatment of the subject. He will fully appreciate what the chairman of the Editorial Com-
mittee says (page 16): "The purpose of this book is not to supply a narrative history, but to publish some of the records of which history is made. The editors wish to revive and illuminate our history by printing firsthand accounts of past events without interpretation and with a minimum of comment. We assume a general knowledge of the history of the county on the part of the reader and proceed to let the past speak for itself with its own authentic voices."

The result of this effort is a book of attractive appearance in which more than one hundred firsthand reports of past events, chronologically arranged, together with more than one hundred pictures, are included. The selection of accounts includes a wide variety of subjects, demonstrating that the history of Cumberland County is rich in all principal lines of interest in the history of the nation.

The book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter X is a collection of "Historical Sketches of Sponsors," which is a valuable addition from the historical standpoint, and a happy solution of the problem of financial support of the undertaking. Chapter I is entitled "Plowshare and Tomahawk, 1731-1774"; Chapter II covers "Revolution and Rebellion, 1776-1794"; Chapter III presents "Some Worthies, Some Criminals, 1794-1810"; Chapter IV describes "Stage Coach Days, With a Backward Glance, 1810-1827"; Chapter V tells of a "New World of the Woodburner, 1827-1847"; Chapter VI sets forth "Glory, Gold and Gas Lights, 1847-1860"; Chapter VII recalls "Civil War in the Valley, 1860-1865"; Chapter VIII treats of "Firebugs and Wild Indians, 1865-1885"; and Chapter IX concludes with "The Trolley Car and the Flying Machine, 1885-1917." There is no general index, but the table of contents is detailed, with a chronological arrangement of the accounts, and the table of illustrations is indexed by subjects. The editorial and the manufacturing work are well done.

The book is a worthy contribution to the Bicentennial of Cumberland County, and to the literature of Pennsylvania history. The statement on the rear outside of the jacket is apt: "A Stage Journey through Cumberland County's past. Not a formal history, but a collection of eye-witness accounts of the terrors of war and the arts of peace, the lively joys and sore trials of a county's people, revealed in old letters, diaries, memoirs, documents, newspaper reports and advertisements."

Gettysburg College

Robert Fortenbaugh


In these two volumes Professor Nevins has carried his notable analysis of the ante-bellum period to the brink of armed conflict. He continues in his
graphic and often dramatically lively style to appraise with calm analysis the forces at work on both sides of the nation's great dividing line. Clever vignettes often etch the actors on the tragic stage. Periodically, southern leaders, conservatives, and radicals—and their northern counterparts—are given the spotlight, although it lingers to illumine more particularly the figures of Buchanan, Douglas, and Lincoln. As to Buchanan, the insistent note is sounded of his irresolution, "the combination of timidity, pliability, and self-seeking in his character"; the president, having chosen a southern cabinet, did not use it but let it use him, even up to the fatal issue of secession. In contrast, Douglas takes on more definitely heroic stature, rising from two parts politician and one part statesman to become a significantly important American leader, prepared at length to place the Union above his own preferment. Douglas' courageous fight for a genuine brand of popular sovereignty in Kansas contrasts sharply with Buchanan's abandonment—under pressure—of a clear public pledge and of the high ground of principle. Lincoln begins to emerge as a statesman through successive episodes that heralded the even more significant role he was shortly to play in behalf of the preservation of the Union.

But however carefully the scenes in the political drama are worked out, the author does not fail to suggest the less obvious, more subtle, and often basic forces that operated in the background. A chapter entitled "Not from a Vain or Shallow Thought" gives glimpses into the cultural forces that underlay sectional attitudes, but which fundamentally proved that the American soul was at last finding expression. Another on "Panic and Recovery" reveals how economic developments were sharpening the forces of sectionalism. The chapter on "Slavery in a World Setting" reveals the tragedy of southern champions of the peculiar institution, many of whom knew in their hearts that slavery was doomed by the judgment of history, being forced into a blind and often ruthless defense, in part by the intransigency of abolitionists who in their blind idealism oversimplified the problem. Mr. Nevins hazards the opinion that a timely and bold scheme of compensated emancipation might have won a sufficient minority of southerners, in alliance with a generous body of northern opinion, to "turn the scale in 1861 in favor of a new compromise and some improved scheme."

As the appeal to arms became insistent, Mr. Nevins does not fail to give his own conclusions both as to what happened and what might have been. A heavy responsibility for the conflict is placed upon a leadership on both sides which failed to give a constructive examination to the problem of slavery as linked with race adjustment. He scouts any monistic explanation of the drift to war, more especially a narrowly economic one. He does not hesitate to score a Republican overconfidence in 1860 which minimized the danger of secession. Moreover, he says, "if secession could have been postponed by two decades, natural forces might have placed a solution full in sight."

But what were the chances of such a postponement? Confirming early
findings of this reviewer, Mr. Nevins points out that the summer of 1858 witnessed the revival of a conservative opposition party in the upper South, which offered a promise of restraint upon southern conspirators, until John Brown's mad raid loosed the whirlwind of sectional passion, a raid that might have been nipped in the bud by the Virginia governor who had been forewarned. The author is discriminating in his treatment of Buchanan's handling of the secession crisis, not hesitating to designate his general policy as "sound," although his mode of implementing it was "weak, timid, and blundering." Buchanan originally contemplated the calling of a national convention. This, says Mr. Nevins, under energetic leadership might have rallied national interest and Union sentiment and might have saved the day. But, made aware of objections to this plan, he failed to press it and took the easy path of transferring responsibility to Congress, where the radical secessionists and the radical Republicans were committed to oppose any practical scheme of accommodation. And so there ensued "a war over slavery and the future position of the Negro race in North America."

The entire work is so sound in scholarship that it would seem petty to cavil at a few minor discrepancies. Perhaps more significant is the absence of an analysis of the southern nonslaveholder vote in 1860; the analysis of the social, economic, and geographic factors in the later popular vote on secession conventions is perhaps not too penetrating. One may also regret that a number of important quotations are not documented by exact citations. But these are lapses that are readily offset by the masterful treatment of the main theme.

Brooklyn College

ARTHUR C. COLE

Mr. Lincoln's Contemporaries. An Album of Portraits by Mathew B. Brady. By ROY MEREDITH. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1951. xiv, 234 p. Index. $6.00.)

In this second volume of Brady photographs, the first being Mr. Lincoln's Camera Man (1946), we have a sketchy panorama of men and events of the 1850's and of the Civil War period. From the first picture of Marshall Owen Roberts, a promoter "who knew the value of political connections," to the last, that of Walt Whitman, poet, philosopher, and newspaperman, the reproductions are clear and distinct, many of them portraying long-forgotten Lincoln contemporaries. Most of the illustrations are of Union men and scenes, as Brady did not go into the South either before or during the Civil War. Soldiers, politicians, newspapermen, ministers, inventors, actors and actresses, businessmen and others follow one another in succession in this galaxy of 172 portraits. The emphasis is on the generality of society rather than on any particular aspect of it. The dress, the attitude, the physical and facial adornment, the very expression, portray a vanished, and, in retrospect, a romantic age. The bloomer girl of the period is a far cry from
present-day shirt and slacks. The beard, the flowing tie, and the frock coat are frequently, though not always, present. Significant omissions are portraits of Generals Halleck, McClellan, Pope and Burnside, cabinet officers Welles and Bates, and Theodore Parker and H. W. Bellows. There is some repetition of photographs or subjects in both volumes, but in general the present volume contains photographs never before or infrequently published. No pictures of men or places in the western area of the Civil War period are included and none of Confederate subjects.

The book is prefaced by a brief sketch of Brady, but the dates of his birth and death are not given. There is a running commentary designed to identify the portraits and to place the subject in the stream of the times and in relation to other subjects portrayed. The first half of the book is devoted to the period of the 1850's preceding Lincoln's election and inauguration, "a decade of adventure." The war period moves quickly through the conflict with a brief glance on the way at the home front.

Two portraits (pages 175 and 176) are unidentified; a third (on page 124), evidently a photograph of a caricature on birch bark, is identified in the text, but without explanation, as John C. Breckinridge. The only Lincoln photograph (page 129) is repeated from the former volume. General Henry E. Davies (page 196) is incorrectly identified as "General H. E. Davis."

Altogether the collection of photographs here presented constitutes a worth-while addition to the constantly growing body of material on Lincoln and the Civil War period. An alphabetical index to the illustrations enables easy determination of the subjects shown and the location of the illustrations. The book is well printed and attractively bound.

Locust Valley, N. Y.  

THOMAS ROBSON HAY


Earl Schenck Miers is a gifted and imaginative young man who several years ago developed a new formula for writing history books for a wide popular market. He applied it spectacularly in his editorial supervision of Paul Angle's Lincoln Reader, which sold nearly a half million copies in three months, refined it in his own Gettysburg, and now has polished it to a high gloss in his account of Sherman's campaign through the South. In the preface, he describes his technique:

The General Who Marched to Hell actually is an attempt to capture from contemporary records, or from as near-to-the-moment records as exist, the moods and motivations of one of the unique episodes in American history. This book tries not only to see into the minds, and to evaluate the emotions, of the generals both North and South who threw their troops into battle, but also to present the experiences
and the attitudes of the man on the battlefield, of the civilian who heard the roar of cannon and fled to his cellar, and of the politician who already had begun to live history by hindsight. This is a book that, in attempting to recapture the immediacy of feeling at a precise moment, is more concerned with the impression than with the facts themselves. Only historical research can afford to deal with the whole truth; history, as it is lived, must contend with the partial truth by which men fight and bleed and die.

In all this Miers has succeeded admirably well. The center of focus is Sherman—the same Sherman as Lloyd Lewis's fighting prophet; both he and the lesser characters almost invariably come alive. Involved descriptions of the maneuvering and fighting from Chattanooga to Atlanta give way to vivid impressions of the march to the sea, and finally, the burning of Columbia.

The writer of either popular or scholarly history can learn much from Miers' craftsmanship. His fast-paced, clean style is infinitely superior to the Edwardian perfervid prose and invented dialogue, long outmoded in the novel, that clutter the sort of books popular reviewers usually nominate for the Pulitzer Prize. It is equally preferable to the involved Germanic sentences of too many monographs.

There are shortcomings too. The reader can see little beyond the smoke of battle; he is kept in almost as much ignorance of broad patterns and underlying significance as the participants at the time. In order that he might not encounter anything that would slow the turning of the pages, he is sometimes led down short cuts past what is more significant but less exciting. Miers candidly explained his technique in the Abraham Lincoln Quarterly, December, 1948. He told how, to his later regret, he insisted that the Lincoln Reader contain Sandburg's romantic but wholly fictitious story of Lincoln's romance with Ann Rutledge rather than Randall's account, "completely pulverizing" the legend. There is no such outright distortion in the present book, but it too contains the inevitable limitations that come from tailoring a narrative primarily to entertain a broad audience.

The general impression is much like that of one of the old Brady picture books of the Civil War, with words substituted for the pictures.

University of Illinois

FRANK FREIDEL

Yale University Portrait Index, 1701-1951. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951. x, 185 p. Illustrations. $5.00.)

In every history of American painting there are references to important early portraits owned by our older universities. Because they are mostly private institutions and do not publicize these holdings as among their major attractions, the academic collections are less well known than those of the museums and historical societies. Fortunately, however, in recent years several universities have published catalogues of their pictures on the occasion of their major anniversaries. The University of Pennsylvania
issued its catalogue on its bicentenary in 1940, and Princeton did likewise in 1947. Now to celebrate its 250th anniversary Yale has published its Portrait Index.

This is an event of great significance because the Yale collection is the richest of all. Through the long, continuous process of amassing portraits of faculty members, students, and benefactors, and by receiving such princely gifts from alumni as the Mabel Brady Garvan Collection of American Arts and Crafts, the Yale collection now numbers 1,108 identified portraits. Among these almost every outstanding American painter of the period 1700 to 1850 is represented, frequently by not one but by several portraits. There are, for example, three Smiberts, six Charles Willson Peales, seven Ralph Earls, seven Gilbert Stuarts, eight Copleys and, thanks to the receipt of the entire contents of his studio, ninety-six paintings by John Trumbull. Add to this the fact that among the Trumbulls are the original sketches for the episodes of the Revolution, among the Smiberts the first great portrait group painted in British America, and among the Earls the superb Roger Sherman, treasurer of Yale, and it will be at once apparent that few institutions of any category can rival the greatness of this collection.

For the purpose of providing essential information about this wealth of early portraits the present catalogue is perfectly adequate. As the compilers state in their foreword, it is not intended as a catalogue raisonné, like Princeton Portraits, “but is issued as a finding list for historians and art historians.” As a result, information about the pictures is kept to a minimum, brief biographies of the sitters forming the most lengthy part of each entry. The portraits are arranged in the alphabetical sequence of the sitters’ names and only a relatively few (150) are illustrated. In a short foreword John Marshall Phillips, director of the Yale University Art Gallery, relates the history of the collection.

Within the limits set for the project it would be difficult to improve the effectiveness of the arrangement of material made by Miss Anna Wells Rutledge, who by performing similar services for the Maryland Historical Society, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and the collections of Charleston, South Carolina, has become an authority on writing the texts of portrait catalogues. One slight improvement would have been the inclusion of pagination in the list of portraits according to artists, which closes the volume, for it would have facilitated the task of locating them in the body of the catalogue. Readers not especially concerned with the history of Yale might have preferred a selection of illustrations based more on the merits of the picture and less upon the attainments of the subject than the one used in preparing this publication.

One of the delights of catalogues of this sort are the surprises they provide. Philadelphians will have special interest in Benjamin West’s early miniature self-portrait of 1756, which shows him looking astonishingly like his painting of Thomas Mifflin, now in the possession of this Society, in Major John André’s drawing of Mrs. Benedict Arnold wearing her Meschi-
anza costume of 1778, which unfortunately is not illustrated, and in John Neagle's fine portrait of our great architect William Strickland, which like so many Philadelphia treasures, has been lost to this city. All careful readers will appreciate the great amount of detailed research which has gone into the making of this catalogue and which in the case of the early nineteenth-century "primitive" Reuben Moulthrop, has resulted in a series of new attributions.

University of Pennsylvania  


In Men of Good Hope Daniel Aaron sees an especial need today for outspoken men of liberal principles. This is a period of inflexible criteria on public issues in which men dare not speak out—a complaint which holders of minority opinions have maintained since the time of John the Baptist. Progressivism has become a "shabby thing." The author of this book harks back to the golden era of vigorous dissenters of the nineteenth century, and, in a series of well-written biographical essays depicting their philosophies of liberalism, offers examples of men who would be heard: Emerson, Theodore Parker, Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd, William Dean Howells, and Thorstein Veblen (the latter fits most uneasily in this group, but the discussion is appropriate). Here are seven fearless liberals, articulators of the sturdy, middle-class yeomanry in a period when they represented a proud, artisan, president-making stock. They held in common the ethics of democracy and believed that a great disparity of wealth would corrupt the morals and the body politic of a wholesome nation. The theme running through the whole is that of the cleansing action which these men of conscience had on American life by speaking their opposition when it was unpopular to do so. But there is no formal thesis which substantiates the contention that the American progressive is vanishing. The origins, rise, and decline of the species progressivus americanus must be sought elsewhere. If these fearless creatures are on the verge of extinction, certainly they deserve a full-length history.

The most satisfying aspect of these essays of the progressive beau ideal is Mr. Aaron's appreciation of the combined literary and humanitarian qualities of the reformers. Care is always taken to pause thoughtfully over their keenness of expression and the classification of their genre.

Parker used the sermon and the lecture as vehicles for his progressive philosophy; George wrote his masterpiece as a dramatic prose-poem; Bellamy composed sociological romances and Howells realistic novels, while Lloyd embodied his views in the evangelical fact-studded essay of exposure. Veblen chose the form of the academic monograph to express himself, but the same ulterior objectives lay behind them all. (page 217)
The author, himself distinguished for literary clarity, is more at home, however, with the diction of his progressives than with the soundness of their economic theory.  

*Men of Good Hope* is reminiscent of Charles A. Madison’s *Critics and Crusaders* (1949). Both are written in the V. L. Parrington motif of examining men and their ideas against the standard of a liberal creed, although Madison is more inclusive in his selectees than is Aaron. Madison discusses eighteen reformers, three of whom overlap Aaron’s group. Aaron includes two transcendentalist-preacher-lecturers (Emerson and Parker—the latter was also an abolitionist); two utopians, who more or less participated in politics (George and Bellamy); a journalist-muckraker (Lloyd); a realist in fiction (Howells; Bellamy, too, was a novelist); and a maverick economist-sociologist (Veblen). None of these were extremists in ideological movements, nor were any leaders of labor, outstanding populists, or Progressive Party men, and none were foreign born. Moreover, four were New Englanders by birth or adoption, two were from the Midwest, and one, Henry George, is difficult to classify. Mr. Aaron’s selectees are apropos, certainly, but one speculates on his standard of selection of progressives, since the list of eligible nominees who were omitted, it may happily be said, can be a long one, depending on one’s point of view.

The format of the chapters is similar to Richard Hofstadter’s *The American Political Tradition* (1948), both drawing on substantial historical sources listed in a bibliography, but using no footnotes, and displaying fresh insights along with sprightly writing.

There is also a chapter in *Men of Good Hope* devoted to two “pseudo-progressives,” Brooks Adams and Theodore Roosevelt. The gregarious Bull Mooser has lately emerged as a tarnished reformer whose motives and achievements are seriously questioned no matter what he did. Yet, in his day Roosevelt had a large following of faithfuls who were inspired by his brand of progressivism. Madam Secretary Frances Perkins was initiated into the cult by the Colonel, and she, considerably inspired, serves as a living link between the fifth cousins who occupied the presidency within twenty-five years of each other. Two of our recent progressive chief executives, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, are treated with disdain by Mr. Aaron, while Franklin D. Roosevelt emerges as a “spiritual descendant of Jefferson and Jackson if not Ralph Waldo Emerson.” It may be that Franklin Roosevelt, too, will be relegated to the position of a bogus liberal. Shifting historical situations, it seems, make it impossible for the term *progressive* to be a constant.

The study of those who pleaded for human values, who tried to prevent a cultural lag between industrial advance and social consciousness, is a fruitful one. Mr. Aaron’s contribution to this literature lies in his appreciation of the gentle qualities of our more sensitive reformers—men who would have social action and change, albeit preserving the dignity of the individual.

*University of Pennsylvania*  
*Louis H. Arky*

It is a well-established custom that the President of the American Historical Association shall read an address at the annual meeting of that body during his year in office. This custom has been faithfully adhered to since 1884 by all save those who died in office, and Henry Adams who chose to be out of the country, but obliged with a written statement.

This annual address marks a high point in a historian’s career, and he presumably summons his best efforts to enable him to put into words his concept of the meaning of his profession. Professor Ausubel has read and compared these efforts, has analyzed them topically and related them to the careers and works of those who gave them and to the prevailing trends in historiography.

The sum total is, of course, heterogeneous, but there are certain threads which appear again and again. The chief concern of the presidents has been to demonstrate that history should be accurate and truthful, that it should be written in a fashion which will invite rather than repel the reader, and to prove that history so written is socially useful.

It is all too evident that there has been little effort to contribute to the philosophy of history or to call for the need of a more intellectual effort at meaningful interpretation. One receives the impression that seldom have the presidents written these addresses at a period of most creative activity or in a penetrating mood of introspection. In other words not often do they represent the president at his best. Shining examples to the contrary are the efforts of Becker, Cheyney, and Dunning. Somewhat disillusioning as this survey may be, it is encouraging to realize that there is a greater interest nowadays in the philosophical responsibilities of the historian, which should be reflected in the addresses which are yet to be prepared.

University of Pennsylvania
ROY F. NICHOLS

Annotated Bibliography on the Amish. By JOHN A. HOSTETLER. (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1951. xx, 100 p. $1.50.)

Mr. Hostetler's bibliography of source materials pertaining to the Old Order Amish Mennonites should prove a valuable aid to the growing number of students interested in this quiet, seclusive religious group. In addition to the bibliography itself, which is divided into books and pamphlets, graduate theses, articles, and unpublished sources, Mr. Hostetler has included an interesting short preface, a map giving the location of past and present church communities, and an analytical subject index to the sources he has listed.