

BOOK REVIEWS

A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher Covering the Years 1834-1871. Edited by NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT. (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1967. x, 626 p. Illustrations, endpaper maps, index. \$12.50.)

At his suburban home a few miles north of Philadelphia on June 8, 1867, Sidney George Fisher (1809-1871) made the following entry in his diary:

This morning finished table of contents to last volume of diary & put it in the walnut box, where there are now 46 volumes, besides diaries kept at Mount Harmon & on journies. What shall I do with them? The idea of their falling into any hands but those of Bet or Sidney [*the diarist's wife and son*] is unbearable. Yet such a thing might happen after I go, or they might be stolen. I feel sometimes tempted to burn them.

Fortunately he did no such thing, but added others to the assemblage during the remaining years of his life. All seventy-nine volumes descended to his son, who lived until 1927, and in 1948 R. Sturgis Ingersoll, a collateral descendant of Mrs. Fisher, presented them intact to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In April, 1952, the first selection from them appeared in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Twenty-three more substantial installments were published at intervals between then and October, 1965, the whole run comprising only a fraction of the original in bulk but covering its entire chronological span, 1834 to 1871.

The editor of the *Magazine* and of the *Diary* as it now appears in book form tells us that nothing theretofore published in the *Magazine* attracted more comment. Readers called for back numbers and recommended that a book be made of the serial selections. This speaks well for the *Magazine's* readership. For the diary now published under the title of *A Philadelphia Perspective* is on many counts a very remarkable document. No one who reads it is likely to dispute Mr. Wainwright's own claims for it (not made in this book), that "This diary is, presumably, the most complete and most revealing ever compiled by a Philadelphian, and surely one of the best written ever kept by an American" (*Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, LXXII [1962], 29).

As now issued by the Society as a volume, thanks to the generosity of Mrs. Harry Clark Boden and in fittingly handsome typographical dress, the diary covers the same time span as the serial publication but adds about one fifth more material from the manuscript text. The editor has not included his perceptive essay on Fisher (cited in the preceding paragraph),

which the reviewer would have been glad to see accompany the text. He may also have reduced by a little the scale of the editorial annotation found in the serialization. But this is only an impression, and the notes in the book seem unerringly suited to the matter they clarify: they are almost never superfluous and almost never wanting where needed. They are the work of a seasoned editor deeply versed in local and national history; and the rendering of the text, one feels sure, is equally skillful and reliable. These are *sine qua non*s of documentary editing, usually passed over when well done and noticed only when badly done. Much thoughtful care has also been given to other features of the book that are agreeable or useful or both at once. A section of genealogical notes places the diarist among the extensive Fisher family, and his wife among the still more extensive Ingersoll family. There is a "Family Album" made up, chiefly, of photographs of both families, some of their frequently mentioned contemporaries, and their homes; and contemporary prints of views and sites in and about Philadelphia appear throughout the volume. An annotated list of country-seats that Fisher knew well is of great help to the reader, and the endpapers provide a schematic plan of these as well as a map of the country round Fisher's beloved farm called Mount Harmon on the Sassafra River in Maryland. The index has been prepared for real use, and will get it.

By temperament and by self-schooling, Sidney George Fisher was an ideal diarist. At an early age he deliberately chose the role of the contemplative observer rather than the participant in affairs, and thus ran directly against the main current of American life in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Though well educated and trained for the bar, he despised almost every form of gainful activity, including the practice of law, because it tended to "narrow the mind, degrade the feelings and blunt the moral susceptibilities." "I cannot imagine a man more thoroughly without occupation than I am," he wrote as he was approaching thirty; and although he sometimes found this "irksome" and knew he was making great sacrifices to maintain his detachment, he more commonly congratulated himself on his freedom from the ambitions and cares that hardened and corrupted other men—even the best of men, like his younger and much loved brother, Charles Henry.

Sidney's relations with his brother Henry (as he is invariably called) form a major theme of the diary. The brothers came, of course, from the same solid Quaker stock that had dominated Philadelphia mercantile and social life in the eighteenth century, and as long as both lived they were bound together by the strongest ties of affection. But they could hardly have been more unlike in talents and tastes. Henry was trained for business, and in the expanding commercial and industrial world of his time he displayed a Midas touch, a level head, and conspicuous integrity—a combination which readily attracted the trust of the Philadelphia business community and of wealthy clients from elsewhere, notably England. He married well and raised a large family. He built a mansion in the country, staffed it with a

regiment of servants, and stocked it with costly furniture, plate, and wines. Year after year Henry's interests and fortune grew, and Sidney recorded their increase with mingled admiration (unmixed with envy) and apprehensiveness. Eventually the brothers' paths diverged so far that a gulf opened between them.

Henry is the best friend & brother in the world [*Sidney wrote as early as 1843*], but he does not understand me. Activity is his natural element, he is successful & enjoys his success & his efforts. He cannot conceive why I should dislike or be incapable of the same kind of exertion. His talents are eminently practical, mine, if I have any, speculative. He lives in the external world of reality, I in the inner world of thought.

Again and again Sidney asks in his diary if Henry "is not paying too dearly" for his wealth "by total absorption in business to the neglect of higher objects." He trembles at the thought that, like many another new-made millionaire, Henry may one day overreach himself and fail. At length, in the tight money market of 1861, Henry is obliged to suspend payments, and although his home and a good part of his fortune are saved for his children through the leniency of kindly creditors, Henry himself was to die a peculiarly grisly death within a year, at the age of forty-seven, the victim of overwork and nervous exhaustion. Under the terms of Henry's will, Sidney's debts to him (which were large, though Sidney scarcely knew how large) were canceled. Deeply saddened, in ever-narrowing financial straits, but irrevocably committed to cultivated leisure and consoled by his books, his reveries, his diary, and remnants of the domestic comforts he had so long enjoyed, Sidney lived nine years longer, then died with dignity even though he was virtually a charity case.

The theme of the two brothers' contrasted lives, each fulfilled in a way but both ending tragically, has an almost allegorical clarity and force. Running through most of the diary, it provides it with a unity ordinarily found only in works of imagination, almost never in the formless records of daily life. Add to this Sidney Fisher's rigorous honesty toward himself as well as others, his ample assortment of prejudices, his versatile expressiveness, and his happy-sad play of mind over the persons and events he chose to comment on, and the result is a work of great literary merit, an undoubted classic, a book of enduring appeal.

But if Sidney Fisher was a brilliant satirist and elegist of his times, his record is valuable in a hundred ways besides its agreeableness as reading matter. Fisher drew back from the world because he largely disapproved of it, but disapproval did not mean disregarding what went on there. On the contrary, he withdrew in order to gain—as the editor's title indicates—perspective on the bustling world, in order to scrutinize and analyze the pettiness and, when he could discern any, the greatness of those who inhabited it.

Here, then, are chronicled by a privileged observer four decades of Philadelphia social life, of which the most conspicuous feature was the

powerful effect of expanding wealth on manners. "Fortunately," Fisher wrote in 1843, "there are yet left a few houses from which vulgar people are excluded." He meant the newly rich, but as time went on the old extended cousinhood of families with inherited wealth—to Fisher the only respectable sort of wealth—grew more defenseless against invasion by parvenus. Old Philadelphians, infected by "the taste for villa life" that was propagated by Andrew Jackson Downing and facilitated by a growing network of railroads, took to the suburbs north and west of the city. Fisher himself did, following the marriage that it had taken him eleven years to decide on, occupying a modest countryseat called Forest Hill near Germantown that was owned by his wife's family. But even in this refuge it was impossible to escape the vulgarizing effects of wealth. Forest Hill had a basement kitchen, which made it hard for the Fishers to keep their servants when more luxurious houses were built in their neighborhood. By the late 1860's the "plague of bad servants" had in Fisher's opinion become the "curse of American life." "It is one among the many ills of democracy. The lower classes rule and we are now feeling their power not only at the hustings but in the household." Fisher required a minimum of six servants to tend the Forest Hill house and grounds, and they beggared him. In 1867 he noted perceptively that "The secret of the economy of people of the middle classes is that they keep *no* servants & do their own work," which is the better done for just that reason. But, he concluded, "This is impossible for a *lady*" and, by implication, for a *gentleman*.

The diary takes us at times beyond Philadelphia to the vacation haunts of Philadelphians and others—at first to the rustic pleasures of Schooley's Mountain in New Jersey, where Fisher's parents had summered, later to Newport and occasionally Saratoga Springs, and repeatedly in Fisher's later years, when he became partially crippled by "rheumatic gout," to Richfield Springs in central New York. It furnishes details on resort life during the period when resorts first became available to a wide public, and quite expectedly it emphasizes Fisher's trouble in finding company acceptable to his fastidious taste. In 1848 he thought the social standards of Newport were already declining. The Ocean House was crowded, he wrote,

chiefly [with] New Yorkers of the upstart school . . . [M]any of those most conspicuous in the society of New York are not merely of vulgar parentage but have themselves occupied the lowest stations in life, grocers, porters, milkmen, mechanics, &c. [In Philadelphia] it is different. Some of the old Wm. Penn families still remain & the preponderance which the professions have always had has given a much higher tone of manners, characters & culture to Philad. We are gradually losing it no doubt from the influence of the general causes which control the country, but still we are far superior to New York.

The diary also serves as a selective but highly informative and diverting biographical directory of eminent Philadelphians. Fisher knew "everybody"—at least everybody he cared to know. During their lives he pilloried or praised them according to his standards, and regularly reported their

secret vices and their incomes. When they died he attended their funerals, for like most Americans of the time he was fascinated by mortuary details, and then composed formal sketches of their careers and characters. Although written solely for his private satisfaction, these portraits of Fishers, Ingersolls, Wisters, Butlers, Biddles, Logans, Binneys, and Rushes are often astonishingly comprehensive and vivid, and we would have been immeasurably the poorer without them.

Politics both repelled and fascinated Fisher. He peremptorily turned down opportunities to enter public life, but he followed the evolutions of national parties and their leaders with informed if thoroughly prejudiced interest. After all, they made good copy. The first entry in this volume describes a visit to the White House, where he found Andrew Jackson, clothed "in a rusty & dirty suit of black," being pestered by a Methodist fanatic:

Such is the man whom a free and *enlightened* people have twice elected for their ruler. . . . [W]hen we see a nation so infatuated, as in spite of all evidence and all reason, in spite of the grossest mismanagement, the vilest fraud & corruption, . . . to worship such a creature as Andrew Jackson, ignorant, passionate and imbecile, without a striking or estimable trait, the tool of low adventurers & swindlers, and whose only service was the victory of New Orleans in which no military skill or genius was displayed, it is enough to destroy all hope in the power of the people for self government, and to dissipate forever the fanciful dream of republicanism.

Of few political leaders, especially Democrats, did Fisher have anything much better to say. He wondered at times if the whole American political experiment wasn't a monstrous mistake, and one of the reasons he left the city for the country was in order "to escape the noise, vulgarity, and various abominations of 4th of July patriotism. On that day all laws seem suspended, & riot, incendiarism, drunkenness and uproar form an appropriate celebration of democratic triumph." Since he attributed most of the ills of the country to manhood suffrage, the very suggestion of giving votes to women or to Negroes raised his indignation to outrage.

In view of all this it is astonishing to read what Fisher had to say of Abraham Lincoln. On learning that "a Mr. Lincoln" had been nominated for president, he thought it a great point gained because the nomination of Seward would have immediately driven southern secessionists (for whom, on the other hand, the diarist had scant sympathy) to extreme measures. He stuck to this view even after learning that Lincoln was "a Western 'screamer,'" a typical representative of "Western coarseness & violence." Lincoln's first inaugural address seemed to Fisher imbued with "candor, native good sense, generous & elevated sentiment, and simple sincerity." He even praised its style, which from such a commentator was praise indeed. "In this hour of its trial," the diarist wrote with a Lincolnian eloquence of his own after reading the President's war message of July,

1861, "the country seems to have found in Mr. Lincoln a great man." The same warmly approving tone marked all of Fisher's other comments on Lincoln throughout the war years. His most influential publication, *The Trial of the Constitution* (1863), supported Lincoln's emancipation policy, and he wrote a tract advocating Lincoln's re-election in 1864. At the great Sanitary Commission Fair held in Philadelphia in June of that year, Fisher met the only politician whom he had ever deeply admired, and thereby confirmed his admiration:

Was much pleased by his countenance, voice & manner. He is tall, slender, not awkward & uncouth as has been represented, well dressed in black, self-possessed & easy, frank & cordial. The pictures of him do great injustice to his face. His features are irregular & would be coarse but for their expression, which is genial, animated & kind. He looked somewhat pale & languid & there is a soft shade of melancholy in his smile & in his eyes. Altogether an honest, intelligent, amiable countenance, calculated to inspire respect, confidence & regard.

Fisher's judgment in April, 1865, as soon as he had recovered from a mere "stupefied sense of calamity," was that "The southern people have murdered their best friend, as they are likely to find ere long."

Although he preferred to face backward toward a simpler America, Fisher as a self-appointed chronicler of his times recorded with painstaking detail new developments in industry, transportation, and technology. He visited and described coal and iron works and reported on the fortunes made from the illuminating oil being extracted in western Pennsylvania. His records of travel by railroad and steamboat are replete with data on schedules and accommodations. Despite himself, he could not withhold approval from the new cars in which, in 1848, he journeyed across New York to Geneseo, for they were equipped with "gum elastic springs," mahogany and walnut paneling, and velvet cushions, and were mercifully free from "sparks, smoke, dust, rattling or jolting." The annually more sumptuous steamboats that he took up and down the Hudson also evoked his reluctant admiration. "Street railroads" (horse-drawn trolleys) were introduced in Philadelphia in 1858. To Fisher they were a great boon; he pronounced them "so comfortable that the most fastidious may endure them," and thoughtfully listed their routes in 1859. They quickened the physical growth of the city and raised property values, but like other innovations they had some disagreeable consequences. The rails made carriage driving in the city difficult, and the owners, linked in corrupt alliance with the city politicians, soon became indifferent to any interest except their profits. As minor but not insignificant features of the technological revolution, Fisher noted in 1860 that his wife's new sewing machine enabled her to do work in an hour that had taken her a day to do by hand; and that, in the following year, on a visit to the Continental Hotel in downtown Philadelphia,

we went up to the 6th story in the hoisting machine just introduced. It must be a great convenience & save a great deal of running up and down stairs. You enter a nicely furnished little room ten feet square. A man pulls a string and the room ascends with an easy motion. You can stop and get out at any story.

What mattered most to Sidney Fisher, however, was the life of the mind and the well-being of American letters and culture. It was his insistence on these values, he knew, that more than anything else isolated him from his fellows. Friends asked him to give lectures and commemorative addresses. Friends and family pampered him with praise for these efforts and retained for the author they were a little surprised to find in their midst a genuine if sometimes condescending affection. Inevitably they came to think of him as an idler and dreamer who would never be able to take care of his worldly concerns. In a limited sense they were right. Yet his diary if read attentively gives anything but the impression of a lazy or irresponsible man. Fisher marched to a different drum, held his colors higher, and yearned and labored hard to make more lasting contributions to his kind than the busy and mundanely successful Philadelphians around him. In the end he was convinced he had failed. His volumes of poetry did not sell; his prolific writings in newspapers and periodicals on political and constitutional subjects, many of them collected in book form, had their momentary impact and were forgotten. With perfect candor, Fisher admitted that his failure in the three fields he had labored in—law, farming, and literature—was nobody's fault but his own. It would therefore surprise and gratify him to learn that he was completely wrong on the last of these counts. His *Diary* as now given to the world fulfills his chief aspiration. It belongs to that very select company of personal documents which so captivate the reader, so completely identify reader with writer, that it seems a pity that they have to end at all.

Massachusetts Historical Society

L. H. BUTTERFIELD

The American Revolution Reconsidered. By RICHARD B. MORRIS. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1967. xi, 178 p. Index. \$5.00.)

In this volume, substantially expanded from a series of four lectures delivered at New York University, Professor Morris outlines his views on the American Revolution and on its pertinence for what he chooses to call this "Nuclear Space Age." His work is strongest in reviewing the general pattern of changing viewpoints on the Revolution and in suggesting some of the implications of the author's own study of Revolutionary diplomacy and of the Confederation period.

Throughout the book, Professor Morris appraises the work of many previous writers on the Revolution and chides some of them for presenting

overdrawn and unrealistic pictures of the character of American or British leaders, or of the differences between the American and French Revolutions, or of the significance of this or that aspect of the diplomacy of the period. His first chapter is essentially a review of changing historical fads, complete with criticism of approaches ranging from the filiopietistic to the Namierist. Next, Professor Morris discusses the "two revolutions," the French and the American. And, in keeping with his general skepticism toward simplistic sketches of characters or events, he cautions against picturing the French and American Revolution in terms of nearly absolute contrast. He suggests that the approach of those who see no elements of feudalism in the American past needs numerous qualifications. He argues that the American Revolution had a dual character: while, as most historians now agree, the Revolution was a movement political and constitutional in origin, it had consequences for many other areas of American life and became part of a "general movement for liberation." The third chapter is an evaluation of the mythmakers' work with regard to the French Alliance, the process of negotiating the peace, and the role of such figures as Benjamin Franklin. Many of his suggestions here will be familiar to those who know Professor Morris' recent work, *The Peacemakers*. Finally, the author examines the controversy over the Confederation, its successes and failures, and the "counter-revolutionary" interpretation of the Constitution of 1787. While admitting the importance of the questions raised by revisionist historians with regard to the 1780's, he generally believes that the Philadelphia Convention did not represent the Thermidorian phase of the American Revolution.

Some of the strengths and weaknesses of Professor Morris' work are implicit in the summary above. It does provide a clear and succinct guide to many of the various approaches and to much of the controversy among historians about the nature of the American Revolution. The book also contains many reasonable criticisms of simplistic or overstated interpretations of the period, as for example, his carefully worked out critique of the revisionists' view of the Confederation and its record. Yet some of the comments of the author seemed directed against nonexistent antagonists: aside from the writers of a Broadway musical mentioned by the author, who now upholds the "legend of France's *disinterested* support for the Revolutionary cause?" (italics added). And a few of the arguments made by Professor Morris seem quite questionable: his attack upon the value of the French alliance depends partially upon a peculiar use of words (he asks whether the alliance was as "equally indispensable" as French aid) and partially upon arguments that seem incomplete to this reviewer. Morris' position is based to a large extent upon the often noted failures of the allies to co-ordinate their efforts, but it slights the impact of French arms upon the broader military picture and the way in which French activity elsewhere sapped British military efforts on the American mainland. Perhaps most important, while the book includes an interesting review of much

previous scholarship and some valuable criticism, it does not meet fully one question to which the author originally addressed himself: the problem of a general and balanced interpretation of the Revolution and its meaning for those who are already beginning to think of the celebration of its two hundredth anniversary.

University of California, Davis

DAVID L. JACOBSON

The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution. By BERNARD BAILYN. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967. xiii, 335 p. Index. \$5.95.)

Two years ago Professor Bailyn laid claim to the respect and gratitude of all historians of the American Revolutionary era when he gave us the first volume of *Pamphlets of the American Revolution*. Some reviewers—including this one—carped and complained at the Bailyn pamphlet selection process; but very few found much to criticize in the remarkable two-hundred-page introductory essay. Indeed, the most commonly voiced regret was that so useful an exercise should be so inconveniently attached to the multi-volume *Pamphlets* project. It is to counter this complaint that Bailyn now offers his essay as a separate volume, slightly expanded and modified.

Many of the reasons for the initial critical enthusiasm naturally survive: Bailyn's remains the first comprehensive and coherent analysis of the relevance of the English commonwealth tradition to the American scene. His essay was (and is) the only systematic examination of the influence in colonial America of Caroline Robbins' libertarian radicals; Bailyn, for all his indebtedness to recent English scholarship, will long be respected and admired for the vigor and speed with which he moved in exploiting this breakthrough in eighteenth-century intellectual history. The convenience and availability of this separately published *Ideological Origins* merely increases our sense of obligation.

But it is in the nature of grateful critics to find occasions to qualify their gratitude. Important and useful as this book is, it could and should have been still more effective, more satisfying. Bailyn, it seems to this reviewer, had an obligation to furnish more than he has supplied in this slender volume. (It may seem over a hundred pages longer than its original, but smaller pages in the new version supply a major explanation.) Although on its first appearance his essay attracted both favorable and critical attention, there seems to have been little effort to respond to some of the constructive and valid criticisms which the first version encountered. Indeed one would have thought that the prospect of a fresh publication would have stimulated the author and occasioned a more drastic revision than that actually furnished. Most authors yearn for a second chance, an opportunity to deal with the flaws that escaped their scrutiny, a chance to respond to useful

criticisms; but there are others already excited by new ventures, and Bailyn would seem to belong to their number.

The fundamental difficulty confronting this independently published *Ideological Origins* is that it is necessarily wrenched from its earlier context, and Bailyn has not attempted any serious measure of compensation. So long as the essay was part of a multi-volume collection of Revolutionary pamphlets it could and did rest with some security upon the foundation they afforded. It might be a rather too narrow base for some critics, but it had an inherent and persuasive logic. Separated from its pamphlet support, *The Ideological Origins* seems to this reviewer dangerously deficient in substantiation. The footnotes carry too much of a burden; they are allusive and do not furnish the information upon which the text must and does depend.

We do enjoy some revisions: many footnotes have been modified to incorporate newly published material; there is a useful addition on Bolingbroke; the "Note on Conspiracy" is substantially expanded, and well worth having; but these changes merely whet the appetite for what might have been. This version surely demanded a critical bibliography. It also needed and deserved a discussion of the regionality of pamphleteering—and a large measure of attention to the relevance of other publishing activities in the colonies. And surely the footnotes Bailyn himself supplies in "Sources and Traditions" conflict with his claim (in the Foreword) that "little if any of this writing [on English commonwealth thought] had hitherto been applied to the origins of the American Revolution." Bailyn's contribution remains sufficiently significant to survive handily without such exaggerations.

University of New Hampshire

TREVOR COLBURN

The Papers of James Madison, Volume 5, 1 August 1782–31 December 1782.

Edited by WILLIAM T. HUTCHINSON and WILLIAM M. E. RACHAL.
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. xxx, 520 p. Illustrations, index. \$12.50.)

The material in the present volume covers the period from August to December, 1782, and includes much the most interesting items thus far. But the immense bulk of Madisoniana, especially in view of the overly generous criteria of inclusion discussed in previous reviews, leads one to wonder in how many volumes it may eventually be encompassed. At the point we now find ourselves Madison is still only a young Congressman with most of his long career ahead of him—and most of his papers!

The documents fall into three principal categories: (1) Madison's notes on the proceedings of Congress ("For one half of the time we have failed in making a House, and the remaining half has been spent on minute

objects.”), communications from the Virginia delegation to Governor Benjamin Harrison, and Harrison’s communications to the Virginia delegation; (2) Madison’s letters transmitting news to Edmund Randolph, fellow member of Congress, then serving in Richmond as Attorney General of Virginia, similar letters to Edmund Pendleton, then a Virginia high court judge, and the replies of these gentlemen to Madison, giving him the news of Richmond; (3) personal correspondence, mostly between Madison and Randolph. The main subjects covered are the prospects for a peace treaty with Great Britain (there was much speculation and little hard news), Virginia’s cession of her Western lands (opposed by states having similar western claims or none at all), the finances of the Congress, including the troubles of the Virginia delegates, and political gossip.

Unhappily there is little evidence of Madison’s vaunted talent as a legislator. Partly, no doubt, this is owing to the inherent weakness of the Congress itself. There simply was not much it could effectively legislate about. But partly, also, it may be that Madison’s skill in phrasing other people’s proposals and ideas may have led to exaggerated notions of his legislative powers.

But there are some signs of developing sophistication. “The consideration of your territorial report,” he wrote Randolph, “has been resumed. The expedient which was to conciliate both sides proved, as often happens, a means of widening the breach. The Jealousies announced on the side mentioned in my last were answered with reciprocal jealousies from the other, & the *report* between the two was falling to the ground when a commitment as a lesser evil was propos’d and agreed to.” It is worth noting that in the report to which Madison refers, Randolph had advanced the first post-Revolution constitutional claim by the United States to the lands west of the Alleghenies: “if the vacant lands cannot be demanded. . . upon the titles of individual States, they are to be deemed to have been the property of his Britannic Majesty immediately before the Revolution and to be now devolved upon the United States.”

Indeed, the quality of Randolph’s mind at this stage is at least equal to Madison’s, and a good deal more interesting. At the time of the present volume, for example, he was arguing a case before the Supreme Court of Virginia which established the rule of treason later adopted into the Constitution of the United States. Under common law, Randolph’s theory ran, a man could be convicted of treason only on the testimony of two witnesses, but they had to be each witness to a separate act. A better rule, both for protection of individual civil liberty and the stability of the state would be to require two witnesses to “the same overt act,” which was adopted by the Court.

And Randolph, unlike Madison, had humor. In a great paragraph he told Madison about “a notorious robber, who escaped from gaol about a twelvemonth ago [and had] associated in his villainies a formidable gang of blacks and whites, supposed to amount to fifty.” This gang, he reports, “disperse themselves judiciously for the accomplishment of their work,

and the elusion of punishment." In view of the "laxness and inefficacy of government," he doubted it had "any means in its power" to "effect the seizure of this man." He himself lives "in the center of the late depredations," Randolph concluded, "and [has] no other hope to avoid their wickedness, than by the awe, which my office may create."

Pendleton appears as the logical mind and tower of moral decency that he was. The rumor, often revived in those days, that Canada might become the fourteenth state in the peace settlement, gave him a chance to reveal his character as well as his principles: "It is my opinion," he told Madison, "that it would be wisdom on the part of Britain to yield Canada as a 14th Member of the Union, since the event at some future period is more than probable, and a War may precede it; yet I cannot but consider the Spontaneous hinting of it in the manner it has been done, as having a deep, insidious intention on our Integrity—to decide what would be right on that head in the Treaty, independent of the Interest of the contracting powers, would seem to be to leave it to the Canadians to choose the party they would be annexed to."

At the same time, both Pendleton and Madison reveal at least as much concern for personal property in slaves as they do for the self-determination of peoples. One transaction, involving Pendleton's appeal to Madison to help in the recovery of a runaway slave and Madison's efforts to comply, lasted from the 6th of August to the 24th of September and is often treated by both men as though it were as important as the pending treaty of peace.

The editorial technique of these volumes, though a monument to historical accuracy and completeness, sometimes leads to a reader's frustration. Cross referencing can, of course, be helpful, but it can be carried to a point of absurdity. From page 268 to page 275, for example, there are at least eight cross references from one to another of the documents encompassed in that span. Thus one is often referred almost immediately to what he has just finished reading, when what he would like is a note of elucidation on matters outside the text to throw light on what is in the text.

Finally, one wonders what Philadelphia readers of this volume in the summer of 1967 must feel when they learn that Joseph Jones and his wife, on their way from Virginia to Congress in August, 1782, did not "propose to come into the City till the salubrity of Germantown shall have enabled them to encounter its noise & polluted atmosphere"!

University of Hawaii

STUART GERRY BROWN

The Eleventh Pillar: New York State and the Federal Constitution. By LINDA GRANT DE PAUW. (Ithaca, N. Y.: Published for the American Historical Association by Cornell University Press, 1966. xvi, 328 p. Map, appendixes, tables, bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

In this, the age of the social scientist, the award by the American Historical Association of the esteemed Albert J. Beveridge prize to Mrs. De

Pauw for this work on the contest in New York State over the ratification of the Federal Constitution of 1787 was both sane and salutary. The volume deliberately eschews the social-economic approach, treating the celebrated New York contest as one between contending political groups and conflicting points of view rather than as one involving chiefly economic groups and issues. Indeed, from beginning to end, Mrs. De Pauw quite properly stresses that consensus rather than conflict prevailed, especially during the Poughkeepsie debates when the conflict among delegates boiled down to the problem, real but compromisable, of finding the means of reaching goals fundamentally acceptable to all parties.

The research is done with care and the results thereof are clearly and interestingly presented. Most interesting is the account of the activity at Poughkeepsie where a clear Antifederalist majority became one in favor of unconditional ratification. Important to note, too, is the broader value of the study since, we are told, in New York the contest was longer than elsewhere, the Antifederalists were better organized, and there one finds "the best opportunity for studying the Antifederalists close up, for identifying their political aims, and for evaluating the means by which they sought to achieve them."

While Mrs. De Pauw has sought "to turn the history of ratification from the lines set down by Beard," it is important to note that she has not rejected the possibility of a social-economic analysis. She simply believes that at this time data are lacking for such an interpretation. And, of course, it is quite appropriate for her to remind us that parties can differ on many grounds. Thus:

Fortunately, it is not necessary to relate Federalism and Antifederalism to other factors in order to point out a significant distinction between the parties. One need not know the social status or psychological characteristics of Baptists and Episcopalians in order to describe their theological differences. In fact, an excessive preoccupation with determining what sort of men tended to vote Federalist or Antifederalist tends to distract attention from what the two parties wanted.

The student of early American politics will find confirmation of the undeveloped state of parties in these years and will also find useful information concerning the holding of elections, the presentation of issues to the electorate as well as interesting comments on the level of popular political intelligence. Example: "it is important not to overestimate the electorate of 1788. There is a temptation to make plaster images of the entire Revolutionary generation and to assume that the men who cast their votes for the Constitution were superhumanly intelligent, well-informed, and rational." We are warned not to speak of parties which simply did not exist and not to assume a type of activity (see the discussion of the choice of Hamilton as one of the delegates to the Philadelphia convention) also nonexistent. Hamilton, it may be added, is placed in a perspective which underscores

again why he could not become a great American politician—witness his stupid attack on Governor Clinton and Abraham Yates as well as his something less than overpowering role at Poughkeepsie.

The final chapter begins by presenting a good synthesis of most of the author's thesis:

During the ratification campaign, the chasm separating Federalists and Antifederalists in New York had been deep—there was real suspicion, fear, and sometimes even hatred between members of the opposing factions—but it had been very narrow. The issue, when to amend the Constitution, that divided the parties was almost trivial, and there were wide areas of agreement. Both parties wanted stronger government, and both parties valued individual rights. The Antifederalists wished the adoption of a properly amended Constitution, and few Federalists had serious objection to the addition of a bill of rights if it could be added without damaging the Constitution itself. The war between Feds and Antis was a contest in which both sides could win, and political hostility was bound to fade quickly once that truth was apparent.

This book is attractively printed but a reduction in the number of chapters would have made it more usable. It would have been improved by a bibliographical essay, following the line suggested in the preface; in such an essay a fuller treatment of older accounts as well as that of Forrest McDonald might have been developed more effectively.

Muhlenberg College

JOHN J. REED

The Works of James Wilson. Volumes 1–2. Edited by ROBERT GREEN McCLOSKEY. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967. 440 p; vi, 441–875 p. Bibliographical glossary, index. \$17.50 the set.)

In re-issuing the *Works of James Wilson*, originally edited by Bird Wilson and published in 1804, Robert Green McCloskey and the Harvard University Press redress a sad neglect and fill a definite need. One aim of the present editor, admirably achieved in two gracefully designed, ably annotated, and fully indexed volumes, is the rescue from near oblivion of the record of Wilson's thought and statesmanship. Another aim, to which Dr. McCloskey devotes his Introduction, is toward securing for Wilson a long-denied "honest and well-earned fame," and toward perpetuating his name in the company of such illustrious contemporaries as Washington, Adams, Hamilton, and Madison—the most "celebrated among the founders of the Republic." In this object the editor fails. The failure, inherent, it may be supposed, in the limitations of the subject, may reside also in Dr. McCloskey's reticence and reservations: not Wilson but Wilson's image is paraded for praise and presented to posterity.

Dr. McCloskey puzzles over the "discrepancy between Wilson's historic importance and his posthumous reputation" not to lessen but to deepen the mystery. He delineates Wilson's pre-eminence in colonial and early America, he remarks upon his transcendent role in the deliberations and the ratification of the Federal Constitution and in the making of the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1790, "his personal handiwork," and he carefully considers Wilson's career as an associate judge on the nation's first supreme court and as the "most learned and profound legal scholar of his generation."

Dr. McCloskey analyzes brilliantly Wilson's "precursory insights." He establishes Wilson's forerunning denial of the power of Parliament over the colonies. In examining the *Considerations on the Bank of North America* he traces Wilson's arguments—the "doctrine that a corporate charter is an inviolable contract between the state and the company," and the contention that the Confederation or national congress, as a result of the union of the states, held general as well as specifically delegated powers—from their first enunciation in 1785 to their pronouncement in the Supreme Court of the United States early in the nineteenth century and again in the twentieth. He develops Wilson's concept of dual sovereignty, his fresh view of the law as evolving from general consent and the accumulation of custom, and his distinctively American tenet of judicial review. Finally, he asserts Wilson's consistent commitment to democratic principles, citing Wilson's advocacy of political democracy throughout his writings, his espousal of popular sovereignty at the Constitutional Convention, and his urgent pleas for the direct election of the president and of both houses of congress. Only Wilson, he insists, accurately anticipated the direction of the future. He alone envisaged our "democracy and national union" as "natural partners."

In discussing Wilson's accomplishments and contributions Dr. McCloskey is cogent, clear, and penetrating. He is otherwise when he tries to account for Wilson's "historical obscurity" and turns, as he must, to the rapacious and repellent in Wilson's life and character. Dr. McCloskey tells us, though he would not have us believe, that as much as Wilson was a jurist and a statesman he was also a "too variously ambitious" and overweening office-seeker, a grubby political manipulator, and a greedy and reckless, if not vicious, speculator in land. He recounts, though he would not have us credit, Wilson's cultivation of the men of place and purse, the well-born and the well-heeled, and his willing sacrifice of talent, time, and energy for wealth. He hints that often enough Wilson's political tracts and services—such as his powerful championing of the Bank of North America, the bank to which he was heavily in debt—smacked of self-seeking. And he suggests that the essential paucity of Wilson's "magisterial achievement"—he did not leave a body of notable opinions, nor did he, as he aspired in his *Lectures on Law*, create the structure upon which to build an American jurisprudence—could be attributed to Wilson's ready compromise with avidity. But Dr. McCloskey does not fathom in any of this the solution to his conundrum, coming upon it instead in the commonplace that Wilson was

born before his time. He "was born and died too soon." Finding Wilson's "claims to be remembered" surpassing, Dr. McCloskey would have them unimpeachable as well.

Something of this may be seen in the use Dr. McCloskey makes of the judgments of scholars. With the exception of Charles Beard, he quotes only those critics favorable to Wilson. The impression is given that there is consensus among political scientists and historians and that generally Wilson is counted among the democrats. There is no suggestion that there have been and that today there are various and conflicting conceptions of Wilson. Nor is it anywhere entertained that the interpretation of Wilson as a force for conservatism has legitimacy and adherents.

Dr. McCloskey is in the same way selective when he treats of the equalitarian Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776. Since Wilson's inveterate opposition to the Constitution will not fit easily into the picture of Wilson as a "prescient" democrat Dr. McCloskey must, it seems, dismiss it. Its "arrangement," he says, "flouted the separation of powers principle, which was already an article of faith for Wilson and for practically all other Americans who had reflected about the process of government in a free society," and, he continues, "even its vaunted democracy was open to question." If open to question its democracy was also simple to uphold. And if, as does Dr. McCloskey, it can be claimed that Wilson "could find plenty to object to in the Constitution," equally it can be argued he could have found plenty to approve. It shattered the elitist pattern of Pennsylvania politics and created the first government to embrace the frontier farmer and the immigrant townsman. It acknowledged the people as the source of all political power, it removed all property qualifications for voting and for office, it rectified the underrepresentation of the west, and it provided for an eventual apportionment according to population. Embattled the Constitution of 1776 was, but not without worthy defenders. Abroad it was admired above all others of our Revolutionary charters by such luminaries as Brissot de Warville, La Rochefoucauld, Mirabeau, Turgot, and M. Condorcet. At home it drew the loyalty not only of the exceptional Tom Paine and Benjamin Franklin and the dedicated George Bryan and William Findley, but also of a wide spectrum of gifted men. Had Wilson supported the Constitution in the course of some fifteen years he would have been in the remarkable company of David Rittenhouse, Charles Willson Peale, Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant, Joseph Reed, George Logan, Alexander James Dallas, William Bradford, Jr., and Albert Gallatin. That instead he chose to be with Robert Morris, Thomas Willing, Thomas FitzSimons, and George Clymer makes suspect his populist professions and what Dr. McCloskey poses as the enigma of Wilson's contemporary reputation—he was "James the Caldonian"—appears not at all perplexing.

Illuminatingly reviewed and evaluated by Dr. McCloskey, the *Works* in the present edition consist primarily of the *Lectures on Law*, delivered in 1789, with the addition of some miscellaneous papers, including, among others, *Considerations on the nature and extent of the legislative authority of*

the *British Parliament*, published in 1774, a *Speech on choosing the members of the senate by electors; delivered, on 31st December, 1789, in the convention of Pennsylvania . . .*, *A charge delivered to the grand jury in the circuit court of the United States for the district of Virginia, in May, 1791*, and the *Considerations on the Bank of North America*, of 1785. Though far from a complete collection of Wilson's writings they are representative and they comprise a whole statement: revealing Wilson's impressive scholarship, the sources and nature of his political and legal theories, and the temper and temperament of the man himself. Essential to the study of Wilson and the intellectual currency of his time, they are valuable also as history. Wilson's recitation of the mechanics and functioning of the government of Pennsylvania, particularly of the processes of the judicial branch, is without peer. To read his exposition of the complex of courts, of the nature and work of juries, of the duties and purposes of eighteenth-century sheriffs and coroners and of constables is to enter the court with him and to ride the circuit. To follow Wilson here is to have one's knowledge honed to precision.

Oregon State University

THOMAS R. MEEHAN

New Jersey's Jeffersonian Republicans: The Genesis of an Early Party Machine 1789-1817. By CARL E. PRINCE. (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg by the University of North Carolina Press, 1967. xvi, 266 p. Tables, map, note on sources, index. \$7.50.)

Carl E. Prince modestly offers his book as still another state study of early American politics, and claims little more for New Jersey's Jeffersonian Republicans than the first permanent state nominating convention (1800) and the first non-nominating legislative caucus (1801-1806). But these were, after all, important contributions to American political life, as were the organizing and electioneering techniques which were developed by the Republicans and which, the author suggests, need more and comparative study. As for the political uses of those newspapers which constitute the main source of his work, Prince leaves no doubt of Republican mastery. The Pennington brothers of the Newark *Centinel of Freedom* (1796), James J. Wilson of the Trenton *True American* (1801), and Shepard Kollock of the state's earliest Republican paper, the Elizabethtown *New Jersey Journal*, and others, were shrewd party leaders and opinionmakers.

The beginnings of the Democratic-Republican party in New Jersey are understandably hard to fix, but in his scrupulous research Prince finds no evidence for a discrete opposition party before 1796. In the presidential campaign of that year, the publishers of the *Centinel of Freedom*, Newark's new anti-Federalist paper, declared for Jefferson, but, predictably, the state legislature chose electors pledged to Adams. Locally, though, a Republican candidate from Essex county, John Condit, was successful in a contest for the Legislative Council, marking the first victory of a Re-

publican against a Federalist in the state. In Congress, meanwhile, Aaron Kitchell, a New Jersey representative secretly converted to Republicanism, was working closely with John Beckley and other Philadelphia Republicans to organize an opposition party in his home state. Not surprisingly, the newspaper which called for a Republican ticket in the oncoming congressional election of January 1797 was the *Centinel of Freedom* and, naturally enough, one of the suggested candidates was Aaron Kitchell. At a December meeting in Newark the first Republican ticket in New Jersey history was adopted, with Kitchell heading it, only to lose decisively to the Federalists in the winter election. But the meaning of the event was perfectly clear: an opposition party now existed and state politics would never quite be the same.

In Essex County, the Penningtons, in Morris County, Aaron Kitchell and Mahlon Dickerson, in Sussex, Silas Dickerson, in Hunterdon, James J. Wilson, in Burlington, Joseph Bloomfield—these men and other political leaders from other counties made the Republican party of 1800; and it was really *their* party, as the author insists, only ostensibly the people's, which scored in that year its first congressional victory and went on to one success after another. While slower in organizing their party than Jeffersonians in New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and other states, New Jersey's Republicans brooked no delay in enjoying the spoils after winning the state government in 1801. Their supremacy was so complete in the following years, their local party organization so remarkably effective, that only once, in 1812, did they go down to defeat, and then only as Madison's "war party." But little did they know at the time that the new vigor of the Federalists was only apparent and that, in reality, the minority party was dying. With the demise of the Federalist party after 1815, the Republican party, now deprived of its necessary and tonic opposition, could not itself last much longer. So it was that New Jersey's Jeffersonian Republicans met their ultimate defeat not at the polls but, undramatically, in their own deteriorating local party organizations.

Prince's skilful and richly detailed account of the tangled origins of New Jersey's Jeffersonian Republicans belies his modest offer. But his detail is, perhaps, too heavy at times, and his close narrative unrelieved by biographical vignette or illustration. Here are missed opportunities. Which is only to say that Prince's very fine, indeed authoritative, book could have been even better.

State University College, New Paltz, N. Y.

DONALD J. D'ELIA

Social Reform in the United States Navy, 1798-1862. By HAROLD D. LANGLEY. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967. x, 309 p. Bibliography, index. \$8.50.)

It is obviously for the good of the Service that able men in sufficient numbers should be induced to enlist in the Navy, and that the life should

be found attractive enough for them to re-enlist when their cruises are up. Finding and keeping career men has always been a problem with which Navy management has wrestled with varying effectiveness, and it is very far from being solved today. An article in the current (July 1967) *Naval Institute Proceedings* discusses the needless annoyances with which Navy dependents are sometimes faced, to the detriment of a career incentive for married sailors. Likewise the Navy, having thoroughly trained a man in some technical skill in demand "on the outside," cannot compete with the wages paid civilian technicians, and so many good men are lost to the Service. Such were not the problems of the less complicated Navy of the early nineteenth century, but that Navy had its problems too, and the efforts to solve them are the subject of this book.

After the great exploits against the Barbary pirates and the British and French, a period of stagnation beset the Navy. Morison has recorded in the *Maritime History of Massachusetts* that the famous Yankee clippers were largely manned by foreign crews, and the pre-Civil War Navy also seemed unable to attract good native seamen. The life was certainly needlessly hard, and many senior officers, then as now perhaps overly partial to the old ways, were averse to changing it. Dr. Langley points out how the Service had started with the traditions of the Royal Navy, and took the savage discipline thought necessary to maintain order among impressed crews as a matter of course. On the subject of the conservatism of sea-faring men, it is interesting to learn from this book that many of the more articulate enlisted men strongly defended the practice of flogging. The argument was that when a malefactor or malingerer was flogged he then returned to duty (if he was able to) whereas the alternative of locking him in the brig meant that the good men had to do his work for him. Similar arguments have been heard more recently, in defense of what used to be politely called extra-judicial punishment.

Be that as it may, there was certainly a shortage of good men. Actual cheating and robbing of the crew by pursers and others in authority, another inheritance from the corrupt eighteenth-century Admiralty, was checked early, but ship's companies continued to be a rather unsatisfactory lot. There must have been, then as now, a good sprinkling of one traditional type of sailor, unattached, independent, a good man on board ship and a devil ashore, of the same stamp as the cowboy and logger of legend, a trial to executive officers but a tower of strength when things go adrift in a seaway. There seem also to have been a surprising number of sober men with some education, judging by the testimony quoted in this book by seamen pro and con the proposals for change. But the bulk of the crews were made up of riff-raff (amongst which foreigners were automatically included), and fierce verbal battles were fought in and out of Congress as to how to correct this.

The great reform movement of the period was of course toward the abolition of Negro slavery, but it occurred to many of the reformers that the lot of members of their own race imprisoned for long voyages in crowded

berth decks with poor food, hard work, and the constant threat of flogging for the most trifling offenses was in many ways worse. The abolitionist type of reformers centered their efforts on flogging and grog. Doing away with the latter was a difficult assignment, as without its free issue on board ship it seemed to many that it would be hard to attract even the sort of men that then enlisted. The reformers countered with the assurance that without the degrading effects of alcohol on board ship the superior men that the Navy needed could be tempted to join.

While reformers outside the Navy, with help from some distinguished officers within, fought for these radical alterations of naval ways, less spectacular efforts were being made by a succession of senior officers and Navy Secretaries to make the career more tempting. Naval apprentice programs to bring in ambitious boys, adequate training facilities, rewards for good service and a number of incentives for re-enlistment all were inaugurated. There were occasional set-backs such as the Brig Somers incident, and much inert opposition, but by the fifties these measures to improve the lot and the quality of the enlisted Navy, coinciding with the establishment of the Naval Academy to do the same for the officer corps, were bearing good fruit.

The course of all these efforts to improve our Navy is recorded in this book with perhaps too much detail for the general reader. Also the organization of the subject matter, carrying one aspect of needed reform through the whole period concerned, and then going back for another, leads to a good deal of repetition. However the book should interest greatly anyone concerned with the Navy's development, as well as students of the social history of the period, of which this is a previously neglected aspect. Dr. Langley writes from the position of social historian, but his book shows an understanding of the Navy and a sympathy with its special problems which are gratifying to find in an account of this transition period and the heated emotions which it aroused.

Ambler, Pa.

JOHN CADWALADER

The Hicksite Separation: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Schism in Early Nineteenth Century America. By ROBERT W. DOHERTY. (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1967. vii, 157 p. Bibliographical essay, index. \$7.50.)

To most readers the novelty of this book will be its emphasis on a sociological approach to religious history. Since Weber and Troeltsch we have been exposed to theories of this general sort. The author of this book wishes to carry them further, and "to test certain sociological theories about religious behavior and to understand the underlying causes" of a limited episode in church history, *viz.*, the Hicksite-Orthodox Separation in the Society of Friends. Since the beginning and decisive factors of this episode

occurred in or about 1827 and in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, the book under review is appropriately considered in a Pennsylvania magazine.

The author presents in the first chapter what he calls a functional view of religion. He connects it with secular aspects of environment, especially economic and social. He believes that the participants themselves can hardly be expected to tell or know the truth about the reasons for their activities or the functions those activities fulfill. He wishes to judge the groups not by their spokesmen or by later historians' approach but by the rank and file, "collective biography." Hence his series of appendixes listing names, occupations, residence, and wealth of Orthodox and Hicksite Quakers in Philadelphia, and in the nearby counties (Chester and Delaware, where however he uses acreage of property, number of cattle, and size and length of mortgage). The result confirms in a general way the long-held impression that wealthier city Friends were a principal, but not the only ingredient, of the Orthodox party, but the statistics are not decisively one-sided.

The author canvasses also other criteria or possible causes of diverse affiliation, like the limited influence of Elias Hicks or of orthodox English Quaker visitors, the example of controversies in New England Congregationalism or Quakerism, the egalitarian political ideals of the period. He guards against generalization at every turn, though sometimes failing to recognize the lasting similarity in the two groups. In general he assigns the "sect" characteristics to the Hicksites and the "church" characteristics to the Orthodox. Yet both inherited quietism and differed from each other not a shade in form of worship. He finds on both sides an unconscious influence of alienation, but admits that "conclusions about inner needs which rely on external evidence are highly tenuous even if they are based on quantitative data" (p. 93). He is probably quite right in saying that the term "Hicksite" is a misnomer (p. 32) and that the Hicksite movement was a result of heterogeneous response to orthodoxy. Their unity was negative. He regards it as a mixture of the sectarian features with traditional and liberal ones.

The substance of the four principal chapters but without all the supporting tables, appeared one each in four different periodicals. It is an advantage now to have them together. If their joint purpose is to test how sociological theories can aid historians they may seem not so much to vindicate the theories as to confirm the general judgment of modern Quaker historians, who have not made the same approach or used the same material.

Haverford, Pa.

HENRY J. CADBURY

Jacksonian Aristocracy: Class and Democracy in New York, 1830-1860.

By DOUGLAS T. MILLER. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967. xiii, 228 p. Bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

The mature observer of life quickly learns that paradox is very much a part of reality. In the realm of human psychology Sigmund Freud long ago

demonstrated clearly that opposite and conflicting emotions such as love and hate could be very much related to each other and focused simultaneously on the same object. In history, too, contradictory phenomena and trends can prevail side by side. Douglas T. Miller points to the existence of such a paradox during the Jacksonian era of American history: democracy and aristocracy developed alongside each other as a result of the conditions which prevailed in the nineteenth century before the Civil War. As the title of his book, *Jacksonian Aristocracy: Class and Democracy in New York, 1830-1860*, implies, the author contends that during the three decades before the Civil War important economic and social changes occurred which produced "a new plutocratic aristocracy clearly set off from the masses."

Although most studies of the Jacksonian period emphasize its egalitarian aspects, Miller is not the first to discern an opposite tendency. The most astute student of American life remains one of the first, Alexis de Toqueville. As de Toqueville predicted in his justly famous *Democracy in America* from which Miller amply quotes: "in proportion as the mass of the nation turns to democracy, that particular class which is engaged in manufactures becomes more aristocratic. Men grow more alike in the one—more different in the other; and inequality increases in the less numerous class, in the same ratio in which it decreases in the community." In elaborating on this Tocquevillian insight, Miller's book serves as a useful corrective to the dominant stereotypes used to explain the Jacksonian period.

The author shows that some other widely accepted ideas about this period also require modification. For example, notable historians such as Oscar Handlin have usually argued that immigration did not hurt workers' wages or reduce social mobility; on the contrary, it is maintained that the arrival of new immigrants helped to push earlier arrivals to better paying jobs and a higher social level. While Miller concedes that this may be true in the long run, the evidence in New York State from 1830-1860 reveals that wages during that period were adversely affected and social stratification became more intense.

Social mobility in this country likewise has probably been exaggerated. More often than not second-generation immigrants failed to attain a higher social and economic level than their parents. Thus, New York's Irish and German immigrant families in the ante-bellum period did not benefit from the arrival of new settlers until the late nineteenth-century influx of refugees from southern and eastern Europe. The main beneficiaries of immigration in the pre-Civil War period were the upper classes who found in the newcomers an abundant supply of unskilled cheap labor.

Within the ante-bellum upper class of American society, historians have been wont to distinguish between the land-owning gentry and merchants, on the one side, and the "capitalist industrialists," on the other, as if they were clear-cut groups antagonistic to each other. Miller shows, however, that most wealthy New Yorkers were involved in all kinds of economic enterprise. Typical is the case of Robert Schuyler, heir to one of the largest

parcels of real estate in the Hudson Valley, who was also head of the New York and New Haven Railroad. Although a certain measure of social snobbishness continued to separate some of the "old" aristocrats from the "new," for the most part both groups continued to maintain their prominence by joining their resources with each other. The crucial prerequisite to membership in the American aristocracy was wealth. With it, the appropriate manners, culture, and education could be easily acquired. Without it, these latter trappings counted for little.

The "Gilded Age" and all the anti-democratic problems that accompanied it have traditionally been regarded as an outgrowth of the Civil War and the industrialization which followed it. It is as though the egalitarian ideals of Jacksonian America were betrayed after the War between the States with the result that America was confronted by giant industrial magnates bent on oppressing and suppressing the menial laborers. As Miller proves beyond the shadow of a doubt all these problems emerged in the pre-war period and evolved simultaneously with the blooming of America's democratic political institutions.

Besides describing the industrial and transportation revolutions between 1830 and 1860 which changed a relatively homogeneous American society into a class-conscious one, the author also delineates with great skill and charm some of the landmarks of New York's Knickerbocker society. Until 1830 New York City extended from the Battery northward only to what is today Canal Street. Broadway was the most fashionable street in the city and lots could be purchased in the Times Square area for \$700. After 1840 the city's fashionables built splendid homes in the area around Washington Square, Fifth Avenue, University Place, Lafayette Place, and Astor Place.

Perhaps the most fascinating of the paradoxes in an equalitarian society which the author delineates is the fact that people are more status-conscious in it than they are in an aristocratic society where one's place and rank are clearly defined. Although democracy stresses the equality of all, human beings apparently feel a necessity to rank themselves and their fellows in some hierarchical order. Since there are no established traditions and universally accepted criteria for ranking in a democracy, the citizens frantically search for a variety of insignia which will persuade others they enjoy a significant measure of social distinction. Among the most frequently sought after indicia of aristocracy in the ante-bellum period were large homes, expensive furnishings, collections of European art, the giving of lavish parties, possession of authentic or faked titles, and other manifestations of "conspicuous consumption."

Douglas Miller's study of Jacksonian aristocracy in New York is a significant contribution to our understanding of some of the major paradoxes of American democracy.

Long Island City, N. Y.

ALVIN KASS

The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North. By ARTHUR ZILVERSMIT. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. xii, 262 p. Bibliographical essay, index. \$6.95.)

This work supersedes Mary S. Locke's *Anti-Slavery in America, 1619-1808*, published in 1901. Based on a thorough study of primary and secondary sources, it originated as a doctoral dissertation at the University of California under the direction of Professor Kenneth M. Stampf.

The first two chapters deal with the institution of slavery in the North, giving special attention to slave codes. While conceding that slavery in the North was generally milder than in the South, the author makes it clear that the institution was not a benevolent one. He also contends that slaveowners found the system profitable.

The next two chapters review colonial antislavery activities: the German-town protest of 1688; Samuel Sewall's *The Selling of Joseph*; the work of Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay, John Woolman, and Anthony Benezet; the expulsion of slaveholders from Quaker meetings; and colonial attacks on the slave trade.

Chapter Five covers the abolition of slavery in New England and Pennsylvania, which was begun during the American Revolution. Following in the line of two recent scholarly articles on the subject, Zilvermit denigrates the importance of the Quock Walker case, but it still appears that slavery was abolished in Massachusetts and New Hampshire through court decisions based on the bills of rights incorporated in the state constitutions. The Vermont constitution of 1777 explicitly outlawed slavery. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania passed laws providing for freeing the children of slaves when they reached maturity.

The last three chapters cover the abolition of slavery in New York and New Jersey, where the institution was more firmly entrenched and harder to dislodge. These states passed gradual abolition laws in 1799 and 1804 respectively. Both included clauses permitting the masters to abandon the children of their slaves to the care of local overseers of the poor at the expense of the state, which the author calls a disguised form of compensated emancipation.

Treatment of the activities of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, the New York Manumission Society, and other similar organizations is rather skimpy. The author focuses mainly on governmental activities. He contends that the main cause of emancipation in the North was not the supposed unprofitability of slavery there but rather the influence of the democratic philosophy of the American Revolution. Of secondary importance was the religious idealism of the Quakers.

The book is competently written and thoroughly documented.

Slavery in the Americas: A Comparative Study of Virginia and Cuba. By HERBERT S. KLEIN. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. xi, 270 p. Index. \$6.95.)

Professor Klein's comparison of the institution of slavery in colonial Cuba and ante-bellum Virginia interestingly leads him to conclude that the different patterns of race relations in the two areas today were conditioned by the earlier experiences with Negro slavery in the two colonies.

Almost from the beginning of colonization in America the English settlers, so Klein writes, displayed an antipathy or prejudice toward the Africans that was entirely lacking in the racial relations of the Castilian Cuban and the Afro-Cuban. The Spanish Crown, from the earliest days, maintained rigid control of the laws affecting the New World, and this meant that the relatively mild Castilian slave code of a previous era was imposed from above on Cuba. Cuban church authorities, generally working in close co-operation with the Crown, also proved a powerful factor in ameliorating the institution of slavery. As a result race relations on the island never became rigidly fixed with segregation as the end product.

Iberian people were long familiar with Negroes who served as soldiers and slaves in the Moorish armies. As Klein points out, the Spanish Christian kingdoms had accepted Negroes as coequal with other non-Christian peoples who as slaves had the same obligations, duties, and rights. The king's law in Spanish America guaranteed the Negroes the same treatment in the New World.

In Virginia, however, the Crown did not become directly involved in establishing rules of local government, the Church of England for a long time was indifferent toward its colonial parishes, and the settlers were left to develop their own communities and local ordinances. They treated their Negroes as valuable economic property and allowed their own racial prejudices to influence their slave codes. The result ultimately was a harsh system of segregation that has remained in force long after the disappearance of slavery.

As early as the 1630's there existed in Virginia a strong dislike of the African race as noted in the miscegenation laws of that period. The British colonists, who had had little contact with Negroes before coming to America, treated them in law, and in fact, as an inferior racial group. These early customs in time hardened into rigid policies that have caused the main tragedy of contemporary America.

It is possible that slavery in Cuba was more brutal an institution than Klein suggests. David Brion Davis, in his *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, has challenged the view that slavery in Latin America was indeed as benign as many historians have claimed. Nevertheless, Cuban slavery was certainly not as cruel as the institution in Virginia, and this difference has influenced the subsequent history of race relations in both areas.

Professor Klein should be commended for presenting a challenging thesis that historians will debate for some time.

Villanova University

JOSEPH GEORGE, JR.

The Shrine of Party: Congressional Voting Behavior, 1841-1852. By JOEL H. SILBEY. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967. xii, 292 p. Appendixes, bibliographical note, index. \$6.00.)

The Civil War was a cataclysm which shook the young republic. The four years of bloodshed involving millions of men on the field of battle, their families, the nation's industries, an expenditure of billions, death, suffering and sorrow commensurate with the great effort not only affected the lives of those then in being but society ever since, among these the historians by no means the least. Mr. Silbey has been very conscious of this and has incorporated his thoughts in an article, "The Civil War Synthesis in American Political History," *Civil War History*, X, 130-140. He believes that history has been distorted and needs readjustment into better balance.

His primary scholarly interest is party history and his study has confronted him not only with the Civil War distortion to be overcome but also with a corollary. The preoccupation with the calamity has led to a basic misinterpretation of the nature of our political history. There has been a tendency among historians to present the sectional orientation of our development as the basic influence in our political behavior, following the doctrines of Frederick Jackson Turner.

Silbey believes that there are behavior patterns more significant and more determining. His study of American political behavior and its patterns leads him to believe that the institutional moulds which they have created in the form of political parties are stronger in shaping the conduct of our society than the sectional form of our ecology. This he attempts to demonstrate.

He is willing to do the work made necessary by those who have developed the modes of quantification recently brought into being. He wants to count, as Namier says, "to know who the guys are." He therefore takes the voting records of all the members of Congress from 1841-1852, applies these new techniques and after a back-breaking amount of compilation demonstrates the strength of the influence of party organization and shows it probably to be stronger than that of sectional environment. Institutional organizations are mightier than the random influence of unstructured environment. The shrine of party has a symbolic dominance, somewhat spiritual in character which compels the behavior of men in a fashion more powerful than the emotional influence of community passion.

This is a valuable study which points up the weakness of the method of analysis, of quantification and of elaborate use of tables. It does not capture the imagination and may be therefore avoided as forbidding. The able scholars who understand it have a translation job to do, they must intrigue an audience if their work is to have the impact which it should. Personally I commend the findings, though I would never have had either the patience nor the skill to achieve them by anything more scientific than instinct.

University of Pennsylvania

ROY F. NICHOLS

Cotton versus Conscience: Massachusetts Whig Politics and Southwestern Expansion, 1843-1848. By KINLEY J. BRAUER. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967. vi, 272 p. Bibliographical essay, index. \$7.50.)

The Massachusetts Conscience Whigs have done well by historians. In the last decade and a half nearly all of their leaders have been subjects of biographies: Donald's *Sumner*, Duberman's *Charles Francis Adams*, Shapiro's *Dana*, Schwartz's *Howe*, and Gatell's *Palfrey*. Also, studies of Henry Wilson and Thomas Wentworth Higginson will appear shortly. Not all of the authors have accepted the Conscience Whigs on their own terms—that is, as selfless protagonists in the moral regeneration of Massachusetts—but they nevertheless have written of them as comprising the vital element in their state's politics, those who answered the antislavery call (for a variety of reasons), and those who have had history on their side. Their party opponents, the Cotton Whigs of the Webster and Lawrence camps, on the other hand, served as foils for historians and biographers, sometimes pictured merely as self-interested textile magnates and their retinue, at other times depicted as overly pro-southern party men, who, if not insensitive to the moral imperatives of the slavery crisis, were simply too irresolute to act upon their real beliefs. It is significant to note that even Professor Donald, who certainly did not whitewash *his* Conscience Whig, chose to write about Charles Sumner rather than one of the Cotton men.

Kinley Brauer's study of Bay State factionalism would seem to right this unbalanced situation. "Cotton" receives the first listing in the title; slavery-expansion conservatives are identified, their ideas explained, and their actions detailed and evaluated. But the primacy of Cotton was financial and temporarily political. Their historiographical subordination to Conscience is confirmed in this book as well, since, if squeaky hinges get the oil, protesting politicians also receive more attention. In the period under study, Charles Francis Adams, first a member of the state senate, then editor of the Conscience paper, *The Boston Whig*, dominates the account. Part of this is attributable to the preservation of Adams' detailed diary, which Brauer cites time and again, but there is no doubt that Adams kept

the Conscience group functioning, especially after assuming the *Whig's* editorship. The reader will find here a close description of Whig reactions, private and in the press, to the Texas question, and of the varieties of ways in which the party sought to prevent annexation. Following the joint resolution of Congress in early 1845, annexing Texas, further anti-Texas efforts became a gauge of antislavery feeling, as more moderate Whigs declined to risk splitting the national party over a lost cause.

Brauer introduces his study with the comment that he has avoided the "narrow political approach," and has "considered the social and economic developments in Massachusetts and, to some extent, the psychological motivations of the insurgents." He claims too much. First, there is quite a bit of "straight" political history, and in many cases too much detail (pre-convention data on p. 186, for example). The social and economic developments are treated in standard fashion, with no new avenues of research explored. To be specific: Brauer mentions that country areas were antislavery, but he does not develop the theme. And what of the fact that Worcester County was the banner antislavery area. Why? There is no sustained attempt here to establish the geography of antislavery sentiment in Massachusetts. There should have been a career line analysis of Cotton and Conscience leadership, rather than the use (without citation) of Donald's abolitionist-dislocation hypothesis as applicable to the Conscience Whigs (p. 25). Finally, as for the psychological motivations of the insurgents, let us merely say that the following quotation indicates that the problem is open for further study: "so the antislavery Whigs wanted political power because they were convinced that they alone had the moral qualities necessary to direct Massachusetts and the United States on a course consistent with the laws of God and progress." And if these "seekers after a cause" felt that "the greater the sacrifice, the greater the satisfaction," they could have achieved ecstasy by joining the abolitionists.

A standard account of Whig factionalism in the 1840's, this book does not build upon the work of the Conscience Whig biographers. It was written a decade too late.

University of California, Los Angeles

FRANK OTTO GATELL

George Ticknor and the Boston Brahmins. By DAVID B. TYACK. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. x, 289 p. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$6.95.)

One of the characteristic figures of that Silver Age of the early Republic from 1800 to 1830 was the Gentleman of Leisure and Letters, the dilettante of culture. Feeling that the American experiment was secure in the Constitution, and its administration was, if not secure, at least genteel in the hands of Founding Fathers and their delegated heirs like Monroe and J. Q. Adams, the educated man of means considered it at once a duty and

a pleasure to enrich the native soil with ornamental learning. Particularly in the three largest cities, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, this type proliferated. As individuals they raised fancy sheep, studied geology, wrote poetic dramas, dabbled in politics, usually all at once. As groups they gathered together in numberless societies, on numberless boards, creating institutions, fighting with each other in charitable and cultural vendettas.

They were peculiarly concerned with the problems and possibilities of American literature. Ignoring the Revolutionary poets Barlow, Freneau, Hopkinson with positively English hauteur, they looked forward to an Augustan Age to be planted and nursed by them. Something truly American was hoped for. But what? Something as chaste and refined as the literature of London, yet somehow as distinctly native in flavor as a yam—the still extant dichotomy of Silk Stocking and Leather Stocking, of James and Twain.

Young, rich, handsome gentlemen of the best families got together and founded journals of taste. A Biddle, an Ingersoll, a Hopkinson blessed the *Port Folio* in Philadelphia and wrote variously for it. Irving and Paulding created Geoffry Crayon and the Salamagundi paper in New York. In Boston a similar group which included Ticknor founded the Anthology Society, a club-and-magazine that until its death in 1811 tried valiantly to create “truly American literature” on purely English models.

Little of this writing endures, but it laid foundations. Few of the Gentlemen of Letters are well remembered as such, but they were representative then and progenitors thereafter. None more so than George Ticknor of Boston, most gentlemanly, most lettered, if not most leisured. He inherited wealth from a father poorly born but rich in the grocery business, and passionately interested in education. He then married an heiress. Money was after all the first requisite of the life, as poor Sidney George Fisher, who tried to lead the life without the money, found out. The second requisite was a trip abroad. No one ever made such a triumphal trip abroad as George Ticknor. All doors opened to him in England, Germany, France and, finally, Spain. Though always a violent Federalist, letters from Jefferson helped open these doors. He bagged Byron, Madame de Staël, and Goethe among literary lions, learned languages with appalling ease, seemed popular everywhere. But duty, stern New England duty, called even men of Leisure and Letters. He must not be idle. He received an invitation to teach Romance literature at Harvard, and after his tour of Spain returned to do so. Thereafter he became America's expert on Spanish literature, and Boston's arbiter of social and literary worth. Through the Jacksonian Revolution and the Civil War he maintained his fine house on Park Street and his Federalist principles. No one got into the former that was not sympathetic to the latter. Hospitality, learning, and reaction were curiously blended.

Though Ticknor was not a great man, and though his career was not one of high adventure, still he was a perfect specimen of a kind. This

brisk and lively book about him does give a picture of the man and his circle. The chief criticism of it is a compliment: it seems too short. One would really like to know more about his curious friendship with Jefferson (of all people), his years abroad, his friendships and feuds in Boston. Also, there is a suspicion that Mr. Tyack really thinks him a phenomenon unique to Boston. He does not appear to recognize him as a national phenomenon of the time, paralleled all up and down the Eastern seaboard by other such Gentlemen of Letters. Boston in fact during the earlier period of the Anthology was less important as a center of this kind of thing than cities to the south. The problem of the Gentleman of Leisure in American society was not a local one, that problem so acutely felt by Fisher. Ticknor in fact is more interesting from this national point of view than even just as a Boston Brahmin.

He hoped to solve his problem by turning to the University, and away from finance, politics, and religion. As one of the first to do so, he set a pattern. He soon found out that professional academics who depend on teaching for bread don't like Gentlemen of Letters mucking about in college affairs. Ticknor was more or less forced out of Harvard, and into the writing of his authoritative history of Spanish literature.

He is interesting enough as an individual case, in Mr. Tyack's presentation. He would be perhaps even more interesting as a national case—what is the proper quality of American literature anyway, the chastity Ticknor defended, or something more yam-flavored? What is the proper role of the man of leisure in a democracy? What Tyack gives us is good. But he could have afforded on the one hand more individual detail, and on the other a broader examination of Ticknor as a national specimen. As it stands, the book does not seem quite the "definitive work" it might be. How much better though to want more, rather than less, of a scholarly biography!

Princeton, N. J.

NATHANIEL BURT

Extinct Medical Schools of Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia. By HAROLD J. ABRAHAMS. Introduction by WM. FREDERICK NORWOOD. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966. 580 p. Bibliography, index. \$12.00.)

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, Philadelphia was the medical center of the United States. And in an era when a medical school could be organized as casually as any other enterprise requiring a nominal capital investment, it was inevitable that a goodly supply of profit-seeking medical schools would make their appearance in the Quaker City. Dr. Abrahams has performed what must have been a true labor of love in carefully and impressively reconstructing the tangled history of six of these ephemeral institutions.

Within each of the chapters on a particular medical school—the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, the Philadelphia College of Medicine, the Franklin Medical College, among others—the author discusses buildings, curriculum, faculty, and students, even providing lists of graduates and matriculates for each school. A similarly comprehensive treatment is accorded faculty members, some of whom were men of stature and lasting reputation. This is a book which any serious student of the history of medicine and medical education will find of permanent value.

One fears, however, that its audience will be limited to such students. For in his zeal to reproduce every bit of the information he has so laboriously unearthed, Abrahams has produced a lengthy—and lamentably expensive—product which resembles a research report as much as it does a book. A more synthetic and analytic account might have attracted a far broader audience, while a repetitive organization and arbitrary layout (within each chapter a substantial number of pages are simply filled with lists of names) help make what could have been a fascinating account into a forbidding one.

University of Pennsylvania

CHARLES ROSENBERG

Dear Ones at Home; Letters from Contraband Camps. Edited by HENRY L. SWINT. (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1966. 274 p. Map, bibliography, index. \$6.95.)

These are the letters of two well-educated young women, Lucy and Sarah Chase of Worcester, Massachusetts, members of the Society of Friends, written between 1863 and 1870 when they were teachers of the contrabands, the newly freed slaves, in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida. They were affiliated with the Boston Educational Commission which gave them \$20.00 to purchase needed items and promised them a salary of \$25.00 a month for their services. Fortunately they came from a well-to-do family, their father being a highly respected and successful businessman and treasurer of Worcester County for thirty-five years.

What led such genteel persons to give up the security and comforts of their sheltered New England home to work among Negroes in areas newly conquered by the Union armies, and later in the still hostile and dangerous South, usually under most primitive conditions that would repel sensitive and cultured persons? They were shocked by the accounts they read describing conditions under which the freedmen lived in Virginia and felt a "concern" to help ameliorate them if they could. The sisters shared the sacrificial spirit of the Quaker abolitionists and possessed the zeal for reform and humanitarian uplift common to their circle of New England society. To them the future of the Negro depended upon the schoolhouse; he must be educated to read and write, taught a useful skill, and instructed how to vote—the schoolhouse and the schoolbook were the instruments that would bring about the social and moral regeneration of the South.

But the Misses Chase learned on their first assignment to Craney Island, a "displaced persons" camp in Hampton Roads, that 2,000 homeless, hungry, and cold Negroes first needed food, fit places to live, and warm clothing before any teaching could take place. Their letters describing the pitiful plight of the contrabands brought barrels and boxes of clothing, blankets, shoes, yard goods, bedding, thread, books and school supplies from Freedmen's and other relief societies, from church groups, and from individuals in the North who supported their work. Co-operating with the military authorities and agents of the Freedmen's Bureau they tried to settle families on government farms, helped unite families dispersed by the war, encouraged marriages between men and women living together without benefit of clergy, and taught their charges some simple skills and the rudiments of sanitation and cleanliness. Somehow they also found time to visit hospitals and assist in caring for the wounded and ill. Their principal task, however, was establishing schools and staffing them to educate the Negro children, and operating night schools for adult Negroes. The Chase sisters were imbued with the optimistic assurance that the primer and schoolbook were the keys to the black man's future; to this they had dedicated themselves. To a friend, Lucy Chase epitomized the pattern of their days late in 1864:

Our work is never done. We don't know what leisure is. Papers come, and we don't open them. Books are something we used to enjoy. All this, *not because* we are really industrious, but because it chanced that our early arrival here [in Norfolk] made it necessary for us to work in a multitude of ways; and our work is of all times and seasons.

They learned the folkways of the ex-slaves, their varying attitudes toward freedom, their zeal, or lack of it, for "schooling," their music, dialect, and religious ideas and practices. Their letters are replete with episodes of human interest, many quoted in Negro idiom and patois. This intimate, contemporary look at the lives of the freedmen as they were passing from bondage to freedom is a unique addition to the literature of the Civil War and reconstruction. Through their eyes the reader sees a devastated South, an embittered white population, still feared by most of the colored people, and a veiled or open white hostility toward themselves as they moved on into the deeper South to continue their work in Georgia and Florida.

Children of poor white families were invited to attend the schools where the freedmen's children were being instructed, but this was unthinkable to their parents. Of political reconstruction the letters comment sparsely, though officers of the armies of occupation and Freedmen's Bureau agents with whom the sisters dealt are briefly characterized at times, and occasionally impatience crops out at the restrictions and red tape imposed upon them. But the Misses Chase were invariably of cheerful countenance, blessed with a Quaker conviction that what they were doing was good and

right, the source of a strength and fortitude that kept them persevering in their chosen work of aiding the Negro through eight years of war and rehabilitation.

Professor Swint provides a ten-page introduction, meticulous identification of persons, events, and places that are mentioned in the letters, an adequate bibliography of the works he has consulted which also is suggestive for further reading, and an index. The book is attractively jacketed with pen and inkwell motif, but one questions the publisher's preference for putting the book title and the chapter running heads at the bottom of the page rather than in their customary place at the top.

The Hagley Museum

NORMAN B. WILKINSON

Dumbarton Oaks. The History of a Georgetown House and Garden, 1800-1966.

By WALTER MUIR WHITEHILL. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967. x, 147 p. Illustrations, index. \$6.95.)

The story of a famous house is here told with verve and with accuracy. Dumbarton Oaks became world famous in 1944 when the Conference which planned the United Nations was held there. Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss, the former owner, suggested that the author write its history. Earlier the Blisses had commissioned an unpublished study of Dumbarton Oaks and its occupants before 1920. That document became the basis for Whitehill's research. In addition, he held numerous interviews with Mrs. Bliss and with others familiar with the history of the area.

Whitehill has confined his account to the house, the land that surrounds it, and the private owners. He makes no attempt to summarize the varied scholastic and musical activities that have been carried on there since 1940.

William Hammond Dorsey probably began building what became Dumbarton Oaks in 1800, although neither plans nor the name of the architect who designed the house are known today. Apparently it was completed sometime in 1801. Within a few years it had a series of owners, the best known being John C. Calhoun, who used the property as a summer home during his tenure as Secretary of War.

During its existence Dumbarton Oaks has had various ownerships—primarily names prominent in Washington and Virginia history, Beverleys, Calhouns, Mackalls, Linthicums, Dents and Blounts—before the Bliss purchase in 1920. Several names have adorned the property, the strangest being Acrolophos! It became Dumbarton Oaks in 1920.

During Edward Linthicum's lifetime (he died in 1869), Dumbarton Oaks was known as the showplace of Georgetown. Linthicum, a local philanthropist, enlarged and radically changed the appearance of Dumbarton Oaks which previously had resembled other great houses of the Federal period. Since no picture of the house before 1860 is known to exist, we must rely on written descriptions for its original appearance.

Dumbarton Oaks of today was created when the Robert Woods Blisses purchased the property in 1920. In establishing a "country house in the city" they built on the shell of the Federal house of 1800. Planning carefully—though they lived in the house only seven years—they built up what became the basis for the present Byzantine research center and the collection of pre-Columbian art. With the help of Mrs. Beatrix Farrand, Mrs. Bliss created the beautiful gardens.

In 1940 the Blisses deeded the house and about sixteen acres of the property to Harvard University and the adjacent twenty-seven acres to the District of Columbia, which, known as Dumbarton Oaks Park, is now operated by the National Park Service. When he died in 1962, Bliss left eleven million dollars as a permanent endowment to Dumbarton Oaks. All this information and much more is told in Whitehill's definitive study.

However, he castigates too severely Alexander R. Shepherd for his part in creating the beautiful Washington of today. It is true that Shepherd rode roughshod over all opposition, but circumstances were so strong that his opponents would have defeated any lesser show of strength.

The book is augmented by illustrations of the house and grounds from different periods of their history and by portraits of early owners.

Columbia Historical Society

ELDEN E. BILLINGS

Little Charley Ross: America's First Kidnapping for Ransom. By NORMAN ZIEROLD. (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1967. 304 p. Illustrations. \$5.95.)

Among Philadelphia's more dubious distinctions is that of having been the scene of America's most notorious kidnapping up until the Lindbergh case more than half a century later. As a result, the name of poor little Charley Ross has long been legendary in the United States. Now Norman Zierold has written a popular detailed account of this tragic episode which is not footnoted but seems based primarily on a thorough perusal of Philadelphia and New York newspapers.

Since presumably every reader knows that there is not going to be a happy ending or even a satisfactory resolution of the mystery, the book becomes essentially a monotonously depressing story of disappointed hopes. Indeed, at times it seems almost padded so as to achieve book length. Not only is much space given to a full reprinting of a harrowing series of letters demanding ransom allegedly written by the kidnappers, but there is an equally full recounting of the innumerable rumors and false reports that filled the press and even an occasional halting of the story simply to tell what else was appearing in the newspapers at any given time.

The modern reader will probably be impressed by the none too admirable role played by press sensationalism nearly a century ago, including some cruel misrepresentations of the behavior of the suffering Ross family. The

intimation is that the combination of newspaper publicity and police insistence that no ransom be paid ruined any possibility of ever recovering the boy. Indeed, the then unprecedented nature of the crime apparently so unnerved the American public that it became more interested in punishing the abductors than in retrieving the lad. The case may well be one by-product of the way in which the United States was moving into a more complex, impersonal urban society after the Civil War in which such a crime was possible, though Mr. Zierold is too much the straightforward journalist to become involved in such sociological speculation.

Mr. Zierold apparently accepts the presumption that the kidnapers were two minor criminals, William Mosher and Joseph Douglas, who were killed in a housebreaking attempt in Brooklyn a few months later and therefore took the secret of Charley's fate with them. It is now an ancient story, perhaps overshadowed by much more widespread horrors which have occurred since then, but Mr. Zierold does convey very well the suffering undergone by one particular family which still gives his tale a universal quality. Anyone who wants the full haunting details of this case will find it here, but he will not find it very cheerful reading.

University of Pennsylvania

WALLACE EVAN DAVIES

Old Buildings, Gardens and Furniture in Tidewater Maryland. By H. CHANDLEE FORMAN. (Cambridge, Md.: Tidewater Publishers, 1967. xi, 326 p. Illustrations, index. \$12.50.)

After some fifty pages of a rambling "Glimpse of Early Maryland," during which the author seeks largely to fulfill the "Gardens and Furniture" part of the title of his book, he takes the reader on a series of personal "adventures"—finding and describing in utmost detail old dwellings and out-buildings located in four geographical divisions: the Upper Eastern Shore, the Lower Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland and Upper Bay Counties. The volume is completed with a sentimental epilogue; an Addenda section largely critical of earlier nomenclature and attributions; five pages of notes, well over half of which are simply references to the author's previous books or local history articles; and an index.

Here indeed is repeated evidence of close observation and careful recording. There is fascination in the author's dedication and persistence and in the myriad details he has brought together, not only of architectural features but also of genealogical matter and traces of early customs and manners. But there is frustration in the format and in the completely loose and informal style of the writing. The former allows illustrations of a single property to be scattered from front to back of the book and even to be sandwiched between unrelated details of several others on the same page. The latter abounds in changes of tense, making it difficult to tell whether the material is freshly observed reporting of existing conditions, or, as one

begins to suspect, compiled from notes and historical papers of ten or more years ago. It also often combines exterior and interior description almost in the same sentence and falls into personally coined terminology.

Besides the well-nigh endless observational detail, the considerable body of conjectural material, and the repeated criticisms of the alleged mistakes of other writers in the field, one would have hoped the author could have informed us more about the actual architects and master-builders of the "Tidewater." It is good to pin down the earliest owners and the descent of property, but surely there must be more record of the builders, carpenters, and craftsmen of the region than appears in this volume. Agreeing with the author that early gardens leave little record of themselves, one feels that there must have been other plant material than box in Maryland and that descriptions of completely restored gardens along Williamsburg lines do not add greatly to historical appreciation.

Finally, it is often hard to find, as one would hope to do, specific comparisons of architectural features between the different sections of Maryland and to have them clearly enough described, drawn and dated to compare with those found in other states. But perhaps the best thing to do with this book is to "read the pictures." Forget the fussiness of the drawings, and their puzzling juxtaposition of the smallest with the largest details in altogether too reduced and annotated form; overlook the often postage-stamp size of the photographs, and discover in over five hundred illustrations a truly exciting and worthwhile record of the development of Maryland architecture. Study the pictures and see much evidence which might otherwise have been lost and find an interest in the cause of historic preservation encouraged and enhanced by Dr. Forman's eagerness to advance it.

*The Society for the Preservation
of New England Antiquities*

BERTRAM K. LITTLE

Father Against The Devil. By EDWARD S. GIFFORD, JR. (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966. viii, 181 p. \$3.95.)

Dr. Edward S. Gifford, Jr., has written a charming and thoroughly absorbing little book about his father, also a Philadelphia physician. Dr. Gifford, Sr., practiced medicine in sleepy North Philadelphia where he raised his family in those confident days before the First War. He was a Methodist of the "oldest school" who firmly believed in muscular Christianity, "gumption," and the stock market. Life was guided by moral aphorisms rather than the abstractions of Freud, guts rather than adjustment still ruled, and serious illnesses and death were looked upon as moral rather than medical problems. Needless to say, in the true old Philadelphia style, he never took an aspirin tablet or a taxi. In this simple moral world, it was no wonder that both doctors Gifford "enjoyed" the First World War, looking upon the contest between the allies and the Huns in a manner similar to a football game between Penn and Princeton on Franklin Field.

Dr. Gifford, Sr., left the country only once, taking the grand tour of Europe in 1899. Typical of his provincial and self-righteous Americanism, he was of course only confirmed in his belief that all Europeans, with the exception of a few Englishmen, were morally degenerate. He listened to a lecture by Krafft-Ebing in Vienna and was somewhat surprised to hear that sex was so important. Among other experiences in Paris he watched the funeral cortege of Felix Faure, President of the Republic. He would have been even more sure of his judgment of Europeans had he known of the circumstances of the President's death. Thus it was many years before "intimate diaries revealed that on the afternoon of February 16, Monsieur Faure received in his presidential office the Archbishop of Paris, then the Prince of Monaco, and finally Madame Steinheil, the beautiful young wife of a popular French portrait painter. With Madame Steinheil, the president retired to a boudoir adjoining the office and locked the door. An hour later, attendants heard the lady screaming and forced their way into the room. Madame Steinheil lay on the floor completely naked. Monsieur Faure, partially conscious, lay on a bed in a 'significant state of undress,' clutching Madame Steinheil's long hair in one hand and thus preventing her escape. Apparently, he had suffered a hemorrhage of the brain from amorous exertion. . . . That night the president died."

As this anecdote suggests, one of the great charms of this book is the contrasting characters of the two doctors Griffin, the provincial and moralistic father and the urbane and questioning son. At the same time, there is never a hint of a patronizing sense of superiority on the part of the author. Thus, in spite of his wide-ranging and sophisticated knowledge of the arts and literature which constantly show through the narrative, Dr. Gifford, Jr., apparently had a sincere respect for his father's literal sense of sin and faith in the Bible, evangelical literature and the stock market. Though he himself lost faith in North Philadelphia Methodism, he recalls with pleasure how "father's moral strictures added to the spice of my life."

In an age when so many of us see so many of the aged pass through their so-called "Golden Years" in illness and bitter decline, it is a pleasure to read of a man like Dr. Gifford, Sr., who was still growing (and becoming increasingly liberal) in his "gay nineties." In his last years he lived with his son and daughter-in-law in their large Spruce Street house and felt entirely at home with, and charmed by, some of the city's leading intellectual, artistic, and professional people who gathered there during the post-World War II years. Eventually, he even took a cocktail or two.

University of Pennsylvania

E. DIGBY BALTZELL

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Founded in 1824, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has long been a center of research in Pennsylvania and American history. It has accumulated an important historical collection, chiefly through contributions of family, political, and business manuscripts, as well as letters, diaries, newspapers, magazines, maps, prints, paintings, photographs, and rare books. Additional contributions of such a nature are urgently solicited for preservation in the Society's fireproof building where they may be consulted by scholars.

Membership. There are various classes of membership: general, \$10.00; associate, \$25.00; patron, \$100.00; life, \$250.00; benefactor, \$1,000. Members receive certain privileges in the use of books, are invited to the Society's historical addresses and receptions, and receive *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. Those interested in joining the Society are invited to submit their names.

Hours: The Society is open to the public Monday, 1 P.M. to 9 P.M.; Tuesday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The Society is closed from the first Monday in August until the second Monday in September.

A Philadelphia Perspective
The Diary of Sidney George Fisher: 1834-1871

Edited by NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT

Price, \$12.50

Dr. Roy F. Nichols, former President of the American Historical Association, has written: "The Fisher diary is a fascinating revelation of life in Philadelphia in the mid-nineteenth century. Also, it is a very interesting indication of the relationship of people of good family to cultural interests of the time. Mr. Fisher had a capacity for making his readers acquainted with his friends and his community. It is difficult to lay the book down."

According to *Nathaniel Burt*, author of the popular and challenging *The Perennial Philadelphians: The Anatomy of an American Aristocracy*: "The diary of Sidney George Fisher provides one of the most vivid pictures of nineteenth-century life in existence, particularly that of the Philadelphia upper class. Everything from clothes and furniture to great public issues and the latest poem has its moment, all flavored with the special personality of Sidney himself. Along with the diaries of Charles Francis Adams and George Templeton Strong, it is required reading for those interested in American manners of the mid-nineteenth century. No Philadelphian can afford to miss it."

Printed on a large-size page, this volume is handsomely bound in marbled paper, is ornamented with front end papers displaying a map of the Philadelphia area and rear end papers showing a map of the Sassafra River, where the diarist's farm was located. Ten pages of front matter are followed by 626 pages of text, including an index, thirty-seven pages of illustrations, and more than twenty line cuts.

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