Life in Cincinnati meant social activity, lectures, concerts, plays. The town was a center of western industry, trade, and travel; Stephen had much book-keeping to do, and, be it said, made his ledgers models of accuracy. But Cincinnati was not to be measured in decibels of pig-squeals and steamboat whistles; there were other harmonies in its song of life. "Porkopolis" was famous for its several colleges and fifteen schools, its astronomical observatory, its thirty-five newspapers and magazines, its half-dozen book and music publishing houses, its three concert halls and three theaters with their abundant offerings in music and drama. "Here was an environment having flavor and charm," writes President Walters, "which spurred on this young man who wanted to be both poet and musician; here he was able, in after-hours leisure, to produce verse and music notable for quality and quantity; here he received generous public notice."

But Foster's formative years had been lived in another environment of flavor and charm, that older metropolis of western trade, the town at the Forks of the Ohio. Here the lad, in care of a mulatto servant, often went to a church of colored "shouters," and drank the strains of negro melody at their source. Here the young man saw minstrel performances and mingled with the actors. Here he knew the "mudsills" of the Monongahela wharf, and the precious darlings of Pittsburgh society. Here he sang in amateur chorals, and joined his fellow members of "The Knights of the Square Table" in parlor musicals. Here were those "dear friends and gentle hearts" to whom he dedicated many of his romantic songs. And in Pittsburgh are his grave, his statue, his enduring shrine in tradition and in stone.

In view of the merit of a previous volume on the place of Cincinnati in Foster's life—E. Jay Wolgemuth's *Within Three Chords*—President Walters' labors may seem not wholly necessary. But new material has been gathered and old material rechecked; this little book happily blends affection and scholarship.

*University of Pittsburgh*  
E. Douglas Branch


While Dorothea Dix is remembered chiefly for her work in behalf of the mentally ill, the scope of reforms that claimed her attention extended to the major social problems of her time. For the forty years from 1841 to 1881, she
gave a tireless energy and fearless courage to the improvement of conditions in prisons and almshouses, to the establishment of separate hospitals for the mentally ill, to the direction of the official nursing service during the Civil War, to the development of after-care for disabled Union veterans, and to many minor undertakings such as raising funds for a war memorial and providing adequate life-saving stations. Her loyalty and devotion to the western Pennsylvania institution named after her, Dixmont Hospital, which the reviewer has previously discussed (ante, 17: 247-258), formed but one episode in her remarkable life.

Deeply religious and extremely modest, Miss Dix may have preferred a selfless absorption in the great social movements with which she was associated to a lasting memory of her achievements. But a rare foresight in advocating the principle of federal aid to the states for welfare purposes has earned for her a renewed fame as the problems of unemployment have been recognized as national in character and as federal programs of relief have been established in accordance with the grant-in-aid principle. To the student of contemporary public-welfare problems, Miss Dix is hardly a “Forgotten Samaritan.”

With Miss Dix, “to see was to act.” Her first survey of the conditions to which the mentally ill were exposed under almshouse and jail administration convinced her of the futility of reform under the system of local-government responsibility. Her famous memorials to the various state legislatures were eloquent arguments for the logic of complete state responsibility for the care of this group. Her later appreciation of financial limitations within some of the states brought her to see the inevitable necessity of federal aid to the states if an adequate and comprehensive program of care was to be insured. The result was her effort in behalf of the twelve-million-acre bill which would have made available the income from certain government lands to the states for use in providing systems of treatment and care for the mentally ill. The famous veto of the proposal by President Pierce in 1854 fixed the responsibility for the care of the distressed as state rather than federal, where it remained for three-quarters of a century until the depression of the 1930’s once more revived interest in federal responsibility for the relief of need. The exponents of what became the social security act have widely quoted the effective arguments for equalization that came from an individual who had no grasp of political theory but whose interest in meeting need led her to seek out the ultimate responsible source of aid.

Because of this renewed interest in her theories of governmental responsi-
bility, a new biography of Miss Dix is more than timely. By a re-examination of the materials used by the Reverend Francis Tiffany, her earlier biographer, and by the discovery and analysis of correspondence not hitherto utilized, Miss Marshall has contributed much to the understanding of Miss Dix as an individual. Her childhood and adulthood had few personal satisfactions. An absorption in great causes became the great motivating force of her life. Her reliance upon religion, her self-denial, her fanatical courage developed a detachment apparent even in her associations with close friends. Miss Marshall’s skillful use of materials has served to emphasize the quality of martyrdom already familiar to those who have followed the achievements and disappointments of Dorothea Dix. An excellent bibliography is included in the study that should be useful to those who may wish to analyze more minutely the contribution of this great leader to social reform in America.

University of Pittsburgh

Marion Hathway


*Old Favorites from the McGuffey Readers.* Edited by Harvey C. Minnich, curator of the McGuffey Museum. (New York, American Book Company, 1936. xiii, 482 p. Illustrations.)

These two volumes should be of particular interest to residents of western Pennsylvania for several reasons. McGuffey was born in this area, a few miles from West Alexander, and, although his family moved to Ohio when he was very young, he received both his secondary and collegiate education at western Pennsylvania institutions. He attended the Greersburg, later called the Darlington, Academy, near Beaver Falls, and received his collegiate training at Washington College. Too, these books make their appeal here because the early McGuffey Readers were used in many schools of western Pennsylvania years ago.

The latter hold the most remarkable record of any series ever published in America. First written upon the special request of Truman and Smith, a printing firm in Cincinnati, these books have had a more or less continuous sale from 1836, when the First and Second Readers were first published, until now. In