BOOK REVIEWS

Banners in the Wilderness, Early Years of Washington and Jefferson College. By Helen Turnbull Waite Coleman. (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1956. X, 285 p. Illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. $4.00.)

Don't you ever dare to take your college as matter of course,—because like freedom and democracy, many people you'll never know anything about have broken their hearts to get it for you." This was the telegram from an absent alumna—Alice Duer Miller (White Cliffs of Dover) to Dean Virginia Gildersleeve on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Barnard College, and this is the message of this volume.

Mrs. Coleman's readers are not likely to take those great little colleges as "a matter of course." As she makes the turbulent founders, teachers, and students of the little schools "come alive" she convinces us that their values, "religion and true learning," are good values for us today. Such was her purpose and this she has achieved.

Candidly and fairly the author has told us the amazing and often painful story of the colleges—just seven miles apart—from their founding, as academies, to the union as Washington and Jefferson College. Her book represents a happy combination of detailed research and clear, lively presentation. She graphically describes the times and delineates the character of the men who made Jefferson and Washington Colleges instruments of culture and civilization "on a moving frontier." All too briefly the author tells us of a few of the great host of Washington and Jefferson men who have gone out in the cause of human good in community, national and international service. Mrs. Coleman is "embarrassed by riches" as she calls the roll of "men of mark," alumni of Washington and Jefferson College: William Holmes McGuffey, Washington, 1826, the influence of whose "Readers," according to Louis B. Wright, a competent judge, cannot be calculated; Joseph Ruggles Wilson, Jefferson, 1844, father of Woodrow Wilson, who called him "My best teacher"; Missionaries Walter Lowrie and Hunter Corbett; statesmen Hon. John White Geary and James Gillespie Blaine; Dr. Jonathan Letterman, Jr., who established the field hospitals in the Civil War. These are the names of but a few of the Jefferson and Washington College men characteristic of the great company who have served in every field of endeavor, education, religion, medicine, law, business, and in defense of the Nation.

More than half a century ago a distinguished preacher and teacher
of Pittsburgh declared, in an address in Washington, "These two colleges have been greater for good in the region west of the Allegheny Mountains and in the eastern part of the great Mississippi Valley, than any other of which we know. I do not except the Christian Church, for the reason that the power and influence of the Christian Church have been largely exerted through these colleges."

It's high time such a book as Mrs. Coleman's should be written and it is to be hoped that the great debt owed to these colleges and this college will be acknowledged.

The book is beautifully printed and bound. The pictures and portraits are unusually attractive and quite important historically.

The inclusion of the Pennsylvania Acts and Charters together with the famous United States Supreme Court Decision make the volume, with its bibliographies and lists of Professors, Trustees and Administrators of the colleges, an extremely valuable source of history.

There are, necessarily, some omissions in the long story as well as some minor inaccuracies, but it is a valuable book and worthy of a place in all libraries.

Lewistown, Penna.  

HENRY A. RIDDLE


Perhaps the most serious charge that can be brought against any historian—except for the ubiquitous and unpardonable crime of being inexact—is that of being one-eyed.

This serious fault may often be present in two forms. The worst form is personal bias; but almost as damaging at times is unwillingness to consider all possible evidence.

James A. Kehl University of Pittsburgh history professor, is to be congratulated on both the breadth and the depth of his research for Ill Feeling in the Era of Good Feeling. Although he may have overlooked some possibly fruitful sources of material, he has tapped so many others that the book casts a great deal of new light on a much neglected topic: the growth of party politics in the early United States, and particularly that tendency as it was revealed in and reflected in Western Pennsylvania.

In such a field the old-time doctrine of "No documents, no his-