On his fifty-second birthday, February 4, 1850, Calvin Fletcher noted that "This past has been a year of toil yet of pleasure. God has given me wonderful health and good success in business" (p. 167)—an entry that might stand as a summary of the five years included in volume four of his published diary. A record of incessant activity and hard work that was more often than not rewarded with profit, the diary is also an account of the comings and goings of the large, closely knit Fletcher family, of festive occasions, of public duties performed in good conscience by a man of vigorous constitution.

Born in Vermont in 1798, Fletcher had lived in Indianapolis since 1821. Earlier volumes of his diary recorded his struggle to establish himself and his family in Indiana's new capital, his experiences as a circuit riding lawyer, the details of his debt collection partnership, the beginnings of his "second" career as banker and large landowner, and the seemingly endless activities of an increasingly prominent citizen.

By 1848, Fletcher had terminated the collection agency and all but ceased the practice of law. During the next half decade he devoted much of his time to the affairs of the Indianapolis Branch of the State Bank of Indiana, of which he was president. His other great concern was his farms northeast of the city, comprising in all some fourteen hundred acres. Several of his nine sons worked on the farms from time to time and he employed as many as a dozen other hands, but Fletcher occasionally took to the harvest field himself. Claiming his attention, also, were other farms in Marion and Morgan counties, on which tenants lived, and his large investments in cattle and hogs, some of which he fattened locally and some on the prairie near Lafayette.

Fletcher held no public office in these years, yet he was in public life, for he had a well developed sense of his responsibility to the community. He worked particularly hard in the causes of free schools and temperance, often address-
ing meetings (which he disliked to do) and serving on governing boards. As had been his custom for many years, he continued to give generously of his time and money to church and Sunday school. The Fletcher home stood hospitably open to the new schoolteacher, the itinerant preacher, the poor relative, and the orphaned child. Twenty persons were as likely to gather around the breakfast table on any morning as around the supper table on Christmas Eve.

All this is not revealed by the scanning of a few pages of the diary, but the reader who perseveres through the volume will find himself as involved with the Fletchers as with his favorite television family. He will eagerly await news of Cooley, the eldest son, a missionary in Brazil; he will follow the younger children to their schools and feel with Calvin, Jr., Elijah, and Miles as they try to establish their independence; he will keep a watchful eye on the mother's uncertain health and view with amusement and sympathy the father's attempts to improve his irascible disposition; he will suffer with the Fletchers through cholera epidemics and the death of the first grandchild. The historian who reads the diary will be rewarded with new knowledge of banking practices, the midwestern cattle trade, conditions of travel (for the Fletchers were often on the road), and many other aspects of the economy and society a century and a quarter ago. In sum, the Fletcher diary is unrivalled as an account of life in the Midwest during the years that it covers.

As was the case with earlier volumes, the editors must be commended for their careful work on this one.

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"Any book on pioneer crafts must necessarily be written in the subjunctive mood. It is too late by more than a century to make positive assertions concerning some aspects of professional weaving" (p. vi), recognizes Pauline Montgomery in her volume describing Indiana's professional coverlet weavers and their products. She consequently has not attempted to discuss the technicalities of the weaving process