

lish a record of effectiveness. This record was, admittedly, uneven across the nation, but it established a trend that was clear. Central to this effectiveness were the officials themselves—the inspectors, statisticians, analysts, scientists, engineers, superintendents, and experts. If Brock has not rediscovered “the best men,” he has certainly celebrated a new breed of good men who took the initiative to investigate and regulate the social environment. In doing so they provided the practical experience that was necessary for the federal government to build upon.

Some of Brock’s findings are worthy of further consideration. Did the development of social policy have little to do with political party? Were courts more cooperative than previously thought in giving support to use of the police power? And one would like to know more about the public that the author tends to ignore. The Michigan Board of Public Health, for instance, was organized in 1873 “largely as a consequence of pressure from Dr. Ira H. Bartholomew, who won election to the legislature to promote these objectives. His cause was aided by public alarm over the sale of unregulated and impure illuminating oil which had caused several explosions and fires” (p. 123). Were perhaps some of Brock’s enlightened liberals responding to an increasingly demanding public? In spite of these questions *Investigation and Responsibility* is clearly presented, well argued, well documented, and well worth reading.

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*Freemasonry and American Culture, 1880-1930.* By Lynn Dumenil. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. Pp. xviii, 305. Illustrations, appendixes, tables, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$30.00.)

Dumenil presents a tightly controlled examination of Masonry over a period of fifty years spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the book therefore arrives in some respects as an interrupted but enlarged sequel to Dorothy Lipson’s *Freemasonry in Connecticut, 1789-1835* (1977). After a brief account of Masonry in American life immediately prior to and after the Civil War, Dumenil organizes the study under two major headings—Masonry in the nineteenth century and Masonry in the 1920s. The first part concentrates on the religious features of Masonry by identifying its mythic elements, its ritual practices, its communal aspects, its fraternal moral codices, and its vague, but nonetheless discernibly Protestant, theological assumptions. In this form, as an “asylum” from and within a culture beset by the new problems of industrialization, urbanization, and reli-

gious and social pluralism, the Masonic Lodge presented white, middle-class men with a preserve for the traditional values of sobriety, respectability, prudence, honesty, and industry that, even in Victorian America, they feared were disappearing. In the second part, with a focus on the watershed decade of the 1920s, Dumenil examines the accommodations of Masonry to the modern temper, with particular attention to its new senses of nationalism, to erosions of its ritualistic character, and to its increasingly civic and social emphases. Moving from enclave into the cultural mainstream and in the process changing from "temple" to "club," Dumenil points out, Masonry insured its temporary life in its new secular formations but surrendered some of that exclusive identity and distinctive character that had made it a powerful and respected organization in the years before World War I.

Produced from the author's doctoral dissertation, this clean and well-ordered book is both generally accurate and informative, but it remains far too cautious about itself. The basic contention—that Masonry over this fifty-year period "mirrors" American culture generally—is perhaps sound, but it is certainly not startling. And, since Dumenil relies heavily on general depictions of cultural and religious history in this era, it is not in the least surprising to discover that the "mirror" of Masonry follows and reflects the by-now-well-worn path of "secularization."

The book, then, perhaps frames itself too tightly with its mirror-device and, thus, relents too quickly to the more or less conventional reflections to be found therein. For instance, disdainful of any challenge to the pat "secularization thesis," it fully ignores the antinomous charge of the Masonic order in a modern society: the book lacks subtlety in its failure to imagine that the very structures of nineteenth century Masonry posit a means for sustaining, in this enclave group, permutations of the covenant "virtues" and theocratic contents of old Puritanism; thus, it cannot measure the ways that Masonry, especially in the 1920s, might be considered a vehicle for "civil religion" in America. Refusing opportunities to vaunt any risky interpretation in these and other areas, Dumenil, although instructive on continuity and change in Masonry, teaches nothing new about American culture.

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*The Care of Antiques and Historical Collections.* By Per E. Guldbeck; second edition revised by A. Bruce MacLeish. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1985. Pp. xiii, 248. Illustrations, notes, suggested reading, appendixes, index. Paperbound, \$14.95.)

Everyone is a collector, and for those whose collections include articles of historic value Per E. Guldbeck's book has been