
In her own time Frances Willard was a nationally known figure. As the president of the Women Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the largest women's organization in the country, she commanded a respect and following unmatched then by any other woman in American history. Yet, within a half century her fame had disappeared. Biographer Ruth Bordin attributes this turn of events to the nation's disillusionment with prohibition. Now that alcoholism is again a troublesome national issue, Bordin reflects, the opportunity exists for an objective evaluation of Frances Willard's life and accomplishments. In her work, Frances Willard, Bordin presents the temperance leader as a person of great personal gifts, as a feminist, and as the embodiment of the progressive ideal of womanhood.

When in 1879 at its annual meeting in Indianapolis the WCTU elected Frances Willard its new president, the membership chose as leader a woman already well known as an educator and evangelist. In addition to her background as the first dean of the Women's College at Northwestern University and her fame as a public speaker, Willard brought to the position energy, charm, and a political astuteness that enabled her to manage and direct the organization during the years of its greatest growth and influence. Moreover she brought a social consciousness formed by family and religion that enabled her to see the temperance cause as linked to a broad spectrum of social concerns and persuasive power that caused her to influence many women and men to her viewpoints. In later life she summarized hers as "The Do Everything Policy" and took pride in the success of her lobbying efforts and the scope of her civic involvements.

The most important of her social concerns was the "women question." Reared to value herself and act independently, Willard had had two unhappy experiences working with strong-willed and intelligent men easily challenged by an equally strong-willed and intelligent woman. Her decision to choose a woman's organization as her arena of activity was probably deliberate. From her earliest years she supported women's education and suffrage. Throughout her life she formed close associations with other women both within and outside the WCTU. During the 1890s when she traveled in Europe and the Near East, her greatest outrage was the victimization of women in the Islamic countries. Willard believed firmly in the notion of "separate spheres" and looked confidently to the day when the country and the world would be enhanced by the addition of women's special graces and viewpoints to society.

Bordin presents Willard as the embodiment of the ideal of womanhood most popular in the late nineteenth century. Attrac-
tive, idealistic, and concerned about others, she did not question the cultural norms of the time but instead used a militant organization to foster these standards as they related to family life, poverty, and international understanding. She enjoyed her involvements and grew from her experiences, but she never foresaw the challenges future social critics would hurl at her most cherished beliefs.

Bordin's work is a fine study of an outstanding American woman. It extends but does not contradict the interpretation Willard presented earlier in her work Woman and Temperance. It is based on a wealth of resource material. The most important feature of the work is that it casts Willard's life into a perspective that acknowledges and highlights her gifts while noting their limitation to and rootedness in a distinct historical time period.

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No historian has made more of an impact on the American historical scene during the past century than Frederick Jackson Turner. Thus, despite the books and articles written about Turner and his famous frontier thesis, Martin Ridge is on firm ground when stating in his excellent introduction that there is little need to justify the publication of this volume of essays by and about this noted historian.

Ray Allen Billington's contribution, entitled "Young Fred Turner," ably illustrates how his subject was influenced by the frontier aura that rural and small-town Wisconsin still possessed during his boyhood. It is clear that Turner himself fully recognized the effect this environment exerted on his later work.

Whether read for the first or fifth time, Turner's essay on the "Significance of the Frontier in American History" can readily be appreciated. At the heart of his argument, first presented at a meeting of the American Historical Society in 1893, was the thesis that the process of moving westward in a succession of frontiers from the Atlantic had been of paramount importance in forming the American character and nation. After years of discussion and controversy, most present historians accept the general validity of this premise, while often also giving emphasis to other elements they believe were decisive in determining the uniqueness of American development.

The last essay is Turner's "The Significance of History," published in 1891, in which he challenged the then prevailing schools