

*The Passing of the Frontier, 1825-1850.* By Francis P. Weisenburger. Volume III of *The History of the State of Ohio*, 6 vols. Edited by Carl Wittke. (Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio, 1841. Pp. xiv, 524. Maps and illustrations.)

The reader of this third volume in the new history of the state of Ohio, is taken, by way of introduction, on a tour of the cities of the state as they existed in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Toledo, Sandusky, Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Steubenville, Zanesville, Marietta, Portsmouth, Chillicothe, Columbus, Springfield, Dayton, and Cincinnati are the principal points visited, somewhat after the manner of John Bach McMaster in his *History of the People of the United States*. The point of the chapter is the development of urban life in an agricultural state which was passing from the frontier stage. This is followed by a survey of the various elements of Ohio's population beginning with the Indians, the last of whom were removed from the state during this period. The presence of a few thousand Negroes kept the state from being a white man's country and also preserved considerable hostility to the black race. The migration of settlers from the older sections of the nation is also described in detail. The agricultural activities and the beginning of industrial developments are pictured. The contents of the fourth chapter are indicated by the title, "Modes of Transportation—Old and New." Because the subject involves the change from rivers, roads, and canals to railroads the chapter is more of a historical treatment than the previous chapters.

Nearly one hundred pages are devoted to the social history of the period, in which "Recreation and Sociability," "Religion and Education," and "Literature, Science, and the Arts" are treated. The political developments of the years of the Jacksonian movement and the rise of the Whig Party require a longer description in which the Panic of 1837 is subordinated to the political story. The anti-slavery movement forms something of an interlude before the political narrative is resumed in connection with the presidential campaign of 1840. The volume closes with a discussion of banking and sectional problems as they affected the politics of the state.

It is obvious from this brief review of the contents of the volume that the author considers the economic, political, and social aspects of his subject. Although this is to his credit, it is permissible to raise a question that is not confined to this particular volume. How much historical development or change is necessary to entitle a descriptive treatment to be called history? Conversely, does the lack of change within the period assigned to an author cause a narrative to become something else than history? Let it be said at the beginning that the historical character of this volume as a whole is not questioned, although portions of the work justify raising the question. The problem seems to be inherent in the social approach to history, particularly when the period to be treated is a short one. It also seems to be increased as a result of the small amount of interpretation which the author offers his reader. Too often the narrative is merely a citation of so much of this and so much of that, so many hogs or cattle, so many foreign born or so many natives of Southern states or of New England. Certain chapters like the one on transportation and those on political developments are exceptions. Others like the surveys of the cities, the population elements, agriculture, industrial beginnings, and parts of the treatment of social events raise the question whether a longer period of time ought not to have been assigned to the author. Perhaps there was more change than readily meets the eye, which a more interpretative account might have pointed out.

A few minor points may be mentioned such as the lack of related details on the maps, especially those illustrating the transportation network (p. 99, and 116). The rivers of the state should have been added. Since Middleton is involved in the discussion (p. 98) it might have been indicated also. More attention should have been paid to the process of clearing the land and to the making of potash. Sheep-raising and ship-building seem to have been passed over too quickly.

In fairness to the author and to those who share with him the honor of producing this work, it must be said that it is a highly creditable volume. It is a thorough study of the period by an experienced investigator and writer. It is scholarly and unbiased.