

that Owen's main contribution was the determination and naming of the major geological formations of the Mississippi Valley, placing them broadly in their relative positions in the geologic time scale and helping to standardize geologic nomenclature throughout the United States.

A bibliography of Owen's writings as well as a bibliography of works used by Hendrickson in preparing this work are to be found in this little volume.

Freedom's Ferment. By Alice Felt Tyler. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1944, pp. x, 608. \$5.00.)

Of the phases of American social history to 1860, Mrs. Tyler has taken two dominant trends as the theme of her study: "Cults and Utopias" and "Humanitarian Crusades." In exposition of the former topic, the author has dealt briefly with the religious life of colonial America, and has developed at greater length the utopian strivings of early nineteenth-century America. The very obvious movements are discussed, such as transcendentalism, Brook Farm, Bronson Alcott and Fruitlands, Mormonism, Shakerism, and New Harmony; and lesser-known phenomena are also depicted: the Fox sisters and their spirit rappings, Frances Wright and Nashoba, and Jemima Wilkinson, the Universal Friend.

In treating the latter subject, "Humanitarian Crusades," Mrs. Tyler has undertaken to sketch the history of the anti-slavery movement and its culmination in the Civil War; early nineteenth-century women's rights movement; the nationalistic, nativistic, anti-Roman Catholic and anti-Masonic episodes in our nation's history; temperance; education; and criminal and social reform. All have been treated with a facile pen, though the exposition occasionally seems interlarded with quotations.

Mrs. Tyler has the gift of writing well; her study can be criticized from one point of view, however, as being too textbookish. It is on this comment that most reviewers would indulge in *obiter dictum*. Depending upon the reader's approach to the book, it will appear as too lengthy for general exposition, too reliant upon secondary materials, and perhaps in part even superfluous.

The general reader will find in this book a good summation of the various "crack-pot" movements that studded this period. It represents a mine of information within its limits,

but there are gaps. No mention is made of medical history, of the mushroom growth of medical and eclectic colleges in reference to the history of American higher education, nor of the development of American philosophy within the colleges and its bearing upon the philosophical and religious life of the nation. These are seemingly serious omissions. The stress, moreover, is upon the abnormal. No mention is made of the crusading zeal of the Protestant circuit riders or of the early Roman priests and bishops on the frontier. Though the attitudes of the churches on slavery are briefly discussed, it would have been a more complete picture had the ecclesiastical background been depicted. The attitudes of the churches are perhaps best understood in the light of historical perspective. It would have given a better setting for the abnormal and aberrational in cultist development had a comparison with normal church growth been drawn.

The specialist in early United States history will find this book disappointing; its possibilities are great, but its realizations fall short of the ideal. Relying almost wholly on published material, Mrs. Tyler has presented little not already available to the researcher. Her greatest contribution to the specialist is perhaps her very extensive notes and bibliography.

The student will approach this book as a boon. It should be required reading for every student meeting American history for the first time in college. It will give the student a survey of those fundamentals of faith, truth and half-truth to which our forebears often clung so tenaciously. Dependent upon the reader's background and technical intellectual equipment, the approach to this study will be eager, hesitant, or even reluctant. It offers much to the novice, but little to the specialist, from the standpoint of depth of treatment.

To all it offers a fine summation of the knowledge and facts in that field to which Mrs. Tyler has limited herself, to "the religious movements and the adventures in reform of the early years of the republic" which were the "truly significant activities of the men and women of the age. . . ."

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