

much less detailed information as to dates, volume numbers and specific titles than in the previous edition, an omission especially regrettable to order and exchange librarians attempting to complete files and to serial cataloguers seeking bibliographical information. Omitted, too, have been the notes about the housing of the societies.

It is suggested that the editor of the next edition include more notes about ownership of historic sites and a fuller description of library holdings unless some better description of special libraries and collections has been issued than is now available. Usually collections are called by the donor's name which does not always have much to do with content. It would be helpful, too, if patriotic societies which publish historical materials could be included.

The percentage of typographical errors seems fairly high. In the repeated phrase of a local radio newsman "Hoosiers can always smile" and some of them laughed right out loud when it was discovered that a local historical society was listed as located in Hells County but the proofreader in Washington must have been startled to discover that such a trick has been played upon a county properly named Wells. Another of the obvious, or perhaps not so obvious, misprints in the Indiana list is the spelling of Quistenon instead of Ouiatenon for the name of the French fort in Tippecanoe County. It should be noted, too, that it is Mrs. George W. Blair, not Mrs. George W. Bevin, who is chairman of the Indiana Library and Historical Board. Various other errors in personal and geographical names occur.

Tools cited in the preface are the two previous editions of this handbook, the *Handbook of Learned Societies and Institutions, America, 1908*, the *American Library Directory, 1942*, the *Handbook of American Museums, 1932*, and Coleman, *Museum in America, 1939*, but no reference is made to Griffin, *Bibliography of American Historical Societies, 1907*, nor to the extremely useful Holbrook, *Survey of Activities of American Agencies in Relation to Materials for Research in the Social Sciences and the Humanities, 1932*, with its discussions of the historical anthropological, archaeological and patriotic societies, university departments, libraries, museums, and archival establishments.

Nellie M. Coats

A History of Oberlin College, From Its Foundation Through the Civil War. By Robert Samuel Fletcher. (2 vols., Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, 1943, pp. xvii, xi, 1004. \$5.00.)

Written by a graduate who is now a member of its faculty, this history is both a scholarly work and a labor of love. In many respects it is an ideal history of a college, ideal because Oberlin made important contributions to many significant developments, because the author is so much a part of Oberlin that he understands it thoroughly, because his love for his alma mater required of him the best workmanship, and his scholarly training would be satisfied only with the highest standards. Oberlin's record was great enough that unfortunate and unfavorable episodes and events could be and were discussed

frankly. Historians of other institutions will do well to study this work carefully. Oberlin was particularly important in the Middle West, where it was intended to "civilize" the "desolate valley," and where it spearheaded many reform movements. Oberlin's leadership in the antislavery movement brought her prominence in the Civil War and Reconstruction and so her history has national importance. Oberlin represented the Yankee invasion of the Middle West, not the conservative culture of New England, but rather the radical, unorthodox, crusading, uncompromising missionary element.

The author found the roots of his college in the migration of New Englanders to the Middle West, the revivalism of Charles G. Finney, the manual labor schools, the Oberlin colony, and the early emancipation movement. The Lane revolt brought to Oberlin, the Lane Rebels, the support of Theodore Weld, the money of Arthur and Lewis Tappan, the preaching of Charles G. Finney, and the precedent of freedom of discussion and freedom from racial prejudice. In addition to abolitionism, "God's College" became identified with perfectionism, evangelism, pacifism, feminism, and dietary and physiological reform. Joint education of the sexes, the training of the negroes in the same classes with white men and women, and the early attention to agriculture and even to business training are among Oberlin's claims to distinction. With reformers getting in each others way and one reform movement crowding hard upon the heels of another, perhaps Finney's constant insistence upon evangelism and the saving of souls was the salvation of the college as well as many of its students. In the Civil War, Oberlinites were interested not so much in preserving the nation as in the opportunity it afforded to destroy slavery. Having aided in civilizing the Middle West, and in saving Kansas, Oberlin found in Reconstruction the prospect of converting and puritanizing the South. Its energies went chiefly into the work of the Freedman's Bureau and in negro education, and its leaders made no apologies for their support of the Republican party while carrying on their official duties.

This work is unusually free from misstatements of fact, typographical errors, or rank prejudices, which sometimes mar historical works. The chief defect seems to be the long detailed narration and description of student life and activity contained in the fourth book. To many, no doubt, these chapters will appeal, but to others they may prove a strong incentive to lay the second volume aside before they reach the significant concluding chapter in which is told the story of Oberlin's progress towards orthodoxy and "respectability" and of the nation's acceptance of many of Oberlin's peculiarities as desirable and proper. The workmanship expended upon these volumes is excellent and this includes footnotes, bibliography, index, paper, printing, and proofreading. A more attractive binding might have been in order. Oberlin is, undoubtedly, fortunate in its historian and its history.

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