

The Diary of A Public Man, An Intimate View of the National Administration, December 28, 1860 to March 15, 1861, and A Page of Political Correspondence, Stanton to Buchanan. Prefatory Notes by F. Lauriston Bullard, Foreword by Carl Sandburg (Chicago, Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, 1945, pp. xi, 117. \$10.00.)

This little volume is pre-eminently a fine book. Its design and typography are due to Norman W. Forgue, the hand decorated paper employed for binding was made by R. Hunter Middleton, the typefaces used are Linotype Baskerville and Monotype Ultra Bodoni, and the edition was printed at the Norman Press on Cortlea ivory paper. The number of copies was limited to 500, apparently, designed particularly for Lincoln collectors. It is a beautiful production, and each copy is enclosed in a protective slip-case.

Carl Sandburg in his brief foreword declares the book "has history and mystery." Bullard in his prefatory notes does not attempt to identify the "Public Man," but does tell us quite a little about the *North American Review*, in which the "Diary" first appeared, and about its editor, Allen Thorndike Rice, who refused to reveal the author. Facts about the period covered by the diary and about prominent men are given. Nine letters of Edwin M. Stanton to James Buchanan written between March 14, and July 26, 1861, are included. They contain very pessimistic predictions about the Lincoln administration and items that would "cheer or gratify" the former President. Like the "Diary," they had been published in the *North American Review*.

The whole procedure leaves one feeling as though he were all dressed up with no place to go. We do not learn the identity of the author or to what extent the contents are trustworthy. In fact, historians need to be warned that a fairly good case can be presented for forgery. One will not, however, be harsh with anyone for not producing the name of the diarist, indeed, Mr. Bullard suggests "if this 'Diary' is in fact a fake, it has full right to be pronounced an—almost—perfect crime." Perhaps the volume was intended to stimulate the search for the missing author, or to induce Professor Frank Maloy Anderson to publish the result of his study. It was unfortunate his findings could not have been included.

The "Diary" is "a series of extracts" supposedly written between December 28, 1860, and March 15, 1861. It contains very interesting and provocative stories, gossip, and incidents, which presumably passed through Washington political circles just before the outbreak of the Civil War. There is just enough to whet the appetite, and to give one a vivid idea of the perplexing problems which confronted Lincoln as he came into the presidency.

The solution of the mystery, the identity of the author, can become a lifetime passion or a side issue for Lincoln collectors, college professors, or anyone intrigued by the search for truth.

Some of the Earliest Oaths of Allegiance to the United States of America. By Nellie Protsman Waldenmaier. (Privately Printed, 1944, pp. v, 93. \$3.50)

Nellie Waldenmaier is first and foremost a genealogist, and as

such her approach to a discussion of oaths of allegiance to the infant revolutionary state colors the materials with which she has dealt. She has not distorted anything she has used, nor has she misrepresented anything. Her introduction and text, however, are too summary and too disjointed to be very useful to the historian. Her work is little more than a brief survey of the various oaths (not only to the United States, but to various offices as well of which certain men were then the incumbents) taken in the three years prior to 1779.

Fifteen pages are devoted to explanation; the remainder of the book is a list of signers of oaths. The lists are compiled from the originals in the National Archives and the Library of Congress. The compiler's chief interest seems to be in providing a list of men hereby proved to have participated in the American Revolution. She has included some interesting facsimiles of various types of oaths. As a handbook of signers it is very useful; as a historical study of the oaths and their background, it falls short of the ideal.

It is the genealogist primarily, not the historian, who presided over the compiling and writing of this book. Her enthusiasms sometimes overreach themselves: "The usefulness of the material in these oaths in genealogical research far exceeds the bare fact that a given individual 'took and subscribed' the oath on a certain day. The existence of a man's name in this roster of patriots is indisputable evidence that he was a person trusted by the Continental Congress."

The author, too, has a tendency to see nothing but high resolve and noble purpose in the actions of the men of the American Revolution. In her mind they *all* took oaths because of idealism and not to ensure holding a post. To her "They are unequivocal endorsement of the action of the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence and for that, if for no other reason, they are deserving of our most respectful attention." Sidney George Fisher, to mention but one of many, would undoubtedly take exception to this viewpoint. The inclusion of the name of Benedict Arnold, as an early signer of the oaths now reposing in the National Archives, seems to shatter Nellie Waldenmaier's thesis at the outset.

Robert H. Irrmann

Climate of Indiana. By Stephen Sargent Visher. (Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, c. 1944, pp. 511. \$4.00.)

Encyclopedia of Indiana Climate might have been the title given to this volume, for it is very inclusive. It treats not only the major topics, but it analyzes them into their more minute parts and describes these smaller subjects. For instance under precipitation the following divisions receive attention: seasonal, monthly average, weekly average, daily, and hourly precipitation. Under climate there is a chapter describing the "Climate of Seven Legal Holidays." Large amounts of statistical data are included. Scattered through the five hundred pages are 486 maps and charts and 81 tables. Consequently, it is quite likely that it will be used as a reference book rather than as general reading. In many parts it is very interesting, in others somewhat heavy and dull.

The work begins with a summary, followed by four chapters on