

by the Irish Land League. In the meantime, individual land holdings became larger, less crowded dwellings were available, wages of laborers slowly increased, and the percentage of paupers slowly declined.

The author has produced a veritable storehouse of evidence to support his conclusions, and has performed a useful service in placing the Irish immigrant in a perspective which shows the relationship between his presence in America and his absence from his origins. Schrier's use of interviews with people who saw members of their families embark for America and his extensive employment of Irish and English newspaper files and governmental documents give the reader confidence in his scholarship. The bibliography and full appendix should be very helpful to future researchers in the field. Introductions and summaries for each chapter are fortunately of superior quality, since the multiplicity of evidence used by the author is occasionally tedious.

The reader of this book may wish that Schrier had included information about the migration of the 1840's in his book since he frequently refers to that period, and 1850 does not seem to be a logical point of departure. The introductory chapter might have presented a more complete political background for this predominantly cultural study. This reviewer believes that the 222 letters noted on page 196 scarcely make a "substantial and representative collection," and is not thoroughly convinced by Schrier's evidence on pages 191-192 from which he concludes that the majority of all letters containing money orders received by the United Kingdom were destined for Ireland.

The author appears to have worked exhaustively in the area prescribed for his study. The evidence is presented carefully and convincingly, and the book will be a useful addition to library materials pertaining to national groups in the United States.

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Henry Adams: The Middle Years. By Ernest Samuels. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958. Pp. xiv, 514. Appendix, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$7.50.)

Henry Adams, in addition to being an historian, was one of the best biographers of the nineteenth century. As such, he had pronounced opinions on this form of literature, and once wrote, "The trouble is that any truthful biography must always define the hero's limitations" (p. 193). Certainly Ernest Samuels in *The Middle Years* has followed Adams' own views on biography and has written an honest story of a remarkable man in a not so remarkable age.

The middle years of Henry Adams comprise the period from 1877 to 1890, during most of which Adams and his wife lived in the center of a select Washington society. It was a very productive time for Adams when he wrote such works as the biographies of Gallatin and Randolph, two novels, and his *History of the United States*. At the same time, Adams led a crowded social life, took time off for travel abroad, and was able to give attention to the latest political, literary, and scientific events.

All his activities and successes notwithstanding, the reader cannot find in this portrait of Henry Adams a happy man. The middle period in Adams' life ended in tragedy—the suicide of his wife—but even before that event, there is seen a pervading sense of disappointment and frustration. The reasons for Adams' lack of satisfaction are clearly shown by the author in his analysis of the character of Henry Adams, who perhaps was a man who could neither live in or with his times. For Adams and his associates, there was much that was wrong with contemporary America. They had fought in the anti-Grant struggle of the 1870's and, having failed in it, some of them, particularly Adams, had come to regard politics with disgust. He could not help thinking that America was changing for the worse, and came in time to question democracy itself. His writings generally distressed him, possibly because the longer he continued, the less he found to support his theories for a "scientific" history.

As Samuels shows so well, Adams possessed values, those of style and taste, morality and family, which seemed out of place in the late nineteenth century. The reader is led to the conclusion that Henry Adams had unrealized ambitions, and that he saw no honorable and satisfactory avenue by which he might attain them. So he remained on the sidelines, the cynic and critic and at the same time the constructive scholar of much of America's past. In his own words and thoughts he expressed pessimism and irony, but withal possessed a lingering optimism and faith.

The Middle Years is a much needed biography, supplementing in excellent fashion the author's admirable *The Young Henry Adams*, and filling in much that is missing in *The Education*. It is more than the life of one man; it presents the plight of many intellectuals in America who feel themselves both attracted and repelled by the world outside the library and who stand on the sidelines knowing that their idealized hopes for their nation can never have reality.

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Robert F. Erickson

Altgeld's America: The Lincoln Ideal versus Changing Realities. By Ray Ginger. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1958. Pp. 376. Bibliography, index. \$4.95.)

Through a penetrating analysis of the men and events in the history of Chicago during the decades from 1885 to 1905, sometime Hoosier Ray Ginger tells the story of the testing of American ideals at the turn of the century when the Lincoln ideal of the dignity of man and equality of opportunity came face to face with industrialism and the struggle for private fortunes. Here, in microcosm, is the whole struggle of free enterprise against monopoly, of labor against capital, of democracy against bossism, of human rights against property rights. Mr. Ginger writes tautly and with objective compassion about people, great and small, who are caught up by forces they cannot control—the Haymarket anarchists; the women and children, and men, too, who worked in the packing houses and sweat shops, hired and fired as though they were automatons; and the ward bosses who accepted bribes from utility companies.