

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.

Butler University

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.

He writes about the merchants, industrialists, lawyers, and street railway magnates—Field, Pullman, Armour, and Yerkes; the politicians and boodlers—Carter Harrison, "Hinky Dink" Kenna, and "Bathhouse" John Coughlin. They and others did what they thought best for themselves and saw no conflict between their interests and those of the public. They sweated their employees but contributed generously to provide Christmas baskets for the poor; they wrested favorable franchises from the city council and, at the same time, established the Chicago Art Institute and patronized the Symphony.

Mr. Ginger shows the other side of the society of the time, too—he tells of those who fought, and sometimes won, the battle of the individual against increasingly powerful and impersonal economic forces: of Jane Addams and Hull House, Florence Kelley and factory inspection, Clarence Darrow and the reform of the criminal law, Thorstein Veblen and philosophic condemnation of conspicuous consumption, Theodore Dreiser and Upton Sinclair and literary social criticism, Peter Altgeld and pardon for the Haymarket anarchists, and William Rainey Harper and Chicago University.

But, for Mr. Ginger, there is no absolute black and white; as he finds good and bad in his villains, so he finds clay feet on his heroes. Darrow the champion of labor took legal fees from business tycoons, Veblen and Sinclair criticized the status quo so savagely that they are looked upon as mad dogs, and Jane Addams accepted contributions from the very men who refused to support social legislation advocated by her.

In conclusion, Ginger finds that while American society has changed in many material ways in the last fifty years, yet there has been little spiritual change. The struggle to make money and get ahead in the world still goes on, and Ginger feels there is no other goal for the modern American. Ray Ginger's volume is more than a competent history of an era in one city; it is a call for Americans to understand themselves today by taking a long, sharp look at their past.

MacMurray College

Walter B. Hendrickson

American Labor Unions and Politics, 1900-1918. By Marc Karson. (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1958. Pp. xv, 358. Notes, bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

To the regret of Republicans and businessmen in recent years, labor unions in the United States have participated more frequently and more earnestly in both national and state elections. They have usually followed the advice of the deified first president of the American Federation of Labor, Sam Gompers, to support labor's friends and defeat its enemies. From 1900 to 1918 "friends" always seemed to mean Democrats. The Socialist party or an independent labor party did not receive the support from labor unions which these political groups enjoyed in many other democratic countries, such as Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries, and Australia. The author of this volume, a student of Harold Laski, has endeavored to analyze the reasons for continued opposition to independent labor parties in the United States