

political and military. Ferri Pisani felt that President Lincoln was a benevolent giant "without brilliance," quite overshadowed by his quick, witty, shrewd Secretary of State, William H. Seward. General Pierre Beauregard, General Albert S. Johnston, and the aging General Winfield Scott, leaning on the arm of General George B. McClellan, were observed at their military headquarters and are given fascinating and incisive characterization.

The author had interests in America other than its people. He commented upon American business, transportation, geology, military affairs, the armies of North and South, politics, education, and religion. In addition Ferri Pisani was something of a philosopher. He felt that America in 1861, like France in the eighteenth century, was in all probability going quickly in the direction of military dictatorship and that the new order was to be in the hands of what he called a new class of people in America, the West Pointers. This philosophical observer also discoursed upon rationalism and deism and on what seemed to him to be their erosive effects upon Protestantism in general and the Congregational and Unitarian churches in particular.

Ferri Pisani was wrong about a great many things. Lincoln was not overthrown by Seward. A Napoleonic regime did not succeed Washingtonian democracy following a collapse of the Northern armies. General John C. Fremont did not play the role Ferri Pisani seemed to imply he might, nor did he run for president against Lincoln in 1860, as the translator points out. An historian could indeed find many points of difference with the writer in fact and in conclusion, but nevertheless Ferri Pisani's letters offer a great deal to the modern scholar and general reader. His gloomy view of many Washington politicians has only too authentic a ring. His barbed comment upon the American "genius for publicity"—Barnum-style—certainly is a recognizable facet of American life, and his characterization of many Americans as original, inventive, and daring calls to mind Frederick Jackson Turner's evaluation of them at the turn of the century.

Altogether this volume contains a fascinating collection of impressions of mid-nineteenth century America, and it affords important insights into many sorts of questions and problems which the professional historian might well utilize, or at least take into account. Professor Joyaux has performed a service in making this fairly objective, shrewd, and humorously critical observation of America available to a larger number of Americans who should be after all the ones most interested in it.

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Mary Steele Owen

Portrait of America: Letters of Henry Sienkiewicz. Edited and translated by Charles Morley. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959. Pp. xix, 300. Frontispiece, index. \$5.00.)

The English translation of nearly all Sienkiewicz's letters from America will be welcomed by students of Polish literature and also by those interested in a portrayal of America in the 1870's by a prominent European writer. Although, as Charles Morley points out in his intro-

duction, some of these letters have previously been translated, the present book is their first comprehensive publication in the English language. An excellent introduction provides most of the necessary background, while the letters themselves give the reader ample material for thought and reflection. The author of the *Quo Vadis* was undoubtedly a shrewd observer and many of his remarks have validity even today. Sienkiewicz analyzes the contrast between the American and the European forms of democracy and enumerates the three elements characteristic of America: respect for labor, absence of an educational gulf between the upper and the lower classes (a gulf so prominent in Europe), and a certain uniformity of manners. Although conditions have changed a good deal since the late nineteenth century, some of these characteristics may still strike European visitors in the mid-twentieth century. Many European visitors would agree with other observations made by Sienkiewicz, for instance those on New York, American cuisine, or the position of women in the United States.

Sienkiewicz discusses, of course, also the America that is gone forever, the America of the wild West, of the open spaces, and of the pioneering frontier. But even in this respect his remarks compare favorably with those of many other nineteenth-century travelers. Perhaps the writer, coming from a predominantly agricultural country like Poland, had a better understanding of and more sympathy for agrarian America than such representatives of highly urbanized societies as Dickens or Tocqueville.

Professor Morley has done an excellent job of translating and editing the volume. One might disagree with his method of anglicizing Polish first names—I would prefer *Henryk* to *Henry*—but this is but a minor point. The book is a timely and useful publication which serves well its double purpose of giving us an insight into Sienkiewicz's personality on the one hand, and on the other, a portrait of America as it existed over eighty years ago.

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Piotr S. Wandycz

History of the Progressive Party, 1912-1916. By Amos R. E. Pinchot. Edited by Helene Maxwell Hooker. (New York: New York University Press, 1958. Pp. xii, 305. Appendices, notes, index. \$7.50.)

Among the Amos Pinchot Papers at the Library of Congress are two unfinished drafts of a history of the Progressive party which Helene M. Hooker has rescued from neglect by a skillful editorial job. Pinchot did not attempt to write a comprehensive study of the party but to present chronologically arranged recollections of events which were still subject to controversy a generation later. A comparison of judgments expressed by Pinchot during the Progressive era and in the early thirties—when his projected history took shape—indicates that the passage of time improved his perspective. No drastically new interpretations of the third party movement are proposed in Pinchot's study; Roosevelt, LaFollette, and others are described charitably but in familiar terms.