

*Corporation* George J. Kuehn gives primary emphasis to the types of business corporations which developed in Wisconsin. He discusses their legal and constitutional status and governmental activities regarding their promotion and regulation, principally from the 1830's through the 1870's.

Mr. Kuehn has done laborious and detailed research concerning Wisconsin business corporations for the period indicated. Moreover, he has at least made a reconnaissance of Wisconsin's political history and development for the period of his study. He makes clear that the question of the appropriate relationship between business and government and the issue of "honesty" in such relations were not something new when these and related questions were brought to state and national attention by Governor Robert M. LaFollette and the Wisconsin Progressives early in the twentieth century. Mr. Kuehn's tabulations and summaries about the various business corporations are useful, and he shows beyond doubt that the provisions of early business charters were generally loosely drawn and often drafted or approved by legislators directly involved in their success or failure.

A pioneering study in an important area, however, is seldom as effectively done as is desirable. This volume suffers from poorly digested and organized massive detail. It is difficult reading and is unduly repetitious. Its main ideas are often hard to follow. Page nine overlooks the two banks chartered in Indiana in 1814, apparently because the years 1800-1809 were mistakenly used as the period during which Indiana was a territory. This book was apparently inadequately edited and developed. Nevertheless if its deficiencies are recognized, scholars can still find much of significance in it.

*Indiana University*

Donald F. Carmony

*A History of American Labor.* By Joseph G. Rayback. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959. Pp. vi, 459. Bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

The literature of the American labor movement is immense, but few general histories of American labor have been published. Of these, the Commons four-volume *History of Labour in the United States*, completed in 1935, is the most comprehensive and the most scholarly. Since the publication of the Commons history, there have been only two general histories of American labor: *American Labor History* by Foster R. Dulles, published in 1949, and the current work by Professor Rayback.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I, "The Colonial and Revolutionary Era," includes a description of the colonial economy and an examination of the kinds, sources, and conditions of colonial labor. Colonial experiments in regulating the conditions of labor are described, and an interesting account is given of labor's role in colonial politics and its activities in support of the Revolution.

Part II, "The Transitional Era," relates the story of American labor during its formative years. It begins with a description of significant changes in the nature of economic enterprise following the

Revolution and traces the development of permanent trade unions from these early beginnings to the time of the formation of the American Federation of Labor in 1886 and its successful struggle with the Knights of Labor. The fragile nature of unions during this period, union efforts to remain organized in the face of hostile government action and the activities of employers' associations, and frequent union involvement in politics and reform movements are well presented.

"The Modern Era" in the history of American labor begins around 1890 and for the next fifty years the American Federation of Labor was the dominant labor organization. It was not, however, an inevitable success. Professor Rayback describes its efforts to establish a strong and stable labor movement based on the principle of craft unionism and economic action. From the beginning it was involved in problems with the Knights, with "recalcitrant" trades, with Socialism, with strike failures, and with a depression. From these early struggles of the newly formed federation through the trying days of the great depression, the New Deal period, and the rise of the CIO, Rayback presents an interesting description of events. He examines the factors leading to the formation of the CIO and the period of struggle between the two federations; he concludes with an analysis of the reunion movement and the efforts of labor to maintain New Deal and Fair Deal achievements in the Eisenhower administration.

Throughout the volume Professor Rayback has viewed the evolution of the labor movement against the background of American economic, political, industrial, and social history. Especially worthy of comment is the section on the Colonial and Revolutionary era. Though the book as a whole contains little that is new in the way of interpretation or analysis, it is a well-written and interesting history of American labor from the colonial period to the present day.

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D. W. Murphy

*Religion and American Democracy.* By Roy F. Nichols. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959. Pp. vii, 108. Notes, bibliography. \$2.50.)

Although its subtler processes remain to be explicated, a by-product of the religious revival of our times is a burgeoning interest in the history of American religion. Not only have monographs on this subject appeared with greater frequency, but increased attention to religious expressions of economic, political, and social aspirations suggests the redress of a long standing imbalance in American historical writing. Somewhat belatedly, members of the craft seem to be awakening to the realization that the institutional divorce of church and state has not meant the rigid separation of what our ancestors liked to call the sacred and the profane. *Religion and American Democracy* is another witness to this alerted appreciation.

Dean Nichols has restricted his treatment to the period prior to the Civil War, but he still has uncorked a very large subject. That he has drawn out only a few drops is accounted for by extraneous limita-