

to medical history. Since little is known about the industrial and labor history of western Maryland, a letter which deals with the activities of a large Maryland corporation during the second half of the nineteenth century is very informative. This letter was edited by Richard Lowitt under the title "Frostburg 1882: German Strikers vs. German Strikebreakers." The last article in the *Report* is a letter by Wilhelm Rapp relating his experiences in Baltimore from 1857 to 1861. This letter was translated and edited by Alice H. Finckh.

The articles in the *Twenty-eighth Report* represent painstaking care on the part of the contributors. Through this publication the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland has made available a scholarly work for any shelf of American history.

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Sheridan the Inevitable. By Richard O'Connor. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953, pp. 400. Notes and index. \$4.50.)

Richard O'Connor has presented a picture of General Philip H. Sheridan in which he neither hesitates to point out the General's shortcomings, nor tends to exaggerate his subject's virtues or talents.

Presenting the story chronologically, the author has used other material liberally to round out his picture and make a background against which his central figure stands out. By so doing, he has made his biography the more interesting. The important events in Sheridan's military career follow a brief description of his boyhood and youth in Somerset, Ohio. His eight years on the frontier, his service on the staff of Halleck, his brief and brilliant command of a Michigan cavalry regiment, and his even more brilliant command of an infantry division are related as they occurred and as a sort of preface to the final flowering of Sheridan's military genius. His destruction of Jeb Stuart and of the effectiveness of the Eastern rebel cavalry, his work prior to Cold Harbor, and his abortive raid toward Charlottesville are next related; the stage is set for the Shenandoah Valley campaign. From the valley, it is an easy step to Sheridan's

classic, almost solo, destruction of the gallant Confederate Army of northern Virginia. In rapid succession came his direction of Reconstruction in Louisiana and Texas while bluffing the French out of Mexico; his command in the Indian campaigns; his work after the Chicago fire; and his command of the United States Army.

If the author is liberal with his background material, he is not necessarily critical of it. He has accepted that school of thought toward the war and its aftermath which persistently ignores that the first troops were raised and the first shots fired in the South—which ignores the fact that Lincoln's policy was sabotaged as much by Southern intransigence as Northern excess. O'Connor falls into this error because he uses too many secondary materials for his background and not enough primary sources; this distorts the picture the author presents and does an injustice to Sheridan. No politician, Sheridan determinedly carried out his duty to his country as he saw it. Accepting his sources without question, O'Connor makes no allowance and is quick to condemn. He nowhere makes mention of Sheridan's oft-repeated devotion to the principles of republicanism as opposed to authoritarianism or monarchism.

The reader will profit if he approaches the book with the intent to gain information about the General without accepting the author's judgment of it.

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