

to the name of nearly every historian mentioned and of persons, subjects of their writings. Von Holst and Lawrence Gipson escaped the indexer. Some subdivisions of the table of contents are in the index, some are not. The names of magazines and journals and of historical associations are included and the name of but one book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. These slips are trivial and this reviewer is more than ready to underwrite the blurb of the jacket flap: "For the teacher, student, or lay reader of American history, there is no other single volume anywhere which will direct, stimulate, and enlarge the appreciation and perspective of American historical writing in the fashion of *The Writing of American History*."

Rutgers University

Irving Stoddard Kull

History of Martin County, Indiana. By Harry Q. Holt. (Paoli, Indiana: Published by the author, 1953, pp. ix, 366. Illustrations and index. \$5.00.)

This latest volume in the series of Indiana county histories deserves to rank with the best of those previously published. Martin County, somewhat off the beaten track of early Indiana history, naturally lacks the glamour and romance that characterize the histories of those counties that actively passed through the French and British periods. Harry Q. Holt has nevertheless produced an interesting and detailed study that furnishes Martin County with the most up-to-date history of any county in Indiana.

Fluent writing and attention to detail are such an integral part of this study that the reader immediately has a feeling of confidence in the scholarly ability of the author. An intense desire for accuracy and completeness is evident on every page, often to the extent of listing insignificant material. As commendable examples of the author's research one can list his diligence in attempting to find the origin of the county name, his well-drawn account of the difficulties involved in locating a permanent county seat (it changed nine times, a record in Indiana), and his interesting account of the attempts to increase or decrease the county area, even to recent attempts to dissolve the county altogether. His striving for completeness, however, sometimes clutters the text with unimportant

details, incidentals, and names. A few examples might include the mention of the first two persons to bring cook stoves to the county, the first owner of a radio set, the first owner of a riding cultivator, the first owner of a television set, and the like. Also somewhat out of place is the list of every case to come before the circuit court in November, 1951, complete with names and decisions, as an example of the type of cases the court now handles. The forty-six persons named in the twenty-three divorce cases listed will probably not relish their new-found fame in a county history. Mention of the number and types of cases in each category would no doubt have sufficed to prove the author's point. Holt's own realistic attitude, however, is expressed in his preface, where he notes that "many facts and incidents are included not so much because of their present importance, but more so for their value for the use of future generations."

Holt is at his best describing the early social and family life of county inhabitants. Here again his exactness and attention to facts are impressive. He does not write in generalities, but in specific detail, as if he personally had lived through the period. A nice touch is his remark on one occasion, for example, that he (the author) "still remembers when he used an outside pole ladder to reach his bed in the attic of a log cabin." Especially interesting too is his chapter on customs and traditions. He begins with the remark that "Martin County is probably more prolific in customs and traditions than any other county in Indiana," and then sets out to prove his point by listing forty-four local superstitions together with a series of fascinating tales and legends that "have been told so often they are regarded almost as true."

Only a few minor criticisms are in place. A very fine job of proofreading has resulted in an almost flawless text. The reviewer noted only two places (pp. 186 and 313) where minor changes might have made a small improvement. Furthermore, Chapter VI is correctly titled "Highways and Transportation" in the table of contents but unfortunately abbreviated to a misleading title, "Highways," in the text itself. More significant perhaps is a misinterpretation of government land policy. In discussing the sale of government land in Martin County (p. 23) the author notes that most of the land was sold under the terms of the Land Act of 1820. He then declares that the government was extremely lenient

toward purchasers inasmuch as its policy provided for a small down payment and several years of credit. It would have been in place to note that the 1820 law did away with credit and insisted on cash on the barrelhead. Finally, the book ends rather abruptly with a very brief account of Crane Naval Ammunition Depot which now occupies a sizeable portion of Martin County. A longer section devoted to the Crane Depot would have been an improvement to an otherwise excellent text.

These few criticisms detract nothing from the excellence of Holt's work. His *History of Martin County* is a valuable contribution to the local history of Indiana.

Evansville College

Orville J. Jaebker

The Catholic Indian Missions and Grant's Peace Policy, 1870-1884. By Peter J. Rahill. (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953, pp. xx, 396. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. Cloth, \$5.00; Paper, \$4.25.)

The Catholic Indian Mission Bureau has found a good historian. In the first chapter of this book the Rev. Peter J. Rahill treats of the Catholic Church's traditional solicitude for the Indians. In the second chapter he records the not always successful measures adopted by the government in the days of President Ulysses S. Grant in behalf of the Indians and the drawback of not having an effective Catholic agency at Washington to press the Catholic claims in the Indian mission field—a drawback that gradually led to measures to offset it. From chapters three to seven the author deals with the founding and organization of the Catholic Indian Mission Bureau; of its financing; of the criticisms of it from some of the bishops and missionaries, but especially from James A. McMaster, the editor of the New York *Freeman's Journal*; of its operations among the Sioux of Dakota, especially of the two earliest and typical missions of the Benedictines from St. Meinrad Archabbey; and, finally, of the expansion of its activity consequent to the abandonment of Grant's so-called Indian Peace Policy, which hitherto had restricted its operations. In an epilogue, Rahill sketches the course of events from the complete setting aside of Grant's peace policy till