reviewer, affected the literary aspects of the book. Mr. Link’s narrative treatment makes for clear exposition at the expense of dramatic appeal; his style, while lucid, is a plain one with little or no use of metaphor, which advances in a sober, steady cadence. This kind of writing makes for easy reading and quick understanding, but also, in an extended work, it can skirt dangerously close to dryness. There is also present in the writing an undue dependence upon overworked expressions; fewer appearances in the future volumes of falls from grace, pressing concerns, wraths that are aroused, and devotions that are dog-like will make for more effective prose.

In summary, one can say, on the basis of Mr. Link’s first two volumes, that here is the Wilson biography of our times. While it has its shortcomings—as what scholarly work of such scope does not?—as an example of good, solid historical writing it testifies impressively to the author’s diligence, seriousness of purpose, and technical skill. It is a good example of the learned life-and-time biography so frequently produced today by American historians.

Indiana University

William M. Neil


Here is a factual account of what happened to objectors to war when the United States entered the first World War in 1917. The lynchings, the strong-arm police methods, the hysterical trials, the grossly unfair sentencing by such judges as the late Kenesaw Mountain Landis—all this is here in detail. There also is description of the less violent measures taken against Americans who were lukewarm to the war effort. Individuals who did not wish to buy Liberty Bonds found their doorsteps painted yellow. German-Americans and other former nationals of the enemy countries in 1917-1918 sometimes had to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States by publicly kissing the American flag.

The reason why Americans during the first World War behaved so shamefully toward objectors to the war was not simply wartime fears. The unconstitutional repressions of
civil rights during the war had a number of motives. Destruction of the I.W.W., for example, involved a great deal of anti-labor and anti-Socialist feeling; where patriotism ended and other hatreds began was difficult to say. Likewise many violations of civil liberties during the war years showed racial feeling, for opponents to war often were former citizens of East European countries with traditions different from those commonly denominated “American.” Dislike of foreign ways easily led to persecution under the excuse of patriotism. The authors of Opponents of War have moved carefully in describing the reasons for intolerance at home in 1917-1918. As a piece of social analysis the book is subtle and convincing.

It is perhaps unfair therefore to criticize it for what it has not attempted to do, and yet one cannot help remarking that despite its excellence the volume fails to attain any kind of broad perspective. Professor Fite, who carried the work to completion after the death in 1952 of his colleague Professor Peterson, has expressly disclaimed any broad approach. “Generally,” he writes, “the treatment has been more descriptive than analytical, although a considerable amount of analysis has been included.” The above sentence is revealing in more ways than one, for its passive-voice verbs reflect the book’s colorless writing. But does not its point, that Opponents of War is descriptive and not analytical, sound suspiciously like the procedure so common to doctoral dissertations, where the inexperienced student refuses to generalize and takes refuge in a recital of facts?

To ask such a question is not to belittle the research of Professors Peterson and Fite. Still, printing costs being what they are today, and with the reading public usually balking at the purchase of university press books, should not professorial writers attempt to get away from the narrow, narrative approach, and tell their readers what their subjects mean for the broad course of history? Opponents of War does make feeble efforts in that direction in the last chapter. But why not write a book that constantly puts its facts into the main stream of American history? Why not show that the sorry tampering with civil rights in 1917-1918 was part of a long history of unconstitutional acts during wartime or supposed periods of national danger? Why not, indeed, bring the sorry present into the sorry past? The book under
review does all these things inadequately, and the result is a volume of only narrow excellence—a painstakingly factual, extremely well researched, disappointingly myopic account of an important episode in American history.

Indiana University

Robert H. Ferrell

*British Emigration to North America: Projects and Opinions in the Early Victorian Period.* By Wilbur S. Shepperson. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957. Pp. xvi, 302. Tables, appendices, bibliography, index. $5.00.)

Although the subtitle of this book would limit its scope to the middle half of the past century, the author has given a rather lengthy introduction to earlier phases of British emigration, and concludes with an excellent chapter in which he evaluates emigration as a practical movement and as a theoretical issue. This is the best part of the book.

The volume deals with certain phases of immigration and the settlement of Britons in the colonies and the United States, but it is devoted primarily to emigration and the unusual importance which it assumed from the late Georgian through the early Victorian periods. During the nineteenth century almost seventeen million persons emigrated from the United Kingdom; approximately 80 per cent of them went to North America. The views of the British people as well as the government attitude on the controversial subject of emigration are discussed at considerable length.

According to the author, one of the objects of the work was to illustrate the place emigration occupied in the minds of the people. While it is primarily a narrative of events, it is also devoted to the development of ideas. Attempt is made at interpretation and explanation, but the major space is given over to a recording of information.

The first part of the book gives an account of the emigration movement as approached by farmers, agricultural workers, and the landed aristocracy; labor unions, Chartists, and unorganized industrial workers; philanthropic agencies, self-help societies, and religious bodies. The second part deals with the reaction to the emigration movement, and depicts the views of commercial men, financiers, and industrialists on the subject of the exodus of laborers and skilled workers.