“colleges in the wilderness” adopted from their prototypes only as much as they could use and adapted it to the peculiar and rapidly changing conditions of life in the New World. As in other areas of life, there was little or no central control or planning, and as a rule the founders of colleges had more faith than cash. “Education was like business . . . a strange mixture of courageous idealism and competitive recklessness” (p. 11). No wonder the mortality was so high among them. Of 174 institutions founded after 1790 in Ohio, Georgia, and Missouri, 142 were out of business by 1860. That so many of them did survive bears witness to the zeal for knowledge and the love of freedom which characterized the creators of American culture.

What used to be common knowledge among informed persons but what has been lost sight of increasingly since the advent of this scientific and technological age is that two of the principal ingredients of our culture are the Judaeco-Christian and the Greco-Roman tradition. Professor Schmidt is fully aware of this fact and peculiarly equipped to comprehend and interpret it. Among the best of the twelve chapters in the book are the second, which portrays the liberal arts college as the “child of religion,” and the third, which depicts it as a product of classical civilization. It seems to this reviewer, however, that the author does less than complete justice to either of these traditions. He appears to take a kind of impish delight in singling out the eccentricities of their representatives and to leave the impression that as a rule liberal arts students were victims of miseducation, that in fact higher education until recently was quite a joke. But for this, if it is a valid comment, he may be forgiven, for these chapters provide some hilarious reading. Besides, there was more than enough in the way each of these two traditions was distorted to make some of their representatives appear ludicrous. But the fact remains that without the motivation and content supplied by Christianity and classical culture, there probably would have been no liberal arts colleges to write about, and perhaps no other colleges either.

This is easily one of the best of the many recent treatments of the liberal arts, in or out of college, and Professor Schmidt seems to have enjoyed himself immensely in the writing of it, a scholarly and readable contribution toward a better understanding of our cultural heritage.

Valparaiso University

Walter E. Bauer


While university extension has developed to significant proportions since the late nineteenth century, the University of Wisconsin has been a pioneer in the movement. Starting in the late 1880's with institutes for farmers and teachers, Wisconsin soon added popular lectures, chautauqua-like offerings at Monona Lake, and correspondence study to her extension program. Outstanding members of the faculty, including the historians Reuben Gold Thwaites and Frederick Jackson Turner,
early gave extension lectures. Turner was instrumental in securing Richard T. Ely, the economist, to head Wisconsin’s incipient program in the early 1890’s.

At first there was much emphasis on the diffusion of knowledge to encourage enlightened citizenship. Turner thought this especially desirable because of the varied national and cultural elements within Wisconsin. But extension was also expected to augment the “prestige” of the university, encourage “campus” enrollments, and increase university appropriations.

During the 1890’s, however, Wisconsin’s extension floundered. Explanations varied: too little attention had been given to what people wanted or “needed”; the administrative machinery and methods had been ineffective; the program had been sapped by misunderstandings with local sponsors and rivals; small scale, but thorny, financial questions had developed; the faculty had given inadequate co-operation; and unstable administrative attitudes were considered a key factor by some. Critics, on and off the campus, recommended that the extension baby be allowed to die because it depleted time and resources from the important work of the university.

For about a decade extension slumbered in Wisconsin. Meanwhile, Americans took several giant steps in world politics and imperialism and reached a new high in economic prosperity and big business. Soon, thanks to the Progressive movement, “Fighting Bob” LaFollette was governor of Wisconsin and “Teddy” Roosevelt was president of the United States. Reform was in the air and enlightened citizenship seemed urgent. Governor LaFollette, himself a product of the University, wanted extension to play an important role in public affairs. President Charles R. Van Hise, though formerly hostile, now also supported it. Although various factors were at work in the form of extension, the Progressive movement certainly hastened its development.

Wisconsin formally organized an Extension Division in 1907. The diffusion of general knowledge, though much neglected, was not forgotten, but until about World War II offerings were mainly vocational and practical. They were also chiefly non-credit and sub-university level, but university credit courses slowly gained in number. The offerings were very elastic. For instance, though some programs exhorted citizens to be wary of the evils of propaganda, during World War I the Extension Division itself peddled government propaganda, most of which was inaccurate.

Since approximately World War II Wisconsin has strengthened extension’s connections within the university, enlarged its credit programs, increased its liberal and cultural offerings, and developed resident extension faculties. Its previous offerings have generally continued, but usually in a new context.

Much in this volume indicates that Wisconsin’s extension grew like Topsy. The author, a former member of Wisconsin’s extension staff in history, seems to share this conclusion. Professor Rosentreter, however, has seen more of the treetops and weak branches of the extension wilderness than he has of its roots and seedbed.

The democratic concepts which produced university extension are doubtless much the same as those which have multiplied college and uni-
versity enrollments, spawned professional schools, proliferated courses, fostered countless offerings in adult education, and the like. Furthermore, Professor Rosentreter lacks perspective in centering too much on personal differences and feuds and too little upon the issues involved.

The weaknesses of university extension have perhaps been greater than indicated by this study. Nevertheless, university extension needs to be understood in terms of broad perspectives as well as in terms of ragged treetops and passing personal conflicts. Fortunately the movement has exhibited evidences of growing strength and increasing maturity in recent years, but whether in the long run university extension represents promise or peril to American universities remains a moot question. It is reasonably certain, however, that, though a university may have educational stature without an extension division, an extension division cannot have educational stature unless it is principally an extension of certain portions of an effective and significant university.

Indiana University

Donald F. Carmony


These two books together constitute a remarkably detailed and useful guide to the early American homes east of the Mississippi. Listed here for the first time are "virtually every open house of any merit" in the region, and "for the first time hundreds of private homes whose owners, through the Guide, have generously agreed to let their homes be visited under conditions set down in each case." The authors have included some one thousand Northern and some eight hundred Southern homes, homes of great magnificence and homes of simplicity and charm, as well as restoration villages, and house and garden tours open to the public. Richard Pratt, architectural editor of the Ladies Home Journal, and his wife, Dorothy Pratt, collaborated on the Journal's "Regional Series," out of which grew the Treasury of Early American Homes and these two Guides.

These books are flexibly organized by states and by regions within states. Brief sketches of the types of homes in each state are given, and a paragraph or two is devoted to each home, pointing out what the authors believe to be its most distinguishing features, whether they be architectural or historical or both. Along with these thumbnail sketches the authors provide extremely practical information on the conditions for viewing each home, the admission fee, the name of the owner, and the location of the home. These Guides can save the traveler many hours of searching and many disappointments. The numerous photographs (black and white and averaging more than one per page) are exceptionally well chosen, and a quick glance through each Guide serves to illustrate the architectural variations from state to state, region to region.