

transcripts in the Library of Congress and in the Canadian archives for British material.

Waller's work is more than a biography of Vetch; the career of the Scot is the focus for the wider scene of intercolonial rivalries, provincial politics, and the administration of the empire. Consequently, this history is of greater value than a more narrowly treated biography would be.

There are, however, some questions which remain unanswered. Perhaps lack of material accounts for the rather skimpy account of Vetch's later years when he apparently had many influential contacts in London. Still more important, how much of Vetch's "Great Enterprise" was conceived because of legitimate concern for the empire? Or was he acting to promote the advancement of Samuel Vetch as he did in so many of his other activities? In consistently violating the Trade and Navigation Acts he did not appear to be overly concerned with the imperial interest. In dealing with Vetch's "Glorious Enterprise," Waller appears to have overestimated the ability of England to wage war in the colonial sphere. She was not in the same pre-eminent position early in the eighteenth century as she was during the Seven Years' War. Waller concludes that the eventual success of Vetch's plan, the elimination of France as a colonial power in North America, freed the colonials from the threat which had tied them to the mother country, brought on the program of imperial taxation, and thus helped institute the American Revolution. This fact, he concludes, was "the imperial irony of history." But are historical developments that inevitable?

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Alexis de Tocqueville: Journey to America. Translated by George Lawrence. Edited by J. P. Mayer. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1960. Pp. 394. Appendix, index. \$6.50.)

Since 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville has been known chiefly for his classic study, *Democracy in America*, an analysis and description that remains unsurpassed in perceptivity, lucidity, and charm. For more than a century virtually nothing was known of its background, conception, or preparation. In 1938 George W. Pierson, having discovered some of the notebooks Tocqueville kept on his American tour, published a monumental study based on them, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America*. Nineteen years later J. P. Mayer made the original texts available as part of the fifth volume of his complete works of Tocqueville. Now they are available in an English translation by George Lawrence. They comprise thirteen notebooks, some arranged topically and others chronologically, and three travel sketches covering a period of nine months from May 10, 1831, through January, 1832. The contents include notes and extracts from a variety of books, diary entries, observations and comments on American affairs, and reports of interviews, many of them given in dialogue form.

The wide range of Tocqueville's interests, his sensitivity to the people he met and to his physical surroundings, his delight in the

adventure of an American tour (especially to the Michigan frontier, Lake Oneida, Quebec, and New Orleans), and the cordiality with which he was received are all clearly evident throughout. The rapid growth of his interest beyond the original purpose of studying the penitentiary system is particularly striking. Here is the raw material on which a good many studies will no doubt be based; and much of it, even though not written for the public eye, will be read with pleasure by those who enjoy travel accounts of bygone times.

Unfortunately the editing is designed neither for the scholar nor the general reader. The introduction is abridged in translation and the bibliography omitted. Most of the footnotes are cross references to Pierson's volume and will be useless to those without it. Some are used to identify such men as Calhoun and John Quincy Adams, but less eminent persons are left in complete obscurity. Occasionally notes in the French edition are silently suppressed. Misleading paging (e.g., pp. 150-151) seems to have been determined by the compositor. The author's errors go uncorrected (e.g., p. 214, Berian for Berrien? and p. 216, Arisban for Harristown or Harrisburg?). The translation is on the whole excellent, but errors in proofreading are compounded by the introduction of mistakes that do not appear in the Paris edition. A university press has done a valuable service in publishing this English version, but it has not done justice to itself.

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William Hickling Prescott, A Memorial. Edited by Howard F. Cline, C. Harvey Gardiner, and Charles Gibson. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1959. Pp. 179. Frontispiece. \$3.00.)

To mark the centennial of the death of William Hickling Prescott the *Hispanic American Historical Review* devoted an entire issue in 1959 to the writings of the great historian. This book is a clothbound edition of the periodical, and it makes available to a wider public the essays which constitute a reassessment of Prescott and his works. While each essayist acknowledges the merits of Prescott as a historian and as a writer, at the same time he presents a critique with the benefit of one hundred years of hindsight. It is the style of Prescott which comes under most severe scrutiny. Robin A. Humphreys, in "William H. Prescott: The Man and the Historian," calls it "magniloquent." According to Humphreys, Prescott seemed to prefer the Latin for the Anglo-Saxon word and used "verdant" for "green," etc. It may be that "green" is preferable to "verdant" as Humphreys alleges, but it must be admitted that the English language would be impoverished by the complete elimination of all but a basic vocabulary of Germanic words.

The most interesting contribution, "History as Romantic Art," is that of David Levin, assistant professor of English at Stanford University. This essay alone is worth the price of the book, for it shows how the work of any writer, even the greatest, may be improved by skillful analysis and editing. Levin scores Prescott's lack of originality in phraseology, his inattention to detail. Prescott wrote, says Levin,