

museums, self-improvement associations, workingmen's projects, oratory, pamphlets, lecture series, and even common school textbooks. Edgar Richardson, writing of the relationships between the visual arts and cultural history, notes that among other deficiencies, there exist no adequate studies of American caricature and cartooning, of collectors and collecting, or even of American sculpture. Philip Jordan finds much the same situation in regard to American sports and recreation; music, theater, organized group sports, and such favorite American pastimes as gambling and card playing have as yet received little attention from the historical researcher.

Besides being packed full of ideas and information, the collection succeeds admirably in doing what it set out to do, that is, to offer suggestions for profitable research in certain selected areas of American cultural history. One should judge, in fact, that there must be a thousand suggestions here that any alert and enterprising scholar might pursue, and about half that many usable thesis topics for the imaginative graduate student. As an indication of the great potential offered by this kind of discussion of American historical research, the conference was clearly a success; we could use many more of them.

Michigan State University

Russel B. Nye

Origins of the TVA: The Muscle Shoals Controversy, 1920-1932. By Preston J. Hubbard. (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt University Press, 1961. Pp. ix, 340. Frontispiece, bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

Now in its twenty-ninth year of operation, the Tennessee Valley Authority has become an American institution. For many, however, federal development of water power resources continues to be a controversial question. As one peruses magazines and newspapers he still finds articles attacking the TVA or defending it. Within the past decade a number of important works have appeared which chronicle the early years of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Among these works are Roscoe Martin's *TVA, The First Twenty Years*, Judson King's *The Conservation Fight: From Theodore Roosevelt to the Tennessee Valley Authority*, and David Cushman Coyle's *Conservation*. Each of these contains a brief discussion of the Muscle Shoals controversy, but Preston Hubbard's book furnishes the first detailed description of this important landmark in American history. The volume is an outgrowth of a doctoral dissertation submitted in 1955 to the history faculty of Vanderbilt University. It constitutes the most comprehensive treatment of the struggle which eventually resulted in the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

History has its congruities. Demobilization following each of our major wars has been fraught with the question of how to dispose of war matériel and government properties which have come into being during hostilities. Following World War I the problem arose of what to do with the nitrate plant at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, which had been built for the production of explosives. Certainly part of the controversy involved the issue of whether the production of cheap fertilizer should be the most important objective of peacetime development of

Tennessee River resources or whether the energy of the river should be utilized primarily for generation of electric power. Yet the most important issue concerned the question of who was to control and develop the available resources—the federal government or private enterprise. Contenders for private development who wished to operate the plant at Muscle Shoals were Henry Ford, the American Cyanamid Company, and a combine of power companies.

Hubbard's account is a fascinating review of the activities of Ford and the American Cyanamid interests in relation to Muscle Shoals and their efforts to circumvent the regulatory aspects of the Federal Water Power Act. The protagonist of federal ownership, operation, and control of water power resources is Senator George W. Norris, Republican liberal of Nebraska. He is depicted as the leading advocate of federal development of the Tennessee River. Norris proposed development of the Tennessee River basin by the federal government both for the provision of electricity to the people of the valley and for experimentation in the most inexpensive methods of producing fertilizer. The position of proponents of the Norris plan was strengthened by the economic depression of 1929, and Norris' program was assured of success with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932.

Hubbard's book constitutes a well-organized discussion of TVA history and reflects a good deal of attention to scholarship and style. The reader interested in the author's sources is spared the inconvenience of turning to the back of the book since footnotes appear at the bottom of each page. An extensive bibliography is provided and bespeaks thorough research in primary material. The list of secondary publications, however, is by no means exhaustive nor does it include a single book published since 1950, although a number of significant works on TVA and related history have been published in the last decade. Thus, one does not find the works of David Lilienthal, Roscoe Martin, or the last publications of Judson King and Gifford Pinchot, to mention but a few.

Surely one of the handicaps which future generations will encounter in assessing conservation and TVA history will be its one-sidedness. It is apparent that to a very large extent sources available to the historian of the conservation fight are expressions of advocates of public ownership, operation, and regulation. One finds relatively few publications defending private ownership and control in the bibliographies of the early and more recent accounts. In TVA literature of the last ten years one is hard put to discover a single volume which is pro-private ownership of the nation's water power resources or, indeed, a volume on the history of the power controversy which is a defense of private power interests. No doubt some will take this dearth as proof positive of the rightness of the public power cause and the wrongness of the private power interests. Yet such a circumstance is not always the proper basis for such a judgment.

Preston Hubbard came by his interest in the TVA honestly, for he was born in Winfield, Alabama, during the beginning of this controversy and for many years lived in Lawrence County, Tennessee. Having heard arguments on both sides of the power question he was

determined to make a thorough and objective study of the problem once having acquired the necessary professional qualifications. He is currently serving as professor of history in Austin Peay State College at Clarksville, Tennessee. His volume constitutes an important addition to the history of the Tennessee Valley Authority and its larger setting in American political, economic, and social history. Professor Hubbard is to be commended for the writing of such a contribution and Vanderbilt University Press for having published the work.

Alaska Methodist University

Robert A. Frederick

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