

however, the merit of this publication both to the membership of the church and to the student of church history.

The story of "The Formative Years" ends with the epoch of the twenties. In "A Forward Glance," appended to the last chapter of his work, Professor Smith states that the story of the thirty years since the General Conference of 1933 would be "a tempting one for us to try to tell." It is to be hoped that the admonition to "yield not unto temptation" might be ignored in this instance.

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Rural Free: A Farmwife's Almanac of Country Living. By Rachel Peden. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961. Pp. 382. Illustrations. \$4.95.)

Father and His Town: A Story of Life at the Turn of the Century in a Small Ohio River Town. By Wilma Sinclair LeVan Baker. (Pittsburgh: Three Rivers Press of the University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961. Pp. xi, 143. Illustrations, appendix. \$5.00.)

A review should be objective, impartial, analytical, accurate, and just in order to present to prospective purchasers or readers a guarantee that the contents of a book either will or will not suit their thousand differing tastes. I confess inability to write such a review of Rachel Peden's *Rural Free* because I profess subjective kinship with every phase and facet of Rachel Peden's calendar from page one, September, to the end of the following August. I knew the land whereof she writes before mechanization, consolidation, concentration of resources, and decentralization of community and family life became oppressive; before swift facilities, utilities, and futilities had progressed to degenerative degrees. Mrs. Peden has succeeded in integrating the old with the new without significant losses.

It is paradoxical that Rachel Mason Peden—though not a dirt farm product—could penetrate the confusion of modernization and accurately find, fix, and portray processes and mores inflexibly retained throughout the Indiana portion of the Elizabethan Belt. It is remarkable that she could also, without apparent strain, reconcile super-accurate reporting with earthy facts yet never offend the most fastidious nor omit the truths of round-the-calendar farm living.

The author has a rare genius for concealing herself modestly behind the tapestry she weaves, emerging briefly with humor tart as wild grapes a week early: "If there is anything more irritating than the sound of a person eating an apple, it's the sound of him trying to eat it quietly" (p. 102); with a short sentence flatly stating a fact every farmer knows but not one in a million ever thought to put in words: "Snow changes the colors of a farmscape" (p. 142); and with tenderness that eludes analysis as in the exchange with her dog, Rose, while walking in the June moonlight (p. 312).

Consonant with the author's self-submersion in the interests of fine reporting is the emergence of Dick Peden as a man, a husband, a farmer, a father—never one, never two, never three but ever all,

and ever himself. By character, by love of the land, by quiet wit and humor, and, most of all, by Rachel Peden's appreciative understanding, he will linger in the minds of sensitive readers as the source-spring of a book too long awaited.

The things the author knows! For instance: it has been more than fifty years since my ears heard "ewe" pronounced "yo" (p. 360); that is what all of us turn-of-the-century Hoosiers called it.

And "shafts": diligent search in the big dictionary will produce "thills" as a synonym but it will not give the pronunciation required to make sense in Indiana. In Indiana, shafts are "shavvs." Thills were unknown in my youth but "shavvs" everyone knew. Buggies had "shavvs," and between them the buggy horse was hitched. Romantically, the buggy periodically repopulated Indiana. Rachel Peden knows this but does not make it obtrusive (p. 211).

Rural Free has been crafted by a pro reporter. It is restrained and understating, the better to give generations to come a heritage worth exploring. When my generation is gone, readers of *Rural Free* can glean metaphorical artifacts further to illuminate a Golden Age of Indiana's literary greatness.

In *Father and His Town* Wilma Baker has deftly avoided maudlin sentimentality and bathetic nostalgia, substituting therefor an honest picture of a typical town that refused to run true-to-type. And, without false pride or false modesty, the author makes clear to her readers that a unique personage caused the refusal.

That the unique personage was her father and thus gave her superior opportunities for observing his deeds cannot be denied; but, that her love and admiration caused her to exaggerate his importance to the town of Steubenville, Ohio, is an untenable idea—the evidence of Dohrman James Sinclair's influence is factual and enduring beyond question. And, without effusiveness, flag waving, or bible thumping, the author manages to show her father preaching a powerful sermon on sane and decent living by the rarest of all methods: precept and example.

Perhaps without conscious intent, Mrs. Baker has analyzed present problems and evils by describing the Good Old Days. She knew well that the Good Old Days were by no means all good: she neither condemns nor falsely exalts them; she describes them accurately.

And from the miasmas of metaphorical swamps of ignorance, now drained, emerge some perfumes that seem to have been lost in the fumes of Progress: the code of living within one's means, the pride of solving local problems locally, the pleasure of helping the needy or afflicted anonymously.

Recently, we have been told from highest places that we should give generously to a mammoth charity organization, and the reason stated was that increasing population had made it impracticable to solve local aid problems locally! If I analyze correctly Mr. Sinclair's philosophy, such high level dogma would have made the same amount of sense to him as saying that, whereas, the hometown general practitioner with fifty years successful experience can set properly the broken leg of a hometown boy stepped on by a small elephant, only

a high priced doctor from Washington is qualified to reduce a fracture caused by Jumbo.

Father and His Town does not contain any stuffiness. There is ample humor but it is never slapstick, cliché-tainted, nor pestilential. It leaves no sting and holds no bitterness but, on the contrary, it lurks like a happy puppy and nips one gently, unawares. Chapter 8, "Eccentric People," is a delightful package and from it I cite a superb example of finest dead pan: "The Baroness finally died, and poor Harry lived on for several years in the Massillon Insane Asylum, which, while he wasn't actually insane, seemed a more suitable place for him to end his days than in the Jefferson County Poorhouse" (p. 93).

This book will make you respect the central figure and admire the expertise of the author who projects a fine image vividly.

Grass Valley, California

George W. Busbey

An Affair of Honor: Woodrow Wilson and the Occupation of Veracruz.

By Robert E. Quirk. ([Lexington]: University of Kentucky Press, for the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, 1962. Pp. vi, 184. Notes, essay on sources, index. \$5.00.)

Beginning with an apt title and ending with a refreshing essay on sources, Professor Quirk's latest book is delightful to read. Furthermore it is a well-documented and interpretive historical account of a curious chapter in Mexican-American relations.

President Wilson's Mexican policy was both quixotic and enigmatic. His idealism led him to oppose armed intervention, yet he ordered occupation troops into Latin American nations more frequently than any other American president. And although Wilson, a former political science professor, would recognize only moral governments where the leaders ruled with the consent of the governed, he recognized Carranza, who gained power through revolution and held no elections at the time of his recognition. Quirk portrays Wilson and his secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, as self-righteous, ignorant of foreign affairs, and distrustful of the career diplomats in the foreign service. Such a situation in Washington partially explains why a small incident in Mexico became a *casus belli* and led to the occupation of Veracruz by 7,000 United States soldiers and marines.

The incident at Tampico in April, 1914, where American sailors were briefly jailed then released after an apology by the Mexican commander, is well detailed in this book. Admiral Mayo, who subsequently demanded that the Mexicans fire a twenty-one gun salute to the United States flag, fares better here than in other accounts, in one of which he is relegated to the "age of Santa Anna and the Prince de Joinville." Quirk gives us fresh insight into the character of the American chargé d'affaires in Mexico City, Nelson J. O'Shaughnessy, who saw in the Tampico affair a chance to improve his position in the diplomatic corps. Effective use of the O'Shaughnessy papers, Department of State records, contemporary newspapers, and personal