

Book Reviews

Messages and Papers Relating to the Administration of David Wallace, Governor of Indiana, 1837-1840. Edited by Dorothy Riker. *Indiana Historical Collections*, Volume XLIII. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1963. Pp. vii, 501. Illustrations, notes, index. \$7.50.)

This volume is the sixth in the Indiana Historical Bureau's series of "messages and papers" of Indiana's territorial and state governors. Companion volumes in the series cover a broader time-span, but the importance of the critical era subsequent to the Panic of 1837 undoubtedly justifies the editor's decision to confine the coverage here to the single three-year term of Governor Wallace.

The volume contains basic executive documents reflecting Indiana's efforts to cope with its responsibilities in carrying out the "mammoth" internal improvements program authorized by the 1836 General Assembly. Included are such significant papers as the governor's annual addresses to the legislature and the regular reports of three key agencies—the Internal Improvements Board, the Fund Commissioners, and the State Bank. These and similar documents have been ferreted from the extensive collection of official papers (*Senate Journals*, *House Journals*, *Laws of Indiana*, etc.) which are in the Indiana State Library. The practical value of a compilation of this type is obvious to the student who has attempted to make his way through the parent collection. The editor's footnotes—though sometimes more lengthy than the sources they are designed to interpret—are a vital part of the documentary presentation.

It is conceded that a book of governmental documents such as this will have a limited reading audience. Yet, a systematic perusal of its 501 pages will expose the reader to the kind of subtle, authentic drama that only "nearness" to historical events can bring. The plot is simple: how was Indiana to maintain financial solvency in the midst of the stringent fiscal cutback which followed the great Panic? The "Prologue" of the drama was staged back in the late 1820's when state officials became imbued with a multitude of panaceas to cope with the region's transportation problems. "Act I" saw the General Assembly, prompted by the prevailing optimism of the day, commit Hoosiers to a comprehensive internal improvements plan which in retrospect was well beyond their means. The Wallace volume contains the theme of "Act II": the confrontation with reality and the groping for methods to resolve a long chain of financial dilemmas. "Act III," in which the protagonists eventually prevail over adverse circumstances and rise from the melee with a chastened outlook on the facts of economic life, stretches out for more than a decade beyond the official tenure of Governor Wallace.

As the editor implies (pp. 47-49), this is not a drama in which great heroes have been cast. Even Governor Wallace, who was in a position to play a starring role, seems to prefer the dimmer portions of the stage. A host of secondary figures—Samuel Merrill, Nathan

Palmer, Lucius Scott, Milton Stapp, Isaac Coe, James Farrington, James B. Johnson, Samuel Judah, Noah Noble, Jesse Williams, Samuel Hanna, Calvin Fletcher, Samuel Lewis—flit back and forth without appreciably altering the course of events. Actually, it seems that it is the "Fates," personified by the Morris Canal and Banking Company, the London Rothschilds, and the New York Belmonts, who are harbingers of the action. And clearly the real villain in the whole episode is the depression which began to creep over the nation following the inauguration of President Martin Van Buren.

It is easy to criticize Governor Wallace and other officials of this era for their actions, or lack of action, in forestalling the bankruptcy which threatened the state from a dozen different directions. But, again, a careful reading of their formal arguments has a tendency to gain support for their efforts. Granted that Indiana's leaders at this time were not Lincolns, Clays, and Jacksons, it would be a mistake to dismiss them lightly. They were "good" frontier people—adroit politicians, respectable administrators, and self-trained experts in the arts of communication. They should not be indicted for failure to comprehend all of the intricacies of "high finance" into which the attempted expansion of their state's facilities inevitably led them.

Indiana University

Victor M. Bogle

Hoosier Zion: The Presbyterians in Early Indiana. By L. C. Rudolph. *Yale Publications in Religion.* Edited by David Horne. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1963. Pp. 218. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$5.00.)

Dr. Rudolph, of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, presents the story of Presbyterianism in Indiana in the first half of the nineteenth century as a struggle between Yankees and Hoosiers. The Yankees were well-educated Presbyterian ministers from New England and the middle Atlantic states who, hearing of "the mud and illiteracy and grossness of the frontier . . . felt the call . . . to do something about it," and came west to build a "Hoosier Zion—a segment of the kingdom of God" (pp. 47-48).

He has used a wide variety of sources, many in manuscript, including minutes of church sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and especially valuable reports made to the American Home Missionary Society. Judicious use has been made of contemporary books by Presbyterian ministers Isaac Reed, Baynard Hall, and John M. Dickey; of later church historians such as Sweet and Edson; of such writers on early Indiana as Esarey and Buley; and of the *Indiana Magazine of History*. Quotations from contemporary writers enrich the text, notably Hall's spicy comments; some quotations from secondary writers might have been abridged.

Not strictly chronological, the book treats in turn "The Settlers," "The Preachers," "The Churches," and "The Teaching." The preachers were sent by the General Assembly and various missionary societies, especially the American Home Missionary Society in which Congregationalists cooperated with Presbyterians. Methodist and Baptist workers, already on the ground when the Presbyterians arrived, through the homespun oratory of their lay preachers and the excitement of their