

At this rate, instead of the original estimate of a total of fifteen volumes the project will require twice that number.

Scholars will always quibble about the proper method of editing the papers of a prominent figure, but many roads lead to Rome. This volume actually tells little about the man, but it is a detailed study of the department he administered. Documents already published are simply summarized, and two out of three of the letters printed here are often inconsequential and routine epistles addressed to him. The text is preceded by an excellent, incisive one-hundred-page introduction describing Calhoun's conduct of his department and the political ramifications thereof. Many historians will agree that an analysis of an important executive department in such a crucial era is worth the effort. William E. Dodd pronounced Calhoun the best secretary of war until Franklin Pierce appointed Jefferson Davis to that post in mid-century. William Lowndes in 1819 wrote from England that his South Carolina friend was much superior to Lord Palmerston, then serving in the same capacity in the British cabinet. This period in Calhoun's career, when he was an archnationalist, has often been neglected by his biographers.

Even the informed reader will find most of the contents of this book dull. Calhoun as secretary of war was a vigorous bureaucrat in an important post—he regarded the Treaty of Ghent as only a truce in a critical struggle with England certain to be resumed at any moment. It is obvious that he was an eager beaver and that he was a man doing a job he thought had to be done; but the Calhoun papers of this period reveal little of that intriguing ambivalence of personality with which he was endowed.

In general I would question the value to the historical profession of the current re-editing of the works of Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Calhoun, particularly in view of the fact that such work has already been adequately done. In my opinion, little that is significant has been added by the tomes now pouring from the presses. The papers of important figures like Thomas Hart Benton, Martin Van Buren, and Stephen A. Douglas, were they made available, would be of far more service. Nor do these new editions shed much additional light on the fundamental question in regard to their subjects, namely "what is he to Hecuba or Hecuba to him?"

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The Larkin Papers: Personal, Business, and Official Correspondence of Thomas Oliver Larkin, Merchant and United States Consul in California. Volume VIII, 1848-1851. Edited by George P. Hammond. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962. Pp. xxix, 420. Illustrations, notes. \$10.00.)

It was just over ten years ago when George P. Hammond's first volume of *The Larkin Papers* was published. New England-born Thomas Oliver Larkin arrived at the tiny village of Yerba Buena on San Francisco Bay in 1832. The following year he moved to Monterey, the

capital of Mexico's Alta California. Before he died in 1858, Larkin had become one of the Golden State's richest and most respected citizens. During his residence there he was a hide merchant, land speculator, and United States consul at Monterey (1844-1848). In the latter capacity Larkin played a critical role during the tense days of 1846. He was rather unsympathetic with the gasconade of such noisy patriots as the Bear Flag adventurers. The practical New Englander realized that a transition from the absurdly inoperative Mexican authority to United States occupation, and administration, was but a matter of time. In light of his prominence and wide-ranging activities, one can only regret that typhoid stilled his hand at the age of fifty-six. Today Larkin's papers are a basic key for unlocking California's most dramatic decade. These years witnessed the eclipse of the land-rich and relatively content *rancheros* by the gold-intoxicated, real estate-hungry, mercantilistic Yankees: men who doubtless could have seized California without Robert F. Stockton, Stephen W. Kearney, and John C. Frémont.

Volume VIII of *The Larkin Papers* spans the years 1848-1851. In the preceding volume readers observed the initial gold seekers. In the Preface to Volume VIII the editor notes that, by mid-1848, "so fast did the change take place, so sudden was the invasion, and so great its magnitude, that not many realized what had happened or were able to cope with it." Larkin was able to do so, and his fortune rose accordingly. This is the theme of the present volume. The first document is dated October 2, 1848, the last May 15, 1851. Between these dates gold fever spread over the nation, San Francisco boomed, and California was admitted to the Union. Many a researcher will wish that "paisano" Larkin had been a more voluminous recorder of these stirring scenes. Readers are hardly aware of his role in the notable California Constitutional Convention of 1849 in which participated such "old Californians" as Mariano G. Vallejo, John A. Sutter, and Abel Stearns. These latter names do occasionally appear in the *Papers*. Only rarely, however, is there correspondence with such national personalities as Henry Clay, Thomas Hart Benton, Gideon Welles, and James Buchanan.

Too good a Yankee to waste many words on the social and political scene, Larkin devoted his records primarily to business and family matters. But notable exceptions to this habit make digging in the *Papers* a rewarding experience. For example, a letter to Secretary of State Buchanan details the quantities of gold which miners had torn from the ground. "Could you know the value of the California Placer," writes Larkin, "as I know it you would think you had been instrumental in obtaining a most splendid purchase for our country, to put no other construction on the Treaty" (p. 38). Others, however, had tasted their full measure of western adventure. As one bemoaned: "I have learned my lesson at too great price in the last ten months. Give me a very small Pile and I will leave these diggings for the Old Bay State. . . . this country is a perfect *hell* without money" (p. 329).

As in the earlier volumes, Hammond has drawn almost exclusively from Larkin documents in the Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley. This is the only really grave criticism which can be made of his genuinely outstanding contribution. As a means of

compensation, those readers who have not already done so are urged to acquaint themselves with the selectively comprehensive, one-volume collection of Larkin papers edited by John A. Hawgood—*First and Last Consul* (1962). Hawgood's work is based for the most part on material deposited in the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California, and is a mandatory supplement to Hammond's great undertaking.

Three volumes remain to be published in *The Larkin Papers*. None of the eight volumes thus far published has an index. Researchers will particularly appreciate the editor's capstone, Volume XI, for it will contain a general index and a biographical dictionary of all persons mentioned in the *Papers*.

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Prohibition and the Progressive Movement, 1900-1920. By James H. Timberlake. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963. Pp. 238. Illustrations, notes, index. \$5.25.)

Historical myths sometimes die a slow death. One myth long held by Americans and many of their historians is that prohibition was a singularly conservative measure, promoted primarily by fanatical rural drys. In this little book, a happy combination of good scholarship and good writing, James Timberlake has snuffed out this notion by finding, as it were, the proper home for prohibition. He argues that prohibition was an integral part of progressivism; indeed, it was one of the more important (and least understood) reforms of the Progressive movement. Essentially a middle-class reform, deeply rooted in the American reform tradition, prohibition cut across geographic and class lines. It was successfully stitched into the Constitution, not merely because of the astute tactics of the Anti-Saloon League, but fundamentally because it was buttressed by the moral, economic, social, and political idealism of progressivism itself.

Thus, argues Timberlake, if progressivism was founded on a belief in the moral law, so was prohibition, which sought to eliminate from commerce an article that was believed to destroy man's reason, paralyze his moral nature, and undermine the very foundation of religion and political democracy. If progressivism was an attempt to limit the power of an industrial and financial plutocracy, prohibition aimed to smash the liquor industry—one of the most corrupting branches of that plutocracy—with its intimate ties to commercialized vice and political machines. If progressivism represented a crusade for humanitarianism, so did prohibition, which held that liquor was a primary cause for poverty, crime, disease, misery, and broken homes. And, finally, if progressivism sought to elevate and improve the status of the lower classes, prohibition attempted to uplift them by banishing intemperance, believed to be of critical importance in stunting the rise of the working-man and the "Americanization" of the immigrant.

Timberlake is not so unsophisticated as to believe that all progressives were cut out of the same cloth. Prohibition appealed largely to