

Book Reviews

The Correspondence of John Badollet and Albert Gallatin, 1804-1836.
Edited by Gayle Thornbrough. *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, Volume 22. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1963.
Pp. 372. Illustrations, notes, appendix, index. Paperbound, \$3.00.)

This correspondence between Albert Gallatin, for half a century a figure of national and international importance, and John Badollet, from 1804 to 1837 a leading citizen of Vincennes, Indiana, gives a picture of affairs in territorial Indiana and the early days of statehood, as well as one of an enduring and devoted friendship. All the letters published in this volume are in the Gallatin Papers in the New-York Historical Society, the letters from Gallatin to Badollet having been returned to Gallatin in 1846 by a member of Badollet's family.

Badollet and Gallatin were both born in Geneva, Switzerland, of well-known families, and both were college trained. Attracted by the free atmosphere of America they determined to emigrate. Gallatin came in 1780. After traveling for several years he settled in western Pennsylvania in 1785 and urged Badollet to join him. The latter arrived by 1786. In 1795 the two, with three other men, purchased 650 acres and laid out the town of New Geneva, with a view to attracting a Swiss colony. In 1799 the partnership broke up; Badollet returned to his Pennsylvania farm and Gallatin, who had begun a career of public service, spent most of his time in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington. Badollet found it difficult to maintain his family although he had a position of modest importance in the region. Gallatin, who had become secretary of the treasury under Jefferson, obtained for Badollet the position of register of the newly created land office at Vincennes. He highly recommended Badollet as being of strict integrity, and having an excellent command of English. "This is the only instance of favoritism discovered during Gallatin's long service in the Treasury Department" (p. 14) and was to be amply justified by Badollet's faithful service. The correspondence begins in April, 1804, with Gallatin's notification to Badollet of his appointment. Badollet took the oath of office in Vincennes on September 19.

Badollet was full of misgivings as to his ability to cope with the duties of the office and poured out to Gallatin his problems and fears. Gallatin was too occupied with affairs of state to answer as fully, but he wrote encouragement and never lost confidence in his friend. Soon Badollet assumed a place among the more important citizens of Vincennes, being a member of the first board of trustees of Vincennes University, first president of the Vincennes Library Company, and later president of the Historical and Antiquarian Society.

Badollet's letters indicate that he soon became disillusioned about the morals of Americans. Of unswerving honesty himself, he was highly critical of the often devious methods of his fellow-citizens to rise in

the world politically and financially. At first an admirer, he soon became violently critical of William Henry Harrison and other officials in Vincennes. With his love of freedom, he could not reconcile himself to the machinations of the slavery party to abrogate the provision of the Ordinance of 1787 against involuntary servitude. He wrote that he did not approve Harrison's relations with the Indians; in fact nothing the governor did was right. In a letter to Gallatin in 1809 Harrison speaks highly of Badollet's integrity, but says that he is "extremely irritable & Pevish & altho possessed of a sound understanding he is so extremely diffident of himself & so little acquainted with the world that there is not a man on earth more easily duped" (p. 111). Previously Gallatin had written Badollet who had complained of persecution: "As to your squables & disappointment, they are matters of course. At what time, or in what country, did you ever hear that men assumed the privilege of being more honest than the mass of the society in which they lived, without being hated & persecuted? . . . When you are tired of struggling with vice & selfishness, rest yourself, mind your own business, and fight them only when they come directly in your way" (pp. 106-07). In spite of this good advice from his devoted friend, Badollet continued to write his criticisms of local persons and conditions. Gallatin, too, was critical of society, but being more a man of the world accepted it more calmly.

Along with others, Badollet believed that the Prophet was leading his group of Indians in the right direction by encouraging habits of industry and sobriety, and that Harrison's enmity toward Tecumseh and the Prophet was due to a wish to "stifle the murmurs of the Wabash Indians in relation to the late treaties and the unwarrantable means employed to effect them" (p. 195). He felt that the Tippecanoe expedition was unnecessary, as most of the Indians were entirely peaceable and the occasional outrages were the work of only one tribe, the Potawatomi. He considered Harrison a poor military leader, not, however, questioning his personal bravery. He was apprehensive of being falsely accused of communicating with the Indians. Inevitably he became involved in the squabbles over the relative merits of the Regulars under Col. John P. Boyd and the militia, and felt that the fact that he had subscribed to resolutions praising Boyd had put him in danger of physical violence. For some time after the battle he was in a state of terror regarding possible Indian attacks and criticized Harrison as having no plan for the defense of Vincennes. But fear of the Indians simmered down, and Harrison left Vincennes as commander-in-chief of the army.

Badollet's letters then focused on removal of the capital from Vincennes to Corydon and the attainment of statehood. Badollet was a member of the Constitutional Convention and served on several committees. He introduced sections having to do with education, care of the indigent, and establishment of libraries. In spite of their devoted friendship, Badollet and Gallatin met only once after 1804 when, in 1825, Badollet journeyed to New Geneva where Gallatin was then living. The correspondence ends with Badollet's last letter to Gallatin, penned in October, 1836.

It seems strange that Badollet did not mention John Cleves Symmes Harrison, son of the governor, who became receiver of the Vincennes land office in 1820 and continued in that position until 1830. Young Harrison was popular and well thought of, and perhaps Badollet found nothing in his conduct to criticize. This volume, ably edited by Gayle Thornbrough, is well introduced and annotated and fully indexed. It is of great value to those interested in the early days of Vincennes and Indiana.

Vincennes, Indiana

Florence G. Watts

Charles Evans: American Bibliographer. By Edward G. Holley. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963. Pp. xii, 343. Illustrations, notes, tables, bibliography, index. \$7.50.)

The biography of Charles Evans reads like a modern Horatio Alger story. It is the incredible narrative of a lowly inmate of the Boston Asylum and Farm School for Indigent Boys. As a nine year old, the orphaned Evans was admitted to the distinguished charitable institution "that supplied the sense of direction and training which would lead to opportunities for his life's work" (p. 3), that of creating one of the greatest bibliographical works of all times. For, in spite of "ghosts and omissions, errors and inaccuracies, complexity and inconsistency," this monumental work is often cited for praise as well as blame. From the titles in a volume for a given year it is possible to obtain "a splendid picture of the cultural, intellectual, political, and social conditions of that period of American history" (p. 320).

Indianapolis librarians, scholars, and citizens should find this biography of special interest because of Evans' connection with the public library of that capital city. In 1872, when Evans was but twenty-two years of age, he became the first librarian of the Indianapolis Public Library. In a few years he had placed it among the leading American libraries. Among his goals "was a collection of source materials for the study of Indiana history" (p. 44). His determination to make the library the depository for all materials relating to the city and state was demonstrated by his becoming a member of the Indiana Historical Society where he hoped to exert sufficient influence for the support of this venture. Evans' efforts to promote social, literary, and aesthetic culture, however, did not materialize until January, 1877, at which time the Indianapolis Literary Club was organized. The following year Indianapolis failed to reappoint its first librarian. "As the board rejected Charles Evans for personal and political spite, it turned its back on six years of almost phenomenal library progress" (p. 76). After an interval of over ten years he was again selected librarian of the Indianapolis Public Library. This appointment, however, lasted for only about three years. Fortunately, whenever Evans lost a post, his staunch supporter, William F. Poole, was usually successful in placing him in some other library. Among the libraries that Evans served were the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Omaha Public Library, Newberry Library, and the Virginia Library of McCormick Theological Seminary. In 1896 he was appointed librarian of the Chicago Historical Society.