tative cross section of population with characteristics approaching the national averages.

One strength of the work is that it is based largely on primary sources: official records and documents, personal interviews, and, especially, district newspapers. A few books, both primary and secondary, were also used. Since David Turpie, one of Colfax’ most illustrious opponents in three campaigns, wrote about these contests at some length, his *Sketches of My Own Times* (1903) could have been added to the list with profit. The author states that “gleanings from the general histories and the biographies proved valuable” (p. v) for his study, but nowhere does he cite the biographies that exist.

This reviewer wonders whether more discussion on the nature of the population that settled in the Third District would not have laid the groundwork for a fuller and livelier discussion of the issues involved in the political struggles. The author concedes, however, that studies in greater depth are still needed, and in the light of his limited purposes he has succeeded in producing a pioneering, worthwhile book.

*Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.*

Willard H. Smith


This is a book, the publisher asserts on the dust cover, in which the “standard interpretations of the pre-Civil War revolutions are significantly modified.” Notwithstanding one inconclusive hypothesis Professor Scheiber's penetrating study thoroughly justifies the statement. He leaves little doubt of the activist nature of antebellum state transportation policy. Moreover, intervention in the economy by state government during the canal era stimulated industrialization and the growth of Ohio's railroad network in the 1850s—a major formative influence upon national economic growth in the nineteenth century.

Part one treats the impetus for public works and the crucial interplay of politics and ideology on policy making and offers a traditional analysis of canal construction and financing. The obvious politicalization of canal policy, however, leads the author to suggest that egalitarian ideals were primarily responsible for the expansion of the canal system after 1825. The thesis is bold but unconvincing. Egalitarian rhetoric may have “colored” the intellectual milieu of the period (p. 93); but to demonstrate that each locality in the state felt entitled to an improvement is quite different from acknowledging
that policy was made as a result of a belief in the equality of all men and their property (p. 111). To his credit Scheiber frequently recognizes such a distinction, but can one legitimately define an "egalitarian" society as one in which "expectant capitalists" compete in a "desperate struggle" (p. 13)?

The most substantial contributions are contained in the latter two thirds of the book. In part two, which measures the direction and extent of economic change during the canal era, Scheiber significantly revises the so-called "second phase" (1840-1850) of the transportation revolution. State rate making authority caused significant alterations in commercial traffic patterns in the 1840s, prior to railroad competition of the fifties.

A shift from public to private transportation construction and the economic impact of the railroad are analyzed in the final section. Unlike decisions of the 1820s and 1830s, later policy makers turned away from public enterprise as the popular conception of the "commonwealth" declined. Instead private railroading was actively encouraged. This development clearly documents a shifting definition of the laissez faire state prior to the Civil War.

In this otherwise substantial and thoroughly researched volume there are some unfortunate omissions and errors. It would have been helpful to add county boundaries to the map of proposed improvements on page 96. Table 8.2 (p. 195) purports to show commodity trade at Portsmouth from 1833 to 1851 but includes data only from 1836. Table 8.5 (p. 204) is similarly incomplete. Perhaps the most unforgivable publishing error is the reference to Stanley Elkins as Saul Elkins (p. 32).

Humboldt State College, Arcata, Calif. 

Stephen C. Fox


Dr. Daniel Drake has been frequently compared with Benjamin Franklin, although on a reduced scale, but the editors here make clear that actually Drake molded himself after two of his mentors: Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Smith Barton. Though Rush was a rationalist and speculative thinker, which Drake was not, Drake greatly admired him as a mover and shaker in his profession. Barton was an empiricist who emphasized the need for careful observation as the first step in understanding nature's laws and an orderly uni-