pean revolutions of 1848 and 1849, will also appeal to many readers. Busch had been a theological student, and he had special interest in and was amazed by the religious practices and customs he found in America. His observations of unusual groups such as the Shakers are interesting, but equally significant are his descriptions and evaluations of more traditional religious groups. In particular, Busch’s evaluations of the German Protestant churches in Cincinnati read as if they were written by one expert in and concerned about such groups. His concern with land values and agricultural production frequently made this reader wonder if he were actively seeking a place to locate or simply adding another dimension to his account. People concerned about special locations will find a good deal about Cincinnati, a substantial amount about St. Louis, and interesting descriptions of a number of western Ohio and Kentucky areas.

Professor Binger has translated well, and his introduction and notes succinctly explain the reason for the book. The fact that no publisher or editor felt compelled to offer an English translation in almost 120 years sets a dimension of the limitations on the book’s significance. However, its appearance in English now should be welcomed by a number of audiences interested in the area dealt with and in the impressions of European visitors to the pre-Civil War United States. The University Press of Kentucky as publisher and Binger as editor-translator have provided an attractive and readable version and are to be commended. The price on a volume of modest size without visible features to increase unduly manufacturing costs bears unhappy testimony to the escalation of book prices in the present inflationary society.

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William D. Aeschbacher


Paul Carter’s study is crowded with a fascinating assemblage of American “Victorians” representing a variety of religious viewpoints. The result is a composite picture of the faith and the doubt of the Victorian age in America set within a wide framework embracing such divergent figures as Robert Ingersoll and Samuel Clemens, critics of traditional religion; Isaac Mayer Wise and Washington Gladden, modernizers of traditions; Lew Wallace and Henry Ward Beecher, popularizers of unique brands of spirituality; and Andrew Jackson Davis and Charles Taze Russell, prophets of Spiritualism and the Jehovah’s Witnesses respectively. The religious situation during the Gilded Age was complex: faith and unbelief locked in conflict.
The spiritual crisis among Americans between 1865 and 1895 was a reflection of the larger situation in western Christendom at the time. Science and scientism shook the foundations of the religious establishments; indifference and a growing distaste for supernaturalism gnawed on the churches from within. Open opposition to religion was on the rise. Yet in America agnosticism must be placed in its proper perspective, alongside the Sunday evening hymn singing in the White House led by Rutherford and Lucy Hayes and alongside the revivalistic successes of Dwight L. Moody in the cities. The Gilded Age of America was a time of religious revival as well as decay, a paradoxical age indeed.

The principal religious issues spanned a wide spectrum. With respect to the origin of man, for example, was it to be God, a gorilla, or something in between? As for man himself, was he animal, spiritual, or divine? What vision of the afterlife or immortality could American Victorians salvage? With social ills apparent to all—poverty, slums, labor unrest, glaring inequality of opportunity—how should the churches respond? In a moment of duress for all faiths in what manner ought religious people regard each other? To these and other questions many different answers were given. Carter, however, has done a commendable job of sorting the questions and the answers.

The virtues of this volume are obvious. It is useful that Carter has not confined his perspective to mainstream Protestantism but rather shows all religions encountering similar problems at the end of the last century. Sectarian groups, ethnic churches, and Judaism are too often blocked out of view in the more usual Protestant oriented religious historiography of America. This work will appeal to a wide circle of scholarship because it is not presented as historical theology but as intellectual history. In it abstractions fade, and the characters who peopled the churches or ranted against them take flesh and blood. Well chosen illustrations add another delightful note, as do the extensive annotation and bibliography in the text. This reviewer predicts that what has been said about traditional dogmas in the Gilded Age—they "fade away because they are neglected" (p. 125)—will not be true of this book.

Indiana University, Bloomington    Stephen J. Stein


This work breaks new ground with a thoroughness found in very