

neglect the tariff, and he is giving better reasons than one previously had to believe this. The same is true of the foreign policy angle. Democratic reductionism and Republican reciprocity treaties were, he argues persuasively, rival strategies both linked to the desire to remedy economic dislocation at home through trade expansion abroad, but neither strategy got anywhere. Extreme protectionists in each party undercut the reformers. The discussion of reciprocity ends on a characteristic note of anticlimax. Rebuffed by Congress after negotiating a precedent shattering reciprocity agreement with France, President William McKinley launched a new campaign for public support on the issue with an address at Buffalo in 1901. The next day McKinley was shot.

The book's most serious failure is literary. Terrill's prose is dull, stiff, and sometimes ungrammatical, whether he is at a point of high drama in his story, as on page 185—"The legislative history of the Wilson-Gorman Tariff has often been detailed, obviating the need of yet another elaborate narrative"—or at a low point, as on page 132—"Of course the Democrats opposed (as it [*sic*] had spurned the 1884 reciprocity with Spain for Cuba) protectionism, modified by a drawback system, for practical political reasons." Many specialists may welcome this comprehensive account of a major political debate, but this reviewer doubts that anyone will enjoy it.

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Political Reform in Wisconsin: A Historical Review of the Subjects of Primary Election, Taxation, and Railway Regulation. Written by Emanuel L. Philipp. Abridged and edited by Stanley P. Caine and Roger E. Wyman. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1973. Pp. xxviii, 197. Notes. \$12.00.)

It is fair to ask why *Political Reform in Wisconsin* by Emanuel L. Philipp should be republished in this format at this time. The researcher is unlikely to be satisfied with an abridgment and will want to see the original, the general reader will be bewildered, and even dedicated specialists not directly at work on the Robert F. La Follette movement in

Wisconsin will find the effort taxing. The editors insist that nowhere else "can the historian find a more detailed treatment of the legislative history of major reform bills" (p. xxvii). This will meet with widespread if weary agreement. They also assert that Philipp's book "has as legitimate a claim to being serious history as the more popular *Autobiography*" of La Follette (p. xxvii). This may have had most to do with the decision to publish.

For many years La Follette was glorified as an heroic figure who singlehandedly built progressivism into a mighty movement in Wisconsin. The editors, Stanley P. Caine and Roger E. Wyman, belong to a group of scholars, including Robert S. Maxwell, Herbert F. Margulies, and David P. Thelen—to name the most important—who have been happily demythologizing La Follette over the past decade and a half. Cumulatively their work purports to reduce the importance of La Follette by showing that far from initiating progressivism he placed himself at the head of a movement already well developed and long in the making, and once in power his reforms did not amount to much anyway. These points are precisely the burden of Philipp's book. La Follette's *Autobiography* was the seminal source for his glorification. *Political Reform in Wisconsin* clearly was a seminal source for the demythologizers, and for some of them perhaps even the origin of their initial insight. No wonder the editors claim it is history as much as the *Autobiography*.

This reviewer thinks they are right but fears the effects. The *Autobiography* led a generation of historians to identify a complex movement with one dominating personality, which was surely unfortunate. But it is a logical fallacy to assume that if one position is wrong the opposite must be the case. It does not reduce a politician's importance to accuse him of adopting issues after they had become popular and riding them to victory. This is what political leadership is all about and when executed brilliantly is evidence of political genius. There might, as Philipp (and some of the demythologizers) claimed, have been a progressive movement in Wisconsin whether or not there had been a La Follette. For better or worse it was La Follette, nonetheless, who of all the possible contenders for leadership successfully harnessed the movement to his career.