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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

185

Melville is obvious from the thirty or more  
ved. Although uneven, they are among the  
of the remainder — always excepting the  
thorne and his wife Sophia — are common-  
business correspondence, moderately interest-  
dates, etc., but with no more than an infre-  
age. Melville, the letter burner, had friends  
who inherited his papers had a passion for  
fine lines and interesting biographical in-  
it, if the extant letters are an indication, it  
it any great store of comment by the author  
ateur or second-rate writer who most often  
an explanation of his genius. The great ones  
Melville.

ly 271 letters. Of these they note:

nd two are reconstructions of fragmentary  
rity, 174 letters, have been published else-  
clusion in the present volume, fifty-five are  
he first time and forty-two are new letters

published in full provide no surprises. The  
most part, the final scraping up and pulling  
pieces. Drawn principally from New York  
also from numerous university libraries and  
only for the prodigious labors of the editors  
rs definitive. We learn from them something  
id, in a letter from Liverpool (No. 130), we  
probably had been no great shakes as a

great advantage to Melville scholars to have  
e gathered, carefully transcribed, and uni-  
d the central problems and with great per-  
solved them admirably. It would have been  
rwise. Both Davis and Gilman, professors  
e University of Washington and the Uni-  
r graduate students of the late Stanley T.  
an their studies of Melville on which their  
are based.

at, and editing the volume is an example of  
done. The introduction, although brief, is  
entitled "Melville's Hand," with its explana-  
ered in reading the author's highly indi-  
is especially interesting. The body of the  
ons, each with a succinct preface, to cor-  
isions of Melville's life, with a fifth section  
of 145 other letters not found but known  
ten by Melville is also included. Recipients  
med are identified, so also are vague refer-  
matters of historical information. A section  
the location of each letter, information re-  
and a detailed account of editorial choices

and possible variant reading of manuscripts. By placing this material in  
the back of the book instead of running it through the text the editors  
preserved a clear, readable page for the general without in any way handi-  
capping scholars. The index is well made and those who have faced the  
problem might note, as a small example of the over-all care and technical  
polish of the work, the way in which the material under the entry "Herman  
Melville" is handled.

Scholars from other areas of study who happen into the field of Ameri-  
can Literature are sometimes surprised at the scarcity of adequate bibliog-  
raphies, complete annotated editions, collected letters, and such common-  
place aids for study. Melville has been unusually fortunate in the quality  
of scholarship he has attracted, but the lack of a collection of his letters  
has been a major problem now solved in a thoroughly craftsmanlike way.  
It is a good book to have.

Saint Louis University

JAMES E. CRONIN

*History of the Catholic Church in Nebraska. Vol. I: The Church on the  
Northern Plains, 1838-1874*, by Henry W. Casper, S. J. Catholic Life  
Publications. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1960. Pp. xx, 344. \$7.50.

Just at the time this volume was being read for review, an article en-  
titled "The Church in the Midwest" appeared in *America* (February 25,  
1961). The volume at hand is a description of the beginnings, while the  
article is a statement of what has been achieved between 1838 and 1961.  
And it is an impressive achievement, though perhaps no more distinctive  
than thousands of others in the history of the missionary labors of the  
servants of the Church. In part it is simply the story of the building of  
a parish, which in itself reflects the economic and social instability of  
the human materials that are committed to the care of the frontier  
pastor. Beyond the parish comes the school, the hospital, the social service  
agency, and finally the institutions of secondary and higher education.  
The Church becomes thus, as it always has been, the creator of culture and  
the inspirer of higher levels of civilization. From such small and plain  
beginnings do great things come, because in the 19th century the prelates  
of the Eastern seaboard gambled cautiously on the Middle West.

The volume at hand is a quiet, sober, and detailed account of the  
original Vicariate of Nebraska, the territory of which is now in the dioceses  
of Lincoln, Grand Island, Denver, Cheyenne, Helena, Great Falls, Bis-  
marck, and Rapid City. It was an immense territory extending from the  
southern boundary of the Nebraska Territory to the Canadian line, and  
from the Missouri River south of Council Bluffs to Colorado on the west  
and on through Montana west of Helena. In 1923 President Monroe  
authorized Secretary of War John C. Calhoun to inform Bishop DuBourg  
of Louisiana that the United States "Government would contribute two  
hundred dollars annually toward the support of not more than four mis-  
sionaries whom he might send out besides substantial aid toward the build-  
ing of accommodations for them" (p. 3). The function of the missionaries  
was, from the standpoint of the Government, to assist in reducing the  
Indians to a civilized state. From this beginning, with various alterations,  
there has been continuous development, with a constant effort to recruit  
priests and religions, and with an inevitable shift of missionary effort

from the Indians to the white settlers moving into the Great Plains area. The Middle West of Father DeSmet was beginning to emerge and the Vicariate was established in 1850. There is, indeed, in this volume a wide range of detail and many tales of friction, as between the Germans and the Irish. Probably one of the most impressive struggles was the effort to secure the right to engage in missionary work among the Indians, which was sharply curtailed under President U. S. Grant (pp. 224 ff.). In eight out of 72 Indian Agencies religious work was assigned to Catholics, and they were excluded from the rest. Of course, such a discriminatory policy could not survive. Here there was a harsh decade of frontier struggle with Protestant efforts to exclude Catholic influence. The volume closes with the death of Bishop O'Gorman in 1874.

While Father Casper has provided us with the most complete account of Church history in this area, one may suggest a few larger or more intuitive problems. This volume is really an account of the Catholic missionary as part of the American frontier. Such missionaries are fellow workers with the priests of Latin America. The lonely priest on the unsettled land deserves the kindly recollection of the writer of local history. The religious history of the frontier is not limited to the labors of the Protestant preacher, or the Circuit Rider. In the Vicariate of Nebraska the European culture of the young priest—who was often not well trained—was placed immediately among those of his fellow-countrymen who might be there, against Indian tribes with their different languages, and in uneasy posture with many Protestants who came to Mass for want of a church service of their own. There were no blinders on history-in-the-making on the frontier. Now, one may ask: What of Turner's view of the frontier's contribution to American democracy? It would seem that Turner's frontier was too much severed from Western and European culture, and in general Turner's frontier was Protestant. It fails to recognize the Catholic contribution from Père Marquette to the end of the frontier condition. To the extent that the frontier shaped our tradition of either the republican or the democratic creed there was a Catholic ingredient that Father Casper has made plain.

University of Illinois

FRANCIS G. WILSON

*Handbook of Latin American Studies: No. 22*, prepared in The Hispanic Foundation in the Library of Congress by a Number of Scholars, Nathan A. Haverstock, editor. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1960. Pp. xiii, 378. \$12.50.

This work needs no introduction. However, the present volume of this most valuable bibliographical and historiographical aid inaugurates several very promising innovations which may well be noted. There are some changes in the structure of the *Handbook*: Latin American Language forms a section apart from the Literature division; Travel becomes a separate category; a Mesoamerican Ethnohistory is now included in the Anthropology section; the former Statistics section has been eliminated and materials in this category distributed through related sections; and more helpful sub-divisions are added in the History section. The abbreviation system has been revised in the interests of saving valuable space. Three non-American Corresponding Editors have been added to ensure coverage of Latin American materials and interests outside the Hemisphere—Bock

from Germany, Cespedes from Spain, and I contributes a short review article on Latin navia; this policy of such review articles, the series, is revived.

This volume of the *Handbook* contains s period from 1956 to 1959, with emphasis, ob time span.

*Handbook No. 22* has its sad notes. Th the enterprise carry the notation "deceased" man emeritus of the Advisory Board; Rol Hill, contributing editors for History. An the retirement of Preston E. James, since Geography section.

Saint Louis University Jc

*The Cowboy Reader*, edited by Lon Tinkle a Longmans, Green and Co., 1959. Pp. xi, 1

*Letters from a Texas Sheep Ranch*, edited by Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1959

To find cowboys and sheep herders bedded might seem to some to be as unusual as the But to those who take their history from television, the close proximity of cattle and in Texas. While it is true that the golden there was generally a decided sociological g: cowboy, money-wise many a rancher found profitable than risking only one market. In here we have some excellent primary materia West.

The editors of *The Cowboy Reader* have gi based on his own writings. It is amazing l were in autobiographies, especially when who helped make the American West. This to some thirty selections based on what th authentic and reliable sources for a true pic chosen well, and the short introductory para; stage for a true appreciation of the passa; number of sketches and plates which help en more than words ever could.

*Letters from a Texas Sheep Ranch* is a v none the less readable and informative. W written by George Wilkins Kendall betwe Kendall has been called "the greatest sheepr. In these letters he vividly describes the tri of sheep ranching in a land still subject to C of being a Union man in Texas during the dated in the 1860's; there are only a few i letters in between might have told an inter value to the history of the development of sl series is well edited and certainly a must fo of the American West.

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