

Humanities

An Illuminating Experience

Ordinarily an exhibition of 11 rare Armenian illuminated manuscripts might not cause the general public to make a mad dash to the local art museum. Owing to the esoteric nature of these ancient books their display might be expected to draw only a handful of scholars.

But the nine Gospels and two Hymnals shown at The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, Md., with assistance from an NEH grant, constitute the largest group of Armenian manuscripts in this country. Produced between the 10th and the 17th centuries, they provide an overview of major phases in the history of Armenian illumination, as well as a variety of regional styles.

The ancient kingdom of Armenia, where these manuscripts were produced, came into existence toward the end of the 7th century B. C. in southwest Asia. Extending at times from the Greater Caucasus mountain range on the northeast to the Mediterranean Sea on the west, this area marks the source of the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Aras Rivers. Throughout its long and turbulent history Armenia was a small state struggling to maintain its independence between powerful neighbors to east and west. The Armenian King Tiridates was converted to Christianity by St. Gregory the Illuminator in about 300 A. D. after which his kingdom became the first country to adopt Christianity as the state religion.

In the process of exhibiting the creations of the descendants of this ancient civilization, the Gallery's Curator of Manuscripts and Rare Books, Dr. Lilian M. C. Randall, set out to make illustrated manuscripts understandable as cultural expressions in an exhibition running from November 10, 1974, to February 9, 1975. Her approach demonstrated that a broadened humanistic interpretation through educational aids could create public understanding and interest in these elaborate and richly decorated manuscripts. Proof of the validity of this concept was the 72,391 visitors who were drawn to the exhibition.

To present manuscripts to a public which usually sees only individual "leaves" or pages of books, Mrs. Randall installed two microfilm readers in the exhibition. One machine held two full-length color films of two of the most appealing and sumptuous manuscripts, enabling visitors to feel they were turning the books' pages. By operating the machine themselves, viewers became actively involved in examining both

text and pictures.

The second Reader-Printer contained microfilm of another manuscript from which viewers could make print-outs of images on the screen before them. Some three thousand of the exhibition visitors availed themselves of this printing service. Together, the two machines enabled guests to see both text and ornamented pages of entire manuscripts, rather than only two open pages of a book.

Other visual aids that proved enormously popular with the public were a large map illustrating sites where manuscripts were produced and a 12-minute slide presentation showing views of the Armenian countryside, vegetation, architectural sites, and pages from manuscripts showing local flora and fauna. The map helped clarify the great variety of regional styles represented in the manuscripts, while the slide presentation brought the visitor closer to the country that



"The Evangelist Matthew," from the *Four Gospels*, early 17th century, paper.



"Portrait of the Evangelist John," from the *Four Gospels*, A. D. 1488, paper.



"The Rich Young Man," from the *Four Gospels*.

Prints courtesy The Walters Art Gallery

gave these books their special character.

As stated in the catalogue, "The large number that has survived despite the destruction wrought by time and man testifies to the important place they occupied in the lives of the people. The manuscripts were considered as pledges for the salvation of the donors, as imperishable treasures set in heaven, and this also explains the fact that Armenian manuscripts are rarely anonymous productions. The sponsors, as well as the scribes and the painters, wished to record their names in testimony of their pious act and so that they might be recalled in the prayers of all those who had occasion to use these manuscripts."

In addition to the devices already described, 24 luminous color transparencies mounted in light boxes emphasized the vividly colored and gilded patterns of Armenian manuscripts, as well as the great variety of decoration. These qualities were further illustrated by Armenian textiles and metalwork from the Walters col-

lection. In the exhibition's second gallery, enlargements of miniatures, appropriate literary excerpts, and a chart showing the Armenian alphabet and English equivalent sounds filled the walls.

A special impetus for the exhibition was the recently published comprehensive catalogue, *Armenian Manuscripts in The Walters Art Gallery*, by an expert in the field, Dr. Sirarpie Der Nersessian. She also authored the exhibition's Picture Book, *An Introduction to Armenian Manuscript Illumination*, which was both richly illustrated and modestly priced, thanks to an NEH subsidy. Supplementing these publications were informational handlists placed at the exhibition's entrance.

By putting the manuscripts into as wide a framework as possible through the exhibition aids discussed above, Mrs. Randall and the Gallery made illustrated books come alive in a way that could serve as a model for other institutions seeking more effective methods to display their treasures. □

T'oros Roslin: "Nativity and the Adoration of the Shepherds," from the *Four Gospels*, A. D. 1262, vellum.



Gospels of the Translators, A. D. 966, vellum, oldest Armenian manuscript in an American collection.





Focus on Lumberton

This exposé of small-town U.S.A. may not make the national splash of that other intimate area study, *Tally's Corner*, but it's a sure bet that *Focus on Lumberton*, written by 12 students from Temple University and due for limited release in September, will be the hottest item on record in Lumberton, New Jersey.

Not much happens in Lumberton. Located barely 20 miles east of Philadelphia between Medford and Mount Holly on the edge of South Jersey's Pine Barrens, the town is accessible but decidedly out of the way. And that's the way the residents like it. After 291 years on the map, the township of Lumberton—with a population of 4500 people on 13.5 acres, 80 percent of which is still planted annually with corn, cabbages and tomatoes—has taken steps to ensure that its future does not lose touch with its past. Wary of developers circling in from the west, Lumberton passed a township ordinance in February 1975 declaring itself an historical landmark district.

Until May 1974 not much thought was paid to the preservation of historic Lumberton—indeed very little was known about the locale. There was no historical society, and despite the fact that Main Street had changed little since the days of their great-great-grandparents, most Lumberton residents considered their town without distinction—just another middle-class, middle-American town. In the words of Vice-mayor Philip Yannella, "History, construed as great events, was never made in Lumberton, New Jersey."

But Mr. Yannella, known otherwise as Dr. Yannella, assistant professor of English and American Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, knew better. A study of Lumberton in fact seemed just the project for his American Studies students. For if Lumberton was and remains an undeveloped middle-class, middle-American community, it is precisely those sociological aspects that make it of historical interest.

The course subsequently named by Yannella "Rural America: Focus on Lumberton" was received with enthusiasm by the Temple University American Studies Department, recipient in 1973 of a 3-year NEH Program Grant to expand the department's on-campus study programs beyond the traditional boundaries of the University and take advantage of the rich supportive resources of the Philadelphia area.

When Dr. Yannella and the 12 students involved in

the Lumberton Project arrived on-site May 13, 1974, they had no idea how much information about Lumberton's past they would be able to secure. Their initial information was sketchy. They knew that earliest records showed settlement of the area in 1684 by Robert Dimsdale, an English Quaker and contemporary of William Penn, and that most of the buildings in town were reputed to be quite old. Their study would later show in fact that 70 percent of the structures standing in 1974 had been standing in 1876, and that 34 of them pre-dated 1820.

Reaching collective decisions on methodology, approach and modes of evaluation of data, the group—including six majors in Art, Art History, Journalism and Architecture and six in American Studies—split into study groups according to their specialized interests and knowledge. For 7 weeks they worked day and night: interviewing local folk for legends and recollections, doing architectural surveys of the 130 extant structures they found to be of historical significance, poring over yellowed county, state and township archives for maps, deeds, old court records, and newspaper notices of public auctions, social items, death notices, business advertisements, etc., that would give them the clues they needed in restructuring Lumberton's past. For most of the students this was a first exposure to the excitement of working with primary sources.

The enthusiasm and professionalism of the Temple group paid off. At the end of the eight-credit 7-weeks course the 12 students had accomplished what seems a formidable task. They had stepped in cold and proven themselves a functioning, productive, professional team. They had researched and documented in the form of a book a major portion of Lumberton, New Jersey's hitherto unstudied past. The culmination of their on-site activities was a public presentation of their findings to the town, drawing the largest crowd in the history of Lumberton. And they were instrumental in the founding of the Lumberton Historical Society and in the passage of the Historical Landmark Ordinance of February 1975. To say that the Lumberton Project was a success is to understate the fact. Each of the students involved has at one time or another stated that it was the best undergraduate course he or she ever had. As for Dr. Yannella, still Vice-mayor and Councilman of Lumberton Township, he plans to offer the course again this year. □

A Time Recaptured

Great stream. Maker and breaker of dreams. Molder of lives. From almost any place along its long, still stretches, any dig in its bank or brushy patch, any town or landing, you had merely to signal and a stern-wheeler would stop and pick you up—to take you, or your grain, your belongings, your hopes, to another place. That was in the late 1800s, and it is all changed, of course, the water giving way as a highway to those graded and surfaced paths, the great smoke-belchers losing to automobile and train.

But, for 29 minutes at least, you can see (and hear) the old steamboats, the frail home-built flatboats, you can hear again the sound of river music, the sound of water breaking. You can listen to the recollections of old-timers: "These fellows (river workers), they'd work on one or two boats, then quit, or decide that they'd quit the river, but like an alcoholic they'd always go back. On and off. On and off. Couldn't stay away from the river. . . ."

The river is the Willamette, and for about 175 miles, from Eugene to its mouth, you feel the mood and pace of the past in the fertile Willamette Valley of Oregon Country. In their 16mm, black and white film, "They Hailed A Steamboat Anyplace," filmmakers Jack W. Sanders and James R. Blashfield, Jr., have movingly recreated the way it was, the only film ever made about the Willamette and its long-forgotten 1830-1900 pioneer period. Their work was produced under the NEH "Youthgrants in the Humanities" program, which supports humanities projects developed and conducted by students and out-of-school youth.

Full-time for a year, the two Oregonians complemented one another: Jack the chief researcher, main filmer on river, Jim the chief editor, main shooter of stills. But none of the work was easy. They had, first of all, to find people who could remember the river of old. And when they found them, two in their 80s, two in their 90s (one who died last year at 95), they had somehow to shape a visual story of a river that had no folklore like that of the Mississippi.

This they did by poking into archives and attics, then blending old photographs, drawings, sketches,



The Willamette River meandering through farmland between Salem and Albany.

and newspaper clippings with new film footage and the spontaneous recollections of the four who lived the old way of life, and loved it. An authentic score of period music performed by local bluegrass musicians added the final touch, and the result was real history—"not nostalgia," as Jack is quick to make clear.

He says: "Certain aspects of local history are just not taught in the public schools, and you can grow up not knowing anything about the land immediately around you. You learn the classical history, but not enough about people and the routine of life, which is important to relate to how things are, where they are, and why."

Influenced strongly by his work with the film's stills, Jack is planning to use 35mm slides and black and white films to make educational filmstrip tape or slide tape presentations, mainly about rivers and the people who work them. Jim is teaching filmmaking as an artist-in-residence at a Portland High School.

As for the river, it is, remarkably, growing wilder and more remote than it was 100 years ago because activity has been led away from it. Vegetation and trees crowd its banks; while in schools, libraries, historical societies, and other non-profit institutions, the river, on film, flows on, to provide some sense of the past, a historical context for the future. □

Turn-of-the-century riverboats *Ramona*, *Gypsy*, and *Ruth*.





American Issues Forum

Beginning early this fall, the American people will have a unique opportunity for participation in a nationwide exploration of our ideals and institutions through the American Issues Forum. Two NEH-funded programs, Courses by Newspaper and the American Library Association Bicentennial Reading, Viewing, and Listening Lists, are among those which will bring the Forum to a national audience of unprecedented scope.

Courses by Newspaper

Courses by Newspaper is a program designed to present college-level courses to a large audience through the use of newspapers. The courses consist of three components. A series of weekly newspaper articles of feature length constitutes the "lectures" for the course. These lectures are supplemented with a book of readings and a study guide which the newspaper reader can order by mail. In addition, certain colleges and universities within the circulation area of the participating newspapers offer credit for those who complete the course.

The first two Courses by Newspaper, offered in 1973 and 1974, were entitled "America and the Future of Man" and "In Search of the American Dream." More than 250 colleges and universities and 340 newspapers throughout the United States cooperated to offer these courses, and almost 10,000 students enrolled for credit. Approximately 20 million newspaper readers have read the course articles.

The third Course by Newspaper, "American Issues Forum I," will begin in September 1975. A related fourth course, "American Issues Forum II," will be offered in the spring of 1976. Both courses for 1975-1976 have been prepared specifically to help implement the American Issues Forum and so to encourage a dialogue among Americans on some of the issues fundamental to our society. The Forum presents a calendar of nine monthly issues for discussion. Courses by Newspaper will present four articles on various aspects of each monthly topic.

Courses by Newspaper is a project of University Extension, University of California, San Diego. Daniel Aaron, Professor of English and American Literature

at Harvard University and one of the members of the original AIF Planning Group, is coordinating the courses for 1975-1976.

The articles for the American Issues Forum Courses by Newspaper will be written by eleven of America's foremost scholars and writers, including: Alan Barth, a former prize-winning editorial writer for the *Washington Post* and the author of several books on civil liberties; Robert Heilbroner, Norman Thomas Professor of Economics at the New School for Social Research and the author of *The Worldly Philosophers*, a classic economics study now published in 20 languages; John Higham, Professor of History at Johns Hopkins, well-known for his book on immigrants in America; Doris Kearns, Associate Professor of Government at Harvard and author of a soon to be released biography of former President Lyndon Baines Johnson; and Paul Samuelson, a Nobel Prize-winning economist from M.I.T., who writes a column for *Newsweek Magazine*.

For further information, contact: Courses by Newspaper, Suite 209, 4901 Morena Blvd., San Diego, California 92117.

ALA Reading Lists

In an effort to present the American public with a series of diversified views on each topic within the American Issues Forum, the American Library Association is producing special reading lists. There will be one list specifically for adults and one for children. Called "Bicentennial Reading, Viewing, and Listening Lists," these 12-page booklets will present eight to ten items for each weekly Forum topic. There will be books for the general reader—poems, plays, historical novels, humorous books, as well as non-fiction. The list will also include records, films, and filmstrips relating to the topics.

Over 12 million of the lists will be available to the public when the Forum begins this fall. They will be distributed primarily through school libraries—elementary, middle, secondary—through public, college, and university libraries, as well as through all state libraries and Armed Forces libraries throughout the world. The lists can be used for the entire year, and it is expected that they will become a basic library document in the area of American Studies. This is the first time that a reading list of this scope has ever been designed for the general American public.

Suggestions for the works to be included came from a distinguished Board of National Advisers. The Board included several members of the AIF Planning Group as well as other scholars, writers, and public leaders such as Norman Cousins, Vine DeLoria, Jr., Rene Dubos, Erik Erikson, Arthur Goldberg, Hans Morgenthau, William Ruckelshaus, Albert Shanker, and Studs Terkel. Two committees of librarians then selected the final lists, which are being annotated by the American Library Association staff. The project is being coordinated at ALA by Robert Wedgeworth, Executive Director, Donald E. Stewart, and Ivan Dee, and is funded by the ALA and a substantial grant from NEH. □



A Reading List on Democratic Theory

This reading list, another in the "Good Reading in the Humanities" series, was prepared by Thomas Scanlon, Associate Professor of Philosophy; Dennis Thompson, Associate Professor of Politics; and Nancy Weiss, Assistant Professor of History; all of Princeton University.

The Subject

In recent years philosophers, historians and political scientists have shown an increased interest in examining the fundamental assumptions underlying the idea of democracy. Their inquiries have taken a number of different forms. There have been new analytical investigations of central notions such as justice, liberty, representation, and obligation, and studies of the historical origins and evolution of these notions. In addition, the current of the times has led to renewed theoretical interest in traditional issues which had been generally neglected by political theorists in the postwar period, issues such as civil disobedience, conscientious objection, the commitment of democracy to genuine citizen participation, and the ideological bias of prevailing ideas of democracy.

The works listed below represent the range of concerns that have engaged students of democratic theory in recent years. With the exception of Croly's critique of Jeffersonian liberalism, all of the works were published after 1960. Although they do not all agree in their approaches or their conclusions, these works demonstrate the possibility of reasoned discourse about the fundamental principles of democratic government. They thus represent a challenge to the once widely held view that rational discussion of the values of democracy is not possible.

Each of these works can be read independently. None requires substantial background in political theory, although the books by Rawls and Pitkin are somewhat more difficult than the others.

Good Reading

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, Terrence E. Cook and Patrick M. Morgan, editors. *San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1971. 486 pp. Available in paperback.*

This collection of readings provides a good introduction to the theoretical and practical problems of participatory democracy. While the first part of the book presents various theoretical perspectives, the bulk of the book consists of articles applying the principles of participatory democracy to community government,

school decentralization, universities, industries, government bureaucracies and legal systems.

THE PROMISE OF AMERICAN LIFE, Herbert Croly. *New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909. 468 pp. Available in paperback.*

A leading intellectual of the Progressive Era, Croly argues for the use of Hamiltonian means—a strong, active federal government—to achieve Jeffersonian ends: social justice, democracy, and world peace. "The Promise" is "an improving popular economic condition, guaranteed by democratic political institutions, and resulting in moral and social amelioration." Croly demonstrates historically how veneration of individual freedoms has stifled the fulfillment of the national promise by encouraging "an indiscriminate individual scramble for wealth." The lesson he draws is that democracy and laissez-faire are incompatible in modern industrial society.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION? AUTHORITY IN A GOOD SOCIETY, Robert A. Dahl. *New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970. 171 pp. Available in paperback.*

A distinguished political scientist examines the principles on which the authority of democratic government rests. After specifying criteria for judging democratic authority, he evaluates various forms that democratic government can take. He concludes by applying his principles to three current problems: the inequality of resources, the accountability of business corporations, and the remoteness of government.

THE DIMENSIONS OF LIBERTY, Oscar and Mary Handlin. *Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961. 204 pp. Available in paperback from Atheneum.*

In this brief volume the Handlins interpret the nature, evolution, and historical significance of liberty in the United States. Drawing on evidence from colonial times to the twentieth century, they explore the manifestations of liberty in three major areas: political structure, social mobility, and voluntary organizations. Particularly provocative themes include the relationship between liberty and the power of the state, and the role of freedom in defining the American national identity.

FRONTIERS OF DEMOCRATIC THEORY, Henry S. Kariel, editor. *New York: Random House, 1970. 435 pp. Available in paperback.*

The traditional ideal of the democratic citizen as active, informed and public-spirited has come under

attack in recent years by a group of theorists and social scientists, whom Professor Kariel labels "revisionists." They argue that this ideal is unrealistic and that it is undesirable as a goal. This collection presents some of the leading revisionist writings, along with examples of the traditional theories and more recent critiques of the revisionists.

PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY, Carole Pateman. *Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1970. 122 pp.*

Mrs. Pateman seeks to show how current elitist theories of democracy, popular among social scientists, distort the writings of traditional theorists such as Rousseau, Mill and G.D.H. Cole. Criticizing the view that political apathy is desirable and that an increase in citizen participation could threaten the stability of western democracies, she argues that participation is psychologically and educationally worthwhile. Two chapters are devoted to a discussion of the possibilities of democracy in industry.

THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION, Hanna Fenichel Pitkin. *Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967. 323 pp. Available in paperback.*

Professor Pitkin explores the variety of uses that the concept of representation has had since Hobbes. By showing that contending theories of representation are each partial accounts of the concept, she seeks to elucidate or resolve certain controversies surrounding the concept, such as the "mandate-independence" controversy: must the representative do what his constituents want, or is he free to act as seems best to him in pursuit of their welfare?

THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRATIC THEORY: SCIENTIFIC NATURALISM & THE PROBLEM OF VALUE, Edward A. Purcell, Jr. *Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1973. 272 pp.*

In this prize-winning monograph, Professor Purcell, an intellectual historian, looks at the effect of pragmatism and scientific naturalism on developments in philosophy, social sciences, and law after 1910, and examines the impact of those developments on traditional assumptions of democratic theory. He shows how democracy came under attack in the 1930s and how, in response, intellectuals began to develop "a broadly naturalistic and relativistic theory of democracy" that became transformed in the postwar era into an ideological defense of the status quo.

A THEORY OF JUSTICE, John Rawls. *Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971. 607 pp. Available in paperback.*

Rawls' theory of justice "generalizes and carries to a higher level of abstraction the familiar theory of the social contract as found, say, in Locke, Rousseau and Kant." In his book the idea of a hypothetical initial agreement is used not only as the basis for an account of political obligation but, more generally, as the basis for the development of principles of justice which provide a standard for the criticism of all the basic institutions of society.

OBLIGATIONS: ESSAYS ON DISOBEDIENCE, WAR AND CITIZENSHIP, Michael Walzer. *Cambridge, Mas-*

sachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970. 242 pp. In paperback from Simon and Schuster.

Walzer believes that obligation requires consent in more than a formal sense. In his view, genuine political obligation must arise out of voluntary involvement in the shared goals and undertakings that constitute the life of a true community. In these stimulating and readable essays he develops this idea through investigations of various obligations, political and non-political, and the forms of association in which they arise, and he considers the implications of this idea for the grounds of obedience and disobedience in the modern state.

THE POVERTY OF LIBERALISM, Robert Paul Wolff. *Boston: Beacon Press, 1968. 200 pp. Available in paperback.*

Professor Wolff presents, from a radical perspective, a sharp critique of four ideas that are essential in liberal democratic thought: liberty, loyalty, power and tolerance. Wolff argues against liberalism that we "must give up the image of society as a battleground of competing groups and formulate an ideal of society more exalted than the mere acceptance of opposed interests and diverse customs." In his final chapter, he takes some tentative steps toward formulating that ideal in a "new philosophy of community."

Suggestions for Discussion

1. Do all citizens have a right to equal participation in the institutions by which they are governed? Is increased political participation by citizens desirable and possible? What advantages and disadvantages for citizens and for government might come from greater participation? What reforms would be necessary to stimulate participation?
2. How can meaningful democratic rule be maintained in face of the inequalities of resources and the remoteness and complexity of government? Is there room for elites in a democracy? How can democratic societies cope with the increased power of non-governmental institutions such as corporations and unions?
3. Must liberal democratic theory be revised in light of the changed circumstances of our time? How (if at all) does the greater complexity of political decisions, the increased interdependence of individuals, cities and nations, and the widened influence of the mass media affect our theories of democracy?
4. Is there a special form of political obligation which binds all the citizens of a country and no others? If there is such an obligation, must (can) its origins be found in the citizens' past acts of consent? Must this obligation allow special exceptions for the exercise of individual conscience?
5. Under what conditions is the toleration of divergent views and practices a rational policy? What marks the limits of rational toleration? Must toleration always be toleration of recognized groups rather than of isolated, independent individuals?
6. What are the implications of a relativist theory of democracy for reform? For the defense of the status quo? □

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NEH Notes

National Board of Consultants Program

A new program, the National Board of Consultants, has recently been established by the Endowment to enable institutions of higher education to receive assistance from teachers, professors and administrators who have wide experience in humanities education.

First institution recommended by the National Council on the Humanities for a grant in the program is Baker University, Baldwin, Kansas, which sought advice and assistance in analyzing and developing its pedagogical and curricular resources for effective humanities general education.

The program is expected to cover a wide variety of situations in post-secondary institutions, such as a liberal arts college wishing to revitalize a major program; a community college wishing to design humanities courses suitable for vocational students; a university wishing to strengthen the role of its library in humanities education; or humanities faculty planning to conduct a summer institute dealing with current issues.

While the register of the National Board of Consultants presently contains the names of 65 nationally known scholars, teachers and administrators, all of whom have served as Endowment consultants, the number is expected to increase in future years.

The States and the Nation

Combining the double purpose of providing good reading for the public during the Bicentennial of American Independence and developing resources in state and local history, the Endowment has made a grant of over \$600,000 to the American Association of State and Local History to produce a 51-volume series of state histories for each state and the District of Columbia.

The histories will be written by 51 authors uniquely qualified by experience and interest to interpret the history of each state. Among those already selected are Bruce Catton (who will prepare the volume on Michigan); Louis B. Wright (South Carolina); Wilma Dykeman (Tennessee); Elting Morison (New Hampshire); Jay Saunders Redding (Delaware); Oliver Jensen (Connecticut); David L. Lewis (District of Columbia); and Charles T. Morrissey (Vermont).

About half the writers have been named to date by AASLH with the assistance of an advisory committee of leading American historians, editors and librarians headed by James Morton Smith, director of the State History Association of Wisconsin. Editor of the series is Gerald W. George. □