

budgets upon which the courts have been working in determining a reasonable standard of living.

JOHN R. COMMONS.

University of Wisconsin.

A Hoosier Autobiography. By WILLIAM DUDLEY FOULKE.
(New York: Oxford University Press. 1922. Pp. 252.)

Had Mr. Foulke lived in England, in all likelihood he would be classified as a Victorian Liberal. In this country he has been known as an Independent, a Mugwump, and a Progressive. He represents in his person and career a high type of American citizenship. An orator and publicist of power and distinction, he has devoted himself to certain causes with ability and effectiveness. His chief concern has been the reform of civil service. With this movement he has been closely associated most of the time as a vigorous member of the National Civil Service Reform League, but for several years as a civil service commissioner. He has told the story of this work in his interesting volume *Fighting the Spoilsmen*. Other causes in which he was a pioneer are woman's suffrage and proportional representation. He was one of the early presidents of the American Woman's Suffrage Association and the first president of the American Proportional Representation League. For five years he was president of the National Municipal League, succeeding Charles J. Bonaparte in that office. While occupying that position the league published the second municipal program composed of a series of proposed constitutional amendments and a model charter, all formulated on the basis of municipal home rule.

Mr. Foulke has been interested in many issues and was active in the Progressive movement of 1912. This was due not only to his interest in the issues involved, but to his intense devotion to Colonel Roosevelt, to whom he devotes some of the best chapters of his book. Mr. Foulke is a graceful poet and has written sundry volumes dealing with general literature including an excellent life of Oliver Morton. In short he has devoted his time, his means, his experience to public causes and to the cultivation of the arts, thus making a contribution of real value to his own time. This present volume is one of reminiscences however, rather than an autobiography. It is none the less interesting for that, although perhaps not so valuable as some of the other books he has written. One wishes that the chapter entitled "Personalalia" occupying but fourteen pages had been extended, for therein we find his philos-

ophy of life and that is what is quite as interesting as some of the things a man does. For instance his views on working within the party as advocated by Roosevelt (except in 1912) and as an Independent could be made a most valuable contribution of this always recurring problem.

CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

James K. Polk, A Political Biography. By EUGENE IRVING McCORMAC, Ph.D. (Berkeley: The University of California Press. 1922.)

The derisive query of the Whigs, "Who is James K. Polk?" has been definitively answered by Professor McCormac. His biography leaves little more to be said on the subject of the chief figure of the Mexican War and the Oregon controversy. In the preface, he raises the question as to whether Polk ought not to have been included in the American Statesmen series and the American Crisis biographies. Certainly he has demonstrated that Polk is fully as eligible to a place in the former series as Martin VanBuren or John Randolph. He was, moreover, emphatically a crisis president and as such merits inclusion in a set of crisis biographies.

Professor McCormac describes his volume as "a political biography," disclaiming any attempt to write "a personal biography." This is regrettable. Having furnished such an exhaustive and authoritative account of Polk's public career, it is a pity that he did not complete the picture by portraying the more intimate side of Polk's life. While the personal aspect is not wholly neglected, Polk is treated less as a man than as an official. Accepting the limitations which the author has imposed upon his treatment, however, we must remain grateful for a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the Jacksonian period and the "roaring forties."

Since the publication of Polk's *Diary* and the volumes by Rives, Reeves, and J. H. Smith, much has been added to our knowledge of Polk's policy as president. The earlier stages of his political career, however, have remained in partial obscurity. Professor McCormac devotes about a third of his book to an account of Polk's services as a member of the Tennessee legislature, as a member of Congress, and as governor of Tennessee, and he thereby throws light upon a portion of his career which has sadly needed illumination, though it is regrettable that he could not find space for a survey of the economic and social background of Tennessee politics.