

BOOK REVIEWS.

Handbook of Learned Societies and Institutions: America.
Edited by J. David Thompson. Carnegie Institution of Washington, No. 39. (Washington, D. C., Carnegie Institution, June, 1908, 592 pp.)

One of the first projects approved by the trustees of the Carnegie Institution was the publication of a handbook of learned societies, this being regarded as a necessary preparation to almost any kind of careful research. Beginning in 1902, grants of money were made for the purpose, the supervision and expenditure being entrusted to the Librarian of Congress. Material has now been collected upon all publishing societies of the world, the present volume being limited to North and South America and adjacent islands. Exception has been made of a few classes of societies which are mentioned in the introduction to the Handbook with reasons for their omission.

As is well known, there is a great wealth of material in the publications of societies which have been formed for the promotion of study in special fields of knowledge. For the student along special lines of work, there is almost no source of information so fruitful as the literature of these publishing societies. The completion of an accurate and up-to-date check-list of the learned societies of the Western Hemisphere is a significant event in the history of scientific progress.

Within the field covered, it is now possible to obtain reliable information upon all publishing societies, together with colleges, universities, museums and laboratories which issue contributions to knowledge. Full information is given including name of society, permanent address, history, object, time and place of meetings, membership, regular and special publications, research funds and prizes. Facts are also given in regard to distribution of publications,—conditions under which exchanged, price and place of sale. While the exact titles of the various serial publications are given, it should be noted that the volumes are not analysed for contents. That would of course be out of the question in a one volume work covering so broad a field.

The arrangement is primarily by countries. Under countries, there is a list of national societies alphabetted by official name,

followed by a mixed alphabet of local societies arranged under city and state. This arrangement seems likely to prove confusing. Fortunately, there is an excellent index where names of societies and institutions, serial publications, cities, counties and states, are arranged together in a single alphabet.

—CHARLES W. SMITH.

Bibliography of American Historical Societies. By A. P. C. Griffin. Edition 2, revised and enlarged. Annual report of the American Historical Society for the year 1905, volume 2. (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1907, 1374 pp., \$1.)

This revised edition of Griffin's *Bibliography of American Historical Societies* has seemed long in coming. It was announced for the second volume of the Report of the American Historical Association for 1905 and as such it now makes its appearance in the year 1908, although bearing the imprint date of 1907.

It is a large volume, well printed and well indexed, and is in itself an ample justification for any delays in its preparation. It covers the publications of all publishing historical societies of the United States and Canada, bringing the record down in most cases to the close of the year 1905. The arrangement is geographical and chronological with a full author and subject index to which is added also a biographical index and an index of societies. These indexes add immensely to the working value of the book.

The work as now issued is easily the most important one volume bibliography in the field of American history. Like many another work of its kind, it has gradually developed from smaller beginnings.

In the Report of the American Historical Association for 1890, pp. 161-267, appeared the first installment of Mr. Griffin's *Bibliography of American Historical Societies*. A second and final installment came out in the Report of the American Historical Association for 1892, pp. 305-619. The completed bibliography listed the publications of 282 societies and covered 418 pages. It was not indexed except as the items were brought out by the indexes to the volumes in which it was contained. It proved very helpful even in this form but was not convenient to use.

In the Report of the American Historical Association for 1895, pp. 675-1236, there was published an enlarged and consolidated bibliography covering the same field and by the same author