

The Papers of James Madison, Vol. IV, 1 January 1782–31 July 1782.
Edited by WILLIAM T. HUTCHINSON and WILLIAM M. E. RACHAL.
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965. xxviii, 486 p. Illustrations, index. \$12.50.)

It is, of course, far too late to alter the editorial policy of so vast an undertaking as the *Madison Papers*, and this reviewer is resigned to the appearance—at immense cost in energy and fine scholarship—of volume after volume containing hundreds of pages of documents which have almost literally nothing to do with Madison and which no one is likely ever to read. The proceedings of the Continental Congress are, of course, of intrinsic interest. But the *Madison Papers* seems hardly the place to go for them. Yet some three-fourths of the present volume consists of committee reports, resolutions, motions, and correspondence between the Governor of Virginia and the Virginia delegation to Congress of which Madison was either merely the amanuensis or one of a committee. A fair example is the "Report of Delegates of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia on Edward Carrington's Memorial." This document is a half page paragraph in which the delegates assert their incompetence to judge whether Carrington should be colonel of a regiment of artillery. The editors provide two and a half pages of notes, in small print, explaining in considerable detail the whole matter of Carrington's claim to the command. No connection with Madison is at any point suggested, except that he was one of the delegates from Virginia. This reviewer, for one, cannot believe that a meaningful purpose is really served by this sort of scholarship, or that the effort is worth the result.

The period covered by the present volume was noteworthy for the beginnings of negotiations with Great Britain to end the revolutionary war. And there are some valuable letters on this subject between Madison and Edmund Pendleton, Edmund Randolph, and Jefferson. The Jefferson letters, of course, together with the Madison replies, are already set forth with detailed annotation in the *Jefferson Papers*. There are, in addition, occasional exchanges of letters of some political interest between Madison and Randolph and Madison and Jacquelin Ambler. But they do not rise above the level of gossip, dealing with presumed intrigues to unseat this or that politician, including Madison himself.

Except for some fragmentary motions and memoranda on the question of the disposition of the western lands, there is little in this volume to display the growth of Madison's mind or forecast his later achievements as a legislator and statesman.

University of Hawaii

STUART GERRY BROWN