

## Reviews and Notes

*George Washington: Farmer, Being An Account of His Home Life and Agricultural Activities.* By PAUL LELAND HAWORTH. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, pp. 336.

THE first question to suggest itself on reading the above title was What can a serious historian do with such a subject? Fortunately a reading of the book settles the question. The author has done at least four things and avoided doing one which has brought considerable notoriety to less sensible authors. The author has held strictly to the fundamental principles of good history writing. The whole account is based on a first hand study of Washington's own papers; he has produced a valuable commentary on the labor question, the problems of farming, the problem of good living, the social customs, and commercial conditions of that period; he has given us a new angle on the life of Washington; he has produced a very readable book; and finally he has not given us one of the modern "real" biographies by dipping into every trace of scandal handed down by the gossips of the times.

The account is concrete and descriptive. There are no opinions advanced, no theories set forth and argued at length. There is an atmosphere of reality preserved throughout. The author naturally has a snappy style, and the numerous expressions picked up from Washington's own pen help to keep one on the Mt. Vernon premises at all times. Some of the chapters are "Building an Estate", "Virginia Agriculture in Washington's Day", "Conserving the Soil", "The Stockman", "White Servants and Overseers", "Black Slaves", "A Farmer's Amusements", "Profit and Loss". The reader cannot escape believing that the author enjoyed browsing among the voluminous papers of General Washington. There is no evidence anywhere of that musty, dutsy, grind by which some writers make a living browsing through repulsive material hoping here and there to find a pay lead. Being a robust, red-blooded Hoosier farmer himself, he certainly enjoyed the long visits with "Our Farmer" as he rode from farm to farm, or chased the foxes, or cursed lazy negroes, or tried to raise bumper crops on worn out

land, or whiled away the wintry hours studying "Hoil." The fortunate thing about the whole affair is that he can take any reader who has any appreciation for farm life with him on these trips, so that he gets an idea of the great general not easily obtained elsewhere. The finest thing in the whole book is the testimony the author bears to the character of Washington. It seems that every new discovery, as he studied the Farmer day by day, increased his regard.

*Michigan Historical Collections*, Vol. XXXIX. MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION, Lansing, Mich., 1915. p. 601.

This volume contains besides the usual reports and a Subject and Author Index for the whole series, the following papers: Patrick Sinclair, Western Sketches of Caroline Kirkland, Dr. Douglass Houghton, Prehistoric Copper Mines of Lake Superior, Prominent Newspaper Men in Michigan, James McMillan, Will Carleton, Thomas W. Palmer, Two Early Missionaries, Saginaw County, Study of Michigan History, Memoirs of Pioneer Settlers, Biographical Sketches (14 in number). The volume contains several articles of great value to Indiana readers. The Michigan Historical Commission under the lead of Governor Ferris is doing a great deal of work. Dr. Charles Moore is editor for the Commission.

*The Illinois Whigs Before 1846*. By CHARLES MANFORD THOMPSON, Ph. D., Associate in Economics, University of Illinois, Urbana, 1915. pp. 165.

THIS is a preliminary study to a history of the Whigs of Illinois. The five chapter heads: Genesis of the Illinois Whigs; The Emergence of the Whig party, 1834-1839; Harrison and Tyler, 1839-1841; Sectional and State Issues, 1841-1845; and The Illinois Whigs and National Politics, 1841-1845, show fairly accurately the field the author has examined. From another point of view the study seems to fall into three sections; the period of personal politics, the period of State politics, and the period when national issues dominated the field. Each of these periods developed its characteristic men. Governor Edwards built up a strong personal following, the men of the second period built up sectional followings, depending for their cohesion on local interest. This was the period of bank and internal improvement legislation. In the third