

clusive characteristic. The power of concentrated wealth was diluted at least for a time; this was the result of the impingement of democratic forces upon economic forces. Thus we have the essential nature of the study.

It is evident that there can be no clear understanding of the present banking situation with its clash between forces making for the continuance of a democratic system and those which look to greater concentration of power without careful consideration of the work which Professor Helderman has done.

ELBERT A. KINCAID

The John Askin Papers, II. Edited by MILO M. QUAIFFE. The Detroit Commission, Detroit, 1931. Pp. 829, illustrated.

For many years Clarence M. Burton has devoted time and money to the accumulation of a mass of books, other printed records and manuscripts pertaining to the history of Detroit. When it was determined to take up the task of publishing the manuscripts in the extensive and valuable Burton Collection, the Directors of the Detroit Public Library decided to begin with the *John Askin Papers*. The first volume appeared in 1928, being also the first in a series known as the *Burton Historical Records*. A brief review of volume I appeared in this quarterly in June, 1928. Attention was then called to the durable quality of the handsome volume and to the fine craftsmanship and general excellence of its make-up. In this respect, the new volume, which completes the *Askin Papers*, duplicates the fine qualities of Volume I. The earlier volume includes documents falling within the years 1747-1795. The present volume presents those of Askin's later career, the period embracing the years 1796-1820.

The letters of Askin and his correspondents published in the two large volumes furnish a vast amount of original information relative to the history of Detroit. Indeed the great array of course matter presented places all students of the history of the Old Northwest and of the states formed from that area under deep obligations to Dr. Quaife and the Detroit Public Library. While the letters vary much in content, throwing light on a multitude of things related to the period, they furnish extensive information in regard to the business activities

of the times. Almost every document in the two volumes possesses historical value. Many of the letters are fascinating in their human interest and may be read for pure enjoyment.

The editing has been done with meticulous care. Anyone accustomed to the preparation of manuscripts for the printer knows that Dr. Quaife and his *aides* have performed a stupendous piece of work. Beyond question, the task has been well executed. It has been the desire of the editor and the printers of the *Askin Papers* to produce "books worthy of bearing the imprint of the Detroit Public Library." The two volumes published are tangible evidence that they have succeeded in fulfilling that desire.

William O. Lynch

Soil (Its Influence on the History of the United States). By Archer Butler Hulbert. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1930. Pp. xii + 227, illustrated, \$2.50.

In this volume, the author undertakes a study of the effects of soils on the migration to and the settlement of areas westward to the Mississippi. He adds a single chapter, "Types of Soil Influence in the West" in which he deals very briefly with the trans-Mississippi country. There is also an appendix (pp 209-215) in which suggestions are made for the study of local areas through the making of a series of key maps.

"The main theme of the present volume is the quite ignored one of the influences of the soil on American settlement and expansion," says Professor Hulbert at the beginning of his preface. Following three general chapters, he writes a series of strong chapters in which there is a definite attempt to carry out the purpose of the book. Among the best of these chapters are: "The Waterway Keys to our Soil Provinces"; "Highland Pathways of Conquest and Migration"; "The Meadows of New England"; "The Tidewater Pioneers"; "The Virginia Piedmont"; "The Grand Advance"; "Beyond the Shenandoah"; "The Conquest of the Alleghanies"; "The Blue Grass Region."

Though the title is *Soil*, the volume is as much a study of the effects of topography on American history as it is of the influence of soils. In fact, the study is what it should be, an analysis of geographic influences with more than the custom-