ception may be noted. He omitted the governor's confirmation of land claims which seems to have been to the advantage of his sons, John Murray St. Clair and Arthur St. Clair, and which seems to have been clearly contrary to law (Francis S. Philbrick, ed., The Laws of Indiana Territory, 1801-1809, pp. lxxviii-lxxix). On the other hand, he discussed at some length the events leading to a court martial of St. Clair during the Revolution, the disastrous campaign of 1791 which also resulted in a court martial, and the contest with the Jeffersonians which led to his removal from the governorship of the Old Northwest Territory.

The author's conclusions are easily distinguishable from his statement of facts. Although often more favorable than the facts seem to warrant, the reader may discount them as he thinks advisable. The discriminating reader will likely get from the facts a different opinion than the one expressed by the author, and will question the use of the term "Epic" in the title. The epic story is that of the frontiersmen whom St. Clair misunderstood and not the story of St. Clair.

A few errors of statement, a few typographical errors, and other less important features detract slightly from the general character and trustworthiness of the work. It does not seem to be longer than William H. Smith, The Life and Public Services of Arthur St. Clair (2 vols., Cincinnati, 1882), and it lacks the documentation of this earlier work. On the whole it seems that its chief service may be in calling attention to the need of a new and scholarly reconsideration of St. Clair's life.

John D. Barnhart

Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet. By Rembert W. Patrick. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana University Press, 1944, pp. xi, 401. $3.75.)

This is easily the most scholarly and refreshing study of Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet that has been written to date. While at times it appears that Dr. Patrick is overly sympathetic with the Confederate President and his advisers, a general estimate of the work justifies the conclusion that he has made a valuable contribution to the history of the South. It has been too long the tendency of writers to attribute the failure of the Confederacy to a mediocre administra-
tion at Richmond. Dr. Patrick's views will be welcomed by those who are concerned with the fundamental causes of the South's defeat.

The author's treatment of Davis is sympathetic but not partisan. The South turned to its "most suitable citizen" for leadership. The Mississippian was an able and intelligent executive. Despite the fact that he was commander in chief of all the armed forces, and was often blamed for defeats on the field of battle, Davis did not force his views upon the generals. His conscience was often torn between the demand of military expediency and his duty to act within the Constitution. "His inherent weakness as commander in chief was the inability to intervene, with considered judgment, in the Confederacy's military affairs."

It is erroneous to believe that Jefferson Davis consulted no one in selecting the members of his Cabinet. Although he realized the importance of the geographic factor in the promotion of national solidarity, he also sought the most able men available. The President relied heavily upon recommendations, not only of Congressional delegations, but also from influential private citizens. His appointment of Stephen R. Mallory, however, was contrary to the wishes of Florida delegation. Personal friendship did not enter into his appointments. Several members were not known to him personally at the time of their selection. Only James A. Seddon could be classed as an intimate friend when he entered the Cabinet.

The members of the Cabinet, contrary to popular opinion, were not mere clerks or "spineless yes men." The President sought their advice and respected their opinions. He seldom overruled the opinion of the majority. They were given complete control of the details of their respective departments, and Davis defended them loyally against Congressional and newspaper attacks. That fourteen men occupied the six executive positions over the brief period of four years was no indication of a general lack of harmony between them and the President. Most of them were devoted to their chief and remained friendly after leaving the Cabinet.

Robert Toombs, the first Secretary of State, was not happy in his post nor were he and Davis congenial. The Georgian has deserved more sympathetic treatment, and it seems rather harsh to say that "Toombs was abundantly
endowed with brains, but he often made poor use of them.” While his foreign policy was not a success, the same can be said of R. M. T. Hunter and Judah P. Benjamin. “No man in the South could have obtained recognition for the Confederacy.”

The War Department was probably the most difficult of the Cabinet posts. There were six secretaries during the war and it appears that Seddon was the most successful. “No other Secretary of War, not even Benjamin, influenced the South’s military strategy to the same extent as did Seddon.” Benjamin, Attorney General, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, was the South’s “handy-man” and a “jack-of-all-trades.” He was the President’s alter ego, and his greatest value to the Confederacy was as an adviser and aide to the chief.

Any Confederate Secretary of the Treasury was bound to be unpopular. Christopher G. Memminger had to contend with a people set against taxation. The inherent weakness of the Confederate fiscal policy was the issuance and dependence upon treasury notes for revenue. Memminger never desired this and it was forced upon him by Congress. The Confederate navy was the creation of genius. Mallory possessed the imagination and initiative to accept new trends in naval construction and to experiment with weapons heretofore untried in naval warfare. He built the first ironclads, and experimented with mines, torpedoes, and submarines. John H. Reagan ranks with Mallory as one of the most able men in the Cabinet. The Post Office Department was the orphan child of the Confederacy, and despite tremendous obstacles, the Texan gave the South a fairly adequate postal system.

Dr. Patrick presents sound evidence that the collapse of the Confederacy was not due to the defects of the Southern civil administration. The Cabinet was composed of the “ablest men in Southern public life.” “The one great failure of the Cabinet was the Confederacy’s defeat.” The author’s treatment of each Cabinet department is excellent, and there is an abundance of valuable information for the student of Southern history. The bibliography is unusually good and the index is adequate.

Powell Moore