creating a situation in which such a blow would appear to be also an attack upon the United States.

One exculpation, however, leads to another accusation, as Current assigns to Stimson at least his share of the blame for insufficient alertness to the possibility of Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor; later, too, he sought to avoid and shift responsibility for this disaster to other shoulders. The account of two other aspects of wartime policy leave him in an unfavorable light. His was the chief responsibility, under the urging of west-coast hysteria largely inspired by pressure-groups, for the decision that “military necessity” justified the evacuation and virtual imprisonment, in violation of normal canons of civil liberty, of thousands of Japanese-Americans. Again, and perhaps in the long run this will be his heaviest responsibility, he played his last crucial role, in the face of conflicting scientific advice, in the decision to loose atomic power on all-but-prostrate Japan.

This is a controversial book. The author accepted the risk of those who write close to the event, before the documentation necessary to a full appraisal has become available. It is the reviewer’s belief, however, that some aspects of Stimson’s career, such as Nicaragua and the Secretaryship of State, would have been better described after a closer examination of already available printed and archival material. Current’s highly-critical evaluation, though not the first such appraisal (see the works of A. Whitney Griswold and Sara R. Smith) renders him liable to a suspicion of having written from a hostile predisposition. This leaves him a target, somewhat vulnerable, for subsequent scholars whose predispositions may be less or different, and whose materials will be more voluminous. Out of this give-and-take will, one day, emerge a rounded portrait. Meantime, this “first assessment” merits close attention, if not universal agreement, for its content, its point of view, and its lively presentation.

Rutgers University
L. Ethan Ellis


The frontier theme in American history has been given so many eminently decent burials that one might expect it
by this time to stop kicking. But in the Indiana University Press and in the press of the Indiana Historical Society it has shown enough life in the last few years to produce at least three more-than-ordinarily-significant books.

In the book under examination, Richard Lyle Power has re-examined the advance of Yankee culture along the water-level route into northern Ohio, northern Indiana and southern Michigan, and on into the prairies of Illinois. He keeps an eye also on the rival march along the rough trails of western North Carolina, western Virginia and Kentucky, and on across the Ohio River to the Northwest into Indiana and Illinois. His interest centers at the point where these cultures clashed and merged in the Corn Belt, chiefly in Indiana and Illinois.

The author seems to see something reprehensible in the Yankee “cultural imperialism,” which attempted to impose Yankee morals, Yankee “book learnin’,” Yankee thrift, grass culture, dairying and cheese making, mince pie, and down-east dialect on the earlier Southern-western tradition. Is he willing to extend the same implied condemnation to American cultural imperialism elsewhere in the world and at a later date—even to Point Four programs? The Yankees in this period were sometimes irritatingly egotistical and looked upon the upland Southern settlers in the West as ignorant and godless because they differed so much in manners and mores from the New England norm. But it seems clear enough that these Yankees often had plenty of “know-how” in education, in improved agricultural methods, in journalism, and in business to share with a society which had more than its share who were illiterate, improvident, and, occasionally, downright lazy.

Sometimes, too, the Southerners looked down upon the Yankees, giving measure for measure for Yankee scorn and criticism. The Yankees tended to organize wherever they went and whatever they did—and keep records of it. The uplander who came along the “Jinglety-bang” trail was an extreme individualist and his incursion into the Northwest was not organized in a “crusade to extend Southern culture.” It was not in the Southern genius to do so. The Yankee migrant usually carried with him a love of the cultural institutions which he left behind him, and certainly hoped to recreate in the West some of the institutions of the East, but
some of the Southern uplanders were essentially refugees from the social conditions of the South. It was hardly to be expected that they would have a quite comparable missionary zeal.

The author has made excellent use of various original sources, including the often-neglected papers of the American Home Missionary Society. There are several useful maps, including a map of the area "dependent on cooperative drainage" and a good general map of the chief routes of migration.

He thinks that there was produced in the West, in the Corn Belt area, a culture which was neither Yankee nor Southern but truly Western, a culture created in large part by western environmental conditions, especially by the corn-hog cycle and the sense of natural abundance which he finds chiefly demonstrated by the fact and the folklore of the midwestern cornfields. Whether the continuing differences between Yankees and Southerners in the West have been more important than differences between the culture of the seaboard area and of Transappalachia is a matter of emphasis and somewhat of local patriotism.

Planting Corn Belt Culture explains in part why the frontier theme is still a living thing to students of local social and institutional history in this country and is likely to remain so for some time.

Oberlin College
Robert Samuel Fletcher


During the span of years covered by this careful study, the American people may be accurately characterized as a society in motion. When independence was achieved there were some four millions of people scattered along the Atlantic seaboard, few of them living out of easy reach of tidewater. The 1850’s saw all of middle America occupied by a population sufficient to add seventeen new states to the original thirteen. This great movement of people westward was primarily concerned with laying economic and political foundations and gave little attention to the things of the spirit. Under such conditions, to use the words of Horace Bushnell, barbarism was the first danger. Schools and churches did