The final chapter re-examines the Monroe Doctrine with some fresh insights. Though John Quincy Adams, the American secretary of state, naturally receives a good deal of praise for constructing the doctrine, Monroe emerges as less the shallow figurehead than he has often seemed. Indeed, throughout the work Perkins has some critical things to say about Adams' propensity to quarrel in the face of British overtures. In the end, it was Castlereagh's Polignac Memorandum, warning off European intervention in Latin America, that counted for more than Monroe's pronouncements.

The author has given us a first-rate history of the Anglo-American connection in these formative years. Sound, well-written, and original, the book is an attractive example of what could be done on other periods and countries.

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The intermittent debate as to the principal explanation of the coming of the War of 1812 has resulted in several schools of thought. Frequently a fresh look at the problem seems to buttress a previously proclaimed interpretation with additional corroborative evidence. Historians agree that the various views are all a part of the total picture; the differences of opinion come from the emphasis and importance accorded the explanations. These generalizations apply to Roger Brown's study despite his Preface contention that "this book shows for the first time" the primary motivation leading to the declaration of war in 1812. Leonard White, Herbert Heaton, and more recently Norman Risjord, would not regard Brown as a stranger in their midst.

Brown does go further than any of his predecessors, however, and spells out more precisely the fear felt by the chief executive and the national legislators that the future of the republican government of the United States was at stake. The experiment in republicanism for which the Constitution provided was in peril, and it must be upheld even at the cost of a war with Great Britain.

Jefferson and Madison Republicans were sure that commercial restrictions would bring cessation of the French and British maritime practices which were violating American neutral rights and hurting American commerce. If one belligerent repealed its edicts the other would follow suit rather than suffer the consequences of its rival becoming the sole beneficiary of American commerce and friendship.

When the Cadore letter convinced the administration that France was willing to make concessions, and when the British made it clear they were unwilling to repeal the Orders, Madison and his supporters were induced to believe that the Orders were aimed at Britain's principal maritime and commercial rival, the United States. If Englishmen could not have access to the trade of the Continent, they would not permit American merchants to have the advantages of it either. Britain, in effect, was waging war on American commerce.
Embargo legislation failing, force seemed the only alternative to
economic, moral, and political surrender—too high a price to pay for
avoiding war, which was regarded as a lesser evil than submission.
Surrendering to British demands would be a blow to the prestige of
republicanism, demonstrating its lack of energy and staying power, its
inability to organize and to use the will and the strength of the nation.
Submission might even be fatal to republicanism. “Proven inability
to ensure such vital concerns as the economic interests of citizens,
national sovereignty, and national honor might destroy the faith of all
America in the republican form of government” (p. 78).
Some feared a resurgence of Federalists—men who championed
aristocracy and monarchy. Many of the Federalists themselves predicted
eventual political disaster for their opponents as the principal benefit
of a war. They believed the temporary disadvantages and losses from
war well worth the price for the collapse of their political enemies.
The year 1812, according to Brown, takes on “an heretofore un-
perceived meaning” (p. 189). Republicanism’s waning prestige in 1787
made urgent the movement which resulted in the Constitution, “a new
blueprint” for republican government. Now, republicanism was again
in jeopardy. To their credit the Jeffersonians recognized it as a parallel
situation with as momentous consequences at stake, even though re-
sponsible Federalists believed that the Jeffersonians were ready to
plunge the country into a major war for partisan and personal benefit.
Brown dismisses the label of “war hawks” as a Federalist-coined
term based on false appearances and unfortunately perpetuated by
historians. There is no “firm evidence” of the existence of a faction
which displayed “reckless bellicosity,” motivated by a hypersensitive
feeling of national honor, expansionist plans, and economic grievances.
He also argues that the sectional interpretations which have “dominated”
a half century of writings on the War of 1812 are without basis of fact.
While not convincingly demonstrating that republicanism’s peril
was the primary motivation for entry into war in 1812, Brown’s study
serves the very useful purpose of putting more deserved emphasis on it
than heretofore. Even in the pursuit of this phase of the war’s advent,
imbalance might be corrected and a better perspective attained if the
Federalist position and record were examined in more detail. Finally,
the transition from doctoral dissertation to the printed page is
hazardous. Although it has been accomplished quite well in this
instance, considerable improvement could be achieved with tightening
of the text. Increased effectiveness would result.

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Winthrop’s Boston: Portrait of a Puritan Town, 1630-1649. By Darrett
B. Rutman. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press,
for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at
Williamsburg, Va., 1965. Pp. x, 324. Frontispiece, notes, maps,
charts, appendixes, note on sources and methods, index. $7.50.)

With fervor like unto that of Puritans struggling to know good and
evil, historians have sought to comprehend Puritanism. And both, it