

canal operation in the antebellum epoch of mercantile dominance and in the modern period.

All the themes commonly found in studies of pre-1860 canal promotion and development are here: the impact of urban and state rivalries on planning, the diverse roles played by promoters and engineers, the struggle for federal aid, and the like. Much of the detail, however, bears on significant general problems. For instance, Gray incorporates rich data on engineering, construction, and navigational techniques. The Chesapeake and Delaware managers' attempts to apply steampower parallel the early American railroadmen's efforts at "research and development" through design of locomotives and experimentation with their use at company expense. Here too is a vivid microcosmic account of swift technological change—including railway competition as early as the 1830's—and of strategies adopted by canal managers to meet the challenge. These and other developments are well documented, by reference to the Chesapeake and Delaware manuscript records, state archival sources, congressional documents, and contemporary pamphlets and legal briefs.

In addition, Gray provides excellent discussions of the leading personalities in the enterprise, among them Matthew Carey, John Randel, and Benjamin Latrobe. His chapter on the Civil War years, when the canal assumed great importance in the Union's strategy and logistics, is exceptionally lively in a book otherwise written in a fairly dry style.

Beginning in the 1870's, the private company's flexibility for responding to manifold problems began to wither under financial pressures. Gray indicates well how the locus of interest and initiative passed from Philadelphia to Baltimore and how the older pattern of locally oriented interest groups gave way to pressure from well-organized shippers, industrialists, and merchants from all the Atlantic Coast cities.

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Andrew Jackson and the Bank War: A Study in the Growth of Presidential Power. By Robert V. Remini. *The Norton Essays in American History.* Edited by Harold M. Hyman. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967. Pp. 192. Notes, bibliographical review, index. \$4.50.)

This is a volume in the promising Norton series now being published for a general audience but based upon extensive firsthand research by specialists. Such series are commendable for their compactness, substantial scholarship, and attractive literary qualities. Hopefully, there will be more publications of this kind and fewer collected documents and readings that have saturated the market. Certainly this book on the national bank during the Jacksonian era is a model to be imitated. Robert Remini, an expert on Van Buren and Jackson, has got to the heart of the bank controversy, has methodically explored a wide variety of primary materials, and has told his story with a flair that is bound to keep his readers awake and wondering what will happen next.

Remini's thesis is that the main element in the bank war of the 1830's was Andrew Jackson himself rather than forces emphasized by other authors—the western farmer, the eastern working man, the rising entrepreneur, or a particular social group. Two stubborn, powerful men faced each other: Jackson and President Nicholas Biddle of the Bank of the United States. At many points in the conflict, Remini believes, a compromise which would have preserved a badly needed central banking system and still have introduced a necessary degree of governmental regulation was entirely possible; but owing to pride or prejudice, neither stubborn man would consent to it.

So the focus is on Jackson the politician, instead of financial, constitutional, sociological, or ideological aspects. It was Jackson who finally turned public opinion against the bank by 1834, though the President had run against the current earlier. Remini thinks that a majority of the people favored the bank at the outset and even through the election of 1832 (when Jackson probably lost rather than gained votes because of his recharter veto). This assessment of opinion corresponds with the findings of Jean Wilburn in another recent book on the subject but rests upon soft, incomplete evidence. In any case, the dynamic ingredient was Jackson's conviction that this monopolistic corporation wielded too much power over the nation's economy and government. And Jackson's victory was a tribute to his considerable skills as a politician and to his capacity of democratic leadership.

The long-run consequences were important. Jackson materially built up the office of the presidency to a position of much greater strength than it had ever had previously. The President developed the veto as a valuable instrument in policy making, he actively participated in the legislative process, he prevailed in his insistence upon complete control over his cabinet, he stimulated the resurgence of the two-party system, and he became the only national official representing the American people as a whole.

In terms of what the author proposes to do, perhaps beyond that as well, the book is both informative and interesting. No doubt it will be received quite favorably indeed.

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Maurice G. Baxter

Life in Two Worlds: Biography of William Sihler. By Lewis W. Spitz. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968. Pp. 199. Notes, index. \$3.95.)

The noted Reformation scholar, Lewis W. Spitz, Stanford University, ventures into the field of nineteenth century American frontier history with this biography and career evaluation of an Indiana Lutheran pioneer, William Sihler. The founder of several Lutheran colleges, Sihler exerted a profound influence in the organization of the Missouri Synod from his position as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, 1845-1885.

The book's title is well chosen. Sihler lived exactly half of his eighty-four years in Germany, half of them in America. Spitz, however, gives the title another twist. He explains, quoting Leigh Hunt: "There are two worlds—the