What is more bothersome is the writer's uncritical account of Tarkington. Perhaps that results from his feeling that the nation needs the inspirational qualities of his subject (p. 142). Whether such qualities make one an artist is another matter. Tarkington rejected thoroughgoing realism because "a thing is not art if a pinch of dirt is deliberately added to make it sell" (p. 133) and naturalism because it was "inimical to his artistic temperament, as well as to his religious ideals" (p. 31). Whether his novels provided a significant amount of realism is debatable, particularly since entertainment and humor were basic to them. Tarkington's professed aversion to the writer's exploiting the public seems weakened by the remark that he was "an astute judge of both the literary mart and popular taste" (p. 80), and by the fact that all but one of his novels were first serialized in a periodical. A millionaire from his writings, he judged "monetary success [as] the justifiable product of professional craftsmanship" (p. 48). Tarkington felt a writer was obliged to lift the human spirit, not to right wrongs. The frequent reference to Tarkington as a craftsman also undermines the author's claim as to his subject's creativity (pp. 48, 78, for example).

In sum, Fennimore presents a picture of a skilled writer who, although touching upon social concerns, was neither realist nor naturalist. Tarkington is lauded because of his popular appeal, as judged by book sales, as well as for that "practical idealism" which "would stand us in good stead in a none-too-brave new world" (p. 142). Fennimore presents a case for his subject as a talented writer who provided entertaining and uplifting literature and offered occasional glimpses of the influence of industrialization and urbanization in the Middle West. None of this convinces one, however, to think of Tarkington as an artist.

Indiana State University, Evansville

Darrel E. Bigham


The term "dean," as well as the educational role once identified by it, has recently lost some of the aura with which it was once surrounded. This is a natural result of the massive
expansion of universities and the proliferation of their once simple but functional governance structure. It is clear, however, that the dean depicted in this book held office back in an era when deans were truly deans.

Andrey A. Potter served as dean of the Division of Engineering at Kansas State College (Manhattan) from 1913 to 1920 and then went to Purdue University where he held the position of dean of the Schools of Engineering until his formal retirement in 1953. At neither institution was Potter merely a presider, office holder, or passive administrator; rather he was a catalyst for building, an inspirational leader, and the personification of a gentleman professor. Clearly he excelled in all three of the categories for which the performance of university professionals are allegedly judged (teaching, research, and service). It is men like Potter whose exemplary record gave rise to these performance criteria.

As summarized by Professor Eckles, Potter’s life and career read like a Horatio Alger novel. Just prior to his sixteenth birthday the future dean journeyed—alone—to the United States from Vilna, Russia. His family had early recognized and nurtured his versatile interests, among which were history, poetry, languages, science, and music. “He narrowly escaped becoming a child musical prodigy” (p. 6), but his real lodestar was America’s Benjamin Franklin. When he stepped off the train at North Station in Boston in 1897, he learned “that Benjamin Franklin was not in residence” (p. 8), but he quickly adjusted to the situation by gaining admission to “Boston Tech,” today’s Massachusetts Institute of Technology. There he received a sound curricular basis for what would be a remarkable professional career.

This background and his subsequent experience with the General Electric Company in Schenectady were vital components in Potter’s career preparation, but these alone did not create the dean. In molding his career Potter made full use of many, many talents, some of which were congenital, others of which he learned and cultivated in his adopted country. He personified the engineer-scientist, and at times the managerial entrepreneur. But the dean’s prime quality was his ability to lead and inspire through personal example. This best accounts for his successes in the instructional laboratory, for his administrative effectiveness, and for the deserving accolades he received from his professional contemporaries at Purdue and elsewhere throughout the nation.
Undoubtedly many persons have helped pave the way for Purdue University's current status of greatness, but this biographical account provides convincing evidence that Dean A. A. Potter was among those at the forefront of this development. And although this account is not a model of biographical scholarship, it does provide interesting insights about Purdue University as an evolving institution and the role that personal leadership has had in this development.

Indiana University, Kokomo
Victor M. Bogle

_Banks or No Banks: The Money Issue in Western Politics, 1832-1865._ By William Gerald Shade. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972. Pp. 328. Tables, maps, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. $15.95.)

As Shade notes in his introduction, historians have presented conflicting interpretations about “western banking” in the United States. He suggests that Frederick Jackson Turner viewed currency inflation and wildcat banking as frontier phenomenon, but later pointed out the significant increase of state banks in the thirties and the antibank movement which followed in most states. In Shade’s words, Bray Hammond contended that “opposition to banks and monetary expansion typified the agricultural West and that the push for easy money was more closely related to the needs of business enterprise” (p. 13). Hammond considered western emphasis on state banking monopolies immediately preceding the Panic of 1837, its strong antibank sentiment in the forties, and the development of free banking in the fifties “as responses to the area’s changing economic structure” (p. 13). More recently, Shade notes, James Roger Sharp argued “that the conflict over banks after 1837 reflected the true nature of Jacksonian democracy and the essential difference between the parties in the following decade” (p. 14).

Shade states: “Nowhere was the contest over banks more bitterly fought than in the rapidly growing states of . . . Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin” (p. 11). Suggesting that before the Panic of 1837 “neither free banking nor wildcat banks . . . were common” in the Old Northwest, Shade concludes that this panic “accelerated the polarization of attitudes on the bank issue as parties emerged more distinctly in the late 1830s” (p. 15). Then in the forties Democrats be-