The author has a good literary style but unfortunately occasional condensed statements have crept into the work that are likely to convey wrong impressions. Examples of such statements are: that the Delawares “successfully withstood their traditional enemies, the Iroquois,” after their removal to the upper Ohio (p. 27); that an English settlement was made upon the Ohio about 1725 (p. 78); that John Frazier “made a settlement on the Monongahela” in 1753 (p. 81); and that chief Shingiss lived at the forks of the Ohio (p. 83). If the Iroquois ceded the lands between the Allegheny Mountains and the Ohio in 1744 (p. 78), why were they asked to cede them again in 1768 (p. 103)?

There are also a number of definite errors: the Monongahela and the Little Kanawha were not the boundaries of the tract in which the lands of the Ohio Company were to have been located (p. 80); Gist did not go to the interior by way of the Monongahela in 1750 (p. 80); and General Gage was not “stationed on the frontier” in 1767 (p. 98). The interpretation of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix and of the Indiana and Vandalia projects seems to the reviewer to be distorted and also to ignore the fact that Virginia had lost her charter (p. 99-106).

Minor imperfections should not obscure the fact that Professor Ambler has produced an exceptionally good one-volume state history. It is readable, well-organized and well-proportioned, modern in its approach, and objective. It will be very useful in connection with the teaching of state history in the schools, it will enable the citizens of West Virginia to know their state, and it will contribute to an understanding of the history of the nation.

Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey

Solon J. Buck


Too often histories of agriculture have been written from the viewpoint either of farming technique or of an economic phase of national development. Seldom does one meet with a narrative that chiefly stresses the growth of agriculture as a human activity shaped and determined by a particular physical and social environment. Usually anecdote or abstract biographical data serve for what should be the human and social elements in history.

The author of this book has in a large measure escaped the narrow antiquari-
anism peculiar to the typical local historian. This refreshing volume, written mainly with a non-technical attitude, traces the history of agrarian New York during Indian and colonial times and down to about 1850. The author, despite the fact that he is the director of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station, is only incidentally concerned with a description of the progress of agricultural chemistry, and he does not debate the merits or demerits of farm legislation. He usually makes such subjects subservient to the larger idea of picturing "the changing social scene in rural New York." He is mainly interested in people and not in plows or potash unless they have definitely influenced the career of the New York farmer.

The history opens with a fascinating account of Indian agriculture and the early colonial efforts to produce crops. The eighteenth century New York farmer waged incessant warfare against the forest, yet utilized to his own advantage all that the forest contained; he was in turn farmer, trapper, logger, and distiller. After giving some attention to the early state land system, land politics, and the rise of county fairs, the author devotes three chapters to the development of the transportation system and its expansive effects upon farm life and production.

The book presents, sometimes highly successfully, the New York farmer as a human being, eating salt pork, drinking applejack, reading almanacs, and worshipping in log churches—a man of virtues and of vices, inhibitions, and hypocrisies. At one time we see him clearing the forests and engaged in the endless tasks of the pioneer; sometimes he goes to the fairs or lounges about the country store. Hedrick turns to our view all the facets of the farmer's character as it flourishes in the agrarian milieu. Writing of the New York farmer's penchant for gambling, he observes, "Old and young, rich and poor alike, gambled, yet any man in a rural community who quoted Shakespeare was under the suspicion of immorality." Agriculture in New York was at its best around 1850. The farmer at that time was less dependent than his successors upon the cities with their machine factories and bankers. In 1850, moreover, the farmer was held in high social esteem.

The last few chapters of the work deviate a bit from the trend of the preceding development in order to view some problems of contemporary agriculture, such as the necessity of an adjustment between agriculture and industry in the national economy and the deplorably declining standard of living and birth rate on the farms. Hedrick believes that the present-day farmer's salvation lies in group action: "It is apparent that individualism is drifting toward groupism, and that workers in all fields must incorporate or cooperate," or it is
not altogether impossible, he concludes, that the American Republic is headed toward the end reached by the Roman Republic.

The real significance of this book for students of Pennsylvania history is its exemplification of how the story of agriculture in this state could be written. A detailed and colorful description of the rural environment in Pennsylvania plus an analysis of the socio-economic rôle played by the Pennsylvanian in that environment during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would be a valuable contribution to the social history of the commonwealth and of the United States.

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