Documents of American History. (Crofts American History Series.)
Two volumes in one. Edited by Henry Steele Commager, New York University. (New York, F. S. Crofts & Co., 1934. xxi, 450; 454 p.)

Professor Dixon Ryan Fox, in his foreword to this book, alleges that the compiler has here brought together a larger collection than any previous one of the fundamental sources of American history that all students of the subject read about but, for the most part, have not read. Professor Commager states that he has "attempted to include those documents with which students should be familiar, such as the Northwest Ordinance or Marbury v. Madison; those which are illustrative or typical, such as colonial charters or land laws; those which focussed upon themselves the attention of the country, such as the Missouri Compromise or the Lincoln-Douglas Debates; those which serve as a convenient point of departure for the study of some economic or political development, such as labor cases or party platforms; those which illuminate some phase of our social life, such as the constitution of the Brook Farm Association or the Mooney-Billings Report; those which have certain qualities of interest, eloquence or beauty, such as Lee's Farewell to his Army or Holmes' dissent in the Abrams Case."

There are 486 sections, numbered consecutively through the two volumes; several sections contain two or more (up to eight) different documents. They range in time from the royal grant to Columbus in 1492 through the "New Deal" legislation, the Philippine Independence Act, and the Abrogation of the Platt Amendment in 1934. About forty per cent of the selections illustrate conditions of the time prior to 1860, while more than twenty-five per cent refer to events and conditions of the present century. The editorial introductions are generally adequate; they include the citation of the sources of the documents and also suggestions for collateral readings.

There are only four documents bearing specifically on the history of Pennsylvania. The original charter of Pennsylvania is not included; but place is found for "Penn's Plan of Union" of all the English colonies in North America in 1697; for the "Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges" of 1701; and for the "Pennsylvania Resolutions on the Boston Port Act" of 1774. An interesting
bit of the early history of Pennsylvania is found in "A Remonstrance of the distressed and bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania," dated February 13, 1764, and addressed to Governor John Penn by Matthew Smith and James Gibson "in behalf of ourselves and His Majesty's faithful and loyal Subjects" inhabiting what were then "the Frontier Counties of Lancaster, York, Cumberland, Berks, and Northampton." They begged for relief from various political and other discriminations in favor of the eastern counties and the Indians, for protection from Indian attacks, and for the revival of the "rewards for Indian Scalps" that had been given "in the late Indian war."

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William J. Martin


This third edition of the history of the Lutheran church is in the nature of a textbook for use in Lutheran seminaries and attempts to give "in brief form the most essential information concerning the history and status of Lutheranism in America." The necessary revision of materials and the preparation of new material, of which there is a considerable quantity, was done by the Reverend Willard D. Allbeck, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church of Pittsburgh (Highland Parish). Data on church history of various sections of the country not specifically treated in any of the topical divisions within the four periods of religious development outlined, is scattered throughout the book. Thus certain features of the history of the Pittsburgh and West Pennsylvania synods can be traced in connection with that of the General Synod and the General Council. A section in the chapter on independent German synods is devoted to the Joint Synod of Ohio, which "had its beginning at Baidland, Washington County, Pa., in 1812, meeting as a Western District of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania." The greatest historical interest of the book for western Pennsylvanians lies in the sketch of the life and work of William Alfred Passavant, born at Zelienople in 1821, who became a leader in the mission and charitable work of the Lutheran church and whose "aggressive organizing ability... resulted in the organization of the Pittsburgh Synod and the formulation of its Missionary Constitution." Interesting also are brief descriptions of the Passavant Hos-