and reached the zenith of his power between 1866 and 1868, only to suffer a keen disappointment in his failure to effect a conviction in the impeachment of Andrew Johnson.

The study entailed a great amount of research and is based upon a huge quantity of documents. It is written in a delightful style and is beautifully printed. The failure of the author to integrate Stevens' business activities with his political theories is unfortunate, because Stevens' interest in the protective tariff probably resulted from his interests in the iron industry. As a well-written chronicle of Stevens' political career, the work is a valuable contribution.

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This volume is the first of a number of collections of historical essays to be published under the general editorship of Professor William E. Lingelbach. The series is planned to embrace a variety of essays dealing with synthesis and interpretation, and it is hoped thereby to stimulate more philosophical and theoretical writing among historians. The first topic chosen is the one made so vivid by Frederick Jackson Turner. Ever since it was first suggested in 1893, American historians have been debating the significance of his frontier thesis.

What Turner meant and the validity of his conclusions are matters of increasing controversy, samples of which are contained in this book. The editor, Dixon Ryan Fox, expounds the Turner thesis and combines with it his own interpretation of the process of the transit of civilization. Benjamin F. Wright attacks the thesis; Avery Craven and John D. Hicks give their interpretations of it and suggest some modifications of and exceptions to Fox's theory. Marcus L. Hansen closes the book with the thought that American society is not so isolated as it seems and that European social conditions have had their reflex in America. The main burden of the criticism is that people migrated West with ideas gained from older environments and were dominated in large part even in the new environment by the old ideas. The replication is largely to the effect that the new sections lived different lives because of the demands of the strange environment and thus created distinctive institutions that taught the older settlements a vivid lesson.
From the standpoint of western Pennsylvania history, these essays are very stimulating. Western Pennsylvania was really part of the first Middle West, and the virility of its constitutional growth caused much concern on the seaboard, was at the root of many a political battle, and served as a liberalizing influence. But the region grew up soon, and newer "Wests" grew up, which left it behind among the settled and the organized. But it can never quite forget that it was once an outpost on the far frontier and that it lived as frontier societies do. These essays challenge better understanding of that far-off epoch and a clearer realization of the extent to which even then the community had an important influence on the evolution of youthful American society. No region should live too much in the present.

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Roy F. Nichols