place on the wall, to oblivion, to a photograph, and back to the wall again. The pages turn, the fan opens and shuts, the eye of the china doll turns outward to eternity. History may lie in the hand that holds the colored marble.

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The Preface to this volume (p. 3) is a model. It is very brief but altogether satisfactory to the general reader. The Introduction (pp. 5-19) is definitely superior. Expenditure of much time, energy, accumulated scholarship and money is revealed on virtually every page.

Dr. George Hunter, Philadelphia chemist and druggist, a personage of importance and distinction six generations ago, is lifted from obscurity which descended upon him after his death in 1823. But fortunately for his permanent reputation and for history he was a journalist or diarist and left four or more separate journals, all of which seem eventually to have come into the possession of the American Philosophical Society.

John Francis McDermott is a researcher, editor and author of considerable repute. Some of his output has appeared in this periodical. The reader may assume that materials in this volume are "exactly and completely reproduced from the original."

The journals of Dr. George Hunter as found herein printed, throw great light on his biography along with valuable historical information about travel, settlement and trade in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Illinois, Louisiana and Arkansas in the decade from 1796-1805.

The editor has added much in footnotes which may well be called "explanatory notes." Involving wide research and much travel the footnotes are an essential part of the publication.

Perfection is the objective of such publications, though it is rarely, if ever, attained. Where, as here, major imperfections are not found, minor discrepancies are not always eliminated by the most careful workmanship. There is debatable English (p. 5, line 12 and p. 6, column 2, line 4). There is repetition (unobjectionable) of a statement
of Thomas Jefferson (p. 8, column 2, top and p. 9, column 1, bottom). "Basrrop" (p. 19, footnote 57) should be "Bastrop." "James Meason" (p. 20, footnote 3) probably should be "Isaac Meason." "Raymond Chandler Downes" (p. 125) seems to be a reference to "Randolph Chandler Downes."

The "Sources Consulted," a selective bibliography, is of great value.

The Index may be classified as both comprehensive and elaborate, though annotation is drastically concise.

This volume must prove of importance not only to advanced historical scholars but to geographers, genealogists, sociologists and others of many types. It fills a place in the history of the American frontier, notably in the Mississippi Valley.

Professor Emeritus
University of Pittsburgh

Alfred P. James


The author, director and librarian of the Boston Athenæum, admits to a "curious muddle of occupations" in addition to the writing of history, which he conceives to be his profession. He has "also been involved in the affairs of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the American Antiquarian Society, the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, and . . . served on the boards of the New England Quarterly, the William and Mary Quarterly, and the Adams and Franklin papers"; in addition, he is "a trustee of one college, four museums, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and a number of corporations that own historic sites on a beat extending from Vermont to Virginia . . ." Apart from his biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, he has written engagingly on local history, as witness his topographical history of Boston and his centennial history of the Boston Public Library, also published by the Harvard University Press. These credentials do not necessarily indicate a Brahmin approach to the subject of this book on independent historical societies, subtitled "An enquiry into their research and publication functions and their financial future."