

the competence of the writer permits a discussion of this important subject." Would that more historians had this sense of honest candor and humility.

*Ohio Writers' Project, Columbus*

RANDOLPH C. DOWNES

*The First Century and a Quarter of American Coal Industry.* By HOWARD N. EAVENSON, B.S., C.E., DR. ENG., PAST PRESIDENT OF A. I. M. E. (Pittsburgh, Privately Printed, 1942. xiv, 701 p. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs.)

THOSE who are historically minded have been greatly aided, of late years, by books embodying studies of men or subjects not dealt with at length in general histories. An example of the first class is the useful series of *Pennsylvania Lives* published by the University of Pennsylvania Press.

*The First Century and a Quarter of American Coal Industry* is a striking example of the second class, a definitive study of a subject of great importance, particularly to Western Pennsylvania, never before so thoroughly done or with so great interest. Its author, Howard N. Eavenson, a graduate of Swarthmore College, after a lifetime of work and study in the coal industry, is one of the foremost, if not the foremost, authority on coal in all its forms. He has spent eight years in exhaustive research in every library and collection in many countries to produce a monumental and yet most interesting work.

While the century and a quarter named in the title of this work is 1758 to 1885, the first part of the book gives the earliest historical mentions of coal with scarce and interesting maps and references. The first four hundred pages will be of the greatest interest to the general reader since they give the history for each state and district, separately, without too great emphasis upon the technical aspects of the subject.

Readers interested in maps, very numerous now, will find fine reproductions of scarce maps from the collections of the British Museum, Privy Council Office, Public Records Office, Bibliotheque Nationale, as well as the Library of Congress and some fifteen American university and historical society collections.

The succeeding two hundred pages contain most valuable maps, charts, and tables connected more particularly with the technical aspect of the study and yet, most instructive to any general reader interested in industry. The voluminous data and figures contained are drawn from widely scattered and generally inaccessible sources, fortified by the expert knowledge of the author to check, supplement, and fill out lucunae.

The author has presented to the Society an autographed copy but the book ought to be included in the libraries of all historically minded readers.

*Pittsburgh*

HENRY O. EVANS