Dickinson resigned as governor of Delaware to serve in that capacity in Pennsylvania. After three stormy years as chief executive of the "Keystone State," Dickinson eagerly moved back to Delaware, which later sent him as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. After signing the Constitution, Dickinson wrote the widely-read "Letters of Fabius" supporting ratification of the 1787 document. As if to emphasize that he was among the older "Founding Fathers," Dickinson did not hold any major public office after 1787. His death in 1808 was widely noticed and greatly lamented.

The publication of what is now the definitive biography of John Dickinson will go far to gain for the "Farmer" the admiration and esteem strangely withheld during his lifetime. A selected bibliography, index, and several illustrations (including the famous 1770 Charles Willson Peale portrait of John Dickinson) all enhance the value of this volume for scholar and layman alike. Professor Flower is to be commended for making available this readable biography of the heretofore neglected "Farmer" and the Friends of the John Dickinson Mansion are to be commended for encouraging and supporting this publication and for helping to restore and maintain the beautiful ancestral Dickinson home near Dover, Delaware.

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Professor James C. Mohr has found a distinctive pair of Civil War diaries, one by Rachel Bowman, kept from 1858 to 1865, and the other by Samuel Cormany, kept from 1859 to 1865. Mohr alternates sections of the two accounts. First we read Rachel's words, then Samuel's; we watch them meet in college, part, meet again and marry, move to Canada, then return to the Cumberland Valley, where Samuel enlists in the Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry in 1862. Rachel then keeps her diary from the home front in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, while Samuel writes from the frontlines at Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Petersburg, and Appomattox. Finally, the diarists come back together at the end of the war.

The editing is excellent. In an opening glossary Mohr identifies
all the kinfolk mentioned in the diaries. There are maps, photographs, explanatory footnotes, a thorough introduction, and chapter headnotes. The original characteristics of the text — odd spellings and the like — have been left intact.

Civil War soldiers’ diaries are not rare, and Samuel’s diary is not unusual. Neither is his character: he was determined to be a brave soldier, a true Christian, and a loving husband. His only idiosyncrasy seems to be hydrotherapy. Rachel’s diary is one of the few we have from Civil War women, however, and it is more useful and interesting. It is especially good on domestic details: her baby’s health, her daily chores, how “blue” she feels with Samuel gone (like him, she also wishes she had more religion). To understand the two of them is to understand many of our ancestors.

The only flaws are in some of the claims the editor makes for the diaries and the diarists. Mohr asserts, for example, that the Cormans were from “middling farm families and rural areas,” and that this makes them “quite different from most of the Americans whose diaries have survived.” Personal narratives, he writes, tend to come from “individuals in the upper echelons of society, and they were usually located near major metropolitan areas” (p. xi). This is not true of Civil War diaries. In fact, the clear majority of the published ones come from hundreds of soldiers much like Samuel — college educated, “middling” men from small towns and rural areas. The distinctive feature of the Cormany diaries is not their existence, then, but their coexistence in this form (we have many husband-and-wife letter collections, but not husband-and-wife diaries).

Readers of Civil War diaries should find this handsome and well-managed volume worthwhile, both for its love story and its war story.

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Mother Jones Speaks: Collected Writings and Speeches. Edited by Philip S. Foner. (New York: Monad Press, 1983. Pp. 724. Preface, acknowledgments, selected bibliography, index. $35.00, cloth; $14.95, paper.)

Philip S. Foner’s latest endeavor is the collected works of the woman known as “Mother” to much of the American working class. Mary Harris Jones’s remarkable career spanned the latter half of her