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Book Notices

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History of the Grasslands of North America

These two books which must be read together to form a fair appraisal of the author's intention, present the first really important bibliography of the natural conditions of the central region of the United States. In preparing his manuscripts some 2500 titles of primary sources have been carefully reviewed. The ecologists as well as the geographers and agronomists will find a wealth of background material which cannot be overlooked any longer as exploration and exploitation give way to the responsibility of dealing with an environment which contrasts so markedly from the eastern forested land areas. The author's concept of the grassland formations is strikingly like that of the early competent description and emphasizes the same plant types made familiar in the writings and lectures of John H. Schaffner. The second part of the work owes its inspiration in great part to the publication of N. S. Shaler. The total impression left with the reader is a more complete and more reliable account than found in some of the modern ecologists' efforts. What makes Malin's work valuable to an understanding of the social implications of the grassland is the main thesis that social process is rooted to the environment. Only exceptional histories have revealed awareness of this relation.

It is unfortunate for the distribution of these books that a publisher who would bring the work to the attention of a large reading public was not selected. The books must be obtained directly from the author.—A. E. Waller.

(2) Essays on Historiography, 1946. Published by James C. Malin, 1541 University Drive, Lawrence, Kansas.