

Jones narrates the history of the Tennessee debt controversy in uncluttered prose. He carefully mined the state's newspapers, but his research in manuscripts unearthed fewer riches. His book raises salient questions which are only partially answered. How did Tennessee's "low tax" faction compare with Virginia's Readjusters and repudiators in other states? How does Jones square his "left fork" conclusion with Woodward's argument that in the 1880s "the right-forkers contrived to keep the South fairly faithful to the Eastern alignment" (*Origins of the New South*, p. 50)? Surprisingly, Jones relegates mention of his break with Woodward to a mere footnote (p. 169n). Not until southern debt policy as a whole is examined will the winding road to the New South be understood.

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Senator Lenroot of Wisconsin: A Political Biography, 1900-1929.

By Herbert F. Margulies. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977. Pp. x, 432. Notes, bibliography, index. \$21.00.)

Herbert F. Margulies' biography of Irvine L. Lenroot glances at the senator's life from beginning to end, but the focus is on Lenroot's political career as a Wisconsin state assemblyman and as a representative and senator in Congress. During his early political life Lenroot was known as a progressive insurgent. He was a La Follette man; he worked for passage of the primary election law, conservation measures, railroad taxation based on physical valuation, and agricultural credits legislation; he sympathized with the purposes of dry and antigambling bills; he supported efforts to limit the powers of Speaker Joseph Cannon; and he voted against the final version of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff. By the late 1920s, however, Lenroot was considered a party regular. The change, Margulies argues, was less in Lenroot than in circumstances. The senator had always viewed politics as the art of the possible, and he was generally consistent in his role as a practical legislator and a moderate progressive. He directed his efforts toward achieving compromise, harmony, and government by consensus, which he thought possible because of his faith in the informed will of the people. However, like many others of this period, he was partisan; the Republican party, in his view, was a vehicle of progress, and he would not desert it for some new and untried coalition.

The search for harmony in politics sometimes brought results, but at other times a satisfactory consensus could not be achieved. Even in the areas of failure (such as support for the St. Lawrence Seaway project and United States membership in the League of Nations and participation in the World Court—with appropriate reservations), Margulies feels that Lenroot made significant contributions. In all, Margulies believes Lenroot was more important than is generally recognized. Much of the senator's most significant work was behind the scenes, and "the course of compromise led to the unspectacular and often unnoticed middle of the road" (p. viii). Lenroot deserves to be remembered as more than the man who might have been nominated for vice-president at the 1920 Republican National Convention. (The fact that he was not so nominated, Margulies makes clear, came out of his own action—or inaction—at the time, and the result was one which Lenroot did not regret.)

Margulies' work is based on extensive research in the documents and unpublished sources. The author is straightforward in his presentation and is careful to affirm no more than his evidence allows. What speculation appears is clearly indicated by a "perhaps" or a "may have been." His conclusions generally support recent interpretations, particularly those concerning the League of Nations battle and the election of 1920. This study of a moderate progressive from a state often considered radical during the years from 1900 to 1929 provides valuable insights into Republican progressivism and into the issues many Americans saw as vital to the nation's well-being in the early twentieth century.

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Rainey of Illinois: A Political Biography, 1903-34. By Robert A. Waller. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977. Pp. xii, 260. Notes, maps, bibliography, index. \$12.50.)

Rainey of Illinois is a good, solid, old-fashioned political biography that performs a valuable task in rescuing its subject from undeserved obscurity and elevating him to his proper status as "legislative marshal of the New Deal" (p. 181). Bryanite in the 1890s, progressive in the Roosevelt-Wilson era, majority leader and severest critic of New Era Republicanism, and speaker of the House during the First Hundred Days, Rainey was, according to Robert A. Waller, the personification of the