

some matters of historical interest in which he very much desired the assistance of Senator Kern and although he met the Senator several times and saw him often he never presented his letters of introduction or mentioned his business. Senator Kern seemed the busiest man in Washington and rarely slept over six hours, if so much, out of the twenty-four.

Mr. Bowers, the author of the book under review, is a well-known newspaper man of Indiana. For a quarter of a century he has been in close touch with Indiana politics. He was secretary to Senator Kern and in sympathy with the senator's views. While the whole volume is thus sympathetic there is no offensive partiality, no long arguments so often indulged in by apologists to prove his hero always in the right. The reviewer, as has been intimated, was not a follower of Senator Kern but he has not found a single expression in the volume at which offense could be taken. Mr. Bowers is a graceful writer, his style is clear and simple. The volume should rank with Mr. Foulke's *Life of Morton* as one of the two best contributions to Indiana biographical and political literature.

The Valley of Democracy. By MEREDITH NICHOLSON. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; 1918. p. 284. \$2.00.

This is a series of magazine articles dealing in a critical way with the life of the people of the Mississippi valley. There are six essays averaging 40 pages each. The whole series is tinged with a political cast which indirectly reflects the deep and consistent interest of the people in things political. In dealing with so large a unit the author necessarily uses wide generalizations each of which is open to grave exceptions. Time and again he insists on the conservatism of the people as a whole. How he arrives at his conclusions is not always shown. He points out that Grangers, Greenbackers, Populists and Progressives are all native to the place but continues that the West was merely flirting with these. As a matter of fact the dreams of the fathers are nearly always realized by the children and the visions of the agitators referred to above are practically all now on our state and national statute books. The author flits with grace from parlor car, summer resort

and city club to the serious conclusions of the western historians. One is left with the suspicion that somewhere in the background are the busy millions of whose busy life and thought these clubs, societies and activities are merely surface indications, merely driftwood on the current. For fear of being misunderstood, I quote "Mr. George Ade's Indiana farm is one of the State's show-places. The playwright and humorist says that its best feature is a good nine-hole golf course and a swimming pool" (p. 87). Again, "One night, a few years ago, on the breezy terrace of one of the handsomest villas in the lake region, I talked with the head of a great industry whose products are known round the world." It is hardly necessary to point out that conclusions drawn from such sources are liable to be over colored. The picture of Chicago is open to the same general objection. Chicago does not live on the boulevards nor sit in the music halls nor picture galleries. It lives in the smoke, grime and sweat of the factories and counting houses. The life of the west and of Chicago is not play but work, a hard continuous struggle. I have enjoyed the "big-brother" hospitality of Chicago but the west knows that Chicago takes a heavy toll of its manhood and womanhood as well as of its wealth. But these things can not all be told in a magazine article. Mr. Draper who, and not Dr. Thwaites, was the founder of the Wisconsin Historical library, spent a lifetime collecting materials for a history of the life of the west and the work is only begun. A careful study of this material would have so far improved Mr. Nicholson's perspective that all doubts of the continual improvement of the west would have disappeared. Its pulse is as strong and steady as ever and its home life, politics and general culture better as the years pass. It has its problems, many of which are national, and in the solution of these it has little regard for any other section. However, one may disagree with many of the statements Mr. Nicholson is a vigorous writer. His birds-eye review will arouse healthy thought. It is better perhaps to write of the more pleasant things even at the expense of fact, of the social settlement rather than of the slum, of George Ade's golf course and swimming pool than of the distressing tenements that still disfigure too many of our western farms.