

Reviews

American Presidents; their Individualities and their Contributions to American Progress by THOMAS F. MORAN, New York, Crowell Co., 1928, pp. 318, \$2.00.

This is a revised and considerably enlarged edition of the book published under the same title in 1917. The volume is a series of character portraits and an evaluation of the services of the Presidents of the United States from 1789 to the present time. Dr. Moran has divided his subject into five chapters: From Washington to Jackson; From Jackson to Lincoln; From Lincoln to Coolidge; Why Great Men are Not Chosen Presidents; and The Ethics of the Presidential Campaign. With an impartial, keen analysis and at times even a humorous touch, the outstanding characteristics of each president, his strength as well as his weaknesses, are briefly described. He appears not only as an individual, but in relation to his contemporaries and to the period in which he lived. In the chapter, "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen Presidents," are brief comments on some thirteen prominent men, such as Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Thaddeus Stevens, John Hay and Elihu Root, who might have made good presidential timber, but who for one reason or other were not "available." The author admits that the best talent of the nation is not finding its way into politics, but in spite of the haphazard way in which the presidents have been selected thinks the results on the whole are not disquieting. After describing in his last chapter the bombastic presidential campaigns of the past, he suggests as helpful to a more careful selection of the presidents the doing away with such campaigns; an amendment to the Constitution, so as to provide for a single term of six years for the President; a reconstruction of the national nominating conventions on a more equitable and truly representative basis; a change in the powers of the National Committee; the enact-

ment of definite presidential primary laws in all the states; and definite and constructive party programs. The author's independent judgment, his sense of proportion, his critical yet kindly comments, and the clear, direct style make a very interesting book for the general reader, and one which is suggestive to the student. The book is illustrated by portraits of some of the more important personages discussed and has a good index.

ESTHER U. McNITT.

Cass County in the World War. Edited by ORA E. COX.
Printed at Logansport, Indiana, under direction of
the Cass County Historical Society, 1928. Pp. 383.
\$13.50.

This stout quarto volume, made possible by recent appropriation by the Commissioners of Cass County, is an unusually complete and carefully compiled account of the activities of an Indiana county during the World War. A table of contents, unfortunately omitted, would reveal that practically all the information which could well be expected in such a book has been included. It is especially complete, as such a book should be, in its lists of persons who served in the armed forces of the nation. Lists are given of the June, 1917, draft and the June, 1918, draft in addition to the full army and navy records, in alphabetical order, compiled from the files of the Adjutant General of Indiana and from local records. The citations received by Cass County citizens and the list of those who lost their lives in the war are given together; it would have been a more convenient arrangement to have had separate lists. No illustrations are included, but the reviewer hardly knows whether to class this as an omission or as a virtue, since the inevitable tendency in such publications is to include pictures of little historical significance. Special commendation should be given for the choice of the paper upon which the book is printed; it is of good appearance and promises more durability than most publications of the present time.