

## Reviews and Notices

*Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858.* By ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928. Two volumes, XXVIII 607, VII 741 pp. Illustrated, \$12.50.

When the late Senator Beveridge began his work as a historian, his notable experience as public man, his splendid powers of expression, and his willingness to search long and patiently were valuable assets. During his period as a writer of history, he added the passion to deal impartially with men and events. When preparing his life of Marshall, he was unwearied in his labors to find and study the sources for himself. He employed his rare literary skill in the production of the four fascinating volumes dealing with the life and times of the great jurist, but he had not then attained that spirit of detachment so essential to the very best results. The volumes under review reveal a splendid success in dealing fairly with the contemporaries of Lincoln. Readers familiar with volumes on the great War President will hardly recognize James Shields, Roger B. Taney, James Buchanan and Stephen A. Douglas as portrayed by the impartial pen of Senator Beveridge.

In every instance, Lincoln is set forth as a leader slowly evolving his gifts, his powers, and his convictions in regard to public questions. His rivals are not pictured as the villains of the drama—mere demagogues and weaklings used to show up the virtues of the hero. There is a recognition of the fact that Lincoln required time for development; that he could and did make mistakes; that men who disagreed with him could be, and often were, right. It is especially true that the greatness of Douglas stands out. In every chapter after the two leaders came into contact, there is evidence of the strength of the man who was Lincoln's great political rival.

The biography, which ends abruptly at the close of the de-

bates of 1858, just where the gifted author received his summons, is a fresh and appealing narrative. Senator Beveridge sought aid from a number of persons. He asked and received much counsel, which he readily and generously considered, but he went directly to the sources and made his own interpretations. No previous author has written adequately of Lincoln's career in the Illinois Legislature, nor with his two years in the National House of Representatives. These two phases of his life are here treated fully and truthfully.

In regard to the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, which are covered in the last chapter of the second volume, there is a wide departure from the accounts in standard works. The author is not the first to challenge the tradition regarding the purpose of the third question which Lincoln propounded to Douglas at Freeport, as well as, other traditional views concerning the debates. It is to his credit, however, that, without the slightest wavering, he ignores long established views and analyzes the situation from beginning to end simply and sanely.

When dealing briefly with the South Carolina "Ordinance of Nullification" of 1832, the author refers to it once (p. 129) as "South Carolina's Ordinance of Secession". He writes also that newspapers read by Lincoln "had printed news of the secession movement before the convention met." This is unfortunate. The terms "nullification" and "secession" should not be used as if interchangeable. There was no secession movement in South Carolina in 1832-1833. This is a matter in regard to which public men are especially prone to hold erroneous notions.

The writer of this review hopes that this new life of Lincoln to 1858 will be widely read. He especially commends it to all who have not understood that Lincoln became a great man only through a long and slow process of development. He hopes and expects that this biography will go far toward exploding standardized but false notions about the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the rivalry between Lincoln and Douglas. He believes with the late Senator Beveridge that Lincoln did not demolish the arguments of Douglas but rather that he eventually accepted as his own the fundamental principle of Douglas—that the primary object was the saving of the Union. The truth about the great rivals is not that they were poles apart but that their paths converged from 1854 to 1861.

Undoubtedly there will be admirers of Lincoln who will be disappointed in the new work by Senator Beveridge, at first. All lovers of truth and fair play, however, will be later, if not at once, struck with the rare impartiality of the volumes. It required unusual independence, an uncommon passion to set forth the unbiased facts, and real courage, to write the story as presented. It is a great work, though but half completed, and it will live.

WILLAM O. LYNCH

*The Northern Boundary of Indiana.* By Mrs. FRANK J. SHEEHAN. Indiana Historical Society Publications. Volume VIII, Number 6, Indianapolis, 1928. Pp. 32.

"A Labor of Love" would be a well deserved description of the brochure entitled *The Northern Boundary of Indiana* recently made available by the interesting pen of Mrs. Frank J. Sheehan.

Even though she gives credit for the painstaking, diligent searches and friendly coöperation, it was her sense of "news value", her appreciation of the dramatic and challenging, that gave direction to these searches and later, out of their fruits, made possible this interesting review of the events that moved so quickly and with such startling potentiality upon the stage of early Indiana history.

Perhaps the fact that she almost as much, if not more than any other individual, by her enthusiasm and indomitable courage, marshalled friends and resources which finally resulted in that generous investment by the public and the state of Indiana, now known as the Dunes State Park of Indiana, gives her an unique background out of which to know these values and to portray the figures that hurry with such long range influences across that early State.

"54'40 or Fight" while nationally of tremendous potentiality was not more so than this ten mile strip of Indiana, as we discover easily in the pages so carefully limned for our review of the changing scenes.

The interplay of adventure, of greed, of strategic moves for personal advantage or political prestige, are brought out in bold relief as the author's intimate knowledge of our state, her institutions, her people and her industries, the work, the