

Reviews and Notices

A History of Chicago, II. By Bessie Louise Pierce. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1940. Pp. 478, \$5.00.

Professor Pierce, in this second volume of her proposed four-volume biography of Chicago, continues to maintain the high standard of scholarship and literary skill which she set for herself in her first book, *The Beginning of a City*, which covered the period from 1673 to 1848. The sub-title of the second volume is "From Town to City, 1848-1871."

For those historians whose interest centers upon urban development of the nineteenth century, this narrative, beginning in 1848, when the first railroad came to Chicago, and continuing until 1871, when the city was destroyed by fire, will be of great significance. The casual researcher will be satisfied by the almost encyclopaedic data found on every page, and the general reader will be rewarded with most adequate generalizations. It seems certain that this study will remain for years as the only key to the history of the "Queen of the Lake."

The author describes Chicago with its eastern and western transportation connections as the logical community through which thousands of emigrants passed *en route* to the trans-Mississippi West. European immigrants, as well as native Americans, remained in the city to form the structure of society and to boast that "The world comes to Chicago." The coming of the railroad, the short life of the plank road, and the construction of canals stimulated both passenger and freight movement until Chicago was the cynosure of shippers' eyes from both the South and the West. Railroads and grain were transforming frontier Chicago into an urban city with a metropolitan economy which was to express itself in intricate banking and financial institutions. Laborers, both native and foreign, asserted themselves as early as the 'fifties when they organized for "self-protection and for charitable purposes generally."

Chicago's development from town to city may be understood, says Professor Pierce, if the historian keeps in mind the expanse of the city physically, the development of an urban culture, and the rapid increase of wealth. It was these forces which gave rise to municipal corruption and confusion, made necessary police and fire protection, stimu-

lated vice and gambling, produced a haphazard architecture, created belief in free education, and moulded the refinements and ways of an urban world in a transitional period. Crude theatricals, such as "Our Eastern Cousin in Chicago," could be billed as easily as "Othello," and crime statistics could mount in spite of church-going. Even the strain of the Civil War did not swerve Chicago from becoming the *entrepôt* of the Middle West. In this period of "passion and prejudice" the city, overwhelmed with militaristic fervor, volunteered liberally, but did not forget to quarrel over Lincoln's policies and the state of the Union. And the city continued to grow --in population, in trade, and in wealth. By 1871, "America possessed no more interesting city than Chicago." It was primitive and modern, rural and urban, tawny and cultured. One beheld there vestiges of the pioneer community, so adequately described in the first volume of this series, and one also saw the beginnings of a metropolitan American community. Nothing seemed inconsistent to this city surging forward to meet a flaming destiny in 1871.

The Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, was, in effect, to burn away the primitive and to make room for modernity. How this fire started is still unknown, although several explanations have been offered. It is but fair to mention, however, that Mrs. O'Leary's cow is completely exonerated. That is, the evidence that the cow kicked over the lamp is no stronger than that against several other alleged culprits, including Providence, Communists, and a group of celebrating Irishmen.

The volume is attractively printed, is illustrated with contemporary maps and photographs, and contains fifteen appendices. Certainly, no historian of urban growth in the United States can ignore this study which bids fair to be a model.

Edward Livingston: Jeffersonian Republican and Jacksonian Democrat. By William B. Hatcher, Louisiana State University Press, University, Louisiana, 1940. Pp. xvi, 518, illustrated, \$3.50.

This attractive volume, the second of the Southern Biography Series to be published, deals with Edward Livingston of New York and Louisiana. A brother of Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, Edward first came to the front in