

Reviews and Notices

This Land is Ours. By Louis Zara. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1940. Pp. 779, map, \$2.75.

This historical novel of the Old Northwest follows the Benton family from Philadelphia to Lancaster, where it paused in 1755 for the Indian troubles to subside, to Pittsburg, on to Detroit in time to be in on Pontiac's attack, to the Illinois Country during the Revolution, to Vincennes, and finally to Chicago. Andrew, the son, was captured at Detroit, adopted by the Shawnees, and lived for a period with them at Piqua where he married into the tribe. Then he went back to Detroit with the general release of prisoners after Bouquet's expedition. After his marriage to Hannah Morgan, Andrew wandered to Kaskaskia, went with Clark to Vincennes, and finally settled at Vincennes. He fought with Wayne at Fallen Timbers, where his father was killed, with Harrison at Tippecanoe, escaped death at the Fort Dearborn massacre, and lived to see the Indians give way to roads, farms, and towns. At eighty, he was contemplating setting out again for less crowded regions.

Across the pages of the novel parade Croghan, Gladwin, Pontiac, Clark, Vigo, Wayne, Little Turtle, Wilkinson, Harrison, Tecumseh, Point Saible, Gurdon Hubbard, and many others, including scouts, wilderness-men, river-men, traders, soldiers, Indians, neighbors, children, grandchildren, dogs, and buffalo. (The white bull was never found and killed.)

The book is magnificent in its conception and scope, and excellent in its general execution. The story and characters keep well within the bounds of historical accuracy. The dialogue is good—at times spiced with realistic bits from soldier and hunter—but now and then a sentence combines perfect modern English with pioneer words and phrases in a manner a bit noticeable. Admittedly this is a hard thing to handle.

The central theme, "This land is ours," permeates the book—the Indian's belief as well as the white man's. One of the best things in the book is the treatment of the real wilderness-man's attitude towards the Indian, a far truer picture than that usually portrayed by the expression, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian." The author is almost Parkman-like in his attention to topography and naturalist-

like in his background of flora and fauna. Characters are adequate, though not outstanding. There are no powerful villains and no overwhelming heroes. The author's characters are in keeping with the book and life. The book is hardly dramatic enough to film into a "super-colossal," horrifying enough to be a thriller, or heart-rending enough to be a best seller. Rather it is a saga of a family and a region.

A casual reading by someone familiar with the period would have eliminated some of the minor irritations. Pioneers did not clear land by starting forest fires (how the senior Benton stopped his fires is not clear); nor did they sow wheat in newly-cleared land—if they wanted wheat. Invariably the rifle is loaded in a most amazing way: "Methodically he rammed in the ball and spilled the powder down the muzzle and into the pan." This isn't a slip, it's a ritual. A smooth-bore musket becomes a rifle (283-4). People travel up the Ohio in "broadhorns," chop limbs with mattocks, and do other interesting things. Better editing would have taken care of the "none were" habit.

This Land is Ours is recommended not only for the historical student, but for the reader who enjoys a good story and at the same time may like to refresh his mind on some of the struggles by which the heart of our continent became what it is.

R. CARLYLE BULEY.

Lazare Carnot, Republican Patriot. By Huntley Dupre. The Mississippi Valley Press, Oxford, O., 1940. Pp. 343, \$4.50.

This volume is the first of the series designated as the "Foundation Studies in Culture" by the new historical publishers, and is a worthy addition to that growing list of studies of important figures of the French Revolutionary era which American scholars have contributed in recent years.

Carnot, justly known as the Organizer of Victory for France, 1793-1795, merits the respect of every true friend of popular government, for he not only helped save one of the first of modern democracies from its autocratic enemies, but he has furnished others with practical and effective patterns of military administration and tactics which, if