

parts of this volume are the five chapters which deal with economic and financial matters: "Wartime Finance, 1861-1863"; "The Financial Collapse"; "The Struggle for Economic Independence"; "Planter and Farmer in Wartime"; and "The Trade Through the Lines." The lack of specie and the need for a circulating medium of exchange incited legislative attempts to help the financial life of the state by the issuance of state paper. Such attempts for the most part were disastrous, although, as Professor Bettersworth shows, Mississippi state notes depreciated less rapidly than Confederate currency. The twin evils of speculation and inflation added to the hardships of war suffered by the ordinary people. Too, the very presence of the negro slaves on large plantations was an economic liability. The curtailing of cotton production during the war left the negroes virtually useless as sources of profit. As "non-producing consumers" they became a drag upon a way of economic life which had been reduced to a subsistence economy by the circumscriptions and privations of war.

Professor Bettersworth has used the available manuscript and printed sources with skill and painstaking care. His interpretations are usually backed by a more than adequate array of sound evidence. It is to be regretted, however, that his style of writing leads him into devious paths of circumlocution which often obscure significant statements. Too, the author frequently predicates his narrative upon an assumption of a familiarity with certain not-too-basic facts, supposing a knowledge which even the professional historian may not always have. These minor flaws, while detracting from the book in the eyes of the general reader, in no way impair the very real excellence of *Confederate Mississippi*. Dr. Bettersworth is to be commended for having done an excellent piece of research, which reveals with piercing clarity the manifold political, social, and economic problems facing the state of Mississippi and the Confederacy in those war years.

Oscar S. Dooley

The Little Giant: The Story of Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. By Jeannette Covert Nolan. (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1942. Illustrations by Monte Crews. Pp. ix, 272. \$2.50.)

In writing *The Little Giant*, Mrs. Nolan has created a biography which is at once entertaining and instructional to a

wide range of readers. For the adult who knows the story of Lincoln and Douglas, it provides a stimulating and refreshing experience. For the younger reader it should make much more real and human the purely political and uninspiring story which he will be expected to learn from his high school history book.

In this biography state and national politics are pictured as forces which make great statesmen. While the career of Lincoln is secondary to that of Douglas throughout the story, the certainty of the conflict between them is very early made clear. At first the political issues of the times appear to be made to order for the display and exercise of Douglas' prowess. But as time goes on he becomes less and less the master politician and more and more the man with a mission. In contrast, Lincoln seems from the first to stand squarely on the moral issue of slavery, with political interests playing a somewhat secondary role in his conduct. But the significant thing about Mrs. Nolan's story lies in its gradually unfolding conception of Lincoln and Douglas not as men with fundamentally conflicting purposes but as men with opposing solutions for a problem endangering the Union, for which they would both sacrifice themselves.

While not every reader may agree with this interpretation of Mrs. Nolan's story, none can fail to note its emphasis on the sincerity of Lincoln and Douglas and their mutual respect for each other throughout the years. The work of Douglas in holding Illinois for the Union, even after Lincoln's inauguration, is a story not always known, even to many adult readers. The same is true of Douglas' reason for wanting to organize the Nebraska territory, a point which Mrs. Nolan explains at length.

Other historical sidelights, which are brought into the narrative naturally and effectively, include stories about such men as Andrew Jackson, who, as Douglas' guiding spirit from early youth, is painted as a very human but very great figure. In contrast, Buchanan's disloyalty to his party is forcefully presented; and the causes of the Mexican War, discussed earlier in the story, are described simply and frankly. Of course, the excitement of state and national campaigns is pictured vividly, and the famous debates are treated in detail as political events of the time.

But with all its attention to politics and national problems

this biography is still the story of Lincoln and Douglas. Out of seemingly insignificant but really portentous events Douglas' strong character and his democratic philosophy develop. In sharp contrast to his background and in much less detail stands that of Lincoln, sketched in skillfully from time to time as the occasion demands and with increasing indication of his great destiny.

To this skill in characterization and to her careful historical workmanship, evident in *The Little Giant*, Mrs. Nolan adds a style of writing admirably adapted to her subject.

Kenneth B. Thurston

J. Sterling Morton. By James C. Olson. (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1942. Pp. xiv, 451. Illustrations. \$3.50.)

The people of Indiana should find this biography of the founder of Arbor Day very interesting and significant. It is the story of one of Nebraska's pioneer statesmen who became secretary of agriculture in Cleveland's second administration and whose political career was cut short by that other leader of the Cornhusker State, William Jennings Bryan. Born in New York and raised in Michigan, Morton attended the Wesleyan Seminary at Albion, Michigan, and the state university at Ann Arbor. From the latter he was expelled before graduation, as the result of criticism growing out of the dismissal of a member of the faculty. The occasion was less discreditable to him than to the university and it revealed a young man with a strong, determined character.

He soon became a pioneer settler in Nebraska, where he quickly reacted against his environment and the times by criticizing the conduct of the Civil War and joining the party of the opposition. As a politician he was a failure, but as an agriculturist he succeeded. Always a conservative, he opposed the Grange and the Alliance and all for which they stood. For many years he served the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad as publicist, lobbyist, and agent. He was for a time the leading member of the Democratic party in the state, but he favored the railroads and opposed the radicals, particularly William J. Bryan. Often he made considerable sacrifices of time and money for his party, but he preferred to see it defeated rather than to see it win under Bryan's leadership. As an outstanding agriculturist and con-