One Hundred Great Years. By Thomas Ewing Dabney. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana University Press, 1944, pp. xii, 503. Appendices and index. $4.00.)

The Picayune came into being during a rainstorm in New Orleans on January 25, 1837, as the Southern version of the "Penny Press" of the Jackson period. It grew to manhood within a decade and became a leader of the expansionist movement to the west in the Mexican War period. It recorded the crumbling economy of the Cotton Kingdom and the tide of rebellion. It watched the defeat of the Confederacy and the bitter experiences of reconstruction; it led New Orleans and Louisiana and the Gulf Coast region through good times and bad. As its competitors dropped aside one by one, the old Picayune survived consolidations and changes in leadership to become, as the New Orleans Times-Picayune, one of today's greatest American newspapers.

The story of a newspaper through a century must of necessity be a composite picture traced through thousands of issues, each a faithful record of the life of a community at the end of a single day. Just as a single issue of today's New Orleans Times-Picayune presents a side variety of subjects and personalities, so within its files are bound up in infinite number the stories, the heartaches, the successes and the failures, the tears and the laughter, and above all, the steady march of progress which have made New Orleans a romantic and an inspiring spot from the old Creole days to the present.

Thomas Ewing Dabney's One Hundred Great Years is more than a history of the Times-Picayune from its founding through 1940. It is the history of the nation's growth through a dramatic century as reported in the newspaper's columns. Mr. Dabney's scholarly background and his long training as a reporter are combined in a happy partnership to produce a readable and delightful story based on long and painstaking research. Perhaps no other writer has presented so clearly the contest for control of the city's destiny waged between the old Creole French and the rising tide of Anglo Saxons following the Louisiana Purchase, the decline and revival of Mississippi River traffic, the story behind the story of flood control.
While Mr. Dabney points out the significant contributions made by the Picayune's founders, George Wilkins Kendall and Francis Asbury Lunsden, as well as Samuel F. Wilson, Page Baker, Pearl Rivers and others whose names brought fame to the paper, he has rightfully discerned that a newspaper actually is made by a great body of anonymous workers who toil day after day, almost unknown to the public. It is to this group that he has dedicated his volume.

Fayette Copeland


Dr. Quaife, editor of the Series, naturally chose Lake Michigan as his own. Long familiar with the documents, the people, and the region, the author has produced a happy combination of solid history, travelogue, and inspirational description. Part one, "From Bark Canoe to Steel Leviathan," establishes the historical background. "Black Robe and Red Skin," "Dreamer of Empire," "Cities in Embryo," "Treason and Sin at Old Mackinac," "Sturgeon Boats," "Wind against Steam" are representative chapters which both suggest and deliver. In part two the "Talk of Many Things" ranges from an authentic historical account of state boundary disputes to nineteenth-century community-utopia quests and the Kingdom of Benton Harbor. Part three escorts the reader around the coast; fruit, tulips, dunesland, the Green Bay Road, and finally Chicago, the "Eighth Wonder of the World," are stops on the itinerary.

Treating as the author does, with topics of varying interest appeal, the writing presents, to the reviewer at least, a delightful change of pace. Being a historian, Dr. Quaife realizes that people who read this kind of book often want some meat as well as dessert. At times the reader finds himself mentally filing away the location of rich lodes of useful factual and source material; at others, chuckling over comedy low and high. Many shrewd observations and