be a Whig, though he lived until 1881) balanced his positions on state and federal functioning in the field of internal improvements (pp. 10-26, 57, 70, 77, 223).

The biography demonstrates repeatedly the stubborn fact that intricate processes of political adjustment cannot submit to full documentation. Baxter's account of Illinois state politics in the 1830's and 1840's, when Browning occasionally served as senator and representative, is skeletal probably because Illinois, like numerous other states, is poorly documented in that period. Also the Diary, such as it is, begins only in 1851, when Browning was 46, and is disappointing at critical junctures. For the dramatic events around May 18, 1860, when the Republicans nominated Lincoln and Browning was espousing him, although Browning's first choice was Bates, the leaf for May 18 is missing from the Diary pages and the account is cursory. Also missing are the leaves for June 9-13, 1861, when Browning's appointment to Douglas' vacant Senate chair was consummated; nor does the extant Diary mention this appointment until fifteen days after it occurred. Perhaps a little-known fact, unmentioned by Baxter, accounts for some of the Diary lacunae: the Diary entered the public domain under a stipulation that no criticism of Mrs. Lincoln should be conveyed therefrom.

On the whole, the greatest value of this biography derives from the fact that most of the persons engaged in political maneuvering escape greatness; whenever we can learn something of one of these prominent non-greats we are helped in our endeavors toward realism. It is to be hoped, however, that we shall rarely be proffered a biography destitute of either any picture of the subject or of any chronological summary, in index or out, of his major experiences. Lastly, may no one ever imitate a note-numbering which recommences at number one numerous times within every chapter.

University of Pennsylvania Jeannette P. Nichols

Congressman Abraham Lincoln. By Donald W. Riddle. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957. Pp. vii, 280. Bibliography, index. $4.50.)

"Why did Lincoln, in his single term in Congress, come short of success? What errors of judgment did he make—wrong judgments of party policy, failure to make correct

estimates of the views of his constituents, mistakes in the evaluation of colleagues and of party leaders? And what elements of personal character did Lincoln have to enable him to accept failure and rebuff in good humor, with no diminution in his loyal support of his party and its leaders—even of those responsible for his own ill treatment—without complaint and without recrimination?" These and other interesting questions are answered in Professor Riddle's latest book on this almost overlooked chapter of the Lincoln story.

Briefly, answers to the questions concerning his failure to succeed and errors of judgment are these. Lincoln offered his Spot Resolutions which were presented to embarrass Polk by focusing attention upon what the Whigs thought was a weak point in his case for the justification of the Mexican War. The response to the Resolutions in Illinois was prompt and negative. The sobriquet, "Spotty," stuck to Lincoln throughout his political life in Illinois. In less than two weeks Lincoln voted "aye" on the Ashmun Amendment which labeled the Mexican War as "unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun by the President." A short time later he made a full-length speech entitled "The War With Mexico" which was severely critical of Polk's war policy, bitter in its references to Polk, and negative in its attitude toward the war. Lincoln's Seventh District in Illinois was justifiably baffled when they remembered that Lincoln had supported the war during his congressional campaign.

Professor Riddle correctly concludes that Lincoln's brief career in Congress forced his own retirement for several years, diminished his party's strength in the state, and delivered the one dependable Whig stronghold in Illinois to the enemy.

This new book, according to the author, was written to serve two purposes: to further the understanding of Abraham Lincoln and to aid Lincoln's biographers. The author has served these purposes well by presenting Lincoln in the full context of the historical situations which occurred during his congressional career. He includes a detailed discussion of western expansion, the Mexican War, the administrative policies of Polk, the changing of political party alignments, and the increased tension of the slavery issue. He has also used all available sources for his limited subject, and, as a result,

has made it unnecessary for Lincoln's biographers to repeat the painstaking research that has gone into this study. Both purposes are served by an excellent bibliography and index.

Congressman Abraham Lincoln is a continuation of an earlier work, *Lincoln Runs for Congress,* published in 1948. In the earlier work Professor Riddle presented a study of Lincoln's campaign for nomination and election to Congress as a report of an episode in western history, rather than as a chapter of Lincoln biography. The book tells briefly the story of Lincoln's two attempts and successful third campaign, 1843-1846, to win election to the House as a Whig.

Purdue University Paul E. Million, Jr.

Education of an Historian. By Halvdan Koht. (New York: Robert Speller and Sons, 1957. Pp. xv, 237. Frontispiece, illustrations, notes, index. $6.00.)

Since Halvdan Koht moved from his birthplace in Tromso to southern Norway some seventy-two years ago, he has never allowed himself to be rooted in one spot or limited to the narrow confines of one field of historical specialization. Although he was thoroughly trained in Norwegian and medieval history in Norway and abroad by such masters as Sophus Bugge, Karl Lamprecht, and Gabriel Monod, his intellectual curiosity and almost universal interests soon led him to such divers fields of scholarship and practical activity as literature, mythology, politics, and linguistic controversy. Accordingly, his publications treat a wide variety of subjects ranging from old Norse sagas to Bismarck, from Ibsen and Wergeland to Norwegian social and economic history, and from the history of the United States to modern Scandinavian diplomatic history. While writing articles and books on these and other topics, he was active, at various times during his life, as a journalist, editor of the *Dictionary of Norwegian Authors,* professor of history at the University of Oslo, and a prominent figure in the Norwegian Labor Party (he was Norwegian foreign minister in 1940 when Hitler attacked Norway).

Two threads of thought run throughout his works: Norwegian nationalism and the role of class conflict in history. From an early date in his life Koht became interested