

among those whom the Muckrakers pilloried as "Enemies of the Republic."

It was during his last ten years as a senator (1897-1907) that Spooner exercised his greatest power. He was less than enthusiastic about some party measures such as the Dingley tariff bill, and Theodore Roosevelt's "hasty course . . . in pushing through the Panama Canal project caused Spooner some painful misgivings . . ." (p. 285), but in general he did defend Presidents McKinley and Roosevelt. One may question, however, whether Spooner was as much of a "defender" of the latter as were Jonathan P. Dolliver, Henry C. Lodge, or Albert J. Beveridge.

Dorothy Fowler, professor of history at Hunter College, is at her best in describing Spooner's accomplishments as a lawyer and as an adviser on foreign policy. Unfortunately, she sometimes fails to probe deeply enough or to explain with sufficient detail major domestic political and economic developments. For example, her discussion of the efforts to pass the Hepburn Act is quite inadequate, indeed inaccurate in some respects, and her treatment of the development of the Progressive movement is rather superficial. Most disappointing and least understandable is the author's failure to give any explanation whatever for Spooner's resignation from the Senate in 1907 (p. 369).

The book is amply documented, the index is complete and accurate, and despite its minor shortcomings this is an interesting and much needed biography of a significant senator.

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*American Railroads.* By John F. Stover. *Chicago History of American Civilization.* Edited by Daniel J. Boorstin. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961. Pp. xiv, 302. Illustrations, maps, chart, chronology, suggested reading, index. \$5.00.)

This is a welcome addition to the topical group of books in the set of forty-odd volumes being published in the *Chicago History of American Civilization* series. Such topical studies as this provide the weft for the warp of the chronological volumes. John R. Stover's subject has special relevance because it fits a dramatic framework—the cycle of rise, maturity, and decline of the American railroad empire. He sees the 130 years of the development of railroads in this country as falling generally into three well-defined eras: (1) the first generation from the beginnings in Baltimore in 1830 to the important role of railroads in the Civil War; (2) the half-century after Appomattox, during which a great national rail network was created and finally subjected to close governmental controls in the Progressive era of the early twentieth century; (3) the decades since World War I, a troubled period full of new problems and new competition and presenting the railroads with an uncertain future. Within the compass of 260 pages of text the author covers briefly but clearly such matters as technical improvements, financial corruption in the post Civil War period, regulatory legislation, and wartime accomplishments. He does a good

job not only in describing the growth of railroad transportation in the United States but also in relating it to the main trends of American social and economic history.

In so short a volume, however, some questions must be passed over lightly. This is apparently the case with the part played by organized labor in the railroad story. Aside from brief mention of the year of violence in 1877 and Debs and the Pullman strike of 1894, the book contains little information about the organization and early struggles of the railroad workers' brotherhoods and other unions. Yet the author has a good deal to say about such modern labor abuses as "feather-bedding" and their effects upon railroad decline. As the editor of the series writes in the Preface, the *Age of the Railroad* has its romantic element, but in *American Railroads* most of this is lost in the rapid pace of the narrative and beneath the heavy but probably necessary burden of statistics—trackage and capitalization figures, freight and passenger rates, number of employees—embedded in the prose of many of its pages. But all in all, Stover has accomplished much in so small a space. The story of American railroading as he tells it has continuity, breadth, and direction. Moreover, he obviously believes in railroads. His last chapter is both a good account of present difficulties and a strong plea for a "healthy, stabilized, and prosperous" American railroad system in the future. In his conclusion he argues persuasively that the drama of the railroads' rise and decline need not become decline and fall.

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*Fortune's Merry Wheel: The Lottery in America.* By John Samuel Ezell. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960. Pp. viii, 331. Tables, illustrations, bibliographical essay, notes, index. \$6.75.)

For countless generations men have carried on a more or less continuous controversy over gambling: Is it a natural "instinct"? If so, is it "moral" or an evidence of human depravity? In any case, does the state have the right (or the obligation) to regulate, limit, or suppress it? While this ageless dispute has been raging, men have had time to devise ingenious and varied forms of gambling, among which the lottery has occupied a special and, in a sense, honored place.

In *Fortune's Merry Wheel* John Samuel Ezell, associate professor of history at the University of Oklahoma, traces the history of the lottery from its transportation as part of the intellectual baggage brought to colonial America, through its "national mania" phase, to its decline and legislative suppression in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Taken altogether, the book is a detailed and meticulously organized substantiation of the author's thesis that "many an institution has been built on the weakness of man" (p. 281). It is unlikely that any other "weakness" has been exploited for more socially useful purposes than man's fascination for the "lucky lottery." For three centuries Americans used the lottery as a fund-raising device for a