

Book Reviews

My Days with the Diesel: The Memoirs of Clessie L. Cummins, Father of the Highway Diesel. By Clessie L. Cummins. (Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1967. Pp. x, 190. Illustrations. \$5.95.)

This work is what it purports to be: memoirs. No sources are given, no credit or recognition is given for anything already written on the subject, and no index is included.

The subject, then, is Clessie L. Cummins. The life he describes is one full of successes, but due notice is given to heartaches and disappointments.

These memoirs trace the development of the high-speed diesel, which in itself is perhaps the prime reason for the growth of the trucking industry. One story follows another in rapid order. Cummins tested Marmon cars. He became chauffeur and handy man for William G. Irwin, famed banker and entrepreneur of Columbus, Indiana. He sold one idea after another to Irwin and to Irwin's relatives: support of his machine shop; support of what proved to be a wild venture in building small engines for Sears, Roebuck and Company; financial backing during a decade of almost continual losses. Much space is given to highly amusing accounts of "the Barnum and Bailey days" when, lacking funds for a normal advertising campaign, Cummins pulled off one stunt after another—all with excellent results.

Great names appear throughout the book. Cummins, aided and abetted by William G. Irwin, sought contacts and had interesting experiences with railroad magnates, automotive giants, government heads, and, on occasion, foreign dignitaries. The pursuit of those whose influence might be helpful in the growth of the engine company paid off in some cases. In a few instances, however, Cummins and Irwin failed. Henry Ford, General Motors, Baldwin Locomotives, Walter P. Chrysler—all are mentioned and listed as having failed to appreciate the potential of the Cummins product. But one notes no bitterness in the chronicle over the hopes that died.

There is a sad note in the account, and it is regrettable. The relations between the two truly great men, William G. Irwin and Clessie L. Cummins, grew more and more strained as the years went by. The untimely death of Irwin prevented the reconciliation which, this writer believes, might have occurred.

Basically, the work is an interesting account of the growth of a company whose life was given it by two clever, intelligent, and noble men. The book is a contribution of value and should be widely read by students of recent American history.

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Father O'Hara of Notre Dame: The Cardinal-Archbishop of Philadelphia.

By Thomas T. McAvoy. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967. Pp. xi, 514. Frontispiece, notes, index. \$7.50.)

Father McAvoy has written the first scholarly biography of a recent leader of the Catholic Church in America. The author meticulously covers the details of O'Hara's career from his Notre Dame