

BOOK REVIEWS

Land Hunger: David L. Payne and the Oklahoma Boomers. By Carl Coke Rister. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1942. Pp. XIII, 245. Twelve Illustrations, Bibliography and Index. \$2.75.)

Dr. C. C. Rister, head of the University of Oklahoma History Department, explains the make-up of his book in the preface: "In the first three chapters the author presents Payne during his years in Indiana and Kansas when he was being conditioned in mind and body to meet the hard experiences of Oklahoma invasions. There is in Chapter IV a sketch of the Indian settlements after the Civil War incident to Indian Territory reservation assignments and to the origin of the Boomer Movement. The next eleven chapters are devoted to the high tide of the Boomer Movement while Payne was its leader, a period of field operations. Payne's death in 1884 brought to the front his able friend William L. Couch, who was leader of the Boomers until the final success of their movement." The author also states that he "has sought to portray Payne, the principal actor, objectively, and not to condemn or condone his many acts and motives."

The Unassigned Lands, a heart-shaped area of more than 2,000,000 acres and later the nucleus of Oklahoma Territory, engaged the attention of prospective settlers in the 1870's. Not until late in 1879 did David L. Payne—Civil War Veteran, former Kansas Legislator and recent assistant doorkeeper for the National House of Representatives—influenced by E. C. Boudinot, build up a sufficient following to become the recognized leader of the Boomer Movement. Payne, big, bombastic, intrepid, sought again and again to establish permanent settlements in the forbidden land, but each time the intruders were removed by federal troops. But the intruders would not be restrained when it was found that eviction could be their only punishment. Boomer insistence that good, arable land should not be denied land-hungry whites inspired public approval and led to the historic opening of April 22, 1889.

To the Indians, David L. Payne and the Oklahoma Boomers were a desperate and uncultured band of frontier ruffians, the dregs of Kansas and adjoining states; to the railroad corporations, a tool of exploitation; to the cattlemen, hated rivals; but to the home-seekers they were the vanguard of a commonwealth. This study of Rister's will not change pre-conceived notions on the importance of the Boomer Movement but from the wealth of material left by active participants, government reports and newspaper accounts he has presented dispassionately the Boomer Movement. Students of western history, generally, and Oklahomans, particularly, will welcome this newest addition to Professor Rister's studies of the southwest.

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

—J. S. Clark

The Progress of Pan Americanism: A Historical Survey of Latin American Opinion. Translated and Edited by T. H. Reynolds. Introduction by George H. White. (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1942. Pp. 418. \$3.00).

The unique system of expressing the political and economic viewpoints of Latin Americans by their own words in translation, yet without tiresome longevity, has been developed by Dr. T. H. Reynolds, Head of the History Department, Oklahoma A. and M. College. This system was manifest in his *Economic Aspects of the Monroe Doctrine*, but especially in his book, *As Our Neighbors See Us*. His new book is a continuation of this series. It contains twenty-five chapters, divided into three parts: The Progress of Pan-Americanism; Pan-Americanism and the World Conflict; and Economic Aspects of Pan-Americanism.

With the axis threat to the British empire came the coincidental development of the good neighbor policy of the United States toward the Latin American nations. And the role of the southern neighbors is steadily becoming of greater importance. Witness how Argentina, being neither foreign invader nor belligerent, occupies a place of world interest.

The reader of *Progress of Pan Americanism* not only refreshes his memory by words of Cordell Hull, but finds cardinal viewpoints of such men as Dr. Miguel Angel Campa, Secretary of State of Cuba; Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan-American Union; Rodolfo Garcia Arias, Minister of Foreign and Cultural Relations of Argentina; Dr. Ricardo Alfaro, Former President of the Republic of Panama; Herman Laborde, Ex-Secretary of the Mexican Communist Party; Luis Robalino Davila, Publications of Central University, Quito, Ecuador; and Antonio Planchart Burgillos, Doctor of Political and Social Sciences in the Central University of Venezuela. Although some of the sources dip back into the nineteenth century, the book deals primarily with events since the year Franklin D. Roosevelt and Adolph Hitler came into national power, and the good neighbor policy was launched.

The greatest challenge to historians of this era is to evaluate fairly, and without bias, the two sides of a raging world controversy. On either side a patriotic leaning now brings the writer applause from his countrymen, but will bring down on him the condemnation of cooler thinking generations of the coming century. In this dilemma there is no safer procedure for historian and layman than to examine carefully the cause of each country as set forth by official spokesmen, realizing of course that no leader represents the views of more than a part of his nation. Well chosen official and educational sources will always command the respect of investigators; on that fact rest the merits of this book.

Some critics may contend that Dr. Reynolds relied too much on the writings of one authority, Dr. Rafael Castells Mendez, for Argentina's attitude toward the world conflict. Others may say that the Mexican oil question receives too much attention. But few will overlook the skill with which selections were made amid voluminous literature. It is unfortunate that a part of the first edition passed the bindery with the table of contents and index omitted. Appropriate illustrations and helpful bibliographies are included.

—Berlin B. Chapman

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