

the most important of six factors in bringing about the decision. He asserts that Allied propaganda accentuated many of these factors, but that it would not have borne fruit without receptive soil. Unfortunately, except for the defense of neutral rights, the majority of Hoosiers gave little thought to the relation of belligerency and American foreign policy. "Their failure was of little consequence in the prosecution of the war, for they agreed well enough on the immediate target. But what was unessential in war might be crucial in making peace."

Max P. Allen.

The Farmer's Last Frontier, Agriculture, 1860-1897. By Fred A. Shannon (Volume V of *The Economic History of the United States*, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, c. 1945, pp. xii, 434. Text edition, \$3.75, trade edition, \$5.00.)

With the appearance of this volume a new co-operative economic history is introduced. The series is to contain nine volumes. The period before 1815 will be described in two general volumes, the years from 1815 to 1860 will be treated in a volume devoted to agriculture and another to industry, the period from 1860 to 1897 will also be covered in this manner, while the present century will be described in three general volumes. If the others meet the high standards set by this one, history will be enriched by a significant and thorough treatment of the economic development of the United States. The absence of a work of this type has been a notable defect of historical literature.

This volume is first of all a comprehensive account of agricultural developments from the beginning of the Civil War to the end of the century. It also summarizes in the excellent footnote citations and in the final bibliographical chapter the scholarly literature and much of the source material concerning the subject. Occasionally one fails to find an important work included, but that is rarely true. It sets forth conclusions and interpretations at variance with older works particularly in relation to the national land policy.

After noting that the fundamental basis of the farmers' difficulties on the Last Frontier were the differences of soil, climate, and distance, the author described the rapid settlement which was often influenced by artificial stimulants

supplied by the railroads, states, and land companies. The corporations, railroads, cattle and lumber barons, and land companies were the chief beneficiaries of the land laws according to the author's analysis. His judgments are reflected in a group of quotations. "In its operations the Homestead Act could hardly have defeated the hopes of the enthusiasts of 1840-1860 more completely if the makers had actually drafted it with that purpose uppermost in mind [p. 54]." "It tempted settlers out to the arid stretches where a quarter section was barely enough for the grazing of two or three cattle [p. 57]." "The [railroad] companies were not only given their railroads—they were given a bonus [usually land] to accept them [p. 67]." "Some \$200,000,000 were paid to Indian tribes to quiet their claims, and then the land was turned over to speculators at less than cost [p. 69]."

The agricultural reorganization of the South after 1865 with its labor system of tenant farmers and share croppers and its credit system of crop mortgages is also critically examined. "The outright confiscation of large parts of estates created by slave labor, to make farms for freedmen, would in the long run have created more prosperity for the section than the growth of land monopolization that took place instead, and the simultaneous establishment of a system of quasi serfdom that left the toilers without ambition and the landlord with ruined soils and finances [pp. 79-80]." The classes of the South where the crop-lien system predominated were "the landlord-merchant-banker-capitalist group, numbering approximately a sixth of the total population and having all the political power; [and] . . . the bulk of field workers, living from enfeebled hand to empty mouth [p. 99]."

Even in the North Central states "a remarkable growth in tenancy" occurred which was not checked by the mechanization of the farms. The expansion of prairie agriculture in the Great Plains led to the plowing of the grass lands that should have been reserved for grazing. Both the "little fellow" and the "bonanza farmer" often failed. The livestock frontier was another story of injustice and special privilege, and the cowboy was far less romantic than usually pictured. Problems of the West are discussed in the light of the agrarian revolt and the co-operative movement which are also described sympathetically. Eastern adjustments, the declining position of the farmers in the nation, and his

social life are not overlooked in completing the story.

Perhaps some views of the author have been over-emphasized, but one can scarcely avoid the feeling that he has offered a few judgments that are somewhat extreme in his treatment of the Great Plains and the South. His analysis is skillful and scholarly and the total picture may not be overdrawn. The illustrations and charts are excellent. The binding of the textbook edition is not attractive and is so light in color that it will soil readily and become less attractive. Although much of the volume is not concerned with the Middle West, it presents the background for understanding the agricultural development of this region.

John D. Barnhart.

War, Peace, and Nonresistance. By Guy Franklin Hersberger. (The Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1944, pp. xv, 415. \$2.50.)

The history of nonresistance and the scriptural and doctrinal teachings upon which it is founded form the subject of this volume. Its preparation was undertaken some years ago as a commission from the Peace Problems Committee of the Mennonite Church. Its purposes were to clarify the position of the church from its beginning to the present war and to strengthen the members in maintaining that position as individuals. The author is professor of history and sociology at Goshen College, a Mennonite college at Goshen, Indiana.

The work is significant to the historian as an historical account of the Mennonites' reaction against war from the sixteenth century to the present, and as a resume of other important pacifist attitudes, but more especially as a means of understanding the Mennonites and their unique position in Indiana and in other states and nations.

Some historical material is included in the first four chapters which give the doctrinal basis of nonresistance. These chapters review "war in history," "peace and war in the Old Testament," "nonresistance in the New Testament," and peace and war and the church. The Mennonites trace their origin to the Anabaptists in Switzerland in 1525. From here they spread to Holland, Germany, France, and Russia, often fleeing from persecution. Those most interested in preserving the nonresistant way of life came to America,