

Rekindling Camp Fires, the Exploits of Ben Arnold (Connor).

By LEWIS F. CRAWFORD. (Bismarck, North Dakota: Capital Book Company, c1926. Pp. 324. \$3.00.)

"The story of the West must be written largely from human experiences, as vital moving history must come from the lives and activities of men". Hence these experiences of Ben Arnold so admirably edited by Lewis Crawford (who is the superintendent of the state historical society of North Dakota and the author of several books) are a valuable contribution to the history of the middle western states in the period around 1860-1867. Mr. Crawford has completely obliterated his own personality in developing Ben Arnold's story, which reads like an autobiography, but the clear concise style and grouping of material is the work of the editor. The historical authenticity is vouchsafed for by the editor's knowledge of his own state, coupled with his painstaking care in consulting source material from books and people who lived then. No apologies have been made in mentioning names or relating incidents which were often a discredit to individuals concerned, and the narrator has not spared himself in this respect, his purpose being to present such incidents truthfully.

Ben Arnold (Connor) was a restless spirit, who loved adventure and for 60 years was an Indian fighter, gold miner, cowboy, hunter and army scout in the states of Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas. He was uneducated, but was "an expert marksman, a good packer, could cover a trail like an Indian, and had an ability to find his way in the night that was uncanny"—What better qualities could a frontiersman possess. This combined with an Irish wit, a keen observation, and a faculty to remember names and incidents enabled him to give an interesting intimate account of his own life and the life of the times in which he lived. His understanding of the Indians, his skill in speaking the Sioux language, and his knowledge of the country, made him a valuable army scout. The last few chapters are devoted to the Sioux uprising, resulting from the violating of the treaty of 1868, and the invasion of white settlers and miners into the Black Hills reservations. There are controversial opinions concerning Crook's stand in this campaign and Ben Arnold's account as a spectator is worth taking into consideration.

LOU LARSON.