

Book Reviews

The French in North America: A Bibliographical Guide to French Archives, Reproductions, and Research Missions. By Henry Putney Beers. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957. Pp. xi, 413. Appendices, bibliography, index. \$12.50.)

In *The French in North America*, which is a guide to the French sources of American history, Mr. Beers describes the history of the activities of American and Canadian institutions, historians, and others who obtained reproductions of relevant documents from archives and manuscript collections. The author is concerned primarily with compilations of public records, ecclesiastical records, and private manuscripts which relate to the history of the region now included in the United States and to the history of its foreign relations; the story of the acquisition of original manuscripts falls outside the scope of the study, although such documents are mentioned occasionally.

Within these limits, Mr. Beers discusses first the history of the principal depositories in France and their pertinent holdings. Then he turns to the work of the historians of American diplomacy; the historians of the French regime, such as Francis Parkman, John Shea, Pierre Margry, Clarence Burton, and Reuben Thwaites; state institutions and libraries, where the Illinois State Historical Society has produced the best compilation; the Carnegie Institution of Washington, the Library of Congress, and Canadian institutions and historians. In the concluding chapter, along with a summary and evaluation, Mr. Beers suggests the need for additional work in depositories and research areas.

There are a few minor errors. Sometimes the details become exceedingly minute; occasionally pronouns without clear antecedents confuse and bewilder. But the bibliography is a solid contribution which will be useful to—and much appreciated by—historians who will study the amazing activities of the French in North America.

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The Negro in Indiana Before 1900. By Emma Lou Thornbrough. Indiana Historical Collections, Volume XXXVII. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1957. Pp. xiii, 412. Index. \$4.50.)

This study of the Negro in Indiana before 1900 is a pioneering effort to depict his status in a Northern state during the nineteenth century. It supplies a needed historical base for understanding the situation of the Negro in the twentieth century.

The volume is essentially divided into the two chronological periods of before 1860 and after 1865, with an interlude chapter on the "Civil War Years." Chapters are devoted to the legal, economic, and social patterns of Negro life in the two respective periods. Data are supplied to the reader for a comparative analysis of these patterns as they exist for the enslaved Negroes, the indentured servants, and the free persons of color before and after the Civil War.

Many present-day Indiana citizens will be as "shocked" as was the Vermont-born lawyer upon his arrival in Vincennes in 1819 to learn of the existence of slavery in Indiana despite "the Northwest Ordinance and the Constitution of the state" (p. 25), and that even after 1816 indentured servants continued to be bought and sold within the state. As the author contends, the antislavery sentiment in these years "stemmed more from a desire to preserve the soil of Indiana for white men than from any humanitarian interest in black men" (p. viii). Nor did this desire for white supremacy vanish after the Civil War. This thesis strongly reminds the reader of "the theme of Southern history" as presented by Ulrich B. Phillips for the Southern states—the determination to keep the South a white man's country.

Possibly it is at this point that the reviewer begins to wonder whether this excellent and well-documented study could have been presented in somewhat better perspective if it had been more consciously and specifically placed in the setting of national history. Perchance this point could be illustrated in terms of Chapter II, "Population Movements 1816-1860." Brief reference is made at the beginning of the chapter to the transformation of Indiana from "a pioneer wilderness into a flourishing agricultural state" and to the growth of the population of the state during these ante-bellum years, but no analysis is given of the sources of the white settlers. Discussion of population movement is practically confined to Negro migration.

Repeatedly through the volume it is pointed out that both Negroes and practices of discriminations against them—practices intended to keep the Negro in "his place"—were relatively concentrated in the southern counties of the state. Geographical proximity to the South and consequent weight of numbers obviously would tend to magnify the problem there, but the settlers in the area of the state lying south of the fortieth parallel were disproportionately from the states of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Could it be that these migrants from the South (with such exceptions as the North Carolina Quakers) carried their Southern mores and attitudes with them into Indiana? Comparably, could the migrants emanating from New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey have affected the climate of opinion of the area of the state lying north of the fortieth parallel in terms of the mores and attitudes transferred from their sources of origin?

Nevertheless, the student of the subject can only be grateful for this highly informative monograph and hope that other Northern states will emulate the author and the Indiana Historical Bureau in making available an equally invaluable contribution toward a history of the embattled Negro in the whole North during the years covered.

Much patience, persistence, and research skill are manifest in ferreting out elusive, fugitive, and fragmentary sources of the history of the Negro, whose own literary inarticulateness makes the task of the historian infinitely more difficult. This fine product sponsored by the Indiana Historical Bureau should challenge the writing members of local historical societies to lend a hand in the utilization of their local resources on the subject.

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