It is possible that the Indian played little or no part in the development of the character traits of Americans, but if he did, America's Frontier Heritage sheds little light on his role.

Overall, America's Frontier Heritage is an excellent work that should be in most libraries and of great interest to all students and general readers who desire to know more about the origins and peculiarities of the American character.

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tion precedes the digested text. How successful this condensation into a single volume is remains a matter of individual opinion. In this reviewer's judgment, the results are commendable. Yet it is doubtful that Nicolay and Hay should now be labeled "classic" or "great" historians and thereby included in the company of Prescott and Parkman. They were hardly skilled practitioners of historiography, although they performed a valuable service for posterity.

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James Ford Rhodes' massive *History of the United States From the Compromise of 1850 to the Final Restoration of Home Rule in the South in 1877,* published in seven volumes between 1892 and 1906, is one of the great works of American historical writing. Rhodes, a Cleveland businessman turned historian, was an honest researcher and a good judge of character who brought much hard common sense—as well as the prejudices of his age—to his account of the politics, diplomacy, and fighting of the Civil War era. He, more than anyone else, gave historical substance to the view which thoughtful Northerners generally and Republicans in particular held of the causes, course, and consequences of the war. His picture of these heroic years, altered in so many particulars by subsequent study, is now being replaced in its entirety by an even more massive and sweeping narrative, more gracefully written, more thoroughly researched, and better balanced, by the greatest living American historian, Allan Nevins. Thus Rhodes' work, superseded by a great historical synthesis and lacking in the literary power of some of our other classical American historians, seems doomed to the ever deepening oblivion of being respected but not read.

This is unfortunate. The first five volumes of Rhodes' history (taking the story to 1865) offer one of the more pleasant surprises in store for readers of American history. One is continually amazed at how good Rhodes was: how reasonable his explanations, how sharp his character portraits, how much he knew about the era, how much closer his conclusions come to recent scholarship than do those of many writers who came after him. And the prose, if not brilliant, remains solid and serviceable. Rather than a musty period piece, one discovers, as Nevins writes in introducing his abridgement of the first five volumes, "a magnificent piece of narrative history that offers a larger combination of enjoyment and profit than any but a few historians provide" (p. xxvi).

The volume under review provides historians with an excellent introduction to Rhodes' history—which is not to say a sufficient ac-