

them too great credit for triumphs—only partly deserved—and suggests that even failures were actually victories since they made possible the racial advances of a century later. It is as if without the Radicals nothing was possible but with them all things were.

The book provides a convenient survey of the Radical Republicans, but for full understanding it is still necessary to consult the more exact and exacting sources. The work needs more precise definitions, more critical analysis, more judicious balance. Finally any judgment of this work, as of the Radicals themselves, must applaud the intent but question the execution.

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The South and the Sectional Conflict. By David M. Potter. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968. Pp. xi, 321. Notes, index. \$7.50.)

Eleven essays are gathered in this volume, two dating from the 1940s and the remainder from the 1960s. The nine here reproduced in their original form were scattered widely in books and journals. One previously unpublished essay, "John Brown and the Paradox of Leadership Among American Negroes," and one newly revised bibliographical treatment of Civil War background add to the usefulness of the collection. The author has grouped his writings into three categories. Three essays are on the nature of southernism, one of which is the well known analysis of "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa." Three others classified as historiography include the author's 1947 inaugural lecture as Harmsworth Professor at Oxford, "The Lincoln Theme and American National Historiography." Five concern the crisis of the Union: a 1941 article on "Horace Greeley and Peaceable Secession," the new piece on John Brown, a very recent commentary on "The Civil War in the History of the Modern World: A Comparative View," and two already widely used items, "Jefferson Davis and the Political Factors in Confederate Defeat" and "Why the Republicans Rejected Both Compromise and Secession." Professor Potter's many admirers will rejoice that these eleven are now so conveniently available.

The title of the volume is probably no worse than any other would be but nevertheless is inadequate to describe the wide ranging of a brilliantly perceptive and doggedly persistent mind. If there is a unifying theme at other than a superficial level, it probably arises less from the fact that southern history provides the bulk of the examples employed than from the identity of the real object of scrutiny, the historian. The author labels as "a reality about history" the proposition that "the determination of truth depends more perhaps upon basic philosophical assumptions which are applied in interpreting the data than upon the data themselves" (pp. 146-47). And he describes the "supreme task of the historian" as seeing the "past through the imperfect eyes of those who lived it and not with his own omniscient twenty-twenty vision" (p. 246). In a sense, throughout these essays he is either patiently

urging the historian to see himself clearly or actually holding the looking glass before him. Implicit in all is the theme that history incorporates so much of the historian that it behooves both writer and reader to be ever on the alert to separate the two.

Dean Acheson recently commented that, while he was secretary of state, a memorandum so persuasively written as to defy ready dissection sometimes baffled him until he had it rewritten in jargon, after which he could easily discern the deficiencies in argument. One often has the uneasy feeling while enjoying these polished pieces that something is amiss that might be recognized if only the style were not so disarmingly lucid. It is hardly necessary, however, to endow their author with superhuman accuracy or judgment to maintain that this volume should be read by anyone who seriously studies history and that it will long continue to stimulate as well as chasten practicing members of the historical guild.

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United States Oil Policy, 1890-1964: Business and Government in Twentieth Century America. By Gerald D. Nash. ([Pittsburgh]: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968. Pp. ix, 286. Notes, appendix, bibliographical essay, index. \$7.95.)

Within his area of special interest, the interaction of government and the economy, Professor Nash has chosen for his latest book a particularly worthy theme—the formulation of national policy since 1890 with respect to one of the nation's most important industries. In briefest compass, the evolution he perceives is from a negative and limited initial policy of antitrust to the current one of positive and broad scale cooperation. Improved understandings on the part of science of the problems of oil finding and oil production, the industry's self-concerns, and the perceived requirements for national well being with respect to foreign and domestic matters have all contributed to this transition. In arriving at his conclusions, Nash has used intensively and well a wide range of sources.

The two principle goals of current oil policy, in the author's view, are conservation and economic stabilization. To achieve these goals, government and industry have fashioned a network of interrelations which today include federal assistance to the industry through forecasts of probable market demand, prohibition of interstate shipments of oil produced in excess of quotas prescribed by state regulatory bodies under the Interstate Oil Compact, favorable tax provisions and a tariff on imported oil to stimulate domestic exploration, research on oil finding and oil production by the United States Geological Survey and the United States Bureau of Mines, and support of American oil companies in exploration and production overseas. The author finds the first powerful push toward industry-government cooperation to have