

slave insurrections, and discussed the slave trade, miscegenation, exploitation, and the immorality of the institution. Giddings also became a tough, opportunistic campaigner. An important instance, omitted from this book, occurred in 1844 when he used a letter from Cassius Clay while implying it was written by Henry Clay. Unable to restructure the Whigs he belatedly labored for the 1848 coalition. Once committed to the Free Soil party he was instrumental in preserving its independent position. He operated on the left flank of the Republican movement until ill health forced retirement in 1859.

This volume captures the main thrust of the man, an evangelical reformer who sought to turn politicians and the populace from support of the peculiar institution. Giddings never advocated complete equality for the Negro, but Stewart documents a struggle for black rights that was advanced for the period. In the age of Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan his appeals for the regeneration of the whole people clarify his relationship with Republican leaders. It is unfortunate that the book closes with a rush. The discussion of John Brown's raid would be more balanced if mention were made of the editorial in the *Ashtabula Sentinel* declaring that Brown would die with "all the prestige of a martyr . . ." The treatment of the war-time assignment in Montreal and the war years is thin. Giddings used confrontation to advantage, and a fuller assessment of his adjustment to the realities of the grand confrontation is needed.

Nevertheless, Stewart adds another dimension to an understanding of the evangelical crusade against slavery.

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*Stephen Douglas: The Last Years, 1857-1861.* By Damon Wells. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971. Pp. xvi, 342. Illustrations, notes, critical essay on sources, bibliography, index. \$10.00.)

This book is basically a political biography. It treats Stephen Douglas' private life and his position on economic issues only incidentally. Professor Wells is not an apologist for Douglas. No attempt is made to disregard his shortcomings although the author does endeavor to explain the reasons for these faults.

Douglas is portrayed in the years 1857-1861 as a man who was out of step with the times. He seemed to be unaware of his errors until it was too late to reverse his actions. Notwithstanding his bad timing, Douglas does not emerge as the well intentioned, but occasionally blundering Illinois senator, which has often been the case in other volumes on this period of American history. The image of

Douglas created by Wells allows the reader to view a man who finally realized that his long held political views were no longer applicable to a rapidly changing American political climate. Douglas turned from the former materialistic bias inherent in his view of the nation and its welfare and sacrificed any chance of capturing the presidency in an effort to avert secession.

Wells contends that Douglas was a nationalist in an age of sectionalism. The reader becomes aware that in another era of American history, Douglas would have been known as a great compromiser, perhaps with a reputation equal to that of Henry Clay. However, it becomes evident that this was not possible in the period of political turmoil which preceded the Civil War.

Abraham Lincoln, the great political antagonist of Douglas, is given fair treatment in this book. Wells makes no attempt to berate Lincoln's image in order to improve Douglas' appearance; Douglas does not emerge as the hero in his encounters with Lincoln.

It is somewhat difficult to imagine that Wells would have the reader believe in his discussion of the Kansas Civil War of the 1850s that "Kansans today appear to be more serious than most Americans. They laugh less easily. The land and its people seem never to have quite recovered from the trauma that marked their early history" (p. 16). It is also questionable whether Douglas "knew better than any other Northern leader, the magnitude of the crisis that was now upon the country and the lateness of the hour" (p. 259).

Wells has written a book which will shed new light on the twilight years of Douglas' life. This scholarly volume allows the reader to view Douglas as he grappled with the issues which were tearing the United States apart. It is an important contribution to an understanding of some of the most crucial years in American history and will be welcomed by scholars and other serious readers alike.

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*Gifford Pinchot: Private and Public Forester.* By Harold T. Pinkett. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970. Pp. 167. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$6.95.)

This book demonstrates the value of perspective. Given two previous biographies, an autobiography, and numerous other publications touching his life, one could doubt the importance of another Pinchot volume. Yet archivist Harold Pinkett has provided an original segment of American forest and conservation history. As deputy director of the Records Appraisal Division of the National Archives, he is familiar with Pinchot papers which have not been hitherto