

tional Park Service, assumed the reins of responsibility. Naturalist John Muir summed up the army's service: "Blessings on Uncle Sam's soldiers. They have done the job well, and every pine tree is waving its arms for joy" (p. 190).

Historian Hampton has carefully researched and written a piece of western history which has heretofore been overlooked. Whenever today's social or natural scientist reports on America's ecological past, historical objectivity is frequently flawed by the author's intense feelings about the environmental crisis. Happily Hampton's narrative is no polemic. Some will wish he had given more attention to the Gilded Age matrix that first preserved Yellowstone and its California counterparts and then so callously threatened them. An extensive and accurate bibliography will provide help for those wanting to study this aspect of the subject further.

In his epilogue Hampton is not afraid to remind his readers that the struggle to preserve the wilderness remains; in truth, the odds in the environmental battle may have worsened. "The future of conservation may be in greater danger today than it was then. For now, the interested public risks being lulled into complacency by reassuring statements from the White House, the Secretary of the Interior, and major industrial concerns . . . and the ever-present personal greed of individuals all point[s] toward more and larger threats to the existence of an inviolate National Park system" (p. 188). Given this reviewer's pessimism, one must wonder not if, but when, the military will be required to return to the duty it left in 1918.

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*Railroads and the Granger Laws.* By George H. Miller. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1971. Pp. xi, 296. Maps, notes, table of cases, bibliographical essay, index. \$12.50.)

Arguing that the impact of the rise of the interstate railroad system in the antebellum political economy is best understood through a study of the Granger laws, Miller focuses upon the politico-legal history of the enactment of these regulatory measures in the upper Mississippi Valley between 1871 and 1874. Drawing upon the massive amount of secondary information already available, coupled with extensive utilization of primary sources such as the papers and reports of various interest groups, state and railroad archives, and local newspapers, the author has produced an impressively documented, solid, scholarly study.

As a result of an in depth analysis of the Granger agitation and legislation in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, Miller con-

cludes that to understand the Granger laws one must recognize that they were part of a reaction of the older, regionally based mercantile orders to the rise of a burgeoning industrial capitalism on a national scale and in particular to the rise of interstate railroad systems. Promoted by local mercantile, shipping, and business interests rather than farmers, the regulatory Granger laws centered mainly on the issue of railroad rate discrimination and were essentially moderate, not radical, measures. Alluding to the fact that the railroad officials played a key role in drafting the regulatory laws and to the fact that "all the important Granger innovations . . . were concessions to the railroad interests" (p. 168), the author further alleges that the commission form of regulation, framed by the established political leadership in each of the Granger states studied, was acceptable to the railroads.

While the author asserts that he can find no evidence of class struggle in this movement for railroad rate regulation, it is nevertheless apparent that there was a conflict of economic interests in which the forces of a dynamic industrial capitalism—in this case the railroad industry as the first big business in the nation—sought in the face of increasing interrailroad competition and disgruntled local interests to rationalize a ruinous nationwide competitive situation through stabilization of the market. Confronted with increasing popular discontent and agitation for government action, the railroad interests sought to shape that regulation for their own benefit.

Here the author has broached a particularly fruitful area for intensive exploration; yet, it is an area which he does not develop—i.e., the role of the railroad interests themselves in framing the Granger railroad regulatory laws. Much as Lee Benson approached this problem in his *Merchants, Farmers and Railroads* (1955) or as Gabriel Kolko dealt with the issue in his *Railroads and Regulation, 1877-1916* (1965), and more broadly for the Progressive Era in his *Triumph of Conservatism* (1963), historians in this contemporary age of welfare corporate industrial capitalism should explore more closely the role of industrial capitalists as a powerful interest group actively pursuing government regulation as the means to stabilize an "unrationalized" capitalistic marketplace.

Supported by a truly impressive bibliography and extensive documentation, Miller's volume is a useful addition to those works on the Granger movement in general and to the studies dealing with the history of railroad regulation in particular.

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