

Johnson and Johanningmeier make good use of the wealth of manuscript material dealing with their subject in the University of Illinois archives. Beginning with their first chapter which concerns nineteenth century Illinois schools as revealed in Charles Shamel's "Diary" and concluding with a dramatic final chapter climaxed by the involuntary retirement of Dean Thomas E. Brenner, the authors employ the personal papers of university presidents, deans, and alumni to develop their essentially biographical approach to the subject. While handled in a thoroughly competent fashion, this biographical treatment tends to preclude the inclusion of other important aspects of the subject to which the authors only allude in passing. Little attention is given to demographic factors, to political, legislative, and financial developments, or to the role of private and parochial education in Illinois—subjects which should be included in any definitive treatment of the material. In short, the book is too much an internal study of the dean's office and not enough a study of certain external factors bearing on the subject. In all fairness, however, it should be noted that Johnson and Johanningmeier recognize these limitations. After carefully delineating in the Preface what they intend to do, they then proceed to do it in a narrative that is both well written and scholarly in nature.

On occasion the book seems a bit wordy and even circuitous in its approach. Important and perceptive points are occasionally buried in a plethora of biographical and institutional facts. But on balance the book is a solid piece of historical research which should serve as a model for other institutional histories in the field of American higher education. *Teachers of the Prairie* evidences throughout a conceptual grasp of the subtleties of educational and intellectual currents rare in works of this kind.

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An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War. By Graham A. Cosmas. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971. Pp. 334. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$11.50.)

The praise bestowed upon the military performance of the United States in the Spanish-American War has been largely reserved for the activities of the navy and for the personal gallantry of soldiers in the field. The War Department, on the contrary, has been the persistent target of severe criticism. Its highest civilian and uniformed officials have been charged with gross mismanagement, ineptitude, and even corruption. Indeed, they have been held responsible for everything from defective strategy and obsolete

weaponry to inadequate sanitation facilities and "embalmed beef" rations. Graham A. Cosmas, the author of this impressive volume, contends that this traditional interpretation rests largely upon the works of soldier-memoirists and newspaper correspondents who possessed little first hand knowledge of the inner workings of the War Department or the pressures which influenced its decisions and policies. Through extensive research in the voluminous files of the department, especially those of the offices of the adjutant general and quartermaster general, Cosmas presents "the War Department's story of the war" (p. 2), which substantially modifies the view based upon the works of such field observers as Theodore Roosevelt and Richard Harding Davis.

Appropriately the first third of this volume is devoted to an analysis of developments in organization and strategy which influenced the War Department during the twenty years before the *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor. Despite repeated economy drives in Congress, the disruptive effects of national guard lobbyists, and conflicts in the command system, the department in 1898 approached the war with Spain with competent if not brilliant professional soldiers in charge of its administrative bureaus and with a "well worked-out plan" for the mobilization and employment of the land forces. But as Cosmas points out, the department also entered the crisis with several important weaknesses: the highest leadership—Secretary of War Russell A. Alger and Commanding General Nelson A. Miles—left much to be desired in terms of ability and character; supply stockpiles were inadequate; trained commanders and staffs for large forces were not available; and the established theories of organization and strategy in the regular army ran counter to the political, diplomatic, and naval realities of the developing conflict. Both army and navy planners assumed that the political objective of a war with Spain would be to assist the Cubans in driving out the Spaniards and in establishing an independent nation. They therefore considered such a war primarily a naval problem with "no major ground action" required of the army. But changes in the diplomatic situation and in political objectives, as well as pressure from state militia organizations regarding a volunteer army, forced the War Department to abandon its original plan and embark upon a wholly new course at the last minute.

In assessing the department's performance during the war, Cosmas carefully analyzes each military decision regarding the raising and deploying of troops within the fluid political and diplomatic context in which such decisions were made. The army, he insists, suffered from the constantly changing demands imposed upon it by President William McKinley's vacillating strategy and war aims. Without obscuring the errors committed by the War Department or

claiming for its officials virtues which they did not possess, Cosmas argues convincingly that "the Army's wartime misfortunes resulted less from fundamental mistakes in policy than from efforts to implement sound policies too rapidly with too few trained men and with inadequate stockpiles of supplies" (pp. 3-4). Despite all the charges of incompetence, he concludes, the hardworking, conscientious officials of the War Department had by late 1898 solved most of the problems responsible for the "comedy of blunders" enacted during the invasion of Cuba. Largely through improvisation they developed an efficient military administration and forged "an army of empire," providing a solid base for Alger's successor, Elihu Root, to build a modern staff and command system.

An Army for Empire is a highly significant contribution to the historical literature on the American military experience. It has, in fact, all the qualities of a prize winning work, both for its contents and for its format and design.

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The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969. By Pete Daniel. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972. Pp. xii, 209. Notes, illustrations, critical essay on authorities, index. \$7.95.)

Even as some southern Negroes sought to achieve personal security, civil rights, and political power during Reconstruction, many black laborers were becoming mired in a system of debt known as peonage. Regardless of its origins—whether it grew naturally out of antebellum slavery or whether employers distorted customs and laws to create debt servitude—peonage was quietly accepted by most southerners. For employers, it represented a way of controlling workers; for those caught in its grip, it was a bewildering system which could not be escaped without the risk of beatings, imprisonment, or perhaps even death.

Professor Daniel's book is about this largely ignored form of twentieth century slavery. In a series of case studies and histories, the author recreates the harsh and frightening world of peonage. He reveals vividly how debt servitude denied numerous black workers the fundamental right to move about and seek higher wages in an effort to escape from grinding debt and poverty.

Daniel's study is also in part "the record of an American failure—the inability of federal, state, and local law-enforcement officials to end peonage" (p. xi). Though debt servitude was outlawed by federal statute in 1867, government officials moved timidly against peonage and continually failed to stamp it out. In attempting to