

notated typescript is available in the Historical Room at the school and may be seen with the permission of the superintendent.

These problems should not deter readers vitally interested in institutions for the blind or education in general from consulting the book. The provincialism, the lack of footnotes and index, and the author's style, however, create problems too serious and annoying to warrant use of this book by a wider audience.

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*Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the Nineteenth Century.*

By David M. Katzman. *Blacks in the New World*. Edited by August Meier. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973. Pp. xii, 254. Notes, tables, maps, figures, appendices, note on sources, index. \$10.00.)

This volume comprises a welcome addition to the growing literature on the history of black urban communities. Based in part on sociological theory, the book describes the experience of blacks in Detroit before the massive inner city ghetto of the twentieth century took shape. The story is grim. Deprived of political and legal rights and subjected to mob assaults by whites as well as to social and economic discrimination in the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s, blacks in Detroit by 1910 had won the vote and gained some constitutional victories—including a fight to desegregate the schools—but remained, de facto, a separate and distinct group at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale. By that date, moreover, the rise of Hazen Pingree and the adoption of the direct primary eroded the political power within the Republican party which had provided many blacks in the 1870s and 1880s a measure of economic security, an outlet for their aspirations to leadership, and a chance, for once, to be on the winning side. And in 1900, as in 1840, most blacks lived in overwhelmingly Afro-American neighborhoods, though the intensity of residential segregation remained below the high levels it reached in Detroit and other cities during the twentieth century.

The book is solidly researched. Katzman rummaged through and analyzed a broad range of sources including

manuscript and published census returns, newspapers, tax lists, city directories, novels, government records, court reports, and sociological literature. The result is an illuminating and important book containing fresh insights. The elite of the midnineteenth century black community, Katzman notes, came from the urban South, notably the cities of Virginia, and his evidence suggests that the "new" black middle class which led the community around the turn of the century also came out of southern urban backgrounds. Katzman, in addition, argues that black Detroit before the ghetto was not a cohesive community but a community divided by class and religious distinctions and conflict.

Finally, Katzman's account of black-white relationships is one of the first by an historian to rest upon the systematic application of the concept of caste. Though some readers may feel that the author pushes it too hard, the use of caste combined with the analysis of Detroit's shifting socioeconomic and population structure should assist in putting to rest the immigrant analogue, the myth that blacks represent merely another in a series of immigrants to urban America bound by the working of natural social and economic forces for assimilation into metropolitan society. Ironically, however, Katzman suggests (p. 210) that if blacks had only responded with the ethnocentric self defense of cooperation and communalism which allegedly characterized white immigrants, things might have turned out differently. Blacks in Detroit may, indeed, have been too thoroughly imbued with the American middle class traits of self reliance, individualism, and independence. But separatism for blacks, that is, acquiescence in caste status, scarcely seems an effective tactic to undermine the barriers of caste. After, as well as before, the ghetto the problem of race (or caste) remained, and remains, essentially a white creation, and its destruction requires enlightened and cooperative efforts by leaders of both races. Regardless of one's view on that issue, however, this study is solidly researched, well documented, ably organized, provocative, and, on the whole, a well written monograph. It deserves the attention of all serious students of American history and society and broad dissemination among the audience of informed and intelligent readers.

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