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William B. Goodman

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Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.



750 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK 17, N.Y. OXFORD 7-8400 CABLE: HARBRACE

February 11, 1963

Professor James W. Silver
Department of History
University of Mississippi
University, Mississippi

Dear Professor Silver:

I am in grateful receipt of yours of February 5 and much appreciate your interest in the problem of the reissuance of Hundley's Social Relations in Our Southern States as a Harbinger book. Several volumes of the first group of Harbinger Books were sent to you last week so that you might see what some of the books are like. I am not sure they will help a great deal in answering the question of how the Hundley book should be reissued. Let me say that Mr. Taylor and I had been thinking that if indeed it were to be reissued the book would have to be reset, that explanatory footnotes might have to be introduced at given points where the modern reader would not be able to construe contemporary references, that a list of suggested books for collateral reading might well have to be added at the end, and that the whole would require an introductory essay of from 3,500 to 5,000 words which would give an account of the occasion for the volume in 1860 and delineate as well the cultural context from which it sprang.

The value of such a publication is what we turn to you for a judgement upon. Is Hundley's book worth reissuing? Or is it mere bombast? Is it to be taken seriously as an historical classic? Will historians feel it valuable enough upon its reissuance to require either that students in Southern History courses or U. S. Intellectual History courses buy it or suggest that it is an indispensable book for their understanding of what W. J. Cash called "The Mind of the South." Much of it reads like the familiar propaganda of a lost cause yet the claim is made that the whole hangs together in a way that gives it an importance in the history of the American mind which we should recognize by issuance as a Harbinger book. Is this claim to be taken seriously?

With best wishes.

Cordially,

William B. Goodman

WBG/rrc