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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

Experiencia misionera en la Florida (siglos XVI y XVII). By P. G. J. Keegan and L. Tormo Sanz. Instituto Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas. Biblioteca "Misionistica Hispanica," Series B. Vol. VII. (Madrid, Talleres Graficos Jura, 1957. 404 pp.)

This was originally a doctoral dissertation written by a Maryknoll Father in Spain under the supervision of a Spanish professor, Tormo Sanz, an authority on mission history. Later the two combined their efforts to publish this book, a novel experience in cooperation between a doctoral candidate and his academic supervisor. The authors are not particularly concerned with describing a chronological development of the early history of Florida centered around such leading personalities as Ponce de Leon, Ayllon, Narvaez, De Soto, Luna and Menendez; rather, they present and evaluate the contributions of the early priests of Florida. Their narrative covers the period from the first friar that stepped upon the shores of Florida to the successful establishment of the Franciscans. Chronologically speaking, the book covers in detail the period of 1513 to the Guale revolt in 1597. Although the excellent bibliography at the front of the book includes items about the Apalachee missions and lists the many articles of Mark Boyd and others, it does not cover the seventeenth century. In fact, it does not go beyond the administration of the controversial Mendez Canzo and therefore the title is somewhat misleading. *Experiencia misionera en la Florida* is the history of Catholic penetration and colonization of Florida in the sixteenth century and as such it is a definitive work.

The book starts with an excellent bibliography that shows many modern Spanish sources that have yet failed to arrive in Florida libraries. Chapter one describes the Florida land, followed by an interesting sketch with new information about the native inhabitants. From then on a chronological approach is used, from the discovery by Ponce de Leon to Dominican efforts, to Jesuit missions which are described and analyzed in detail, to the establishment of the Franciscan missions in the Guale-St. Augustine area. The last three chapters were the most interesting to this reviewer as they analyzed the missionary policies of

the several orders. The doctrine taught, methods used, and results obtained are the subject matters of these chapters.

The extensive bibliography reveals a vast amount of research. The authors have used all possible sources for this period, and even though they are often rare, most of them are available in printed form. Unpublished documents were also used, such as the valuable Munoz collection. They also relied heavily but judiciously on the unpublished, often cited and controversial poem, "La Florida," by Father Alonso Escobedo, written in the sixteenth century and several hundred folios long. Many serious scholars such as Fathers Pou y Marti, Antanasion Lopez, Fidel Lejarza, Ignacio Omavecherria, Maynard Geiger and Alexander Wyse have praised the poem's irrefutable historical value. The authors under review do not question the merits of the poem as probably the best source for sixteenth century Florida history, providing that it is used in conjunction with other sources. For example, no man, excepting the French Le Moyne, has provided such a good description of the Indians as Escobedo. Keegan and Tormo Sanz for the first time reproduce large and pertinent parts of the poem. The fact that it has not been published in its entirety is deplorable, but with the resurgent efforts of recent Franciscan historians to unearth Florida history, it is conceivable that soon "La Florida" will be printed.

In summary, *Experiencia misionera en la Florida* is a well balanced and highly interesting book. Father Keegan is not adverse to a thorough evaluation of Jesuit, Dominican, and Franciscan missionary efforts, comparing all three orders favorably and unfavorably. It is an open-minded work. Furthermore, the authors are the first to have made extensive but careful use of the Escobedo poem. It is a very good book.

CHARLES W. ARNADE

Florida State University

The Story of Southwestern Florida, By James W. Covington.
(New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1957.
2 vols. Maps, illustrations, index. \$48.50.)

This attractive edition consists of one volume of the history of southwestern Florida and one volume of "Family and Personal

History," compiled by the publishers. As has been noted in the reviews of similar editions, the personal histories are one of the few and valuable sources available for biographical material but their value lies mainly in the future and the reviewer need do nothing with them. The review below is of Dr. Covington's work.

This is the first inclusive history of the lower Gulf Coast and interior areas from Polk County to the eastern shores of Lake Okeechobee. The author has freely consulted and acknowledged the research and publications of earlier historians who did spade work in the counties and cities of the section. Nonetheless, Dr. Covington's research in newspaper files and archives, especially in Tampa, has been extensive. He also acknowledges his debt to the pioneer historian, D. B. McKay, to whom the volume is fittingly dedicated.

The description of the land and the sea in relation to the region is adequate and of the aborigines is accurate. The latter benefits from the many recent writings of archeologists and anthropologists who have visited southwestern Florida since 1940. The allocation of space to the Spanish and early American periods, though ample, adds little to existing accounts since the section remained largely a primeval wilderness and there is little history to compile for these years.

Dr. Covington's major contribution begins with the Armed Occupation Act. From 1842 to the present, the effects of research and publication are evident. The later chapters of the history are by far the most interesting, especially the use of the newspaper materials from the McKay columns of the *Tampa Tribune*. The concluding chapters on special subjects gather together information in one place that has been hitherto widely scattered. And the four appendices, with the lists of permits under the Armed Occupation Act and persons listed in the 1850 and 1870 censuses, will intrigue those persons who can trace their ancestries back to the early years.

The author has assiduously and carefully documented his research and writing with chapter notes. These notes will serve as an excellent springboard to any others who may be inspired to do further work in the region or any of its subdivisions. While there is no formal bibliography, the notes are sufficient for those who choose to seek more information on practically

any subject connected with the history of southwestern Florida.

The edition is well illustrated and manufactured, equal to the standards the publisher has maintained in the other sets of Florida histories brought out in previous years. Dr. Covington's work will be a worthy addition to the libraries of the subscribers and any others fortunate enough to obtain one of these sets.

J. E. DOVELL

University of Florida

Ante Bellum Alabama Town and Country. By Weymouth T. Jordan. Florida State University Studies, No. 27. (Tallahassee, Florida State University, 1957. viii, 172 pp. Bibliography. \$3.00.)

It is a far cry from Pickett to Jordan. The earlier sort of state history somehow, and generally, seems by now to make tolerably musty reading. All too often it manages to consist of the sort of pabulum that seems mostly composed of romance and politics, and paying disappointingly scant attention to the daily social and economic inner life of a people.

To serious students trained in the more modern disciplines, and indeed to the modern casual reader as well, Doctor Jordan's interesting and meaty vignettes of old Alabama days and ways will seem refreshing.

More sober than Baldwin's "*Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi*," this little book, using the case method of presentation, affords a certain amount of insight into what was going on in a frontier area, one Southern to the core, yet unusually full of progressive and forward-looking citizens. It tells of men who successfully exploited the soil according to the manner of that day, and of other men who saw the need for and the opportunities offered in lush business and manufacturing fields.

Here and there, before the book is done are heard low strokes on the iron bell that was to ring in a new dispensation, where land and Negroes and cotton were to give ground to the soot and smoke of a modern money economy.

This interesting and closely documented verbal "lantern-show" presents life in Alabama from seven different facets. They

are closely related to the economic life of the state as it then existed, to the daily life and interests of some of its significant citizens, to shadows cast upon the screen by the problems of agriculture involved with slavery, and to those cast by the slowly but surely dawning new day of industrialism.

By virtue of both its age and of its direct and vital connection with the handling of the commercial side of a cotton economy, it is not remarkable that the reader is first taken to Mobile, growing and bustling, an indispensable adjunct to an expanding agricultural milieu.

From Mobile we move out into the land, where we view a highly successful planter, growing the staple that was to provide the shroud for the Old South.

But our planter certainly was successful. He died possessed of baronial acreage and of much good yellow gold. Died, too, before the storm could break over his head.

Intimately connected with the all-absorbing cotton regime are two chapters, the one revealing the all but universal beliefs of Southerners of that day as regards the physical and mental characteristics of Negroes, the other furnishing a flood of information on the activities and ideas of some of the outstanding contemporary proponents of agricultural improvements and reform. Especially does this chapter, entitled "The Crusade for Agricultural Reform," recall Noah B. Cloud and other men of similar interests, such as M. W. Phillips and Thomas Affleck.

To the reviewer, partly because the subject-matter evokes nostalgic memories, the collection of homely family recipes, along with the accounts of the old-time agricultural and county fairs, prove highly entertaining, as well as in the case of the family recipes throwing a spotlight on the slender and uncertain fund of knowledge of how to do things and how merely to keep alive. Little reliable information of such sort was available to the people of that generation, and especially to farmers living remote from towns.

The closing chapter turns its attention to the keen realization on the part of far-seeing Alabamans that the future should more and more be concerned with the exploitation of vast deposits of raw materials and with the development of an industrialized world.

One notes with surprise the extensive development in Alabama of manufactures, long years before the War, and with still more surprise is made aware of the fact that many "agricultural aid" plans, far from being peculiar to the New Deal were in Alabama and elsewhere in the South, advocated before 1860.

There is an extensive and comprehensive bibliography, and an adequate index. Typographical errors are few. The style and diction are both very good.

A map would have been a help to casual readers not conversant with the geography of the South and to others who may be strangers to Alabama and its subdistricts.

James D. Glunt

University of Florida

Lee Chronicle; Studies of the Early Generations of the Lees of Virginia. By Cazenove Gardner Lee, Jr. Compiled and edited by Dorothy Mills Parker. (New York, New York University Press, 1957. 411 pp. Illustrations, maps, genealogical tables, index. \$6.50.)

Cazenove Gardner Lee, Jr., proud of and enthusiastic over his ancestors, was editor of the *Magazine of the Society of the Lees of Virginia*, 1922-39. This book is made up of articles written by him, for that journal, during his editorship. The pieces chosen cover a variety of subjects, pedigrees, burial grounds, guided tours, and so on. However, the bulk of the space is devoted to stressing the importance of Richard Henry Lee and William Lee to the success of the American Revolution. As a result, it is not a chronicle, is lacking in continuity, and is repetitious.

The author's scholarship is not demonstrated in this work. For instance, the clinching proof offered to establish the antecedents of Colonel Richard Lee, the first of the Virginia Lees, consists "of a Bible record, copied in toto from an earlier Bible, the first sentence of which is quoted from a still older Bible, and which states that Colonel Richard Lee was 'son of Richard Lee of Nordley Regis in Shropshire.'" (p. 17) Such is hardly a first class source. Many documents are quoted and important statements are made without footnotes. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* are used as sources. It is hard to

excuse errors such as "Under the Navigation Acts the colonies could trade only with English, in English ships" (p. 251), and, Ludwell Lee "was standing near the General when Cornwallis offered his sword to General Lafayette instead of George Washington, whereupon Lafayette bowed and pointed to Washington" (p. 283). Though the index is adequate, the bibliography is meager.

Antiquarians may find some joy in this book. It is of no great value to the serious student.

J. RYAN BEISER

University of Tampa

The South in Northern Eyes, 1831-1861. By Howard R. Floan. (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1958. xi, 198 pp. \$3.95.)

Dr. Floan's book, as its title only partially suggests, is an analysis of the attitudes toward the South expressed in the works of the major northern authors and in certain northern magazines during the three decades before the Civil War. The book has two major divisions. Part I deals with the principal New England literary men and magazines of the period; Part II with the New York group.

It should perhaps not surprise us that the writers of New England - that hotbed of the abolition movement - were almost to a man inimical toward the South. Whittier, for example, passed "from hatred of slavery to hatred of the Southerner," and Lowell, who despised the South, "held that a slaveholder, as slaveholder, could not be kind or generous." In this both writers were to some extent following the lead of the fanatic Garrison, of whom Dr. Floan says: "Garrison's hatred of slavery became hatred of the slaveholder, and the slaveholder became indistinguishable from the Southerner. Any Southerner, by virtue of his association with slavery, was guilty of all the crimes which Garrison associated with slavery, and, for that matter, with human nature itself."

In varying degrees Emerson, Thoreau, Longfellow, Holmes, and Hawthorne displayed an almost complete ignorance of the South and its people and problems, and were prone to extend

their condemnation of slavery to a blanket indictment of Southerners in general.

New England magazines, on the other hand - especially the *North American Review*, the *New England Magazine*, and the *Waverly Magazine* - were generally favorable in their treatment of the South and Southerners. These better class magazines were dismayed by the hate-mongering of abolitionists like Garrison and Phillips, and when they published articles about the South insisted upon objective, even sympathetic reporting.

In Part II, Dr. Floan gives particular consideration to Melville, Bryant, and Whitman. Perhaps because each of these men, in contrast to the New England writers, knew something of the South at first hand, their attitudes toward Southerners were generally friendly. The author suggests, too, that the close commercial relations between New York and the South may well have fostered a climate of better understanding.

The New York writers, of course, condemned slavery as an institution, but they tended, as do most modern analysts, to recognize it "less as the crime and more as the calamity of the South." Whitman shows up especially well in Floan's analysis, even though his "affection for the South placed conflicting emotional demands upon him." For Whitman hated slavery and hated, too, the aggressive slave power that, he felt, controlled the legislative bodies of the slave states and the nation.

Dr. Floan, Chairman of the Department of World Literature at Manhattan College, is described as a "Westerner who migrated to the East." He has evidently striven to maintain an objective, non-regional attitude toward his materials, and has largely succeeded in doing so. His book, which he has apparently developed from his doctoral dissertation at Columbia University, is perhaps not the final word on the subject. But within the limits he has set, it is an authoritative and well documented study which should be of interest to historians and to students of American literature.

CLARKE OLNEY

University of Georgia