

was one of the two young men on the initial exploratory trip in 1858. Considerably longer than Krebs's autobiography, his diary contains entries from May 11 to November 19 of that year. Schmidt appears to have been a very observant young man. His diary contains descriptions of the wildlife, landscapes, food, people (both whites and Indians), and struggles encountered on the trip. It also portrays the young missionaries' bewilderment and conflicting emotions as they encountered expectations and attitudes that conflicted sharply with what they had known in Europe. Historians and others interested in primary sources dealing with the American West of the nineteenth century and with relations between whites and Indians during that period will find this a useful and fascinating document. They will also gain insights into what it meant to come from the more established cultures of Europe into the cultural and religious pluralism of the American frontier.

Schmutterer's book is a valuable contribution to the historiography of the northern prairie plains. One senses the author's respect and admiration for the dedication of the young German missionaries, even though the enterprise ended in failure. Of course, those who regard efforts to Christianize the Indians as a kind of cultural imperialism will not share the author's positive attitude toward the undertaking, and they may be glad that it failed. Readers must make that assessment for themselves.

The addition of an index would have further enhanced the quality and usefulness of the work.

The Protestant Clergy in the Great Plains and Mountain West, 1865-1915, by Ferenc Morton Szasz. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988. 288 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$27.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARVIN BERGMAN, STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

This book begins to fill a huge gap in the literature on the West and on American religion. While there are purely descriptive accounts of particular denominations in particular states, little interpretive work has been done on religion in the trans-Mississippi West. Now readers will have a useful account of the strategies of Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Episcopal clergymen in the Great Plains (from Dakota Territory to west Texas) and the Rocky Mountain-Great Basin region of the interior.

The book bucks some trends in the recent scholarly literature. Accounts of the American West are increasingly questioning earlier

stereotypes of the region, partly by focusing on women and minorities. Meanwhile, much of the work on American religion is focusing on its pluralistic expressions. Yet in this book Professor Szasz has chosen to focus on white, male, so-called mainline Protestant clergymen and their efforts to save the West from gamblers, drunks, and prostitutes and from Catholics, Mormons, and "Rationalists." He draws on traditional kinds of evidence from denominational archives and published and unpublished clerical autobiographies, reminiscences, and memoirs, which predictably tell how these clergymen overcame nearly insurmountable obstacles to conquer the barbarous West by establishing churches and denominational schools throughout the region.

Chronologically, Szasz develops an interesting story that has useful applications. The first clergy to arrive responded to calls from prominent eastern clergy and denominational leaders to "save the West." To deal with the vast territory of the region and the isolation of its inhabitants, all the denominations adopted the Methodists' itinerant system, launched Sunday schools, and held revivals and camp meetings. Once the clergy had succeeded in establishing themselves in a community, they almost invariably became influential citizens. According to Szasz, "The early Protestant clergy . . . represented stability, decorum, and morality in . . . a harsh and shifting world" (29). They campaigned against gambling, prostitution, and saloons and established schools, academies, and colleges. Meanwhile, the women in their congregations provided essential support for the day-to-day operation of the churches, especially by organizing "sociables." As a result, "for many people, 'social life' and 'church' became almost synonymous" (8).

After he establishes this story line in the first four chapters, Szasz devotes three chapters to the Protestant clergymen's efforts to convert Hispanic Catholics in the Southwest, Mormons in Utah and Idaho, and Native Americans throughout the region. These chapters offer nicely balanced accounts of sensitive topics. A final chapter on "The Social Gospel in the New West," treating urban welfare programs, Chinese schools, aid for those who moved to the Southwest for their health, and Charles Sheldon's popular ideology of social ethics, seems tacked on, except when it treats the social gospelers' campaigns against vice, concluding, "By 1920, most of the 'sporting' element of the western towns had moved their activities behind closed doors. A long-term goal of the early western ministers had (finally) come to fruition. Thanks to new political alliances, the clergy's middle class version of morality had emerged victorious" (200).

Generally, this story is convincing as far as it goes. But one wishes for more evidence from the communities themselves, and not just the

clergymen's memories. Szasz might have made better use of some recent community studies, where religion is not as seriously overlooked as in the more general literature he cites.

The account is unsatisfying in other ways, too. Szasz makes few geographic distinctions: examples from the northern Great Plains appear in the same paragraphs with those from the Southwest, and evidence from the ranching frontier supports the same generalizations as that from the mining frontier. Only on pages 81-82 does he discuss the "distinct religious milieu" of one of the vast region's subregions, but that is a superficial discussion: Szasz claims that what distinguished the southern Great Plains from the rest of the region was the dominance of religion rather than alcohol in community life and mores.

Readers will not even get a sense for how the process of establishing churches in the Great Plains and Mountain West was different from the same process on earlier frontiers. Did the different theological or political climate at the time this region was settled affect the pattern of religious activity? The only thing we learn from this book is that the theological controversies on the antebellum frontier did not extend to the New West, because the current national debates over evolution, higher criticism, and comparative religion did not speak directly to the average person. But that begs the question. Why were those controversies any less appealing than the debates between Calvinists and Arminians on the antebellum frontier?

All in all, this book is extremely valuable as far as it goes. I hope, though, that others will take up where Szasz leaves off and provide more sophisticated interpretations of the role of religion in communities of the trans-Mississippi West, taking fuller advantage of the recent western historiography.

Between the Rivers: A History of Iowa United Methodism, by John A. Nye with Louis Haselmayer and Leonard Deaver. Des Moines: Commission on Archives and History, Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, 1986. xv, 323 pp. Illustrations, notes, maps, glossary, appendixes, timeline, index. \$12.95 cloth, \$10.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY RICHARD H. THOMAS, CORNELL COLLEGE

John A. Nye, a retired United Methodist clergyman, has undertaken the task of tracing the complicated organizational changes and mergers within the various governing bodies of Iowa Methodism since 1844. The book also includes contributions by Louis Haselmayer, president emeritus of Iowa Wesleyan College, and Leonard Deaver,

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