

American political system. Humphrey's fundamental decency and his understanding of the rules of political life contrast sharply with the spate of memoirs emerging from the Nixon period.

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Radical Republicans in the North: State Politics During Reconstruction, edited by James C. Mohr. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.

The Dunning School of Reconstruction History has been subjected to many criticisms running the gamut from racism to a failure to employ the comparative approach in the straight political history with which they were concerned. While the former charge is tenuous, there is some justification for accepting the latter. Dunning and his pupils did fail to employ the comparative approach. They did not contrast corrupt political behavior in the South during Reconstruction with like behavior before and after 1865-1876. Moreover, there is an absence of any mention of corruption in Northern politics during the same period. Rather, they examined corruption as if it were a phenomenon peculiar only to Radical Republican Southern politics. In an attempt to remedy these faults, recent historians, including the authors of this work, have felt inclined to take a harder look at the Northern states during Reconstruction. The result is a correction of the imbalance that in part was the consequence of Southerners writing too much about Reconstruction and Northerners too little.

The subject of this well edited and equally well written work is Radical Republican politics in nine Northern states: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. In addition, there is an excellent historiographical note and summary of source materials.

In the examination of these states representing New England, the central section of the United States, and three significant north-central plains states, the editor mentions toward the end of the introduction that all of the essays were written specifically for this volume with a single exception—David Montgomery's piece on the erratic behavior of Republicans in Pennsylvania. The editor might have added that the basic themes of all the pieces are based on Montgomery's pioneer work. These themes include inner party struggles, the question of racial relations, and the impact of economic development on politics.

It is always difficult to review a work that includes a number of essays written by different authors. Always some of the articles are of more value than others, and one cannot make an essay by essay evaluation in the space allotted for a review. Consequently, this reviewer will suggest that the chapters on Connecticut (John Niven), New York (James C. Mohr), Ohio (Felice A. Bonadio), Illinois (Phillip D. Swenson), Michigan (George M.

Blackburn), and Wisconsin (Richard N. Current), are all quite good. They conform to the basic aims of the work, thematically speaking, and illustrate a high degree of scholarship. The article on Pennsylvania, first published in 1961, by Montgomery stands forth as one that can yet be judged as excellent.

The article on Massachusetts is worthy of being singled out as a particularly well balanced and scholarly treatment of the subject. The author, Richard Abbot, is well informed on this period of Massachusetts history as he recently completed a fine biography of Henry Wilson, junior senator from Massachusetts from 1855 until 1873. Professor Robert Dykstra's article on Iowa, although scholarly, is not so well balanced. Indeed, it had better be described as an article that deals with one aspect of Iowa political history during this period—the enfranchisement of the black man in 1868. Out of a total of twenty-one pages, the article devotes eighteen to this subject. In addition, Dykstra, like other new historians, is inclined to marry history to mathematics. Consequently, both traditional historians and lay readers will find his treatment difficult to comprehend. Indeed, it is advisable to read chapters 10 and 11 in Leland Sage's *A History of Iowa* before tackling the chapter written by Dykstra.

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Acres For Cents: Delinquent Tax Auctions in Frontier Iowa, by Robert P. Swierenga. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976. pp. xix, 263. \$14.95.

Capital is an essential ingredient in any commercial venture, and the shortage of available money was often a crucial factor in economic development on the American frontier, especially when farmers strove to transform their homesteads into larger, more profitable enterprises. Consequently, close to currency-starved agrarians usually stood speculators, who bought and sold land, made mortgages, or purchased tax liens. Robert P. Swierenga has focused his attention on this last mode of activity—tax buying—and the product of his scrutiny is an informative monograph on tax buyers and their roles in the economic life in Iowa during the nineteenth century.

Swierenga found the Hawkeye State a fertile center for his investigations; for not only did he have access to numerous manuscript collections, newspapers, government documents, and other secondary publications, but also, and more importantly, he discovered that many of the records of tax sales in the state still existed. Utilizing county tax registers, he quantitatively compared selected variables in sixteen representative counties. The fruits of his statistical analyses coupled with a collective biography of tax buyers and a

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