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Book Reviews

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Bourbon Democracy in Alabama, 1874-1890; by Allen Johnston Going. (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1951. Pp. ix, 256. Tables, maps, bibliography, index. \$4.00.)

Professor Going's study bridges a glaring gap in Alabama's recorded history. More particularly, the account covers the years between those already described so well by Walter L. Fleming's ***Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*** (1905) and John B. Clark's ***Populism in Alabama*** (1927). The book was originally one of a series of doctoral dissertations being prepared under Fletcher M. Green's inspiring direction at the University of North Carolina. As a group, the dissertations give close attention to a neglected period in the South's history.

Alabama Bourbons differed little from their counterparts in other Southern states after the Civil War and Reconstruction, for they promoted the Democratic party, "white supremacy," railroads, economy in government, public education, manufacturing, and what is generally called "New South" approaches to life. Some Bourbons bore the name "Brigadier" because they had held high rank in Confederate armies; and a premium was placed on military service when Americans sought political office after 1865, of course. As has long been known, numerous post-Civil War political leaders in the South had been politicians before 1861. It is a well-known fact, too, that their social legislation was tempered by a lack of money. They borrowed many carpet-bag approaches to government. Reconstruction experiences demanded honesty on their part, and large-scale political graft did not exist in the South from 1874 to 1890.

Bourbon Democracy in Alabama emphasizes the point that there occurred a gradual shift from a rural-agrarian to an urban-manufacturing concept and struggle for politico-economic control in the 1870's and 1880's. Agriculture certainly did not remain profitable. Farmers, believing that they were mistreated,

passed from the Granger movement to the Farmers' Alliance to Populism. At the same time, successful Bourbons in the economic field were often successful only because they attached themselves in one way or another to Northern business enterprises or experienced Northern agents in the South. Going reaches the conclusion that north Alabama coal and iron became important, although not entirely decisive, factors in determining state political actions by 1890. However, he emphasizes the fact that Bourbon politicians could not long have remained in power if they overlooked agrarian welfare, "white supremacy," or past events in the South. Thus, Bourbonism in Alabama, as elsewhere, was a combination of the old and the new. The author's approach to his subject, therefore, is sound and historically correct. Furthermore, the same approach to the present South is the only tenable one if one wishes seriously to appraise and understand the region and its people.

WEYMOUTH T. JORDAN

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Liberty and Property, by R. V. Coleman. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951. Pp. 606.)

"Liberty and Property," the vigorous shout of the American patriots of Stamp Act days, appears through these pages to represent the basic desire of the hardy colonials through the entire period covered - from the 1660's to the eve of the Revolution. Fierce individualism, a determination to obtain property and guard political rights, and an irrepressible impatience with the laws of the day come flashing out from the tumultuous drama of the life of that era. "I am free," says an Iroquois chief. "You may goe out of the way," says an unnamed teamster to a royally appointed governor whose carriage he had met on a narrow road. The people of Connecticut would not "take Directions . . . from any Body," said

a member of an orderly mob to Governor Fitch when they were forcing the resignation of His Majesty's tax collector.

Coleman supplies tempting take-off points for innumerable tales of high adventure. The forests throb with Indian life - you simply can't see the trees for the Indians. You can almost hear the Redman breathe as he lays an ambush, kidnaps a white woman, faithfully delivers into the hand of Iberville the letter intended for La Salle after necessarily waiting thirteen years, or protests against the multiplicity of frauds in the Walking Purchase treaty.

Excellent maps abound throughout the text, but nearly all the footnotes are shuffled off to the back of the book and entered under the title of "Bibliography" - thus reducing greatly the value of the notes and making the bibliography relatively useless to any reader save one with the diligence to reorganize it sufficiently to make it intelligible.

Pictures from life carry the story; statistics are sparingly used. Great men stalk across the scene, exploring a continent, building a nation, or burning a city. Smaller characters are snatched back from the verge of oblivion and made to tell us, through words or deeds, how the people felt. Action rarely gives way to description or explanation, so the forward motion is seldom slowed. Human interest episodes tell always of significant events. Thoroughness and minor detail are foregone. Page references written into the text itself aid the reader in maintaining the proper time sequence as the attention shifts from colony to colony, but many readers will probably find it difficult to keep the events in logical order.

There are rich rewards for the time spent in reading this book, however, and readers will not soon forget the memorable scenes from those exciting days when our forefathers proved the world was not too much for them and showed

that Liberty and Property can constitute not merely a slogan but an integral part of the pattern of life.

GILBERT L. LYCAN.

John B. Stetson University.

A recent worthwhile publication is *Florida's Seminole Indians* by Wilfred T. Neill, Ross Allen's Reptile Institute, Silver Springs, Florida, 1952. 81 p. \$2.00.

There is a brief sketch of the earlier Seminole, but the value of the book is in its account of the present-day Seminole from first-hand research and observation, with numerous excellent illustrations.