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## Book Reviews

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*Colonial Georgia: A Study in British Imperial Policy in the Eighteenth Century.* By Trevor H. Reese. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1963. vii, 172 pp. Notes, bibliography, index, \$4.75.)

As the last of the original thirteen American continental colonies to be established, Georgia is of special significance in the explanation of British colonial policy in the eighteenth century. In its short life as a British colony, in a span of less than fifty years, Georgia illustrated practically every facet of British colonial policy. The conception of Georgia was due to the philanthropy of private individuals in London who were keenly interested in the plight of insolvent and unemployed debtors. Its support by the government, however, was due to the strategic and commercial benefits that Britain hoped to derive. "In this way, the three principal strands in the pattern of British policy were represented in the foundation of Georgia; firstly, in the social relief envisaged by the Trustees, secondly in its strategic value as a barrier against French and Spanish expansionist tendencies in America, and thirdly in its commercial potentiality as a contributor to the imperial economy, a useful subsidiary in the attempt to establish a well-regulated, interdependent family of territories with the United Kingdom as the business centre." This long sentence in Professor Reese's small, carefully organized, and well-written book is the author's central theme. In contrast with the many monographs which have been written about Georgia, Dr. Reese has examined the sources from the vantage point of the mother country and has given Georgia's colonial history a new perspective by relating it to British colonial policy as a whole in the eighteenth century.

In the first chapter, the author says that encouragement of foreigners to settle in the colonies as a method of increasing population and strengthening the defenses of the empire remained a salient feature of British policy until the end of the century. He also points out that the government was not particularly interested in the charitable intentions of the Trustees, but that it was vitally concerned about defence of the empire. Dr. Reese maintains, on the other hand, that the Trustees were always jealous of their powers and were unwilling to permit their authority to be reduced by the appointment of a governor.

The author presents a concise account of the vast expendi-

tures by Parliament on Georgia - 136,000 pounds to the end of the charter period. Only 16,000 pounds was collected by the Trustees from other sources. "Such Governmental benevolence towards a colony had no precedent in British imperial history."

In the chapter on "Land, Labour, and Liquor," it is clearly demonstrated that these were the main grievances of the colony, and that the Trustees' land policy cramped the poor small farmers of Georgia in competition with rich large landowners in South Carolina. "This was the upshot of a policy coloured too much by moral and military considerations and too little by the economic and human factors."

The author's conclusion is that: "Economically, Georgia's development reflected all the commercial attributes of mercantilist theory and illustrated the mother country's blind devotion to what was desirable and her consequent neglect of what was practicable or most suitable to the natural capacities of the overseas settlements. . . . The story of the growth of colonial Georgia's production and trade proved that natural resources and human needs were stronger factors than governmental directives in economic development."

HUGH T. LEFLER

*University of North Carolina*

*Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side.* By Leonard W. Levy. Foreword by Oscar Handlin. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1963. xv, 225 pp. Preface, bibliography, notes, index. \$4.50.)

Most of what Mr. Levy has to say about the darker side of Jefferson is not new. Serious scholars are, in the main, familiar with Mr. Jefferson's lapses and inconsistencies. Nonetheless, Levy's book is a contribution to Jeffersonia in that it is a well-written, well-documented study of these lapses in the historical perspective in which they occurred. If there is any criticism it is one that Levy noted, that his book is not a balanced presentation. In fact, the listing of discrete incidents leaves the reader with the feeling that the book is a montage of not always related fragments which ignores the man Jefferson and focuses on the actions of Jefferson that were non- or, worse still, anti-libertarian.

Levy suggests a number of rationales for Jefferson's most un-libertarian behavior. Among the factors seen as influencing Jefferson - particularly Jefferson as president - was his ardent desire to maintain, preserve, and protect the American experiment. This led to the rationalization that it must be preserved by whatever means were available, even if the system to be preserved would condemn the means of its preservation. This point of view eventuated in Jefferson being seduced by the doctrine of the end justifying the means. Perhaps the fact that he could be so seduced, so faithless to his own libertarian principles, was, as Levy postulates, his lack of anything like Lincoln's exquisite moral consciousness. Or, perhaps, it was simply that Jefferson was temporally a statesman before he was a politician and found out that the actions of the latter were not always compatible with the values of the former. Certainly, during his years in the presidency some of his actions were characterized by what can only be described as a high-handed disregard of the Constitution. Jefferson, like other presidents, probably felt that constitutional limitations imposed on this office were at times intolerable.

Levy points out, with some justification, that Jefferson was not a creative philosopher. Although he was widely read in philosophy his greatest virtue was the ability to give enduring meaning to a philosophical ideal through his writing. For Jefferson, if we are to accept Levy's interpretation, values were non-problematic. He seems not to have seriously questioned the values he held and was, in fact, a "true believer," feeling that his actions were in accord with all that was best in Enlightenment thinking. Like others of his time, he had the certainty that is implicit in a philosophical system which is based on natural and immutable laws.

There is no doubt that Levy's book will contribute to rounding out the present picture of Jefferson. It should not, however, be considered the final word on Jefferson. This book's greatest value will be in balancing the mass of conventional encomiums by showing that the principles that Jefferson the statesman had so ably enunciated were more than Jefferson the man and the politician lived up to. The question which one must inevitably raise after reading this book is, which Jefferson is more important?

F. BRUCE ROSEN

*Auburn University*

*The Papers of Henry Clay. Volume III: Presidential Candidate, 1821-1824.* Edited by James F. Hopkins and Mary W. M. Hargreaves. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1963. viii, 935 pp. Frontispiece, index. \$15.00.)

The editors of *The Papers of Henry Clay* merit congratulations for another task well done. In the third volume of this notable undertaking there are approximately one thousand entries, consisting mainly of letters to and from Clay located in over forty depositories throughout the United States. Painstaking research has enabled the editors to identify several hundred obscure persons, geographical locations, and other references, thus facilitating the historian's utilization of this significant publication.

There is much material relating to Clay's legal and private affairs during his two-year absence from Congress (1821-1823), but the all-absorbing subject of the Kentuckian's quest for the presidency in 1824 dominates much of the book. The volume traces the declining fortunes of Clay's presidential aspirations. At first, he received sanguine reports from friends concerning his candidacy, and he too often expressed the fond hope that he would ultimately win. Jackson's entry into the race was a heavy blow to Clay, who had expected no rival for the western votes.

This volume ends at a crucial point in Clay's career. He had just been eliminated from the presidential sweepstakes, and the scene was being set for that fateful drama that led to the election of John Quincy Adams by the House of Representatives, a drama in which Clay, as speaker of the House, was destined to play a leading role. His friends had offered conflicting advice. One of them, Henry Shaw of Massachusetts, urged him to "hold yourself . . . above all compromising Arrangements . . . we support you for President, & for nothing else - if we fail, let the champion make his own Cabinet. . . ." Shaw argued that "a Seat in Congress will be more honorable & popular too with the People, than a Seat in the Cabinet. . . ." On the other hand, Benjamin Watkins Leigh of Virginia wrote that he expected to find Clay "at the board of general officers" in the new government. As 1824 drew to a close, Clay seemed inclined to heed Shaw's rather than Leigh's advice. "I would not cross Pennsylvania Avenue," he wrote Leigh, "to be in any office under any Administration which lies before us." Unfortunately for his presidential ambitions, Clay did

accept the office of secretary of state from Adams, thus giving rise to the embarrassing cry of "bargain and corruption." The office that had been a stepping-stone to the White House for Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Adams would become a stumbling block for "Harry of the West."

EDWIN A. MILES

*University of Houston*

*And Tyler Too: A Biography of John & Julia Tyler.* By Robert Seager III. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963. xviii, 633 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$12.50.)

Tyler biographers labor under the handicap of inadequate source material. The personal papers of President Tyler were burned in the conflagration which followed Lee's retreat from Richmond in April 1865. To help fill this vacuum, Professor Seager has mined some 10,000 previously unused Gardiner family papers. Disavowing any pretension to authorship of a "definitive study of President John Tyler and his times," he has written "an informal social history of the Gardiners and the Tylers" in the hope that he can thereby "Humanize" John Tyler and "bring him out of the shadow into which history has cast him; to see him as his wife, his family, and his informal friends saw him, and as he saw himself."

However, Seager's account is more successful in its portrayal of the ambitious, snobbish, and somewhat avaricious Gardiner clan of Long Island than in its treatment of the Tylers of Virginia. John Tyler's young wife, Julia Gardiner, emerges from these pages as an unforgettable personality, vivacious, aggressive, devoted, and slightly spoiled. Unhappily, though some light is shed on the "human side" of John Tyler, on "his fears, frustrations, ambitions, joys, sorrows, and loves," he remains in the shadows, an unbending, highly principled, rather inflexible, and somewhat unbelievable figure. Professor Seager has succeeded only partially in humanizing the ninth President of the United States, who, on March 3, 1845, signed the bill which admitted Florida to the union as the twenty-seventh state.

Despite the author's modest disavowals, *And Tyler Too* is of

considerable value to students of Tyler's curious political career. Not only has he provided a masterful synthesis of earlier studies, but, by careful use of his source materials, Seager provides some interesting insights into the Tyler presidency. He advances a very convincing case in corroboration of the thesis that Tyler was motivated by commercial considerations, rather than by the interests of slavery, in pressing for Texas annexation. He also offers an intriguing account of Tyler's use of patronage (a political device he earlier denounced) in advancing his third party movement of 1843-1844.

*And Tyler Too* is written with grace and wit. There are times, however, when the author's rhetorical enthusiasm for his subjects undermines his sense of proportion. Few readers will be entirely convinced by his pronouncement that John Tyler entered the presidency with a "training in the art and science of government unmatched by any other American President before or since."

ALFRED A. CAVE

*University of Utah*

*American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862.* By Warren S. Howard. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963. xi, 336 pp. Preface, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

Criminals try to leave as few traces as possible behind them, and slave traders did their best to follow this maxim. Yet of all criminal enterprises of the past, one of the most voluminously documented was the slave trade between Africa and America in the nineteenth century. In a series of laws (1794, 1800, 1807, 1818, and 1820), the United States Congress forbade American ships and American citizens - the latter even on pain of death - to engage in this malodorous traffic. Yet the laws were violated with scandalous and even contemptuous frequency. Till 1963, the suppression of this trade had attracted the serious attention of only one historian, W. E. Burghardt DuBois, who, in 1896, published *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870*. The work had all the

trappings of scholarship, but it was based upon printed sources alone, (some of them wholly unreliable), and it had a highly partisan tone. It claimed that the sorry record of the United States government in failing to carry out its laws was due to a "conspiracy" of southern slave-owners; that the "slave power" that controlled the federal government prevented any serious efforts at enforcement; that only after the high-minded Republicans came to power in 1861, was the African slave trade wiped out; and that if only the Whig and the Democratic administrations before 1861, had genuinely wanted to suppress the trade, they could easily have done so.

Now an admirable new book has appeared, showing that Du-Bois' work was both superficial and biased. Dr. Howard has based his book on a wide variety of materials, British as well as American, manuscript as well as printed. He agrees that the poor record of enforcement stands as a shameful blot on the record of the United States. But the explanation of the failure was complex, not simple. There certainly was no "slave power" conspiracy. The slave trade flourished because the United States navy did not have enough cruisers; Congress did not provide the cruisers because they cost money, and American taxpayers (Northerners as well as Southerners) demanded frugality of Congress. Some federal officials did act inertly and even stupidly in enforcing the laws, but no party was blameless, not even the Republicans. The kinds of evidence required by law were not easy for prosecuting attorneys to get and to present in court; and some federal judges, notably Samuel R. Betts, United States district judge in New York City, handed down some bone-headed decisions. But nobody in Congress, not even Northerners, made any effort to remedy the defects in the laws. A great deal of shocking information was to be found in documents published by the navy and state departments. But apparently few congressmen read them. Even the American public was apathetic, and remained so till the late 1850's.

The author is a historian for the United States Air Force. He has written a book which is a model of clear and graceful writing, of well-paced narrative, of excellent organization, of graphic descriptions, of memorably depicted personalities, and of forcefully persuasive conclusions.

*Emory University*

JAMES Z. RABUN