

Retreat From Reconstruction, 1869-1879. By WILLIAM GILLETTE. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979. Pp. xiv, 463. Preface, notes, bibliographical essay, acknowledgments, index. \$27.50.)

Professor Gillette (Rutgers), the author of the well-known work on the Fifteenth Amendment, has now, after twelve years of study, written the first scholarly monograph on the decline of Reconstruction as a national issue during the 1870s. Using a traditional methodology, he has in a series of interpretative essays analyzed "the nature of the Reconstruction program and the reasons for its having ended . . . before, during, and after the Grant Administration" (pp. x-xi). Initially the author surveys Reconstruction from 1867 to the Force Acts of 1870-1871 and their feeble enforcement in selected states, particularly Delaware. In the 1872 election the political liabilities of the Liberal Republican movement are emphasized. Insisting that Grant *did* have a southern policy, "an intentional course, though sometimes inconsistent, contradictory, and inconstant" (p. 76), Gillette traces the administration's "policies" in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Texas ("Federal Power Tested"), Louisiana ("The Longest Battle"), and Arkansas and Mississippi ("Politics or War?"). He concludes that "Grant was more active, stronger, firmer, and far better at getting his own way when faced with problems, at least in the short run, than has been generally realized."

He attributes the Democratic resurgence in 1873-1874 to widespread opposition to the Civil Rights Bill, hence, "by August [1874], northerners of both parties recognized that the racial and reconstruction issues, as well as Democratic resurgence, were not limited to the South" (p. 224). The Civil Rights Act of 1875, he contends, marked the end of Reconstruction.

Gillette believes that Tilden had Parkinson's disease, which was a primary reason for his defeat in 1876. Since the Republicans had already abandoned the blacks (he uses the term Negro interchangeably) prior to the election, he disputes the significance of electoral impasse on Reconstruction. Hayes's policies in Louisiana and South Carolina are delineated. He failed because he "chose to govern by general policy statement and preaching rather than on bargaining and pressuring" (p. 360). "Having expended rivers of blood and oceans of money," the author concludes, "to suppress the rebellion, most northerners had been willing to acquiesce when the white Southerners ended reconstruction and when the federal government proved in-

capable of protecting its own citizens in their right to vote" (p. 377).

There are methodological questions about this work besides its elitist political structure. The end-notes are selective, that is, secondary works are listed in the twelve-page bibliographical essay. Private papers and newspapers are cited, the latter primarily from New York and the northeast. Hence, when a generalization is supported by a newspaper, one cannot determine the source(s) used for that particular statement.

Conceptually, he writes that his approach is "post-revisionist," that is, he emphasizes the "limits of legislation and the manifest failure of reconstruction" (p. 450). One must question this assumption if only by comparing the role of Grant and that of Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s. The point is that legislation *can* be enforced. Also, when he links the "right to vote" interpretation to the failure of Reconstruction, Gillette dismisses other variables that impacted on critical issues when the blacks did vote in large numbers. In addition, the author does not articulate what Grant's policies were, except "quick fixes," as the scholarly articles over the past two decades have determined. He understates the significance of the devastating Panic of 1873 and the continuing depression on national politics. Too, the corruption/fraud issue in the Grant era and the emergence of new, competitive national issues are not considered in this admittedly complex era. Finally, his total avoidance of election graphics and quantitative studies detract from his overall analysis. Until these techniques are included, the topic in the period under consideration will remain as elusive as the decline of the Civil Rights "movement" during the 1960s and early 1970s.

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Andrew Carnegie. By GEORGE SWETNAM. Twayne's United States Authors Series. (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1980. Pp. 186. Preface, chronology, notes, bibliography, index. \$10.95.)

It might be expected that any literary series so highly eclectic as to include among its subjects of study such writers as Henry Adams, Zane Grey, Herbert Hoover, and LeRoi Jones would surely reserve a space for America's most literate and loquacious industrialist, Andrew Carnegie. With the publication of George Swetnam's study of Carnegie's writings that reserved space has now been filled.