

in the parts it seems to be necessary to sacrifice the unified view, which a single writer might attain, tho at a sacrifice of truth in detail. This difficulty has been partially met in *The American Nation* series, first by the unifying plan of the editor, and, secondly, by the fact that most of the writers are not only specialists on a given field, but are teachers of the whole subject of American history, and thus are compelled, often yearly, to take a survey of the whole field. Thus they reach a better appreciation of the importance and meaning of their specialty in its relation to the whole subject.

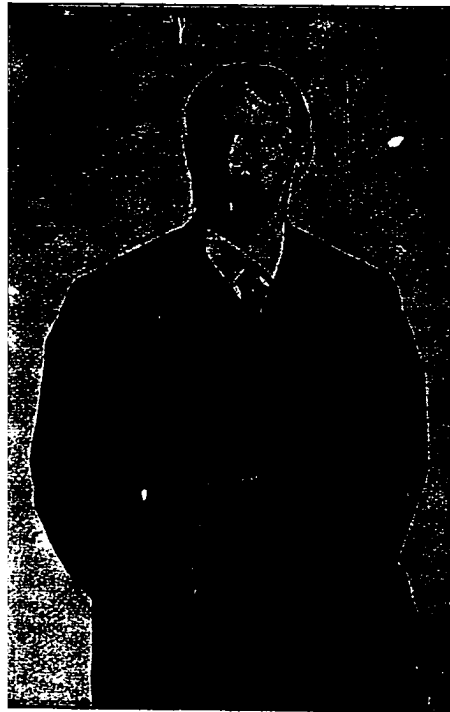
But all this effort to get the truth, both in large and in detail, might have resulted in a very dry and unreadable work, having no value except for the student. Altho the volumes are irregular in that regard, we must agree that the editor has in the main secured work that stands the double test of accuracy and of readableness. As he hopes, the history "loses nothing in dramatic interest because it is true or because it is truly told." We are interested not only by the style, but by the range of subjects treated—the social life, schools, religion, literature; the economic life, the work of the people and their labor and capital organizations, and, finally, war and diplomacy—all running well on the thread of political and constitutional history. Nor are the great personalities neglected, and some of America's greatest heroes are more fairly delineated here than in any other place that we know—notably, Henry the Navigator, Columbus, Governor Andros and Nathaniel Bacon.

It would be quite impossible within the limits of this review to mark the notable features of each of the five volumes, but the real contributions at least may be noted. Professor Cheyney's volume is in many respects a wholly new chapter in American history. Since America has, in fact, been merely a new land whither Europeans have come, with all their social and economic and political traditions, to work out their destiny in a new environment, it is very essential that we know at the start what European civilization was at the time that Spaniards and Frenchmen and Englishmen began coming to America. This we are told in a series of truly fascinating chapters

The American Nation*

THERE has long been a need for a complete history of the United States by associated historical scholars whose work is harmonized by an editor who has a recognized standing as a historian. Moreover, in such a history the work must be done by the scholars, and they must not merely sell their names to be placed in an honorable position in the early pages of a work really done by hack-writers, graduate students, forced by poverty to write for a penny a line. Further, the work must be done by the recognized authorities in the particular period to be treated. The fields of special study have necessarily been gradually narrowed, until it is no longer possible for one man to be the master of the whole field of American history. Truth is not learned by a bird's-eye view, but through the closest research, followed by long consideration, until the many details fall into their proper relation to the organic whole. To get this accurate view

* *THE AMERICAN NATION. A History from Original Sources by Associated Scholars. Edited by Albert Bushnell Hart, LL.D., Professor of History in Harvard University.* In 28 volumes, 5 groups. Group I: *Foundations of the Nation.* I. European Background of American History. By Prof. Edward P. Cheyney. II. Basis of American History. By Professor Livingston Farrand. III. Spain in America. By Prof. Edward G. Bourne. IV. England in America. By Pres. Lyon G. Tyler. V. Colonial Self-Government. By Prof. Charles M. Andrews. New York: Harper Brothers. 5 vols. \$9.00.



ALBERT BUSHNELL HART, LL.D.

upon (1) medieval commerce with the "Golden East," (2) the effect of the Turkish conquests upon the trade routes, (3) the pre-eminence of the Italians in geographical science and navigation, and (4) the dramatic story of Portuguese ventures on the African coast. Then the Governments of Spain and France and Holland are described, and there is a most attractive chapter upon the growth of the great commercial companies, which were to do so much of the early work of colonization. Then the spirit and importance of the Reformation are shown in its effect upon colonization. Because the English institutions became dominant in America, several chapters are devoted to describing the conditions in England when the future American left it. Finally, that we may better understand the sort of government, both local and provincial, which was set up in the colonies, Professor Cheyney has given us a scholarly account of the English Government, both central and local.

As Professor Cheyney's volume prepares us to understand the man who came to America, so Professor Farrand's book pictures the environment, both physical and human, into which the European interloper came. Not merely the physiography of North America is discussed, but those peculiar conditions are pointed out which most determined the paths which men would take—the waterways, portages, trails and passes. There is a survey of the natural agricultural products and animal life which have turned and driven men this way and that because of their economic necessities. Finally, Professor Farrand turns to that subject which has been his life's study. An immense amount of scientific study of the American Indian is condensed in some 200 pages, dealing with the distribution, character and religion. The subject which everybody knows we find nobody knows rightly, for many supposed traits of the Indian vanish before scientific investigation.

The third volume, by Professor Bourne, is one to the publication of which students of American history have long looked forward. In this field the author is without a rival in this country. Expectation is fully realized, for not only is the scholarship of a high order, but the book is more attractively written than any previous contribution that Professor Bourne has made. The story, stripped of the many fictions that have long clung to it, moves with a truly dramatic interest. Controverted points are clearly set forth without tedious argument, but with original conclusions. The mythical voyages of Sebastian Cabot are disposed of with scholarly acumen. The summary (p. 103) of the respective merits of Columbus, John and Sebastian Cabot and Amerigo Vespucci is masterly. The latter is beyond doubt cleared of complicity in having his name given to the New World. The chapters which treat of the Spanish system of colonization are a real revelation of the extent to which Spanish culture prevailed in her colonies. The editor points out the importance of this study in Spanish culture, because today larger areas in America are dominated by Latin civilization than by Anglo-Saxon. Moreover, as the author states, more than one-half of the pres-

ent territory of the United States has at one time or another been under Spanish dominion.

President Tyler's volume is not characterized by so keen a scent for the essentials of his subject as the other authors have shown. Tho his work is based upon the sources, he has not seen so deeply into their meaning, but has rather taken their curious phraseology and attractive stories. Tales of Raleigh's gallantry and John Smith's doubtful and insignificant adventures occupy, with many others of their kind, too much space, which should have been devoted to the more serious question of the institutions which were then taking root. There is no new meaning given to the old facts in this fresh interpretation, which is the result of deep and thoughtful scholarship. The old story is told, however, with accuracy and no little attractiveness, and that virtue in itself makes the volume no unworthy member of the series.

Professor Andrews's book is a work showing the most careful and thorough research. Some of the most vexing problems of that period of colonial history are here adequately dealt with for the first time. The navigation acts are studied as they have never been before, and the administration of colonial affairs by the English council is given full exposition, which the subject has long needed. Puzzling questions concerning the early New England charters are made clear, and the conquest of New York from the Dutch is robbed of some perplexing problems. In fact, upon almost every subject that he has touched Professor Andrews has given us new light, which he has gotten from the foreign archives as well as from the published colonial records.

On the whole, if the series continues to be of the same high grade as these first volumes, the complete work will be an object of pride to American scholars. The volumes invite the reader both by their contents and make-up. The size is convenient, the binding attractive, and the maps of such a character as to be really helpful, not merely ornamental. Moreover, they have the right titles under them.