

Hon. W. A. Courtenay, of South Carolina, reprints, with an introduction, "An Inquiry into the Propriety of Establishing a National Observatory," printed in 1827 by Professor James C. Courtenay, of Charleston, the first public appeal from a private citizen for the erection of an astronomical observatory in the Union.

The chapters of Mr. Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* which treat of the American Revolution, though forming one of the most instructive and judicious histories of the Revolution that has been written, have not hitherto been accessible except in the complete work. Now, under the editorship of Professor James Albert Woodburn, of Indiana University, these chapters and passages have been gathered together and published as a separate volume under the (half) title of *The American Revolution, 1763-1783* (New York, Appleton, pp. xxvi, 518). Though intended primarily for use as a text-book, the volume can not fail to find its way into the hands of many who are not university students, and into libraries to which the complete work would never come, thereby doing much, as Professor Woodburn trusts, to remove or avoid any false and exaggerated conceptions of British despotism and tyranny that may yet remain, while at the same time carrying conviction that the resistance of the Americans contributed, as Fox said, "to preserve the liberties of mankind." The editor has prefixed a brief bibliography (pp. xi.-xviii.) of some of the important primary and secondary English and American authorities on the period. He has added also some fifteen pages of notes upon the text. The notes consist chiefly in occasional references to American authorities, or in quotations from them, and especially at points where in the view of the author Mr. Lecky has been "unduly severe or hostile in his criticism of the American cause or actors in the Revolution." Taken as a whole the notes form a very useful addition to the book, though they seem to be distributed somewhat arbitrarily or accidentally. Excepting occasional suggestions to students the editor gives little comment of his own. Where pages and passages not bearing on American history have been omitted (this has been mentioned in the notes, but it would seem that some mark of omission should also be found in the text.

E. C. B.

*History of State Banking in Maryland*, by Alfred Cookman Bryan, Ph.D. [Johns Hopkins University Studies in History and Political Science; Series XVII., Nos. 1, 2, 3] (pp. 144.) We are indebted to Mr. Bryan for the addition of another and important chapter to the history of banking in this country previous to the adoption of the national banking system. It is the familiar story of experimental legislation, lax supervision by the state and consequent loose and sometimes fraudulent practices by bank managers, marked, however, by gradual improvement, resulting during the later years of the period in the establishment of a fairly satisfactory system.

Maryland made no contribution to the development of either sound

legislation or practice comparable in importance to what was accomplished in Massachusetts, New York or Louisiana, but its experience, as presented by Mr. Bryan, is none the less instructive. Specially worthy of note is his account of the part imposed on the banks by the state in carrying out its schemes for internal improvements, of the taxation of banks for the support of the school fund, and of the close relation between the development of banking and the general industrial movement which he clearly brings out. Mr. Bryan's treatment is systematic, and he has apparently done his work in an adequate manner on the whole, though his material does not seem to be always well digested, and his statements are sometimes lacking in clearness. It is difficult, *e. g.*, to get, from apparently contradictory statements on pages 50 and 53, a clear idea of the facts in regard to the depreciation of the notes of the Maryland banks in 1815.

H. B. G.

One may question the appropriateness of including Mr. Amos K. Fiske's *The West Indies* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, pp. xii, 414) in the well-known series of the "Story of the Nations," for the obvious reason that those islands do not form a nation, never have, and probably never will. The book itself is a facile compilation of the essentials of West Indian geography and history to "meet the needs of that numerous but undefinable person 'the general reader.'" It betrays no intimate knowledge of the subject and is drawn exclusively from sources in the English language. Two of the best of these, it may be noted in passing, Madden's *Island of Cuba* (London, 1849) and Levy's *Cabrera's Cuba and the Cubans*, have escaped the author's attention. The historical portion of his work is slight in texture and unsatisfactory in quality. The sketch of Cuban history, for example, closely follows Ramsey's imperfect outline in Rowan and Ramsey's *Island of Cuba*, even to the mistake of assigning the Black Warrior episode to the year 1850. Mr. Fiske seems entirely unaware that Cuba was represented in the Cortes from 1812 to 1834. The relaxation of the restrictions on Cuban commerce he apparently attributes exclusively to the conscious policy of the French domination in Spain in 1808. It is true that the colonial monopoly broke down at that time, but the policy of open trade was begun by royal decree in 1794. It was not, however, permanently adopted until 1818.

Consultation of so accessible a book as John Fiske's *Discovery of America* would have saved the author from contributing his mite to perpetuate the error of explaining Hispaniola as "Little Spain." Columbus expressly says in his Journal (Dec. 9) "puso nombre à la dicha isla la isla Española," showing beyond doubt that "Española" is the adjective, "Spanish," and not the diminutive. The so-called Moro portrait of Columbus is reproduced and described as "Painted in 1542 at the court of Philip II. of Spain." Moro went to Madrid in 1552, Philip came to the throne in 1555, and the portrait is generally assigned to the year 1570 or thereabout.

E. G. B.