

virtuosity of the typist, who "occasionally paraphrased the transcripts, known to be reliable". A more careful reading of the text would add to the list of errors.

Dorset was of slight weight as a diplomatist. Some of his despatches would not have been briefer had they been sent by cable and paid for by the word. Hailes was a man of different calibre; his despatches contain more information and show a better grasp of the meaning of events. No. 49, written from Fontainebleau (October 25, 1786), is a full and illuminating description of the condition of the French government and court on the eve of the meeting of the Notables.

On the whole, the letters add little to our knowledge either of diplomatic relations or of the internal condition of France during this period. They are confined very largely to the first kind of information, but treat even that in a most niggardly way. It would have been tantalizing to the ministers in London had they possessed no other source of information. Fortunately they were not wholly dependent on Dorset. The diplomatic questions that engaged the attention of the English government in the years 1784-1787 were the French-Dutch defensive alliance of 1784, the trouble between Austria and Holland over the opening of the Scheldt, the overthrow of the republican party and the ruin of French influence in Holland by England and Prussia, and the activity of France in the eastern Mediterranean and in India. After the work of Colenbrander, containing the transcripts of the bulk of the foreign correspondence concerning the first three questions, the despatches of Dorset and Hailes seem poor indeed. They do, however, supplement, in some minor points, the despatches of the English minister at the Hague. Concerning the activities of France in the Mediterranean, the information is more valuable and throws good side-lights on the work of the Revolution and of Napoleon. For internal affairs, the most significant portion of the despatches concerns the Assembly of the Notables. Even this is scrappy, containing only here and there a nugget for those who are familiar with the French sources and the despatches of the Austrian minister, Count Mercy.

The dates on the back of the volume should read "1784-1787" and not "1784-1786".

FRED MORROW FLING.

*The French Revolution: a Short History.* By R. M. Johnston, M.A. Cantab., Assistant Professor of History in Harvard University. (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1909, pp. vii, 283.) This little volume is an attempt to "disentangle from the mass of details the shape, the movement, the significance of the great historical cataclysm", to "catch its perspective" and "proportion". The method and style are essentially dramatic; men, parties, and movements are vigorously portrayed and play their parts clearly; too clearly at times, in the light of the complexity of forces and motives underlying the development of the

Revolution. The crisis of Thermidor, for example, is attributed too exclusively to Carnot, as is the freeing of the accused from their temporary arrest to Hanriot. The account (p. 219) of the activity of St. Just is a little obscure. But these, like the "6th of October" (p. 85) instead of the 5th, are minor faults. More serious exception is to be taken to the statement (p. 125) that the constitution of 1791 is prefaced by "a declaration of the rights of man that stamps the whole as a piece of class legislation". Is it not just this declaration that is out of accord with the class legislation of the constitution, the distinction between active and passive citizens, based upon property? In view of this the explanatory foot-note also needs revision.

The treatment of economic and social conditions when this phase of the subject is introduced is excellent. Indeed it might well receive greater emphasis from a writer who avowedly seeks the perspective of the Revolution in "the gradual political education and coming to power of the masses" (p. 9). Space for this could be found by condensing the first chapter, which is taken up with a survey of secondary writers, into an introduction, where it properly belongs. The brief chapter on art and literature is suggestive and, coming at the end, revives the impression of the vigor and freshness of the work as a whole. Some knowledge of the Revolution would seem necessary for a thorough understanding of the work, but even to the uninitiated it will be interesting and thoroughly readable, serving well as a companion volume to the author's *Napoleon*.

WILLIAM E. LINGELBACH.

*Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, par Charles Borgeaud, Professeur aux Facultés de Droit et des Lettres. *L'Académie de Calvin dans l'Université de Napoléon, 1798-1814* (Genève, Georg et Compagnie, 1909, pp. xiii, 251). On the occasion of the fourth centenary of Calvin, Professor Borgeaud brings out a second volume of his official history of his university. The first of these sumptuous volumes gave in most attractive form the history of the Academy of Calvin, so important to the intellectual history of Europe, from its foundation in 1559 to the annexation of the republic of Geneva by France in 1798; the third will present its history in the nineteenth century, since 1814. The present volume begins with the visit of General Bonaparte in 1796, and then, proceeding to 1798, describes the organization effected under the Directory, and the division of functions between the Société Économique and the Société Académique. Under both the Directory and the Consulate, the chief interest of the story lies in the struggle between certain centralizing officials, especially prefects, endeavoring to introduce large innovations, and the Genevese professors and other conservatives, bent on maintaining a moral autonomy when political independence had departed. Although under the Empire the decree of 1808 establishing the Imperial University was followed by action reorganizing the Genevese