

byterian party was so "short-sighted" as to "abstain" from exacting pledges as the price of its aid, is to ignore entirely the threats of Monk in the first debate and the later history of the Convention, the Royalists, and the king (p. 13). Space permits but few more observations. Regarding the Popish Plot (p. 151) our present knowledge does not warrant the statement that Danby could find nothing to corroborate Oates's informations. It may be true but we do not know what he found or knew. If we did it would help us greatly.

But to come to greater matters. We have here presented clearly and ably what may, in general, be called the traditional Restoration corrected here and there by some later investigations. Yet one must seriously dissent from some of the larger views, among them, the opinion of the Clarendonian and Cabal administrations and the conception of the Parliamentary situation in 1676-1678. And it is even more difficult to accept the unselfish generosity and sympathy of Louis XIV. as a completely satisfactory explanation of his reception of James II. and his recognition of James III. That, indeed, is a view which has had much vogue since the days of Macaulay. But surely the French king who had so long enjoyed the advantage of an England divided against itself by the divergent views of crown and Parliament, who had bribed the one and attempted to bribe the other, was scarcely likely to be blind to the advantage of an England divided by schism or even war between Jacobite and Whig. This supposition surely does an injustice to the shrewdest diplomatic intelligence of the day—save one. And we are not willing to sacrifice Louis XIV.'s head even to his heart. One must regret that present limitations forbid further consideration of this interesting book which, whatever its faults, offers the most complete study of the Restoration since Lingard.

W. C. ABBOTT.

*George I. and the Great Northern War: a Study of British-Hanoverian Policy in the North of Europe in the Years 1709 to 1721.* By JAMES FREDERICK CHANCE, M.A., F. R. Hist. S. (London: Smith, Elder, and Company. 1909. Pp. xviii, 516.)

THE purpose and results of this study are stated in one of the concluding paragraphs: "Reviewing the policy of George I. in the north, we see in the years 1709 to 1721 three successive phases of it; indecision, war with Sweden, and approximation to war with Russia. In the second phase George was successful, gaining for Hanover the valuable acquisition of Bremen and Verden, though the gain was discounted by the concomitant aggrandisement of Prussia and the transference of the ducal Sleswick to Denmark. In the third he suffered dire defeat. How far his policy, as elector, was damaging to British interests is a question which has been referred to; it has been debated for nearly two centuries and will probably never be agreed upon. The chief consideration is, how far it caused the hostility with Russia. If George had

sided with Charles XII. instead of with his enemies, Charles might, perhaps, have recovered his dominions in the east, and then there would have been no Russian mastery of the Baltic to fear. But to do so, as we have seen, was not possible, principally in consequence of the perversity of Charles himself. After his accession George's policy was not at all inspired from Hanover, his British governments supported it as in the interests of Great Britain. Townshend, Stair, Carteret, Whitworth were not inspired by affection for Hanover; in the last years they were strong in opposition to the policy of Bernstorff. Jealousy of the rise of Russia was natural on the part of Great Britain and inevitable." King George's methods in diplomacy Mr. Chance characterizes as selfish and tortuous, "but if not straightforward he was strong, and he restored to Great Britain the foremost place in Europe".

The specific problem of Hanoverian influence on English diplomacy in these years is answered, it seems to me, in favor of the coincidence of English commercial interests in the north, and especially in the Baltic, with the plans of George in behalf of his electorate. When they clashed it was the Hanoverian ministry who retired and not Stanhope (*cf.* p. 317).

Had Mr. Chance more thoroughly mastered his material, the significance of these years in the shaping of English policy in the Mediterranean and in the Baltic would have been clearer to his readers at least. It is only when these dominating centres of interest are kept in mind that British policy and British administrative organization become clear. The Secretary of State for the Northern Department is, in a large sense, a secretary for the Baltic, and the Southern Secretary a secretary for the Mediterranean. The shifting alliances of this infinitely confused period, England's drifting away from Austria, her rivalries with Sweden, Spain, and Russia, her approach to Prussia, France, and again to Sweden, attain, from this standpoint, a significance and coherence that is profounder than dynastic interests and Hanoverian influence can ever explain. Incidentally, this absorption of the ministries of George I. in the Mediterranean and the Baltic might suggest to American colonial historians the thesis that England may have suffered later from a sin which we have always considered purely French, the neglect of her colonial interests for what Mr. Chance considers the great service of George I., the restoration of Great Britain to the foremost place in Europe.

The essence of Mr. Chance's work has already been made available in his chapter in the *Cambridge Modern History*, VI., and in the essays in the *English Historical Review*. In this volume he has filled five hundred pages with unsifted and undigested archival material, two-thirds of which might better have gone into the foot-notes or into appendixes. The result is an exceedingly clumsy and amateurish work which is only made usable by an exceptionally good index.

GUY STANTON FORD.

*Histoire de France depuis les Origines jusqu'à la Révolution*, publiée sous la direction de M. ERNEST LAVISSE. Tome VIII., Partie II. *Le Règne de Louis XV. (1715-1774)*. Par H. CARRÉ, Professeur à l'Université de Poitiers. (Paris: Hachette et Cie. 1909. Pp. 428.)

ALTHOUGH this volume brings the history of France to within fifteen years of the Revolution, it cannot be relied upon for a general description of the "old régime". What is said about social conditions is introduced incidentally in accounts of the controversies over the *vingtièmes* or in explanation of the results of the propaganda of the economists and the physiocrats. Part of the reason for the lack of such descriptions is found in the fact that the preceding volume contained nearly a hundred pages on the subject, and M. Carré has apparently considered it enough if he notes the changes in the situation, especially those which came in the second half of the century. The main interests which the volume serves, however, are of the same order. Diplomacy and war occupy less than a quarter of its pages. The matters treated with fullness are questions of administration and finance, and the intellectual progress of the country, illustrated particularly in the work of Voltaire, Montesquieu, the Encyclopedists, and the economists.

If it be asked, is there any single impression left by the reading of this volume which suggests the secret of the fatal inability of the French government to apply in time a remedy to its menacing ills, the answer may be the blight which the presence on the throne of such a man as Louis XV. seemed to cast upon the abilities of really able administrators. France was not perishing for the lack of either wisdom or warnings. The ominous want was a king, who, if not great himself, would furnish the necessary element of unity and continuity. Moreover, it was futile to expect disinterested devotion to become a common trait among the ministers of such a monarch. Even the Abbé Terray proposed to reform the conditions of the contract of the "farm" by abolishing the *croupes*, but he discovered that Louis XV. figured in person for a quarter of the venture of one "farmer", and Mme. du Barry for 20,000 livres in that of another. There was a demand that Terray suppress the *acquits de comptant*, and M. Carré thinks this reform might have made possible the establishment of an equilibrium between receipts and expenditures, but the change was out of the question, because in that case the king could no longer dip into the treasury at discretion and would have been obliged to justify his expenditures. This was the time when Mme. du Barry, "jeune, fraîche, amusante à son perpétuel ennui, ni tracassière, ni ambitieuse", was receiving 300,000 livres a month.

It was the king who was responsible for the failure of the projects to distribute more fairly the burdens of taxation, and so, eventually, to increase the revenue. Machault attempted in 1750 to collect the *vingtièmes* from the clergy, but when he was making some progress in