

account of the Constituent Assembly. The background is as interesting as the main figure; there is so much of it, however, that at times Barnave himself is almost lost from sight. The work might perhaps be more properly called "The Life and Times of Barnave".

ELOISE ELLERY.

*A Historical Geography of the British Dominions.* By Sir CHARLES LUCAS, K.C.B., K.C.M.G. Volume IV. *South Africa*, part II., *History to the Union of South Africa*. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1915. Pp. viii, 533.)

THE first volume on South Africa in this series included the descriptive geography and the history of this region to about 1895. The author in this second volume, which is exclusively historical, surveys in much greater detail the fifteen years ending in 1910. In the appendixes are several familiar and important documents; several excellent large maps are given, though the sketch maps in the text are disappointing; and the bibliography is confessedly brief and elementary. But the references, particularly to official documents, are frequent and precise and the index excellent.

The author has chosen to take the period of the war, and particularly the military operations, as his central theme. Of the 487 pages of text, 300 pages are devoted to the years 1899-1902. The result is that we do not find even in the three long chapters on this subject a satisfactory balance as to the operations in the field and the equally difficult matter of the political history of the conflict. Nearly every stage of the war is treated with a mass of detail which would be justified only if Sir Charles Lucas were primarily a trained writer of military history, and if on his frequent maps he had supplied occasional contour lines or marked the position of troops. As it is the result is most confusing. The book is equally unsatisfactory both to the reader who is concerned chiefly with the larger strategy of war and to the closer military student. On the other hand, the candor of the author's criticisms and his readiness to quote from hostile or foreign commentators make these chapters a temperate and at times almost naïve declaration of British military bravery, incompetence, and persistence.

Of the remaining pages, the best are those devoted to the period immediately before the war, though the last chapter is an admirable, brief summary of the two volumes. It is therefore a matter of regret that the union of South Africa—the climax and crown of a tumultuous century—should receive less than a dozen rather perfunctory pages. Furthermore, though the central problem in South African history—the contact of white and colored peoples, involving also the labor question—is frequently mentioned, the reader will look in vain for adequate appreciation and treatment of this thorny subject. In brief, in these respects this volume is not up to the standard set by its predecessors in this series.

But it has certain excellent qualities and contains many passages which are stimulating to the specialist in colonial affairs and which deserve careful reading by any student of recent history. For example, there is the keen analysis of the conflict between a seventeenth-century civilization on an alien soil with modern industrial capitalism at work in a new country. It is open to doubt whether the author, who has tried to be conspicuously non-partizan, is quite fair in his condemnation of Boer traditions and characteristics as shown in the Transvaal. But he makes a suggestive distinction between the South African Republic and the Orange Free State. The former was always a frontier state. It drew the more restless and reckless Dutch; and these because of their situation and their history had to face two of the most difficult of administrative problems. On their borders, indeed all about them, was a vast native population, and later, surging in upon them from the ends of the world, came the miners and foreign corporations. On the other hand the position of the Orange Free State had been in the main long fixed and its political and economic atmosphere was much more calm. Other equally important matters appear in many parts of the book and commend anew the whole field of South African history to the attention of men with varied historical interests.

ALFRED L. P. DENNIS.

#### BOOKS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

*The Riverside History of the United States.* WILLIAM E. DODD, Editor. I. *Beginnings of the American People.* By CARL LOTUS BECKER. II. *Union and Democracy.* By ALLEN JOHNSON. III. *Expansion and Conflict.* By WILLIAM E. DODD. IV. *The New Nation.* By FREDERIC L. PAXSON. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1915. Pp. 279, xviii; 346, xvii; 329, xxiv; 342, xiv.)

TECHNICALLY, the four volumes of this attractive and handy series are of about equal size, but the number of pages of text varies from about 275 in volume I. to 346 in volume II. Each of the last three volumes, again, is divided into from sixteen to twenty chapters, while Professor Becker groups in six long chapters the material of volume I. To each chapter, throughout the series, is appended a brief bibliography of primary and secondary material, forming as a whole a discriminating selection of authorities best worth while. Professor Becker adds a brief general bibliography of the period, but this useful feature is omitted in the other volumes. Each volume is separately indexed, but there is no consolidated index to the series. There are numerous maps in black and white, most of them, apparently, drawn for this work, and embodying a good deal of well-directed labor. The maps are so small, however, and the mechanical execution as a whole so inferior, that it is not easy to use them without a glass.