

the use of a term of English law which is not found in any of the codes constituting prototypes of the present, such as for example, "common carrier" (Art. 331), "negotiable paper" (Art. 434).

The annotations are helpful. They relate mainly to the sources from which the particular sections are derived. A brief account of the structure and jurisdiction of commercial courts in Japan would have been of great value and might have cast needed light upon certain provisions of the Code. The translation as a whole is interesting because it reveals the particular Occidental system of law which an Oriental country, engaged in extensive commerce, has found to be most readily adaptable to its own needs.

ARTHUR K. KUHN.

*The Speakers of the House of Commons.* From the Earliest Times to the Present Day, with a Topographical Description of Westminster at Various Epochs, and a Brief Record of the Principal Constitutional Changes during Seven Centuries. By ARTHUR IRWIN DASENT. (New York: The John Lane Company, 1911. Pp. xl, 455.)

Even students of English constitutional history who have again and again gone over the ground that Mr. Dasent traverses will welcome and prize his "Speakers of the House of Commons." It adds much to what is already available as regards the history of the Chair; and moreover it makes many additions to existing knowledge of the constitutional development of England and the development of usages of the House of Commons. Mr. Dasent is Senior Clerk in the House. He was born within sight of St. Stephen's; Westminster topography is obviously a congenial study to him; and as his book makes apparent on almost every page he has an instinct for the literature of the history of Parliament, and a keen and scholarly appreciation of the traditions, associations and environment of the House of Commons. Many new sources—mostly in manuscript—have been drawn upon by Mr. Dasent with what must have been to him pleasurable surprises; and he has been able largely to supplement both Manning's "Lives of the Speakers," and the Dictionary of National Biography. His research has enabled him to write biographies of one hundred and thirty of the men who were in the Chair between 1295 and 1895, and to weave into his book much that is new and valuable concerning the Journals of the

House, and also notes of many of the clerks at the Table under whose direction the Journals have been compiled.

Mr. Dasent's plan has been to write the sketch of each speaker; and in connection with each to note any constitutional development, any new development in procedure or any evolution of the office which made the Speaker's term memorable or of permanent significance. He has succeeded so admirably that there is scarcely a constitutional development or step forward in the procedure of the House that is not chronicled in his pages. Eighteenth century speakers naturally come in for most detailed attention, because there is more biographical material concerning them than concerning their predecessors.

Diligent research has been necessary, however, even as regards these eighteenth century speakers, and students of the history of the House of Commons will feel particularly grateful to Mr. Dasent for his productive work in the case of Arthur Onslow, who was in the Chair from 1727 to 1761, and who has long been recognized as the greatest Parliamentarian of the eighteenth century, and the first of modern Speakers. Students of English representative institutions will be similarly indebted to Mr. Dasent for his careful tracing of the relations that existed before 1547 between the Abbey at Westminster and the Houses of Parliament, and those whose interest extends to the topography of Westminster and of the older parts of London will rejoice in Mr. Dasent's notes on the various buildings in which the Commons have assembled, both at Westminster and at Blackfriars, and in his history of the old and the new Palace of St. Stephen's, which is fuller than has been embodied in any previous history of the House of Commons.

Mr. Lane, the publisher, has coöperated with Mr. Dasent in collecting the illustrations; and he contributes a prefatory note in which he suggests a Royal Commission on National Portraits to supplement the work of the Historical Manuscripts Commission. England must have been scoured as never before for portraits; and the efforts of author and publisher have been abundantly worth while, for of the hundred and two excellent illustrations, no fewer than eighty-one are portraits of speakers.

EDWARD PORRITT.

*Municipal Franchises.* A Description of the Terms and Conditions upon which Private Corporations Enjoy Special Privileges in the Streets of American Cities. By DELOS F. WILCOX, Ph.D., Chief of the Bureau of Franchises of the Public Service Commission for the First District of New York. In Two Volumes: Vol. ii, Transportation Franchises, Taxation and Control of Public Utilities. (New York: The Engineering News Publishing Company, 1911. Pp. xxi, 885.)

The first volume of this work was reviewed in the REVIEW for February, 1911. The present volume, like its predecessor, consists of two parts; one devoted to a consideration of certain general phases of the franchise problem as affecting American cities, and the other to a more or less detailed description of the character and provisions of franchises that have been granted by municipalities of the United States for the performance of certain public utility functions. The two volumes together give us much the most comprehensive study now available regarding this, probably the most, difficult concrete problem confronting our municipalities.

The bulk of the work and the great variety of topics handled preclude anything like a full statement of the points covered and much less any attempt to pass judgment upon positions taken. The best that can be done is to indicate in a general way those features which seem to be of especial interest, and make known the more important conclusions of the author in respect to the manner in which a solution of the very complex problems presented should be sought.

The utilities considered in this volume, under the head of transportation franchises, are street railways, elevated railways, belt line railroads, interurban railways, subways, spur tracts, depots, viaducts, toll roads, omnibus lines, docks, ferries and markets. Each is given separate treatment and the character of the franchises granted by different cities for them is described in detail. In this descriptive part of the work, the chapters which are of greatest interest to the general reader are those devoted to the street railway franchises in Greater New York, and to the street railway settlement franchises of Chicago in 1907 and Cleveland in 1910, which latter two, as the author points out, represent the high-water mark thus far attained in municipal franchises granted for urban transportation in the United States. In an appendix is also given substantially in full the Minneapolis gas