

have been his in the grand proportion necessary for a great poet in that sphere, is hardly more than matter of speculation. But as it is a gain to character to know that he was not "snuffed out" by Lockhart, it is a still greater gain to find in him not the puerile idol of a sentimental sensuality, but a manly, natural fellow, in whom truth as well as beauty was a passion, and who was inspired poet enough to put man at the centre of all things.

Mr. Colvin, as has been said, presents this view of him, though he might have supported it better than he does. In point of the character to be ascribed to Keats, no one would find this biography lacking in essentials. He adopts, however, too broadly the theory of Arnold that Keats in his love was "passion's slave." One feels that Mr. Arnold objected to that less because of the fact, than because in his love-letters Keats expressed himself in what eminent respectability considers an "underbred" way. The subject, with all its limiting and mitigating circumstances, need not detain us. In the criticism of Keats's works Mr. Colvin is less fortunate. Of general and illuminating criticism there is none at all. What there is of the minute kind, as, for example, the fault he finds in the "Ode to a Nightingale": "By a breach of logic which is also, I think, a flaw in the poetry, he contrasts the transitoriness of human life, meaning the life of the individual, with the permanence of the song-bird's life, meaning the life of a type." This is just one of those plausible criticisms which are inapplicable because the magic of the poem keeps it outside of the mind while the poem is being read; and that is not really a fault in a poem which cannot be felt as a fault when it is being read. So, too, in the criticism with regard to the town that will be for ever "emptied of its folk," which readers will remember is one of the most charming passages of the "Ode on a Grecian Urn"—"In these lines there seems a dissonance, inasmuch as they speak of the arrest of life as though it were an infliction in the sphere of reality, and not merely, like the instances of such arrest given further back, a necessary condition in the sphere of art, having in that sphere its own compensations"; this is irrefragable, but it amounts to nothing. In other cases, as where he says:

"Neither is Milton a match for Keats in work like this:

"Throughout all the Isle—
There was no covert, no retired cave
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess";

or where he condemns the lips that

"poesied with hers in dewy rhyme"

as "an effusively false touch in the sugared taste not infrequent in his earliest verses"; or where he cites the fine lines,

"Only the dreamer venoms all his days,
Bearing more woe than all his sins deserve,"

as "a cry of the spirit vanquished by the flesh"—in all such cases we can only put a note of exclamation in the margin. The whole treatment of the works is too piecemeal and over-refined; the criticism lacks body, mass, comprehension, and is always pottering about the superficialities of the poetry, the minor touches, the finish, the accidents of its imagery and movement, to the neglect of its substance.

On the whole, we are constrained to think that, bad as Leigh Hunt's poetry was at its worst, he was a better poetical critic than even Mr. Colvin. The latter's work in this branch of his subject by no means takes the place of the studies of others; one feels lacunæ in it everywhere. The sonnets, for example, are as inadequately represented in the total criticism as the wonderfully good letters in the biography itself. In the way of minute criticism, one point is made against Mr. Gosse which is worth mention. The latter has traced

in "Endymion" the influence of the "Pharonmida" of Chamberlayne, upon which suggestion Mr. Colvin remarks that "there is nothing in his treatment of the measure for which precedent may not be found in the work of almost every poet who employed it during the half-century that followed its brilliant revival for the purposes of narrative poetry by Marlowe; . . . and to seek affinities for him among the tedious byways of provincial seventeenth-century verse seems quite superfluous." So it is, but "superfluity" is a characteristic of much literary criticism in our time.

This Life, as is apparent, we cannot regard as a great success. It is much too good to be flawed as it is, and its excellent qualities only make one more irritated at its slips and failures. Owing to the shortness of Keats's life, the difficulty of writing it was great, and there seem to have been added difficulties due to ill-health. In all ways there is much to be pleaded in excuse; but the blemishes which have been dwelt upon do not seem to depend on any accidental circumstances surrounding its composition, or on the inherent slightness of the subject. It is, with all its faults, serviceable to the memory and truer understanding of Keats, and as such one welcomes it to a shelf where, among its companions of the same able series, it must be thought to hold a lower rank.

THE CONFEDERATE STATES NAVY.

History of the Confederate States Navy. By J. Thomas Scharf, A.M., LL.D. Rogers & Sherwood.

Few men of this generation are cognizant of the gallant struggle that was made, during the four years of the civil war, by the officers of the Confederate Navy. They were beset by difficulties from which not only their opponents but their colleagues of the army were comparatively free. They entered upon the contest without the materials of warfare, and the state of the country was such that their deficiencies could never be properly supplied. At the outbreak of the war the United States, though far from being a great naval power, could bring into service some of the finest war ships in the world—the *Wabash* and her sister frigates, sloops like the *Hartford* and *Richmond*, and side-wheelers like the *Mississippi* and *Powhatan*; while the fleet of the Confederacy was composed of the sunken *Merrimac*, a dozen or so of schooners belonging to the revenue marine and the lighthouse service, and a few small coasting steamers and river craft. The great commercial marine which furnished the navy of the Union with four hundred vessels and with nearly sixty thousand volunteer officers and sailors, belonged almost wholly to Northern seaports. Last of all, the want of workshops and shipyards, of skilled mechanics, and even of raw materials, made it impossible for the South to carry out anything more than a fragmentary plan of construction; while the Federal Government during the whole war was turning out new sloops, gunboats, double-enders, monitors, and river-ironclads, with a rapidity and completeness unprecedented in the annals of naval war.

The Confederate Navy, then, was composed not of ships or of seamen, but simply and wholly of a body of officers who, in accordance with the political views then prevalent at the South, had left the regular navy and attached themselves to the service of their States. The volunteers who joined their ranks were without naval experience—making such entries in their logs, says Capt. Parker, as, "The moon was over the port bow, and the wind was hard-a-

starboard." They formed no material addition to the corps of regular officers. These latter carried with them the traditions of the service in which they had been bred, and of its collective ability they certainly represented a fully proportionate share. In the uncertainties of the political future, the Union officers moved at first with a hesitation that they would not have shown in a foreign war. The Southern officers, as might be expected, having once taken the revolutionary side, showed none of this uncertainty. The very desperateness of their situation seemed to arouse and stimulate all their energies.

With the imperfect means at their command, the efforts of the Confederate naval officers were necessarily confined to detached enterprises. During the whole four years they could never collect a fleet sufficient for harbor defence. Tatt-nall's flotilla at Port Royal had not even the semblance of a naval force, and that of Lynch in the North Carolina sounds was little better. The ironclads *Mississippi* and *Louisiana*, which were to have been the main elements of strength in the defence of New Orleans, could not be finished before the passage of the forts. The rams at Charleston created a twenty-four hours' flurry in the blockading fleet, but they did not succeed in raising the blockade. Gen. Beauregard's proclamation to the contrary notwithstanding. The *Albemarle* for six months occupied the Roanoke River, a small stream of no strategic importance, but was unequal to the task of clearing the sounds. At Mobile the *Tennessee* fought a gallant battle, but its disastrous result might have been predicted with certainty. The *Merrimac* at Hampton Roads, great as was the moral effect of her appearance, was checked in her career after she had only succeeded in destroying two vessels which were really unfit for purposes of war, and which should not have been in commission at all. In all these cases, the failure to accomplish greater results was traceable directly to the weakness of naval resources which compelled the officers to fight with imperfect weapons.

The officers themselves were rarely found wanting, and among them there were many whose record of bravery deserves to be rescued from the obscurity into which it has fallen. Of the whole number, perhaps the only one who achieved great distinction was Semmes, and in his case, unfortunately, the very undeserved abuse which was directed at him in the heat of the struggle has given him a reputation more akin to notoriety than to fame. It is an indisputable fact, which, however, few but professional men really recognize, that Semmes stands out as one of the most remarkable products of the naval war on either side. The unerring judgment with which the cruise of the *Alabama* was planned, and the skill and audacity with which it was conducted, give him a place almost unique among naval commanders. Of the others, the names to-day are almost forgotten. Foremost of all was Buchanan, who gave the clearest evidence of his fitness for a great command. Tatt-nall was a man of hardly less ability, though he had little opportunity of exercising it. Among the captains there were many whose daring, skill, and professional resource entitle them to eminence as naval officers. The bold dash of Brown in the *Arkansas* through the combined fleet of Farragut and Davis, like the passage of Maffitt in the *Florida* past the blockade of Mobile, was an act of the very highest professional merit; so was the capture of the *Underwriter* by John Taylor Wood, and the fight made by Kennon in the *Moore* at the battle of New Orleans. The raids made by the same Wood in the *Tallahassee*, and by Read in the *Tacony* and her prizes, were brilliant feats, only surpassed by the more ex-

tended cruises of the great commerce-destroyers." In other fields of professional duty must be mentioned the work done at Richmond by Brooke, the creator of the naval ordnance of the Confederacy, and in England by Bulloch, the agent through whose consummate tact and steadfastness of purpose the *Alabama*, the *Florida*, the *Shenandoah*, and the *Georgia* were fitted out as Confederate cruisers.

In writing a book upon this great and attractive subject, Mr. Scharf has been fortunate in having an absolutely unoccupied field. Having been himself one of the pupils of the Naval Academy at Richmond, and having borne a creditable part in some of the famous exploits of his service, he has exceptional advantages for his task of authorship. He has shown evident diligence in accumulating materials, and his book includes a valuable collection of *mémoires pour servir*. A more careful revision would have saved him from many little inaccuracies in names and dates, and from occasional lapses in the use of his mother tongue. In many chapters his materials have been loosely thrown together, with little regard to style or to structural arrangement. In these respects the book is seriously defective.

The most extraordinary feature, however, of Mr. Scharf's otherwise useful book is the undercurrent of political animosity and bitterness which penetrates all his references to the causes of the war and the conduct and motives of the Union leaders. In holding that secession was a constitutional right, he only expresses the sincere conviction of the majority of Southern men before the war; but he goes far beyond this, and appears to think that no other view was possible to men of sincerity and average intelligence. Indeed, it is not quite clear that he regards the war as having done anything towards a settlement of the question. "Whether the theory of a national or a compact government," he says in his opening sentences, "be the true theory of the Constitution, now and hereafter, it is not necessary to discuss," which would seem to indicate that the question is still open for discussion. The condition of affairs at the beginning of the war is explained by the statement that "in 1861 events had presented to the States that most unexpected result—the soldiers and sailors, educated by the Federal Government in its character as agent of the States, were called on by that agent to fight against its principal—by the servant to make war on the master, by the creature to destroy the creator."

Starting with this "anomalous condition of the relations of the States to the Federal Union," as Mr. Scharf correctly designates it, the reader will not be surprised to learn that the war was a bloody work of repression, perfidiously undertaken by a tyrannical government, in the interests of a political party, and that the leaders in the secession movement were the innocent victims of a trick perpetrated by Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet. This opinion recurs again and again, and its manner of presentation is more remarkable for the author's tone of unquestioned authority, and for a certain grandeur of diction, than for cogency of reasoning. A few passages will suffice to illustrate. Thus on p. 20:

"The recital of these facts, as they existed at the South in 1861, establishes beyond controversy that no preparation for war had been made by any Southern State prior to secession; that not one of the States desired war; that there ought not to have been war, and that there would not have been war except to 'save the Republican party from rupture.' The facts of the times and the acts of men cannot be covered up from the search and exposure of the historian, who, when he comes to write the causes of the terrible war of 1861-65, must discover and expose those who, to secure themselves in the possession

of political place, deliberately played with the excited passions of the hour to involve the country in war, and dissolve the Union, so that its reconquest would perpetuate their party ascendancy, or that the loss of the Southern States would deprive their political opponents of the great bulk of their strength, and thus secure for themselves the possession of power in either the reconstructed Union or in the divided and dismembered northern part."

Here is another passage:

"Mr. Lincoln and his advisers had outwitted and overreached all the precautions of peace taken at the South, and, by deftly and cunningly drawing the fire of the Charleston batteries, had inaugurated war. The latent spirit of devotion to the Union, which the echoes of the guns at Charleston aroused into such terrible force and proportion, stopped not to consider the trick by which the war had been begun. It only saw the flag of the Union in the smoke of battle, and, whether right or wrong, rushed to its defence. But neither that expression of loyalty to the Union, nor the extraordinary efforts in its defence, nor the triumphs of its army and navy, will be able to cover up and conceal from the reprehension of history the shameful subterfuge of provisioning Sumter as a start to war; but history will separate the glory of the people's defence from the shame of the politician's trick."

In regard to the Southern officers who resigned from the old navy, every candid student of history is ready to acknowledge that, during the trying period that preceded their resignation, they discharged their duties with scrupulous fidelity. It is, therefore, hardly necessary to give this lucid explanation of their conduct:

"They did not presume to take upon themselves the duty of dividing the navy among the States, notwithstanding it was the common property of all the States. In the excitement of the times, it would have been pardonable conduct to have brought their ships to the defence of the States; but their sense of honor, and a sailor's duty to the government whose commission he bore, required that he should divest himself of every selfish motive before he returned his commission to the Federal Government."

The author's comments upon persons and events are what might be expected from the general statement of his views. The hotel-keeper who killed Ellsworth at Alexandria is a hero. "Among all the acts of personal bravery during the war," says Mr. Scharf, "not one exceeds in heroism that total indifference to personal safety which inspired the noble Jackson to brave in his single person a whole regiment of the enemy." Farragut is an "apostate," who turns "at the prompting of self-interest against the people among whom he was born"; and his differences with the Navy Department in the last year of his life lead the author to moralize in this pathetic fashion: "It is the old story—they loved the treason, and they rewarded with honors and prize-money the exploits of the apostate son of the South, but they never took him wholly and singly to their hearts." If, as Mr. Scharf states, it was "petty malice" that led the Secretary of the Navy in the heat of civil war to designate the Southern naval officers as deserters, what shall be said of an author who, twenty years after the war is over, has the presumption to say that the great Admiral was induced by the "prompting of self-interest" to stand by the dag and the Union, and that his countrymen "never took him wholly and singly to their hearts"?

It would be a waste of time to dwell upon the preposterous absurdities of this kind with which Mr. Scharf has seen fit to mar his history. He exhausts the language of petulance in his criticisms of Mr. Seward and Mr. Welles. The climax of childishness is reached in a delightfully funny passage on page 438, in which the Secretary of State is charged with having "dirtied the pages of American diplomacy" by an indelicate allusion:

"The euphemism by which, when a household

is gladdened by the birth of a babe, the convalescence of the mother is described in technical and courtly phrase, 'that the mother is getting on as well as could be expected,' was introduced by Mr. Seward in a despatch to Mr. Adams, as, 'The work of pacification in the region concerned is going on as successfully as could be expected. You hear of occasional guerilla raids, but these are the after-pangs of revolution in that quarter which has proved an abortion.'"

Mr. Scharf is hardly fair in lashing Mr. Seward so unmercifully for a metaphor which he does not hesitate to use himself. On p. 725 he speaks of "the prevailing ambition that the bosom of the James should bear ironclad ships over which the Confederate ensign should float," and he adds: "This pregnant desire gave birth to the *Richmond*." Indelicacy is a very grave fault, but it is well with this, as with other offences, for some one who is without sin to do the stone-throwing.

If Mr. Scharf, as he declares in his preface, is attempting to vindicate "the political views of Confederate officers," he has shot very wide of the mark; for it may be doubted whether there are many of his companions in arms who would subscribe to his extravagances. Capt. Bulloch, who did more than any other naval officer to sustain the Confederacy during its four years' struggle, and who may fairly be considered a representative man of his class, says, in a work every page of which excites admiration by its dignity, its clear insight, its breadth of view, and its moderation: "The South has accepted the result of the war; business and social relations are again intermingling the people of the two sections on terms of friendship and intimacy, and the great majority on both sides can now recur to the events of the war, and discuss them as historical incidents, and not as subjects for strife and recrimination." In his address in New York on the last 4th of July, Gov. Lee declared, with just pride, that "Virginia was not sulking in a corner." It is charitable to hope that sooner or later the historian of the Confederate Navy will emulate Virginia's noble example, and fall into line with Capt. Bulloch and his "great majority."

RECENT PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

Preliminary Report of the Commission appointed by the University of Pennsylvania to Investigate Modern Spiritualism, in accordance with the Request of the late Henry Seybert. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1887. 8vo, pp. 159.

Proceedings of the [English] Society for Psychical Research. Part XI. May, 1887. London: Trübner & Co.

THE first report of the Seybert Commission has been awaited with interest, but it is certainly somewhat disappointing. To be sure, the only disappointment that we here can testify to has little to do with the merely negative character of the results so far reached by the Committee. In common with most people who give themselves over to the modern spirit and like to trust its instincts, we, of course, have expected no positive results of any very serious importance. But then it has seemed to us that the Seybert Committee has a work to do that must go far beyond mere special criticism of the so-called "facts" of modern Spiritualism. Granted that one finds little but fraud and delusion in most classes of these "facts," is it enough simply to report one's failure, with a considerable display of literary skill, and with a manifest readiness to assure the world that one is not easily to be fooled? We think that this is not enough for men who have undertaken the peculiar responsibilities of the Seybert Commissioners. If up to the present time the Committee have found only deception and