

RECENT RAILWAY PUBLICATIONS.

Railway Practice: Its Principles and Suggested Reforms Reviewed. By E. Porter Alexander. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1887.

Railway Rates, English and Foreign. By J. Grierson, General Manager of the Great Western Railway. London: Edward Stanford. 1886.

Railway Problems: An Inquiry into the Economic Conditions of Railway Working in Different Countries. By J. S. Jeans. London: Longmans. 1887.

The Handling of Railway Supplies: Their Purchase and Disposition. By Marshall M. Kirkman. Chicago: Charles N. Triviss. 1887.

THE growth of this kind of railroad literature in the last two years is something remarkable. Previous to this time, books on railroad administration were rare, and the few that existed were of a somewhat technical character. They dealt either with railroad engineering, railroad law, or the minor details of railroad operation. To-day, however, we have treatises on railroad economy in the broader sense; on the earnings and expenditures of railroads in their relation to the interests of the general public.

Gen. Alexander's book is a short one, but it contains no lack of vigorous and useful matter. He deals with the principles which govern railroad rates; and, unlike many of those who have written on this subject, he speaks from practical experience. He first describes at some length the actual scheme of rates which prevails in the United States; the way in which competitive and non-competitive points are treated; and the systems adopted by various traffic associations in forming their schedules of charge. His extracts from the rate-book of the trunk lines give an excellent idea of how railroad tariffs look. Most persons who read his pages for the first time will be astonished to find how small a proportion of our older tariffs violated the "long-and-short-haul" principle. In one respect Gen. Alexander's presentation of the case is too favorable for the railroads. A reader who should take his ideas from this book alone, would not imagine how largely the practice of granting special rates had been abused. He would overestimate the importance of the tariff schedule and underestimate the deviations from it. But almost every one who reads this book will read some other book that falls into the opposite error, and the one will fairly enough offset the other.

Gen. Alexander next criticises proposed plans of railway reform developed by Prof. Ely and Mr. Hudson. He shows the difficulties involved in Mr. Ely's plan of State control, not merely as a matter of administration, but as a matter of political corruption; pointing out that the very dangers of which Mr. Ely complains to-day would be aggravated rather than lessened by a system of State ownership. Against Mr. Hudson's plan, by which the carriers were to be separate from the railroads, he brings up the old objections which occur to every railroad man, and a new one which is worth noticing:

"It must ever remain impossible," he says, "for many rival carriers to occupy the same depots and make up their trains with shifting engines in the same yard. Each carrier must have his own yards and terminal facilities. But available space for such facilities in our large cities can only be had at enormous expense. A few large transportation companies would speedily be formed who would monopolize the entire transportation business of the country. Small carriers could not possibly gain or maintain a footing against them. And the large companies would speedily unite and pool or divide territory. If Mr. Hudson had started out to devise a plan by which the transportation interests of the United States could be most rapidly consolidated into the most complete and irresponsible monopoly possible, he could not have suggested anything half so

certain and speedy of operation as what he has suggested to bring about the very opposite result."

Mr. Grierson's book does for England on a somewhat larger scale what Gen. Alexander does for America. That is to say, it takes specific instances of English railroad tariffs and defends them against their critics. The book is not exactly of a kind to command general interest—at any rate, outside of England—but it is extremely good in its way. In the recent Parliamentary investigations, Mr. Grierson has habitually presented the general case for the English railroads very much as it has been done by Mr. Blanchard or Mr. Fink in the United States. He therefore writes as an advocate, though by no means as an extremist. There is nothing particularly new in his conclusions, but the facts by which he supports them are fresh and often highly instructive. To most American readers the chief interest will lie in seeing how the long-and short-haul difficulty which is now perplexing the Inter-State Commerce Commission has come up in nearly the same form and extent in England and on the continent of Europe. The selections from English and Continental tariffs, though made with a view to refute a pamphlet of Sir Bernhard Samuelson, are well chosen and extremely convenient. We know of no other place where this material is so fairly presented to the English reader.

Mr. Jeans's book is disappointing. It is handsomely got up, and the general scheme looks interesting. But the writer is quite incompetent to deal with the subject; and, what is still more surprising in a professed statistician, he is careless in the use of figures. A few examples will suffice: On page 102 he gives the average earnings of the United States railroads per train mile in 1883 as eight shillings. They actually were only about two-thirds of this sum, and any one at all familiar with the facts of the case would have seen that this was an error. In fact, Mr. Jeans himself in one place in his book gives substantially the right figures; but he habitually uses the wrong one as a basis of his reasoning, and apparently does not notice the inconsistency. This mistake, however, shows in worse colors when we attempt to see how it arose. The earnings per train mile are, of course, determined by dividing the gross traffic earnings by the total train mileage. Now, Mr. Jeans's figure for the gross earnings is somewhat wrong, being a little too high. His figure for the train mileage is so absolutely wrong that it is impossible even to guess what he based it on. And, finally, if we divide his dividend by his divisor, we do not get his quotient. He seems to have acted on the principle that bad reasoning from bad premises might bring out a good result.

Examples might be multiplied almost indefinitely. One of the most remarkable is on page 68, where he makes out that in the year 1884 the percentage of dividends on railroads in the United States rose to five and four-tenths; whereas it was actually less than two and five-tenths, according to the figures given in Poor's Manual. And when it comes to dealing with facts, our author is as badly off as when he deals with figures. He says that in the United States there is a system commonly known as pooling or dividing the traffic receipts, which "has no exact counterpart in other countries"; that in the United Kingdom much the same results are arrived at by an arrangement as to rates and fares; and that on the continent of Europe neither system prevails to any great extent. It is simply incredible that a man could have been in Mr. Jeans's position as Secretary of the British Iron Trade Association and not know anything more about the facts. So far from neither system prevailing on the continent of Europe, both systems have been applied, as a matter of course more

uniformly than in England or America, while in England competing traffic has been divided by no less high an authority than Mr. Gladstone himself; and English pooling arrangements have been the exact counterpart of those in the United States, except that they have been more steadily maintained.

Nor is our author any more trustworthy in the use which he makes of the facts which he has. In trying to determine the comparative economy of State and private management, he takes as a standard the percentage of administrative expenses to other operating expenses. Now, of course, such a percentage might be made to appear low by wastefulness in other items precisely as well as by economy in administrative ones. The comparison proves nothing. In point of fact, the question whether the percentage of administrative expenses is large or small depends almost entirely upon the extent of railways concentrated under a single management. In the majority of cases the State, where it owns part of the railroads, will have the main system and the companies the local lines. Where the case is reversed, as in France, the relation of the figures will be reversed. This is a perfectly simple and commonplace explanation of the facts on which Mr. Jeans lays so much stress.

It is a pity that the book is so untrustworthy; for if its figures and facts could be relied on, it would meet a real want. But we are bound to say that Mr. Jeans has not made use of a great many sources of information which were open to him, and that those of which he has availed himself have been carelessly used. It shows how little knowledge of railroad administration there is among economists and statisticians that the substance of this book should have been published in the *Journal of the Statistical Society* and in the *Bulletin de l'Institut International de Statistique* without meeting destructive criticism.

Mr. Kirkman is well known as a railroad man of experience and a somewhat voluminous writer on matters of railroad administration. What he says is generally good, but a little more care in putting it together would be greatly to the reader's advantage. The author is kept so busy by his practical work that he does not always find time to condense his ideas before he puts them in print. Some of the most amusing instances of carelessness occur in the index, from which we select a few headings by way of illustration: *Cause of Envy*; *Effect of Climate on Coal*—of *Envy*—of *Saving*; *Facilities*, lack of; *Fruit of Riches*; *How to Acquire Wealth*. In one sense these are trifles, but they indicate slovenly preparation which seriously detracts from the merit of the book.

BRITISH POWER IN INDIA.

The Rise of the British Power in the East. By the late Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone. Edited by Sir Edward Colebrooke, Bart. London: Murray. 1887.

THE addition of this portly volume to the vast, dreary, and increasing mountain of Anglo-Indian literature is wholly without excuse. The Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone was an able and accomplished member of the Indian Civil Service, who, after a distinguished official career, devoted the evening of his days to literary pursuits. Among other books, he projected a history of India from the earliest times to his own day, but he published during his own lifetime only those portions of it which dealt with the Hindu and Mohammedan periods. The present volume, which is concerned with the rise of British power in the East and the earlier exploits of Clive, has been published from manuscripts he left behind him. Had it appeared at the time it was written,

as an episode in a larger and continuous history, it would have needed no apology. Moreover, at that time the subject still retained something of novelty and freshness. But it so happens that, since Mr. Elphinstone's death, the story of the adventures, battles, and victories of Clive and his immediate successors has been told and retold several times over; and these pages do not add a single fact to those which Macaulay's well-known essay has made familiar to all readers.

In another way the treatment of the subject is grievously defective. Historians of British India have invariably fastened upon the campaigns—upon the records of battles and sieges—and have recounted these at tedious length, as if in them were comprised all that was of importance in the substitution of British rule for the sway of the native princes of India. Actually, in their consequences to the country and the people, these were of small significance compared with another series of facts which they have almost or wholly ignored. There was a man of that time who, though he had never been in India, apprehended the vital significance of this other series with the insight of genius; and in the great Indian speeches of Edmund Burke, and in his celebrated "Ninth Report," the student of history will learn more of the inner character of that marvellous revolution which conferred the sovereignty of the East upon a British trading corporation than in all the (so called) histories of that occurrence. To this hour the frightful poverty of the Indian agricultural classes is the difficulty which has baffled all the skill, thought, and ingenuity of Indian administrators. In spite of roads, railways, and canals, in spite of assessments which, *on paper*, can be demonstrated to be moderation itself, the Indian agriculturist insists upon remaining a wretched, unclothed, insufficiently nourished, and hopelessly indebted creature. His life is a life of toil, with nothing brighter than fever, cholera, or famine as its final goal. And yet it can be shown, beyond all reasonable question, that before the rising of British rule the state of this same ryot, notwithstanding the seemingly incessant disorder of the country, was sufficiently prosperous. Now, it was during the rise of British power in the East that the seeds of this dire poverty were sown. They were not perceived until they had, so to speak, struck vigorous root in the soil; and as with certain noxious grasses, well known to the Indian agriculturists, which spring up in the standing crops, spread abroad with appalling rapidity, and defy all efforts at eradication, so has it been with the after consequences of these early errors. Their true nature never having been understood—not being understood to this day—they have positively flourished upon the futile attempts to remove them out of the land. In his "Ninth Report" and his Indian speeches, Burke has pointed out the cause, in the unnatural combination, namely, of sovereignty and commerce in the mercantile rulers of India. The East India Company were driven by the exigencies of their position to treat their Indian Empire just as an Irish absentee landlord of the old time, and with extravagant inclinations, treated the tenants on his estates. Every farthing of surplus revenue was swept out of the country, year after year, in order to win the good-will of Ministers and provide dividends for the proprietors of East India stock. Under such a system, a lavish scale of expenditure in India itself presented itself to Anglo-Indian officials in the light of a virtue. There was, in fact, a perpetual struggle going on between the authorities in Calcutta and the Directors in Leadenhall Street as to the partition of the Indian revenues between them; and Burke has shown, with astonishing power and insight, the ruin wrought upon the trade, the manufactures, and the agriculture of

India by this unnatural strife—a ruin from which the people have never recovered.

Of all these things Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone would appear to have been ignorant. He is at least altogether silent respecting them. His history is a mere "drum-and-trumpet" affair, made up of "alarums," "skirmishes," and the like incidents. The Indian peninsula is, literally, the "theatre of war," and nothing besides. There might have been no inhabitants in it for all that we are permitted to hear about them. We do not mean to say that Mr. Elphinstone is, in this respect, a worse sinner than other of his countrymen who have written upon the same subject. All alike have deliberately turned aside from the path of inquiry which Burke was the first to open out. But the fact that Mr. Elphinstone had only walked in the old well-worn rut ought, we think, to have convinced his editor that the publication of the present volume was a waste of time and trouble.

Mr. Elphinstone, however, though he has nothing new to tell us, relates the old story with simplicity and spirit. And the founding of the British Empire in India is a history so strange and marvellous that it will stand a great many readings. The people of India, if they are impatient under subjection to an alien rule, must acknowledge, if they are candid, that the blame rests wholly with themselves. The odds were all on their side. Their princes commanded thousands, where Clive and Lawrence and Adams commanded but their tens. The world has never witnessed acts of more splendid audacity than the manner in which unknown captains and majors hurled their three or four hundred English soldiers against armies of eight and ten thousand Orientals holding entrenched positions, heavily mounted with artillery. After his varied experience of war, the Duke of Wellington said that, in the quality of reckless daring, no troops he had ever seen were the equals of the English regiments in India; and the incidents recorded in this volume are an abundant confirmation of this judgment. Take, for example, the battle of Udha-nálá. The army of the Bengal subahdar, 60,000 strong, was protected by a line of entrenchments, beyond which was a deep wet ditch fifty or sixty feet broad; and the position was further defended by one hundred guns. Major Adams attacked this huge host at the head of 700 Englishmen and 2,000 Sepoys, and utterly defeated it. The exploits of the small French armies, in the days of their greatness, were no less astonishing; and though the losses sustained in these actions look small, yet, relatively to the numbers engaged, they were very heavy, and indicate in the clearest way the indomitable pluck and endurance of the European soldiers. Curious, too, is it to contrast the behavior of the great Frenchmen of those early times, Dupleix and Bussy, with their English rivals, Clive and Hastings.

In these, its early days, the English East India Company had no higher ambition than to carry on a profitable trade with India. It dreamed not of conquest or empire. Its existence was, in truth, a precarious one. Its monopoly was an object of jealousy to the merchants of Great Britain, and it was obliged to be constantly upon its guard against the assaults of formidable rivals. Under these circumstances, its chief care was to efface itself as much as possible, to undertake no action of a kind to excite public attention and comment. The French East India Company, on the contrary, was the "spoiled darling" of the French monarchy. The Government freely supplied it with subsidies. Its leading officials were nominated by the State, and French Ministers took an active part in determining, not its commercial proceedings, but its political conduct towards the native princes. To Dupleix belongs

the credit of having been the first to discover how, by means of a small body of European troops, skillfully employed, a French empire might be carved out of the crumbling ruins of the great Delhi monarchy. All his alliances with the native sovereigns were regulated so as to aid in the realizing of this idea. In the end, however, as Mr. Elphinstone points out, the intervention of the State at home, which seemed at first to give to the French so great a superiority over their English rivals, proved the cause of their ruin. It seemed to give them power, but, by restricting their initiative, and interfering at every step with their independence of action, it robbed them of much more than it gave. Clive could never have accomplished his great achievements had he been the servant of an English Minister dictating directions to him from his office in London. Next to his own audacity and fearlessness, he owed his success to the fact of his independence; but, unlike the French, his policy was at no time dictated by a prevision of empire, but only by the present necessities of the situation. And this difference in their outlook would seem to have impressed itself upon their manners in a remarkable way. Mr. Elphinstone quotes the following from the French translator of the 'Seir ul Mutakherin,' in which the difference is well described:

"If any one had seen M. de Bussy and Col. Clive or Mr. Hastings in the height of their power and influence, he may have taken from these two or three individuals a pretty good idea of the different geniuses of the French and English nations. M. de Bussy always wore embroidered clothes or brocade, with an embroidered hat, and, on days of ceremony, embroidered shoes of black velvet. He was seen in an immense tent, full sufficient for 600 men, of about thirty feet in elevation; at one end of this tent he sat on an arm-chair, embroidered with his King's arms, placed upon an elevation, which last was covered by a crimson carpet of embroidered velvet. At his right and left, but upon back chairs only, sat a dozen of his officers. Over against him his French guard on horseback, and behind these his Turkish guards. His table, always in plate, was served with three, often with four, services. To this French magnificence he added all the parade and pageant of Hindustani manners. A numerous set of tents, always on an elephant himself, as were all his officers, he was preceded by heralds on horseback and by a set of musicians singing his feats of chivalry, with always two head heralds reciting his eulogium. Col. Clive always wore his regimentals in the field, was always on horseback, and never rode in a palanquin; he had a plentiful table, but noways delicate, and never more than two services. He used to march mostly at the head of the column with his aides-de-camp, or was hunting to the right and left. He never wore silks but in town. Gov. Hastings always wore a plain coat of English broadcloth, and never anything like lace or embroidery. His whole retinue a dozen of horseguards; his throne a plain chair of mahogany with plenty of such thrones in the hall; his table sometimes neglected; his diet sparing and always abstemious; his address and deportment very distant from pride and still more so from familiarity."

Life and Services of Gen. John A. Logan, as Soldier and Statesman. By George Francis Dawson, ex-Librarian of United States Senate. Belford, Clarke & Co. 1887. Pp. 580.

THIS book has all the marks of a "campaign life," prepared for use in an election and afterwards adapted to publication as a *post-mortem* biography. It has the same indiscriminate praise of the subject, the superlative estimate of all he did, the assumption that at every stage of his career he was the chief figure of his time, the belittling or depreciation of everybody who was in contact with him, the scrap-book collection of laudatory newspaper notices of him, the usual excerpts from his "great speeches." It would seem to be written by a political henchman, with all the henchman's blind adoration of the man to whose fortunes he has attached himself, and to whom he looks for place and promotion. It is a