

men read now like some of the oldest pieces of modern literature. Mr. Lowell's voice, as he traverses the proposition that "slavery is of divine ordination and its bases laid in the nature of man," and supports himself by citing the fate of the Ptolemaic astronomy at the hands of Galileo, seems to reach us from afar, through endless "corridors of time." It is the essays on the various phases of the civil war, beginning with the election of 1860, and ending with the reconstruction of 1866, which give us the measure of his capacity as a political philosopher and observer. As we have said already, we do not know of any public man who lived through those times whose speeches or writings would say so much for his sagacity and the soundness of his judgment. For we must all admit they were times in which the wisest found it almost impossible to avoid saying foolish things, and the ablest to avoid indulgence in quackery. Mr. Lowell may well be gratified, therefore, as he observes in his preface, to find that he "was able to keep his head fairly clear of passion when his heart was at boiling point."

In reading through the essays on the Rebellion, including under this head that on Gen. McClellan's Reports, and that on the Lincoln-McClellan election, we find only two points in which Mr. Lowell was mistaken; and his mistake in these cases was shared, we think, by every observer of prominence at the North—we mean the readiness of the Southerners to fight, and their courage and tenacity after the fighting began. There was hardly any Northerner in this part of the world who did not apply to the South the old adage that bullies and braggarts are cowards, and that if faced, boldly they were sure to back down; and yet in the whole list of adages there is not one which derives less support from experience. We believe the rule to be that bullies and braggarts are brave, and that the proverbial doubt about their courage is due simply to the éclat which attends the occasional collapse of a person so obnoxious and unpopular as a hector is sure to be. The Southerners did themselves injustice as soldiers and statesmen through their lack of literary culture. They boasted themselves like Montenegrins or Albanians, while really possessing an admirable talent for organization whether in war or peace, and as great powers of protracted effort as any people in the world.

Where Mr. Lowell shines most is in his clear presentation, through the cloudy and bewildering days of 1860-61, of the real issue between the North and South, and his masterful exposure of the folly and futility of the various schemes of compromise, avoidance, or postponement, with which the air was full until after the Seven Days before Richmond. To him "the election in November [1860], whatever its result, was to settle for many years to come the question whether the American idea was to govern this continent, whether the Occidental or Oriental theory of society was to mould our future." In the following year (1861), he was equally sure "that the United States are a nation, and not a mass meeting; that theirs is a government and not a caucus—a government that was meant to be capable, and is capable, of something more than the helpless *please don't* of the village constable; that they have executive and administrative officers that are not mere puppet figures to go through the motions of an objectless activity, but arms and hands that become supple to do the will of the people, so soon as that will becomes conscious and defines its purpose." In 1864 he said that

"war means now, consciously with many, unconsciously with most, but inevitably, abolition. Nothing can save slavery but peace, let

its doom be once accomplished, . . . and the bond between the men at the South who were willing to destroy the Union, and those at the North who only wish to save it for the sake of slavery, will be broken. . . . The mass of the Southern people will not feel too keenly the loss of a kind of property in which they had no share, while it made them underlings, nor will they find it hard to reconcile themselves with a government from which they had no real cause of estrangement. If the war be waged manfully, as becomes a thoughtful people, without insult or childish triumph in success, if we meet opinion with wiser opinion, waste no time in badgering prejudice till it become hostility, and attack slavery as a crime against the nation, and not as an individual sin, *it will end, we believe, in making us the most powerful and prosperous community the world ever saw.*"

The review of McClellan's Report, in 1864, is the best example in the collection of Mr. Lowell's powers of political discussion. Nothing could be happier or more acute than his definition of the relation either of a successful or unsuccessful military commander to the civil government which he serves, or keener than his analysis of Gen. McClellan's character as a strategist, and of his own explanation of his operations. There was much that was trying in McClellan's position. He organized the great army that was raised at Washington, and his success in this, and the eulogy it called forth, would readily have turned stronger heads than his. Moreover, he was dealing with civil superiors who naturally showed the doubts, uncertainties, and timidities of the great public behind them, and communicated them to the army through the very air of the camp. It was not wonderful that under these circumstances a second-rate general should have felt the politician in him getting the better of the soldier, and that he should, unconsciously perhaps, have come to think the government of his own country a more pressing, as it was apparently an easier, task than the destruction of the enemy. Mr. Lowell's description of this state of mind, of the steps which led to it, and the absurdities which it involved, are admirable specimens both of political and military criticism.

The closing article, on "The Place of the Independent in Politics," is still fresh in the minds of our readers, and was discussed in these columns when it was delivered. Any one who reaches it through the volume before us will miss the triumphant note of the preceding essays, and will, perhaps, find it a reason for believing that Mr. Lowell, in writing about the war and its effects, was animated by more enthusiasm than he imagined. He has lived to see the dull days which are sure to follow every revolutionary epoch, when the heroes are dead and the great memories are waxing faint, and a new generation has come on the stage which is still uncertain what use to make of the glory won for it by its fathers, or what duties it imposes. But he readily finds in the situation a hundred lessons for those who have reaped the fruits without sharing the sacrifices of the war, and extracts, as hardly any other living writer can, from the very disappointments and shortcomings of the restored Union, new reasons for patriotic toil and endeavor.

#### HARRISON'S OLIVER CROMWELL.—I.

*Oliver Cromwell.* By Frederic Harrison. [Twelve English Statesmen.] Macmillan & Co. 1888.

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON has performed a noteworthy achievement: he has produced what will (it may be anticipated) be for a long time the popular account of Cromwell's career. Mr. Harrison's book is "popular" in the good, not in the bad sense of that term. It tells ordi-

nary readers the facts which men who are not historians, but who care for history, want to know about the Protector, and it tells these facts in a style which is clear, striking, and unaffected, and therefore preëminently readable. The deficiencies of Mr. Harrison's treatise are almost forced upon the writer by the nature of his task. A contributor to a series, he was compelled to observe the narrow limits of the space assigned to him. You cannot write a life within the number of pages which suffice for an essay. As, again, he had undertaken to write one among a set of biographies intended for general reading, he was obliged to consult the taste of the general reader. We should certainly have preferred to hear more about Cromwell's constitutions, even at the sacrifice of a description of Marston Moor or of Naseby. But we have no reason to suppose that the thousands in England and America who read the Statesmen Series share our tastes, and, after all, the legitimate object of the series is to provide for the mass of intelligent readers an account of Cromwell which they will care to read, and a picture of the Protector which they may be able to remember.

May it not further be fairly said that the one other fault in Mr. Harrison's book which fair criticism need notice is also imposed upon him by the nature of his task? His treatise is too much of a eulogy; but a writer must be wanting in some of the qualities which go to make up a good biographer if he can study such a striking and massive character as Cromwell's without coming under the influence of the great Puritan statesman. Seldom is a good life of a man written by one not his admirer; and as long as an author aims, as Mr. Harrison always does, at perfect fairness, there is no reason either for wonder or for censure if capacity for impartial criticism of his hero is a trifle blunted by a tendency towards hero-worship. If we regret the presence of this tendency in Mr. Harrison, our regret is caused not by any idea that admiration for Cromwell inspires him with a kind of unfairness to a hero's opponents which vitiates the writings of Carlyle and his school, but because it prevents our author from dwelling on some of the aspects of Cromwell's career which, just because they call for criticism rather than either for eulogy or for censure, are in reality the most deserving of careful attention.

Yet, if Mr. Harrison fails to a certain extent on the critical side of his work, his clear and vigorous narrative suggests instructive criticism on the Protector's career. No one can read this last life of the Puritan leader without feeling that Cromwell's successes and Cromwell's failures suggest two questions or problems which are very closely connected with each other. What was the character of the man? What was the real scope of his policy?

No student of average intelligence can at the present day fancy that the Protector was a hypocrite who masked ambition under the pretence of religious faith. But to acquit Cromwell of hypocrisy is rather to increase than to diminish the difficulty of understanding the sentiment of distrust excited by him in men of all parties. For it cannot, we think, be in fairness denied that when the Protector lay on his deathbed, there was scarcely a statesman with whom he had acted who was not more or less estranged, and did not feel himself more or less deceived. Cavaliers, Presbyterians, Republicans, even Cromwell's own generals, all had some ground of complaint. It is vain to suppose that the charge of hypocrisy, baseless though it was, could have been believed not only by the mass of the people, but by men of sound sense and keen observation, unless there

had been something in Cromwell's character which gave it plausibility. The old rule of pleading, that, in some cases, you cannot dispose of an opponent's allegation simply by denying its truth, but that you must "show color," i. e., explain the grounds which may give rise to his misconception, is a principle of at least as much importance in solving questions of history as in dealing with questions of law. If an error is to be fully exposed, you must explain its origin. The causes of disbelief in Cromwell's sincerity were in the main two-fold. They are to be found partly in the peculiarities of his nature, partly in the peculiarities of his political position.

Hero-worshippers often appear to hold that to prove the sincerity of Cromwell's religious belief is much the same thing as establishing not only his honesty but the straightforwardness of his conduct. Yet in plain truth religious fervor not only is compatible with a want of directness, simplicity, and honesty in action, but is closely allied with a certain subtlety and tortuousness of intellect and of feeling which are apt to result in courses of action that betray a good deal of the wisdom of the serpent. To account for the fact that genuine piety and the habit of measuring the worldly transactions of the day with reference to the actor's belief in the principles governing another and better world lead, if not to dishonesty, yet to modes of speaking and acting which to the outer world seem wanting in candor, would involve a lengthy and difficult analysis of the most subtle of human feelings. That, however, spiritual enthusiasm does not of itself dictate to those under its influence plain and simple dealing with their fellow-men, is proved by all the history of religious movements. One can see in Cromwell's case, at any rate, some of the causes which turn zealots into casuists. He had to lead enthusiasts and men of the world; he was compelled, however honest his intentions, to use two languages. The tone in which he addressed his Puritan friends and his Puritan soldiers was certain to be somewhat different from the tone in which he spoke to cool-headed lawyers and scheming politicians. This difference of tone does not argue the speaker's disbelief in his religious professions. To a certain extent it is almost forced on every religious leader who has dealings with men of the world. The late Lord Shaftesbury was as honest a man as ever lived; we should, however, conjecture that his conversation with Lord Palmerston was unconsciously rather different in tone from his conversation with Mr. Spurgeon. A necessity, further, for speaking in two tongues by degrees affects the speaker's own mind. Cromwell, when seeking for the Lord in the midst of his Ironsides, was a different man from Cromwell debating constitutional questions with Whitelocke, or from Cromwell trying if possible for some basis of negotiation with Charles.

An enthusiast, moreover, who is compelled to perform the part of a statesman, suffers from the unconscious blending of his religion and his statesmanship. This evil was intensified in the case of Cromwell by his avowed belief that outward success, and especially success in battle, was the sign and proof of God's favor. His own successes were to him the bona-fide justification of his policy. He was, indeed, a master, within certain limits, of statecraft. But immediate political success gave him no satisfaction unless he could feel in his own mind that the course he pursued was approved by Heaven. One mark of the Divine sanction was success. Another was the sympathy of good men—that is to say, of the men whom Cromwell bona fide believed to be the

chosen children of God. Mr. Harrison has brought out admirably the reality of Cromwell's desire for the sympathy of ardent Puritans. His attitude in this matter may be compared to the position of many modern Liberals in respect to the will of the people. A Liberal statesman feels that his knowledge exceeds that of his followers. He knows that public opinion is often wrong; he knows that it is his duty to oppose popular error, and at times he opposes it. But he cannot be happy unless public opinion, the voice of the people, the great heart of the masses, is with him. This desire for popular sympathy arises from the only half-acknowledged belief that the ultimate judgment of the people is in some sense the voice of Heaven. Our modern statesman plays tricks with this oracle. Views opposed to his own are, he thinks, not really countenanced by the people. There is a difference between public opinion and the opinion of the part of the public who happen to support the policy of our statesman's opponents. In any case, he knows by a sort of faith that public opinion will at last be found in his favor, and he spares no arts to bias the jury whose verdict he wishes to gain. So, apparently, it was with Cromwell with regard to the opinion of the saints. He wished with his whole heart that "good men" should approve his course. His deference for their sentiment was real. The two most important of his political actions were dictated, and in his own mind we may suppose morally justified, by his respect for enthusiasts whose beliefs he shared, and whose approval he desired. The execution of Charles and the refusal of the crown were each apparently dictated by genuine respect for the opinions of the good men who had risked their lives in the Lord's quarrel. How much there was of policy in this deference no human being can tell. But knowledge of human nature suggests that a genuine desire for the good opinion of good men had at least as much influence on Cromwell's conduct at the crises of his career as any ideas of statesmanship. The sentiment of the saints seemed to him to reflect the will of God.

But this very respect for the opinion of zealous Puritans of itself fostered, if not duplicity, yet what we may call doubleness of mind. Cromwell knew the language and the sentiments likely to conciliate an army of zealots, and he undoubtedly used language which, while it was natural to himself, suited the taste of his followers, and, when dealing with the army, brought into prominence that part of his character with which his Puritan soldiers could sympathize. He, too, like our modern statesmen, must have often been conscious that the "public opinion" which he respected was liable to error. He, too, played tricks with his oracle. He tried to bring round the sentiments of the army to his own views. As his age and experience increased, his ideas of policy expanded, and possibly, though this is not certain, his religious fervor cooled. In any case, he was more and more compelled to act with design. In his acts, in his words, in his policy, he had to consider the principles or prejudices of the army and, what was a very different thing, the principles or prejudices of the nation.

We can hardly wonder if religious faith which was sincere was tainted with casuistry, and subtlety of policy was marred by some of the unscrupulosity of statecraft. For, after all, Cromwell's political position has at least as much to do as have the peculiarities of his nature with those charges of his insincerity which, for more than two centuries, have detracted from his fame. His attitude is more intelligible to men of this generation than it was to

men of the eighteenth century, who were devoid of the instruction which the modern world has gained from the records of a century of revolutions. Cromwell, in spite of the burning religious enthusiasm which made him the friend and ally of fanatics and sectaries, belonged at bottom to a class of statesmen of whom the last fifty years have produced striking examples. He was a conservative revolutionist; he belongs to the family of Cavour, of Deák, and of Bismarck. He was one of those men, in short, who have tried to carry through a great change without using the methods of anarchists and fanatics. Of the extent to which the spirit of a conservative revolutionist is the mark of his policy, we may say something in another article. For our present purpose, the point which deserves notice is that a statesman who uses revolutionary forces to effect a great change, and at the same time attempts to preserve the institutions of his country from destruction, is certain to incur, with more or less of justice, the charge of duplicity. An opportunist will never receive credit for sincerity. To cavaliers, Cromwell was the sectary who had murdered the King. To zealous republicans, he was the traitor who had destroyed the commonwealth in order that he might assume the crown. Combined complexity of character and ambiguity of policy rendered Cromwell, even to his contemporaries, the most incomprehensible of statesmen. The leader whom Englishmen do not understand they may admire, but they will never trust.

#### RECENT NOVELS.

*Summer Legends.* By Rudolph Baumbach. Translated by Helen B. Dole. Thos. Y. Crowell & Co.

*Two Men.* By Elizabeth Stoddard. Cassell & Co.

*The Steel Hammer.* By Louis Uhlbach. Translated from the French by E. W. Latimer. D. Appleton & Co.

*Lajla: A Tale of Finmark.* By Prof. J. A. Friis. Translated from the Norwegian by Ingrid Markhus. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

In 'Summer Legends' we have a collection of charming little fairy stories from the pen of Rudolph Baumbach, a Thuringian poet, now living in Leipzig. These tales have had a wide circulation in Germany, which is not surprising, since they are full of the aroma of those forests where Easter hares run about, and where gnomes and fairies dwell, visible on Midsummer's day, and ready to bestow their favors on mortals in perplexity. But it is not only the fairy-story lover at the back of every brain that will be gratified by the 'Summer Legends'; he who loves a nineteenth-century barb for his magic arrow, will find that, too, in the pungent satire which Baumbach, as an observer of to-day, cannot escape, and as a poet of nature cannot help wrapping in field-flowers, wood-mosses, and mist-wreaths. Poetry, whether in prose or verse, is clearly the author's field. The few stories which describe student life are the least attractive in the volume. The real charm of the book is felt when we see the "meadow-sprite sitting on a bright yellow marigold, kicking his little legs for joy," the water sprite playing on his violin among the reeds till "the birds in the trees were silent, the bees stopped humming, and the fishes raised their heads out of the pond to listen to the sweet sounds"; the stork, who "clapped his bill together with joy"; the upspringing of a "little flower with eyes of heavenly blue." The flower has since spread over the whole land, and for those who do not know its name