

of Mr. Bland—a career which nearly resulted in his nomination for the Presidency four years ago; but it is a disappointing production. The picture given of Mr. Bland is so lacking in intellectual individuality that we are forced to the conclusion that he had very little force or originality of mind, and attained his representative character partly through this defect. Partly, however, it was evidently through his having one characteristic extremely rare in these days, at any rate in public life—rigid pecuniary honesty. We have read the extracts from his speeches, which take up a quarter of the volume, without being able to find in them anything especially memorable, while most of what he had to say about the currency was pure nonsense; but in the chapters containing Mrs. Bland's reminiscences she mentions one or two little incidents which are worth all the rest of the book put together. Mr. Bland was one of the distinguished few to whom it is repugnant and repulsive to take money dishonestly come by, and who prefer to suffer the pecuniary consequences of their own negligence rather than to shift them on to the shoulders of others. Thus, we find it mentioned that when the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House ran off with the public money, Mr. Bland, feeling that he was in a measure responsible for the loose manner in which the business of the Sergeant-at-Arms's office had been managed, refused to receive as his salary any more than his share of the cash actually left—thereby, though a poor man, subjecting himself to a heavy pecuniary fine. Again, in 1893, a motion was carried for "extra mileage" which Mr. Bland thought improper. He not only opposed it, but refused to take the money, though much in need of it. Presents he absolutely refused to receive. In fact, no Roman in the days of the early Republic was more sensitive in money matters than this poor Missouri farmer, keeping up, to the bewilderment of the rascally politicians about him, the tradition which still connects public with private virtue. It was this simple honesty which gave Mr. Bland his real hold upon his constituency, and this trait it is by virtue of which his admirers are entitled to claim for him respect and admiration.

His career, however, shows at the same time of how little use to the public this simple sort of honesty may be when the politician who is fortified by it is weak in other directions. Intellectually, Mr. Bland seems to have had a fair knowledge of Constitutional principles—his attitude towards Imperialism and Colonialism was intuitively correct—but his economical education was so imperfect that he was completely carried away by the free-silver craze, and lived and died under the delusion that the rich, through the demonetization of silver, had gained a control over the prices of commodities through which they ground down and tyrannized over the poor. His speech on "The Parting of the Ways," delivered in 1893 in protest against the bill for the repeal of the Sherman Law, is as great a farrago of absurdities as the human brain ever produced, though, granting the major delusion—that law can regulate prices through the standard of value—it is plausible enough. So that here we have the spectacle of a remarkably honest man advocating a recipe for making something out of nothing, in its effects radically dishonest and corrupting, and supported for

twenty years in the position of leader in this movement chiefly by his well-earned reputation for pecuniary integrity. The case shows how ridiculous it is to suppose that all the sponsors of the free-silver delusion are knaves.

Mr. Bland's life was an uneventful one, and this book is really less a biography than an ambitious attempt to give the author's views of the development and tendencies of American government and society during the past twenty-five years. As a whole, it is almost unreadable; but to those interested in the natural history of political delusions—a branch of study which clearly receives far too little attention in our schools and colleges—it deserves notice. In it the admirers of Mr. Bland put before the public what they still conceive to be the spirit of the time—the democratic conviction and faith for the coming century—the hopes, beliefs, and faiths with which those who are waiting for our political shoes are filled. Some think this spirit to be that of Expansion; others that of free trade; others that of tenure by fitness; others that of Populism. To the author of this volume, the history of the last twenty-five years points to one thing only—"that the reality of American politics is the struggle for the control of government as a means of controlling the products of labor, either directly or by the control of the medium through which they are exchanged—of money, however issued."

As to the latter half of this alternative, which is as much of the truth as the readers of this volume are offered, the currency question is confessedly one of the realities of American politics; but if history proves anything, it proves that it cannot be settled by being thrown into the arena of party politics, because it is scientific and technical in character and therefore must be left to experts. In no country have any other than experts ever settled it, and until it is left to them here it will be for ever unsettled. Therefore the question is not, as the author seems to suppose, whether the American people want "16 to 1" or the gold standard, but, Will Democracy learn the lesson of the currency which kings and emperors have learned before it, and leave it to those who know; or will it insist on plunging the country into periodical panics in order to keep the standard of value a sort of "little joker" to juggle with in elections? This is a reality of American politics, and is part of a broader question—Will Democracy in the long run bring fit men to the front, or are those right who maintain that universal suffrage will in the end always put ignorance in power?

Now, curiously enough, the author of this book does not really blink this question, but answers it, *passim*, by maintaining—it might almost be said to be a thesis of the volume—that the idea that public matters should be decided or public work done by fit men, is a delusion. He speaks throughout with great contempt of what he calls the "Whig" theory of government, and laughs at Cleveland's lack of confidence in the ability of the "inexperienced masses" to "manage the finances of the Government" (p. 195). He says that the difficulty with Cleveland was that "his sympathies inclined him at all points to a government of experts and of the fit." [Notice reader, the derisive quotation marks], selected, not because they represented the rest, but because of demon-

strated superiority manifested in ability to govern rather than to represent others." The equal right of every man to share in the Government at some stage is undoubtedly an essential part of the democratic theory; but, in this travesty of it, the author puts forward as Democratic an idea which, if it ever prevails, will speedily bring popular government itself to an end. It is a theory that a herd of buffaloes or a flock of wild geese would know better than to act upon—and yet it no doubt plays a great part in helping to propagate such crazes and delusions as that to which this book is dedicated.

*Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America.* By Thomas L. Livermore. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1900.

Col. Livermore here offers a careful and thorough examination of the relative strength of the Union and Confederate armies throughout the war, through a laborious application of the theory of probabilities to the confused and uncertain figures of the Confederates with regard to nearly all their army statistics. Some one has characterized the difference between the workings of the Northern and Southern mind by saying that the Yankee "guesses," while in truth he reckons; but the Southerner "reckons," although in fact he guesses. Certainly the two sets of estimates of war numbers give some warrant to this description. The data by which the historian is to determine the numbers of the Union forces are abundant, and based upon principles of enumeration which are seldom capable of misconception. The forms of making returns in all departments of the Federal army were of long establishment, and the reports of most of the branches of the army, from companies to corps, were apt to be made with regularity in pursuance of the war regulations. In one feature, however, the Union returns often disturb the historian when he desires to know the actual combatants in battle, in that the phrase "present for duty" included all sorts of detailed men who were not all in the fighting ranks. Thus, the Union forces in actual battle were apt to be overestimated. The Confederate returns appear often to have been made upon individual principles of presenting the best possible showing for the command. The numbers engaged, and the results in killed and wounded, were represented as incredibly less than those of their adversaries; while in respect of those actually put *hors de combat*, the rule was, at an early period of the war, established by an order of Gen. Lee, not to report the slightly wounded, lest encouragement should be given to the enemy. This was perhaps good warfare, but it was bad for history, and it has helped to mislead ardent advocates of the Confederate cause as to the comparative valor of the opponents.

The downfall of the Confederate Government, and the consequent destruction of a multitude of valuable war documents, aided in the obscuration of the facts, and the truth of history could be determined only by the process which has been frequently applied by recent writers, and which Col. Livermore carries out in a highly interesting manner, of sifting a host of lesser reports, civil and military, and comparing the numbers acknowledged some time before a campaign with those returned under

the bias of defeat or of the intoxication of victory.

The volume is much smaller than Col. William F. Fox's valuable standard discussion of regimental losses, and occupies mainly a different field, showing in tables many important and curious facts of the great battles of the war, not easily accessible elsewhere. For example, the total Union enlistments in the four years, reducing the various terms of service, as for three months, one hundred days, nine months, etc., to a three years' equivalent, was 1,556,678. Upon the Confederate side there are no official records which pretend to give an accurate estimate of the Southern numbers; hence there have been several attempts upon the part of Confederate military men to compute, from the figures which were available in official or private records, the probable number of their men brought against the Union attacks, and of the killed and wounded. The most notable of these approximations is that of Dr. Joseph Jones, Surgeon-General of the United Confederate Veterans, in an historical pamphlet published in New Orleans in 1892. His figures are: Grand total of deaths, 200,000; losses in prisoners not exchanged, 200,000; losses from discharges and desertions, 100,000; available active force in the field at the close of the war, 100,000—an aggregate of 600,000 men. In contrast with these calculations, the rolls in the War Office at Washington show that 174,223 men surrendered at the close of hostilities, and many more than that number were not included in these formal surrenders.

The average strength of a large number of Confederate regiments during the war, as shown in the records, forms a fair basis for estimating the whole number enlisted in the Confederate armies, which equals 1,227,890 for all terms of service; and an examination of the census tables of 1860 presents, as liable to the inexorable and sweeping conscription laws of the Confederacy, 1,234,000. These figures, from two different sources, indicate that the computations are upon justifiable lines, as they are in harmony with the estimates of the War Records and the Pension Departments at Washington, the former of which suggested one million as the probable Confederate armed strength, and the latter a million and a half. Col. Livermore's final summary is, that against the Union armies of 1,556,678 men were arrayed Confederates to the number of 1,082,119.

With regard to the number of wounded, as to which Dr. Jones equally underestimates the Confederate losses, the computations indicate that in the battles of which any trustworthy information is available, far from the Union losses being largely in excess of those of their opponents, 176,550 Union soldiers were hit, against 187,124 Confederates. An illustration of what we have said above concerning the proclivity of Confederate officers to rate their armies far below reasonable probability, is furnished by Antietam, which Gen. Lee reported he had fought with less than 40,000 men. The figures here submitted estimate the Union effectives under McClellan at 75,316, and Lee's forces at 51,844. Upon like principles of calculation at Gettysburg, Meade commanded 83,289 men, nearly one entire corps of which, the Sixth, however, was in reserve, while Lee brought into the fight 75,054 men. Such revisions of the long-received judgments of the comparative courage and endurance

of the two combatants leave no element of discredit to the merit of the Confederates, but prove that when men of the same stock stand up in stern determination of battle, the question of final victory depends upon military skill and material resources rather than upon superior native valor and the divinity of a cause.

*Clearing-Houses: Their History, Methods, and Administration.* By James G. Cannon, Vice-President of the Fourth National Bank of the City of New York. Appletons. 1900.

The theory and practice of clearing-houses have been discussed more or less extensively in various financial treatises, but all such discussions have been inadequate as regards the modus operandi of the institution. Mr. Cannon's 'Clearing-Houses' undertakes to supply this want. The book is written by a banker who has long been active in the work of the New York Clearing-house, and, therefore, investigates, with the advantage of close personal observation, the practical merits of the various systems pursued in this country and in England. The general theory of the clearing-house has been so thoroughly established and tested by experience that its economic value is no longer open to discussion. The fact that, when properly administered, the system dispenses with the use of money for payment in 95 per cent. of the transactions made by check, speaks for itself; it would probably be impossible, under any other system, to conduct with the existing circulating medium the exchanges of modern banking. But the practical application of the theory varies in half-a-dozen different clearing-houses. All, of course, undertake to effect the offsetting of checks drawn upon one bank and deposited for collection with others, by the checks on other banks deposited in that one. All prescribe rules for settlement of the resultant cash balances. It is in this second function, however, that the systems vary.

In London, for example, owing to the customary keeping at the Bank of England of balances of other local institutions, the clearing-house settlement merely involves an order transferring the requisite sum from one bank's credit to another, the Bank of England still retaining the cash. At the Boston Clearing-house, banks with balances to their credit at the daily settlement commonly lend such balances out at interest to the debtor banks. In Chicago, balances are similarly loaned temporarily, though without interest charge. The purpose in both cases is to reduce still further the necessity for large transfers of cash. The New York Clearing-house, on the contrary, requires that each bank whose debits on checks exchanged exceed its credits shall on the same day pay into the Clearing-house, in lawful money, the amount of such difference. Mr. Cannon favors the New York plan as distinguished from that of Boston and Chicago, chiefly on the ground that the latter regularly defers a heavy cash liability to some unfixed future time, when call for instant payment may be embarrassing.

The matter of clearing-house loan certificates—perhaps the most ingenious contrivance in American banking—Mr. Cannon discusses more thoroughly than any previous writer on the subject has done. We

have seen no other satisfactory description of the manner in which the highly intricate problem of allotting this emergency currency and assessing interest against its holders is accomplished. A chapter is devoted to the question of charges for clearing "country checks." Mr. Cannon, who was the leading spirit in the recent movement of New York Clearing-house banks to impose this charge, explains in some detail the reasons why free collection of out-of-town checks cannot rightly be asked of a city bank. The "typical journey of a country check," cited by way of illustration, and showing the passage of a check for the modest sum of forty-three dollars through the hands of nine institutions at eight different localities, before reaching its proper destination, is a striking instance not only of the expenses of collection, but of the mode in which the machinery of modern exchange moves at the bidding of the smallest bank depositor.

*The War in South Africa: A Narrative of the Anglo-Boer War from the Beginning of Hostilities to the Fall of Pretoria.* By Capt. A. T. Mahan, with introduction by Sir John G. Bourinot, K.C.M.G., LL.D., Litt.D. New York: Peter Fenelon Collier & Son. 1900.

Inasmuch as Capt. Mahan's book is given a size and shape which make it inconvenient for library or reference use, in order to accommodate its profuse illustration, it is more properly a pictorial than a narrative history of England's war with the Transvaal. In the introduction Sir John Bourinot briefly outlines the history of South Africa, its physical conditions, the career and the personality of those who have most strongly influenced its development, and the inception and progress of the mining enterprises out of which the complications arose that resulted in a war extinguishing the independent nationality of two republics.

The leading feature of the book is its illustrations. Of these there are some 450 reproductions of sketches and photographs, 34 full-page (size 8x12) in black and white, 18 full-page, and 16 of smaller size in color. These are made from original drawings by Klepper, Wenzell, Reuterdaahl, and Herring. The field covered by the pictures is a wide one. It includes places and people of South Africa, portraits of military and political leaders connected with the war, scenes of peace and scenes of battle, public buildings, Boer soldiery from the Transvaal and from the Free State, and English soldiery from all the world. The details of army life, from organization and transportation, to the sick and the wounded in hospital and the dead upon the battle-field, are all portrayed. All are interesting and illustrative of the place and the time, though some might well have been omitted to give place to others of greater value, such as the occupation and the flag-raising at Johannesburg and Pretoria, the most important points.

Capt. Mahan's narrative cannot fail to be interesting. At times it is vivid, though in the main conventional. It is written from the pro-English standpoint, and is based chiefly upon the English reports. It sometimes errs by its acceptance of reports, current at the time, which have since been shown to be inaccurate. Thus, his assumption that the Boers, in the be-