

nificance. The ideal equilibrium was reached just once and for a brief time in Greece. As if to illustrate concretely the sensuousness of the aristocrat, an essay on Henri Beyle's amorous life is added, and by way of proper acknowledgment of inspiration, a paper on Nietzsche.

We have epitomized this argument fully and objectively because it offers a clear-cut picture of the world—a picture that to readers of Brantôme and the tracts of Machiavelli will even seem to have an historical verisimilitude. The potent aristocrat, the shifty or sheerly imbruted worker, have existed and do exist. The question is whether they exist in the purity of type, or in the preponderating influence, assumed by Signor Sera. Let us recall that his book is intended to be merely descriptive and analytical. He treats, as he often declares, the world as it is. His book is to be taken as a reasoned catalogue of human nature. Taken as such, its classifications appear to us brilliant, specious and superficial.

The magnificent animal which he imagines the aristocrat to be, seems to us a pure figment. To realize him intellectually required all the genius of a Nietzsche. In history, the leader has appeared from time to time. Even so, he has rarely been quite true to type, and never frequent enough to constitute what Signor Sera posits: a special species within the genus *homo*. For example, the depressant qualities of pity, moderation, altruism, and intellectualism have been present and even prominent in most of the actual leaders known to history. As to sexuality, while it is obvious that any powerful person will gratify his passions more boldly, it is doubtful whether the aristocrat is especially favored in this regard. Every class of society from top to bottom produces its Lovelaces. Signor Sera could find his sexual conquerors as readily in the stable as in the palace. So far is sexuality from being an index of general superiority that very inferior men will exercise an extraordinary adroitness and forcefulness in the pursuit of their pleasures. Is the village Don Juan an aristocrat after all?

The notion of the aristocrat seems to us, in fine, purely fictitious: a clever but obviously invalid generalization from such exceptional cases as Antony, Attila, Cæsar Borgia, the Marquis de Sade, perhaps. We have to do not with a kind of race within mankind, but either with sheer abnormalities, or with men simply a degree stronger, wiser, and more audacious than their humbler fellows. The term aristocrat—though alluring when the most imbruted sort of worker is cited by way of contrast, seems to us entirely without physiological or psychological significance. There is a good literary reason for cherishing

this type. To assert that it moves the world is quite another matter.

Equally exaggerated we find the insistence upon the depressing effect of work and upon workers as a category to include the greater part of mankind. That work is a depressant, in many cases may freely be admitted. The coal fields, for example, tell that story only too well. But in whole classes of the community work not only produces value to society, which Signor Sera regards as a unique function, but enhances the value of the individual. The improved *morale* brought about by military and naval drill is thoroughly understood. It would be difficult to show that surveyors, engineers, drivers of horses, navigators of vessels, builders, or, indeed, professional men or fine craftsmen, are belittled by their work.

In fact, Signor Sera's notion of a quite untrammelled personality seems to us highly sentimental and unscientific. It is as if a changeling from Rousseau's loins had been foisted upon Friedrich Nietzsche. There has been no time when this superb unconditioned animal has constituted a ruling class. There have been the crazy Cæsars and the degenerate Bourbons, but no wise publicist will base his system upon them. No, from palace to hovel we are none of us free—society imposes bonds upon us and our class; our inner selves devise even more cunning trammels. Least of all has the aristocrat of history been free. Bound by complex codes of honor, by hereditary duties, by all the manifold obligations of nobility, his lot has been cramped, as compared, say, with that of his own clerk, or his shifty money-lender. So well did a better thinker, Nietzsche, perceive this, that he set himself to creating, not a ruling class, but a few portentous Supermen, to secure which he clearly saw that pity must first be annihilated. The fatal weakness of Signor Sera's argument is that, without exception, the major premises are not proved but assumed.

We have given more attention than it quite deserves to this sprightly book. Even under the veil of a translation that abounds in such barbarisms as "glottology" and "involucre," it is pungent, stimulating, and, to a plodding reader, disquieting. It presents a picturesque and suggestive, if hardly novel, notion of the rise and fall of nations. It puts into modern garb the old scarecrows of Machiavelli and Hobbes, and strips Nietzsche of most of his poetry, hence of his difficulty. We are willing to believe that Signor Sera is honestly fascinated by his own paradoxes. We can only say that his mirror of the world simplifies a complex image out of all familiarity. But his theses are clearly and vigorously expressed, his book is very diverting, or very shocking, according to the reader's temperament,

and, after all, nothing sharpens the teeth of the mind like setting them firmly into a fallacy of the tougher order.

*The Origins of Christianity.* By the late Charles Bigg, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford; edited by T. B. Strong, Dean of Christ Church. New York: Henry Frowde. \$4.15.

This is a disappointing book. The promise of the title is not fulfilled, for it is not with the origins of Christianity but with its history from Nero to Diocletian that the author deals. Nor is the work of the quality one might expect from the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Oxford, whose Bampton Lectures on "The Christian Platonists of Alexandria" have long been well and favorably known. The book was not written for professional historians, but for a wider public, and so should not perhaps be criticised because it contains nothing new and unfamiliar, though it is certainly a mistake to suppose that an author must necessarily confine himself wholly to conventional material because he has others than scholars in view.

A more serious defect is the superficiality of treatment. Even as a summary of familiar matters, it lacks vitality, insight, and imagination. It is commendably accurate, and bears witness to the author's learning and to his acquaintance with the best modern literature—it is not in any sense a bad book. But just because of this its futility is all the more apparent and all the more annoying. The very arrangement of the material betrays the shallowness of the treatment. The book is divided into thirty-seven chapters, one of them printing but two pages, and more than a third of them carrying the name of an emperor as title, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, etc. It would be a miracle if with such a table of contents the book itself were anything but scrappy and superficial. External biographical details, bibliographical notices, and accounts of persecutions bulk large, while the really vital things, such as the inner meaning of the new faith, its appeal to the peoples among whom it spread so rapidly, the forces which shaped its development, its influence upon the world and the world's influence upon it, all these are overlooked or treated in a most casual and inadequate way. The chapter on the Apologists, in which an account is given of the principal writings and the arguments used without any attempt to get at the heart of the situation, or at the real significance of the Apologists' task, is but a sample of the unsatisfactory character of the whole book. Even a chapter with so promising a title as the Church at the Close of the Second Century yields little more than a series of details touch-

ing organization and liturgy, matters which properly belong in an encyclopædia of Christian antiquities, not in a history of Christianity. The final chapter, entitled *A Review of the Third Century*, is much better, but is all too brief and is taken up largely with such conventional topics as private confession, asceticism, and celibacy of the clergy. Though the old anti-Romish polemic has happily almost wholly disappeared from recent church histories, the traditional interests still continue to dominate them, and questions which were formerly bitterly debated between Catholics and Protestants, or between one and another Protestant sect still form the staple of discussion. This is particularly true in England, where perhaps the old differences have been longest in dying out, or where, at any rate, the historic spirit has been longest in outgrowing them.

It is to be greatly regretted that since the death of Edwin Hatch scarcely any work of importance has been done by English scholars in the field of early church history. Conventional, stereotyped, or apologetic treatments of the subject are about all that have appeared. Of freshness and originality, and particularly of large and constructive work, there has been little. Canon Bigg's book is no greater sinner than many another. It is simply one more mediocre book where there are already too many.

*Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia. 1752-1755 and 1756-1758.*  
Edited by H. R. McIlwaine. Richmond, Virginia.

This volume, the second issued by the present State librarian, consists of the Journals of two General Assemblies, the first comprising pp. 1-332, and the second pp. 333-551. There were eight sessions of the first Assembly, and four of the second. The custom adopted in the preceding volumes of printing the names of the Burgesses has been somewhat changed, as they are now given for the whole term of the Assemblies, with notes showing changes during the terms, instead of, as heretofore, appearing before each session of the Assembly: hence we have but two lists, instead of twelve.

As is well known to those interested in this publication, the printing was begun with the volume for 1773-1776, and has proceeded backwards, so to say, so that it has now reached the sixth volume. This plan was presumably adopted from lack of the earlier journals, which it was intended to supply as the printing continued. The importance of the publication has been heretofore commented on, and, indeed, is understood of itself.

The first session of the Assembly of 1752-55 began on February 27, 1752, be-

ing the first session of an Assembly since 1749. Gov. Dinwiddie arrived in Virginia November 20, 1751. In his address to the Assembly he recommended first "that some way should be found to prevent delays in the courts of justice," and, secondly, "that good relations should be cultivated with the Indians in order that the French and Spaniards—particularly the former—might not be able to carry out their designs of settling in the interior." The fact that "the King in council had repealed ten acts passed by the preceding Assembly," prevented the fulfilment of the first recommendation, but the Assembly, on April 6, 1752, passed "An Act for encouraging Persons to settle on the Waters of the Mississippi." Such settlements had previously been made in Virginia (as of the Huguenots at Manikin Town, King William County, and of the Germans at Germannia, in Spotsylvania County), as a protection against inroads of the Indians. This kindly feeling, however, soon changed on account of the dispute over "the pistole fee." The Governor required the payment of a pistole (\$3.50) as a fee on the issue of a patent for land at the secretary's office. This led to a pamphlet by Richard Bland, "A Fragment on the Pistole Fee, Claimed by the Governor of Virginia," which has been edited by W. C. Ford. The claim angered the Burgesses, especially after their handsome present, and they inquired by what authority the Governor made this demand. He replied that the order was given "in accordance with the authority granted him in his instructions from the home government and with the advice of the Council," and that the matter was one with which the House of Burgesses could not constitutionally deal. This did not satisfy the Burgesses, but the House passed a resolution, "That whosoever shall hereafter pay a pistole as a fee to the Governor for the use of the seal to patents for lands shall be deemed a betrayer of the rights and privileges of the people," and they sent the Attorney-General, Peyton Randolph, to London to investigate the matter. The editor states that "in this dispute Dinwiddie was technically in the right," for the land was the King's land, and that the "fee was ill-advised, but not illegal." It, however, destroyed the amicable feeling between the Governor and the Burgesses, and affected the sum appropriated by the House of Burgesses after Washington's mission to the French commandant in regard to the disputed territory in the Ohio Valley.

The capitulation of Washington at Fort Mifflin on September 26, 1777, caused another session of the Assembly. The House passed a bill to raise £20,000 for the campaign, but attached a rider for the payment of Peyton Randolph's claim of £2,500 in the matter of the pistole

fee, to which the Governor would not agree, so the bill failed. The House eventually backed down and passed the bill.

The Assembly of 1756-58 first met on March 25, 1756. The Governor hoped for a change in the membership, and there was a change of about thirty-eight per cent. But "the old leaders were returned, and it may be doubted if the change in personnel was of any great advantage to the Governor in his efforts to control the House." It declined to send men to Crown Point on account of the danger at home; it passed a bill for the appointment of an agent in England, to which the Governor was opposed; and it offended him "by sending the sergeant-at-arms with his mace within the bar of the General Court, and compelling certain officials of that court who were members of the House to attend its meetings." It passed an act to raise £25,000 for the better protection of the inhabitants on the frontiers, and to erect a chain of forts. Among these one was to be immediately erected at Winchester, Fort Loudoun, the remains of which may still be seen there. Washington's letters set forth the alarming condition of affairs, and an act was passed to allow members who were officers of militia to repair at once to their respective posts. The Assembly did its best to meet the emergency.

The feeling between the Governor and the Burgesses was now more harmonious, and the Governor announced his intention of resigning on account of his health, which he did in January, 1758. Gov. Fauquier did not reach Virginia until June 7; in the meantime John Blair, president of the Council, was acting Governor.

There are still errors of proof in this volume, but the proofreading has improved.

*Essays in Politics.* By Andrew Macphail.  
New York: Longmans, Green, & Co.  
\$1.80 net.

British imperialists who base their hopes on preferential tariffs are vigorously attacked in this book of Mr. Macphail's. The Canadian writer, who is here a student of economic and political conditions, offers not a grain of encouragement for politicians of the Chamberlain school. Mr. Macphail sees only danger in the forging of tariff links for empire welding, and relies upon race loyalty to open up the way to political coherence in any future British federation.

In the best essays in this book, which relates chiefly to Canada, the main argument is against the economic theory of protection. Certain phases of Canadian loyalty are criticised, as well as the impatience of advice and rebuke from headquarters that has so often