

in society and their rights; and although his particular economic proposals have not prevailed, the impress of their theory still remains. It is in this sense that his life, and more especially his words, are worthy (perhaps not indeed in equal degree) of such scientific biographical study as John Morley has given to Voltaire and Rousseau, those intellectual forces of the eighteenth century. To this of course Dr. Kohut's book can lay no claim.

R. M. S.

Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1789. By WILLIAM B. WEEDEN. Boston and New York, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. — 2 vols., 964 pp.

The author of this work has endeavored to meet a long-standing want. The economic history of this country is still to a large extent an unexplored field. An effort to trace the development in that line of a section so important as New England is sure to be welcomed by all scholars. Something better is wanted than the occasional chapters of Palfrey, the work of Lodge or even the very excellent account of New England in 1650 which is given by Doyle. More thorough investigation and detailed statement are needed. This can well be done by sections — the northern, the middle and the southern — because social conditions peculiar to itself have to a certain extent affected each region. But a history of social manners and customs is not what is wanted. An ample literature already exists upon that subject. Every historian has devoted attention to it. Books have been written specially upon it. Magazine articles almost beyond number exist, which tell us how our ancestors dressed, ate, entertained their friends, made love and spent, in short, all the days of the week. Therefore it seems to the writer that Mr. Weeden might profitably have omitted a mass of material which he has introduced concerning these matters.

The work shows extensive reading, not only in colonial records and historical collections, but in local histories and authorities still in manuscript. Sources of information have been used which earlier writers have neglected, or have not been able to reach. The result has been the accumulation of a vast number of facts about early New England agriculture, fisheries, manufactures, trade and means of communication. The methods of exchange employed by the early settlers are also described, though relatively less space is devoted to the later experiments of the colonies in the use of paper money. A table of prices is appended to the work, covering the entire period of which it treats, but it is not complete enough to be of scientific value. The course of trade with the French and Dutch colonies of the West Indies and with the states of continental Europe is described at length. One

can see from this book to how large an extent the foreign trade of New England was carried on in defiance of the Navigation Acts. The insufficiency of administration under them is emphasized, but almost no account is given of the efforts made and the methods actually adopted by the home government to secure their enforcement. The sections on piracy show how imperfect was the system of ocean police which then existed for the protection of those engaged in international trade. The evidence of a relatively low standard of commercial morality among New Englanders in the 17th and 18th centuries is abundant.

But there are certain faults in this work which prevent it from being anything better than a storehouse of facts, of which the future historian may make use. Its arrangement is poor. The subdivision into periods is not particularly clear or suggestive. Amid a succession of chapters, cut up into brief paragraphs, each bristling with local and personal details, the reader becomes confused and is unable to follow the development of the subject. This is especially true of the earlier chapters of the first volume. One would almost infer that some of the pages had been printed from the jottings of a note book without change. Detached and unconnected sections concerning the iron industry, for example, are to be found on pages 174, 177, 181, 183, 186, 189. Interspersed among these are paragraphs on a variety of other subjects. Further, upon pages 200 and 201 we find paragraphs, side by side, concerning the building of woollen mills, the building of sawmills, the mining of block lead, the state of morals in Connecticut, the arrival of certain Jews at Newport, R.I., the rate of interest in England, the supply of lumber, the business of the Massachusetts mint, the building of iron works, the use of cider and malt, and sales of wheat by John Hull. Other similar examples might be cited. So imperfectly have the materials of the work been digested, that much of it has been left in the form of unnecessarily complicated annals.

It is not easy for an American to treat with fairness the policy of the Navigation Acts. In order to do that, it is believed that one must put himself to a certain extent in the place of the British government. He must keep before him the idea that England was contending against Spain, France and Holland, at first for the preservation of her colonies and then for commercial supremacy. He must divest himself wholly of the dogmas of natural right and *laissez faire* upheld by the Manchester school, and to a certain extent of the theories of Adam Smith himself. He must study the writers on trade and economics whose works were published or read two centuries ago. Finally he must examine the testimony given by merchants and others before the English Board of Trade, the reports of agents sent to the colonies and to foreign countries

and the representations made thereon to the Privy Council. Upon these was based the trade legislation of the 18th century. It will then appear that the policy adopted was not wholly irrational or ill-considered. It was an honest, though, as it proved, a mistaken endeavor to meet real needs. It was not intended to oppress the colonies. Those which did not revolt probably felt its restrictions more than those which did. The fault of the author, as of all American writers who have hitherto treated of the subject, is that they have looked at it almost wholly from the colonial standpoint. Into their treatment of the subject they have also introduced a good deal of cheap rhetoric about American liberty and enterprise which, to say the least, is out of place in scientific discussion.

H. L. OSGOOD.

La Vie Politique à l'Étranger: 1889. Publiée sous la direction et avec une *Préface* de ERNEST LAVISSE. Paris, G. Charpentier et C^{ie}, 1890. — ix, 486 pp.

As M. Lavissee says in his preface, this new annual shows that "la curiosité du dehors s'est réveillée en France." This will be no news to those who have followed the admirable work of the French Society of Comparative Legislation, or even looked into the *Annales* of the French School of Political Sciences; but the *Vie Politique* is at least a new evidence of the intelligent curiosity to which M. Lavissee alludes. It is a record of the leading political events of the year in all parts of the world except France. Every state except France—even such minute independencies as San Marino and Altenberg (Moresnet)—has its place in the scheme. The work has been divided among a number of writers, but the volume shows unity of plan and a substantial evenness of execution. The record of events in the more important countries is fairly full; not only the strictly political events but also the economic and social movements are followed; the reader will find, for example, accounts of the labor troubles of 1889 and of the relations of church and state throughout Europe. In some cases the treatment of single topics outruns the limits of a chronological record. The account of the German colonial policy goes back to 1884; and the title on the United States, by M. Joseph Chailley, includes suggestive paragraphs on the character of the American people, the spoils system, the protection policy and the restriction of immigration.

It will be seen that this new annual is unlike any of those now in existence. It covers, to a certain extent, the same ground as the *Europäischer Geschichtskalender* of Schultess (started in 1860); but there are important differences in plan and scope. The *Geschichtskalender* gives under the single headings a purely chronological record of events in