

## REVIEWS

*The Eighteenth Century in France.* By CASIMIR STRYIENSKI. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.—vi, 345 pp.

*The French Revolution.* By LOUIS MADELIN. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.—xiii, 662 pp.

The publication of these two volumes in the *National History of France*, under the editorship of Funck-Brentano, following the delightful book by Batiffol on *The Century of the Renaissance in France*, completes just half of the series as thus far planned. *The Middle Ages*, by the editor, *The Great Century* (the seventeenth), by Boulenger, and *The Empire*, by Madelin, are still promised. The series is popular in style and treatment, appealing to the reader who would be dismayed by the long row of substantial volumes comprising the *Histoire de France* of Professor Lavissee and his collaborators; yet the names of the authors of the present series are an ample guarantee that scholarship is not sacrificed to sensationalism. M. Stryienski has the rare distinction, for a foreigner in France, of having produced in the volume before us, his third work dealing with the history of the eighteenth century to be crowned by the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques of the Institute of France; while M. Madelin's volume won the further distinction of winning the Grand Prix Gobert, the "blue-ribbon" prize in history, awarded in former years to his "beloved and gifted masters," Albert Sorel and Albert Vandal.

The books under review are very different in scope. In less than three hundred and fifty pages M. Stryienski treats the three quarters of a century from the death of Louis XIV to the assembly of the States General. His narrative is necessarily rapid, and the total effect produced is that of a succession of persons and events hurrying the doomed monarchy to its end. M. Madelin, on the other hand, devotes almost double the number of pages to the single decade from the meeting of the Estates to the *coup d'état* of Brumaire.

The books are of unequal merit, too. M. Stryienski, in spite of his authority and accuracy, seems to have yielded to the temptation to entertain us with trivial incidents of the court and pen pictures of insignificant celebrities. Portrait after portrait follows in his gallery—of Villeroy, the little king's governor, of the Marquise de Prie, of the

poor Polish wife of Louis XV, of their innumerable daughters, of Belle-Isle and Richelieu, of the Princess de Lamballe and the Nesle sisters, and a dozen other courtly people of second- or third-rate importance in the story. One gets the impression at times of reading the gossipy memoirs of the eighteenth century. The pity of it is the waste of good space that is needed for other things. The Bull *Unigenitus*, for example, one of the most momentous publications of the eighteenth century for the history of France, is barely mentioned (page 123); and there is room in the midst of the long tale of Pompadour's honors and caprices only for a couple of pages on the great struggle between Jansenists and Ultramontanists, Parlement and clergy. We are left to surmise how the popularity of Louis XV in 1744 was changed into the seditious discontent of 1751; and the all-important treaties of Versailles that reversed the Hapsburg-Bourbon relations of two centuries are dismissed with a paragraph apiece (pages 174, 175).

This lack of just estimate and proportion seems to us a fault so serious as to outweigh the many excellent points in M. Stryiński's work. And we have to regret all the more the culpable neglect of the big questions of the eighteenth century when we get glimpses of the author's real grasp of these questions and his rare power of describing their essential nature in the too few pages which he seems able to spare from his chronicles of the court; for example, the couple of pages (which ought to have been half a chapter at least) on the Partition of Poland (pages 202-204). The treatment of John Law is excellent, and the despicable Dubois, while not "whitewashed," is handled with a discriminating justice rare in works on this period. One cannot avoid the suspicion, however, that the gifted author has been frightened out of his serious scholarship by editorial demands for "popularity." In shunning the Scylla of professionalism, he has fallen into the Charybdis of triviality. The book leaves a final impression of thinness.

The translation by H. N. Dickinson is marred here and there by ineptitudes. *Assister à* (page 216) is rendered "assist at;" *ton nom vole vers l'immortalité* is "your name takes flight toward immortality," *Jean Farine* (page 224) becomes "John Barleycorn," and his "army," consequently, a reminder of revels rather than revolt. There are a number of misprints in dates, the *Asiento* is spoken of as a right which England "obtained" by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and Pompadour, who died in 1764, is mentioned as "governing France and seeing foreign courts apply to her for support and protection in 1771" (page 188).

M. Madelin's volume on the *French Revolution* is a remarkably vivid, clear, and well-balanced portrayal of that "most complex phenomenon that ever existed." The author has laid under contribution a bewildering number of sources, primary and secondary (as the bibliographies at the end of his chapters testify), and yet has neither buried the reader under a mass of technical details nor wearied him with long controversies. M. Madelin's own interpretation is clear, his touch is sure, and the narrative moves on with accumulating interest. It is no small task to invest the Thermidorian reaction and the Directory with a vividness of significance equal to the *grands jours* of 1792. The author has profited, too, by the latest studies in the voluminous pamphlet and periodical literature on the French Revolution. In this respect his book truly surpasses any single-volume history of the epoch that we know. It would be impossible to illustrate this excellent feature of the volume by specific examples, for they run through it all from beginning to end; but the reader is referred for a special instance to the effect of the land transfers under the laws of the Constituante and the Convention upon the society of the Year III, and incidentally upon the advent of Napoleon to power.

M. Madelin follows his great master Sorel in the emphasis he puts on the European aspect of the French Revolution. He shows us clearly the effect on France of the preoccupation of Russia, Austria, Prussia and England with the Netherlands and Poland, with the Black Sea and the Baltic, in just the critical days of the great drama at Versailles and Paris. The "miraculous event" at Valmy takes on quite another aspect than it wears in the pages of Michelet and Mignet. M. Madelin is himself a captain in active service in the French army, and his large, sane patriotism is visible in every page of his book. He is an enthusiastic son of the revolution, but he never contracts the myopic vision of Marat or Robespierre, of Barras or Sieyès. Carnot is his hero; Danton, still more: "If we must shed more blood, let it be that of the enemies of France."

Although M. Madelin's work is chiefly political, and his debt to M. Aulard, gracefully acknowledged, is apparent throughout, there is nevertheless as complete an analysis of the social and economic conditions of France at the opening of the States General, at the height of the Terror, and in the transitional Year III of the Republic as we could expect in a single volume. Especially commendable, too, is the convincing, cumulative narrative of the inevitable advent of Napoleon.

The style of M. Madelin's book is lively and eloquent. At times one is reminded of Lamartine, especially in the brilliant epigrammatic

touches of prophecy or reminiscence. The character sketches of Madame Roland, Danton, Robespierre, and the "Five Majesties" of the Directory are gems; and the descriptions of the fall of the Girondists, the Paris "Days" of June 20 and August 10, the dethronement of the tyrant of Thermidor, the tragi-comedy of the Orangerie are intensely vivid. In fact, the rapidity of the narrative at times runs away with the author himself, and results in a bit of confusion for a reader who has not M. Madelin's wealth of material behind him. One is not clear, for instance, of the exact movements of Damas' dragoons in the dramatic episode of the king's flight towards Metz (pages 188, 189).

There are naturally points on which students of the French Revolution will take issue with M. Madelin. To say that "the Constituent Assembly had been overfull of ideas, the Convention seemed to have none at all" (page 300), is certainly unfair to the great body which the author himself on a later page (page 483) credits with a long list of services to education, science, and social reform. Louis' reason for promulgating the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which he afterwards resisted to his death, are not given. Many will think that the author has reacted too sharply from the sentimentality of Lamartine and Dumas in his treatment of the Girondist leaders, among whom he finds "not a single statesman" (page 217).

But these are, after all, matters of judgment and proportion. An error hard to understand in so thorough a scholar as M. Madelin is his confusion on the organization and history of the great Committee of Public Safety. He says (page 330) that the committee was organized on March 25 (1793) as an "extreme measure" after the defeat of Jeerwinden; that Robespierre was "shortly" to drive Danton from his position on it (page 333); that there was a proposition on July 10 to reduce the committee from sixteen to nine members (page 352); and that "the Ten" divided the various departments of government amongst them after October 1793 (page 355). All of these statements are wrong. What happened on March 25 was the session "en permanence" of the old *Comité de Défense Générale*; the Committee of Public Safety was not organized till April 6 (as Madelin, in fact, states on page 333); Robespierre did not sit on the committee until July 24, which in the rapid sequence of events in the summer of 1793 can hardly be called "shortly" after the first week of April—think of the events of May 31 and June 2! The committee consisted of only nine members until the election of Carnot and Prieur of the Côte d'Or on August 14, Billaud and Collot on September 6; and it never numbered "ten" in its history. In fact Madelin enumerates *twelve* members with their func-

tions or "departments" in the same paragraph in which he speaks of "the ten" (page 355). The history of its personnel is briefly as follows: To the eleven members of August 14 Collot and Billaud were added, September 6. Thuriot (a Dantonist) withdrew in disgust September 20, leaving twelve members. Hérault, the last of the Dantonists, was executed with his leader on April 5, 1794, and with the eleven remaining members the committee was unchanged until its reorganization after Robespierre's fall (July 28, 1794).

The numerous minor errors in the book we find from comparison with the original French are due mostly to the carelessness of the translator. By rendering *dès le 5 (Octobre) au matin* as "by five o'clock in the morning" he hopelessly confuses the chronology of the October march to Versailles (page 104); he translates the decree of April 1791, *qui rendra non rééligibles les Constituants sortants*, "whereby members of one Constituent Assembly were declared ineligible for the next," thus turning the legislative into a constituent body (page 123); *rentrer dans le siècle* is translated (of priests) "to return to the century" (page 174); the "Frenchman's motto," "Conquer or run!" has no point unless the play on the words *vaincre ou mourir* *vaincre ou courir* is noted (page 245); Robespierre makes a formal demand "in the Assembly" on July 29, 1792 (the French being *aux Jacobins*), whereas he was excluded from membership in the Assembly by the "self-denying ordinance" which he himself proposed in the closing days of the Constituante (page 261); "Marat (!) was to throw the deputies out of the windows" (*Murat les fera passer par les fenêtres*) in Brumaire (page 344); *Le Comité de Sûreté Générale* is unparadoxically called "the Committee of Public Safety" (page 415)—*et ainsi de suite!* Of misprints, we note "eighty-five" (for "eight-three" departments, (page 126); "Dom Guerle" for "Dom Gerle" (page 138); "Seiout" for "Sciout" (page 143); "Cobenzel" for "Cobenzl" (page 262); "morning of June" for "morning of June first" (page 341); "Boissy D'Anglais" for "Boissy d'Anglas" (page 416) "Monck" for "Monk" (page 496), and several dates. As to dates finally, one wonders why M. Madelin has mixed the ordinary and the revolutionary calendar together all the way through the book, often using the two styles in the same paragraph or even the same sentence. e. g., "On September 17, 1793 they were authorized to draw up lists of those (suspects), and on 14 Frimaire of the Year II to apply . . . the laws" (page 359).

In spite, however, of the anonymous translator's exasperating carelessness, the volume is a joy to read.

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*The Life of John Marshall.* By ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE.  
Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916.—Two  
volumes: xxvi, 506; xviii, 620 pp.

Impressed with the fact that a vague and shadowy austerity characterizes and measures the general conception of John Marshall, Mr. Beveridge has undertaken to give a full portrayal of the character, career and human personality of the great Chief Justice. "No man in our history," he says, "was more intensely human than John Marshall, and few had careers so full of movement and color." This statement is amply substantiated in a narrative which, beginning with whatever is ascertainable concerning the origin and early days of its subject, follows him step by step through his career as frontiersman, soldier of the Revolution, and lawyer; member of the Virginia legislature and council of state, and later of the Virginia convention on the ratification of the Federal Constitution; envoy to France; member of the national House of Representatives, and finally chief justice of the United States.

John Marshall, as his present biographer observes, "was never out of the simple, crude environment of the near frontier for longer than one brief space of a few months until his twentieth year." For education, he was in childhood dependent on such instruction as his parents could give him. Books were few; but his father, apparently with a view to make his eldest son, John, a lawyer, became one of the original subscribers for the American edition of Blackstone's *Commentaries*. At one time Marshall was sent to a primitive "academy" in Westmoreland County kept by the Rev. Archibald Campbell, uncle of the poet Campbell, but his attendance lasted only a few months. When the Revolution broke, he immediately took up arms. He passed through the terrible winter at Valley Forge, and remained in actual service till 1779, bearing his full share of hardships, battle and danger. In this service, in providing for which the local authorities showed so deplorable an inefficiency, "we find," says Mr. Beveridge, "the fountain-head of John Marshall's national thinking." When he formally resigned his commission in the army in 1781, he had already been admitted to the bar. As a preparation for the legal career he had attended law lectures by George Wythe, at William and Mary College, for a period of perhaps six weeks. Jefferson, his kinsman, and later his great political antagonist, signed, as governor of Virginia, his license to practise law.

January 3, 1783, Marshall married, and settled in Richmond for the