

were none the less precious because derived from an unwritten and unsanctioned constitution" (p. 164). He speaks of South Carolina as "a different quarter of the Union" from Georgia (p. 228), and he excludes Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware from the "solid South" (p. 276). "The Hudson-Mohawk river system of western New York" (p. 32) is obviously a slip of the pen.

In the reviewer's opinion, it would be impossible to name a book of greater usefulness and suggestion to the advanced student of American history, or of more solid information in attractive form to the general educated reader who is interested to know the latest results of scholarly research in the field of American history, than these illuminating essays of Professor Schlesinger's. They will bear reading and re-reading before either the charm of their presentation or the profit of their contents is exhausted.

DAVID SAVILLE MUZZEY

Insurance Against Unemployment. By JOSEPH L. COHEN.
London, P. S. King and Son, Ltd., 1921.—536 pp.

Mr. Cohen has prepared a useful survey and a just estimate of the various plans of unemployment insurance. A description of the Ghent System as exhibited in its various forms in Belgium, France, Norway, Holland, Denmark and Germany shows the inadequacy of a system based on the voluntary principle. The bulk of the volume is given to the British system, as the first large scheme of compulsory insurance; the author shows that it introduces some factors that tend to increase the amount of unemployment, and others which tend to diminish it. The former consist in weakening the motive of employers to furnish steady work, because of the knowledge that the workman has an insurance fund to fall back upon (p. 297). The latter consist in the weeding-out of unemployables, the motivation of all parties to the wage contract to reduce unemployment, the regularization of wages, the experimentation that has been induced on the part of employers towards regularization, and the considerable reduction in numbers of inmates of poor-houses. Very detailed accounts and valuable comments are furnished on the actual working of the system in all its ramifications. Some of the experiments of leading employers are recited. The Italian and Austrian imitations, in 1920, of the British plan are briefly described. It is concluded that in Great Britain the scheme has been the greatest bulwark against revolution, and its withdrawal could not be attempted without precipitating a crisis (p. 246).

Several pages are given to the unemployment problem in the United States, and the book closes with a detailed account of the Massachusetts Bill introduced in 1916, in the drafting of which Mr. Cohen participated. The text of the Massachusetts bill is given in full, as well as that of the first "special scheme" drafted by the British Minister of Labour in 1921 under Unemployment Insurance Act, which contained a provision permitting experimentation. The Wisconsin scheme, proposed in 1921, which differs fundamentally from the others in that the burden is placed solely on employers instead of employers, employees and the state, is briefly described.

Mr. Cohen does not mention the significant change in the Danish law in 1920, which took the administration of the law out of the hands of the labor unions. Nor does he make sufficient use of the decisions of the umpire under the British Act, which show, better than anything else, the actual working of that law. In fact, an exhaustive digest of these decisions, covering now a period of ten years, is one of the most-needed pieces of work for a full understanding of the problems of unemployment insurance.

JOHN R. COMMONS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

The Story of the Irish Nation. By FRANCIS HACKETT. New York, The Century Company, 1922.—402 pp.

Although this particular book gives evidence of wide reading on the part of its author, and is much more free from errors of fact than such books are wont to be, it is avowedly a vivid "interpretation" of Ireland's history, rather than its sober record. It is, perhaps, one of the best of a rapidly growing class of books that mark the rediscovery of history by novelists and dramatists. Such books are not intended to serve as texts for students, but as sources of background for the general reader's grasp of matters of current interest. They are not subject to the application of the rules of historical criticism, and nobody—least of all their authors—expects them to be assayed for exaggeration, debatable chronology, trustworthiness of sources or like matters within the purview of the pedestrian compiler or sifter of historical record. To be sure, all works in this class, good, bad and indifferent, have to be taken into account by the student of the history of ideas, and of historiography, to whom even their inept use of historical apparatus and their subjective