

detail. He introduces no new or unusual material. In point of view and interpretation he follows the conservative path. There are no footnote references nor a bibliography. The value of this book lies in the fact that he has written an interesting story. There are no new contributions in subject matter nor in the method of treatment aside from the literary style.

ERMA NELSON.

History of the United States of America. By HENRY WILLIAM ELSON, A.M., Litt. D. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926. Pp. 996. \$3.75.)

The first edition of this book was published in 1904, and it has been very widely used as a supplementary text, and by the general reader. From time to time reprints of it have been made to supply the demand but until the present it has not been revised. The original was literally full of errors and misstatements of facts, but this revision has eliminated them. The new book follows the general lines of the first edition but there have been many restatements of the subject matter. In some cases the chapters have been entirely re-written and new materials have been added. The writer frankly admits a modification of view point and has been helped by numerous friendly criticisms. Barring a certain journalistic style reminiscent of the "sob-stuff" of the metropolitan dailies which many people believe essential to arousing an interest in history, the book has been well done. It has had a very wide circle of readers and it is gratifying to note the great improvement in accuracy.

EDWARD McMAHON.

The Writing of History. By JEAN JULES JUSSERAND, WILBUR CORTEZ ABBOTT, CHARLES W. COLBY, and JOHN SPENCER BASSETT. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926. Pp. 143. \$1.50.)

The Executive Council of the American Historical Association, realizing that the writing of history in the United States was not in a satisfactory state, caused to be appointed by the Association in 1920, a special committee consisting of Jean Jules Jusserand, then Ambassador from France, Doctor Charles William Colby and Professor Wilbur Cortez Abbott. Two years later, Professor John Spencer Bassett, Secretary of the Association, was added to the committee. After planning the work each member submitted to the others his own conclusions. It was

finally agreed to abandon the proposal of one general document and to publish as essays the four separate reports. No one will regret the few repetitions that would inevitably appear in such an undertaking. The four essays as published are as follows: "The Historian's Work," by Mr. Jusserand; "The Influence of Graduate Instruction on Historical Writing," by Professor Abbott; "The Craftsmanship of the Historian," by Doctor Colby; "The Present State of History-Writing," by Professor Bassett.

The book has an explanatory and summarizing introduction by Professor Bassett which ends as follows: "It is not intended to be dogmatic. If it stimulates the student to examine the subject for himself and to resolve that he will endeavor in the most conscientious manner to write the best history that in him lies, it will do all that can be desired; for it is vain to ask that all men write alike, and the best writer of history is he who lets swing the arm God gave him, always remembering his duty to be truthful and to reverence the things that are honorable."

All four of the essayists are highly esteemed within the guild of American historians. Mr. Jusserand came to the United States as French Ambassador in 1902 and in the quarter of a century that followed he earned the real affection of the American people. He was honored by many universities and learned societies. In 1921 he was President of the American Historical Association. His present essay sparkles with his own wit and with gems drawn from many sources of world-knowledge. One quotation must suffice in this limited space: "Art is selection. Historians must select; they can not write history life-size; among thousands of facts they have to choose those especially important or especially characteristic. 'An inconspicuous action,' says Plutarch, 'a word, a joke, will oftentimes better reveal a character than the bloodiest fights or the most important battles and sieges.' A heavy responsibility rests with historians; they must have prepared themselves by thought, method, study, observation, and hard work, to judge well."

No honest historian will continue a slipshod or careless style after reading this group of stimulating essays on "The Writing of History."

Some Imaginary California Geography. By HENRY R. WAGNER.

(Worcester, Massachusetts: Reprinted from the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society for April, 1926. Pp. 49.)