

## BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

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*Railroad Promotion and Capitalization in the United States.* By F. A. CLEVELAND and F. W. POWELL. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909. 8vo, pp. xiv+368. \$2.00.

The authors have given us a very readable book, based on extensive use of both source and secondary material. It is true that the title is somewhat misleading. There is no thorough discussion of capitalization—no analysis of the financial policy of prominent American systems; no discussion of the varying proportions of different kinds of securities, and the like. This has been provided elsewhere to some extent. The volume under review devotes but one chapter strictly to the subject of finance. On the other hand the authors have made a systematic attempt to sketch the growth of the American railroad system and to explain, first, why railroads in this country were built at all, and second, why they were built where they were. The merit of the book lies partly in its co-ordination and interpretation of a wide range of somewhat familiar facts, and partly in original research in certain sections of the field.

The first five chapters relate the story of the development of early methods of transportation. We are told of the growth of the western settlements, the diversion of eastern capital from shipbuilding to manufactures and internal improvements, the invention of the steamboat, the construction of canals, and the introduction and improvement of the railroad. Some few exceptions may be taken; but the narrative is on the whole a good brief account, covering well-trodden ground.

The best part of the work begins with the history of the interference of the state in matters of transportation. Why railroads were built in this country it is easy to understand, but why they were constructed in certain sections rather than in others, and what effect their construction had are matters upon which the last word has yet to be said. There are evidently three things which do most to determine railroad location. First, the cost of construction. Other things equal, the railroad engineer chooses the shortest route and the easiest grade. Second, the traffic to be obtained. The railroad and the railroad promoter are influenced by the probable amount of business. Third, the outside inducements—national, state, or local aid. These inducements in their turn depend on the advantages which different sections anticipate for themselves both from cheap transportation and from cheaper transportation than some rival section enjoys. Of the first of these considerations which determine location the work under review says something. There is a chapter on reconnaissance and surveys which discusses those subjects briefly in non-technical language. Nothing is said of the second—distinctly a weakness in the treatment—but of the third a fuller and more painstaking account is given than is to be found elsewhere, and one entitled to a large amount of praise. This discussion occupies the major part of the last twelve chapters and is too detailed to summarize satisfactorily. The chapter on the rivalry between trade centers

is one of the most interesting. Here we have an account of the efforts of Philadelphia and Baltimore to secure the trade of the Susquehanna, and of these towns and New York to capture that of the Middle West. This competition was active in the days of canals, and was intensified when the construction of railroads threatened to deprive New York of the advantage given her by the Erie canal. But not only was there rivalry between the seaboard cities, but Troy and Albany, Nashville and Chattanooga, Cincinnati and Louisville, not to mention other places, fought vigorously for rail connections in order to preserve their commercial lives. These conflicting interests, stimulated by the persuasive appeals of railroad promoters, led naturally to local and state aid, which took the form of subsidies, grants of lands, subscriptions, exemptions, and the like. The authors have ransacked the reports of state officers, the files of contemporary papers, the testimony before and proceedings of official bodies, the statutes of the different states, and other sources in order to secure trustworthy data as to the forms and amount of this aid, and have been able to condense the result of much laborious research into convenient form. Finally, they describe the part which the national government took in facilitating the construction of numerous enterprises of which the Pacific railroads were the most important. All this treatment is detailed, specific, and useful.

Besides the chapters which have been mentioned there is some discussion of railroad promotion in general and a good critical bibliography. The book is distinctly serviceable, and can be recommended.

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*Wealth and Want. A Study in Living Contrasts and Social Problems.* By W. B. NORTHRUP. London: Francis Griffiths, 1909. 8vo, pp. 334. 5s. net.

The author of this work, leading up to the theory that abolition of private property in land is the only way of social justice, presents a series of contrasts, in words and in pictures, designed to show the gulf that is fixed between the lives of the very rich and the lives of the very poor. Eccentric in his urgency and naive in his implications that land-ownership is the source of every evil, he is obviously earnest and sincere. One must dispute the conclusiveness of the pictorial arguments presented; but undeniably such contrasts as these photographs reveal set one seriously to thinking.

*Unemployment: a Problem in Industry.* By W. H. BEVERIDGE. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909. 8vo, pp. xvi+317.

*Problems of Unemployment in the London Building Trades.* By NORMAN B. DEARLE, with an Introduction by L. L. PRICE. London: J. M. Dent & Co. 8vo, pp. xviii+215. 3s. 6d.

It is one of the encouraging signs of the times that intelligent people are beginning to question the inevitableness of unemployment as a matter-of-course accompaniment of our competitive industrial system. These two books will be cordially welcomed by students of the labor problem everywhere, coming as