

dated by chapters in the back of the book, making a total of fifty pages. These are labeled "Bibliography." Literally they are short bibliographies for each paragraph and not authorities for statements in the text. This makes it very difficult to verify any specific statement. It is hoped that this practice will not spread to other historical writing.

As in most books of this scope, there are minor features that can be questioned. The chief adverse criticism is likely to be the omission of any adequate presentation of material that would help place the colonies as a part of the British Empire, their relation to the sugar islands and the fisheries, the part they played in eliminating forever France as a colonial power in America and the inclusion in the account of so many trivial contemporary local episodes. Readers can go to other works for the former. For a long time they will turn to this volume for the latter. We need such a contribution as Coleman has given us.

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Tyrant from Illinois: Uncle Joe Cannon's Experiment with Personal Power. By Blair Bolles. (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1951, pp. 248. \$4.50.)

This is by no means a complete biography and its author makes no such claim for it. Here instead is a portrayal of Joseph Gurney Cannon after he reached his three score and ten years. This in itself marks a unique achievement, for about how many Americans could a book be written, that opened with the subject's seventieth birthday? Bolles has not attempted a detailed narrative about Cannon's life which began after the latter reached the Psalmist allotted life span but he has written a monograph on only one phase of a complex personality. The author frequently refers to the earlier life of the Illinois Tyrant when he feels the necessity for acquainting the reader with material that explains later action.

Generally speaking, Cannonism in 1906 meant stand-patism. To use Cannon's classic statement, "America is a hell uv a success. Why change it?" He threw the dictatorial powers of the Speakership of the National House, which position he held from 1903 to 1911, into the fight for main-

taining the status quo. He successfully "balked Roosevelt's attempt to marry social consciousness to political science."

In 1908, Taft won the Republican nomination for president but Cannon won the party. Discontent grew rapidly in the fertile soil of the Speaker's repeated opposition to a growing demand for national reforms. Stripped of his autocratic authority in March, 1910, Cannon tendered his resignation only to have it rejected. Though Cannon served until the Democrats organized the House in 1911 he was never happy after he was deprived of his personalized power.

As a politician, "Uncle Joe," as Cannon was called affectionately, was as fair as the "exigencies of American politics" would permit. As a raconteur of racy tales, he had a varied jovial audience. As one of the best poker players in public life, Cannon was respected by official Washington. As a prolific swearer or a vulgar mouthed old man, he had no equal in American politics in his generation, but it is as the architect of standpatism that Cannon will be remembered historically.

Bolles declares that Joe Cannon was the creator of the welfare state. The author bases his conclusion on Cannon's determined refusal to countenance any changes, whatsoever. This obstinacy forced all reformers into the cavalcade of Wilson's New Freedom, Roosevelt's New Deal, and Truman's Welfare State. Obviously, such a thesis will not be accepted unanimously.

This book is well written, has an ample bibliography and an accurate index. Unfortunately, several mistakes have remained. For example, E. H. Harrison, correctly stated in the index, is given as E. R. Harrison twice in the book (pp. 14-15); David G. Phillips' popular book in 1903—*The Treason of the Senate* is listed *Treason in the Senate* (p. 16); a Biblical reference "Garden of Gethsemane" is "Garden of Olives" (p. 34); John Sharp Williams did *not* attend the Democratic National Convention at Denver, 1908, as stated (p. 155) nor did he write the plank in the platform attributed to him (p. 156). Elected as a delegate-at-large to this convention, Williams got drunk on the way to Denver and later was found by a policeman in San Francisco sitting on a street hugging a lamp post. These are minor errors, however, in an excellently written book. Certainly, a full-length scholarly biography of Uncle Joe Cannon is long overdue.

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