

the student of military history. Luvaas' work is also a singular addition to Civil War historiography in the respect that the author relates or connects the war with contemporary and subsequent military affairs in Europe.

An excellent presentation of footnotes at the bottom of each page partially offsets the glaring omission of a bibliography or even a bibliographical note.

Office of the Chief of Military History
Department of the Army

John W. Killigrew

Money, Class, and Party: An Economic Study of Civil War and Reconstruction. By Robert P. Sharkey. *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series LXXVII (1959), Number 2. (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Press, 1959. Pp. 346. Tables, appendices, bibliography, index. \$5.50.)

In this iconoclastic study Professor Sharkey explores many aspects of the financial history of the Civil War and Reconstruction. He deals with the origin of the greenbacks and with their importance as an expedient of war finance. He analyzes the political struggle over currency contraction and inquiries into the economic rationale of bankers, manufacturers, laborers, and farmers.

At the outset Professor Sharkey argues that one must not magnify the importance of the greenbacks as a factor in financing the war, since the total net issues of legal tender notes in the years 1861-1865 accounted for less than one-sixth of the total cost of the war. Yet the author maintains that the country desperately needed an adequate medium of exchange at this time. Thus, he concludes, one can make a strong case for the "necessity" of the greenbacks.

Continuing his well-documented assault upon orthodox conceptions, Professor Sharkey contends that farmers were not duly concerned with fiscal matters in the period under consideration. He cites statistics indicating farm prosperity in the immediate postwar era and concludes that this prosperity is the reason that there is little evidence of economic discontent among farmers during that period. He says that farm prosperity contributed to the Democratic defeat in 1868—that farmers generally ignored the money question and voted Republican.

This reviewer's colleague, Professor R. C. Buley, has often asserted that on few questions is there a common business viewpoint. Professor Sharkey substantiates this position by demonstrating that business interests differed sharply on fiscal matters during the Civil War and Reconstruction era. He shows that spokesmen for manufacturers, such as Thaddeus Stevens, "Pig Iron" Kelley, and Peter Cooper strongly opposed any attempt to contract the greenbacks, while commercial and financial interests generally favored contraction.

In his conclusion the author devotes considerable space to a strong criticism of the analysis of the fiscal history of the Civil War and Reconstruction period which the Beards forwarded in *The Rise of American Civilization*. He believes that many misconceptions on the

subject are Beardian in origin. The criticism is well grounded. Yet the Beards were presenting a synthesis covering the gamut of American history and were almost certain to repeat the errors of those who had made more detailed studies of the period. *The Rise of American Civilization* is a sixteen-hundred-page work and only a half-dozen or so of those pages touch upon the fiscal history of the Civil War and Reconstruction era. Obviously the Beards could not explore in detail each facet of history dealt with in their study. Doubtless Professor Sharkey recognizes this, but he should have made the point clear and mitigated the sting of his criticism accordingly.

Summing up, this is an important study of a much misunderstood period of American history. The book is the product of painstaking research, and it should result in the revision of a number of erroneous ideas about that period. Of especial value to many students of Civil War and Reconstruction history will be Professor Sharkey's bibliographical essay.

Indiana University

John Edward Wiltz

1877: *Year of Violence*. By Robert V. Bruce. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1959. Pp. 321. Notes, bibliography, index. \$5.00.)

Times were hard in 1877. Railroad workers, already underpaid, were faced with new wage cuts. Summer came, and with it a tragic episode in American labor history.

In great detail, the author describes the strike of the Trainmen's Union against the Baltimore and Ohio, the Pennsylvania, the Reading, the Erie, the New York Central, and closely allied lines. The contempt of management for labor leaders; its disregard for the unemployed, the aged, the poorly paid; its stubborn insistence on big dividends alongside pay cuts—these are discussed at length.

Management techniques in handling union members—the black list, prompt dismissal of workers after participation in union activities, employment of Pinkerton detectives, and refusal to bargain—are all illustrated with vigor. Almost without exception, the executive heads of American railroads in 1877 are portrayed as enemies of the workingman, as reactionaries, and as patronizing, yet firm, masters of certain mayors, governors, congressmen, and, by inference, some officials on still higher levels.

Interestingly and effectively the author presents an hour-by-hour account of vicious attacks on private property by maddened men, women, and youths. With especial care he describes the horrors of mob action at Pittsburgh, Altoona, Philadelphia, Reading, and Baltimore. In each case, we are assured, the real damage was done by tramps and young hoodlums. The author places little or no responsibility on bona fide railroad workers, but his argument is not completely convincing.

A major contribution of the book is its description of the pathetic efforts of third-party agitators, especially those of the Workingmen's party, to unite the laboring class. Anyone whose interpretation of