

to the American legation, as private secretary to Mr. Bancroft, and gained large practical experience in research and methods, as the historian's assistant in the tenth volume of the "History of the United States." During his residence abroad he made himself master of German and French, and through his connection with the legation he obtained a large insight into foreign social and political life.

When he returned to America in 1877, although he had a powerful impulse toward metaphysics and history, his chosen field was Oriental languages, and he went to Princeton in some expectation of making use of his Arabic and Hebrew. But as there was little call for his services in either, he became an instructor, and shortly after the professor, in Latin. In the reorganization of Princeton in 1883 upon a broader basis, he took the chair of professor of the philosophy of history, in which he at once distinguished himself as a most brilliant and inspiring lecturer. His scheme of philosophical exposition included universal history, but he brought this philosophy to bear chiefly upon modern times, and lectured especially on the English, American, and French revolutions. The only published result of this work is a successful volume devoted to our period of the French war and the revolution, which has received the highest critical indorsement for its philosophic interpretation of causes and events. In his connection with Princeton he has been recognized as one of the chief forces in the new era of the college.

Before he conceived the idea of writing the life of Napoleon, he had, by repeated and sometimes protracted visits to France, and residence in the provinces and in Paris, become familiar with French life and character, and had given much study to the French educational system. It was probably through his intimacy with M. Taine that his attention was finally directed to this work, and that he was given uncommon opportunities for investigation. I have heard that M. Taine said of him that "he knew France better than any other foreigner he had ever met."

With his accustomed thoroughness, industry, and vigor, he threw himself into the long preparation needed for this work. He had access to the archives of the French Foreign Office (the only ones not heretofore thoroughly studied), to papers examined, indeed, by no one so fully before, except by Lanfrey. His study of these papers was particularly concerned with the two obscure periods — the beginning and the end of Napoleon's career. He has also investigated documents little used, and in some cases little known, in Florence and in the British Museum.

But he has not contented himself with the literature or the written records of the subject. He has traveled more or less over Napoleonic ground, and made himself familiar, to a considerable extent, with the fields of the emperor's combinations, and victories, and defeats.

Aside from Professor Sloane's historical learning and power of investigation, I think I should put his fitness for this work upon his knowledge of the world, and his combination of openness of mind to new ideas with conservative habits of thought. He sees clearly and far, but he is little subject to illusions. It is rare also that so excellent and trained a scholar is so much a man of the world, so interested in whatever is vital, or simply entertaining, in social and political life, so well

informed of what is going on around him. This keen sense of life, with his stores of information and experience, his dialectic power, his dramatic force of narrative, and his charm of expression, makes him equally welcome in the club and the drawing-room. I mention these various qualities that seem to me desirable in one who attempts to interpret the character and career of Napoleon.

Charles Dudley Warner.

A Coincidence in Napoleon's Life.

THE facsimile of the last page of Bonaparte's exercise-book at school [printed on page 19] is one of the most curious human documents, to use a current phrase, that it would perhaps be possible to find. It treats of the youth of the great Napoleon. A mine of unexplored documents full of curious revelations has come down to us — documents, be it well observed, that are authentic and above all suspicion. During the Consulate, Napoleon, who already saw himself in history, as he said later at St. Helena, was mindful to place in safety all the papers that referred to his youth. He put them in a large official envelop on which were placed the words: "Correspondance avec le premier consul." This inscription he canceled with his own hand, to substitute the words: "A remettre au Cardinal Fesch, seul." The envelop, which was wrapped in paper ruled in colored squares and fastened with a large seal of red wax, on which can still be seen the impress of the imperial eagle, remained in the hands of the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons until 1839, the year in which the prelate died. The envelop survived the glorious fortunes of the Empire and the Restoration, and, after having passed into the hands of various owners, fell into those of Guglielmo Libri, an Italian who had extraordinary honors and favors showered on him in France, where he rose to be professor of mathematics at the Sorbonne, and in which country he also wrote his celebrated "Histoire des Sciences Mathématiques." He closed his brilliant career in obscurity, under the accusation of having collected with too great zeal documents and codices from French libraries that had been given over to him to inspect. Libri sold these precious documents, together with his valuable library, to Lord Ashburnham. After the latter's death his library was disposed of, partly in England, partly in Italy, and partly in France. The Napoleonic documents were included in the lot which were acquired by the Italian government in 1884, for the sum of 585,000 francs, and which now, together with other codices of great value, are preserved in the historical and monumental Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, Florence, where the curious document is exposed, under a glass case, to public view in the new and splendid exhibition room devoted to manuscript treasures.

Bonaparte was never a literary man, or even a correct writer. French orthography ever remained a great mystery to him, and the desire to hide this lacuna caused him to employ an undecipherable calligraphy well adapted to cover his orthographical defects. It is said, in connection with this, that in the early days of the Empire a man of very modest aspect presented himself before the emperor.

"Who are you?" asked Napoleon.

"Sire, I had the honor at Brienne for fifteen months to give writing-lessons to your Majesty."

"You turned out a nice pupil," said the emperor, with vivacity. "I congratulate you on your success."

But nevertheless he conferred a pension upon his old master.

Among other documents we find in one of his copy-books, made of hand-made paper of a bluish hue, extracts from the French budget in conformity with Necker's famous report, extracts of opinions taken from the journals and other public papers, and criticisms on various personages of the period. At the close are several geographical-statistical minutes.

The document referred to at the beginning of this letter is from an early copy-book devoted to the "Possessions des Anglais," and ending abruptly in this wise: "Cabo Corso en Guinée, château assez fort. A côté est le Fort Royal, défendu par 16 pièces de canon. Sainte Hélène, petite île."

Strange, truly strange, is this document, that causes the beholder to meditate and to shudder. Libri drew attention to it in an article published in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" in 1842; but as no one had seen the autograph, it was held to be one of those tales which grow up around great names for the benefit of the makers of biographical dictionaries. The authentic document helps to strengthen the belief of those who hold that a mysterious fatality hung about the destiny of this great man, who as a mere lad at school, when summing up the geography of that world which seemed narrow to his ambition, obstinately studied all that bore on England, the great adversary of his fortune, plunged into the history of the Arabs and the Egyptians, stopped at the Pyramids, halted at Venice to scrutinize and condemn its odious policy, took a cursory survey of India, which he dreamed of conquering, and then fell with broken wing on that little island of St. Helena, where his genius, like that of Prometheus, was nailed to the rock.

Guido Biagi,

Librarian of the Biblioteca Medico-Laurenziana.

The Government of Cities.

MUCH attention has been turned of late upon the weak point of our political system — the government of cities. The experiments made in Brooklyn, Philadelphia, and other cities, with a concentrated and responsible executive, and the attempts made in Nashville and elsewhere to govern by means of triumvirates or other hydra-headed executives, show that the public mind is at work upon the problem. It is evident that the tendency of intelligent public opinion is in the direction of the centralization of executive power and responsibility, and away from the device of legislative boards and commissions, so much resorted to in years past. This is a sign that the truth is dawning upon the prosperous citizens that they must take into their own hands the business of governing their cities. Hitherto they have been fain to pass by on the other side while the thieves were plundering the treasury; or else, when the case grew desperate, they rushed to the capital and begged the legislature to turn the old gang out and put a new gang into power. They are beginning to comprehend that it is vain to trust in legislatures; and that the gods, in a republic, will help to govern no community that will not govern itself.

When the principle of home rule is once fixed upon, the principle of responsible government seems to be

a logical sequence. The Brooklyn model is attracting much attention in some of the ring-ridden municipalities, and many cities are framing charters upon this plan. In the mean time the students of political science have been making careful investigation of the methods employed by European cities. The organization of Glasgow, of Birmingham, of London, has been minutely described; and the contrast between the framework of government in these cities and that which is commending itself to municipal reformers in this country excites some surprise. It is notable that the English cities, instead of centralizing authority, distribute it widely. The city council is the supreme power; the executive officers are committees or appointees of the council. In this respect the English municipalities follow the analogy of their Parliament. In Glasgow the council is composed of fifty men, and in Birmingham of forty-eight. The different departments in the latter city are in charge of committees of the council, sixteen of them, consisting of eight members each. A committee of eight supervises the public works, a committee of eight appoints and governs the police, and so on. The American municipal reformer is confounded by this revelation. He has learned to think that such a distribution of executive power is the device of feebleness and corruption: the history of his own continent is contradicted by the experience of the other.

The contradiction is not, after all, so pointed as it seems. The committees of council in the English municipalities, appointed by the council, responsible to the council, reporting all their action to the governing body, and submitting to its constant supervision, are of a very different complexion from those boards and commissions to which the work of the cities of this community has been farmed out by acts of the legislature. And the council itself, in Birmingham, Glasgow, or Berlin, is something the like of which we are not wont to see in republican America. For some reason or other, the best men of those European cities readily accept seats in the city councils. The half-hundred rulers of the great British towns are men of character, of intelligence, of experience. There seems to be no suspicion that they are serving their own interests in these positions; it even appears to be supposed that a man who was suspected of this selfishness would find his political career cut short. There is a measure of municipal patriotism in these English boroughs to which republican America has not attained. The wealthy and intelligent citizens of the great European towns are, no doubt, to be commiserated. They are not getting rich nearly so fast as our own plutocrats; they know less about organizing real-estate booms and continental combines; they must have much less time and money to spend upon their own diversions; but this crumb of compensation is theirs: they have the satisfaction of knowing that their cities are well and economically governed, and that though their individual fortunes are growing much less rapidly than those of their republican neighbors, the safety and peace and welfare of the communities in which they live are much more effectually secured. It is a small satisfaction, of course, compared with that which is derived from the colossal egoisms of our own financial booms, but the subjects of effete monarchies may find it worth some labor and sacrifice.

To be entirely candid one must admit that an addi-

