

community that he returned after half-a-dozen battles, and perhaps even more harrowing experiences in Confederate prison camps.

The material is all here, but it is loosely organized. Pages 1-25 describe Fraser's pre-war and wartime careers. Pages 27-30 contain the Petition. The next six pages comprise a list of names, and the footnotes complete the last twenty pages. If a reader is looking for biographical data, he will find Fraser's post-war years summarized in footnote 13, on page 39. There is no continuity in the presentation. The subject dealt with most fully is prison conditions, and this is the pamphlet's chief contribution.

Although Fraser's descriptions are moderate ("The gravity of our case has made us very careful that an action in the premises should not be impaired by exaggeration or abuse."), the facts in themselves are appalling. At Camp Sorghum there were 1300 Union officers in an open field, without shelter, with poor water and sanitary facilities, and with almost no tools. Cooking utensils were so scarce that most of the men were unable to cook breakfast until afternoon. Food was inadequate; mail was not delivered (in one case) for forty days. In this situation, according to the testimony of others, Col. Fraser earned the undying gratitude of his companions by acting out plays of Shakespeare from memory, "bareheaded and barefooted and with no clothing but a ragged shirt and torn pantaloons." Perhaps a man of this calibre deserves a full-length biography.

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JOHN M. COLEMAN

Commanders of the Army of the Potomac. By WARREN W. HASSLER, JR. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1962. Pp. xxi, 281. Eight illustrations. Twelve maps. Critical Essay on Selected Authorities, 265-273. Index, 275-281. \$6.00.)

This is a superior book, with the proper title and by a recognized researcher and writer. It is remarkably free from pretense. The jacket statement by the publishers is excellent. The author's preface, though not profound, is adequate and sound.

The content of the volume corresponds faithfully with the title. The result is unity of treatment. In such hewing to the line more relevant historical matters of great importance are necessarily given summary statement only.

The reviewer, once a researcher in the materials of the Civil War, found little to criticize. Possibly the Introduction is none too vigorous. The biographical sketches both in the earlier chapters and again in chapter nine in supplemental or complementary way seem well founded, well organized and well stated. The great campaigns, though adequately described and furnished with good maps, are, as the author suggests, not exhaustive.

The Critical Essay on Selected Authorities is definitely superior. References are made to recent scholarly works.

Possibly regimental histories and articles in historical magazines may not have received full attention. But there is no padding, no waste motion, no wasted line in the volume.

This book, so appropriate for the time, will interest both scholars and general readers. It is a contribution of much merit.

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ALFRED P. JAMES

Why the North Won the Civil War. Edited by DAVID DONALD.
(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1960, Pp. xv,
128. \$2.95.)

This small volume is the end product of the Civil War Conference held at Gettysburg College in 1958. The book contains a foreword by Major General U. S. Grant, III, and an introduction by David Donald, the editor. The remainder of it is devoted to five essays by outstanding historians each of whom deals with a different topic in an effort to define why the North won the Civil War. This, of course, has been a matter of considerable discussion ever since the two opposing armies laid down their arms. A great deal of time, energy and ink has been expended on this problem, and one doubts that we are any closer to the ultimate answer than when the Civil War ended. In all honesty, one must confess that, probably, there will never be one uniformly accepted explanation for the outcome of this epic struggle, but this is what makes history such an intriguing study for both the professional historian and the layman.

Professor Richard N. Current in his essay, "God and the Strongest Battalion," examines the economic strength and potentialities of the two contesting nations, and, as one would suspect, concludes