

## BOOK REVIEW.

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**JOURNAL OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION OF 1787, ANALYZED,**  
etc. By HAMILTON P. RICHARDSON, Esq., of the Wisconsin Bar.  
San Francisco: The Murdock Press. 1899.

The proceedings of that Convention which framed the wonderful instrument under which our law lives and has its being must always have a special interest, not only for the legal profession, but for all who are interested in this great civil government of ours. New problems have arisen, new territories have been acquired, but the Constitution has ever proved serviceable in solving the problems and governing our newly found colonies. Rightly interpreted, it will always be thus, for it was framed by men who seemed to have known their fellow men and the philosophy of history so truly that they acquired an insight into the future which may fairly be termed prophetic.

When we first took up this admirable little work we feared that it would add nothing to the literature on the subject. But our fears proved groundless, for it is a most complete and well-arranged summary of the Convention's work. All the plans, the rough and revised drafts, and, best of all, the interpretation are well set forth. New and original ideas are constantly to the fore, and we can conclude no better than by printing the conclusion of the author himself. The words in parenthesis are our own: "To a British statesman (Gladstone) has been attributed the saying that 'As the British Constitution is the most subtle organism which has proceeded from progressive history, so the American Constitution is the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man.' But it may be submitted (this idea is not strikingly original, but plainly presents a truth which must become clear to all of us upon a moment's reflection, but is not instantly patent,) that the American Constitution, instead of being struck off at a given time, was drawn from the British Constitution and from the first American Constitution (the Articles of Confederation) in substance and in form, and however the British Constitution may preserve the equilibrium of the governments of Great Britain, the Constitution of the United States of America was designed to preserve the great principle of self-government, general and local, joint and several, for the people of America."

*J. M. D.*