Dumont expresses it, by *social capillarity*; and he concludes that this restraint on procreation is essentially beneficent and worthy of encouragement. He studies neo-Malthusianism from a religious, hygienic and moral point of view, and he does not hesitate to recognize its injurious effects and its dangers; he holds that it is, however, the lesser of the evils and that it should be practiced, at least in its most harmless forms, in order to avoid an unrestrained excess of population, the source of great misery. But he considers that neo-Malthusianism should be practiced freely, not enjoined by the law, nor yet by the advice of the State. That the State should restrict itself to a purely economic function in facilitating exchanges and in the colonization of national lands.

Such are, in outline, the contents of this learned and interesting work. In many points I do not agree with the author. A strong opponent of neo-Malthusianism, I believe that overpopulation should be remedied by economic means, not by medical and physiological means. The criticism of my theories made by Lebrecht do not seem to me to be convincing. Yet the different doctrines advanced by us, in various grave questions, take nothing from the estimation in which I hold his book; it is to be judged as a notable contribution to the economic theories which are among the most difficult and the most debated.

ACHILLE LORIA.

[Translated by CORNELIA H. B. ROGERS.]

Abraham Lincoln. By JOHN T. MORSE, JR. American Statesmen Series, 2 vols. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1893.

It is a striking tribute to Abraham Lincoln that interest in him does not lessen the farther we are removed from the scenes in which he was the central figure. Indeed, the wider the distance which separates us from this great character, the more wont we are to give him his true place in the catalogue as the "Supreme American of our History."

Among the many biographies issued, with Mr. Lincoln as a subject, this last will take immediate prominence. Mr. Morse, in his portrayal, has escaped the very natural veneration of the biographers Nicolay and Hay, and at the same time the extreme realism of Herndon.

There is great care manifested with regard to details and the careful arrangement of facts. No writer could have brought Mr. Lincoln's

childhood down to a lower plane of rude simplicity. Herndon seems to have had a predominant influence over the author in these chapters. The first gleam of improvement in Lincoln's environments comes after the marriage of Thomas Lincoln to the widow Sally Johnston. She induced her new husband to put windows and a floor in the cabin. She also strove to make her new husband's children "look a little more human."

It is to be questioned whether Mr. Morse has not kept the later life of Mr. Lincoln too much in the gloom because of the dark shadow cast round his youthful days. There is a peculiar dignity to be observed in the rudest of these pioneer homes which we often neglect to consider in the application of our present day scale of living. The process by which Mr. Lincoln grew into a rational stature was slow but unbroken. All things seemed to combine to form and transform him.

The volumes are deserving of much praise, especially those parts dealing with the time after Lincoln had become known to his own State. The careful description of the Lincoln-Douglass debates is notable; also the makeup of the Chicago Convention that nominated Lincoln for President. Mr. Morse aptly shows the political principles of Mr. Lincoln, in their superiority over the political trade-and-dicker ideas of the delegates by quoting the message sent David Davis: "Make no contracts that will bind me."

The author presents the political and military events connected with the later life of his great subject at length and with great clearness and fairness. Most commendable is the manner in which he shows Mr. Lincoln's striking individuality. The advice and criticisms of theorists, enthusiasts and extremists had but little effect on this "most advised man, often the worst advised man, in the annals of mankind."

The pages teem with illustrations of Lincoln's unselfishness, forgiveness, humanity, tolerance, lack of the display of personal triumphs and other marks of real greatness. President Lincoln's relations to his Cabinet may be cited as yet another of the striking interpretations in these volumes. There was always a readiness to listen to counsel, but instances are wanting in which the chosen line of action was materially varied. It was the inflexibility of strength and not that of obstinacy. Strictly interpreted, no other administration ever tended so much toward absolutism. But interpreting as does Mr. Morse, no man better understood the full significance of civil freedom than President Lincoln; no man ever did more to preserve and defend it.

J. A. JAMES.