

journey, showing that he traveled 676 miles. Finally, in a chapter by itself, as though not a part of the journal, we find Smith's "Notes on the Manners and Customs of the Indians," in which he suggests that "probably distant posterity will peruse as fables the accounts which may be handed down of the present customs of the aborigines of North America."

The editor's introduction, nearly as long as the journal itself, is well enough to give an historical setting for the benefit of the popular reader and furnish occasion for a number of excellent halftones scattered through the book, but one cannot help wishing that a little more scholarship, both historical and literary, had been displayed in this connection. Mostly secondary sources are cited and these quite without page references. The arrangement of the subject matter is cumbersome and confusing. Mr. Halsey, however, deserves commendation for his evidently careful editing and indexing of the journal.

— GEORGE H. ALDEN.

**The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot; Original Narratives of Early American History.** (Reproduced under the auspices of the American Historical Association. General editor, J. Franklin Jameson, Ph. D., LL. D., Director of the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington.) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906, pp. 443.)

In this most recent publication authorized by the American Historical Association we find a choice collection of original narratives that is without doubt a useful and valuable addition to the list of reliable reference books on the early history of America. It lays bare the classical narratives on which our earliest history is founded, those which form the sources of our knowledge of the discovery of America. Such a work cannot fail to prove a real acquisition to the library of a school or college, or to that of the true student of history. No modern history, however excellent, can give the reader all that he can get from the "ipsissima verba" of the first narrators, Argonauts or eye-witnesses, vivacious explorers or captains courageous. There are many cases in which the secondary narrators have quite hidden from view these first authorities, whom it is therefore a duty to restore to their rightful position. In a still greater number of instances, the primitive narrations have become so scarce and expensive that no ordinary library can hope to possess anything like a complete set of the classics of early American history. Consequently a real service is done American historical students when sources such as these are made easily accessible



to the general public. And just that service has been rendered in the publication of the collection under consideration.

For one who loves to seek out the original sources of our historical knowledge and who delights to wander down the obscure byways of the past—dim-lit, grass-grown with tradition, long since abandoned by the ordinary wayfarer, and almost hidden by the abundant growth of more recent events,—for him, I say, these original narratives will awaken a rare joy. As his interest grows and his eyes travel from page to page he will feel like a pocket miner who has just made a "find," and can't cease congratulating himself. All his life long he has heard more or less vague allusions to a Norse discovery of America that antedated the efforts of Columbus—but here he lights upon an excellent translation of the old age-worn sagas, Icelandic annals and papal letters that have formed the basis of our belief in the discovery of America by Lief Ericsson about the year 1000. These choice documents have been carefully edited by Julius E. Olson, professor of Scandinavian language and literature in the University of Wisconsin.

Throughout the entire "Saga of Eric the Red" pulses the intensely human record of sturdy warriors, bold Vikings, generous-hearted comrades and brave, strong women who shared alike with their powerful husbands the dangers of the storm-swept ocean, the rigors of the cruel, northern winter, the privations and hardships of pioneer life and the alarming adventures of life in a strange and hitherto unknown land inhabited by savages. These long-treasured pieces of ancient writing are permeated with the vigorous, daring spirit of the hardy Norseman, who with unyielding purpose, undismayed courage and unabated energy, breasted the stormy Northern seas, sailed from island to island, founded colonies, cultivated farmsteads, established primitive law and order, dispensed free-handed hospitality, honored women as comrades in life's battle, and inspired anew each rising generation with a love for achievement. This is the temper of the race that first of all Europeans is believed to have discovered America, probably making landing in the region of Nova Scotia or somewhat further south. The old Sagas relate how Lief Ericsson, who had been commissioned by King Olaf of Norway to carry the news of Christianity to Greenland, was beset with adverse winds, blown out of his course and made the discovery of this western land, where self-sown wheat and vines were found growing and great trees that could afford large timbers for building. Later on we read how Thorfinn Karlsefni, a



friend of Lief Ericsson, explored "Vinland the Good," came upon "long strands and sandy banks," coasted far southward and finally settled on the edge of a lake not far from the coast, and with his party enjoyed good hunting and fishing for more than three years. Here and there in the story we come upon suggestive allusions to a strange people who sped over the water in large "skin canoes"—in one place described as "swarthy men, and ill-looking, and the hair of their heads was ugly. They had great eyes and were broad of cheek \* \* \* dressed in skin doublets. Especially did the strangers wish to buy red cloth, for which they offered in exchange peltries and gray skins. \* \* \* In exchange for perfect, unsullied skins the Skrellings would take red stuff a span in length which they would bind around their heads." On another occasion we read how "the Skrellings attacked the newcomers unawares, showering them with missiles hurled by war-slings. When Freydis, the wife of one of Karlsefni's men, came out of her hut and saw the men taking to flight, she yelled after them, "Why do ye flee from these wretches, such worthy men as ye, when, meseems, ye might slaughter them like cattle? Had I but a weapon, methinks I would fight better than any one of you." Later she discovered a sword and prepared to defend herself. Here we read "The Skrellings then approached her, whereupon she stripped down her shift and slapped her breast with the naked sword." At this brave show of defiance "the Skrellings were terrified, ran down to their boats and rowed away. Karlsefni and his companions, however, joined her and praised her valor." At another time Freydis is represented playing the role of Lady Macbeth in a way almost to rival Shakespeare's heroine. Gudrid, the wife of Karlsefni, however, carries off the honors as heroine of these old tales.

The original narratives of the journeys of Columbus fill more than half the book. They comprise authentic translations of the articles of agreement entered into by "The Lords, the Catholic Sovereigns and Christobol Colon (as the Spanish refer to Columbus), which record Columbus' appointment as "Admiral and Viceroy of such mainland and islands as he should discover," and the grant of his titles "Admiral, Viceroy and Governor of the islands and mainland that may be discovered," followed by the journal of the first voyage, a letter from Columbus to Louis de Santangel, letters from Columbus to Ferdinand and Isabella concerning the colonization and commerce of Espanola. Further on appears a most entertaining letter written by Dr. Chanca



on the second voyage, containing valuable matter in regard to the character and life of the natives of the West Indies. Later is given a narrative of the third voyage as recorded in La Casas' history—then a letter from Columbus to the nurse of Prince John, when the great admiral was being sent home in chains by the command of Bobadilla, the usurper of the governorship of Santo Domingo,—and, finally, another letter written on his fourth voyage. These highly entertaining narratives have been carefully edited under the direction of Edward Gaylord Bourne, Ph. D., professor of history at Yale, as have also the available documents in regard to the voyages of John Cabot. The latter include a letter of Lorenz Pasqualigo to his brothers Alvise and Francesco, merchants of Venice, two letters of Raimondo de Soncino, agent of the Duke of Milan, to the duke, and, finally, a dispatch to Ferdinand and Isabella from Pedro de Ayala, junior ambassador at the court of England, warning them of the possibility of the Cabot explorers seizing some of the Spanish discoveries.

Throughout the perusal of the journals of the Columbus voyages one is constantly surprised and delighted with most interesting details in regard to the daily happenings that befell the voyagers, the character of the land explored, the appearance and manner of life of the natives and the quality and quantity of the natural products of the soil. Columbus was ever in search of gold, spices and precious stones. He pushed on from island to island in search of them, meanwhile becoming acquainted with the country which continued to be an unending source of wonder and delight to him, with its luxuriant growth of tropical greenery, unlike any European vegetation, while the climate in midautumn ever reminded him of "May in Auda-lusia," Spain. Like the Norse explorers he discovered that the Indians who swarmed around his ship were eager to barter anything they possessed for "red caps, glass beads to put around their necks and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure and made them so much our friends that it was a marvel to see."

These original narratives offer substantial food for historical thought, rouse the imagination, convince the judgment, clothe with reality the hackneyed, briefly-stated phrases of the old history text-book and awaken a live interest in early American history. May the book be found upon many library shelves and find its way into many hands. This is the saw we have need of.

ROSE GLASS.