

BOOK REVIEWS

Alaska, Our Beautiful Northland of Opportunity. By AGNES RUSH BURR. (Boston: The Page Company. 1919. Pp. 428. \$4.00 net.)

This handsome book with decorative cover, carrying six plates in full color and forty-eight duogravures, is another in the "See America First" Series. Most of the volumes thus far issued in the series are devoted to the West. "Sunset Canada; British Columbia and Beyond" was reviewed in this *Quarterly* (Volume IX., page 310) and other volumes include "California, Romantic and Beautiful," "Oregon, the Picturesque" and "Three Wonderlands of the American West." Each book is sumptuously printed and boxed.

The author makes no pretense of presenting history. She records the observations by herself and others. The purpose of the book is best told in her preface as follows: "Alaska is a land of beautiful scenery and of almost inexhaustible resources. It is a land with a romantic history, and a land of interesting people, whether these be the sturdy pioneers and their descendants with their tales of early days, the Indians, and the rapid progress they are making on their march toward civilization, or the prospector with pack on back on his tireless quest for gold.

"It is a land also of many opportunities. In size about one-fifth of the whole United States, in resources almost equal in variety to those of the entire country, Alaska as yet has but comparatively a small population and few industries. New business enterprises in almost countless number await the seeing eye and earnest hand of the shrewd business man and woman."

She further tells about the possibility of observing much of the great scenery from well-appointed steamers and railroad trains and automobiles over a three-hundred mile road. All this reminds the present reviewer of a remark made at Prince William Sound in the summer of 1902 by General A. W. Greely, then Chief Signal Officer of the United States Army: "We have just been establishing signal stations through the unexplored interior of Alaska. When the discoverers and explorers come they can step into one of those stations and send their records to the outside world."

There remains much exploring to be done in Alaska. None of it will detract, however, from the interest or value of this book.

The author acknowledges help received from many sources, including "Mr. J. L. McPherson, of the Alaska Bureau of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, who has made the study of Alaska almost his life work; Mr. Kenneth Kerr of the Seattle 'Railway and Marine News,' and many others." The second chapter of the book is entitled: "From Seattle Northward." EDMOND S. MEANY.

Central Oregon. By W. D. CHENEY. (Seattle: The Ivy Press. 1919. Pp. 149. \$1.00.)

This little book locally produced and published has the distinct purpose of calling attention to a part of the Pacific Northwest in which railroad building is being rapidly developed. In addition to the descriptions of new resources to be made available there is also a note of preparedness, which is best told by the author himself on pages 144 to 146, as follows:

"This book is being written in the midst of the European War; and these words are written the day following an address by the Governor of Oregon in which he appeals for the completion of the Pacific Highway as a matter of military importance. Exactly as this paragraph is being written, a representative of the Coast Defense League calls upon the writer for assistance in securing support for the Pacific Highway as a part of the Military Road System. If this highway is important, what of these railroads?

"The strength of Germany has not been in men and material alone. But would have been useless but for a wonderful system of railroads, permitting the quick shifting of armies and munitions.

"Our Pacific Coast is very vulnerable; and it is not because of seven hundred miles of coast-line between Cape Flattery and the Golden Gate. It is because of the long, easily broken thread of the Southern Pacific Railroad, lying undefended between the mountains and the sea. Even if not impaired, it is utterly inadequate to handle the congested traffic of war.

"Not only will the Strahorn Lines put millions of acres under cultivation: they will provide two lines north and south along the Pacific Coast instead of the one line now existing. By double-tracking only seventy-six and one-half miles of the Strahorn System, three lines will be provided for the entire distance between Mare Island and Puget Sound, over which troops and munitions can be rushed north and south; and two of these lines will be east of the Cascade Range, a natural fortification."