

BOOK REVIEWS

The Covered Wagon. By EMERSON HOUGH. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1922. Pp. 379. \$2.00.)

The Young Alaskans on the Missouri. By EMERSON HOUGH. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1922. Pp. 378. \$1.75.)

The authentic historical character in *The Covered Wagon* is the noted trapper and scout known for thirty years in the Rockies as "Old Jim Bridger." Some attempt has been made to furnish a real portrait but it is both less interesting and less picturesque than the truthful account of the man as found in *The Yellowstone Park*, by Chittenden, and more recently in *The Bozeman Trail*, by Hebard and Brininstool.

The adventures of Bridger furnished inspiration for a long series of dime novels by Ned Buntline in the seventies and eighties. These idealized the scout into a super-hero. This later novelist leans the other way and with horse-play, boasting, and much vernacular takes away from the man such dignity as properly belonged to him. The Paramount version of the novel, reported to be filming, can hardly be expected to mitigate the comic supplement flavor of the character of Bridger as found in the book.

The destination of *The Covered Wagon* is the Oregon Territory, but the story relates only to the crossing of the Plains. According to one critic it is "fictionally negligible." Nevertheless, it is a novel which will find many readers. It will almost certainly interest any student of high school age. And as it is in the main historically accurate, and deals with events in themselves important, it may properly be included in lists of high school books, in spite of obvious literary shortcomings.

Intended for younger readers than the book just mentioned, *The Young Alaskans on the Missouri* recounts the adventures of three Boy Scouts and their leader who follow the train of Lewis and Clark as far as the Rocky Mountains. It should give the youthful readers a very good idea of the nature and importance of that expedition, as well as a knowledge of the history and geography of the greatest of rivers.

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