

*California and the Nation, 1850-1869.* By JOSEPH ELLISON.  
(Berkeley: University of California Publications in History,  
Volume 16, 1927. Pp. 238. \$3.50.)

Professor Ellison's excellent book, *California and the Nation*, is a study of the relations of a frontier community with the Federal Government. Its value is twofold: (1) it represents a synthesis of the interesting but complicated problems of federal control—those relating to Mexican and Federal land grants, the mineral land question, the establishment of means of communication and transportation, and Indian difficulties—relations heretofore largely neglected; and (2) it sheds new light upon the period of study which necessarily alters many of the assertions previously entertained by national and local historians.

In many respects, California was a typical frontier community for like other characteristic frontier settlements, that State had to contend with the essential problems of pioneer civilization: the establishment of a government, protection from Indian raids, security of land titles, and the construction of adequate mail and transportation facilities. As Professor Ellison says, "we find in California the characteristic needs and demands of the American frontier; we find the tendency to look upon the National Government as a paternal institution whose duty it is to assist liberally in the development of the new country, and the tendency to emphasize strongly the rights of the people. In a word, we find the typical self-confident, self-assertive, dissatisfied frontier."

In many respects, however, California was unique. Unlike most new communities which developed gradually and enjoyed territorial tutelage, California sprang at once to full stature and statehood. There, problems of communication and transportation were more aggravating and difficult because of the remoteness from centers of civilization. Then, too, few other communities had to contend with such a complicated racial problem which developed as a resultant phase of the gold rush of the forties.

Professor Ellison describes the Federal policy toward California as liberal but dilatory and in general non-interfering. The interesting chapters on the Mineral Land question and the Vigilance Committee illustrate the influence and effect of public opinion upon the policies of the government and the extreme reluctance of the Federal authorities to interfere in domestic troubles

within the State. In his chapter on Loyalty and Disloyalty, the author disproves conclusively the commonly accepted assertion that "on the eve of the Civil War, California was in danger of joining the South." On the contrary, Professor Ellison points out that the great majority of the people of California were loyal to the Union and "might be relied on under all circumstances to keep order and sustain the Federal Government."

The book gives evidence of the most exacting and scholarly treatment. Footnote citations are copious and delightfully illustrative. A complete bibliography is added. Primary sources include Federal documents, California State publications, and contemporary California newspapers. An attractive feature is the simple, straightforward style of the writer. The summaries at the end of the chapters and the very effective resume of the author at the conclusion of the thesis are noteworthy additions of what is truly a very valuable contribution.

L. H. CREER.

---

*The Rise of American Civilization.* Volume I., *The Agricultural Era.* Volume II., *The Industrial Era.* By CHARLES A and MARY R. BEARD. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927. Pp. 824 and 828. \$12.50 for the two volumes.)

*Main Currents in American Thought.* Volume I., *The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800,* Volume II., *The Romantic Revolution in America, 1800-1860.* By VERNON LOUIS PARRINGTON. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927. Pp. 413 and 493. \$4.00 each.)

These two publications will be conceded to be in perfect alinement with synthetic scholarship, the twentieth century's demand on intellectual achievement. It is true that we occasionally detect a slur in such phrases as "outlines of outlines," but every scholar knows the bewilderment of the nineteenth century's flood of monographs and he is blind indeed who does not visualize the need, the groping, the demand for new synthetic valuations. These authors have not claimed such qualities. They do not use the word "outline" or the word "synthesis" but they have achieved the desired substance. While the works differ in form, substance, style, and purpose, they are both concerned with American progress and have sifted the documents and sources of three centuries.

Professor Beard and his wife seem most concerned with economic growth and with political development national and in-