

## NEWS DEPARTMENT

### *British Party Politics and Oregon*

Under this title Professor Frederick Merk, of Harvard, has the leading article in *The American Historical Review* for July, 1932. It forms an important and valuable chapter in the developing history of the Pacific Northwest. The text and footnotes indicate an extensive and careful searching of British and American documents, many of which have been hitherto unknown or but slightly comprehended.

He cites also his former article, "The Oregon Pioneers and the Boundary" in the same publication, Volume XXIX, pages 681-699 (July, 1924.) These two articles are sure to be helpful to students and writers in this field.

The spirit and scope of this last article, "British Party Politics and Oregon" are well shown in the concluding paragraph as follows:

"British party politics have woven their thread into the texture of American history in strange patterns, some of them as yet but faintly visible. They have woven discord more often than harmony and twice they have helped to produce the tangle of war. They came near to producing war in the Oregon controversy, for the dread of party clamor was what induced the British government to postpone a settlement until passions had been aroused in the United States almost to the point of explosion. Because of a distorted Opposition charge of capitulation as applied to a treaty in the American Northwest the British government was restrained from agreeing to a capitulation that was real and necessary in the Pacific Northwest. But partisanship consisting of intransigence in external matters prove to have been unprofitable by December, 1845, and the result was that in the following spring, on the Oregon question, the lion and the lamb of British foreign politics were able to lie down in peace together."

While discussing these two published articles, it is well to recall Professor Merk's great book, *Fur Trade and Empire*, (Harvard University Press, 1931,) which has been so cordially received by reviewers as follows:

Prof. R. C. Clark in *The Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXXIII., (March, 1932,) pages 81-83.

Prof. J. Orin Oliphant in *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXIII., (April, 1932,) pages 151-154.

Judge F. W. Howay in *The Canadian Historical Review*, Volume XIII., (June, 1932,) pages 208-209.

Mr. Lawrence J. Burpee in *The American Historical Review*, Volume XXXVII, (July, 1932,) pages 783-785.

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*Last Spaniards on the Northwest Coast*

Henry R. Wagner has rendered another distinct service to the students and historians of the Pacific Northwest with his article, "The Last Spanish Exploration of the Northwest Coast and the Attempts to Colonize Bodega Bay," in the *Quarterly of the California Historical Society*, Volume X., (December, 1931,) pages 313-345.

It has generally been accepted that the Spanish exploration on this northern coast ended after the futile negotiations of Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra and Captain George Vancouver at Nootka in 1792. Mr. Wagner now reveals much consideration by the Viceroy in Mexico and the sending of other expeditions in 1793, notably under Don Juan Martinez y Zayas and Don Francisco de Eliza. The latter was somewhat of a failure but the former was successful in his examination of the coast from the southern entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca to San Francisco Bay. Translations of both accounts are given.

Mr. Wagner explains his discovery of the materials as follows: "The volume containing the maps lay in the Library of the War Department in Washington unnoticed until about two years ago when it was turned over to the Library of Congress. Colonel Lawrence Martin, the chief of the map division, recognized the importance of the maps and showed them to me when I was there in May, 1929. With these as a clue it has not been difficult to trace the original journals. They are in Vol. 71, *Seccion Historia* of the Archivo General in Mexico, together with the related correspondence referred to in this article. A brief extract taken from both exists in the Archivo General in Seville."

Two of the maps are reproduced in this article, which prompts the acknowledgment that Mr. Wagner has loaned to the Library of the University of Washington photostat copies of seven original Spanish maps of the Pacific Coast from California to Alaska. They were mostly made just before and during the negotiations of 1792. Similarly he has loaned photostats of two manuscript journals in Spanish signed by Salvador Fidalgo and Manuel Quimper. Each is dated 13 November, 1790. They are reports to the Viceroy in