

BOOK REVIEWS

Hall J. Kelley on Oregon. Edited by FRED WILBUR POWELL.
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932. Pp. 411. \$3.50.)

The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California. By LANSFORD W. HASTINGS. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932. Pp. 157. \$3.00.)

Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines. By FRANKLIN LANGWORTHY. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932. Pp. 292. \$3.50.)

Scout and Ranger. By JAMES PIKE. (Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 164. \$2.50.)

In accordance with the plan for providing reprints of rare and inaccessible titles, the Princeton University Press has continued its series of Narratives of the Trans-Mississippi Frontier with the publication of the four titles listed above. With the exception of the fourth book, they deal with the Far West and are therefore of great interest to students of Oregon and California history.

Hall Jackson Kelley, the New England school teacher, urged colonization of Oregon from 1824 to 1844 through numerous pamphlets, books, letters and petitions to Congress. He became interested in 1814 after reading the Journals of Lewis and Clark, devoting his rather confused and active talents to the project. From 1832 to 1836 he made a journey to Oregon, by land and sea, and returned to describe its geography and history in a pamphlet published in 1849. The volume includes five of Kelley's published works and a number of hitherto unpublished letters. Although he did not succeed in founding a settlement he furnished effective stimulus to discussion and argument and thus increased interest in the Oregon Territory.

The increase of settlers through emigration that Mr. Kelly urged seemed to other forward-looking enthusiasts to be the most important element in the problem.

Lansford Hastings of Ohio became a special pleader for emigration to California. His book, first published in 1845, was really an excellent example of good advertising. Hastings joined the spring caravan of 1842 under Dr. Elijah White, but after a few days, Hastings was chosen captain. The young man was dissatisfied with conditions in Oregon and led a contingent of emigrants to California. A point of interest is that Dr. McLoughlin hired Hastings, who was an attorney, to survey a land claim. A townsite was platted

by the name of Oregon City. A year after he left Oregon, the new town boasted several settlers. He seems not to have had any part in the organization of the Provisional Government. In California, Captain Sutter welcomed the Americans and from that time, Hastings decided to use his energies to encourage American settlement in California. The book has some errors and exaggerations but is on the whole an excellent help to understanding the West of the 1840's.

A pioneer of Carroll County, Illinois, who travelled the Overland Trail to California, was Franklin Langworthy, a preacher, scientist, and philosopher. He kept a diary of the trip, published first in 1855, entitled "Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines." There are hundreds of journals of the gold rush, but not many are written in Langworthy's impersonal style. He knew a good deal about geology, botany and zoology. His descriptions were universally accurate. He combined modern scientific learning of the period with an adequate knowledge of practical political questions. While travelling, he delivered lectures to his fellow-travellers, the prospectors, on astronomy, geology, sacred history, Mormonism, and natural history. His diary is valuable as a philosophical description of the Overland Trail, perhaps the only one of its kind.

The last title, *Scout and Ranger*, describes the personal adventures of James Pike of the Texas Rangers, in 1859 and 1860. Corporal Pike was sent out with the 2d U.S. Infantry troops in order to escort the Reserve Indians from Texas to Indian Territory. A quarrel between officers of the Indian Service had complicated a situation already fraught with danger for the Indians. Corporal Pike relates many tales from the region, notably the Cynthia Ann Parker episode, recaptured from the Comanches, 23 years after the original capture. The writer's style is sometimes florid, but on the whole, he tells a straight tale of rare adventure.

Missionary zeal dominated Kelley; patriotic ambition to secure California inspired Hastings; scholarly and philosophic interests pervaded Langworthy's share in the gold rush; love for adventure animated Pike. But they all alike, school teacher and lawyer, philosopher and soldier, told their contemporaries all they had learned about the West and provided historians with additional sources for the history of our expansion movement.

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