

BOOK REVIEWS.

Dr. John McLoughlin, the Father of Oregon. By Frederick V. Holman, Director of the Oregon Pioneer Association and of the Oregon Historical Society. (Cleveland, Ohio: The Arthur H. Clarke Company, 1907, 301 pp., \$2.50 net.)

In writing this work the author has produced what has long been needed, namely, a narrative of the life of the benefactor and great overtowering figure of the Pacific Northwest. Himself the son of Oregon pioneers of 1846, Mr. Holman, as he explains in his preface, has undertaken a labor of love, for to quote his own words, "The one great theme of the Oregon pioneers was and still is Dr. McLoughlin and his humanity." The research which has resulted in the collection of the material here presented was undertaken originally in preparation for an address which was delivered on McLoughlin Day at the Lewis and Clark Exposition, and which even then had reached such proportions as to require considerable condensation for that occasion. Since that time the work has been rewritten, and in its present form it constitutes a valuable historical biography. Appended to the narrative account are a considerable number of illustrative documents of interest, not only for the light they throw on the life of McLoughlin, but on conditions and events in early Northwest Coast history as well.

The life of Dr. McLoughlin is interwoven with the history of the old Oregon country from his arrival at the mouth of the Columbia in 1824 to his death at Oregon City in 1857. As chief factor of the Hudson Bay Company, stationed at Vancouver, for years he directed the activities of practically the only persons of European blood in the region, and was thus actually the governor of an empire. The occupation of the region by his company under the treaties of 1818 and 1827 between Great Britain and the United States could rest only on economic supremacy, since by those treaties equal rights in the region were assured to the citizens and subjects of both powers. Mr. Holman shows very clearly how McLoughlin, from the beginning, recognized this fact, and how he understood better than anyone else on the Coast that his sway to the south of the Columbia at least must be but temporary since so much of the Coast was sure to go to the United States at the final settlement of the boundary dispute. The despotic power which he exercised within this whole region forms an interesting part of the work which the author

has ably treated. One can but feel after reading these pages that the exercise by Dr. McLoughlin of power which in other hands would have been most dangerous, and the effective assumption by him of extra judicial authority in the punishment of Indian criminals only reveal the greatness of a character which could command the respect and obedience of thousands of savages, and thus protect the lives and the property under his care. As proofs of Mr. Holman's thesis that the rule of McLoughlin was a "beneficent" despotism, his suppression of the liquor traffic among whites as well as Indians, and his stern reproof of the redmen when they uttered threats against those whose prosperity meant his ruin, are convincing.

But it is the recital of McLoughlin's treatment of the immigrants from the States which forms the most striking part of the work. The settlement of the country not only meant the end of the fur trade, but it meant the supremacy of the United States, to which these immigrants owed their allegiance. Yet a loyal British subject, the director of the activities of a British fur-trading corporation, was so far moved by a feeling of compassion for the destitute Americans who had crossed the plains and the mountains, that in violation of the rules of his company he advanced them supplies on credit that they might establish and support themselves in the Coast region. It is pathetic to read how he was not only defrauded by some of those whom he had thus befriended, but was reprimanded by the officials of his company, and forced to resign a twelve-thousand-dollar position to end his days almost in want. One feels a satisfaction in reading the tributes of prominent pioneers in later days showing that they appreciated the true value of the service rendered them, and strove to gain for McLoughlin a recognition of his goodness of heart and his actual right to be called, as Mr. Holman has called him, "The Father of Oregon."

A considerable part of the biography is given over to an account of the steps through which Dr. McLoughlin, through practical politics, backed by sectional and sectarian prejudice, was deprived of the land claims at Oregon City which he had intended to be the support of his later years and of his family after his own decease. Many will doubtless disagree with Mr. Holman in his contention that no county should bear the name of Samuel R. Thurston, Oregon's first Territorial Delegate to Congress, who was responsible for the clause in the Donation Land Law of 1850 which thus dispossessed McLoughlin, desiring, not-

withstanding his faults and his mistakes still to perpetuate the memory of the first representative in Washington of the Pacific Northwest. But all will agree to the proposition that, both in Oregon and in Washington, a county should bear the name of the good old doctor, and that the failure thus to use his name in the States he aided in founding is a species of ingratitude which should not be suffered.

Incidentally it should be remarked that Mr. Holman is one of the writers who give to Mrs. Frances Fuller Victor the credit due her for the actual authorship of the histories of Oregon and Washington which bear upon the title page the name of Hubert Howe Bancroft.

WILLIAM A. MORRIS.

The Brothers' War. By John C. Reed. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1905, pp. xviii., 456.)

The Brothers' War is the story of the causes of the Civil War and a discussion of some of the results by a well-informed Georgia lawyer who played a soldiers' part in that great struggle. The author was twenty-five years old when the war broke out, he served from Manassas to Appomattox, led a section of the Ku Klux Klan, played a prominent part in the overthrow of negro domination, and now rejoices in a united nation and the overthrow of slavery.

The author clearly sees the cause of the war in the growing nationalities of the two sections. The North, based on free labor, demanded that the Territories be free, and the South, with its economic system of plantations worked by slaves, demanded with equal emphasis that slavery be allowed to spread to the new Territories of the South and West. Three chapters are devoted to the antagonism of free labor and slave labor and the nationalization of the South and North, and the argument is well handled and convincingly presented.

Chapter VI. deals with the abolitionists and fire-eaters, who are looked upon as the products of the clashing nationalities. The economic interests of the North were against slavery extension, while those of the South demanded the extension of slavery. Opposition to the demands of each section by the other brought forth two classes of hotspurs. No mention is made of the humanitarian wave that swept over Europe and America in the early thirties, and consequently the rise of the abolitionist is treated as a purely economic outgrowth.