

BOOK REVIEWS.

The Nez Percés Since Lewis and Clark. By Kate C. McBeth. New York and Chicago. Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908, p. 272.

In adding a new book to the rather scanty literature on the Nez Percés Indians, Miss McBeth has made a contribution to Northwestern history which will be welcomed in many libraries. Some of the pen pictures of early mission days are excellent and a vivid bit here and there brings pioneer days sharply before the reader. In general, however, the book is not nearly so much a history of the tribe as it is the story of her sister's mission work among them. By far the greater part of it is devoted purely to the introduction and development of the Christian religion among these Indians, and "Missions among the Nez Percés since Lewis and Clark" would have been a far more accurate title.

Evidently in preparation for her writing, Miss McBeth studied only histories bearing directly upon the Nez Percés, as indicated in the preface, and this results in some rather surprising historical inaccuracies. On p. 35 she says, "To explore the Oregon country (this whole country from the Bitter Roots to the sea was called Oregon then). . . ." The general concensus of historical opinion is that the Oregon country was bounded on the east by the Rocky Mountains, not by the Bitter Roots. Again on the much-debated question of the delegation to the east for the "White man's book of Heaven" she remarks, "It is strange that historians have made such careless statements about this delegation—that they were Flatheads, or the Flathead branch of the Nez Percés. . . . I have never heard that the Flatheads claimed the honor." The Naiveté in this statement is charming, but if she were to make that statement on the Flathead reservation she would be very quickly enlightened as to the Flathead claims. This tradition of the three or four delegations to the east for the "Black Robes" is one of the strongest of the tribe and has much evidence in its favor. It is quite possible, of course, that the Nez Percés did make the very first trip, in company with a Flathead, but it is probable that they first heard of this religion through the Flatheads, since their regular route to the buffalo country was through the Lo Lo pass and the Flathead country. That, however, is another story.

Again, commenting on the name Flatheads, which she claims to have been given by Lewis and Clark, and without reason, it may be recalled that the Flathead tribe (who were not flatheaded Indians) were called Ootlashoots by the explorers, and that the old name Tetes Plats goes back far beyond the days of American possession to the time of Jonathan Carver, and he did not by any means invent the name. It was current then.

The name of the tribe is spelled Nez Perces, instead of Nez Percés throughout the entire book—never a French accent.

Take it all in all, the book is somewhat disappointing. It is capable of being so much better. Good descriptions of the places mentioned, such, for instance as the Kamiah valley which is invariably called "beautiful," a keener perception of the artistic possibilities of the subject under discussion, and a more connected narrative would add greatly to the permanent value of the book. The story is so disjointed, especially in touching upon the early missions, as to require very careful reading and a fairly good knowledge beforehand of early history.

If the book could have been written in collaboration with some one who, because less familiar with these missions, could have brought out more clearly the logical sequence of the facts mentioned in the narrative, a better description of places, one who could have emphasized the tribal history of these Indians, its value would have been greatly enhanced.

—KATHARINE BERRY JUDSON.

Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Smithsonian Institution. (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1908, 512 pp.)

All of the publications of the Bureau of American Ethnology are of interest and value to historians and this one has an especial attraction for those in Northwestern America. It contains a paper covering more than a hundred generous pages on Alaskan Indians by John R. Swanton. The title of the paper is: "Social Conditions, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians." The object of the researches recorded was to study the language and myths for a comparison with those of the Haida, with which the author was familiar, and "to add as much as possible to our knowledge of Tlingit ethnology generally." The work bears every evidence of having been carefully done and it will undoubtedly prove helpful to all future students of that interesting people. The phonetics used are those employed by Professor Boas and others who worked with the Bureau of Amer-