

BOOK REVIEWS

THE OREGON SYSTEM; THE STORY OF DIRECT LEGISLATION IN OREGON. By Allen H. Eaton. (Chicago, McClurg, 1912. Pp. 195, \$1.00.)

A traveller may never spend his time to better advantage than when he pauses at some vantage point to glance backward over the road he has travelled. It is with similar profit that the student of American government can avail himself of such a survey as Mr. Allen H. Eaton's "Story of Direct Legislation in Oregon."

This timely volume covers the history of the "Oregon System" from the adoption of the initiative and referendum in 1902 to the beginnings of the presidential campaign in 1912. A convenient tabulation is first made of the sixty-four measures passed upon by the voters of Oregon in the elections of 1904, 1906, 1908 and 1910, showing the numbers of votes cast for and against each proposition, the per cent of the total electorate received by each measure and the per cent of the vote cast received by the measures passed. A general survey is then given of the thirty-three measures rejected and of the thirty-one passed with estimates of the wisdom shown by the people in disposing of the various propositions. Special chapters are devoted to several of the more important measures adopted, namely: the primary law, the direct election of United States senators, the recall of public officials, the corrupt practice act and the presidential primary.

The author has studied at first hand the operation of these measures, having been reelected in November last for a fourth consecutive term as state representative from the county in which the State University is located. His attitude is that of the student and his analysis of the results of direct legislation in Oregon is the clearest and fairest that the writer has seen. He has shown an unmistakable preference for the party convention, but he states that the people were justified in demanding the direct primary. He condemns the use that has been made of the recall in Oregon, but shows that certain abuses are not inherent in the principle. The corrupt practice act and the direct election of United States senators are both highly commended. Mr. Eaton's appraisal of the Oregon system will satisfy neither its ardent advocates nor its detractors. It is an excellent summary, however, of results to date and the author's suggested remedies for the evils and defects of direct legislation should be read by progressive even more than by conservative.

Aside from a misprint which makes Mr. Holman's name in the preface read as "Holeman," the book seems to be clear from serious typographical errors. A useful reading list contains seven pages of references to the Oregon system. A debt is not only due to the author for this concise and readable book, but to the publishers, A. C. McClurg & Co., as well, for their enterprise in developing a line of books relating to Western America.

CHARLES W. SMITH.

WHEN THE FORESTS ARE ABLAZE." By Katharine B. Judson. (A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1912, pages 380; illustrations 6, \$1.35.)

This delightful new book by Miss Judson deals with the difficulties and perils of the present day frontier life of the Northwest. The scene is laid in the wilds of the Cascade Mountains of Washington. The theme reveals the perils and the romance of the pioneer and the relations of the lumberman and the United States Forest Service to the development of this section of the country. Disappointed in love and tired of the life of the teacher, the heroine leaves the schoolroom to take up a claim in a national forest. With this setting the author has developed a thrilling story, interwoven with a strong love feature, depicting the life of the homesteader and the work of the forest service and its fire fighting heroes. Throughout the story the author shows her intimate knowledge of the life and the conditions of the mountain forests; the trees and shrubs, the wild animals and their habits, the life and the ways of the squatter, the difficult and the pleasing sides of the life of the homesteader, the troubles of the cattle and sheep men, the work of forest ranger, the sportsman and the camper from the city, and the dangers of the forest fire. All of these have been woven into her story to show the ever changing conditions which plunge the human emotions from one extreme into another in this region where primitive wilderness and civilization come in conflict; and they have been combined in her story into situations that are both interesting and instructive. To the layman who is not acquainted with the forest conditions of this region the book offers many practical lessons.

The author is to be especially commended for the excellent presentation, in story form, of the work of the forest ranger. Few of the people of the busy city and the broad farms and ranches realize the importance of the work of these heroes of the forest. With the work that is being done by the United States Forest Service, the ranger is taking his place with the pioneer in opening up the remotest corners of the wilderness to civilization;