

BOOK REVIEWS

THE INDIAN HISTORY OF THE MODOC WAR AND THE CAUSES THAT LED TO IT. By Jeff C. Riddle, the Son of Winema, the Heroine of the Modoc War. (Klamath Falls, Oregon, D. L. Moses, 1914. Pp. 295. \$2.74.)

At the time of the advent of the white man, the Klamath Lake country, an elevated plateau in southeastern Oregon interspersed with numerous lakes and extending across the boundary into California, was occupied by a number of bands of Indians commonly regarded as being of a single stock, but having little intercourse with one another and that not always friendly. But one characteristic they had in common, the suspicion and dislike of the white man and the pertinacity and fierceness with which they resisted his attempts to occupy their country. When Ewing Young and his party, as early as 1837, brought the first herd of cattle from California to Oregon, he was attacked by Indians in this region, and from that time forward hardly a year passed without depredations on one side or the other, until the close of the Modoc war in 1873. The Indian who felt himself wronged by a white man revenged himself according to Indian custom upon the first white man that fell in his way. In like manner, if a white man was robbed or murdered, his associates or neighbors were but too apt to avenge him by attacking the first party of Indians they might encounter. It thus happened that oftener than otherwise the punishment for undoubted outrages fell upon those who were entirely guiltless, and in this way, too, every act of aggression became the source of an additional feud. The usual consequences followed, of constantly increasing bitterness between the races, and of reprisals that were simply ferocious in their cruelty. Nor were these by any means confined to the side of the Indians.

One of the smallest of the bands inhabiting the region mentioned was the Modocs, who dwelt along the shores of Rhett Lake, better known locally as Tule Lake, on both sides of the boundary between Oregon and California. There were different bands of these, under different chiefs, but we are here more particularly concerned with what is known as Capt. Jack's band. These were even more turbulent and warlike than the neighboring tribes, and from the earliest appearance of the whites in that region had been in frequent collision with them.

The government, in the beginning of 1870, succeeded in getting

them to settle on a part of the reservation which was assigned to them with the consent of the Klamaths, but they got along no better with the Klamaths than with the whites, though it appears quite certain that the fault was altogether with the latter Indians.

Various attempts were made to compose their troubles without success, and the Modocs after a short time abandoned the reservation and returned to their former home. The authorities ignored this action until, about two years later, complaints began to be made by the white settlers that the Indians had become menacing and were committing frequent depredations. These complaints resulted in an order from the head of the Indian department in September, 1872, to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Oregon, to return the Modocs to the reservation "peaceably if you can, forcibly if you must." The Indians, on being informed of the order, flatly refused compliance. Thereupon Mr. Odeneal, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, applied to the military authorities in command at Fort Klamath, to compel obedience. Maj. Jackson with a detachment of some thirty-five men marched to Captain Jack's camp and after a parley asked the Indians to lay down their arms. The Indians, on Capt. Jack's advice and following his example, were doing so when an affray arose between Lieut. Boutelle and the Indian known as Scar-face Charley, who each at the same moment fired at the other. A general fight ensued, in which some twenty whites, soldiers and citizens, were killed or wounded, but, as is claimed, no Indians except a squaw and her baby.

Lying around the southern end of Tule Lake is a region known as the "Lava Beds," a vast field of congealed lava intersected in every direction with a labyrinth of fissures and caves and abrupt walls of rock. The place is a natural fastness of such extraordinary defensive strength that a handful of resolute men could hold it against an army so long as provisions and ammunition held out. To this place the Indians fled, numbering, with those who afterwards joined them of fifty-three men with their families. And here took place during the next year the most remarkable defense of which the annals of Indian warfare afford any account, and the most unparalleled act of treachery, the murder of Gen. Canby and Dr. Thomas, and the attempted murder of Mr. Meacham and Mr. Dyer, who as commissioners had met the Indians under a flag of truce to negotiate a treaty of peace.

The volume before us is a narrative of the events of this war and a sketch of the history of the tribe during the preceding quarter of a century. The author is the son of a Modoc mother and a white father. His father and mother acted as interpreters in the negotiations between

the Indians and the peace commissioners, and had and deserved the confidence of the best informed on both sides. The mother was a woman of remarkable character, and is in fact the most heroic Indian figure of the Modoc war. With such an ancestry it is not surprising that the author should exhibit strong sympathy for the Indians. In fact, he avows as a reason for his book that "the Indian side has never been given to the public yet." To the credit of his fairness it must be said that his account of actual occurrences is hardly more favorable to the Indians than that of others who witnessed and have written of them. If fault can be found anywhere it is in an occasional lack of details where details would lend a darker color to the facts given.

The author modestly says of himself and his book:

"I have one drawback, I have no education, but I have tried to write as plain as I could. I use no fine language in my writing, for I lack education."

The book itself fully sustains this statement. But at times the very lack of art and skill betrayed lends a certain pathos to the story. The volume can hardly be called a valuable contribution to the history of the war. Its chief interest will be to the pioneer of the locality who will turn to it as he would to a newspaper of the time, or an old letter written from the midst of the scenes it describes, and thus live over again the scenes of this stirring period.

JULIUS A. STRATTON.

TEN THOUSAND MILES WITH A DOG SLED. By Hudson Stuck, D. D., F. R. G. S., Archdeacon of the Yukon. (N. Y., Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914. \$3.50.)

This is a most interesting narrative of winter journeys with dog team into many remote corners of the Yukon basin in Alaska from 1905 to 1913, connected primarily with the administration of the extensive mission work of the Episcopal church among the natives of interior Alaska.

It is the work of a man of trained mind who describes clearly and entertainingly his own experiences from day to day in traveling through drifting snow, over frozen rivers and lakes and across mountain ranges, in temperatures as low as 70 degrees below zero, making camps in the open plains, on mountain sides, in log huts, and with Esquimos in their igloos, and cooking his meals for himself and his helpers, and for his dogs as well, under all the trying conditions of a subarctic climate in mid-winter. Thousands of Alaskans go through similar experiences every winter, but few have the ability to tell their experiences so clearly and faithfully as Archdeacon Stuck has done.