

BOOK REVIEWS

RUSSIAN EXPANSION ON THE PACIFIC, 1641-1850. By F. A. Golder. (The Arthur H. Clark Co., Cleveland, 1914. Pp. 368. \$5.00.)

The title of this book is somewhat misleading. It would indicate that the whole of the expansion of the Russian dominion, in America as well as in Asia, up to 1850, would be presented. This is not the case, for the book is devoted to Siberia, with the exception of the voyages of Gwosdef and Bering to the American continent.

The author states, in the preface, that his original intention was to write a history of Alaska. To do this required an examination of the events and conditions that preceded the discovery of the American continent. He found, upon taking up this work, that, what he intended as a background for Alaskan history, was "the closing chapter of a period of Russian expansion," and "became the principal part of the picture."

The opening chapter is devoted to the administration of government in eastern Siberia during the 17th century. The explorations along the Arctic Ocean, the conquest of Kamchatka, the invasion of the valley of the Amur, each are treated in separate chapters. The voyage of Deshnef, in 1648, when he is presumed to have doubled East Cape, Siberia, is debated at length and the actual passage of the cape is brought in question. The discovery of America is credited to Gwosdef, in 1732. This voyage has heretofore been considered indefinite, and the accounts given have been obscure. The text of Gwosdef's report is given, for the first time, in an English translation. The geographical beliefs prevalent at the time are discussed in a chapter on Terra de Jeso, which ends with "Alaska takes the place of Terra de Jeso on the maps; Company Land, State Island, and Gama Land are three of the Kuril Islands, but on some charts they retain their old names."

In the account of Bering's First Expedition an extract from a report of Bering is given on page 148, which states as follows: "On the fifteenth of August we came to latitude fifty-seven degrees, eighteen minutes, etc." This is an error, as the correct latitude, according to all other authorities was 67 deg. 18 min. N. lat. There is either a mistake in the quotation, or the report was erroneous.

In the chapter on Bering's Second Expedition, the location of the bay where Chirikof lost his men is given as 57 deg. 50 min. N. lat. This is about 30 min. farther north than has been quoted by other writers.

In this the author has followed Louis Delisle de la Croyere, who was with Chirikof on the ship and whose account is given in the appendix.

The illustrations of the volume are reproductions of maps of the period and in an Appendix are papers translated from records of the Archives of Russia and France. The bibliographic notes on original sources and where they may be found, are of special value to students.

The work is more of a critical study of the period than it is of a popular volume for the masses. Much of the material is given in the works of Muller, Coxe, Bancroft, Lauridsen and others who have written on the subject, but this puts it in more accessible form as those works are to be found in but few libraries.

C. L. ANDREWS.

THE HISTORY OF WYOMING FROM THE EARLIEST KNOWN DISCOVERIES. In three volumes. By C. G. Coutant. (Laramie, Vol. 1. Pp. 712, Illus.)*

Unfortunately the proposed three-volumed history of Wyoming was only one third written, the first volume appearing in 1890 when it was privately published in Laramie, Wyoming, and printed by the Chaplin, Spafford and Mathison Co. The author becoming ill and the expensive undertaking being impossible, the history was never completed. Much valuable material collected by the author was disposed of by his widow for a history.

Mr. Coutant for many years was a newspaper man traveling extensively in Wyoming in quest of news, making a wide acquaintance with the people of Wyoming and those things that were old Wyoming. An old-timer himself, he associated with those individuals who not only made Wyoming's history but knew the pioneers of the State's earliest days, thus well qualifying himself for the task he had heroically undertaken.

A running resume of the contents of this first volume will more adequately detail the contents of the history than any other form of review. The delineating of the "Spanish Occupation" of Wyoming is the only portion of the text that is not based on authentic history. There are many indications and traditions that the Spanish explorers came as far North as Wyoming in their daring explorations. Interesting speculations are made as to these earliest occupants of the territory now known as Wyoming if we may except tribes of Indians whose flint work shops are

*The Hudson Book Company, 862 Hewitt Place, Bronx, New York City, announce that a small edition of this work was found stored in the vaults of a western bank. The author had died before completing the companion volumes. Miss Hebard, Librarian and Professor of Economics of the University of Wyoming and an authority on Wyoming history, consented to write the review. It is hoped that she may complete the work by Coutant.—Editor.