

BOOK REVIEWS

DAVID THOMPSON'S NARRATIVE OF HIS EXPLORATIONS IN WESTERN AMERICA, 1784-1812. Edited by J. B. Tyrrell. (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1916. Pp. 582.)

This is volume XII in the important series being issued by the Champlain Society for members and subscribing libraries only. This particular narrative is of great importance to the State of Washington for many reasons, the two most important being the facts that the text refers frequently to this region and that part of the editing was done by a well known citizen of this State. The editor's preface says: "In compiling the notes on the country west of the mountains I have been especially fortunate in securing the assistance of Mr. T. C. Elliott, of Walla Walla, Washington, U. S. A., who is intimately acquainted with the early history of the north-western states and especially of the Columbia valley. He was kind enough to visit me in Toronto, where we had the pleasure of reading over Thompson's original note-books together. His notes throughout are signed with his initials, T. C. E." A number of the illustrations are from photographs by Mr. Elliott and by others, including Mr. Frank Palmer of Spokane.

There is a touch of literary romance in the editor's preface when he recites how his own work on the Geological Survey of Canada caused him to realize that some man at some time had done very accurate work in the western lands. He then heard of Thompson's maps and notes. He began to study them and when he learned that Thompson at seventy years of age had prepared an accurate narrative from his notes he sought that narrative, finally buying it from Mr. Charles Lindsley, who had secured it from Thompson's son. It is this narrative that is now published, the editor declaring: "the present volume, with its wealth of new information about Western America, is issued with the hope that it may assist in confirming David Thompson in his rightful place as one of the greatest geographers of the world."

This splendid volume fully justifies the use of those phrases "wealth of new information" and "one of the greatest geographers." Scholars will henceforth turn to its pages for accurate records of the beginnings of civilized history in large areas of the northwest.

After a number of years in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, Thompson became associated with the North-West Com-

pany and in 1807 he crossed the mountains to the headwaters of the Columbia river and began vigorous work for his company. Continuing this work, he descended the river to its mouth, arriving at the newly built American fort Astoria on July 15, 1811. There he found his old partner, Duncan McDougall, in charge for Astor's Pacific Fur Company. After a few days at Astoria, Thompson ascended the Columbia river and later in the year continued his surveys to the river's source. Editor Tyrrell says: "Portions of this river have never been re-surveyed since that time, so that Thompson's surveys still appear on every map of the Columbia river that is published." Thompson returned to Montreal in the summer of 1812 and "never again did he visit the scenes of his western exploits." His great work in the northwest was thus accomplished in five years.

Mr. Elliott's initials "T. C. E." are signed to eighty-seven foot-notes, some of them extensive ones. They reveal his familiarity with the ground covered and in each case the note helps the present-day reader to a better understanding of the text. His friends will rejoice to see him thus associated with this important addition to American historical literature.

Historians in Oregon who have frequently discussed the origin of the name of Willamette River will find this paragraph, from page 493, of interest:

"In the afternoon, when the River ran to the WSW a high Mountain, isolated, of a conical form, a mass of pure Snow without the appearance of rock, appeared, which I took to be Mount Hood, and which it was; from the lower part of the River this Mountain is in full view, and with a powerful achromatic Telescope I examined it; when clear, the Snow always appeared as fresh fallen, it stands south of the Columbia River, near the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and from six thousand feet and upwards [is] one immense mass of pure snow; what is below the limit of perpetual Snow, appears to be continually renewed by fresh falls of Snow, its many Streamlets form Rivers, one of which the Wilarmet, a noble River through a fine country falls into the Columbia River."

The date of that entry was July 9, 1811.

This valuable source book will not be very generally accessible in the Pacific Northwest. The Champlain Society's publications go only to members and to subscribing libraries. For a number of years there has been a waiting list of each. In the published list of those fortunate enough to receive the works there is but one member in the

State of Washington—George W. Soliday, of Seattle. Victoria has one member and Vancouver has thirteen members. Among the subscribing libraries, these only are found in the Northwest: Carnegie Library, Vancouver, B. C.; Legislative Library of British Columbia, Victoria, B. C.; Public Library, Spokane, Wash.; Public Library, and Library of the University of Washington, Seattle, Wash.

EDMOND S. MEANY.

EARLY DAYS IN OLD OREGON. By Katharine Berry Judson. (Chicago, A. C. McClurg & Co. 1916. Pp. 263. \$1.00.)

This is an attempt to give in the form of episodes a connected history of Old Oregon. The result has been the production of a very readable book, albeit somewhat fragmentary and out of balance. Such a result is scarcely avoidable where topical treatment is adopted. These disconnected chapters are not by any means of equal historical value, and, speaking generally, are taken from the usual and easily accessible authorities. The mysterious ship wrecked upon the Oregon coast in pre-historic days casts the glamour of romance upon the scene of action. The sketches of the work of the early explorers—Cook, Meares, Gray, Lewis & Clark—despite the author's claim of original research are bounded by the four corners of the common sources. The chapters upon the Indian Thief, the Exciting Horse Race, and the Adventures in the Yakima Valley are quite realistic, but are taken from Ross Cox and Alexander Ross, who would hardly recognize the events in their new garb. And why should space be found for these trivial matters when the work of Mackenzie, Fraser, Thompson and Vancouver are practically omitted.

The chapters on Fort Vancouver and John McLoughlin and The Oregon Trail are especially commendable for their combination of accuracy of general outline with a wondrously vivid reproduction of the life of those days. There is a tendency to the romantic and to errors in detail, but these chapters show Miss Judson at her best, and reflect her wide reading and fine appreciation of what may be termed "atmosphere."

The discussion of the Oregon Question, while not nearly as complete and full as could be desired, shows a correct understanding and a broad grasp of the situation. One remarks, however, the absence of reference to the Nootka Convention and only brief mention of the "Joint Occupancy" treaty of 1818, both of which bear most directly upon the subject. Some confusion seems to exist in the mind of the