

BOOK REVIEWS

A Winter Circuit of Our Arctic Coast. By HUDSON, STUCK, (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920, pp. 360, \$6.)

This last of the travel volumes by the Archdeacon of the Yukon, relating to his journeys in Alaska, is perhaps the best and most interesting of the series. It covers a winter's travel, commencing at Fort Yukon, on the Yukon River at the Arctic Circle, going west to Kotzebue Sound, then northerly, following the shore of the Arctic Ocean, past Cape Lisburne where the end of the Rocky Mountain Chain breaks into the ocean, along the shore where in 1872 the whaling fleet was crushed by the icepack, to Point Barrow. Then easterly to Herschel Island, the one time rendezvous of that industry; from that point across to the Yukon by the route of the whaling fleet that passed east of Barrow in the palmy days followed by Captain Amundsen in 1905 to the beginning point. It is a remarkable circuit, rich in reminiscence of Franklin, Beechey, Simpson, and others, a number of whom have traveled it in part, but perhaps no one has before made it entirely or continuously.

The keen observation, the graphic description, and the philosophic interest with which the author writes are fascinating, especially to one who saw the caches of provisions at Point Hope and Point Barrow which had been made in anticipation of the journey.

In all his writings the author is sympathetic with the wild life, and he has an especially warm place in his heart for the natives. In the Eskimo he has a people well calculated to call out every human interest. Recognizing their ever present characteristic he says: "Cheerfulness is perhaps their most distinctive trait," and quotes Beechey, the first voyager to reach the most northerly point of Alaska, where he says they are; "A set of people happy who did not appear to possess a single comfort on earth." Of their hospitality he tells about "the young man who left his own house and spent the night in a deserted tumble down igloo rather than incommode his guests who did not know they were his guests. There is nothing in the whole journey of which I feel so ashamed as of the annoyance that I know my manner must have betrayed—though I said nothing—when this young man and his companions arrived at the igloo we had taken possession of for the night. And if there

be any meaning left in the word, this reindeer herder, smilingly picking up his sleeping bag and leaving his own home to spend a cheerless night amidst the ruins of an old igloo, was certainly a gentleman." And, too, he recognizes the bravery which meets and conquers the hardest conditions of life with a smile.

His descriptions of winter travel and of the phenomena of the Arctic leave little to be told, and to those who have had the experience they bring vividly to mind the very feeling of the storm and of the clear, cold glory of the long northern night.

His notes of the voyages of the early navigators and travelers are full and well chosen, interesting, and valuable, but he overlooks the Russian Kashavarof in his voyage in 1838, and the visit of Lieutenants Hooper and Pullen in search of Sir John Franklin in 1849, in reviewing the notable early visitors to Point Barrow.

There is but one unpleasant feature and that is in his criticism of certain school work with which he came in contact, to the extent of commenting on correspondence of which he was not in position to understand and dictate upon. Also with reference to Noorvik, the transplanted colony, taken from the treeless coast of Kotzebue Sound to the forested reaches of the Kobuk as an experiment in bettering the condition of the native. It is too early to make comments on the results. The reindeer experiment of Dr. Jackson was most caustically criticised in its earlier years, but it stands today the most notable achievement of the United States rule of Alaska, and it is to be hoped that religious prejudice against the guiding leaders at Noorvik did not prompt the remarks.

No book of recent Arctic travel excels the work in its richness of anecdote and allusion, or in its human interest, while but few of any time equal it. The road is not an entirely new one but no one who has before traveled it did so with the same interest in its life in every way as has this sourdough traveler of the Northland.

C. L. ANDREWS.

Adventures of Oregon, A Chronicle of the Fur Trade. By CONSTANCE L. SKINNER. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920. Pp. x+290.)

Like the other volumes in "The Chronicles of America" series, edited by Allen Johnson, of Yale University, this book tells the story in graphic style with emphasis on the dramatic and exciting