

Opening a Highway to the Pacific, 1838-1846. By JAMES CHRISTY BELL, JUNIOR. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1921. Pp. 211. \$3.00.)

Readers of the *Washington Historical Quarterly* will find in Dr. James C. Bell's *Opening a Highway to the Pacific* a new interpretation of the events leading to the acquisition by the United States of the Oregon country. An examination of the volume shows a thorough command of the literature bearing upon the subject. Several rare and unusual sources have been effectively employed. In addition to this new material, all of the more useful and generally accessible items seem to have been well covered.

The author's avowed purpose is to discover the motives that actuated the immigration to Oregon, especially during the later thirties and earlier forties. He diagnoses the "Oregon Fever" and finds that neither politics nor religion were essential factors. He concludes that the fundamental cause of the phenomenal exodus to Oregon was agrarian discontent. Over production in the Middle West and the hope of better markets in a new country led forth these pioneer settlers. As a class they were substantial farmers and mechanics looking for relief from a financial emergency. They were not radicals but rather conservatives, seeking a new geographical location but not a changed position in society.

As a study of economic motives, the reviewer regards this volume as a substantial contribution to Oregon history. The main flow of the author's argument, however, is impeded by extraneous material. To a general reader this material adds background and atmosphere; to the student it is a source of vexation and delay. As a whole the volume is attractive; illustrations and a map are provided. The author is especially to be commended for full and accurate citations to the numerous authorities consulted.

CHARLES W. SMITH

The Study of American History. By VISCOUNT BRYCE. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922. Pp. 118. \$1.50.)

There could have been no better choice for the inaugural lecturer of the new chair of American History, Literature and Institutions, established by the Anglo-American Society in 1920, than Viscount Bryce, much beloved by both Americans and his own