

BOOK REVIEWS

The American Indian. An Introduction to the Anthropology of the New World. By CLARK WISSELER. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1922. Pp. 474 & xxi; 83 illustrations and maps. \$5.00.)

This is history. Despite the modest title, this book can lay claim to have welded New World cultures into a synthetic whole, which others have been chary of doing. That is no mean feat for the cultures are diverse and the methods must be largely inferential. Hence all who are interested in Indians, the development of civilizations, and historical methods will welcome this second edition, with its enlarged sections on chronology and the non-material sides of life.

Dr. Wissler does not claim to have begun the writing of the history of Indian cultures with this book. Fundamentally it is based on Boas' paper, *The History of the American Race* and the methods have long been set forth by Sapir in *Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture*. But it represents a summation of all the contributions of American anthropologists, and as a first approximation is likely to stand for some time.

It is more than history. It might properly be described as the first study of anthropology in a special area from the standpoint of the American school. It is interesting to note how little aware these ethnologists have been as to the systematic way they have developed and applied such concepts as culture area, trait distribution, pattern phenomenon, and so on, in their attempts to get at the dynamics of culture growth. Dr. Wissler has coordinated the ideas: he might have called the book "Culture Determinants, or Factors in the Growth of Civilizations."

Historians will undoubtedly be first struck with the extensive way in which distribution of tools, ideas, and ceremonies are figured. The approach is always through the distribution of a trait: here it originated and thence it spread. Dr. Wissler is so prolific with suggestions of this sort that a degree of rashness in asserting identity may be forgiven him. Hazards of this sort are to be expected so long as large and crucial areas, such as Washington and Oregon, remain practically unknown. Much of the history of our local

Indians can still be unravelled if we fill these gaps, but it means rapid and effective work to save the dwindling remnant of knowledge.

LESLIE SPIER.

Official Explorations for Pacific Railroads. By GEORGE LESLIE ALBRIGHT. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1921. Pp. 187. \$1.50.)

This is a valuable study of an important phase of western history. The entire Pacific Coast is involved as well as the regions traversed in surveying four possible routes from the Mississippi River westward. The northern route is, of course, especially interesting to readers in the Pacific Northwest. The surveying of that route was in charge of Governor Isaac I. Stevens. His work is mentioned in the preliminary chapters and then Chapter IV. is given wholly to that subject under the title: "Stevens's Explorations Between the Forty-seventh and Forty-ninth Parallels." This chapter covers pages 44 to 84. The spirit of the author is revealed by the last paragraph of this chapter as follows:

"The energy of Governor Stevens had enabled him to make one of the first Pacific railroad reports, on June 30, 1854. His ability is further attested by the fact that his was the only survey from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean under a single commander. The zeal and thoroughness with which he had accomplished it were characteristic of the man; and these traits were further displayed in his administration as first Governor of Washington Territory."

After discussing all four routes under those surveys, the author closes his chapter called "Conclusion" as follows:

"By 1855 Secretary of War Jefferson Davis was able to make his recommendation to Congress. He advocated the thirty-second parallel route as the most practicable of the four recommended to the War Department; it was the least costly route, the shortest, and the work upon it would be less interrupted by climate than upon any other route. Davis has been accused of allowing his sectional feelings to influence his judgment, but there can be no doubt that he was absolutely unpartisan in this respect. Upon the most northern survey he had expended almost double the amount given to any other section; but numerous explorations had demonstrated the superiority of the most southern.

"Despite the added information for which Congress had asked