

BOOK REVIEWS

The Oregon Trail. By FRANCIS PARKMAN. Edited with notes and an Introduction by James Cloyd Bowman. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924. Pp. 433. \$1.00.)

If proof were needed to show the continuing popularity of Parkman's great classic, one would need only to list the number of publishers who in recent years have brought out editions of *The Oregon Trail*. The first three editions came from the house of Putnam, the fourth and many succeeding printings were issued by Little, Brown and Company of Boston. Beginning with 1910, distinct editions have been published by the following houses: Macmillan, Ginn, Longmans, Merrill, Newson, Scott, Foresman and Company, the Educational Publishing Company, Henry Holt, and last by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Parkman's narrative is classified both with history and literature. The editors of the various school editions appear to be about equally divided between professors of history and teachers of English. The editor of the present edition, Professor James C. Bowman, belongs to the latter group. He gives the literary estimate of the book in the following terms: "This then is the value of *The Oregon Trail*; it contains full and accurate observation of the primitive Indian in the remote fastnesses, uninfluenced by the White man. It also depicts the restless coming of the White man into these remote fastnesses. The conditions it describes have forever vanished; they can never again be observed at first hand: *The Oregon Trail* remains without rival in vividness or reality, the authentic record of this period. It is picturesque in the extreme, and ever reliable from the point of view of historic fact. But the story is not history; it is literature. It is told in a style as fascinating and compelling as that of Cooper at his best. Whether one reads for content or for language, one is satisfied. This perfect blending of matter and manner, of subject-matter and style, establishes *The Oregon Trail* firmly as an American literary masterpiece."

The present edition is well edited, well printed, substantially bound and issued at a reasonable price.