

Passing the apex of his usefulness and efficiency due to advancing years, to the permanency of the increasing white population needing no frontiersman's service, and to the need for younger men as army guides and scouts, his career seems to have rolled up suddenly like a scroll."

During his lifetime (1804-1881) James Bridger saw many transformations take place in the West. He entered the Rocky Mountains early in life and viewed them in their pristine grandeur; he probably first of all white men saw the waters of Great Salt Lake; probably also he was with the first party that went through the South Pass. He was in close contact with the great migrations which passed across the plains during the decade of the forties, the decade in which the ownership of Oregon was finally determined; he witnessed and participated in the subjugation of the Indians in the West, and even lived long years after the West had been united to the East with rails of steel. Before death overtook him the Northwest had been organized into its present-day political units and these were making rapid strides toward the goal of statehood. Truly these were wonderful changes for one man to view at close range.

As a part of this book there is included General Dodge's *Biographical Sketch of James Bridger*, which has for some years been out of print. This reprint, with annotations, is in itself a useful contribution to the historical literature of the Northwest; but the work is made still more valuable by the addition of a bibliography of one hundred titles and an analytical index. The bibliography is a list of the references which the author has cited. The edition consists of one thousand numbered copies, each of which has been autographed by the author.

In bringing together in one volume a great deal of useful material that has been buried in rare publications Mr. Alter has performed a distinct service to students of Northwest history. He has done his work carefully and thoroughly, and his publishers have turned out for him a very attractive volume.

J. ORIN OLIPHANT.

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*Paul Bunyan.* By JAMES STEVENS. Woodcuts by Allen Lewis. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925. Pp. 245. \$2.50).

When Dr. V. L. O. Chittick, in his review of Esther Shephard's *Paul Bunyan* for *The Washington Historical Quarterly*, stated his opinion that Paul Bunyan "is much too coarse and

earthy a creation to be transferred to poetry" and further that whoever shall attempt to draw a picture of him will find that "every vestige of the marvelous vanishes from him instantly" he would seem to have discovered some of the challenges of the subject that Mr. Stevens and Mr. Lewis had already made up their minds to accept. And evidences of the difficulty of their task are manifest in their book.

In surmounting this difficulty both Mr. Stevens and Mr. Lewis have sought the aid of an art more sophisticated than would probably be understood by any Shanty Boy who has contributed to the building of the epic. In his introduction Mr. Stevens indeed confesses to being under the aegis of Mr. H. L. Mencken, and Mr. Lewis's woodcuts are indubitably right for a "Borzoi Book." At their happiest both have shown that the methods of contemporary art are ingenious with however difficult a problem; but neither has disproved Dr. Chittick's contention that the essential Paul Bunyan of the logging camps is intractable to their purposes. Neither the Gulliverian Paul Bunyan of the frontispiece nor the descending Jove of the tailpiece is quite the heroically vulgar and inconsequential figure that Mrs. Shephard has revealed so authentically in her version of the character. Nor is there much of the accent of a Paul Bunyan known to any skidway in him who "solemnly and warningly spoke"—to his loggers—"of the shadowy workings of fate, and in somber utterance. . . . portrayed the pathos of yearnings, the frailties of blessings and the ultimate vanity of all endeavor."

Mr. Stevens has nevertheless written an alluring book. In the fact that he has dealt freely with his materials lies no proof that he dealt ill with them. Some of the conditions imposed upon him by his subject are, it is true, impossible. Not even Mr. Stevens can persuade us to accept wholly a Gulliver who is at the same time a Lilliputian, a giant who is not a giant but simply a biggest logger. For Mrs. Shephard there was no such problem—she was frankly telling us a tall tale which attempted no effects subtle enough to require a poetic verisimilitude. But the Paul Bunyan of Mr. Stevens is no mere grotesque—he is a poet and a philosopher, a pathetic as well as an heroic figure. It is because he finally wins us to this conception despite our partial or temporary refusals that Mr. Stevens may be credited with having made poetry out of this raw stuff from the logging camps. He has preserved enough of the unique atmosphere of the camps and accepted

enough from the invention of the bards of the woods to give his book some historical significance; but chiefly he has used these materials as his box of toys and has made from them a story that is intriguing indeed, but probably much more intriguing to book-buyers and patrons of circulating libraries than it would be to the bunkhouse cranks if it were recited to them at the camp on Onion River.

JOSEPH B. HARRISON.

*The Trail Blazers.*— By MARY H. WADE. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1924. Pp. 276. \$1.65).

*Canada's Great Highway.* By J. H. E. SECRETAN. (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head Ltd., 1924. Pp. 252. \$2.50).

*Trail Life in the Canadian Rockies.* By B. W. MITCHELL. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1924. \$3.00).

*White Indian.* By EDWIN L. SABIN. (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Company, 1925. \$2.00).

An increasing interest in the annals of the Great American West has led to the publication of a variety of books. Among recent volumes are two that deal with the Oregon Trail, one a novel, "White Indian," and the other, "The Trail Blazers" a new rendering of the Lewis and Clark expedition for boys and girls from ten to fifteen. The background for the novel is found in the far west mountain country around 1835 and its theme is the regeneration of an Englishman through the help of his squaw and a white girl he had loved before he west West. The story is filled with Indian life and lore and with the romance of the mountain country.

In the second book, Miss Wade has succeeded in telling the more picturesque portions of the Lewis and Clark story with accuracy and enthusiasm. In employing a somewhat conversational style, she gives her account the flavor of deeds actually performed and dreams that once filled the hearts of adventurous men. The story of the Bird Woman is emphasized but on the whole it reads very much as if Miss Wade had made good use of the original material. The book deserves to be recommended for young readers.

From the canoe and the pack, we turn to the railroad. In Mr. Secretan's account of Canada's Great Highway, we have an informal narrative of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway from 1871 to 1885 by an engineer who helped to build the road.