

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley: an Account of Marches and Activities of the First Regiment United States Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley between the Years 1833 and 1850. By LOUIS PELZER. (Iowa City, State Historical Society of Iowa, 1917. x, 282 p.)

From 1833 to 1850, the boundary dates of this book, the frontier of settlement in America remained more nearly permanent than during any similar length of time before or since. It was agreed on all sides that the limit of white settlement was in sight. The great western plains were impossible from an agricultural standpoint; white men could never prosper there. This situation was by no means unfortunate for it made easy the solution of the Indian problem. A wise providence had stocked the plains with an inexhaustible supply of game, thus fitting them superbly to become the future home of all the Indians. Apologies for the policy of removal were, therefore, unnecessary. The whites were manifestly destined to inhabit the eastern half of the continent, but the Far West was as obviously reserved forever to the Indians. Between the two sections a line of forts, garrisoned by United States troops, guaranteed peace to white and redskin alike.

Mr. Pelzer's book is designed to be a "cross sectional view" of the work of the army in maintaining this frontier. The First Regiment of United States Dragoons, whose marches and countermarches it chronicles, was organized in 1833 for service in the West. Recruits from all sections of the union were gathered and trained at St. Louis, and afterwards in detachments, small and large, they were sent throughout the western half of the Mississippi Valley "in the work of frontier defense, garrison duty, treaty negotiations, marches, expeditions, patrol duty, exploration, and in the enforcement of federal laws." During the seventeen years that the book covers, certainly the dragoons engaged in about all the types of army service possible and in

giving a history of their marches the author achieves his objective. The reader gets unmistakable impressions of the character of army life along the frontier.

The facts which the book records, Mr. Pelzer tells us, were gleaned from "officers' reports, the accounts of travellers, post records, diaries, journals, order books, and correspondence," a great quantity of which he has been at some pains to examine. By consolidating the reference notes into about twenty pages at the end of the volume instead of distributing them through the text, as customarily is done, the author avoids the necessity of a formal bibliography, yet presents in compact form a critical estimate of his sources. While the exploitation of this material brings out little that is essentially new, the reader will willingly concede that it "enriches our knowledge of the staples of western history." We are not only given additional proof of the weakness of the American army, but we get "close-up" views of the results of the policy of Indian removal, of the government's efforts to maintain its treaties, and to preserve order among the western settlers as well as among the Indians themselves. We see the soldier unconsciously at work to destroy the frontier he is meant to protect, opening up and guarding new routes of trade and travel, and occasionally revealing the fitness of bits of country for white habitation. We find overwhelming evidence of the efficacy of whiskey, sold at the "exorbitant price" of "25 cts a pt" (p. 31), in undermining the character of Indian and soldier alike.

But the narrative is undeniably monotonous. Possibly part of this monotony is unavoidable, but the plan of the book does nothing to lessen it. The volume contains seventeen chapters of an average length of about twelve pages. Nearly every chapter is the record of an expedition in which some of the dragoons participated. In chapter 4 a visit is made to the Pawnee Pict village, in chapter 5 Colonel Kearny leads his command along the River Des Moines, in chapter 6 the Dragoons march all the way to the Rocky Mountains, this being "the eleventh mounted expedition of Colonel Henry Dodge," and so on. With unavoidable changes of scenery, quantity and quality of Indians, buffalo, and water, each journey is like the other. One recalls almost with

a feeling of affection the ever recurring "From thence they proceeded" of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Nor is the situation greatly improved by the author's frequent desire to feature "the beauties of a prodigal nature" (p. 54), and to describe minutely the animal life of the plains in precivilized times. Buffalo become especially wearisome. On fifty-seven out of two hundred and thirty-seven pages the diligent indexer has found them in sufficient numbers to justify mention.

An appendix of more than fifty pages reproduces the *Journal* for the spring and summer of 1843 of Captain Nathan Boone, a son of Daniel Boone. In this year Captain Boone as an officer of the Dragoons explored a considerable part of the territory drained by the Arkansas River and its branches, and in the *Journal* he records the daily activities of his party. The document contains extensive, and possibly valuable, observations on the geological formation, vegetation, and game of the region, but on the whole is rather a tedious performance.

JOHN D. HICKS

The Political History of the Public Lands from 1840 to 1862.

By GEORGE M. STEPHENSON, PH. D. (Boston, Richard G. Badger, 1917. 296 p.)

In this interesting and valuable study the author has attempted three things: (1) "to trace the history of the public land legislation in Congress;" (2) "to portray the sentiment of the different sections of the country relative to the disposal of the public domain;" and (3) "to estimate the influence of the public lands on the political and legislative situation in general in the period from 1840 to 1862." The study which has been accepted as a doctoral dissertation at Harvard, is based upon extensive research, particularly in the *Congressional Globe* and contemporary newspapers, the former being the principal source for the legislative history and the latter for reflecting the sentiment of the country. The work indicates a careful reading of many newspapers of the period in all sections of the country, the files in the Harvard College Library, the Boston Public Library, the Library of Congress, and the libraries of the state historical societies of Wisconsin and Minnesota being used for this purpose. This

volume will be of particular interest to readers in Minnesota because of the extensive use made of Minnesota newspapers and the frequency of footnote references to this material. The *Congressional Globe* and the newspapers, extensive as the list of the latter is, by no means constitute the only materials covered by the researches of the author. Other materials consist of contemporary correspondence, memoirs, and diaries. The reader is impressed with the careful and diligent work of the author, and the frequency of footnote references makes it possible to check the accuracy of his conclusions. One chapter is devoted to bibliography, but this is not critical as regards secondary material.

The work is divided into fifteen chapters, the first six of which deal with the history of the public lands to the beginning of national homestead agitation. Distribution, preëmption, and graduation, the bearing of these upon the tariff and other questions of the time, and the attitude of the sections towards these various phases of the public land question are carefully traced out by the author. The hostility of the South towards homestead legislation, the connection between the homestead bill and the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the relation of the homestead question to the election of 1860 are all considered. These chapters constitute a refreshing and, in some ways, a new view of old and familiar topics. The importance of the public lands in our national history has not until recently been adequately considered. That they had a very great importance cannot be doubted; that the importance might be over emphasized in a special study of this kind must also be recognized. The reader of this volume has the feeling that the author has adequately brought out the significance of the public lands without giving them undue importance, particularly as regards the relation of the homestead-movement to the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the election of 1860.

The book is readable and the text is accompanied by several maps showing the votes in Congress on various phases of public land legislation. Some minor errors have crept in, but these in no way mar the many good features of the book, which is a distinct contribution to our knowledge of this interesting and important phase of our history.

The Fur Trade of North America and Some of the Men Who Made It and Maintain It. By ALBERT LORD BELDEN. (New York, The Peltries Publishing Company, 1917. 591 p.)

In the absence of both a preface and an introduction the reader can only conjecture that the purpose of the author in writing this book was to provide a handbook of furs and the fur trade. The volume consists of brief sketches and notes on the various aspects of the fur trade, principally in North America. These include descriptions of fur bearing animals and their habits, methods of trapping, the preparation and marketing of skins, the history of the trade in well-known American markets, sketches of men and firms identified with this business, and explanations of trade terms and customs.

It is to be regretted that after having collected a large amount of material the author of this somewhat bulky volume did not spend enough additional time and work in the task of organizing his results to make them readily accessible. The reader is confused by a quantity of information put together with little apparent regard for unity of thought or chronological order. "Early Traders," "New York," "Methods," "Boston," and the modern "Cold Storage" follow each other in rapid succession, while biographical sketches of prominent furriers are inserted between descriptions of "Muskrats" and "Civit Cats," "Automobile Furs" and "Prime—Unprime" furs. There are no references to the sources the author has used, so the reader is unable to determine how exhaustive his study has been. Much of his information seems to have been drawn from secondary material with the result that omissions and errors have crept in. In describing the fur trade in St. Paul and Minneapolis (pp. 92-98) Mr. Belden makes no mention of Henry H. Sibley who, as a partner in the American Fur Company, exercised a powerful influence on the fur trade of the Northwest for many years. Norman W. Kittson (p. 26) did not come to Fort Snelling until 1834. Moreover he was engaged at the fort as a sutler for four years before opening a trading post for himself. In a general survey of the North American fur trade a mere mention is not an adequate notice of Manuel Lisa (p. 81) whose life is inseparably linked with the development of the early Missouri fur

trade. These and similar shortcomings lead to the conclusion that the author has not sufficiently evaluated and organized his material.

Nevertheless the book is an interesting one; it is well printed and attractively illustrated. Much of the material is unique, while an index goes far toward remedying the deficiencies in organization. Doubtless many readers will welcome it as a suggestive and usable reference book.

JEANNETTE SAUNDERS

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

An interesting paper on "The Influence of Geographic Factors in the Development of Minnesota" was read by Mr. Chessley J. Posey, assistant professor of geography at the University of Minnesota, at the stated meeting of the executive council on April 8. The meeting was open to the public and was attended by an audience of about sixty members of the society and others.

The museum and gallery on the third floor of the Historical Building were opened to the public on April 8. All exhibits will be temporary in character until the new equipment of cases is received, and even then it is expected that much of the material will be kept in storage the greater part of the time. It will be so arranged, however, as to be readily accessible, and from it selections will be made from time to time for special exhibits. One such special exhibit of objects of war interest was on display during April and plans have been made for exhibits in connection with the dedication of the building. The number of visitors to the museum now averages about sixty a day.

The following new members, all active, have been enrolled during the quarter ending April 31, 1918: Walter L. Mayo and George T. Withy of St. Paul; George M. Stephenson of Minneapolis; and Charles H. Hopkins of Fairfax. Deaths among the members during the same period were as follows: Francis A. Sampson of Columbia, Missouri, February 4; William Jay Whipple of Winona, February 5; Hon. George N. Lamphere of Palouse, Washington, February 10; Hubert Howe Bancroft of San Francisco, March 2; Hon. Lyndon A. Smith of St. Paul, March 5; John A. Stees of St. Paul, April 14; and Hon. Frank Ives of Cass Lake, April 16.

GIFTS

Through the courtesy of Dr. Folwell the society has received two small but valuable collections of manuscripts. These consist of some papers of Hon. William S. King, presented by his

grandson Mr. Lindon S. King of Minneapolis, and some papers of Rev. T. S. Williamson, the pioneer missionary, presented by Mrs. Helen M. Williamson, widow of his son Henry M. Williamson, who died recently at Portland, Oregon.

Dr. Folwell was also instrumental in obtaining for the society a copy of the "Boyhood Reminiscences of General Huggins," recently written by General Eli Lundy Huggins for his nephews. As the son of Alexander Huggins, a Presbyterian missionary to the Sioux, General Huggins experienced many of the hardships and adventures of pioneer life in Minnesota, some of which he describes most entertainingly. Of especial interest are his account of a trip made in an ox cart from Traverse des Sioux to Lac Qui Parle, October, 1845, and his description of a keel boat voyage from Lac Qui Parle to Kaposia and return, on which he accompanied his parents in August, 1849.

Company C of the One Hundred and Thirty Fifth United States Infantry (First Minnesota) has deposited its trophies with the society for the duration of the war. These consist of a flag used by the company in the battle of Manila, a "National Defense Trophy" shield, and a large number of loving cups. The latter are kept in two mahogany cases which are now placed in the second floor corridor of the Historical Building.

From Dr. Guy S. Ford, a member of the council of this society who is now serving as chairman of the division of civic and educational coöperation of the Committee on Public Information in Washington, the society has received samples of some of the the literature prepared by the Committee on Public Information to be dropped behind the German lines from aeroplanes. These consist of German translations of President Wilson's addresses to Congress on December 5 and January 8. In the latter special attention is drawn by means of underscoring to the parts of the addresses which were not printed in the German papers.

The Plymouth Church (Minneapolis) has presented bound volumes of its calendars for the years 1915, 1916, and 1917, which bring the society's file, beginning with the year 1911, up to January, 1918. With the weekly calendars are bound programs

of various church organizations and pamphlet editions of sermons. This policy of depositing ephemeral material with the society is one that may well be adopted by other churches, for it insures a complete and permanent file that is accessible to the public as well as to the people directly interested in the church.

Mr. Stan. D. Donnelly of St. Paul has presented to the society an excellent portrait of his grandfather, Ignatius Donnelly, painted by Nicholas Brewer about 1890. Inasmuch as the society possesses a very large and valuable collection of the papers of Ignatius Donnelly, it is peculiarly appropriate that this painting should be preserved in its gallery.

To S. W. Frasier of St. Paul and E. F. Joubert of Wheaton the society is indebted for files of the *Browns Valley Reporter* from May 20, 1880 to July 4, 1889 and of the *Inter-Laken Tribune* (Browns Valley) from March to June, 1897. The *Reporter* was started by Mr. Frasier in 1880 and was the first paper printed in Traverse County.

Mrs. E. C. Becker of St. Paul recently presented a framed pastel portrait of her father, George Augustus Hamilton, done by "Jaeger" in 1888. Mr. Hamilton was a member of the society and served as its president in 1869.

The firm of Lee Brothers, photographers of St. Paul, has presented, through Mr. K. L. Fenney, a set of twelve panorama pictures of units of Minnesota troops engaged in the war.

A muzzle-loading rifle, a powder horn, and a deerskin pouch, which were for years the property of John Bateman of Spring Valley, one of the pioneers of southern Minnesota, have been presented by G. W. Bateman of Alexandria and W. H. Loomis of Richey, Montana, son and grandson of Mr. Bateman. A short history of the gun, written by John Bateman in 1905, accompanies the gifts.

Mr. Joseph N. Prokes of Jackson, Minnesota, has presented two old copper kettles found by him several years ago near the Des Moines River in Jackson County. They appear to be of European manufacture, and it is surmised that they were lost or abandoned by some pioneer settler at the time of the Indian outbreak. These articles are interesting additions to the museum.

NEWS AND COMMENT

The Nebraska State Historical Society has begun the publication of a monthly paper entitled *Nebraska History and Record of Pioneer Days*, the first issue of which appeared in February. The editor, Addison E. Sheldon, superintendent of the society states that "It is the intention to make this journal a piece of popular literature,—as distinguished from academic. It will aim to present in clear and attractive form, fact, story, comment and criticism relating to the history of Nebraska."

In a brief survey entitled, *The American Indians North of Mexico*, (Cambridge, 1917. 169 p.) William H. Miner has undertaken to supply a want which he feels exists for a "readable, comprehensive . . . authentic account of the original inhabitants of the American continent, which may . . . be termed popular." The book contains a bibliography designed especially for the use of persons wishing to begin a reading course on the American Indians.

The American Indian Magazine for October–December, 1917, is a special Sioux number, and contains much material of interest to the student of the history of this tribe. Among the contributions are "The Sioux Outbreak of 1862," by Arthur C. Parker, and "The Sioux of Yesterday and Today," by Charles A. Eastman.

An article on "Indian Land Titles in Minnesota," by Gordon Cain, in the February number of the *Minnesota Law Review* summarizes the legal aspects of the famous White Earth land cases which play so prominent a part in the recent history of the Ojibway Indians.

Both the March and the April issues of *Iowa and War* contain material of Minnesota interest. The former consists of a brief sketch of "The Black Hawk War," by Jacob Van der Zee, and the latter is devoted to an account of "Border Defense in Iowa During the Civil War," by Dan E. Clark. Mr. Clark's

narrative treats of the effect upon the neighboring state of the Sioux uprising in Minnesota.

A suggestive piece of work in the field of local history is *Iowa Stories*, Book One, (Iowa City, 1917. 138 p.) by Clarence R. Aurner. The book is a series of brief essays on Iowa pioneer life, written in a simple style for the use of school children.

The Ashley-Smith Explorations and the Discovery of a Central Route to the Pacific, 1822-1829 (Cleveland, Arthur H. Clark Company, 1918. 352 p.) is a valuable contribution to the history of the Far West. The editor, Harrison Clifford Dale, has included, besides the original journals, accounts of the fur trade and explorations in the region before and during the period covered by the journals themselves.

Ernest Cawcroft contributes a sketch of "Donald Mackenzie; King of the Northwest," to the February issue of the *Canadian Magazine*. In it he states that a biography of this important figure in the history of the fur trade is being written by Alexander Mackenzie of Toronto.

"A Comparison of Transportation on the Mississippi Basin Rivers and the Great Lakes," by A. E. Parkins, in the *Journal of Geography* for February deals mainly with present day conditions but contains some historical material.

In its series on "State Builders of the West," the *Western Magazine* includes sketches of "Stephen Miller, Fourth Governor of Minnesota," in the February number and "William R. Marshall, Fifth Governor of Minnesota," in the April number. The April number contains also a sketch of St. Cloud, under the heading "O-za-te (The Forks of the Road)," by C. L. Llewellyn, which is partly historical. In the March number is an article entitled "Developing an Insurance Center," by Edmond L. DeLestry, which contains information about the history of insurance companies in the Twin Cities.

Sections five and six of the second volume of *Danske i Amerika*, which appeared recently, contain considerable material relating to the Danish element in Minnesota. The publication of this work was begun by the C. Rasmussen Company, Minneapolis,

in 1917. The first volume deals with the Danish immigration as a whole, while the second volume, which is being published serially, contains studies of this element in special localities.

En Norsk Bygds Historie (1917. 240 p.) is the title of a history of a Norwegian settlement in North Bottineau County, North Dakota, by Olav Redal. The book contains a large amount of biographical material.

Salomons Almanak for 1917: De Forenende Staters Danske Almanak, Haand og Aarbog (Seattle, 1917. 208 p.) is the fourth of an interesting series of year books edited by Michael Salomon. In addition to a valuable collection of data on the Danish element in the United States, the book contains a "Who's Who" of Danish Americans.

The translation of Ole Rynning's *True Account of America* by Theodore C. Blegen, which appears in the November number of the BULLETIN, is noticed in two Scandinavian papers. In the *Minneapolis Tidende* of February 28, Carl G. O. Hansen discusses Mr. Blegen's work at some length, including in his review a sketch of Rynning. A briefer notice is printed in the February 20 issue of *Folkebladet* (Minneapolis). Both reviewers feel that the translating and editing of this little book is an important contribution to the study of the Scandinavian element in America.

The *History Teachers' Magazine* for February reprints Carl Becker's article on "The Monroe Doctrine and the War" from the May, 1917, number of the MINNESOTA HISTORY BULLETIN.

The *Minneapolis Tribune* of March 31 contains an article entitled "The Giant Dam That Harnesses Energy of Mighty Chippewa River," which is of interest to Minnesotans because it attributes the early development of water power on the Chippewa to one of Minnesota's pioneer lumbermen, Frederick Weyerhaeuser. As a preface to a description of a large present-day project to utilize the water power of the Chippewa Falls, the *Tribune* tells of the lumber mills operated by the Chippewa Lumber and Boom Company, in which Mr. Weyerhaeuser was a controlling factor, in the days when lumbering was at its height in that region.

The November 4, 1917, issue of the *La Crosse Tribune and Leader-Press* contains an excellent biographical sketch of Cadwallader C. Washburn who, while not a citizen of Minnesota, was closely identified with its economic history as the builder and developer of the famous Washburn mills, which he established in Minneapolis in 1876.

Under the title "Interesting Grain Case of 1869-72" the *Lake City Graphic Republican* of March 22 prints the history of a suit started by some Wabasha County farmers to determine the title to a large amount of wheat which had been secretly sold and shipped by the Atkinson and Kellogg Elevator Company, with whom the farmers had deposited their grain for safe-keeping.

The March 10 issue of the *Minneapolis Journal* contains an article in which the general development of the banking business in Minneapolis during the last quarter of a century is discussed in connection with an account of some of the earlier banks and bankers.

"Fifty Years Old Today," is the title of an historical résumé of the *St. Paul Dispatch* which appears in the February 28 issue of that paper. In addition to an account of the growth and development of the *Dispatch*, the article contains biographical material concerning the men most closely identified with its history.

"The History of Medicine in Minneapolis," by Dr. Arthur S. Hamilton is published in three parts in the *Journal-Lancet*, beginning with the March number. The article contains considerable valuable material, much of which the author gathered from the files of the Twin City newspapers.

The reminiscences of George Day, in which he describes his experiences as a pioneer in the region of Excelsior, have appeared serially in recent issues of the *Minnetonka Record*. Of especial interest is his account of the numerous unsuccessful attempts to establish cities on the shores of Lake Minnetonka, most of which failed during the Panic of 1857.

In an article entitled, "University of Minnesota Will Be 50 Years Old Tomorrow," the *Minneapolis Journal* of February 17

surveys briefly conditions in the University when it was established and at the present time. Pictures of "Old Main," the first president, William Watts Folwell, and President Burton, accompany the article.

The origin of township names in Dakota County is discussed in the January 18 issue of the *Dakota County Tribune*.

A brief history of the Christian Church at Austin is printed in the *Mower County Transcript-Republican* of January 23 in connection with an account of the dedication of a new church building.

The February 27 issue of the *St. Cloud Times* contains an historical résumé of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of St. Cloud, which dedicated a new church building Sunday, February 24.

In its account of the annual meeting of the Waseca County Anti-Horse Thief Detective Society held at Waseca, February 16, the *Waseca Journal Radical* of February 20 tells something of the early work of this organization, which was established in pioneer days.

The Lake Pepin Valley Old Settlers' Association held its annual meeting at Lake City, February 7; the Winona County Old Settlers' Association met at Winona, February 22; the Danish Pioneers met in Minneapolis, February 24; and the annual meeting of the Canby Old Settlers' Association was held at Canby, March 13.

In its issues from November 3, to February 9 the *Saturday Evening Post* (Burlington, Iowa) publishes an account of the "Indian Outbreak" by William Cairncross in which he tells of his experiences in the region of Fort Ridgely and New Ulm during the Sioux uprising. The "Tales of a Grandfather" by the same author, which are now appearing in the *Post*, contain considerable information concerning early social and economic conditions in Minnesota.



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