

Western History

CALIFORNIA. Los Angeles: The Powell Publishing Company. 1929-30. 9 vols. \$5 each.

Reviewed by HERBERT INGRAM PRIESTLEY
University of California

THE genus *Californiana* is a hardy perennial, but this is the first species to be evolved as a collaborative effort by a group almost exclusively of Southern California writers. Several of them have had experience and training in the north, but only two are not now residents of the "metropolitan area" of the south. Nearly all of them are of established reputation in research or teaching in Western history.

But this series is not quite a history, though the genetic treatment prevails, the intent being to present a general survey of the chief elements of California's colorful individuality. There is, indeed, a studied effort to avoid the appearance of stilted erudition, footnoting and citation being reduced to the minimum, lest the avid seeker after information be scared away by such props to authority. So too, these very well-known professors are deprived of their academic handles, and fare forth like Haroun-al-Raschid o' nights, to stand on their own as free lances in the literary circumjacence. No bad thing for my professorial friends, but I still have enough faith in the reading public to believe that it does not discredit historians because of their methods and paraphernalia.

Some of the prefaces indicate that the writers have felt qualms of modesty at launching upon the sea of popularity, and they have included bibliographies and appendices to buttress their psychic dislocation in the new *milieu*. These accoutrements are excellent, but for the popular reader needlessly prolix; and professional students will seek such aids in the professional writings.

The hand of the publisher is seen in various extrinsic devices; bindings, end-papers, illustrations, and so on are uniform, and the treatment is basically informative and encyclopædic. The volumes are not numbered, and each is complete in itself, so that the Californian may lug home one or the nine, as the spirit moves, with no sense of disloyalty or incompleteness.

Notwithstanding this feature, there is a chronological sequence, even in sugar-coated history. Robert Glass Cleland in "Pathfinders" begins the series with the coming of the pioneers, from Rodríguez Cabrillo in the 1540's to our John C. Frémont. It is of course a well-beaten path for the last half-century; and if Dean Cleland treads it all again without *élan*, there is no lack of detention and completeness in each chosen vignette. Explorers, missionaries, fur-sealers, trappers, adventurers, follow each other in a continuing pageant replete with human interest and philosophic interpretation. An appendix contains a valuable, freshly printed source, "The Narrative of Benjamin D. Wilson," a pioneer statement, collected in 1877, by the tireless H. H. Bancroft for use in his "History of the Pacific Slope."

Cleland and his collaborator, Dr. Osgood Hardy, also present the seventh volume, "The March of Industry." The authors essay to describe "the material progress of California . . . as accurately and dispassionately as possible, avoiding loose generalizations and wilful exaggeration." Just what a passionate portrayal of material progress would be like, guess you; but as for absence of wilful exaggeration, all the world knows that no Californian is capable of abstinence from this great Western outdoor sport; when we tell the unvarnished truth the Eastern cousin knows we are lying, but swallows our "wilful" fairy tales with eyes all popping. The volume begins with the economic activities of the old Franciscan missions, goes on to the advent of the foreign intruders in trade, and then presents mining industry, agriculture, water-power, forestry, and finance. A pretty good bite for two historians, here turned economists in the best moods of Cronise and Hittell, from the latter of whom is excerpted the shameful story of the American spoliation of the early Spanish and Mexican land grants. Our incipient imperialism of the 'fifties reflected the last phase of our bare-faced land-hunger, and it was well enough to let an eye-witness of legal training tell the story. "The March of Industry" contains a wealth of statistical material from many official sources, and many maps of California resources. The volume epitomizes all the wizardry of the combination of mild climate, varied

resource, and abounding human energy working under free political conditions.

To return to chronology: in "Spanish Arcadia" Mrs. Nellie V. Sánchez is happy in description of idyllic mission days and cattle ranchos. Emphasis is on the human element, the social, not the political, process. In spite of the fact that some of our founders of California pueblos were Aztec Indians and halfbreed negroes, there was a selective process in culling even these pioneers; they had to be fit physically to survive the coming and the settling. In their outdoor life, with beef for breakfast, dinner, and supper, their rather simple and wholesome amusements, the "Californio's" began the breeding of larger physical specimens; Mrs. Sánchez finds, contrary to general belief, that some of the Spaniards and Mexicans of this old Arcadia actually worked with their hands! It was not all gambling and smuggling and lassoing and praying. And even here, where health dilates the lungs with every inhalation, there was an interesting development of medical practice; there are good chapters, *con amore*, of



View of San Francisco from Telegraph Hill, from a woodblock by Betty Lark
(Courtesy of William Edwin Rudge.)

Spanish family life, amusements, and customs, which Mrs. Sánchez is sanguine enough to hope will inform our weedy crop of California novelists who want local color without having lived any of it. May they also learn here proper spelling, and the use and accentuation of Spanish words and phrases, symptomatic of a first identification with the imaginary glamor in which they make our old padres and rancheros live and move.

Owen C. Coy in the "Great Trek" recites the story of the coming of the 'Forty-Niners. The volume abounds in quotations from diaries of participants in the historic movement; numerous maps show the old trails. Preliminary to this volume is the same author's "Gold Days." Dr. Coy examines the evidence concerning the disputed date of the gold discovery, and follows the expansion of the diggings, and the impromptu organization of social and legal existence in them, with pictures of red-shirted miners at work washing gold, of the enforcement of crude justice, and mushroom towns under easy-money conditions; of course San Francisco is pictured too, in the high-pitched life of the gambling-room and speculation. There is a good account of our preparation for entering the Union as a free state, and intimate stories of the beginnings of the theatre, early church life, and other symptoms of stabilization.

Rockwell D. Hunt and William S. Ament, authors of "Oxcart to Airplane," trace the evolution of transportation and communication in its effect upon the growth of this rim o' the world. Dr. Hunt studies land transportation, beginning with the trails and the pack, then the railroads, telegraph, telephone, and motor, with a final take-off into the empire of the air. Some of the generalizations would fit Iowa as well as California, but it is a difficult task at best, and well done. Dr. Ament follows the sea-approaches, the evolution of ships, and navigation. Of necessity this volume goes over much that is in early volumes, but repetition is avoided by use of varying sources.

Harold Child Bryant's "Outdoor Heritage" gives the tourist and vacationist an idea of our geology and topography and their effect on life zones, past and present. We go down to the asphalt beds of

Rancho la Brea, and swing in the pine-tops with John Muir in his "Summer in the Sierras." Dr. Bryant covers all phases of the nature-lover's interest and treats them authoritatively, but with a nostalgic plaintiveness here and there, for he would rather be in the field teaching and seeing than at a desk telling about it.

Old Adam Promoter comes nearest to his own in Frank J. Taylor's "Land of Homes." All the cities and towns of the state are marshalled one by one, each with its especial trait and excellence. Los Angeles, for instance and with the author's wholehearted approval, is bitten by the bug of bigness for betterment. They spend a million a year in advertising for "colonists," and now having achieved a million inhabitants, have used up all of Owen's River and must bring in the Colorado for water and power; by doing so they will provide for ten millions, and will of course then be ten times happier. Arizona will encourage them to preempt all the water. Not a doubt, Monterey, quaint old town, avers Mr. Taylor, may stay as she is, not growing at all. But San Francisco he finds altogether unlike anything else in California, mostly because it has no gardens. Even Golden Gate Park is left out of the index. Most of us who have lived in both parts of the State think that the old traditional California is to be found rather in the north than the south, and that it is Los Angeles rather than San Francisco which is "unlike California." Repetitious features mar the book because most of the special characteristics are first ascribed to the metropolitan area, and again to their own locality. The account of Californian art by Arthur Millier is readable.

A later and much looked-forward-to volume on California literature and authorship by Edwin Markham will complete the series. The volumes are uniformly illustrated by modernistic block drawings by Franz Geritz, Virginia de S. Litchfield, Howard Simon, and Aries Fayer.

The First Modern President

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES, STATESMAN OF REUNION. By H. J. ECKENRODE, assisted by POCAHONTAS WILSON WIGHT. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1930. \$5.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

THE career of President Hayes is not one over which historians or biographers can easily become enthusiastic. Hayes's personality was not interesting and his life was not dramatic. The circumstances that attended his choice as President called for a colorless and essentially "safe" candidate, and he fulfilled the modest requirements satisfactorily, but nothing that he said as President is remembered, and time has not added the tradition of greatness to anything that he did. Yet the four years of his Presidency, marking as they did the close of one historical period and the beginning of another, were characterized on his part by a combination of good sense, friendliness, and political enlightenment that stood the country in good stead. If he was in no way a distinguished President, he was at least a very useful one, particularly so in the peculiar conditions which he had to meet, and his work was worth reviewing now that it can be examined in the perspective of fifty years.

The present biography is the first of a series entitled "American Political Leaders" which Professor Allan Nevins has projected, and which promises "a thorough, scholarly, and interesting biographical treatment of all the prominent political leaders in the United States from 1860 to the present day." Considering the pervading drabness of large parts of the subject, the authors (Dr. Eckenrode appears to have written the bulk of the book) have dressed the narrative in an unusually lively style, but while few opportunities to characterize an actor or an event by striking phrase or comment have been allowed to pass, the work is sound, sensible, and impressive.

Nothing suggestive of distinction is to be found in Hayes's early years. "Something of the flavor of aristocracy" is noted as attaching to his family, but the flavor was faint, and the boy grew to manhood with little to mark him off from other early Ohio products except, perhaps, a lack of interest in religion joined to a useful habit of attending church. He studied at Kenyon College, then at the Harvard Law School, was admitted to the bar in 1845, removed in 1850 to Cincinnati where he presently married, became a Republican without cherishing any special concern over slavery, and interested himself mildly in the temperance movement which was

making headway in various parts of the country. When the Civil War came on he enlisted, was made a major, later a colonel, and eventually one of the thousand or more brigadier-generals, was wounded at the battle of South Mountain, looked with disfavor upon the destruction of property by Union troops but approved Sherman's vandalism in Georgia as a "glorious course," and came out of the army in 1865 as a local hero to enter the House of Representatives as one of the Ohio delegation.

Hayes's attitude in Congress was, in the main, indicative of his attitude throughout his political career. "A man so tolerant and sane as Hayes," Dr. Eckenrode remarks, was "out of place" in a Congress which was dominated by Thaddeus Stevens, "and he knew it. But he took care to say little. He did not like the policy of vengeance, but he realized that he could do nothing to check it and he had no intention of offering himself a sacrifice on the altar of reconciliation; he was not in the least a martyr, lacking convictions in the first place and possessing the instinct of self-preservation in the second." In 1867 he was elected governor of Ohio, served two terms, campaigned for Grant in 1872 and swallowed without undue nausea the misdeeds of one of the most corrupt administrations the United States has known, was again elected governor, and in 1876, with a few homely virtues, no obvious vices, and a record of party regularity, was given the Republican nomination for President.

The history of the disputed election has already been ably written by Haworth, and Dr. Eckenrode does not add anything of importance to the story. It was, he thinks, "a comparatively honest election," mainly, it would seem, because campaign funds were small and "bribery was not prominent." He finds something "hypocritical" in the common attitude of the country today toward the decision which gave the election to Tilden, reminding us that Hayes "was as much entitled to his seat as some other Presidents" and that "our elections, especially our presidential elections, are all too often a triumph of bribery and fraud." Nevertheless, the decision was "fortunate" because "it was high time to heal the Southern sore." The only way to heal it was to withdraw the Federal troops from the South. Hayes, although bitterly blamed, could do this because he was "a Republican and a Union soldier. There was no taint of 'treason' about him." If Tilden had done it, "a political struggle of unexampled bitterness would have ensued" even if there had been no war.

The record of the Hayes administration, too, is for the most part familiar history. Fortunately for Hayes, Thaddeus Stevens was dead and the vicious gang of radical Republicans had been shorn of some of its strength, but there were still enemies to be dealt with, and there was a Democratic Congress. Hayes steered his course firmly and wisely. He withdrew military support from the remaining artificial State governments in the South, struck hard at patronage and prepared the way for a civil service system, cleaned out the notorious Indian Bureau and the New York Custom House, maintained the sound money stand which he had taken in 1875, vetoed the Bland free coinage bill and the bill for Chinese exclusion, and courageously used troops to end the great railway strike in 1877. He was not a candidate for re-election in 1880, although Dr. Eckenrode sees him as regretting retirement. For the remainder of his life he interested himself in various good causes, notably prison reform, thereby, as has been said, setting an example of what an ex-President may do.

Dr. Eckenrode recognizes in Hayes "the first modern President." Although he lived in the period of slavery and the Civil War he did not belong to it; his place, rather, was with the new generation that was "looking ahead to the business expansion of the United States rather than backward to sectional feuds." Elected as a Republican under extraordinary circumstances, "he was actually more of a Democrat than a Republican." It is not clear, from anything in these pages, that he penetrated very far into the thought and policy of the future to which Dr. Eckenrode assigns him, and if he is to be classed in any sense as a Democrat it is, apparently, only because, once he was in power, he realized that the end of Republican ruthlessness was at hand and that race equality in the South was not to be. His great service was in helping the country to settle down. It was not in the nature of things that such a service should be brilliant, but for the temper in which he performed it he is entitled, as his biographers have shown, to grateful remembrance.

Wildwood Beauty

THE ADVENTURES OF MARIO. By WALDEMAR BONSELS. Translated by Whittaker Chambers. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1930. \$3.

Reviewed by HARRY ESTY DOUNCE

A SURPRISE awaits readers who, knowing little or nothing of Waldemar Bonsels, look into this book under the impression that it is a mere nature juvenile. I did so, and found it so much more as to amount to a considerable work of art—in all but form, a poem, and I am tempted to say, a symphonic one. There is certainly a story of a boy in a forest and his adventures among its birds and beasts: of his flight to it, after the death of his mother, from the prospect of an orphanage; of the harboring and nurture that he gets from a queer old woman hermit, Dommelfei; of his eventual adoption by a beautiful lady from a castle. But dissolved in the story are measures of original philosophy and intuitive psychology, as well as a remarkable knowledge of wild nature. The underlying conception is of the mothering of the orphaned boy to manliness by Nature herself, a mother neither Spartan nor indulgent, whom Dommelfei—brusque and contemptuous, even cruel from a sentimental viewpoint, yet tender, "often at war with the world," yet very wise, if oracular—more or less personifies. And at the bottom of that conception, and of every important detail of its working out, there is true imagination, authentic, unartificial fantasy. The whole has a grave, wildwood beauty; a sane mysticism pervades it, and a dream light is over it.

An equal surprise must be in store, I should think, for readers who know Bonsels, as I did not—but do now, by his "The Adventures of Maya the Bee," a delightful translation of which was brought out some years ago. For "Mario" and "Maya" are about as unlike as two books by the same author could be, when both were tales based upon nature lore and, ostensibly, at least, told for children. Their features in common are the unusual loveliness of Bonsels's landscape painting, and the fondness that he evidently has for representing the quick mustering of a fiery courage, with the rallying of pride, in a sensitive being after the shock of a deadly peril. The best example of the former in "Maya" is the moonlit midsummer night; of the latter, the reactions of Maya when caught in the spider's web. Fully a dozen pictures in "Mario" are as charming as that night scene, besides their being richer and more deliberate, and being integral parts of the poetic symphony. And in the collaring of Mario by a forester, at two or three junctures of his feud with a tree-marten, and in his encounter with a wolf hound, there are really stirring moments of such drama within the spirit as that spider's-web episode sketches.

In this connection it occurs to me to note that two of the boy's adventures cause him inner turmoils which are much more complex and distinctive, and one of which strikes me as being quite a psychological achievement on his creator's part. These are his agony of remorse after shooting a fawn—an agony that is orchestrated with a thunderstorm, and is finally assuaged by Nature-Dommelfei's hardy common sense; and a conflict that he feels, and resolves, when the deadliness of an adder has strangely obsessed him. It is the chapter about the adder that I think is the special achievement: an ore from a deep vein of personal memory and insight.

Nothing of that sort is in "Maya," where there is no place for it. "Maya" is a fanciful, playful thing, easy to classify, describable by references to a number of young-and-old favorites. It has its brief resemblances to Hans Christian Andersen, to "Water Babies," to Maeterlinck, and to Kenneth Grahame. Alice's Caterpillar is a relative of some of the ill-natured bugs in it; its fable takes airy turns in the direction of a satire like that in "Chanticleer"; it may owe a direct though trivial debt to Kipling's beehive allegory. Flower-sprites figure in it, and without them it would still be a fairy tale. As a juvenile, it is for a wider range of types of bright children, and for decidedly younger children, than "Mario."

Not only is "Mario" of a wholly different genre, but I know of but two "classics" that can be mentioned in an effort to characterize it. One, Selma Lagerlof's "Nils," is almost useless for the purpose; similarities end with the fact that "Nils" also runs to leisurely description and atmosphere and embodies

a great deal of information—which, however, becomes educational, as in "Mario" it never does. The other, and the obvious recourse, is the Mowgli cycle in the "Jungle Books." Here, too, comparison must be somewhat far-fetched, since "Mario" is not fabulous—the beasts don't talk or fraternize, and almost everything is kept within the limits of the plausible and natural. Moreover, when Mario takes refuge in his fir forest he is nearly twelve years old, so that much of the interest of his story is in his gradual wonting and attunement to the wild; that, of course, has no counterpart in the case of the wolf-suckled Mowgli. Even so, there are comparable aspects. Tranquil as "Mario" appears, it is frequently intense and occasionally exciting, yet no part of it begins to have, for me, the sheer story-teller's magic of all the Mowgli tales. A word on the two endings may suggest the regards in which Bonsels is, temperamentally, Kipling's inferior: Well done though Mario's final, beatific foster mother, the lady from the castle, may be, she is nevertheless reminiscent somehow of the beauteous ladies of the brothers Grimm, and the boy's captivation and adoption by her seem a pitifully childish conclusion when you think of "The Spring Running" and the exit of Mowgli from the jungle in quest of a mate.

But Herr Bonsels can do subtle and exquisite things that Mr. Kipling has never attempted; he knows secrets of the human heart, as they call them, that Mr. Kipling has never suspected; and in its own way his book is quite good enough to be compared with the "Jungle Books." I particularly admire him for the artistic integrity, so rare among writers for children, that lets his pen follow where his imagination leads, disdaining the devices and cajoleries of the solicitous entertainer. The design of "Mario" is as clean of all that as the execution is of mere prettiness or the tone of maudlin sentiment.

An All-English Burton

THE ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY. By ROBERT BURTON. Edited in an all-English text by FLOYD DELL and PAUL JORDAN-SMITH. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1929. \$5.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

ROBERT BURTON and Sir James Fraser were both compilers, and "The Anatomy" and "The Golden Bough" are both rich reading, treasuries of curious lore, collections of traditional ideas, museums of human habits and opinions, monuments of research. Like all wise collectors they both specialized, and then interpreted their specialties as liberally as they found interesting or convenient. But fashions in knowledge have their day, like fashions in hats. Since the early seventeenth century erudition has deserted its old haunts and gone elsewhere. Three-fourths of Burton's classical, and nearly all of his late Latin authorities, are neglected if not forgotten by Oxford scholars. Fraser probably knew as little of the opinions of Olaus Magnus on devils and Peter Haedus on remedies against love as Burton knew of negro rituals in the Congo and Australian exogamy. Fashion has so changed us that there are even those who wish to read Burton without his Latin.

Or so it appears to Messrs. Dell and Jordan-Smith. The special feature of their edition is that they have replaced the text of the quotations, usually Latin, with translations, and given "a straight all-English text." They have also abbreviated the references, incorporated some of the footnotes in the text, and omitted the rest. One is tempted to refer the editors to Carlyle's scorching review of Croker's edition of Boswell. Since Burton only occasionally, or partially translates, to give full translations (in brack-

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.....Editor
AMY LOVEMAN.....Managing Editor
WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.....Contributing Editor
CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.....Contributing Editor
NOBLE A. CATHCART.....Publisher
Published weekly, by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry S. Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates per year, postpaid: in the U. S. and Mexico, \$3.50; in Canada, \$4; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere, \$4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 6. No. 40.

Copyright, 1930, by The Saturday Review Co., Inc.