

delightful gusto, however. His thesis regarding "the great plague of journal-keeping travelers" that descended upon the Ohio in the early nineteenth century is worthy of full treatment sometime in a book all to itself. His scholarly and yet lively descriptions of all the forms of entertainment in the Ohio Valley backwoods, from group singing to prostitution, make highly entertaining and informative reading. His chapters on learning and the arts along the river's shores avoid the obvious pitfall of becoming mere catalogues of names, biographies, herb remedies, litigations, scientific discoveries, and the titles of books and pictures. Finally, his three sections that bring the river's story down to the present, enumerating its products, explaining its floods, its navigation, and its improvements,

and portraying its modern aspect, give "The Ohio" a completeness that many of the Rivers books do not have.

Indeed, this volume is one that has long been needed, for nothing equaling it in scope has been published on the subject. Mr. Banta is thorough, sometimes to the degree of prolixity but never quite to the point of dullness. He writes in an ebullient and stubbornly individualistic style that is, however, neither crotchety nor obscure. He is authoritative, for he has not only studied but has lived with his subject for years. He is honest and fair. And he has had the good fortune to be illustrated by an artist of Edward Shenton's fine talents.

William E. Wilson, professor of English at the University of Colorado, is author of "Abe Lincoln of Pigeon Creek" and other books.

Two Cutoffs from South Pass

PRAIRIE SCHOONER DETOURS.
By Irene D. Paden. New York: The Macmillan Co. 295 pp. \$3.75.

By DALE L. MORGAN

SIX years ago, with "The Wake of the Prairie Schooner," Irene D. Paden discovered for the general reading public the piquant pleasures that lurk in hunting out the vanishing traces of the old immigrant trails. What the formal historians almost despair of getting over to their readers—the breathtaking sense of the chase implicit in any historical inquiry, the fascination of working with jigsaw puzzles on a continental scale, the excitement of finding out what has not heretofore been a part of organized knowledge—Mrs. Paden effectively dramatized in a buoyant account of nine years' researches by the Padens and their friends in the vast country between the Missouri and the green and golden shore.

In that first book she took the whole West for her province, or at any rate so much of it as funneled either way from South Pass. Now, in "Prairie Schooner Detours," Mrs. Paden has taken up two major cutoffs which received only sketchy treatment before, and has written a book which may also be shelved as Volume Two of the Lives and Good Times of the Padens. Everyone who enjoyed the first book is certain to like this one and, conversely, those who first become acquainted with the breezy wife of Alameda's superintendent of schools through "Prairie

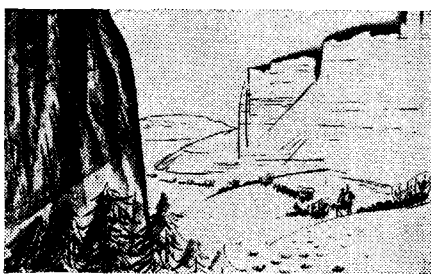
Schooner Detours" will want to enlarge the acquaintanceship.

Historically, the new book strikes me as a much better performance than the first. Having less ground to go over, Mrs. Paden is more thorough about it, and a great deal less careless in statements of fact. Based on more recent research, with the understanding clearly in view that a book would come of it, "Prairie Schooner Detours" is in every way a more responsible work of history, and those who may need to lean on it can do so with more assurance.

The two punishing trails which are the subject of the book are the Hastings and Lassen cutoffs. The former separated from the older trail at Fort Bridger to strike west into Utah through the Wasatch Mountains, round the southern shore of Great Salt Lake, cross the formidable Salt Desert to Pilot Peak on the Utah-Nevada line, and then, by a circuitous route over the Toano and Pequop ranges and around the Ruby Mountains, rejoin the California Trail in the Humboldt Valley below present

Elko. The Lassen Cutoff diverged from the established trail 160 miles farther down the Humboldt, leaving the river at its big bend to strike off west across the charred Black Rock Desert, wind west and south (and also damnably north) over and through the Sierras, and descend finally into the great valley of the Sacramento. The two trails lie in such geographical relationship that one immigrant party could have taken both, but there is no reason to believe that any party was ever so impervious to experience as to have tried. The fearsome Hastings Cutoff was enough to sour any immigrant on shortcuts; and, moreover, the Hastings route was used to any degree only in 1846 and 1850, with a bare handful of travelers adopting it at the tag-end of the 1849 immigrating season, whereas the Lassen trail, "the Horn" or "Greenhorn" route of acid memory, as a California rather than an Oregon route, had 1849 as its only big year. Quite possibly none but the Padens have ever been over both trails, and even they only approximately.

I have not made a special study of the Lassen Cutoff, hence must appraise the book in the light of its treatment of the Hastings Cutoff. The absurdities which embarrassed "The Wake of the Prairie Schooner" in description of the trail immediately west of Fort Bridger have been eliminated in the new book, but it is evident that Mrs. Paden is not yet entirely clear as to just where the trail ran from Fort Bridger to Sulphur Creek. West of the Bear her ideas are more positive, but mistaken; so far from following down the river some distance, the trail climbed almost immediately up Stagecoach Hollow to the head of Coyote Creek. She is again mistaken in thinking the Donner-Mormon trail climbed to Big Mountain via Little Dutch Hollow; Little Emigration Canyon was employed. In the main, however, she has the trail right through the labyrinth of the Wasatch Mountains, and west of Salt Lake City I am not now disposed to quarrel with her. In her treatment of the history of the Hastings Cutoff there are some misconceptions and mistakes, and she has not always been alert to the full resources of information in the primary records she has used. These are matters that merit development at greater length than the available space here permits. I had better be content to say that "Prairie Schooner Detours" offers entertainment and information in abundance and should meet with a wide and appreciative public.



—From the book jacket.

Centaur in the Civil War

GIANT IN GRAY. By Manly Wade Wellman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 387 pp. \$5.

By STANLEY F. HORN

"GIANT" is a large-sized word, but it is not inappropriately used in describing General Wade Hampton, of South Carolina. Hampton was a big man figuratively and literally, physically and spiritually. As a dashing cavalry commander in the armies of the Confederate States of America he was a veritable centaur, a big man on a big charger, glorying in the clash of personal combat. The war over, he gracefully accepted defeat and financial ruin and lived on to serve his state with distinction in private life and as Governor and United States Senator.

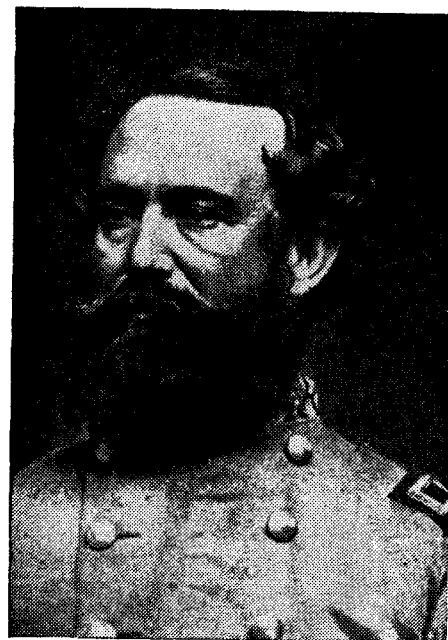
It was once a common saying that the War Between the States was "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight," but the fallacy of this cynical aphorism was well demonstrated by the example of Hampton—among many others. He was a rich man, an extensive land-holder, and the owner of 3,000 slaves, when the war started in 1861. He was an anti-secessionist and was opposed to war. But when war came he did not hesitate to offer himself and his financial resources

in the defense of his native South Carolina.

Within twenty days after the fall of Fort Sumter Wade Hampton, in an advertisement in the *Charleston Courier*, was calling for volunteers, a thousand of them, to organize a "Legion" of all arms—six companies of infantry, four troops of cavalry, and a battery of artillery. Within less than a week more men had volunteered than could be used, and late in June "Hampton's Legion" left South Carolina for the fields of Virginia, where it was to win fame for itself and its commander. After a brief stop-over in Richmond, the Legion moved on to Manassas, arriving just in time to be thrust hastily into the battle then and there raging. Early in the action Hampton's horse was shot from under him, and he continued to lead his men on foot, wielding a fallen infantryman's rifle. The battle over, he was praised by Beauregard for his "soldierly ability," and won the compliments of President Davis.

Other battles followed, and Hampton and his Legion were in the thick of them, always found where the fighting was the hottest. Eventually he was transferred to the cavalry service, and when colorful "Jeb" Stuart was killed in 1864 it was the strapping big South Carolinian who was selected by Robert E. Lee to command the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia. That he made a good job of it is a matter of history, some military critics even venturing the opinion that the unostentatious, calculating Hampton was really a more effective cavalry leader than the more spectacular Stuart. In truth, Hampton—like his companion-in-arms, Nathan Bedford Forrest—seemed to possess a natural genius for cavalry fighting, without benefit of West Point or any other formal military training. Bravely and skillfully he fought on to the end and then, his parole in his pocket, went back to the blackened ruins of his once palatial home in South Carolina, there to face the tragic problems of the Reconstruction.

Hampton [writes Mr. Wellman], who had marched to war as the richest gentleman of the South, came back as one of the poorest. He moved into an overseer's house that had escaped the burning at Sand Hills. . . . He had no source of income; he mourned the loss of kinsmen and friends. Three thousand Negroes who had once called him master were now lost among the throngs of freedmen who ques-



General Wade Hampton—"a big man on a big charger."

tioned, begged, and sometimes rioted. His Confederate money and his lieutenant-general's commission were alike valueless bits of paper. Home from the wars he had brought memories of defeated toil and struggle, a gray uniform he was forbidden to wear, and the scars of five wounds. That was all.

Essentially Hampton's plight was not far different from that of thousands of other returned Confederate soldiers; but Hampton, like Robert E. Lee, showed his greatness by rising above the crippling handicaps of adversity. Ever counseling conciliation and moderation and justice to all, regardless of party or color, but vigorously opposing oppression, he helped to lead the people of South Carolina through the nightmare of the postwar years until home rule was restored and the name of Wade Hampton became legendary in the history of the state.

"Giant in Gray" is Mr. Wellman's first venture into the field of historical biography, although he is an established writer of fiction. In this life of Wade Hampton he combines the two essentials of a successful historical work: he knows how to write and he knows what he is writing about. The result is an excellent biography of a truly great man, a man too long neglected by writers. The book deserves, and will doubtless attain, a place high in the list of the standard books of biography of Southern soldiers and statesmen.

Stanley F. Horn, editor of The Southern Lumberman, wrote "The Army of Tennessee" and edited the recent "The Robert E. Lee Reader."

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 336

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 336 will be found in the next issue.

O ZWHHVS QFSRIZWHM

VSZDG CBS CB HVFCIUUV

ZWTS JSFM GACCHVZM.

—SZWNOPSHV UOGYSZZ.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 335

Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night.

—E. A. Poe.