



## Book Reviews

### HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC COAST.

By John Walton Caughey. (Los Angeles: Privately published by the Author. 1933.) 429 pp. \$4.50.

This book is a very readable attempt "to relate the history of the entire Pacific Coast of North America." The author has not quite succeeded in doing this; Central America, for example, is not included. Nor has he succeeded in entirely eliminating sectional treatment. The reader is still confronted with the problem of relating the history of California with that of the Northwest.

Nevertheless, the book should be much welcomed by the general reader. The book reads as easily as a novel. One is seldom bored by uninteresting details, and the unfolding of the story is not held up by descriptions which may be important to the specialist, but are simply annoying to others. From the point of view of the man who wishes to obtain a general knowledge of the field, this book is invaluable.

The descriptions of the Maya, Aztec, Southwest and Northwest Indians are calculated to give the reader just the information he wants. The story of the Spanish

period is more detailed, yet nothing is included which detracts from the interest of the story. In fact, this period seems, to some degree, to be the chief interest of the author. He manages to impart his own interest to the reader, and while from the point of view of balance, this portion of the book is slightly overdeveloped, the average reader will probably welcome rather than criticize this.

Although the latter part of the book seems to lack the color of the first part, it makes up for this in clarity of style. The last chapters seem rather sketchy and one feels that the author has left his heart in the Spanish period.

While the attempt to tell the story of the Pacific coast as a whole must be accounted at least a partial failure, and while the author has not quite succeeded in living up to his promise, nevertheless, the book is to be highly recommended, especially to the general public. It is exceedingly well written and holds the reader's interest to the end.

O. H. WEDEL.

**DEATH IN THE DESERT.** The Fifty Years' War for the Great Southwest. By Paul I. Wellman. The Macmillan Co., New York. 294 pp. \$3.00.

A readable addition to the literature of the Indian-white (largely Apache-white) conflict in the Southwest, 1837-1887, based on available sources. All the best known characters—Mangus Colorado, Cochise, Nana, Loco, Geronimo, for the Apaches; Crook, Miles,

Crawford, Lawton, Gatewood, for the whites—are present, as are also many other less well-known actors. The important part played by the Indian scouts enlisted by the army in tracking down the rebellious Geronimo is given fuller recognition than usual. The whites suffer in most comparisons, express or implied, in matters of strategy, hardihood, honorableness. Aptly titled, the book contains per square page more casualties, treachery, intrigue, ruthlessness, duplicity (mostly white), cruelty (mostly Indian), than the best (or worst) dime novel. And, the more shame, it is not fiction but history. Apparently doubtful that the desert scene would provide enough of death to

justify the book's title, the writer in one section diverges to a twenty-odd page account of the Modoc atrocities in Oregon and northern California in the middle of the century.

The greed, intolerance, and misunderstanding exhibited by the whites in their dealings with the Indians must remain a blotch on the pioneering work done in the great Southwest. One can take some comfort in remembering that the Indian wars were, after all, but an incident of that great pioneering effort participated in by many nobler spirits than are paraded before the reader in the present volume.

JOHN H. PROVINSE.

