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Book Reviews

BOOK REVIEWS

Man and Resources in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. By Allen G. Harper, Andrew R. Cordova and Kalervo Oberg. (The University of New Mexico Press, 1943. Pp. 134 with twenty half-tone plates.)

It is a very dismal picture of present economic conditions and prospects of the Middle Rio Grande Valley that is drawn by the authors of this study. It must be regarded as authoritative for it is the result of a thorough investigation by well-trained, experienced scientific engineers whose record, as set forth in biographical notes appended, leaves no doubt of their competency.

The silting of the Rio Grande, the erosion of its tributary country, soil exhaustion, floods, drouths, over-grazing and over-population are some of the factors which make the outlook for the future rather hopeless unless drastic and exceedingly costly remedies are applied. "The great need," writes Harper in the foreword, "is the creation of some organization wherein all governmental agencies—state as well as federal—could coördinate their efforts in a sound program of action." No matter, whether the aim is to be "subsistence" farming on homesteads, say of approximately twenty to forty acres each, or commercial farming on a large scale, the Valley will not support adequately the present population on its farms. In fact, there seems to be eventual satisfactory living from the soil for only one third of the people now located on its agricultural lands. The reasons are set forth in detail and analyzed.

The first chapter describes the land from the San Luis valley on the north, down to what was once San Marcial. It is apparent that such low-lying Pueblo lands as those of San Ildefonso, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, are doomed by the progressive silting of the river bed. The tributaries of the Rio Grande carry immense amounts of silt into the main stream especially during flood times when banks are cut away and every arroyo carries soil into head waters. Conclude the authors: "As it leaves its watershed in Colo-

rado, the water of the Rio Grande is clear. When the river reaches the southern end of the Middle Valley, below the Rio Puerco, *it carries in flood stage ten times as much silt as an equal volume of flood water of the Mississippi.* The silt load is, in turn, a leading cause of the acutely difficult economic and resource problems with which man is confronted in the valley."

"The People" is the title of the second chapter. It is a tri-cultural population living mostly in towns and villages rather than on the land under cultivation. The Indians number 11,000, the Spanish-Americans 108,000 and the so-called Anglos 5,000. The Anglo-Americans are increasing more rapidly than the other two categories. The Anglo "introduced a radically different method of settlement. * * * He was a seeker after a cash crop, not mere subsistence. He tended to disperse over the area; to him the highway, rather than the village, was the link between his home and school, church, postoffice and traders store." Further, the other settlers "cling to the use of primitive agricultural practices and farm implements which require little or no capital investment and are well adapted to subsistence economy." It takes no prophet to foretell who and what will eventually prevail in the economy of the middle Rio Grande valley.

The third chapter deals with the history and causes of the "Deterioration of Physical Resources." It is asserted and proof given that deterioration came only during the last hundred years and that through the Anglo-Saxon intruders, who cut timber ruthlessly, over stocked the ranges, exploited the soil. "Sixty years ago," according to the book, "the runoff of rains and melting snows was spread over these meadow-like valleys. Today every large and practically every small valley has been cut by any ugly-looking channel." * * * "Sixty years ago the streams carried the clear mountain waters to the lower elevations unencumbered by the burden of sand, rocks and boulders." The different water sheds are described from the Chama down to the Puerco and statistics are given to demonstrate that deterioration has been progressive. This has caused "The Rise of Eco-

nomic Instability," the fourth chapter heading. When General Kearny entered the Rio Grande valley in 1846 he found that the economy of the two ethnic groups was on the subsistence basis. "Food crops, such as wheat, corn, beans, squash and chili were home grown, locally processed and stored. Cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, chickens, as well as deer and antelope, were the source of meat supply. Clothing was largely made from home grown wool and cotton; leather, from various hides. Houses were built from adobe bricks and vigas from the nearby foothills. The irrigable land resources were about 200,000 acres. Several million acres of grazing land were free and accessible to the Spanish and Indian users alike." In brief: "A uniformity of economic and social position prevailed. The production of surpluses was as unusual as the existence of want; nobody had too much or too little of anything. In the Spanish villages life was extremely simple, stable and integrated upon a single level of economic well being."

How different today: "Dependency is diversified; only thirty per cent of the population are dependent upon farm operation; the rest depend upon various forms of wage and relief work, salaries and private incomes derived from outside of the valley."

A broad program for "Solving the Problems of the Middle Valley" is presented in the final chapter. Public education, vocational training, building of dams to increase water supply for irrigation and to prevent silting. "The health of the Spanish Americans is a major problem" according to the authors. "Basically the cause of their high death and disease rates is rooted in their poverty, but apart from this conditioning factor, there are others; the ignorance of the people as to proper methods of personal hygiene; the superstitious beliefs of the people in homely remedies, herb doctors (*curanderos*) and evil influences; the practice of untrained and incompetent midwives; the effects of primitive systems of sanitation; and the pollution of domestic water supplies." In conclusion "the problems which have arisen from man's efforts to exploit the natural resources of the Middle Rio Grande Valley for his economic benefit

are incredibly difficult; worse still, these problems, so long as they remain unsolved, offer critical menace to our American democracy."

An index, a brief bibliography and fine reproductions of good photographs, add to the value of the volume, which is undoubtedly thus far one of the most useful productions of the School of Inter-American Affairs of the State University, reflecting great credit upon the head of the school and general editor of its publications, Dr. Joaquin Ortega. —P. A. F. W.

Mission Monuments of New Mexico. By Edgar L. Hewett and Reginald G. Fisher. (The University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1943; 270 pp., illustrations, bibliog., index. $4.00)

Another of Dr. Hewett's series, *Handbooks of Archaeological History,* is from the press and, while *Landmarks of New Mexico* may have a more general and popular appeal, many will regard this volume on the historical missions as decidedly the best of the series to date. Perhaps we are prejudiced, for, as the authors agree, the book is about nine-tenths history with only a modicum of archaeology; and also, as is evident throughout, the authors have been well posted as to the results of historical research in this field during recent years.

It was a happy thought to trace our missionary era in the Southwest from its beginning in the Umbrian hills of Italy. After the Foreword and chapter on "Myth, legend and history" by Dr. Hewett, Dr. Fisher gives an adequate and very sympathetic account of Francis of Assisi, of the Franciscan Order which he founded, and of the long trail followed from Assisi to Santa Fé. Chapter III, "The struggle for the faith," is a portrayal of the dramatic seventeenth century from the first colonizing to the tragic Indian revolt of 1680, and is followed by a chapter on "Sanctuaries that survived." One of these sanctuaries, however, (Acoma) is grouped by Dr. Hewett with Pecos, Quarąi, Abó, "Gran Quivira," and Jémez in what he terms "the Archaic Group." These six missions are the theme of the last chapters:

"Ruins of the greater outposts of the Cross" and "Reclamation and re-dedication." And here archaeology comes into its own, showing, in the work of excavation, results which are remarkable, almost incredible, to those who knew all except Acoma in their former ruined state.

Dr. Fisher has added several interesting appendices, and here a few corrections might be suggested. Even three of the "Errata" (p. 270) could well be omitted: "Fray Francisco de Jesús María" (as he always signed himself) appears as "Casañas" only in later records; there was no "Fray Juan de Morales" nor anyone martyred at San Juan in 1680; while Carbonell (or Carboneli) *was* killed at San Cristóbal instead of at Taos.

Turning to the list of martyrs (pp. 243-244), probably both Fray Diego de San Lucas and Fray Juan Mínguez should be omitted; it is true that both were killed in Indian attacks but neither was a martyr in the proper sense of that term. On the other hand, the list of custodians (p. 245) lacks at least eight names to be complete for the period indicated.

Perea did not bring twenty-nine new missionaries in 1629 (p. 86). By his own account (and confirmed by *Contaduría* records) he brought only twenty-one. Of those listed by Dr. Fisher, some were already in New Mexico; Gonzales died on the way north; San Francisco and San Lucas were other lay-brothers. Fray Juan Ramírez here and "Manso's successor" of the same name (pp. 97-98) were two different men. The use of the census of 1749 (p. 109) is somewhat misleading, for eleven other missions "del Paso" and of the "Junta de los Rios" have been omitted, both of which groups were parts of New Mexico in Spanish times. Indeed, when he made up this census, the custodian, Varo, was himself located at Senecú del Sur! The population of New Mexico by the complete census was 23,001 instead of the figure here shown.

We question also whether "greed and thirst for power" (p. 102) are an adequate explanation for the tragic Indian revolt of 1680. That violent climax was caused chiefly by the resort to force instead of persuasion by Spaniards and

Franciscans alike. We have evidence of it through the seventeenth century in such "discipline" as the cutting off of *chongos* and burning with hot tar; in the seizing and destroying of native paraphernalia and preventing of native ceremonies; in the dealing with "witchcraft" even to the public whipping and hanging of their native priests (called "sorcerers"); culminating finally while Treviño was governor in the *destroying of their kivas*—the very heart of native religion. This last outrage on the natives was repeated during the reconquest, and it was perpetrated still a third time while Mogollón was governor. All of this, surely, was quite foreign to the spirit of Saint Francis; and the tragic pity of it, that it should largely have nullified the heroic lives of so many of the Franciscan fathers and even the martyr blood with which so many of the pueblos had been watered.

The authors have made an excellent use of illustrations throughout the text. These include the St. Francis murals by the late Donald Beauregard (several of which were finished by Carlos Vierra and Kenneth Chapman); the Vierra series of mission paintings; and photographs of the major missions before and after their excavation.—L. B. B.

Life in Old Tucson. By Frank C. Lockwood, University of Arizona. Published by the Tucson Civic Committee. (The Ward Ritchie Press, Los Angeles, 1943. Pp. 255, illustrated.)

Biographical sketches of a dozen or more Tucson pioneers give a lively picture of events in Tucson in the transition period from 1854 to 1864—from the days of the Gadsden Purchase to the closing days of the Civil War—during which Arizona emerged as a separate territory. Somewhat akin in manner to as old a method as that of Plutarch, the author tells the story of an assorted lot of picturesque characters, ranging from notorious outlaws to famous financiers and Army men, including in his gallery of portraits both Confederates and Federals. Purporting to be motivated by the childhood reminiscences of Atanacia Santa Cruz, the widow of Sam Hughes, he admits in his preface:

"In the minds of most old-timers, everything that had

to do with remote days, or even events of the recent past, seemed to be in a muddle." Further: "No two old-timers agreed as to any fact of the past, and the older the inhabitant the more he had his facts mixed." The author, who is on the faculty of the University of Arizona, therefore, searched old newspaper files, official records and read numerous magazine articles and early volumes, and thus produced a book which is as fascinating as it is authoritative, as far as any history of that kind can be authoritative. The period covered was a wild one in southern Arizona, and Tucson was the center of happenings which gave color to many stories of "The Wild West."—P. A. F. W.

A Doctor Comes to California. The Diary of John S. Griffin, Assistant Surgeon with Kearny's Dragoons, 1846-1847. Introduction and notes by George Walcott Ames, Jr.; foreword by George D. Lyman, M. D. (California Historical Society, San Francisco, 1943, 97 pp.)

Griffin's diary and Emory's *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance* . . . constitute the only complete contemporary accounts of Kearny's march from Santa Fé to San Diego. Griffin's story was used by Bancroft, but this is its first publication in full. It is divided into two parts: a narrative of the trip to Warner's Ranch, near San Diego; and Kearny's part in the conquest of California with supplementary information about the doctor's experiences in Los Angeles and San Diego. Forty-nine pages of the journal cover the overland trip and fighting, and twenty-six pages deal with his experiences after hostilities had ceased.

The annotation is well done with eight and a half pages of notes. Four maps are reproduced from Emory's *Notes*, showing the route from Santa Fé to the Copper Mines, from the Mines to the Maricopa Village, the Village to Warner's Ranch, and thence to San Diego and Los Angeles.

A twelve page foreword furnishes a touch of glorification for Kearny's dragoons, quite in contrast with the doctor's rather straightforward account of their experiences. The diarist was an observer of the flora and fauna of the region traversed; he was able to appreciate the scenic beauty

despite the hardships of the trail; and his descriptions of medical treatment reveal the great progress made in medicine during the past few generations.

The balmy climate of southern California attracted Dr. Griffin, as many a later American, and after a few more years in army service he lived in Los Angeles until his death in 1898, a highly respected citizen and prominent surgeon. —FRANK D. REEVE.