

while never dull, is less vibrant and colorful than popular readers would like, although occasional sparks appear. And when will the trade publishers get over their silly insistence on segregating the footnotes in their own place at the back of the book! The price—\$7.95 for 210 pages of text—is much too high. There are eight helpful maps and twenty-eight illustrations that will not be new to the scholar.

This unique contribution to frontier history is a real achievement in developing a highly original view, thoroughly grounded on primary sources, in a manner of genuine relevance to the mid-twentieth century world.

University of Bridgeport

Christopher Collier

Red Man's Religion: Beliefs and Practices of the Indians North of Mexico. By Ruth M. Underhill. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965. Pp. 301. Notes, maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$7.95.)

The author says she has pitched this volume at the general reader, but it also has enough depth to enlighten those who already know something about Indians, including anthropologists. The book describes Indian religions at the time of first white contact, which varies from the middle 1600's in the east to the middle 1800's in the far north and west. The emphasis is on behavior in ceremonies rather than on verbalizations about beliefs. The author rightly infers that "action came before thinking" (p. 38) and wisely stresses ceremonies, which are much better reported in primary sources than are the subtleties of belief.

The book contains twenty-three chapters, thirty-four illustrations (mostly half tones), and four maps. The first map gives the six language phyla of Sapir, 1929, which are now known to be incorrect in some respects; but the other maps are up to date. Careful reading by the professional will reveal a few errors in the text. For instance, Chilkat blankets are said to contain dog wool (p. 1). This is not true; the only blankets made of dog wool were those of the Salish speaking peoples of Washington state and southern British Columbia, not those of the Chilkat of southeast Alaska. A few trivial errors of this nature do not detract from the overall accuracy of the volume.

Historical inferences for the pre-Columbian period are plausible and tenable in all cases. For instance, the author suggests that the earliest immigrants to the New World practiced only rites connected with female physiology (birth, menstruation) and death. Such ceremonies were universal among Indians at first white contact and were conducted by families in the areas lacking more complex social organization. Contacts with neighboring peoples gave rise to diffusions or borrowings of both whole ceremonies and smaller details, such that every ceremony at white contact was a conglomerate of ancient survivals, borrowings of all ages, and local inventions as well. Although most of the book is devoted to description of various tribes and culture areas at first white contact or as soon after as data are available, there is a

little documentary history in a number of chapters and a considerable amount in the last chapter on modern religions.

Underhill is one of the best writers in anthropology as the following quotation shows: "One of my most dramatic memories is that of standing in the plaza of a Pueblo, in the dark of a January morning, to watch the Mother of Game bring in the deer. It was almost dawn when we heard the hunter's call from the hillside. Then shadowy forms came bounding down through the piñon trees. At first we could barely see the shaking horns and dappled hides. Then the sun's rays picked out men on all fours, with deerskins over their backs and painted staves in their hands to simulate forelegs. They leaped and gamboled before the people while around them pranced little boys who seemed actually to have the spirit of fawns" (p. 117).

On the whole this book is the best on its subject to date and will appeal to a wide audience. It may be classed as text, trade, reference, or all three and can be read with profit by professionals in both the behavioral sciences and the humanities, including historians.

Indiana University

Harold E. Driver

Historians against History: The Frontier Thesis and the National Covenant in American Historical Writing since 1830. By David W. Noble. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1965. Pp. 197. Notes, index. \$5.00.)

This slender volume re-examines many of the precepts by which Americans have been guided since 1830. It also raises anew many arguments which no doubt will go into perpetuity. The author has sought the central theme or tradition in historical writings dealing with an expanding America. He of necessity has had to review the conflicts between old and new world cultures and between the simple agrarianism and the rising complex industrialism. In examining the adjustments of Americans to their new-found environment, historians have come under many intellectual and physical influences ranging from that of the mythical second covenant of salvation between God and man to the philosophies of Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, and others. Triumph of the common man, some historians have said, came in the 1830's with the elevation of Andrew Jackson to the presidency of the United States.

American historians no doubt, as Noble says, have constantly searched for answers to the question of how the country attained uniqueness and resisted alien influences. From George Bancroft to Daniel Boorstin, historians have tried either to explain this fact or to refute it in many of its parts.

Bancroft has had a vast and no doubt undue influence on American historians, even on those who have never read his history. The simple Calvinistic doctrine of predestinarianism had meaning for Americans. So did the simplicity of Puritanism. Beginning with no actual cultured heritage, as Bancroft saw America, the Republic built its cultural structure on a simple rural agrarianism. Humble leaders such as George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Daniel Boone were