

timentality, his self-deception, his extravagance verging to cant in matters of religion." This seems to put an end to any notion that in her wedded life she compared her lot with Carlyle to "what might have been."

To follow into detail the other minor matters would carry us too far. It appears, from Prof. Norton's account, that Froude has misstated the part taken by Mrs. Montague in the affairs of the lovers; that both of them were equally disposed at first to be content with an affection short of the point of marriage; and that, in the practical arrangements looking to their union, Carlyle's selfishness is not to be discerned, and more especially that Miss Welsh did not perceive any such defect in him, as Froude alleges, but on the contrary expressed her entire faith in him, regard for him, and the devotedness that belongs to the relation she was about to assume towards him. It is too soon to judge of the effect of these letters and controversial notes upon Carlyle's reputation. This present volume covers but a brief period; it remains to be seen whether Froude has misrepresented the wedded life, as he has the years before marriage. We have always regretted the labored discussion of the intimate domestic life of the Carlyles; the necessity to go over such ground again makes the matter doubly unfortunate. Yet Carlyle is entitled to the benefit of all that can be adduced in his behalf, and, at the least, should have the case stated exactly. Prof. Norton has nothing more in mind than to exhibit the papers in the simplest state, and to allow them to do the justice to Carlyle which his biographer, by his misinterpretations and inaccuracies, denied. This is the labor of a friend, and the end and issue of it will be awaited with interest.

#### BANCROFT'S CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA.

*California*. Vol. V. 1846-48. [History of the Pacific States of North America. By Hubert Howe Bancroft. Vol. XVII.] San Francisco: The History Company. 1886.

THE changed name of the publishing firm by which this volume is issued indicates of itself that the fortunes of Mr. Bancroft's enterprise have been subject to some recent calamity. Our readers, however, will no longer need to be reminded afresh that a severe loss by fire threatened, not long since, to put an end to Mr. Bancroft's entire series of Pacific Coast Histories, and that, with commendable energy, the injured firm not only managed to reorganize for the purpose of continuing the publication of the histories, but also succeeded in permitting only the slightest delay to intervene before the appearance of the present volume. This successful resistance to misfortune is certainly a matter for general congratulation.

Previous reviews have prepared our readers to expect much of this crowning volume of the early California series. We think that there will be no disappointment with the book as published. The same hand is at work here as in previous volumes of the 'California.' Whose hand it is, we are still permitted to conjecture. But we have the sense that a good piece of work has been done once for all. There must be supplementary discussions of many of the incidents here narrated, but the main story has now been authoritatively told.

The history of the seizure of so considerable a territory as California has, of course, a natural interest for such inquiring Americans as wish to understand all the significant episodes of their country's annals. The interest of the story is, however, heightened by the fact that the tale has often been grossly misrepresented, partly for romantic, but largely for personal reasons. Those who took part in the affair had

apparently no idea of any historical hereafter when what they did would not only be told in their own glowing way, but also retold truthfully, and judged on its merits. There is an air of utter irresponsibility pervading the whole conduct of the seizure. The Californians were a far-off and degraded people, with no special rights in their own land, and, above all, with no power to make such rights as they had in any wise obvious to the world. Such was the feeling of Capt. Frémont, of Lieut. Gillespie, of Com. Stockton, and of most of the other officers who had a share in the conquest. That these *rancheros* would ever make manifest to the world how their rights had been abused, the heroes of our conquering host of trappers and marines seem never to have imagined. But now at last the case of the Californians is clearly stated by a writer from among the nation of the captors; and what José Castro rightly called at the time the "despicable policy" of certain agents of the American Government, is very clearly exposed. It does, to be sure, little good to lament such long-past wrongs, unless there is some chance that we may avoid similar wrongs in the future. But from this disagreeable tale of boastful and irresponsible aggression, and of petty tyranny, we may at all events learn just what an obtrusive policy towards our Spanish-American neighbors means, and always will mean. In California the mischief was done on a small scale; yet for that not our policy, but the thinness of the population may be thanked. In future we may some time take a fancy to conquer some other California. Before we do so, let us read this story once more, and remember of what stuff such aggressions are made.

The new sources used in this volume include the papers of Consul Larkin, frequently cited, indeed, in the earlier volumes, but here of the very greatest importance. The mission of Gillespie to Frémont—a mission discussed in our previous review of Hittell's 'California'—is now explained in the light of the original despatch brought by Gillespie to Larkin; and the Frémont legend grows somewhat insignificant beside the facts. Bancroft's summary, in chapter iv, page 77 sq., of the "causes of the settlers' revolt," is pretty certainly substantially accurate, although the argument concerning the motives of Frémont himself (p. 89) will seem to the unprepared reader a little less convincing than it should seem, because it is rather too brief for so complex a subject matter. Frémont was undoubtedly, as Bancroft says, "engaged in a revolutionary movement, not in accordance with, but in disobedience of, his orders from Washington." And Bancroft has no insufficient reasons for saying this. Yet the general reader, especially if the Frémont legend has become familiar to him by reason of its frequent repetition in popular histories, will hesitate to accept this statement as sufficiently warranted by the brief summary of the evidence here given. After all, however, the best cure or belief in a legend is the presence of some good sense in the reader's mind; and we heap up evidence in vain for those who are born to believe fables, and to misapprehend historical truth.

Another most amusing group of popular tales, however, has clustered about the story of Commodore Sloat's raising of the flag at Monterey, July 7, 1846. This act, wherewith began our legal possession of the romantic golden land, is a fit nucleus for legends. Yearly such are repeated at California pioneer celebrations. The chances are that they will never be forgotten. Do not all the old pioneers know about them? Thus, for instance, everybody knows about Sloat's race with the wicked English Admiral, from whom he snatched California just in time. Exactly how he came to win the race, is not always so clear, because too many stories exist concerning that episode. They are all equally well founded, but they cannot all be

true at once. Sloat was at Mazatlan until the beginning of June, 1846. By this time he had heard enough of the hostilities on the Rio Grande to make him feel sure that, under his orders, he must set sail for California and seize the ports. Accordingly he did set sail, and was followed not long after by Admiral Seymour in the English ship *Collingwood*. Seymour reached Monterey nine days after the seizure of the town. He remained in the harbor for a week, showed no signs of vexation at the news of the conquest, and was socially on the best of terms with Sloat's officers during this period. Then he set sail for the Sandwich Islands. So much sober history knows. The legends, however, are aware that Sloat and Seymour had both long been equally anxious for news of the hostilities on the Rio Grande, before setting sail from Mazatlan, and that it was Sloat's superior command of secret advices which finally enabled him to outwit the Admiral. Seymour, on his part, as these stories have it, had strained every nerve to get the best of Sloat. That he was defeated in the race for information and in the subsequent race for Monterey depended on various things. Once, for instance, at the critical moment, he did temporarily get the better of Sloat in the matter of information. But thereupon Sloat sent his own son to dine on the English vessel at the Admiral's table. The Englishmen, as was their nature, drank too much champagne; and so the bold young American learned all that they could tell him. Sloat acted at once, and set sail before the Englishmen had time to recover from the effects of that disastrous dinner. And thus we won the golden land!

Of course, this account (which, by the way, Mr. Bancroft has not repeated, although we understand it to be the official legend among a certain group of pioneers) is not the only version of such a glorious story. Quite different reasons why Sloat was able to outwit the Englishmen are current, in accounts summarized from various equally valuable sources in the foot-note to p. 211 of the volume before us. But, as appears from facts which Mr. Bancroft (p. 208) makes public for the first time from the Larkin papers, Sloat actually knew of the hostilities on the Rio Grande as early as May 17, three weeks before he set sail from Mazatlan. At that time already, as Sloat shows by a "strictly confidential" letter to Larkin, he had resolved, under his instructions, to leave Mazatlan at once for the California coast. The subsequent struggle for the earliest information concerning the first hostilities, the heroic incident of the champagne dinner, and all the other exploits of that legendary time thus lose their significance at one unhappy stroke. We may, indeed, ask ourselves, Why then did Sloat still delay so long? But we shall be sure, at all events, that he could not have been passing those three weeks in an hourly struggle to outwit the dreaded Englishmen. Either he was playing no game against them at all, or he spent three weeks in making them a present of the game.

But in fact the whole legend about the hostile English designs upon California is now utterly ruined. On page 208, sq., Mr. Bancroft's discussion of the topic is quite sufficient to make the matter clear to intelligent students. We miss in it one important item only of the evidence, namely: if there were nothing else known about the matter, would it not be clear that Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet was the last one to engage in such an aggression as the one that the legendary account of Admiral Seymour's instructions attributes to the English Government of the day? Mr. Bancroft refers to the conversation in Parliament in August, 1846, between Bentinck and Disraeli on the one side, and Palmerston on the other. In this conversa-

tion enough appears to make it tolerably sure that the English Government had had no hostile designs upon California. But Mr. Bancroft's account does not point out what is equally significant, namely, that not Lord Palmerston, but his predecessor, must have given Seymour instructions, if any were given, with reference to California. Quite impossible, nevertheless, is the supposition that Pœl's Government, which so long and carefully sought every chance to avoid coming to blows about Oregon, should at that very moment have been meditating the deep laid scheme which the brave son of Commodore Sloat wrested from the lips of the nefarious and abject Englishmen, while he enjoyed their hospitality at the legendary dinner.

We hasten to point out, further, in the briefest manner, a few of the more significant novelties in the rest of this volume. In the story of Stockton's rule, Mr. Bancroft presents (p. 271) conclusive evidence that Larkin, acting in his character as confidential agent of our Government, undertook on Stockton's behalf to make peaceful overtures to Castro in the South, and that these overtures were the occasion for Castro's known attempt, August 7, to enter into negotiations with Stockton. Stockton's insolent rejection of Castro's offer at the time when it was made, appears in this way in a worse light than ever before. On page 344, sq., is given what may be called the first authentic account of the savage little fight at San Pascual, a fight of which Gen. S. W. Kearny chose to give so false an official report. Mr. Bancroft's account is made up from a number of not previously accessible sources, especially those collected by Judge Hayes of Los Angeles, in papers which are among the most noteworthy possessions of the Bancroft library. After the conquest history is completed, the most significant novelty of the volume seems to be the detailed plan of San Francisco in 1848, together with the long explanatory notes, founded in part upon testimony not previously accessible to historical students.

Of matters that seem to us doubtful, in Mr. Bancroft's views in this volume, we venture in conclusion to lay stress upon the reasoning (p. 226) whereby the hesitation of Commodore Sloat at Monterey, before raising the flag, is made to depend rather upon Larkin's advice than upon the consequences of Frémont's hostile action. To the writer of the account before us, the Bear-Flag hostilities would seem to have been additional reasons urging Sloat to quick action. We are disposed to regard their influence upon Sloat as only tending to increase his previous hesitation; and a careful reading of Mr. Bancroft's arguments has not convinced us of the contrary. Larkin, indeed, plainly advised the delay, and Sloat, during the time of the delay, doubtless often spoke as if, for his own part, he was ready to act at once. But Sloat had spoken just so, long before, at Mazatlan; and yet, as we have seen, he had afterwards hesitated. That Frémont and the Bear Flag can have been encouraging to the mind of such a man, we still must doubt. It is impossible to acquit "the Bear" of having done all the mischief that he could, in this matter as well as in every other. The valiant beast of the Sonoma flag was an unmitigated nuisance to California, and we cannot grant him the poor honor of having urged on Sloat to action.

With this volume on the conquest, Mr. Bancroft has reached the boundary line between the early history and the history of the modern State. We hope that there will be no falling off in the later and most difficult portions of the task. Thus far there is good reason for congratulation. The history of early California has been written in great detail, and in a fashion that

must make the book readable only in single chapters or episodes—never as one connected whole. Yet nowhere else can we find so thorough an account of the beginnings of an important community. It is an axiom of historical study that to make the exact truth accessible, must be a true end in itself for the investigator. If this be so, then no one should complain that Mr. Bancroft's book deals so exhaustively with provincial annals. Out of provinces grow, if not always nations, then at least organic and vastly important members of great nations. No one can doubt that the Pacific States have a very significant history before them. In the future, near or remote, no sensible man will doubt the value of the elaborate research which has now made the early portions of this history both accessible and comprehensible for all time. We have expressed our decided disagreement with some features of Mr. Bancroft's plan. We have no doubt of the great importance of what has resulted.

*A Muramasa Blade.* By Louis Wertheimer. Boston: Ticknor & Co.

In this unique work, Mr. Wertheimer has essayed a task none the less difficult because others, with no mean pretensions to learning and literary skill, have signally failed in it. These were unable to succeed because it is impossible to call the past into resurrection—to "recreate the rose with all its members"—by the science of archaeology alone. One must have, in addition, keen insight and warm sympathy to write a story of life in the Japan of five hundred years ago that will translate easily into the vernacular, and seem, when read by a native, the product of the soil. Yet this is what Mr. Wertheimer has attempted to do, and we think he has succeeded, excepting a few sentences serving to an American reader as hooks and eyes of speech. The story is truly and minutely Japanese in English. A Tokio *hanashika* (story-teller), under his mat-awning in Yanagi Chō, might tell to his open-mouthed auditors this tale of a sword, and not shock one of his auditors. And this, notwithstanding that such listeners are as critical of idiomatic accuracy as is a four-year-old child of the integrity of bed-time lore.

Improbable as many of the incidents and characters are, from our point of view, and impossible as some of them certainly are in the eye of science, all are in harmony with what the natives call *Yamato Damashii* (the spirit of ancient Japan)—that fierce code of honor which formed the ethics of gentlemen and the religion of heroes like Muto and Sennoské of the story. So faithfully has the author conceived his palingenesis of a vanished ideal, that in one or two points the narrative becomes to us a ludicrous farce, though in the oblique eye the most orthodox tragedy. In reading, we unconsciously suffered our risibilities to rise. On reflection, we felt like the outraged auditor in a theatre, in whose vicinity a boor guffaws during the death-scene. Possibly Mr. Wertheimer might have pleased the Japanese fancy a little less, and satisfied the Occidental taste somewhat more, had he sooner rung down the curtain on certain acts. Yet we are not so sure, remembering our own sensations in a Japanese theatre, when an actor committing *hara-kiri* occupied twenty-two minutes, by the watch, in disembowelling the bag of blood which did duty for his abdominal economy. The author evidently has his eye on the gallery gods afar off, for in chapter x. the endurance of Yamagawa is prolonged beyond belief. The aged servitor opens the region below the navel in a "regulation cut of six inches long and one deep." While thus ripped open, he indulges in a conversation with his young master; and

then, clapping his hand to his gushing midriff, listens bolt upright and calmly to the reading of his prolix will by a comrade. In print, this document occupies twelve solid octavo pages. Even supposing the soldier to be a fair scholar and able to read Chinese fluently—hardly so, we think, in the fourteenth century—the perusal must have required twenty minutes. Now, supposing the *seppuku* of that age was not in the severing of the great artery in front of the spine, but only an "inch deep," still, such a power of endurance in so old a man savors more of the Japanese stage than of physical possibility. It is, to say the least, not good art, and we question whether Bakin would countenance it.

Apart from this criticism, we cannot but pronounce Mr. Wertheimer's literary effort a superb triumph. His knowledge of Japanese history is as exact as it is copious. His references to tradition are to the taste of literary orthodoxy as tested by the latest researches. His local coloring is from actual study and an experience of thirteen years in the language and the land. Despite the literal faithfulness to the *samurai's* ideal, the romance is one of absorbing interest to the Western reader. It pictures the bright and glorious side of feudalism. Then, the soldier's calling was the noblest, war was a profession, the sword was the soul of the samurai, the forger of the bright true blade a pet of princes, and the possessor of a Muramasa was envied of millions. Yet the very brilliancy of the picture, while helping us to understand the gleam which even now lights up the bronze stolidity of a Japanese face when *hara-kiri* or swords are mentioned, shows also the arc of horrible darkness in which the lower strata of humanity rotted under pride and tax and the swashbuckler's tool. We remember only too well the sight of slashed corpses lying in the streets of Tokio, and our feelings at stumbling, while travelling at night, over dead bodies in the public roads, of seeing beggars allowed to drown in sight of withheld but convenient help, of bloody dogs hacked in head, body, and limb—for the sword once drawn must not be sheathed till it tasted blood. With all true reformers, we rejoice that the reign of the sword, even of the Muramasa blade, with its consequent brutality, is over, and that the humanity of the beggar and pariah is now a fact recognized in law and custom. The reading of this book, which held us fascinated to the end, has been a powerful reminder that the horrors and wonders of the feudalism which we witnessed in the days of 1870 and 1871 are now at an end.

The subject is worthy of the noble literary and artistic treatment given it in this book. The illustrations are remarkable in that they have not been contaminated or voided of their spirit by alien hands. The five copper-plate engravings are by Nakamura Munéhiro of Tokio, who has caught the old-time spirit fully. The three-score and ten drawings of a native artist now in this country are on the average good; in some places, as in war scenes, they approach excellence. They have been reproduced by photo-lithography. Print, binding, and index are of the first class. In the silk-bound copies the *Kiōto* brocade, of Mikado red inwoven with chrysanthemums, makes a fitting case for this mirror of Oriental chivalry.

*Memoirs of the Rev. J. Lewis Diman, D.D.*, late Professor of History and Political Economy in Brown University. Compiled from his Letters, Journals, and Writings, and the Recollections of his Friends. By Caroline Hazard. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1887.

THE materials for this biography were scanty. Prof. Diman's outward life was uneventful, and he did not make his private letters a record of