

would not have been available to any writer outside Portugal. Since it covers a wide empire in a detailed way, the work tends often to be no more than a chronicle of events. But the author saves himself from the worst effects of this by providing *resumés* at intervals in which he makes some attempt at interpretation. Much of the story is taken up by Portuguese rivalry with other European states, especially England and the Netherlands. This is mostly a record of external events, with battles, sieges, and treaties predominating. Such commercial details as are provided consist mainly of pieces of legislation and bare statistics. Ecclesiastical history is somewhat better covered: still, there is no satisfactory account of missionary effort.

The arrangement of the book is geographical, with Africa receiving the bulk of the attention, Portuguese India the next largest amount, and shorter sections being provided for small colonies like Timor and Macau. Events are kept in chronological order for the reader by the addition to the appendix of tables which in parallel columns give the leading events of Portugal and the main colonial areas during the hundred and ten years covered. Lists are also provided of all the governors and church authorities in the Portuguese empire.

The maps illustrating the text are old reprints. Pleasing though they are, the addition of at least one modern map would have placed most readers on a surer footing.

CHARLES E. NOWELL.

University of Illinois.

The Discovery of Florida and Its Discoverer, Juan Ponce de Leon. By EDWARD W. LAWSON. (St. Augustine: 1946.* Pp. 127. \$2.50.)

The emphasis of this little book, as its title suggests, is upon Juan Ponce de León in relation to the discovery of Florida. It is not, therefore, a complete biography of the discoverer, though the main details of his life are given: some of his experiences in Española, his years as governor of Puerto Rico, his difficulties with Diego Columbus, his various trips to Spain. This fact will account for the author's giving a disproportionate amount (fifty-seven pages of text) to a re-plotting of the route of discovery and to settling a local controversy over the exact spot of discovery on the Atlantic coast.

Mr. Lawson interestingly points out that historians have always been prone to overlook the solid accomplishments of Juan Ponce de León and make a great joke of "his fatuousness in searching for the Fountain of Youth." This fashion, which got a very early start with even Oviedo and Fontaneda casting sly aspersions on the discoverer of

* Privately printed by the author, 21 Joiner Street, St. Augustine, Florida.

Florida, persists to the present. There is no denying that one of his motives for undertaking the voyage in 1513 was to search for the youth-giving waters. Herrera in his *Historia general* says that "it is a certain thing that in addition to the principal purpose of Juan Ponce de Leon, for the voyage that he made . . . which was to discover new lands . . . he went to seek the fountain of Biminí, and in Florida a river, giving credit in this to the Indians of Cuba, and others of Española, who said that bathing in it, or in the fountain, old men were turned into youths." Though, unfortunately for the aged, Ponce de León did not find the spring, he must still be given credit for having nobly fulfilled his principal objective. He discovered and rounded the Peninsula of Florida; he was the first to observe the Gulf Stream and the Florida Keys; he was the first to explore the lower Gulf Coast of Florida; he discovered and named the Tortugas Islands; he made the first attempt to colonize the mainland part of North America. He must also be given credit for the fact that the Gulf Stream so quickly became the main eastward route for the treasure fleets of the Indies because it was his chief pilot, Antón Alaminos, who six years after its discovery, while in the employ of Cortés, carried the first load of Mexican treasure back to Spain over this course.

There are some things about the book that one would like to see improved—the paragraphing, for instance—but, nevertheless, it is a work of real value. The impression that one carries away, after completely examining it, is that there has been an exhaustive use of the materials on the discovery. Besides the accounts of the early historians, Peter Martyr, Las Casas, Velasco, Oviedo y Valdés, and especially Herrera, Lawson has translated and used many documents from the Archives of the Indies. It is a consecutive, precise, and logical account of the discovery drawn basically from Herrera and Oviedo, which accounts have been given almost in their entirety in various places in the text, but enlarged and adapted to modern geographical knowledge. Transcripts of Spanish texts with English translations by Lawson of the documents relative to the discovery of Florida are given in the appendix. Several controversial points of particular interest to the local history of Florida seem to have been settled by the author: the exact spot of discovery through Lawson's dead reckoning is stated to be Anastasia Island; the Atlantic stopping place of the expedition is definitively shown to have been St. Augustine; the point of discovery of the Gulf Stream is given as between Jupiter Inlet and Palm Beach; the west coast stopping place was probably Sanibel Island; the caciquedom of the Carlos Indians was probably located on Mound Key.

Berkeley, California.

CHARLES W. SPELLMAN.