

*A Self-Governing Dominion: California, 1849-1860.* By WILLIAM HENRY ELLISON. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950. Pp. xi, 335. Bibliography, index. \$4.50.)

For some five years now, California historians and writers have been reworking the abandoned shafts and tailings of sources left by the Gold Rush of a century ago. Sometimes they find a rich pocket which has lain untouched, but often, as in this case, they work their way through much gravel or low-grade ore and secure only a trace of gold.

Dr. Ellison narrates in great detail the political, legal, constitutional, and economic development of California from its acquisition by the United States to 1860, a critical decade. Although this involves a transition from a Spanish-American culture to a largely Anglo-Saxon one, there is little of interest here for the Latin-Americanist, since the transition was so abrupt and the old was so completely swept away. The history of California has enough characteristic features of the American frontier and the westward movement to deserve being read as part of the larger story; but this work is so detailed in its discussion of actions of legislative committees, local bodies, and so forth, that it would seem that only some one with an antiquarian interest in California would be able to read the book with enjoyment.

Probably the two most valuable nuggets uncovered here are fresh evaluations of situations which are usually accepted uncritically. One has to do with the first state legislature, which is forever fixed in the popular mind as "the legislature of a thousand drinks." The author makes clear that this body did an excellent and important job, the magnitude and success of which are not generally recognized. The other concerns the vigilance committees and lynch law throughout the state, but especially in San Francisco. The usual attitudes toward these activities range from tolerance to enthusiastic approbation. Dr. Ellison, however, weighs very scrupulously the moral and legal aspects involved, and clearly indicates that the vigilance committees were more sordid than glamorous.

It is somewhat surprising, however, to find (p. 196) the author contrasting lynch law with "an otherwise inspiring picture of California's past," for the picture up to that point had not been particularly inspiring. Certainly, the chapters on state and federal land-policy and on Indian relations are not pleasant reading; they reveal the persons concerned with these problems, both in Washington and California, as ranging from misguided to venal.

The volume reflects the usual high standards of the University of California Press. Why, though, should Santa Fé and Frémont, which

can get along without accents, be carefully accented, while San José, which needs one, is not?

EDWIN H. CARPENTER, JR.

Henry E. Huntington Library.

*Anuario jurídico interamericano, 1948.* Edited by CHARLES G. FENWICK. (Washington: Pan American Union, 1949. Pp. 393.)

This is the first volume of the *Inter-American Juridical Yearbook*, edited by the Director, Department of International Law and Organization, Pan American Union.

The contents are divided into six parts: I, "Studies in International Law and Organization"; II, "Notes on Current Inter-American Developments"; III, "Activities of the United Nations Bearing upon the Development of Inter-American Law and Organization"; IV, "Summaries of Articles in International Law Reviews Published in America"; V, "Book Reviews"; VI, "Documents."

The first section consists of eight articles, three by the editor, on various aspects of inter-American organization. Three of these articles were previously published.

The second section contains some useful information on the organization of the Pan American Union, on privileges and immunities of the Organization of American States, and on other matters of current interest.

Section III describes various activities of the United Nations and of the International Court of Justice related to juridical interests of the American states, prints the texts of the genocide convention and declarations of human rights, and provides biographical information about the members of the International Law Commission who are nationals of American states.

Section IV includes brief résumés of twenty-four articles on topics in the field of international law which appeared during 1948 in the following five journals: *Boletim da Sociedade Brasileira de Direito Internacional* (4 articles); *American Journal of International Law* (9); *Revista Peruana de Derecho Internacional* (4); *Revista de Derecho Internacional (Habana)* (6); *Revista Argentina de Derecho Internacional* (1).

The fifth section contains twenty-four book reviews, five of which are unsigned, nineteen of which are signed by the editor, and one of which, signed by a professor at a midwestern university, is a review of the third edition of the editor's treatise on international law.

The last section, of 130 pages, reproduces the texts of the Rio Treaty, the Charter of the O.A.S., and the Pact of Bogotá, in the four official languages of the organization.