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REVIEWS.

A HISTORY OF FLORIDA.

FLORIDA AND ITS ROMANCE: By George R. Fairbanks, M.A., Jacksonville. H. and W. B. Drew Company. 1898.

OF late years no Southern State has been making more rapid material strides than Florida, and a new and revised edition of Mr. Fairbanks's well-known work was therefore much needed. Fresh interest, moreover, has been imparted to the history of our first acquisition from Spain by reason of the political results of our recent war with that country. For our occupation of Cuba and Porto Rico, and, in a less degree, our experiences in the far-off islands of the Pacific, are but a continuance of those struggles between the Anglo-Saxon and Latin races for supremacy in the New World that have been going on for more than three centuries. The present volume is therefore a contribution not only to the history of Florida, but to that of the continent.

Mr. Fairbanks writes in a strong, terse style, and shows a great familiarity with the early history of his State. Unfortunately, however, his book is badly proportioned, more space being devoted to the Spanish than to the American period. But this was perhaps natural, for balanced against the eighty years of American occupation and ownership there are three centuries of Spanish and English control. It is to be regretted, furthermore, that the volume contains neither map nor index. There are quite a number of illustrations, however, including portraits of De Soto, Menendez, Oglethorpe, Osceola, and Billy Bowlegs. The make-up of the book reflects great credit upon the printers, and the clear, concise manner in which the author presents his facts will commend his undertaking to all who feel an interest in the long and dramatic history of the Southern peninsula.

Mr. Fairbanks begins by describing the discovery of Florida in the early part of the sixteenth century by Ponce de Leon, then governor of Porto Rico, who was in search of the

famous Fountain of Youth. Wonderful stories were also current among the Indians respecting the rich gold-bearing lands of the country. The date of Florida's discovery is fixed as Palm Sunday (Pascua Florida), in the year 1513, although there are some historians who place it a year earlier. Succeeding chapters treat of the slave expedition of Vasquez d' Aylon; the voyages of Miruelo, De Cordova, and Alaminos; the march of Narvaez, and the immortal explorations of Hernando de Soto. Florida at that time possessed a remarkable attraction for adventurers of all types, but with them often came Franciscan missionaries of unexcelled piety and devotion. Altogether it was a romantic epoch, filled with pathetic stories of blasted hopes, death at the hands of savages inflamed by the cruelties of the invaders, and strange careers led by lost Spaniards who were adopted by the native tribes.

The founding of St. Augustine, the oldest European settlement in North America, begins a new chapter in Floridian history. The English soon made their appearance on the scene, however, for the town was attacked by Sir Francis Drake, but was not to be thus destroyed. Discreditable is its connection with the blackest record of the Spaniards in Florida—to wit, the butchery of the Huguenot settlers at Fort Caroline, on St. John's River, an event that takes one back to the days of Coligny and the great struggle for religious freedom in France. The settlement of Carolina a century later brought the English and Spanish face to face, for "Florida" embraced as large a slice of territory as "Virginia" did. Hence began a long and bitter struggle for spheres of influence and hinterlands, the precursor of those strifes now witnessed in Africa.

For two centuries the history of Florida was that of every other possession of Spain. The French had early begun to encroach upon the western boundary. But at the close of the Seven Years' War, in 1763, Florida was ceded to Great Britain by the Peace of Paris, which stripped France of her American possessions and was the beginning of the end of Spanish America. The English divided the country

into two governments, called respectively East Florida and West Florida. In order to encourage the settlement of the region, the English governors were authorized "to grant lands without fee or charge to such reduced officers as had served during the late war, and to such private soldiers as had been or should be disbanded in America." At this time—namely, in 1763—Florida had a Spanish population of about seven thousand. The results of the English occupation were extraordinary. Immigrants were attracted to the country and new roads constructed. An interesting body of laborers was brought over from Smyrna, Greece, Italy, and Minorca; and, settling at Mosquito, renamed the place New Smyrna. These immigrants were received under terms which are thus described: "Their indentures required the settlers, in consideration of the sum paid for their passage and support, to labor for the proprietors a certain number of years, at the end of which they were to be entitled to receive allotments of land in proportion to the numbers of their families."

On the outbreak of the American Revolution Florida, on account of her recent history, did not cast in her lot with that of the other colonies, but remained attached to the mother country and a refuge for recalcitrant Tories. West Florida, however, was early captured by the Spaniards, and after the Americans had won their independence the English ceded the whole region back to Spain after an occupation of twenty years.

After the American Revolution Spain continued to occupy Florida until its purchase by our government, in 1819. Meanwhile there was a long and bloody record of Spanish misrule, Indian reprisals, and forays into Georgia and South Carolina by outlaws, Spaniards, runaway negroes, and outcasts of every description. No one did more to check these outrages than Gen. Jackson, whose stern treatment of the ringleaders might easily have involved us in a struggle with Great Britain. To purchase the country was therefore a necessary step, not only to save the region from anarchy, but also to round out our seacoast and check filibusters. Hence, by our

treaty with Spain in 1819, that country gave up all claim to West Florida, which we had occupied already for nine years, and ceded East Florida. Our government on the other hand, gave up all claim to Texas, and paid an indemnity of five million dollars to our citizens who had claims against Spain.

The new possession was in due time erected into a territory, and there was a great influx of settlers, principally from the South, who still further increased the number of slaves. Afterwards came the great Seminole War, which taxed the resources of the government and checked immigration. The betrayal of the chief, Osceola, was a disgrace to the American authorities. By 1845, owing to the policy of giving lands to armed settlers, the peninsula was populous enough to be admitted as a State.

Mr. Fairbanks gives a very striking account of the part Florida took in the civil war. He also pictures well the sufferings the people underwent, in common with those of the rest of the South, during the reconstruction period. Since the restoration of good government, however, there has been a phenomenal growth in population and a great progress in education and business.

The space allotted to this modern and interesting period is, as we have intimated, tantalizingly brief, but it is at least a pleasure to add that Mr. Fairbanks makes it clear that the future of his adopted State is a very bright one.

B. J. R.

DR. BRIGGS'S BOOK.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. By Charles Augustus Briggs, D.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1899.

The recent withdrawal of Dr. DeCosta, of New York, from the ministry and communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and its close and avowed connection with the reception of Dr. Briggs into the same ministry, have called attention afresh to the agitation of last summer, when the latter was advanced to the priesthood, and also to the book before us, which appeared about the same time.