

Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, Bradbury, Breckenridge, Long, *Frauchère*, and Ross Cox—and make a general acknowledgment of aid received from these quarters." So much for the charge of plagiarism, which comes with peculiar ill-grace from an author whose history is mainly a scrap-book, made up from clippings of his authorities. The essential facts are all faithfully given by Irving; but no one can read "Astoria" without perceiving that its author has taken the dry bones of journals, logs, diaries, reports and business statements, and clothed them with his exquisite fancy until they have become a living reality, giving us one of the most charming narratives in the English language, and, withal, a truthful one.

The real trouble is that Mr. Bancroft seems to have made up his mind that McDougal must not be blamed for the disastrous outcome of the enterprise, and as the facts are overwhelmingly against him, abuse of Mr. Astor and Mr. Irving must take the place of favorable facts. In his defense of McDougal he is led into contradictory statements again and again. On page 147 this gentleman is described as "short and lithe, and quick of action." On page 214 he has grown into "by nature a cold-blooded man, stolid in body and mind." "Astor was peculiarly unfortunate in his fitting of character to position." "Hunt's great mistake was in leaving the coast at all," and yet McDougal "stumbled upon the best course, the only course proper to be pursued throughout the whole of this unpleasant and luckless adventure." But if McDougal's course was the only proper one, how had Astor been unfortunate in his selection of him? And where did Hunt's mistake come in, leaving him in charge? The facts are continually too strong for Mr. Bancroft, and, with all his twisting of them, he finds himself continually caught.

Mr. Irving's view seems to me the nearest right, but none of the historians of Astoria have sufficiently distinguished between what were two separate and distinct acts: the original agreement with McTavish in July, and the final sale to McTavish and McGillivray in October. According to the compact between Mr. Astor and his partners, it was clearly within the power of a majority of the latter to dissolve the company at any time within the first five years of its existence. The war with England did undoubtedly threaten serious danger to their enterprise, and McDougal may have honestly thought it best to exercise the powers which had been delegated to them, and close out the business in the best manner possible. He gains, first, McKenzie to his views, and receives, afterward, the reluctant assent of Clark and Stewart by putting off the dissolution another year, and then only if no help should arrive sooner. The agreement with McTavish seems also to have been provisional, and, as its purport is not