

Northwestern approaches: The first century of books, by R. D. Hilton Smith. Victoria: The Adelphi Book Shop, 1969. \$6.50.

It is hard to write a good sonnet, but perhaps harder to write a narrative bibliography. Mr. Hilton Smith has succeeded in at least the latter. He has successfully woven biography and history into an account of the books published (and some yet unpublished) about the exploration of British Columbia up to the first decades of the nineteenth century. His knowledge of the books as physical objects is exhaustive, as one might expect from a man who is both bookseller and librarian. In addition, he seems to have read them all and a few more besides.

The structure of the book owes much to a special catalogue issued in 1941 by the firm of Edward Eberstadt & Sons, and Mr. Smith makes this acknowledgement. That catalogue is now unavailable, was not exhaustive in any case, and tended to make the eyes of collectors and librarians wet when they saw the prices. However, it was unique. Now Mr. Smith has produced a more than worthy successor. His four chapters deal with Spanish and Russian accounts, British accounts, French accounts, and U.S. accounts. In describing the printed memorials of exploration, the author provides an admirable short history of this period of British Columbia's history. Appended is a bibliographical checklist, arranged by author, listing all editions, and even forthcoming reprints, of books dealt with in the text. A section of illustrations reprints title pages and engravings from some of the rarest items.

Slim though it is, this is the first book for a prospective collector to buy, and one that all should own. Needless to say, librarians and historians amateur and professional will find it to be an indispensable reference.

University of British Columbia

BASIL STUART-STUBBS

Potlatch, by George Clutesi. Sidney, British Columbia: Gray's Publishing, 1969. 188 pp., plates by the author. \$5.95.

George Clutesi is a member of the Tse-shaht band of the Nootka Tribe of Vancouver Island. As a child he was sent to a church-operated residential school where he recalls that he was taught that his own culture was benighted, heathen, and inferior. His life since then has been given to a stubborn fight to restore, as much as possible, the Indian quality of

his people's culture. To this end he has taught local youth to dance traditional dances and to sing the appropriate songs. He has painted pictures illustrating legends and themes of his culture, and he has won acclaim through his broadcasting of Nootka tales for children.

Potlatch is his reconstruction of the emotional context and detail of the traditional ceremonial life of his people. The Nootka Dancing Society has one main theme — that of Dlukwana, the wolf. In the winter months, the wolf spirits were supposed to abduct the children of the tribe and teach them the songs and dances which belong to their families by inheritance. The children were sponsored by relatives, who gave feasts and gifts in their honour. It is the drama of these days which George Clutesi sets out from his childhood memory of them.

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