EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This is second number of the present series published within a year concerning Stephen Powers. First was the reprinting in Contribution No. 25 of 18 articles on California Indians published by Powers between 1872 and 1877, and portions of one article written in 1875 but not published until 1970. These articles, after rearrangement, some rewriting and with some additions, formed the text of Powers' Tribes of California which was published by the Government in 1877. Long out of print, and now rare, this important volume is now being reprinted by the University of California Press.

Also published by Friends of the Bancroft Library in 1975 was The Bancroft Library Keepsake Volume No. 23 in which Powers' "Californian Indian Characteristics" and "Centennial Mission to the Indians of Western Nevada and California" are reprinted, with a preface by N. Scott Momaday and an article "Stephan Powers as Anthropologist" by R. F. Heizer.

Now, in Contribution No. 28 we have Susan Park's biography of Stephen Powers. She has done a talented job of digging out the life history of this remarkable and talented man who can be called the father of California ethnography.

Appended to Powers' life story are copies of correspondence between Powers and John Wesley Powell or his aides on the subject of the publication of Tribes of California and sundry matters. Powell did not keep copies of his letters to Powers, and the originals were presumably destroyed in a fire when Powers' home burned. No commentary is provided for these letters beyond that offered in Susan Park's biography (pp. 19-36) except to explain the reference to Lewis Henry Morgan in Powers' letter to Powell of December 18, 1881. In the Introduction to Vol. 2 of H. H. Bancroft's Native Races there is an indirect criticism of Morgan's Ancient Society and its "ethnical periods". Morgan was invited to review the five volumes of Bancroft's Native Races, and did so in his famous 44 page essay entitled "Montezuma's Dinner," published in the North American Review, April, 1876. Morgan was strongly critical and wrote that the commendation which Bancroft's work was receiving was "nothing less than a crime against ethnological science." Morgan received supporting letters from such notable figures as Frederick W. Putnam, Francis Parkman and Henry Adams. This little controversy and the reception of Bancroft's voluminous writings (which have nothing to do with Powers) can be followed in B. Keen, The Aztec Image in Western Thought (Rutgers University Press, 1971) and H. Clark, A Venture Into History (University of California Press, 1973).

Robert F. Heizer
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