

BANCROFTIANA

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Twelfth Annual Meeting

SENATOR WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND, well known in the fields of politics and statesmanship, will take on the mantle of the historian when he addresses the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Bancroft Library on Sunday afternoon, May 3, 1959. He will speak on a subject of historical and current interest—the changing and ever-important relationship between California and the Federal government.

The Knowland family, long prominent in California, dates back to pioneer days—the Senator's children are fourth generation Californians. Joseph Knowland, the Senator's grandfather, came to San Francisco from New York in February, 1857. After several months in the mines, he turned to business, working for a shipping firm in San Francisco. A few years later he entered the lumber business and in time acquired one of the most extensive and important lumber interests on the Pacific Coast.

The speaker's father, Joseph R. Knowland, well-known publisher of the Oakland *Tribune*, was born in Alameda in 1873. After being associated with his father in the family lumber business for several years, he entered politics and was elected in 1899 to the California State Assembly. Later, after serving in the State Senate, he was elected to five terms—1905-1915—in the U. S. House of Representatives. From politics, Knowland turned to journalism, and for more than forty years has been president and publisher of the Oakland *Tribune*.

Senator Knowland, the publisher's second son, has served in public office since 1933, including two terms in the U. S. Senate. The Friends are honored to present as their speaker a man who has taken such a prominent part in both state and national affairs.

Return postal cards will soon be sent to all Friends for convenience in reserving places at the Annual Meeting. We are looking forward to welcoming you to the Bancroft Library. Remember the date: Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, the Bancroft Library, Berkeley Campus of the University of California.

Sir Francis Drake



Herb Caen

HERB CAEN'S COLUMN in a noted San Francisco newspaper carried the following comment on the morning of December 10, 1958:

"BUSINESS AS USUAL: Save old letters, they may be valuable. Frexample, Wm. Wreden, the P'Alto dealer in rare documents, just sold a letter signed by Sir Francis Drake to the

Friends of the Bancroft Library (at Cal)—for \$2000. The note is dated Oct. 10, 1593, which goes to show that some people never throw anything away for centuries.”

Of course we appreciate Herb Caen's comments, as well as his knowledge of Drake and the Bancroft Library—though in view of his exaggeration of the price we are not very sure of his accuracy with figures. The Friends did, after a careful and thorough investigation, buy for the Bancroft Library an authentic document bearing Sir Francis Drake's signature, the only one known to be in any Western library.

Drake is a subject of unending interest, not only in California but throughout the world. His exploits on the 1577-80 expedition are enough to make any explorer envious—he invaded the Pacific Ocean (hitherto considered by the Spaniards as their own backyard), stole enough treasure to load his ship to the waterline, spent a month on the California coast in refitting his vessel and resting his crew—and just incidentally taking possession of that land for England and setting up a brass plate as evidence of the claim! Then, instead of returning via South America where the Spaniards might be lying in wait for him, he sailed across the Pacific and rounded Africa on the way home to England—and became the hero of the age, giving history one of the grand adventure yarns of all time.

Even England's Queen Elizabeth flattered and honored the red-headed mariner. When the Spanish minister demanded that he be punished for his depredations on a friendly power, she held a magnificent “news conference”—while her diplomats tried to appease the irate Spanish government—where she knighted Drake for his courageous and patriotic accomplishments. The doughty queen knew just how to inspire her bold “sea dogs” and tease and exasperate the Spanish foe.

This Drake document will be on exhibit at the Annual Meeting on May 3 in the Drake Plate Case.

557 New Members

FANTASTIC, BUT TRUE. The success of the membership drive, launched last October, has exceeded our fondest hopes. To date 557 California alumni have responded to the in-

itation to join the Friends of the Bancroft Library, ready to do something to further its usefulness. With this increase, the membership has grown to over 1,000, making the organization one of the largest of its kind in the country.

Here is the story. Last fall Joseph M. Bransten, chairman of the Friends' membership committee, after consultation with O. Cort Majors, then president of the California Alumni Association, realized that the Alumni would like to do something special for the University, particularly the Bancroft Library, oldest and most famous repository of Californiana and Western Americana in the country. He suggested that they be told about the Friends, their work, their publications, and what they are doing to preserve the record of California's past. The Director and the Bancroft Staff accepted the responsibility of preparing suitable literature, an anonymous Friend and Alumnus paid all the costs—printing, postage, everything—and the envelopes, with an attractive brochure (designed by Lawton Kennedy) went into the mail in October, 1958, inviting Alumni to take a personal interest in the Library.

The response was electrifying. From everywhere Californians, anxious to be of service to their Alma Mater in specific, practical ways, sent in active or sustaining memberships. The Bancroft Library is proud of this loyalty of the Alumni. The Staff will cooperate with the Friends in developing a library that will continue to be the country's richest in California and Western history, and which will be of maximum usefulness to teachers working with young people in these fields of study.

Resourceful Patron

TO JOSEPH M. BRANSTEN, we of the Bancroft Library extend our special thanks for his contributions to our Western Authors collection. He has presented works of a score or more of different writers, and has undertaken to complete the collections of printed works of several individual authors. A few years ago, when he set out to gather the writings of Mary Austin, he succeeded in uncovering 29 titles lacking in our Library. Through agents, he is still searching for the more elusive materials,

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such as the printed programs of performances of Mary Austin's play *The Arrow Maker*, New Theatre, New York City (February-March 1911), and *Fire*, Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco (September-October 1915).

Gelett Burgess was next on Bransten's list. From all parts of the country he has tracked down 21 items, the latest being a group of Burgess' original drawings for a book, *Blue Goops* (New York, 1909), a copy of *Goop Tales* (New York, 1904), and a letter to his publisher, November 25, 1905. Last year, at Mr. Bransten's suggestion, we published in *Bancroftiana* a list of Burgess books still lacking at that time. These have all been received, and Mr. Bransten joins the Bancroft Library in extending thanks and appreciation to those Friends who generously responded: Anthony Boucher, Walter A. Gabriel, Mrs. Guy Gilchrist, International Bookfinders, Lester Roberts, and Dr. Albert Shumate. Another good Friend, Warren Howell, at Christmas time presented a full set of eight *Lark* posters.

We are now preparing a new project for Joe Bransten. If there are other Friends who would be interested in directing their own “book hunts,” we shall gladly furnish suggestions. For those content with a general list, we publish below a number of Book Club of California titles we should like to have for the Bancroft Library.

Want List

THE BANCROFT FILE of the Historical Society of Southern California's *Annual Publication* is complete except for Volume 15, Parts 2 and 3 (1932), which we have not been able to locate. Could someone help us?

Our collection of The Book Club of California publications has been augmented by gifts from members of the Club, and we are hopeful of receiving the following:

Alta California. Diputación Territorial. *A Facsimile Edition of California's First Book, Reglamento provincial*. . . (1954)
The Book Club of California: Its Purposes, Membership, and List of Publications. (1928)
Browne, J. Ross. *Muleback to the Convention*. (1950)
Early Transportation in Southern California. Edited by Robert J. Woods. (1954)
Field, Charles K. *Prayer; A Poem*. Foreword by David Starr Jordan. (1921)
Hall, Carroll Douglas. *Donner Miscellany*. (1947)

Harte, Bret. *Dickens in Camp*. (Printed by John Henry Nash as a gift to The Book Club of California). (1923)

—. *San Francisco in 1866*. (1951)

Lawrence, David H. *Fire and Other Poems*. (1940)

Lewis, Oscar. *The California Mining Towns*. Numbers 1, 2, 3. (1933)

—. *The Origin of the Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. (1931)

Norris, Frank. *The Letters of Frank Norris*. Edited by Franklin Walker. (1956)

Pérez Rosales, Vicente. *California Adventure*. (1947)

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The English Admirals: Greenville*. (1923)

Weil, Oscar. *Letters and Papers*. (1923)

Weller, Earle V. *Ballads of El Dorado*. (1940)

Not All is Gold...

NOT LONG AGO one of Bancroft's staff caught a glitter of gold while “prospecting” some Frémont letters that had recently been acquired in the William K. Rogers collection. The “nugget” that caught his eye was a note from the glamorous Jessie Benton Frémont to Colonel William K. Rogers, private secretary to President Rutherford B. Hayes. Read it and chuckle!

New Brighton, Staten Island.
February 18th [1881]

DEAR COLONEL ROGERS

Mr. Edward Tatnall Jackson of Georgia (I think) wishes to be appointed to the Marine Corps, and his connexion, Admiral Edward Tatnall Nichols—until lately my son's chief here—asks a line of introduction through you to the President. Mr. Jackson has all sorts of papers, Northern and Southern. I think he will get to Heaven as quickly as into that little close corporation, the Marine Corps, but you understand I do not say No to anything asked of me by my son's superior officer.

Sincerely yours,
J. B. FREMONT

Hangnail Sketches

SEVERAL YEARS AGO when Eleanor Bancroft, who personified the Bancroft Library to so many friendly users, had completed 30 years of continuous service, we prevailed on her to tell about the Great and Near Great she remembered who had frequented its treasure-laden shelves. Since there was no Guest Book or Visitor's List in those years, she drew on her memory, though, she confessed, it was growing a bit dim, but added, “I dredged up the names of a few visitors who left an impress.” Here is her story, written in that sly

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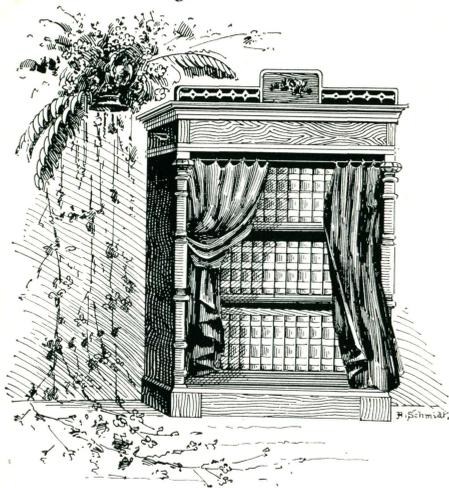
tongue-in-cheek manner so characteristic of her good humor:

"Thomas C. Russell, small, dry, and incredibly wrinkled, who searched through the library for the texts of the rare books he was printing by hand, counting words and letters, and working over his layouts. John Henry Nash, recovering from serious illness and financial reverses, coming to see the Bancroft Library and eventually donating a valuable collection of his own famous imprints. Boutwell Dunlap, avid collector and meticulous student of California history, occasionally adding some item to his library over which he could gloat, 'Not in the Bancroft Library.' William Martin Camp, handsome, interesting, and on the outside a harmonica player, whose tragic death a few years ago took one of our most promising writers. Spencer Cochran Browne, scholarly gentleman and at the same time competent in worldly matters, well informed, fine looking, and one with whom it was always a pleasure to pass the time of day, grandson of J. Ross Browne. Ernest A. Wiltsee, known as 'Colonel' because, he told us, head waiters in the better eating spots thought he looked like a Kentucky Colonel, a gold mining man with a talent for making cordial enemies, six feet five inches tall, a regal host at large and small parties, ordering photostats by the dozens from our early files of the *Alta*. Admiral William Carey Cole, Commander of the 12th Naval District, surrounded by respectful aides who held the books and turned the pages for him.

"Then there was Raúl Ramírez, the aristocratic and handsome Latin, exchange professor from the University of Chile, who, though on his honeymoon, caused many a feminine heart to flutter. Henry R. Wagner, that wise and witty man, discussing the 16th century Mexican printer, Juan Pablos, the 19th century publishers Bosqui, the Bancrofts, and Whitneys, as though they were all as modern as his friends the Grabhorns; throwing in a little about the conquest of Mexico and a wickedly funny story about some current mutual friend. George Parker Winship, calling on us again after many years, wanting to see just one item: a manuscript written entirely in gold, remembered from his first visit in 1910; our frantic search failed to produce it. Edward Eberstadt, that Paul Bunyan of

the book world, forever holding some fabulous collection at a fantastic price, the pocket-book hurt alleviated a little by his sparkling humor. Harry Breen, of Hollister, shattering our 'Oulde Sod' theories by telling us that he has never visited Ireland, he being our number one choice for a real, live contact with the Blarney Stone. Clarence Walker Dobie, whose reminiscences should be recorded: fascinating stories of his boyhood days in San Francisco, weeks and months of explorations of San Francisco Bay under sail, owner of a livable houseboat, banker and business man, and the donor of our valuable collections of the papers of his brother, the late Charles Caldwell Dobie. Many, many more."

A Matter of Sentiment



H. H. BANCROFT'S PRIDE as author, entrepreneur, and publisher of the monumental 39-volume *History of the Pacific States* is suggested in part by the care he showed in binding and in exhibiting a few sets of this work. The most common binding, with which all readers of Bancroft are familiar, is the handsome calfskin, with black labels, but some sets were treated more luxuriously.

A few, beautifully bound, were sold with a special library bookcase made to fit the set exactly. Such a library case I have seen but once. There is none in the Bancroft Library, though we have photographs of it. One of these specially bound sets with its own bookcase would be a particularly attractive exhibit,

to be kept as a permanent memorial to H. H. Bancroft. We hope that one of our readers knows of such a bookcase with a set of the *Works* and might wish to present them to the Bancroft Library.

—G.P.H.

California Historical Society Awards

THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY at its January meeting testified to its high regard for George P. Hammond, Director of the Bancroft Library, by electing him a Fellow of the Society. It would seem, indeed, that a connection with the Bancroft Library is, if not a requisite, at least a recommendation to honors in the Mansion 'cross the Bay, as four of the five new Fellows are Friends of the Bancroft Library, and Awards of Merit were presented to three other very good Friends.

A recent distinction among the California historians, Fellows are elected "in recognition of distinguished attainments in the field of California and Western History and of outstanding service to the Society." Awards of Merit are presented "to individuals or institutions for outstanding contributions to California history." Fellows elected in addition to Dr. Hammond are John W. Caughey, Edith M. Coulter, Sidney M. Ehrman, and Carl I. Wheat. Bancrofters who have received merited awards are Col. Fred B. Rogers, Miss Gladys Wickson, and Arthur Woodward. This, however, does not exhaust our supply of distinguished contributors, and we shall be happy to continue to furnish worthy candidates as long as the Society wishes to honor them. *Ho*

Fremont Older

THE FREMONT OLDER PAPERS, presented to the Bancroft Library by his widow, Cora Baggerly Older, inspired us to refresh the memory of her husband, widely recognized as a towering figure in Western journalism, who fought without quarter for what he believed was just and right.

Born in Wisconsin August 30, 1856, he was spurred early in life by an ambition to emulate Horace Greeley. At the age of 16 he went West and worked as a printer on various

newspapers in California and Nevada, and then in San Francisco as a reporter, and eventually city editor, on the *Morning Call*. From 1894, when he became editor of the San Francisco *Bulletin*, he steered the destiny of that paper for 24 years, engaging in fight after fight to break the political grip of the Southern Pacific Railroad on the State, to clean up San Francisco, and to expose injustice, crime, and corruption. He was ruthless in his exposés, and the city was rocked by the *Bulletin's* flaming headlines and Older's fearless editorials. The paper's circulation soared.

Older's first tilt with the Southern Pacific political machine came in 1897. He plunged into the mayoralty campaign, supporting James D. Phelan as the reform candidate. Phelan was elected. Ultimate victory over the railroad came in 1910 when Hiram Johnson, with Older's vigorous aid, was elected governor.

The most spectacular of Older's campaigns against political corruption was his support of the graft prosecution of Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz and political boss, Abe Ruef, in 1906. So intense was this fight that Older's life was threatened, and, at the height of the investigation, he was kidnapped in an attempt to prevent his appearance as a prosecution witness. Fortunately, the scheme didn't work. Schmitz and Ruef were convicted — although, because of a legal technicality, only Ruef received a prison sentence.

It was often said of Older that he devoted half his long newspaper career to putting men in prison and the other half to getting them out. Older became convinced that Ruef was merely a scapegoat, and, in the last analysis, that men like him were not the cause of corrupt politics, but their product. Older went to San Quentin to ask for Ruef's pardon. His change of heart is best revealed in this letter written to a friend:

"... It was the very exposures brought about by the graft prosecutions which taught me that jails and jute-mills, cropped hair and dungeons, would not give us civic health. I learned that the acute disease which Ruef was suffering from was noticeable in all of us in variloid [sic] form."

Older's personal bitterness toward Ruef had passed. His visits to San Quentin marked the beginning of his great interest in prison reform and the plight of the ex-convict who

could not make an honest living. In this period, too, was born the philosophy of tolerance which became so pronounced in his later life. As he put it, "From being a savage fighter against wrong and injustice as I saw them in the old days, I have gone clear over to the point where I do not blame anyone for anything."

In 1917, Older undertook the last great fight of his career—the freeing of Tom Mooney and Warren Billings. By this time he was convinced that the two men had been convicted on perjured testimony, and came out flatly in the *Bulletin* with the accusation that they had been framed. Advised by the owners of the paper to drop the case, Older resigned and accepted William Randolph Hearst's invitation to come to his newspaper, the *San Francisco Call*, and bring the Mooney case with him. It was not personal concern for a man like Mooney that motivated Older. It was, rather, "the integrity of our legal procedure . . ." Undismayed by repeated refusals of governors to pardon Mooney and Billings, he kept up the fight for 18 years and would undoubtedly have continued to do so had he lived.

In 1929, at the age of 73, he became editor and president of the *Call-Bulletin*, a merger which had been accomplished with Hearst's purchase of the moribund *Bulletin*. In his later years, Older, having won the reputation of a man who "had fought more battles, faced more issues, and won more victories for the things he held dear than any editor of his times," left most of the active work to younger men on the staff. He died of a heart attack, at the age of 78, on March 3, 1935.

Like most newspaper men, Older was not a "saver," and consequently the letters in the collection represent only a portion of what must once have been an extensive correspondence. What has escaped loss and destruction, however, adds considerably to the understanding of a man who became a legend in his own time. *ER*

The 49th State in Pictures

CALIFORNIA IS NOT THE ONLY STATE in the Union with a Gold Rush in its history. The 49th State can proudly lay claim to colorful mining days of its own, a boast the Bancroft

Library can verify by its magnificent collection of Alaskan photographs.

One of the finest acquisitions of pictorial materials owned by the Library, this collection of early Alaska pictures consists of over 2,000 glass negatives and prints. It represents the work of four pioneer Alaska photographic firms: E. A. Hegg (1898-1904); Larss & Duclos (1898-1902); Frank Nowell (1902-1904); and Case & Draper (1906-1908).

E. A. Hegg came to Skagway in the winter of 1897. Traveling the "Trail of '98" over Chilkoot Pass to Dawson, he operated a studio there until 1900, when he sold out to Larss & Duclos and moved to Nome. Frank Nowell, from his studio in Nome, made extensive photographic tours over much of the territory from 1902 to 1908. Case & Draper located in Juneau in 1905, and since then have been responsible for many pictures from that area.

The collection covers many events in Alaska's past: The Gold Rush from Skagway and Dyea to the Klondike; Nome in its early days, and the surrounding area up to Point Barrow and the Bering Straits; Mining activities of all kinds in Nome, the Klondike, and other areas; Shipping, railroading, fishing, whaling; Schools, residences, and saloons; Indians and Eskimos.

One picture is of a group of young ladies who are, so the caption assures us, "hard workers." In short, the collection covers nearly every activity in our far northern state during the decade following 1898. It is a fine addition to Bancroft's Alaskana.

"Long Live the Purple Cow"

A HALF-CENTURY of correspondence with some of the most distinguished persons in America and Europe is included among the more than 1,000 items that have nearly doubled the size and research value of Bancroft's extensive Gelett Burgess Collection. These have now been arranged and are ready for use.

Besides letters from Jack London, Frank

Norris, Willa Cather, O. Henry, Sinclair Lewis, W. Somerset Maugham, and many other literary figures of equal stature, the collection contains manuscripts, drawings, photographs, memorabilia, reminiscences, and published works. Many of the 287 letters to Burgess combine to document impressively the breadth and duration of his fame. In 1897, for example, William Dean Howells encouraged the young author-editor to leave San Francisco and go East by promising him "a cordial welcome from all this *Lark*-loving flat." Later, during aircraft tests in France, Wilbur Wright looked forward to meeting the author whose work he read "more times than any other book in the world probably." And from the White House in 1938, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who shared his birth date with Burgess, rounded out best wishes on the occasion with the ebullient quip: "Long live the purple cow!"

California, where Burgess did much of his best work, receives some noteworthy attention by the writers of these letters. Near the end of the last century, when Burgess complained of a lack of inspiration in England, Rudyard Kipling reminded him that "California is a mighty easy place to be oneself in." And in the locally disastrous year of 1906, Henry James, far away in his peaceful "little old-world corner" of Rye in Sussex, wrote: "Your brief words about San Francisco cast upon me a miserable chill . . . The situation is to me . . . unthinkable!"

Burgess' development as a humorist, the most delightful element in his character, colors many of these papers. A 1¾ x 2½ inch magazine that he wrote and printed in 1880 at the age of 14—the tiniest and earliest item in the collection—contains what is probably Burgess' first published work, and certainly reveals a first sign that the "Muse of Nonsense" had bitten him:

Now merrillie the sting-bugg
Pursues his way with glee:
Yet, half-an-hour ago, he did
But stick his sting in me!

Powell's Santa Fe Journal

AMONG WESTERN JOURNALS few, if any, are more famous than that of H. M. T. Powell, who made the overland trek to California in

1849. Friends who may be so fortunate as to have this remarkable book on their library shelves will remember it both for its beautiful format and its significance as one of the most detailed and readable of all accounts of the rush to California. Printed by the Grubhorn Press for The Book Club of California in 1931, *The Santa Fé Trail to California, 1849-1852*, won the coveted recognition of being selected by the American Institute of Graphic Arts as one of the fifty most beautiful books of the year.

Powell traveled with the Illinois Company, and somehow he found time and energy each day to record the experiences and scenes of life on the trail. The haunting presence of cholera, the fear of "lurking Apaches," the inevitable bickering and dissension between members of the company; the weariness, thirst, and other tribulations, all are reported by the articulate and observant Powell. His descriptions of Santa Fé—"a miserable hole; gambling and drinking in all directions," and of other spots of civilization along the route, including Tucson and several Indian villages, present a uniquely graphic account of the long journey.

Nor did Powell end his diary on arrival in California. Unlike so many, he continued to write each day, giving a fine account of life in the tumultuous land of gold. Indeed, his diary even includes the story of his return home via the Isthmus. And finally, he sketched sixteen lovely pencil drawings of missions and scenes on the journey.

The original Powell Journal came to the Bancroft Library with the Thomas W. Norris Collection. It will be on exhibit—as an outstanding example of overland narratives—at the Annual Meeting on May 3.

New Honor for Old Friend

THE FRIENDS WILL BE DELIGHTED to learn of the latest of many honors showered on Carl I. Wheat, who was for several years their Chairman. In recognition of his varied contributions to the history and culture of California and the West, the Board of Trustees of Pomona College voted on March 21, 1959, to confer on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. *Salud*, Dr. Wheat!

How Important is a Rare Book?

WOULD A BOOK ON ASTRONOMY, printed in Mexico City in 1691, be a rare item, worth hundreds of dollars? Or one on mathematics or history?

That depends, of course, on several factors. The question comes to mind because the Friends, through their Council, voted to give \$400 to the Bancroft Library to help purchase Sigüenza y Góngora's *Libra Astronómica*, printed in Mexico in the year 1691.

And the book is well worth the price. This particular copy is immaculate, bound in the original sheepskin, with paper as soft and white as it must have been nearly three hundred years ago.

The *Libra Astronómica* is primarily famous for its account of a controversy between the Mexican scholar Sigüenza y Góngora and the missionary who had recently come to Mexico from Europe, Father Eusebio Kino. In an age noted for its superstitions rather than its learning, these men got into a heated argument over the nature of comets.

The ever-popular almanacs had warned there would be an eclipse of the sun on August 21, 1691. It was "not only total but one of the greatest that the world has seen," wrote Sigüenza. For fifteen minutes there was total darkness. "An eerie chill descended abruptly with the pall of night . . ." Women and children shrieked in terror, Indians deserted their fruit stalls . . . all rushed to the Cathedral to offer their frightened prayers. But Sigüenza, the Mexican scientist, stood with his quadrant and telescope viewing the sun, "extremely happy and repeatedly thanking God for having granted that I might behold what so rarely happens in a given place and about which there are so few observations in the books."

Sigüenza's strong bent toward mathematics and astronomy shines through these lines. He had already upheld the spirit of scientific investigation about comets in a number of pamphlets. Then, when Kino gave him a copy of his own *Exposición Astronómica*, in which he denounced Sigüenza's views on comets and maintained "their ominous portent," while at the same time referring to Sigüenza as a "trabajoso juicio"—dull wit—the Mexican professor, his pride hurt, wrote his most

learned book, the *Libra Astronómica*, in defense of his country, of Mexican scientists, and of his own reputation as professor of mathematics in the University of Mexico.

The book, though written in 1681, was not published until ten years later, at which time Father Kino was completely pre-occupied with his missionary work in Pimería Alta, and if he saw the book he did not reply. This literary duel between two of New Spain's great men brings into focus the growing enlightenment of the age—the eternal quest to learn more about the universe and free the mind from fear and superstition.

This fine copy of the *Libra Astronómica* belongs among Bancroft's resources. We are hoping that one of these days its companion, Kino's *Exposición Astronómica* (Mexico, 1681), likewise rare and a most important book, will also come to the Bancroft Library.

The Champoege Legend

THE INCREDIBLE staying power of a legend is remarked by the venerable Rev. J. Neilson Barry of Portland, Oregon, in presenting to Bancroft an interesting collection he has made of copies of documents bearing on the "fictitious Champoege meeting" of 1843. He has frustrated, he remarks, 14 different efforts to obtain government funds for commemorating the "Champoege legend" as history. Being well assured that the legend will outlive him, he has deposited the documentation in the Bancroft Library by way of encouraging other scholars to carry on the fight after he shall have passed on.

The legend, Mr. Barry explains, is that a meeting of American and French-Canadian settlers was held at Champoege, in the Willamette Valley, in 1843, at which action was taken to make Oregon a Territory and later a State. The documents assembled indicate that the meeting was actually held in 1844, but that it became confused in the Oregon folk memory. The Reverend Barry, now 87, who has published several score articles on the history and cartography of the Northwest, traces the origin of the "Champoege legend" to a hoax printed in an Astoria newspaper after the Civil War, republished in a popular book of 1870, and ineradicably recorded in Oregon history ever since.