

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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'Fabulous San Simeon'

The California Historical Society has just issued a new publication, "Fabulous San Simeon," written by Oscar Lewis, design by Lawton Kennedy, photographs by Philip Negus Frasse and drawings by Mallette Dean. The publication is a history of the Hearst Castle, a California State Monument, located on the scenic coast of California, together with a guide to the treasures on display. The California Historical Society is to be congratulated upon the attractiveness and the accuracy of the information contained within the 88 pages. The sale price is \$1.50.

". . . alone with one poached egg in that vast baronial hail" . . . is the wonderful phrase with which Edmond Coblenz concluded one of the many anecdotes in his entertaining reminiscences of William Randolph Hearst when he spoke recently at a meeting of the members of the California Historical Society in San Francisco. Following his talk he made an extremely interesting presentation to the society's collection: a small postcard in Mr. Hearst's own handwriting which illustrated and tells of his original inspiration for the towers of the castle at San Simeon.

Oscar Lewis, the author of "Fabulous San Simeon," will have the honor of an exhibition of his work at the California Historical Society headquarters, 2090 Jackson St., San Francisco, June 17 through July 31.

Mr. Lewis was born in San Francisco and with the exception of a year overseas during World War I, he has lived there most of his life. The bulk of his writing has been on historical or biographical subjects. In all his work he accurately projects the qualities that have made the colorful history of the state the dramatic focal point of western development. His record of distinguished literary accomplishments so well represented in this exhibition entitled "The Evolution of an Author," has made him a recognized authority on Califormiana.

We note that in April the Rev. Father Antonine Tibesar, Q.F.M., director of the Academy of American Franciscan History of Washington, D. C., and Francis Price of Santa Barbara, who spoke at the Monterey History and Art Assn. annual meeting in January, traveled to Washington at the invitation of the Spanish Embassy for

a brief ceremony at which they delivered to the Spanish ambassador copies of the Spanish text of more than 300 writings of Father Narcisco Duran, one-time president of the California Missions.

Included in those delivered were copies of 36 original Duran letters in the California Historical Society collection. In the index to the two volumes delivered, these letters were listed with credit to the society and the Ambassador was made aware of the generosity of the society in permitting the use of this material.

In order to make the material available to the Spanish scholars and to acquaint them with colonial California and its connections with Spain, the Spanish government has undertaken to publish in the near future the Spanish text of all the Duran letters.

The Academy of American Franciscan History plans the publication of the writings of all the "presidents" of California missions and the Spanish government has undertaken to publish all of this material. The Duran letters are the only ones which have been delivered to the Spanish government.

It is interesting also to note that Francis Price is annotating the Duran papers in the society's collection for publication in a future issue of the Quarterly, the official publication of the California Historical Society,