

BOOK REVIEWS

La Francia y la Monarquía en el Plata (1818-1820). By MARIO BELGRANO. (Buenos Aires: Librería de A. García Santos, 1933. Pp. 230.)

Rivadavia y sus Gestiones diplomáticas con España (1815-1820). By MARIO BELGRANO. (Buenos Aires: Librería de A. García Santos, 1934. Pp. 122.)

Both of these monographs deal with the foreign policy of that nebulous political entity often designated La Plata—the State that developed into modern Argentina. They both consider problems which have from time to time been discussed by South-American writers. In the preparation of these booklets Señor Belgrano has consulted the writings of Cané, López, Mitre, and Villanueva. Personally or through agents he has consulted inedited papers in the archives of England and France. Further, he has been allowed to use copies of documents transcribed in the *Archivo General de Indias* for the learned *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas* of Argentina. Most important of all perhaps, he has been privileged to search for materials in the *Archivo General de la Nación* at Buenos Aires. Although equipped with footnotes, unfortunately neither of these monographs contains a bibliography of the works consulted. The author does not seem to have noticed the views of North-Americans concerning the incidents in Argentine diplomatic and political history of which he treats.

The study describing the mission of Bernardino Rivadavia to Europe in 1814-1820 (already in its second edition) considers the attempts of that talented Argentine leader to negotiate with European nations on behalf of La Plata. These attempts were initiated by the dispatch in 1810 from Buenos Aires of Manuel Belgrano, Manuel de Sarratea, and Bernardino Rivadavia to Europe to negotiate with England or with Spain for the establishment of a monarchy in southern America. The notion apparently was that this monarchy might be ruled by a Spanish prince, by an English prince, or by a prince of some other European nation. Certain Platean leaders evidently enter-

tained the view that by engaging in such negotiations they might hasten the acknowledgment of their country's independence. The author describes Rivadavia's approaches in 1816 to Pedro de Cevallos, the Spanish secretary of state—approaches which led to the agent's expulsion from Spain in July, 1816. In 1818, Rivadavia turned up in Madrid again—again to be repulsed by the obstinacy of Ferdinand VII. and his advisers who had determined to continue the struggle for the complete reconquest of Spanish America.

The study concerning the relations between Spain and La Plata is supplemented by the monograph describing the informal negotiations between the French Government and the authorities at Buenos Aires respecting the establishment of a monarchy in La Plata. In this work, considerable attention is accorded to the quest of the French agent, Colonel Le Moynes, who sounded the Platean authorities concerning the creation of European appanages in Spanish America. Special attention is paid to the rôle of the Platean emissary, José Valentín Gómez, who was sent in 1819 by Director Pueyrredón of La Plata to treat with France concerning an acknowledgment of Argentine independence. The views of the French ministers of foreign affairs, Dessoles and Pasquier, with regard to the rising nations of Hispanic America are described. Some attention is also paid to the views of England and Spain with respect to the project for a monarchy seated at Buenos Aires. The reaction of Pueyrredón's political enemies to the monarchical scheme is discussed in considerable detail. Two documents from the Argentine archives are printed in the appendix.

These monographs cast fresh light upon significant and much-discussed incidents in Argentine diplomatic history. Unfortunately, there are certain features of that history which not even the Argentine archives can thoroughly explain, for certain documents have apparently disappeared from those archives. Whatever may have been the real views of Platean leaders with respect to the planting of a monarchy in southern South America, these monographs describe in significant detail the attempts of a Platean Government to negotiate with European powers in such a manner as might involve an acknowledgment of its independence.

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