

ences to correspondence of the time is badly needed. Sketches of diplomatic personalities are especially good and the reader is given something of a real acquaintance with the actors in the drama. The best portion of the study is the second half where the complicated situation in Mexico is presented (again without adequate references) in a quite good and straightforward, though somewhat choppy, narrative style.

All in all, here is an account that suffers from being rather poorly organized and from inadequate documentation for a monograph on a technical research problem. However, a worth while story is told and the contribution is one not to be ignored by students in the field.

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*Santa Anna.* By RAFAEL F. MUÑOZ. (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, S. A. 1936. Pp. 259. 5 pesetas.)

This book, one of the most recent in the series called "Vidas Españolas e Hispanoamericanas del Siglo XIX", is an exceptionally splendid account of the life of surely one of the most unusual and enigmatic characters the new world has yet seen. The figure of Santa Anna loomed constantly important on the Mexican scene from the days of the war of independence until he finally was cast from power in 1855, and Sr. Muñoz, already well known as one of the younger authors and journalists of Mexico (especially for his trilogy on Pancho Villa), gives us the story in a most readable and interesting manner. It is obvious from the first that the author is complete master of his material, yet he chooses to relate not so much in scholarly as in popular vein, and in a clever style which changes its nature to suit the mood of the moment, with humor and sarcasm commonly in play. As a biography, this book is most impartial and should satisfy all, presenting as it does not alone the worst (and best known) side of Santa Anna but likewise giving proper credit to the better traits of the man. In other words, the author's treatment is sympathetic at times, critical and condemnatory at others.

Santa Anna! What a name to conjure with in those first hectic decades of the history of independent Mexico! A magnificent organizer, possessed of a fascinating personality, enormous energy, and unbridled ambitions, a good military strategist but inconceivably unfortunate in the direction of a battle, a shrewd politician of supreme

finesse in the art of intrigue and duplicity, patriot and also traitor, of a cruel, strongheaded, dictatorial disposition which never asked nor heeded the advice or wishes of anyone, with an uncanny sense of the dramatic which enabled him to capitalize on any situation which might arise—Santa Anna was all of this, and more.

The sub-title of the book, "el que todo lo ganó y todo lo perdió", seems particularly well-chosen, aptly describing in few words the career of this man who truly was capable of gaining all the honors which his country had to offer him but who was never able to keep from losing everything. The author picks up the story of this turbulent person at the moment of his enlistment in the Spanish forces at Vera Cruz in 1810 and carries it through more than two exciting generations of plotting and fighting, of triumph and exile. And who could have gone through more of such things than Antonio López de Santa Anna? He was the first to turn against the Emperor Iturbide, rising up because of wounded pride and ambition; he acquired great popularity in 1829 when he defeated the expedition under Barradas sent out to reconquer Mexico for Spain; he commanded the Mexican troops in the unsuccessful war with Texas; he appeared very dramatically in Vera Cruz to beat back the French (and lose a leg) in the rather ludicrous "Pastry War" of 1838; once more he led the Mexican forces in their brave but futile defense in the war with the United States. In addition, he was engaged in almost countless uprisings (mostly bloodless ones) against whatever person chanced to be in power at the moment. For Santa Anna was incurably bitten by the "pronunciamiento" bug. The author makes no little sport of his oft-repeated exhortation to the Mexican people to bear ever in mind during any moment of distress that he always "stood ready to shed the last drop of his blood for his country". It may almost be considered a miracle (and surely a tribute to his cleverness) that in all of his activities in revolts he was never taken captive and summarily executed, a fate suffered by many of his contemporaries.

Eighty-two years of age at his death, Santa Anna helped transform Mexico from a Spanish colony into a free nation, witnessed the reigns of both of his country's emperors, and was himself declared president on no fewer than eleven different occasions. Indeed, he could readily have made himself emperor more than once, but contented himself merely with the rôle of dictator and the title of "Most Serene Highness". And, had he set himself up as emperor, his reign

would no doubt have been still shorter than that of either Iturbide or Maximilian, for the people never were able to stand Santa Anna in large doses. His longest term in the presidency lasted less than two and a half years, his shortest was of but thirteen days duration. Nevertheless, the people would no sooner succeed in removing him from the seat of power than they apparently would repent of their act and begin to clamor for his return. There was something about this amazing personage which fascinated the populace. Time after time they urged his return to power, until finally they came to regard him as almost indispensable. And Santa Anna, the shrewd politician, could always read accurately the pulse of public opinion and at unfavorable moments would retire (because of "poor health" to his hacienda called "Manga de Clavo", a vantage point from which he could safely survey matters and determine in which direction the wind was blowing.

The strange power of Santa Anna over the people must be accounted all the stranger when one considers that as a military man he was generally a failure (sometimes terribly so) and that as a ruler he was even worse. Possessed of much natural talent and some good qualities, he was never a success as president, principally because there was no fixed course and no determined object in his governing. One moment he was federalist, the next centralist; today liberal, tomorrow conservative. His record of serving eleven times as president in the face of all his failures indicates rather splendidly the utter political chaos in Mexico from the time of the defeat of Spain to the accession of Díaz.

The author tells at one point how Santa Anna, living in exile in the little city of Turbaco, Colombia, from 1850 to 1853, caused a small chapel to be built in the cemetery there with the idea of having his remains placed in this chapel when he should die. But he was not to die until 1876, and then in Mexico City; where his tomb can be seen in the cemetery on the hill above the great Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In surroundings as quiet and peaceful as his life was restless and turbulent, a simple stone marks the grave of this man who was, as Sr. Muñoz says in his closing words, eleven times president of the Republic, exiled by all America, millionaire and pauper, powerful and persecuted, tyrant and captive, patriot and traitor, hero and villain.

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