

Argentina and Chile are probably the best in descriptive matter, despite the fact that at times they read much like a tourist guide-book. Occasionally he hits hard at imperialistic United States policies, and, as might be expected, spends a good deal of time discussing Latin America's rôle in the Second World War. The concluding chapter, "What Does Latin America Expect from the War?" estimates the results of the author's investigation of Hispanic-American opinion on the war and the post-war world, an investigation seemingly conducted by the familiar "questionnaire" method.

It seems to this reviewer that the book is neither one of the best nor one of the worst of the more recent works on Latin America. Probably it ranks well above the average "pot-boiler" type of reporting on the Hispanic New World. But its comprehensiveness is scarcely in proportion to the somewhat "blue-stocking" attitude suggested by the author's style. The book is provided with an index and with conventionalized end-paper maps which are not quite up to date in boundary lines. There are almost no typographical errors and the format is as attractive as war-time conditions permit. The book is in general well worth reading and has occasional passages of real brilliancy.

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Our Good Neighbor Hurdle. By JOHN W. WHITE. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1943. Pp. xiii, 209. \$2.50.)

The stated purpose of this book is to convince "the millions of intelligent, thinking Protestants in the United States" that "the one most serious obstacle to closer friendship and understanding between the people of the United States and those to the South of us is the proselytizing activity of the army of North American Protestant missionaries who have been sent to the southern republics 'to bring Christianity to them.'" The arguments contained in it are elaborations of those already set forth by Mr. White in a series of articles in such magazines as the *Catholic Digest*, the *Inter-American Monthly*, *The Sign*, and the *St. Anthony Messenger*. The resultant tract treats a problem of historical as well as current importance. It is therefore highly proper that it should be examined in an historical review.

Mr. White maintains that the people to the South are for the most part loyal Catholic Christians and that the Protestant missionaries offend them and hinder the Good Neighbor Policy by trying to "convert" them; by using the word *Christian* as an antonym to *Catholic*; by classing them in reports along with the inhabitants of such heathen

lands as the Congo, Korea and the South Sea Islands; by establishing "mission stations" in their up-to-date capitals; by attacking their religious practices; and by using such terms as "natives," "native pastors," "out-stations," etc., in the same sense as those terms are used when referring to the work in pagan lands. He charges the missionaries with parading their Puritanical urge to reform the world; with political activity; with making false claims about their influence; with promoting most of the misconceptions in the United States about the southern nations, and vice versa; with promoting impiety by turning the people away from the elaborate ceremonies of the early Church without giving them an equivalent; with ignorance of the geography of the countries in which they are working; with scandalous rivalry among the fifty-odd sects of Protestants working in the southern "field"; and with refusing to work among the heathen Indians who really need converting.

Mr. White has been injudicious in choosing his method if he really hopes to convince these American Protestants of the evil they are doing. The publication of a number of his articles in Catholic periodicals, the dedication of his book to a Catholic priest, and the invective with which he attacks missionaries, mission boards, and Protestant organizations and their publications throw suspicion on his purpose. The numerous quotations from Catholic clergy and laymen and the leaders of institutions and movements known to be reactionary are not apt to be convincing to Protestants who are well informed about Hispanic America. It is not a light matter in the Hispanic countries today to be accused of being pro-falangist, but the Sinarquistas, to whom Mr. White devotes a favorable chapter, are so called by liberal leaders in the South.

As to the charges brought by Mr. White against the missionaries and their supporters, some of them are well-founded, others are partially so. In a recent release by the Federal Council of Churches, Dr. Samuel Guy Inman, Mr. White's pet antipathy, called on Protestants "to take seriously the legitimate criticisms made by Mr. White, concerning the scandalous divisions among the denominations." Dr. Inman urges that leaders make sure that their work is definitely not understood as an attack on the Roman Catholic Church, that they clarify any misunderstanding of the word "missionary" as implying one that goes from a superior to an inferior people, that no effort be spared to make our southern neighbors realize that the purpose in working among them is the same as in working among our own people, namely, "to increase spiritual happiness and social righteous-

ness." Speaking for the missionaries, Dr. Inman pleads guilty to their having "fellowship with the liberal elements in Latin America with whom they have worked for religious liberty." Is it this contact with the liberals, who are usually anti-Catholic, though only occasionally Protestant, that forms the basis for Mr. White's charge that the missionaries engage in political activity? That many of the young liberals have been educated in Protestant schools no one will deny; that numbers of them have engaged in political and revolutionary activity is well known; but that the missionaries have aided and abetted them, as Mr. White charges, is open to question. It is likely that among the hundreds of missionaries who have worked in the southern nations a few have overstepped the bounds of delicacy. I have known of only one such case during the fourteen years of my association with missionaries. More often they have applied a restraining hand as I have seen done during a revolutionary period when students and some of my fellow teachers were joining in an attempt to overthrow a dictator. The president of the institution—the only missionary on the faculty—had the revolutionaries into his office day after day pleading with them and praying for them in his efforts to show them "a more excellent way." As a last resort, he requested the resignation of the teachers. The conferring, by the city council, on January 28, 1943, of the title of *Hijos Adoptivos* on the president of the institution and another missionary for distinguished educational service to the city and to the nation testifies to that Protestant's public standing.

There are Protestant denominations which have tried to monopolize unto themselves the word *Christian*, even against their fellow Protestants in the United States, and have not been altogether tactful about it. Proselytizing by some of the organizations, even from their own Protestant brethren, is to be lamented, but my observations have shown that by far the greatest part of the missionary effort is directed toward groups in Hispanic America who are either indifferent or antagonistic to the Roman Catholic Church. The entire Catholic priesthood plus all of the Protestant missionaries and preachers in Hispanic America are exceedingly small for the spiritual needs of the people. It is true that Catholics and Protestants alike tend to concentrate in the cities, but a few, and all too few, earnest souls of both sects do penetrate the rural sections. It is worthy of note that Father Corvera, whose work with the Indians Mr. White praises so highly, has his headquarters in La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. Note this:

Yet the Protestant missionaries from the United States carefully avoid the one country which offers a legitimate missionary field and would welcome them with open arms and liberal land grants. That country is Paraguay . . . (p. 61).

There are only about one hundred Catholic priests in the country and most of them live in Asunción . . . (p. 61).

The Constitution establishes the Roman Catholic faith as the State religion . . . (p. 61).

There are only 56 Protestant missionaries in Paraguay, of whom five are Mennonite preachers working only in the Mennonite colonies. Of the 51 others, 31 live in the capital and 14 in Concepción, the second city (p. 62).

Not a bad percentage of Protestants in a Catholic country. Before the Good Neighbor Policy became a fad, however, more than one of the large Protestant organizations was shifting the emphasis from urban to rural work.

The charge of promoting impiety is most certainly debatable and the Protestant press will no doubt do justice on that score. Missionaries can scarcely be accused of having a monopoly on the promotion of misconceptions about our southern neighbors. My residence of fourteen years in an Hispanic country was spent in unlearning much of what I had been taught by newspapers, magazines, and even histories. Mr. White himself (p. 15) has accused the movies and newspapers of misinterpretation. His book might well have spent its wrath on the former. As it is impossible to weigh and estimate influence, so it would be impossible to count and counteract the harm done on both sides of the Rio Grande by the cinema. No wonder the Southern Catholics accuse Protestants of having no God if what they see on the screen—put there by American companies—is representative of the Protestants in the United States!

No doubt Mr. White overstepped his own intentions in the following discrepancy:

In trying to understand our American neighbors we would do well to recognize the fact that the *mestizo* population over which we feel so superior is the result of a much more noble attitude toward the Indian on the part of the Spaniards and the Catholic Church than was the attitude of our Puritan ancestors. The Puritans considered the North American Indians to be no better than wild beasts and deliberately set out to exterminate them (p. 11).

The tragedy of the primitive races of Mexico and South America is that the Spanish Conquest destroyed their civilization without destroying the race. Consequently, the Indian races are still intact; the Spaniards merely exploited and degenerated them and put them beyond the pale of the white man's civilization (pp. 42-43).

The burden of Mr. White's book, however, is not that the missionaries are ignorant of geography or careless in their reports, but that their presence in Hispanic America hinders the workableness of the

Good Neighbor Policy. He has amassed an imposing list of citations from Hispanic Americans who profess to resent the work of the missionaries, which would be easy to counter with just such another list from liberal non-Protestant Hispanic Americans who appreciate and welcome the missionaries. The latter view with alarm the Sinarquista movement which Mr. White lauds, *Hispanidad* propaganda, and the reactionary tendencies of certain governments, and some predict bloodshed over them, since they connect them with the Catholic Church, which, in their conception, stands for the antithesis of liberalism and freedom. Mr. White says nothing about the missionary campaign in Hispanic America that has been launched by the Catholic Church from the United States, but the people to the South are fully aware of it, and have as much reason for offense from it as from the missionary efforts of the Protestants. The recent suggestion by Catholic leaders in the United States that cultural and diplomatic relations with the southern nations would best be handled by Catholics has raised a storm of protest from certain Hispanic Americans who already see what they assume to be support by our government of Catholic activities in their countries. I had called to my attention a few months ago this statement by the French Catholic Louis Veuillot: "Cuando estamos en minoría, pedimos libertad religiosa en nombre de vuestros [Protestants] principios. Cuando estamos en mayoría, la rechazamos en nombre de los nuestros." It is of interest to note that it appears in the October, 1943, number of *Ultra*—published in Havana—along with other charges of a like nature. Many Hispanic-American leaders fear the Catholic Church, and any move on the part of our government, or any concerted effort on the part of the churches themselves to withdraw Protestant missionaries from the countries to the South would be interpreted as direct support of an institution whose power they have fought so long to curb. A statement about Mr. White's book from a letter which I received a short time ago from Dr. Fernando Ortiz represents a widespread view among non-Protestant Hispanic liberals which Mr. White chooses to discount:

La tesis del libro en el sentido de que el principal obstáculo en el camino de la Good Neighbor Policy es la presencia de los Ministros Protestantes en la América hispánica es absolutamente falsa. Al contrario, yo creo que si el gobierno de los Estados Unidos, engañado por esa perfidia impide la libre propaganda de las religiones, aparecerá aliado de la iglesia católica que en la América Latina ha sido siempre opresiva y tiránica. Se está preparando actualmente una guerra civil en muchos países de la América y particularmente en México. De un lado los sinarquistas que son la forma mejicana de la falange católico-facista, y de otro lado todos los elementos liberales. Parece que al lado de los sinarquistas

están las grandes compañías petroleras y monopolistas en contra del progreso de la América Latina y la poderosa organización de los Caballeros Católicos. Es de temer que en estos países de la América se reproduzca pronto y sanguinariamente la tragedia española y muchos están también esperando que el gobierno americano, engañado de nuevo, adopte una actitud de falsa neutralidad benévola para el despotismo clerical y plutocrático, lo mismo que ocurrió cuando la república española. Si esto ocurre, los Estados Unidos caerían en el más profundo desprestigio y todas las propagandas de democracia y de libertad caerán por el suelo. . . .

El protestantismo ha producido grandes bienes en la América Latina desde hace siglos y debe continuar su historia. Lo temible es que los protestantes imperialistas creen que es para ellos muy conveniente una alianza entre el clero católico, en gran parte español y jesuita, y sus intereses particulares y políticos del momento. . . .

Anyone who has lived any length of time in Hispanic America will gladly agree with Mr. White that something is wrong with the relations of the two continents, but I am convinced that he has picked the wrong scapegoat. A hurdle race invariably has more than one obstacle. Much fault might be found with our diplomacy, with the attitude of American tourists, and with the business practices of American commercialists, whose feeling of superiority frequently wounds the pride of our neighbors. Many of the journalistic books written in the United States about our southern neighbors might well be left unprinted so that they would not arouse the ire of the people they satirize.

Mr. White's book should have a wide circulation among Protestants, and especially among the missionaries and those who direct their activities. There is nothing so effective for curing one's faults as seeing himself in another's mirror, and I believe that the average American and the average Protestant is willing to see and rectify his shortcomings, if they are shown him in a helpful spirit.

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The St. Johns: A Parade of Diversities. By BRANCH CABELL and A. J. HANNA. [Rivers of America Series.] (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1943. Pp. xii, 324. \$2.50.)

The house of Farrar and Rinehart during the past few years has won preëminence with a quasi-historical series of volumes, each of which deals with the development of a region which embraces a particular river of America. Choosing their subjects with evident care, and fortunate in authors who have generally made the most of their opportunities, the publishers have already issued twenty-five volumes which have won favorable comment throughout the nation.