

This volume comprises nine documents, two of which were contemporaneously printed, relating to the proposal to open the ports of Mexico to trade of foreign countries and the conversion of Habana into a center for illicit trade with the Spanish Indies. They are dated from 1810 to 1819 and contain interesting information on colonial trade and ideas of the consulado and the merchants regarding these subjects of such great economic significance. They include petitions to the crown from the Consulado of Mexico and the merchants of Cádiz, an opinion of the deputy from Mexico to the Cortes of Cádiz regarding the proposed treaty between England and Spain, statements of members of the Consulado of Mexico and of merchants of Vera Cruz on the effects of establishing freedom of trade, an outline of measures proposed by the consulado to prevent illicit trade, and a lengthy general report of the consulado to the Viceroy of New Spain in reply to a petition of two hundred citizens of Vera Cruz requesting opening of the port to direct trade with foreign countries. There is a brief historical introduction by Luis Chávez Orozco and a foreword by Jesús Silva Herzog.

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Esteco y Concepción del Bermejo; dos ciudades desaparecidas. By JOSÉ TORRE REVELLO. [Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, publicaciones del Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, No. LXXXV.] (Buenos Aires: Talleres Casa Jacobo Peuser, Ltda., 1943. Pp. 180, xxxiii, 27.)

This excellent monograph presents the history of two colonial towns on the northern frontier of what is now the Argentine Republic. The first managed to survive its many vicissitudes for one hundred and twenty-six years. The other perished only forty-six years after it was founded.

Esteco, as it was commonly called after the region in which it was located (if one prefer an official designation, he may use *Nuestra Señora de Talavera* or *Nuestra Señora de Talavera de Madrid*), was founded in 1566 by a band of soldiers in revolt. Its existence was shortly regularized. The town lay on the eastern bank of the Río Salado in the extreme northwestern corner of the present province of Santiago del Estero, which places it on the route that connected northern Argentina, and later Buenos Aires, with Upper Peru. During its existence it protected the trade along this route and served as a buffer between the Indians of the Chaco and the towns of Santa Fe, Santiago del Estero, Jujuy, and Salta. As with other Spanish-

American towns so placed, it had the usual complement of struggles between civil and church authorities, of difficulties between encomenderos and Indians, of attacks by marauding or revolting Indians, and of the anxieties and deprivations of a frontier community. An Indian attack in 1686 almost destroyed the settlement and an earthquake delivered the final stroke in 1692. It was never refounded.

Concepción del Bermejo, officially *La Concepción de Nuestra Señora*, had its site on the Bermejo River, somewhat to the west of the Paraguay—the author does not place it with exactitude. Corrientes was its nearest neighbor. It was founded to facilitate communication between Asunción and Tucumán and to provide an advance post from which the Indians of the Chaco might be dominated. The author states that Concepción had the same relationship to Asunción as Esteco had to Tucumán (p. 139). The town's rather brief history was filled with Indian insurrections. The governors of the region themselves stated that these disturbances were particularly owing to the abuses which the encomenderos committed against the Indians (p. 158). Ultimately the Indians won the victory and in 1631 the place was abandoned.

The study is exceedingly well documented. The sources cited are largely primary, much of them being unpublished documents from the Archivo General de Indias. Format and general make-up of the volume are praiseworthy. Dr. Torre Revello, author of numerous studies of a similar nature, has made another admirable contribution to his country's colonial history—and to the general history of the American frontier.

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Germans in the Conquest of America, a Sixteenth-Century Venture.

By GERMÁN ARCINIEGAS. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943. Pp. 217. \$2.50.)

In this English version of *Los alemanes en la conquista de América* (Buenos Aires, 1941), the translator, Ángel Flores, has captured much of the vividness of Señor Arciniegas' prose style, already noted in a previous review of the original Spanish edition.¹ The present volume has much in common with the author's earlier book, *The Knight of El Dorado*. As in that work, Señor Arciniegas here seeks to tell his story in impressionistic fashion, to create in the reader's mind a succession of vivid historical images, rather than to

¹ See THE HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, XXIII (1943), 89-90.