

This little study, which we may call psycho-pathological, serves to increase the slight bibliography which we have on this interesting woman. Although Abraham Valdelomar wrote a succinct novelized biography of her some twenty years ago, "La Mariscala" of Peru still awaits the great biography worthy of her incomparable personality, full of terrible ambitions, but of a unique originality in the American world.

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*El gaucho y sus detractores. Defensa de las tradiciones argentinas. Revindicación del gaucho.* By LUIS C. PINTO. (Buenos Aires: "El Ateneo," 1943. Pp. 213.)

"Like the Cid Campeador, the gaucho will win battles even after death." So writes José Roberto del Río in his prologue to this new study of the gaucho by Luis C. Pinto.

As the sub-title indicates, the book is a "revindication." The author attempts to explain the various uncomplimentary terms applied to the gaucho person in the days before the passing of time turned its romantic glow upon the theme. He describes and evaluates the importance of the gaucho rôle in a pastoral colonial society, in wars for freedom from British invader and from Spanish rule, and in the revolutionary chaos of rival caudillo times.

But the distinctive value of this book is its emphasis upon the spiritual importance of the gaucho theme in Argentine national consciousness. Symbol of Argentine love of liberty, the gaucho lives on, an integral part of the Argentine soul. Any "detraction" of that symbol is "anti-Argentine."

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*Nueva geografía de Costa Rica.* By JORGE LEÓN. (San José, C. R.: Soley y Valverde, 1943. Pp. 182, illus., paper.)

The book opens with a survey of local geographical exploration and study which serves at the same time as an enlivening commentary on the ample bibliography appended to the text. From the rudiments of Rafael Francisco Osejo, the first attempt at a geographical description of Costa Rica, printed in 1833, to the present work, the natural and human features of the land have been the object of study by a long line of foreign and native scientists and travelers, some of them among the most distinguished in the field. Osejo's brief exposition

appeared as a simple addendum to the *Lecciones de geografía . . .* by R. Ackerman. Though useful in some basic notions, it was the source of vague generalizations and errors that recurred time and again in books written outside the country, but by the middle of the last century actual observations on the ground and sound interpretation began to winnow the chaff of arbitrary intuition from the grain of ascertained fact.

Despite the progress already made, there is a considerable way to go in laying the foundations for a work that will fully conform to the latest geographical methods, the author modestly confesses. He deplores the evident sterility in local geographical research during the last forty years. He is also keenly aware of the gaps in the spade work to be done, from which many of the other Latin-American countries could hardly be said to be exempt: a scarcity of dependable statistics, a lack of monographs on regional geography, and the fact that the cartography of the country is not based on systematic surveys. Although hedged in by these limitations, he has succeeded in shaping his available material into a new and useful form. Fixing his attention in localizing the centers of population, he has endowed them with their natural and cultural characteristics. In picturing the environment of the present-day Costa Rican, he furnishes with relevant detail the various patterns of life to be found in the national territory. An observant portrayal of the typical dwellings in the different climatic sections of the country adds to the graphical characterization. The major agricultural crops, determining as they do a substantial portion of the folkways and other national attributes, are given ample attention, even to the point of defining, as in the case of coffee, the local terminology involved in its cultivation. The latest studies of Leo Waibel on the white settlements in the country have been judiciously incorporated. Racial regionalisms, such as those of Guanacaste and the Atlantic littoral, have been treated with discernment.

Both for its style and for the soberness of its appraisals, the text strikes a middle ground between the simplicity required of a school manual and the substantial informative character exacted of a reference work. As such, it is of inestimable value in the classroom as well as for the general study of conditions in that section of Central America.

The introduction to the book announces the coming publication of another work by the same author in which the geographic regions will be treated more exhaustively. In it such phenomena may perhaps be discussed as the gradual concentration of property in fewer hands

(p. 24) and the movement of Negro population from the Atlantic coast toward the interior (p. 105), which avowedly constitute serious problems for the future of Costa Rican nationality. The new work may also scrutinize the spelling of place names—Escas(z?)ú is a case in point—and elucidate toponymy so that it will be definitely established for the student as part and parcel of the local tradition. In thus fostering a pride in the knowledge of his own habitation and strengthening his civic fiber, the present work is already a national asset.

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*The Life and Times of Simón Bolívar.* Written and illustrated by HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1943. Pp. vii, 246. \$2.50.)

This story of the life of Simón Bolívar, the great Venezuelan leader of the revolution which eventually drove the Spanish royalists from power in South America, is set in an historical background, told in simple language, and illustrated by colored pictures drawn by the author. Though it is clear that he still had something to learn about the heroic period of Spanish-American history when he died, this attractive volume should find a place in all collections of books for young people.

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*Las artes industriales en Cuba: su historia y evolución desde las culturas precolombinas hasta nuestros días.* By ANITA ARROYO. (Habana: Cultural, S.A., 1943. Pp. xxiv, 305. Illus. Paper. \$3.00.)

The author of this book laments the fact that Cuba has no truly national industrial art like that of Japan, Italy, and Mexico, but she has produced a work of 305 very interesting pages sprinkled with well-chosen illustrations on what is found there. True, much of Cuban art is of Spanish origin, but Cuba has left its imprint, and there is a creole style that is most charming. The individualistic style in Mexico is due in great part to Indian influence, but a similar influence was impossible in Cuba because the art of its aborigines was very crude and even that disappeared soon after the Conquest, along with the Indians themselves.

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