

*Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España.* Por BERNAL DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO uno de sus conquistadores. Edición modernizada, prólogo y notas de RAMÓN IGLESIA. (Mexico: Nuevo Mundo, 1943. Vols. I-II. Pp. xvi, 397; 399.)

Ramón Iglesia in these first two volumes of text, which in its total will include the entire *Historia verdadera* of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, attempts to make available to the general reading public in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, the modernized version of this conquistador narrative of the epic conquest of Mexico. As a basic story it has been used by all of the writers on the subject. More recent scholarship, especially that of H. R. Wagner, has made us aware of its limitations. The work contains a general introduction which sets forth the salient facts with respect to Bernal Díaz and his history. The two volumes contain a modernized version, in Spanish, of the *History* down to the period of Cortés' return to Spain. It is to be hoped that the series will make available to a wide reading public this classic in Latin-American chronicles.

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*Lautaro, joven libertador de Arauco.* By FERNANDO ALEGRÍA. (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Zig-Zag, S. A., 1943. Pp. 233.)

The present offering was a prize-winner among the manuscripts submitted in the recent Latin-American contest for juvenile books sponsored by Farrar and Rinehart. The author, a recent graduate of the University of Chile, received his M.A. from Bowling Green University and later completed his work for the Ph.D. at the University of California. He brings to his task a full measure of local devotion and a youthful zest that lightens his excellent descriptions of physical background and savage encounter. Although he tells his story of the conquest primarily for the young, readers of all ages will appreciate the descriptions of the somber forest background on which his heroes perform their valorous deeds. His pages show familiarity with the *Araucana* of Ercilla, from which he paraphrases some of his longer Indian speeches, as well as with the later works of Vicuña Mackenna and Barros Arana. The historical specialist will hardly welcome the romantic but innocuous love episode that the author evidently uses as bait for his younger readers, nor will the anthropologist so fully idealize Araucanian character nor so persist-

ently decry the cruelty of the Spaniard; but such treatment may be pardoned in a juvenile work. Not the least of the book's attractions are its format and drawings, which match the realistic information of the text.

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*La ciudad de Santa María de los Angeles. Estudio histórico.* By DOMINGO CONTRERAS GÓMEZ. (Santiago de Chile: Empresa Editora Zig-Zag, 1942, 1944. 2 vols. Pp. 374, 468.)

Today the Chilean city with the long name is simply called "Los Angeles." Founded under an order issued in March, 1739, by Governor José Manso de Velasco, its loyal citizens were preparing, two centuries later, to celebrate its natal day with appropriate festivities, when the destructive earthquake of January 24, 1939, made other demands on their time and money. Los Angeles in this catastrophe suffered far less than some of its neighbors and the chairman of its centennial committee, the present author, also favorably known as a local poet and novelist, persevered in his intention to complete the history of his native city and its environs. The result is the two substantial volumes of the present work.

The author gives wide scope to his filial task. His narrative begins with the first chance visit of Pedro de Valdivia to the site of the future city, nearly two centuries before its formal founding. This region, known as the Isle of La Laja, bordered on the Araucanian territory and lay near Concepción; hence the survey of this pre-urban period enables the author to impart considerable color and significance to the first part of his task and link it with the general development of the country. This practice, which permits him to use freely the early and largely forgotten chroniclers as well as such recent general historians as Diego Barros Arana and Monsignor Crescente Errazuriz, fills half of his first volume before his narrative comes to the actual founding of the city. In a similar manner his survey of local annals includes a summary of every later national event that remotely affected this region. Such chance travelers as Charles Darwin and the North American astronomer Charles Reuel Smith contribute their share to his pages as does Pérez Rosales and other pioneers in the colonization of southern Chile. Later developments in the country at large—political, social and economic—receive adequate attention, as well as local figures in each important