

salaries. In truth those who complained of this situation were the *colonos*, or agriculturists, who bore the burden of the greater part of the workers employed in the making of sugar. On the other hand, what in reality aggravated the situation—not exactly of the machinery of credit but of the whole industry—was the fact that many freed slaves fled from the *ingenios*, with the result, consequently, that workers became scarce and wages went up in certain regions. But, in general, the *hacendado* bore a much lighter burden than before abolition.

In respect to the republican period, the author tries for the first time to narrate our economic vicissitudes. And he does so with greater exactitude than in the chapters relating to the colonial period. The latter part of the book is very commendable. We can only object that, in his zeal to hit the mark, the author has a certain tendency to emphasize pessimism, the negative aspects of recent national history. All governments, without exception, are to him responsible for a joyful delivery of the country into the hands of foreign capital, but of liberals of the Spanish republican model of 1871 one could not expect more. On the other hand, we should demand of the present generations the fulfillment of a duty, since they have been victims of the errors of the past, and the world changes with a lively rhythm. The writer of the prologue, Ramiro Guerra, seems more disposed than the author to make allowance for the following principal: Cuba has succeeded in constituting an economy, a nationality, despite domestic and foreign obstacles. Why not believe that in the future she can continue along this road? But as long as there is official acceptance of the passing theories of "natural monopoly" in the production of tobacco and sugar cane, and forgetfulness of the fact that the former is marketed according to habits rather than for its quality and that the latter had dominated Cuban economy in consequence of veritable historic accidents, very little can be done to reorient our economy. The first step in opposition to these prejudicial theories would be to imitate the example of good will of Alberto Arredondo.

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El Colegio de México.

*¡Ecce Pericles!* By RAFAEL ARÉVALO MARTÍNEZ. (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1945. Pp. xxv, 649. Paper).

Students of Latin-American history will welcome this serious full-length biography of Manuel Estrada Cabrera. Surprisingly little has been written about the man who played a dominant role in Central America during a long period when the United States was particularly concerned with Central American affairs. Señor Arévalo gives us the

story of the Guatemalan dictator's life, from the time when, as a half-Indian baby, he was deposited by his mother on the door step of his putative father, to his death in prison sixty-seven years later. His account is not always complete or well-documented, partly because of the difficulty of obtaining adequate source materials, but the book as a whole is a fascinating story of Central-American political life.

The young Manuel had a difficult childhood. His mother made a precarious living selling sweetmeats and other native dishes to the well-to-do families of the provincial city of Quezaltenango, and the boy worked hard to help her. It was during this period, apparently, that he acquired his hatred of the aristocracy and the mean, avaricious spirit which later characterized his conduct of public affairs. Despite his poverty, he was able to go to school and eventually to work his way through the local university. After graduation he became a moderately successful lawyer and an increasingly important figure in local politics.

Unfortunately Señor Arévalo tells us little about this stage in Estrada Cabrera's career. It would be interesting to know more of the manner in which the rather strange, misanthropic young lawyer achieved such prominence as to be appointed at the age of thirty-five to the important post of minister of government in President Reyna Barrios' cabinet. He held this post for five years, from 1892 until 1897, and in 1897 the congress elected him first *designado*, or vice-president of the republic.

Though no longer in the cabinet, he was still first *designado* when Barrios was assassinated in 1898, and he successfully asserted his claim to the presidency. Once in office, it was not hard to bring about his reelection for one term after another. Those who opposed him were imprisoned or mistreated, and the Indian masses, as they always did, voted as the authorities directed.

Estrada Cabrera's twenty-two years in power, from 1898 to 1920, were a relatively uneventful period of tyranny and retrogression, punctuated by a few minor revolutionary movements and two unsuccessful attempts at assassination. It was the army, with its illiterate Indian recruits and hardly less ignorant mestizo officers, that provided his principal support. His subordinates were loyal, partly from fear and partly because they were allowed to indulge freely in extortion and other forms of graft. It was gangster rule of the worst type, buttressed by an omnipresent spy system and enforced by outrageously cruel treatment of those who ventured to protest. In describing the system Señor Arévalo quotes at length from the impassioned stories of persons who suffered under it, but there is little exaggeration in the general picture which he draws. Indeed, those who saw the abject terror which Estrada Cabrera inspired among his fellow citizens will feel that the historian's account is admirably restrained.

Unlike most dictators who have ruled Latin-American countries for long periods, Estrada Cabrera did not even leave behind him any substantial material progress. The railroad to the Atlantic, begun by his predecessors, was completed; but almost no other important public works were undertaken. The schools and hospitals, built to impress public opinion abroad, were empty shells without adequate staffs or equipment. Although the maintenance of peace encouraged trade, the masses of the people suffered from economic as well as political oppression. Artisans in the cities, such as the tailors and the carpenters, were often forced to work without pay for the government. The Indians were cruelly exploited, by foreign as well as by Guatemalan coffee planters, under the peonage law passed in an earlier administration.

Señor Arévalo treats some phases of Estrada Cabrera's career less adequately than others and this is especially true in dealing with foreign relations. He mentions the dictator's efforts to obtain favorable publicity abroad and especially to cultivate the good opinion of the State Department at Washington, an undertaking in which he was aided by the gullibility of several politically appointed American diplomats. He says relatively little, on the other hand, about the conflict between Estrada Cabrera and Zelaya of Nicaragua, or the events which led up to the Central American Conference of 1907 and subsequently to the United States' intervention in Nicaragua.

On the other hand, the story of Estrada Cabrera's overthrow is told with a richness of detail and a sense of the dramatic which makes the last three hundred pages of the book fascinating reading. The man who conceived the revolutionary plan, according to Señor Arévalo, was Manuel Cobos Batres, who returned to Guatemala in 1915 after ten years in Europe. Shocked by conditions in Guatemala, and distraught over an unhappy love affair which made him indifferent to possible consequences to himself, Cobos enlisted the help of a few other intrepid spirits in a plot which aimed to destroy the dictatorship, not by armed revolution, but by arousing a desire for freedom which would compel the president to restore republican government.

Bishop Piñol y Batres started the movement in May, 1919, by a series of lectures in which he painted with ever increasing clearness the moral decadence fostered by the dictatorship. The president, mindful of foreign opinion, hesitated to use rough measures against a churchman of high rank, and the bishop's audiences, timid at first, soon began to applaud his attacks. Public enthusiasm died down somewhat when the bishop was finally arrested and sent into exile, but the revolutionary movement had won many recruits. Among Piñol's most enthusiastic followers were many of the laborers in the city, and these organized an

independent movement which later joined forces with the group led by Cobos. In the events which followed, it was the *pueblo* which bore the brunt of the struggle, and some of the most interesting portions of the book are long quotations from a lively account of these events written by the tailor Silverio Ortiz. It is interesting to note that the labor group, though better organized and more courageous than most of their aristocratic associates, accepted the leadership of the latter and demanded nothing for themselves when the victory was won.

On January 1, 1920, the conspirators publicly proclaimed the organization of a political party, ostensibly dedicated to the reestablishment of the Central-American union. They thought that the president would hesitate to kill or imprison a group working for an idea which he had recently publicly approved, especially as they believed, mistakenly, that the United States also wished to see the union established. From the beginning they had hoped for aid of some kind from Washington, for there had been several recent newspaper stories indicating that the government there was less friendly than it had been to Estrada Cabrera. They had sought to give the president the impression that they were being secretly encouraged by the American legation, which had shown some sympathy for their movement, and they established their headquarters in a building adjacent to the legation premises. When a new American minister arrived, an aged and ineffective political appointee who had happened to be minister in Peru when Leguía seized power, they spread the story, which they apparently believed themselves, that he was the State Department's expert in removing undesirable Latin-American governments.

During the next few weeks the Unionists held a series of meetings which were attended by increasingly large and enthusiastic audiences, despite the government's halfhearted attempts to terrorize those who took part. "Guatemalans entered the Party's House slaves and came out free men." One Indian, brought to the city to take part in a pro-Estrada demonstration, came to the headquarters and asked timidly, "Is this where they're cursing the boss?" Several of the leaders were arrested, but the movement continued to gain force throughout the country.

When the Congress met in March, 1920, even the hand-picked deputies were beginning to lose confidence in the president's ability to remain in power. A resolution in favor of the union was passed under pressure from the excited populace. On March 11 a great public demonstration brought on a crisis. Estrada Cabrera had apparently given orders to his troops to slaughter the participants, but the officers' fear of the populace and the timely intervention of foreign diplomats

caused his plans to miscarry. One Unionist was killed and twenty wounded, and exaggerated reports of the affair caused tremendous excitement throughout the country.

Thoroughly alarmed, Estrada Cabrera asked the diplomatic corps to mediate between him and his enemies. In return for his promise to release all political prisoners and permit freedom of political propaganda, the Unionists ordered their followers in the provinces to refrain from violence. They were confident now of ultimate success. By this time apparently, their plan was to seize power by a concerted uprising throughout the republic. On April 5, however, an unexpected development dashed their hopes.

Soon after the affair of March 11, Estrada Cabrera had appealed to the United States for help. The State Department had proposed that he issue a declaration promising to respect the law, to refrain from political arrests or other interference with legitimate political activity, and to guarantee free elections at the end of his term in 1922; and in return the United States would express its confidence in him and its opposition to any revolutionary movement. Both statements were issued on April 5. Señor Arévalo bitterly criticizes the American government's action. Its purpose was simply to prevent bloodshed and pave the way for an orderly change of government at the end of the president's term, in line with the insistence on constitutional procedures and free elections which was a central feature of the United States' Caribbean policy in this period. The statement did probably prevent a civil war, for it is clear that the powerful governmental machine, backed by the army and by most of the liberal party, would have put up a formidable fight if the Unionists, most of whose leaders were Conservatives, had attempted to seize power for themselves. On the other hand, it was an ill advised interference in a situation which could not be solved by pronouncements from Washington.

The immediate result of the American government's declaration was to force the Unionists to make terms with the Liberal leaders in Congress, who were by this time ready to abandon the president. It was agreed that Carlos Herrera, one of the deputies, should be provisional head of the new government, and that other members of Congress should have four of the six cabinet posts. On April 8, after several timorous deputies had been hunted down by the Unionists and forced to attend, the Congress acted. Several physicians, apparently brought in from the street, were hastily formed into a committee which declared the president to be insane, and he was formally removed from office. Meanwhile, however, Estrada Cabrera had fortified himself in his home in the outskirts of the capital, and loyal troops still held some

of the principal forts of the city itself. Despite the persistent efforts of the diplomatic corps to bring about a settlement, there were six days of savage fighting, with the city under constant bombardment, before the dictator finally surrendered. He was held a prisoner in Guatemala City until his death in 1924.

Señor Arévalo's lively account of these events, and his penetrating comments, make the latter part of the book an absorbingly interesting study of Latin-American political psychology and political methods. Its value to the student is increased by Dr. Julio Bianchi's thoughtful preface, which discusses some of the fundamental problems which Guatemala faces in any effort to establish democratic government.

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*El pensamiento económico latinoamericano.* By LUIS ROQUE GONDRA, VICTOR PAZ ESTENSORO, LUIS NOGUEIRA DE PAULA, CARLOS KELLER R., GERARDO PORTELA, ETIENNE D. CHARLIER, SILVIO MALDONADO, EMILIO ROMERO. (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1945. Pp. 333. Paper.)

In this volume eight authors discuss the economic thought of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Chile, Haiti, Paraguay, and Peru. A second volume will cover the other twelve countries, though the editor confesses that "as yet individuals to write the studies on Ecuador, Central America and Panama have not been found." English and Portuguese editions are in preparation.

It is instructive to observe the different ways in which eight authors construed the nature of the task assigned them. In varying proportions each contribution represents a blend of economic history and the history of economics. Both in form and in content the work differs from the history of Gide and Rist and other standard texts in historical economics. Since Latin America has not produced a Say, a Malthus, a Marx, or any writer with comparable influence upon the world stream of economic ideas, it would be unprofitable and perhaps unfair to compare the present collection of essays with the best histories of English, German, and French political economy. For Latin America, until the most recent decades, the limitations of the division of labor have channeled economic thinking in the direction of pressing national problems; and economists have been more often administrators than academicians.

Manuel Belgrano, to whom Roque Gondra devotes almost half the twenty-seven pages on Argentine economics, offers a case in point. A lawyer by profession and the industrious secretary of the Consulado of Buenos Aires, Belgrano set out to destroy the trade monopoly which