

(class averages were found to be misleading) one notes a constant falling off in the numbers of midshipmen during the years covered in the volume (1776-1811). For the decade 1781-90 the number of midshipmen was 330; for 1791-1800, 289; for 1801-1810, 159. By way of contrast with the 1801-1810 decade with its 159, the five years, 1776-1780 show 220 midshipmen. There were but two members of the 1811 class.

A plentiful sprinkling of Italian and Irish names are found in the lists. Number 2,665 is a case in point. Midshipman Esteban Hickey y Bushe, b. Madrid, 1777, class of 1794, was the son of José Hickey, Vallidorle [*sic*], Ireland, 1731, and Ana Bushe, Waterford, Ireland, 1756. The father was born of Santiago Hickey and Juana Mores, both of Vallidorle [*sic*]; the mother of Juan José Bushe, Kilkenny [*sic*], and Brigida Poubert, Waterford [*sic*].

Two of the midshipmen played parts on opposite sides of the struggle in the Wars of Independence period. Their names, not well enough known in our Hispanic-American history texts, are Ángel Laborde y Navarro, b. Cádiz, 1773, class of 1791, and Manuel Blanco y [Calvo] Encalada, b. Buenos Aires, 1792, class of 1807. Laborde had the bad luck to lose for Spain the great naval battle of Maracaibo; Blanco Encalada, a patriot, won sea power for the *chilenos* before Lord Cochrane appeared on the scene. Incidentally, Blanco Encalada's father was a *criollo*; his mother was a second-generation *criolla*.

The volume contains numerous examples of heraldic devices (in black and white), as well as the four genealogies bearing on the family background of Don Luis Suazo Mondragón y Ximénez de Cisneros (pp. 7-9), the elaborate genealogical chart of the Vernacci of Florence (pp. 123-4), and the decorative family tree of the Jordáns of Genoa (p. 181) (these last in colors).

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*La puebla de Bolívar.* By ANDRÉS PONTE. [Publicaciones de la Comisión Preparatoria de la IV Asamblea General del Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia.] (Caracas: Editorial Crisol, 1946. Pp. 217. Paper.)

This is a book on the Basques, inspired by the author's interest in Simón Bolívar, "the most illustrious representative of his race." The Vascongados called their country *Euskalerría*. The author describes it from nearly every angle including geography, geology, orography, and meteorology; and its people are portrayed from the viewpoint of race, religion, history, government, and psychology. Each province, on both sides of the Pyrenees, and each subdivision, village, and community is described with statistical tables and encyclopedic data.

One of the most challenging chapters deals with the puzzling questions of the origin, race, and language of these provincial people. The use of the Basque language in deciphering Etruscan inscriptions is indicative of relationship, but no final assurance of origin. Basque words are traced into the Near East, with no connection, however, with the Indo-European languages, except for the rare adoption of an occasional word. That the Basque is subject to the usual linguistic variations is illustrated by their designations for their own *vascuence* language: *euskera*, *euskara*, *euskuara*, *euskuero*, and *eúskaro*. With such detail the author presents the background of Bolívar's people.

The history is sketchy, giving only the highlights of events, such as brief accounts of the political relations between the Basque provinces and Spain and France. In spite of the stress on the distinct racial element of these people, one discovers that the Basque blood of Bolívar had been merged, among others, with the blue blood of Anjou and Aquitaine. Theories of racial purity seldom stand up under investigation; but if one were to accept the conventional requirements of "nationality" as the basis, there is enough unity of race, language, culture, and religion among the Basques to justify their organization of a national state.

The presentation of the material in this book is a bit unusual. It lacks narrative style and uniformity. It contains numerous headings and sub-headings in bold-faced type, with brief but detailed information under each. Parts of it appear like a Baedeker. A number of documents are included in the last half of the work, most of them dealing with Bolívar's family in the sixteenth century when it became interested in the Guipúzcoa or Caracas Company. There are also a number of interesting genealogical references. The book concludes with comments on Spanish memorials to Bolívar. Footnotes are few and far between, although numerous author-title references are given in the body. A page of erratas, listing thirty-seven, is far from being complete.

The primary value of this book may possibly be in the variety of material assembled rather than in the method of presentation. It contains more information on the Basques than on Bolívar.

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*La biblioteca erasmista de Diego Méndez.* By JOSE ALMOINA. [Publicaciones de la Universidad de Santo Domingo, Volumen XXXV. Ediciones del Centenario de la República.] Ciudad Trujillo: Editora Montalvo, 1945. Pp. 149. Facsimiles. Paper.)

Some of the sixteenth-century Spanish conquerors and explorers were curious extroverts who, while performing incredible feats that often