

volume—"John" appears as "Jhon." On phases of American life there are descriptions of such widely-scattered items as Coney Island, a Chinese funeral in New York, the race for Indian Territory, the Hay-market Riot, the Charleston earthquake, and the arrival of Bertholdi's Statue of Liberty.

Volume II is in preparation by Dr. M. Isidro Méndez. This will be devoted to Martí's poetry and novels. His works can be classed as history only in the general sense of painting the thought of an epoch. Martí was a man of letters and a revolutionary; he might have been a statesman if his life had not been cut off as it was; but he was not a historian.

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*La frontera de la República Dominicana con Haití.* (Ciudad Trujillo: Editorial La Nación, C. por A., 1946. Pp. 172. Paper.)

The significance of this brief and anonymous volume published in the Dominican Republic lies in its obvious character as an exposition of the official point of view of the present Dominican government, not only on the history of the Dominican-Haitian boundary problem and its settlement, but also on relations between the two countries in general and between President Trujillo and former President Lescot in particular. In other words the book is decidedly anti-Haitian and pro-Trujillo in tone.

Approximately half the volume is devoted to an historical review of the already known facts on the long disputed boundary question and its ultimate settlement. There then follows a detailed description of the achievements of the Dominican government's recent border development project—the so-called "Dominicanization of the Frontier." This section contains useful statistics and facts regarding the government's construction, agricultural, and educational projects at selected sites on the frontier. The volume concludes with the presentation of several recent official Dominican and Haitian documents, as well as a five-page eulogy of President Trujillo's frontier-development policy excerpted from the recent two-volume study entitled *Trujillo, o la transfiguración dominicana* by the Spanish refugee, Ramón Fernández Mato.

Two principal theses already familiar to students of recent Dominican history give unity to the otherwise heterogenous sections of the volume: (1) Dominican civilization—Spanish and Christian in origin—has long been in danger of being engulfed by the African, heathen, and prolific barbarism of Haiti, struggling to break out of the extremely overpopulated area to which it is confined; and (2) it is President Trujillo

who, through (a) the definitive boundary settlement of 1935 and (b) the project of creating a belt of Dominican frontier settlements to bar infiltration of Haitians into previously unoccupied or sparsely settled Dominican border areas, has precipitated the first great advance since the expulsion of the Haitians in 1844 in meeting the threat from Haiti and in removing a principal impediment to friendly relations between the two nations.

As corollaries to these main theses, the following points are also presented in axiomatic fashion: (1) it is the Haitians who have always been the aggressors, the Dominicans seeking merely to defend themselves; (2) the Dominican Republic has shown its conciliatory spirit and willingness to assist Haiti in solving its population problem by giving up valid claims to certain frontier territories (although it is conceded that most of these lands had long been almost completely occupied by Haitians); (3) the Haitian masses are completely uncivilized, as demonstrated by inhuman religious and orgiastic practices of voodoo and human sacrifices and feasting; (4) equally or more to blame for the deplorable conditions in Haiti is the elite ruling class which, in order to maintain its favored position, pursues a conscious policy of doing nothing to better the condition of the masses; (5) since the Haitian frontier settlement of 1935, Haitian bandits crossing the border and seizing the property of Dominican farmers and ranchers have been almost solely responsible for continuing border difficulties, including what the volume terms the "grave incident of 1937"—a responsibility which the Haitian Government in public statements of September 5 and 9, 1941 (pages 171-172) has admitted; and (6) it is Trujillo who has brought the Dominican people to the full realization of Dominican nationalism and the necessity of maintaining the national identity against the threat of absorption from the West.

After reading of the ways in which President Trujillo has contributed to make the Dominican Republic safe for civilization, it is a rude and surprising jolt to be reminded by the compiler of the volume that perhaps even the Dominican chief executive's efforts will not be sufficient to overcome the natural prolificness of the Haitians, which, the volume asserts, may in ten or fifteen years increase their numbers to five or six millions. It is on this pessimistic, almost defeatist tone, that passing mention is made of the possibility of creating under international mandate a new state of Liberia to absorb excess Haitian population. The volume makes abundantly clear that fear of continued population pressure is the basic reason for the essentially violent attacks on Haiti in this and other Dominican publications.

No description of this volume would be complete without mention

of the inclusion of President Trujillo's letter of November 1, 1943, to former President Lescot. This communication is of far more significance as an indication of the close personal relations once prevailing between the two men and their subsequent antipathy for one another, than as a document bearing on the frontier problem. It reveals the extent to which Lescot had put himself in Trujillo's debt in his effort to become president of Haiti, as well as his subsequent efforts to sever the connection. It is perhaps not without significance that the anti-Lescot revolution of January, 1946, followed shortly after the circulation in Haiti of numerous copies of a French translation of this letter.

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*Casa León y su tiempo. (Aventura de un anti-héroe.)* By MARIO BRICEÑO-IRAGORRY. (Caracas: Editorial Elite, 1946. Pp. xxiii, 242. Paper.)

A work constituting an indictment of a *prócer* and a friend of Bolívar by a competent Venezuelan scholar is intriguing. In contrast to the self-sacrificing patriot type, Spanish-born Antonio Fernández de León is depicted as an unpatriotic, greedy landowner and office seeker. During his time, *circa* 1770-1823, De León endeavored to preserve his status by machinations that would do credit to a Fouché.

The León brothers, Lorenzo, Esteban and Antonio, held, respectively, in colonial Venezuela, the positions of secretary to the bishop, *racionero* of the ecclesiastical *cabildo*, and chancellor of the University of Caracas; intendent and head of the *real consulado*; and lawyer and administrator of the tobacco monopoly and *regidor* of the *audiencia* of Caracas. Don Antonio acquired large landholdings to which he added those of his wife. He marketed his produce through his own commercial firm. Ever gracious, he won the respect of other *peninsulares* and befriended the leading creoles. He made gifts to the church and government and entertained lavishly, developing a sense of proprietorship which he valued above honor, friendship, and duty in the turbulent period following the French invasion of Spain.

Don Antonio's initial effort to keep abreast of his time—the establishment of an independent junta in 1808—failed. He then went to Spain, where brother Esteban was now a member of the Council of the Indies; and with his aid Don Antonio, instead of being punished, was rewarded for distinguished services. He returned to Caracas as the Marqués de Casa León to take part in the creation of the 1810 junta which appointed him president of the *tribunal del apelaciones*. Re-