

of the early relations between the United States and Buenos Aires from the first furtive contacts in the days of the viceroys to the formal exchange of diplomatic representatives a quarter-century later.

In a hitherto unknown degree DeForest shaped those relations.

In matters of style Dr. Keen pushes his account with zest and no little skill. Only occasionally does he nod. Twice he uses the pseudo-historical expression: "There is reason to believe. . . ." Occasionally falls into that professorial trap: the polysyllabic abyss. Sandwiched between independent clauses we find ". . . the occupation of Amelia Island had exacerbated the already inflamed peninsular sensibilities. . . ." Gristly meat. Yet it ill becomes us of the leaden pen to give undue weight to these occasional lapses. Rather, Dr. Keen is to be congratulated on his study, which so ably documents the contribution of the United States to the movement of Spanish-American emancipation.

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Los directores del correo argentino. Documentada y completa historia del correo nacional a través de la biografía de sus directores. Primer tomo: Actuación de Don Antonio Romero de Texada. Segundo tomo: Actuación de Don Melchor de Albín. By C. GALVÁN MORENO. (Buenos Aires: Talleres Gráficas de Correos y Telecomunicaciones, 1944, 1946. Pp. 387, 776. Illustrations, facsimiles, and maps. Paper.)

Celedonio Galván Moreno's office in the building which houses the Department of Mails and Telecommunications in Buenos Aires is filled with documents relating to the history of that branch of the Argentine government. The gathering and classification of those records are due largely to the initiative of Galván Moreno. He has not only brought the materials together but has studied them carefully. From his research he concludes that there is a very close correlation between the development of his country and the growth of its communications system. In these first two volumes of a projected series that is expected to include from eight to ten, the author reiterates this thesis time and again. In this reviewer's opinion he presents documents which quite adequately support his contention.

Each of the *tomos* under review is divided into two distinct parts. In the first section of each volume, the author, with due regard for necessary background, narrates the administrative development of the postal department as exemplified by the accomplishments of its first two directors, Antonio Romero de Texada, 1794-1810, and Melchor de Albín, 1810-1821. The second sections, and the ones which the author re-

cognizes as being the most valuable to the historian, are made up of the documents themselves—in all over three hundred closely-printed pages. In addition, there are numerous facsimiles of documents which give the work added appeal.

The author leaves no doubt but that the years during which Romero de Texada and Albín headed the postal system of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata and later of the inchoate republic were extremely trying ones. The foreign wars of the mother country were carried to the New World and at times even threatened to disrupt communication between Buenos Aires and the Banda Oriental. The English invasion of the Plata put additional strain on the embryonic postal system. Then came the revolution, and the administrator of the mails was commanded to order his subordinates to prepare to assist in the transfer of men and supplies. Thereafter for several years the postal department was required to confine itself almost entirely to the needs of the government, whose readers rose and fell before the forces of caudillism, federalism and centralism, and financial distress. These were the high lights of the period which taxed the political and economic ingenuities of the first two administrators of the postal system. Galván Moreno handles these problems as they related to the mails in convincing fashion and concludes that Romero de Texada and Albín both were able men and that were it not for the services of the department which they successively directed conditions would have been far more chaotic than they actually were.

While these volumes are definitely a contribution to Argentine history, there nonetheless seems to be something lacking. When the reviewer completed the reading of them he did not feel that he had a full picture of just what had happened. Perhaps a more complete account of the actual workings of the system, as opposed to the operations as they were supposed to be according to the regulations, would have rounded out the picture. But that is a phase of the story which surely can be handled more adequately in a later period. Perhaps that is what the author proposes to do. Thus far he has given every indication that he understands the work he has cut out for himself.

Galván Moreno has done an excellent job of making his work usable. All documents are listed chronologically by chapter, and there are some fine tables and a good sprinkling of maps.

Several historians of Argentina have told us *what* happened. Galván Moreno belongs to the school that tries to tell us the *how* and *why*.

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