

American Sea Power Since 1775. By J. ROGER FREDLAND, WILLIAM W. JEFFRIES, NEVILLE T. KIRK, THOMAS F. McMANUS, ELMER B. POTTER, RICHARD S. WEST, JR., and ALLAN WESTCOTT. Edited by ALLAN WESTCOTT. (Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1947. Pp. viii, 609. Maps and photographs.)

This book deals largely with the operations of the United States Navy. American sea power, however, has always been an important factor in the affairs of the whole Western Hemisphere, and it has had at least an indirect influence on Latin America ever since the cruise of the *Essex* to Chile. The rôle of American sea power in Latin-American affairs has not always been an obvious one, but it has become increasingly important due to the Monroe Doctrine, the Spanish American War, and the building of the Panama Canal. The abandonment of the blockade against Venezuela in 1902 by warships of certain European nations is one example of the direct influence of American sea power. Upon that occasion the United States fleet had been mobilized at Puerto Rico.

The greater part of this book deals with the naval operations of the second world war, and consequently is not of direct interest for Latin-American history. The book is the result of the collective efforts of members of the United States Naval Academy, and it is a satisfactory account of naval activities rather than an exposition of American sea power as the title indicates.

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The Navaho. By CLYDE KLUCKHOHN and DOROTHEA LEIGHTON. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946. Pp. xx, 258. Maps, photographs, diagrams. \$4.50.)

This book is a study of the Navaho Indians with regard to the Indian Service Administration, and it considers the historical, geographical, and cultural aspects of the tribe. The main emphasis, however, is on the difficulties which the Navahos face today in supporting an expanding population on rapidly deteriorating lands.

The Navaho problem, a legacy of the war with Mexico, is unlike that of most of the other Indian tribes. The Navahos, before falling under the control of the United States, had acquired Spanish culture traits and livestock, and had adapted these to the peculiar conditions of their land and to their natural inclinations. Reservation life has seen not a reduction in the numbers of the Navaho but a great increase. Their way of life has changed little from the Spanish period to the

present time, but some modification seems to be in store for them in the near future.

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Cartas y relaciones, con otros documentos relativos a la vida y a las empresas del conquistador. By HERNÁN CORTÉS. Prólogo y notas de NICOLÁS CORONADO. [Clásicos Emecé, 15.] (Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores, S. A. [Platt, S. A.], 1946. Pp. 687. Pasteboard. \$10.00 m/arg.)

A review of the famous *Cartas de Cortés* may seem, at this late date, as appropriate as a review of Caesar's *Gallic War*, which, indeed, may have been the author's model. In any case the *Cartas* are in no respect inferior to the book of the great Roman, but for some reason they have not received the recognition which I think is due them. We are justifiably skeptical of a man's account of his own exploits, and yet, a careful reading of the *Cartas* should convince the most critical that Cortés wrote the chronicle of his astonishing achievement with a frankness and an objectivity as rare as they are refreshing.

The remarkable thing about Cortés the author is that he wrote with the enviable mastery of language not uncommon among the men of the Renaissance. In an age when soldiers could be poets, scholars, and artists, Cortés showed himself equal to the best. In his book one finds an accuracy and a grandeur of concept in the description of the country, an excited and vigorous curiosity about all aspects of its culture, an expert eye for things military and political, and an artist's selection of vivid and stimulating detail. The clarity and compactness of his style make his book contrast sharply with that of his more popular contemporary, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, whose charm lies precisely in the opposite qualities. Cortés, indeed, belongs in the same distinguished niche with those other two literary soldiers, Xenophon and Caesar. He affords another of the happy instances in which the source-book of the historian becomes a masterpiece of literature.

The Editorial Emecé of Buenos Aires puts us in their debt by giving us a very readable text of one of the classics of all time.

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Siglo y medio de cultura nuevoleonesa. By HÉCTOR GONZÁLEZ. (México: Ediciones Botas [Imp. "Manuel León Sánchez," S. C. L.], 1946. Pp. 384. Cardboard.)

As the title implies, the author has put together the various manifestations of the development of culture in the state of Nuevo León, more