

It is difficult to see, for example, how, if the principles of the New Laws were just and humane (p. 170), the *encomenderos* deprived of their privileges through the enforcement of those laws could be defrauded (p. 176); or how, if "the individualism inherent in their Spanish blood made it impossible for Central Americans to achieve national unity, or even to accept the results of so-called elections" (p. 306), the people of Costa Rica, the most Spanish in Central America, could have "built up a foundation of orderly political life on a democratic basis . . . and expect to choose their president in honest elections" (p. 453).

Wider, or more careful, use of academic history might have prevented such errors of fact as the statements that men of mixed blood are called *ladinos* in Guatemala (p. 378), that Jose de Valdes (*sic*) was the *visitador* sent by Carlos III to New Spain (p. 219), or that, in 1774, one year after the earthquake destroyed Santiago de los Caballeros, the English colonies of North America declared their independence of the mother country (p. 212).

Middle American history gains nothing, either as literature or history, in this retelling. Were it more careful and more accurate, it might provide a convenient summary for the general reader, or useful collateral reading for beginning students, in an area of great interest and importance to the United States.

WILLIAM J. GRIFFITH.

Tulane University.

*The Horse of the Americas.* By ROBERT MOORMAN DENHARDT. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1947. Pp. xvii, 286. Maps, illustrations, and appendices. \$5.00.)

This brief account of the Spanish horse in the New World, although much of it has appeared in earlier writings of Mr. Denhardt, is a noteworthy addition to the knowledge of one phase of Spanish-American civilization. Commencing with a description of Spanish horsemanship and horses of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it moves on to the arrival of horses in the West Indies, their part in the conquest, and their spread throughout North and South America. These aspects of the story of the horse in the New World are emphasized by the inclusion of notable incidents related by early chroniclers.

The later chapters describe the various breeds and types of horses which are found in North and South America today, and which have descended from the Spanish importations. Only a brief mention is made of the horse in the non-Iberian colonies, and it seems that the work might be more properly entitled *The Spanish Horse of the Americas*.

The appendices contain information on a variety of subjects related

to the horse: how ranch horses are named; the evolution of the Western saddle; Western brands; Indian horsemanship; the development of the modern rodeo; epic rides, Eastern horses, and the American quarter running horse. A bibliographical sketch of materials available for the study of various epochs and phases of horse history is also included, and it presents a basic list and comments which are useful for a specialized study of any particular period or area.

*The Horse of the Americas* is a combination of chapters and episodes, scholarly evaluations on the one hand, and "yarns" or horse lore on the other. The latter certainly have played an important role in various parts of both American continents, such as the Western plains of the United States and the Argentine pampas, and are as much a part of the story of the horse as the development of saddles. The result of this mixture is a book in which both scholars and horse-lovers can find interest and profit. As a scholarly effort, however, it must be admitted that the book suffers somewhat from disjointedness and incomplete integration. Much of the material presented in the appendices, for example, might be more suitably included in the text. The section on naming the horse probably could have been a part of the chapter on breeds, strains, types, and colors without a serious cleavage in subject matter. Indian horsebreaking presumably could have been included in the sections on the Zuñi and Apache. And the unit on the American quarter running horse apparently could have been added to that part of the text entitled "Colonial Aristocrats, the 'Quarter Horse.'"

Despite these minor matters of organization, which do not lessen the value of the information presented, the book is very readable and entertaining. Mr. Denhardt's knowledge of horses and horse history is well known. *The Horse of the Americas* is a contribution to an understanding of Spanish-American civilization as well as an interesting sketch of the career of the Spanish horse in the New World.

DONALD E. WORCESTER.

University of Florida.

*Diálogo sobre la historia de la pintura en México.* By JOSÉ BERNARDO COUTO. Edición prólogo y notas de MANUEL TOUSSAINT. (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1947. Pp. 162. Illustrations. Boards.)

Nothing could be more welcome to the student of the art of Latin America than this new edition of the first history of colonial painting in Mexico. Originally compiled in the 1860's, Couto's *Diálogo*, as Manuel Toussaint proves in his introduction to this volume, is an amazingly accurate appraisal of the development of the school. No sub-