

sequent study has in fact entirely superseded the work of this poet, legal theorist, and diplomat who devoted the last years of his life to the task of setting down what he knew and felt about his country's early painters. The book is engagingly written in a crisp, informal style which purports to reproduce a lengthy conversation between the Catalan painter Pelegrín Clavé, the writer, and his cousin, J. J. Pesado. The occasion for the dialogue is a visit to the exhibition of paintings expropriated from the religious orders which Clavé, as director of the Academia de San Carlos of Mexico City, had organized in its galleries and which is now the national collection of painting.

Some of Couto's judgments now seem strange, but we know that they represented the esthetic views of the period. For example, he gave far more importance to the facile and shallow Miguel Cabrera than a critic today would be inclined to do. Couto saw no good in pre-Columbian painting:

Sé que esas pinturas, de grande interés para la arqueología y la historia, no lo son igualmente para el arte, que es lo que en esta casa se profesa. En ellas no hay que buscar dibujo correcto, ni ciencia del claro-oscuro y la perspectiva, ni sabor de belleza y de gracia. Parece que a sus autores llamó poco la atención la figura humana que a nuestros ojos es el prototipo de lo bello; así es que no la estudiaron, ni conocieron bien sus proporciones y actitudes, ni acertaron a expresar, por los medios que ella misma ofrece, las cualidades morales y los afectos del ánimo. Además, se nota en sus autores cierta propensión a observar y copiar de preferencia los objetos menos gentiles que presenta la naturaleza, como animales de ingrata vista.

One wonders whether Couto, who apparently based his criticism on Aztec codices alone, would have felt the same way had he known the illustrated Maya manuscripts of European collections.

For this new edition Manuel Toussaint, who has made long and fruitful researches on the subject of Mexican colonial painting, which should soon be presented in a volume of his own, has supplied invaluable notes that correct errors Couto made, amplify some of his statements, and identify pictures which he mentioned. The critic's biography is provided, as well as sixteen good reproductions of paintings referred to in the text.

University of Pennsylvania.

ROBERT C. SMITH.

*Documentos históricos de Nuevo León anotados y comentados: 1596-1811.*

Edited by CARLOS PÉREZ-MALDONADO. (Monterrey, N. L.: Impresora Monterrey, 1947. Pp. 220. Paper.) [Distributed by the author, Apartado Postal 389, Monterrey.]

The editor of this collection of documents on the history of Monterrey and the state of Nuevo León has previously given us the elegantly

printed *Monterrey: Cosas poco conocidas de este nombre y de su heráldica* and his *Ciudad metropolitana de Nuestra Señora de Monterrey*, thus earning for himself a place among the numerous local historians that have recently sprung up in Mexico. Their work in bringing together the sources for their respective provinces will prove invaluable to the general historian.

The present volume is the first in a series which will include all the documents gathered by the author from various sources, chiefly the private archives of several of his distinguished ancestors, who have played a not unimportant part in the history of Mexico. He has also used the rich archives of the city and archdiocese of Monterrey.

This first installment consists of eighty-four documents, dated respectively from September, 1596, to October, 1812, arranged in chronological order, with notes and comments directed to the clarification of the text or to setting the document against its proper background. By centuries it includes one of the sixteenth, six of the seventeenth, thirty of the eighteenth, and forty-six of the nineteenth. Some deal with civil and others with ecclesiastical history, the majority being of miscellaneous nature. Among the more important because of their general interest are the grant of a royal coat of arms to the city in 1672; the order for swearing allegiance to Our Lady of Guadalupe as patron of New Spain in 1748; the royal cedula establishing the episcopal see in Monterrey and defining its jurisdiction in 1779; the last will of Bishop Verger in 1787; the laying of the cornerstone of the new cathedral in 1794; a letter of Hidalgo relative to the engagements of Monte de las Cruces, Aculco, and Calderón in November, 1810; letters of Jiménez and Allende at the time of their arrival in Saltillo and Monterrey in January-March, 1811; and the request of Jiménez for a general celebration on the occasion of the overthrow of the royal government in San Antonio by Las Casas.

Unfortunately the editor has failed to indicate in each instance whether the document has been previously printed; or whether the publication made now is from the original, a copy, or a rare printed edition of previous date. Several of the documents have been previously printed. He does not specify where the originals or copies used for this publication are located, or by whom they are owned, although it is to be presumed that he has either the originals or copies in his possession. His modernization of the spelling is an aid to the uninitiated in old Spanish documents and will make their use by the average student easier, but the device detracts from the flavor which age gives to original sources. The edition is on excellent paper and printed with greater care than the usual run of such publications.

Sr. Pérez-Maldonado is to be congratulated for his painstaking efforts

in making available documents from private archives which would otherwise remain inaccessible or become lost, as well as for his reproduction of rare printed sources not generally handy to the average student.

CARLOS E. CASTAÑEDA.

University of Texas.

*Justo Sierra el maestro de América.* By GABRIEL FERRER DE M. [Vidas mexicanas, 30.] (Mexico City: Ediciones Xochitl, 1947. Pp. 191. Paper.)

Justo Sierra is, without question, the outstanding figure in the modern history of Mexican education. What Sarmiento was to Argentine education, and what Horace Mann was to education in the United States, Sierra was to Mexican education. Justo Sierra, like Mann and Sarmiento, inspired and directed the educational reorganization and reorientation of his country.

Contributing to Sierra's greatness as an educator were his accomplishments as an orator and as a writer. He was a poet, a historian, a philosopher at one and the same time that he was a teacher and an administrator. These talents, his distinguished personality, and a fine and kindly character endeared him to his contemporaries and, in the midst of the iron-fisted conservatism of the Díaz regime, enabled Sierra to undertake radical reforms in education—with the approval and support of Porfirio Díaz himself!

Gabriel Ferrer de M., the author, has written other historical works of merit, including one (1944) on *El maestro Justo Sierra*. The present volume is part of the collection "Vidas mexicanas," and it is a worthy addition to that series. The style is pleasingly smooth and easy, the biography reading like a good novel. There are no citations and no bibliography.

This is an authentic discription of Justo Sierra, his life, his works, his associates, and his times.

GEORGE I. SÁNCHEZ.

University of Texas.

*Fundación del pueblo de Lares.* By G. E. MORALES MUÑOZ. (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Imprenta Venezuela, 1946. Pp. 329. Paper.)

*Estampas coloniales: Primera serie.* By ROBERTO H. TODD. [Biblioteca de autores puertorriqueños.] (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Imprenta Venezuela, 1946. Pp. 231. Paper.)

*Rememorando el pasado heroico.* By MARÍA CADILLA DE MARTÍNEZ. (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Imprenta Venezuela, 1946. Pp. 667. Paper.)

The three books reviewed here are all concerned with the history of Puerto Rico. They stress the need for a diffusion of historical knowl-