

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.

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*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 description of Justo Sierra, his life, his works, his associates, and his times.

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*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-

edge in a country which has been singularly lacking in good historians throughout the twentieth century. There is no adequate general history of the island since Salvador Brau published his *Historia de Puerto Rico* in 1904. Brau and Cayetano Coll y Toste were the last in a series of scholars who did much in the last years of the nineteenth century to trace the evolution of Puerto Rico within the Spanish empire. In our times, little has been done to emulate their efforts, if we exclude the historical essays of Tomás Blanco and Antonio S. Pedreira, the scholarly monographs of Juan Augusto and Salvador Perea, and a few other contributions of limited scope and value.

Books on the history of Puerto Rico are, therefore, welcome even if they do not fully comply with up-to-date historical standards or are a rehash of previous histories. The *Estampas coloniales* of Roberto H. Todd, for instance, is simply a collection of articles, anecdotic in character, about men and events at the end of the century. They are loosely written and have little to commend them with regard to historical scholarship. But they throw light on the Puerto Rican way of life in the early days of the American occupation of the island and are full of stories about the leading political characters of the period.

In his *Fundación del Pueblo de Lares*, G. E. Morales Muñoz has added another volume to his series on the origins of towns in Puerto Rico. The author divides the "expediente de fundación" into several chapters which he calls "jornadas." These "jornadas" trace the different steps leading to the final establishment of the town or "pueblo." The author is mainly interested in the demographic and genealogical approach, and his footnotes give information on the family background of each of the founders. He also adds pertinent data on legal terms, institutions, etc., although he fails in many cases to indicate his sources and has a tendency towards unnecessary repetition and excessive detail.

Doña María Cadilla de Martínez, a well-known Puerto Rican folklorist, in her *Rememorando el pasado heroico* has emphasized the heroic element in the history of the island which, according to the author, "has always led to progress and enhanced human life" (page 267). The book is based to a large extent on Brau and the historical material published by Coll y Toste. There are, however, long chapters on international events in which Puerto Ricans participated. No less than forty pages are devoted to the background and developments of World War I, and nearly one hundred pages cover the events of the last world conflict. These pages are more of an informative chronicle than a comprehensive history. The book, as a whole, is well-intentioned and written with a lofty purpose, but its historical scholarship is uneven both in quality and in originality.

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