

accusations and defenses, hatreds, passions and virtues, the political drama of the past and its brief interludes of order and peace, all this is latent in the mass of documents, of which the most important part refers to the discussed Liberator."

ROSCOE R. HILL.

Washington, D. C.

*Albores de Venezuela: Significado del régimen alemán: Génesis de la nacionalidad: Origen y expresión del ayuntamiento americano: Encomiendas primitivas de Barquisimeto.* By AMBROSIO PERERA. Caracas: C. A. Artes Gráficas, 1946. Pp. 199. Paper.)

*Albores de Venezuela* was first presented, under the title "Pilares primitivas de Venezuela," as a paper read before the Fourth Congress of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History held in Caracas in 1946. It is an analysis of the capitulation made by the Spanish king, Charles I, in 1528, with the Augsburg Welsers to explore and colonize the Province of Venezuela and an interesting study of certain aspects of government under the Welsers based on unpublished documents from the Archives of the Indies, copies of which the author used in the National Academy of History in Caracas. The book contains also the texts (about one hundred pages) of grants made to *encomenderos* in Barquisimeto in 1552 by the founder, Juan de Villegas, and the instructions issued with these grants regarding the treatment of the Indians. He contrasts the policy of the Spaniards with respect to the Indians with the practices of the Germans.

The German interlude contributed to the evolution of the Province of Venezuela into a separate jurisdiction within the Spanish Empire and hence to its final appearance as a nation in 1810, the author holds. He objects, however, to the contention made by German writers that Venezuela was a German colony and makes use of documentary sources to show that neither in the political sphere nor in the economic were the powers of the Welsers unusual for the period of conquest. In the economic sphere he finds the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Welsers less extensive than those of the Guipuzcoa Company.

As a devoted citizen of the State of Lara (Barquisimeto) the author introduces bits of regional history and geography that add to the interest of his book. And he comments on the autonomy of the colonial city lost when its citizens "no longer had an Atlantic to separate them from despotic authority."

MARY WATERS.

Illinois State Historical Library.