

institutions were decaying, and "all society was in complete disaccord with the enforced order of things" ("*La sociedad entera está en completa disonancia con el forzado orden de cosas.*") (Despatch, Jan. 22, 1840, p. 26). But if his monarchist and undemocratic views kept him from seeing the vitality of the new social forces that were emerging, especially among the mestizos, he was no more blind than the Mexicans with whom he associated.

Students of the relations of the United States and Mexico will be interested in the Spanish minister's view that Joel R. Poinsett was responsible not only for *yorkino* agitation for a federal republic, and hence for the republican form of government in Mexico, but for the very independence of Mexico. (Despatch, Jan. 22, 1840, p. 26.) The editor's footnote (n. 38, p. 325), ample in other respects, is at fault in not commenting on the obvious discrepancy between this charge and the fact that Poinsett was at the time a member of the United States Congress, where he was taking an active part in urging recognition of the independence of the Latin American nations. The charge in the same despatch that the federalism of Mejía in 1839 was "fomented by the Texans" is also interesting, although Calderón de la Barca offers no proof of his contention. (p. 27.)

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*Latin American Leaders.* By HAROLD E. DAVIS. (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1949. Pp. 170. Cloth.)

"Auch kleine Dingen" have their function, and a slender volume like Mr. Davis' may have a particularly important one if it encourages our intelligentsia to become acquainted with the representative men of the numerous republics to the South-east. To be sure, in an average space of eight pages one cannot expect the full-length portrait, but what one has a right to expect Mr. Davis gives his reader, for he is well-balanced, clear, judicious, and unobtrusively well-informed, and conveys a maximum of truth in a minimum of words.

The author is too wise to expect Latin America to be satisfied with his heroes of sword and pen. If the list were ten times as long, the proponents of certain names and certain countries would still raise a shocked outcry at the omission of their favorite great men. He makes an effort, not entirely successful, to avoid the difficulty by labeling his men representative or typical and also by referring to many who do not receive extended treatment.

Most students of Latin America will agree that in considering that area it is especially fitting to seek a key to understanding in great men

rather than merely in impersonal trends and institutions, and that men of ideas "have exercised more influence . . . on the movements of politics than have their counterparts in the United States." It shows more than a little comprehension of Latin-American mentality that Mr. Davis has included among his sixteen leaders a poet, Rubén Darío. One can be thankful, also, for his remembering Haiti in the person of Toussaint L'Ouverture, and giving Brazil its due, in essays on Feijó and Euclides da Cunha.

The thumb-nail sketches of these outstanding figures of the last 150 years fall into two groups: those devoted to nine "political leaders," and seven studies of "leaders of thought." The division is useful if one remembers that political leaders in Latin America are likely to be pretty literate characters and that thinkers usually aspire to political influence.

We wish *Latin American Leaders* more readers than hard-boiled realism would justify one in expecting, and hope that Mr. Davis' "*Nociones de Biografía*" will send his readers to the many volumes of *Pensamiento Vivo* and *Pensadores de América* that have burgeoned in recent years, and lead them to discover scores of fascinating figures in addition to the handful here taken to be representative.

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*Guayaquil en 1842: Rocafuerte y la epidemia de fiebre amarilla.* By PEDRO JOSÉ HUERTA. (Guayaquil: Talleres del Colegio Nacional Rocafuerte, 1947. Pp. 250. Paper.)

This author has refined the high grade ore which he mined from local archival veins into a dramatically written account of the fearful yellow fever epidemic which, from September, 1842 to August, 1843, devastated Guayaquil. That port city with a population of about 20,000 dominated the Province of Guayas, which suffered a ten per cent loss or almost 5,000 lives.

The heroes of this piece are Vicente Rocafuerte, second president of the Republic of Ecuador (1835-1839) but, in 1842, Governor of the Province of Guayas; also that handful of civil servants, shopkeepers, physicians, and clergy who chose to remain behind and assist those unable to flee from the "formidable enemy." Singled out as the villain is Dr. Juan Francisco Arcia, the Chief Public Health Officer. He failed to execute the duties of his office when, on August 31, the schooner *Reina Victoria* put into port with at least one yellow-fever victim aboard. From that point of origin, the disease fanned out, insidiously but rapidly. Terror replaced gaiety in the coffeehouses where dominoes was the game of the day, at the bullfights, at the performances of Professor Antonio