

Neuman's lyric opera company recently arrived from Lima, in the homes of rich and poor, of the governing and the governed.

From this point on, the author chronicles the course of the epidemic. To allay public fear at the outset, a Board of Physicians recommended that the local government proclaim the prevailing sickness as not yellow fever but as a "bilious fever of a seasonal nature!" Individual doctors, however, did yeoman work and treated for yellow fever. The energetic Rocafuerte initiated practical measures. To pleas for assistance, the central government at Quito and neighboring communities responded generously. The listing of individual contributions might have been dispensed with. The "Black Month" of November, with biographical data on distinguished victims, is vividly described. Impact of the epidemic upon the daily life of the "sorrowful and desolate city" receives a similar treatment.

There is a chapter on contemporary local opinion, especially that of Dr. José Mascote in his *Memoria sobre la fiebre amarilla*, concerning the origins and pathology of yellow fever. According to those views, the disease could not be contagious because it was not produced by a virus, and for the same reason could not be carried from one place to another.

The summing up with statistics is admittedly not what it might be because of the lack of accurate data. While the absence of an index is not surprising, that of a simple table of contents is.

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Latin American Politics and Government. By AUSTIN F. MACDONALD. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1949. Pp. ix, 642. Maps. Illustrations.)

Professor Macdonald attempts to describe both the theory and the practice of government in each of the twenty Latin-American republics. Taking up each country separately, he describes its people and its geography and sketches very briefly its history since independence. He discusses recent political events in much more detail, and then summarizes the more important provisions of the current constitution. He always keeps before the reader the fact that the constitution, from the Latin American point of view, is "a record of what should be done under ideal conditions" rather than "the fundamental law, to be regarded as superior to all other laws and enforceable under all circumstances."

A description of the provisions of twenty rather similar constitutions involves much repetition and does not make very exciting reading. On the other hand the account of contemporary politics is lively, if some-

times rather superficial, and brings together much information not easily accessible to the average student. The curious reader can glean many interesting facts even from the sections that deal with the constitutions and with the laws. For example, Professor Macdonald has gathered some surprising information about presidential salaries, which range from such utterly ridiculous amounts as \$1200 per annum in Bolivia, \$4500 in Ecuador, and \$6000 in Chile, to \$35,000 in Brazil and Cuba and \$60,000 in Guatemala. He also gives the requirements for voting in each country and describes briefly the way in which the voting takes place. Property qualifications for the suffrage seem to be a thing of the past, but all of the West Coast republics, from Colombia to Chile, have literacy qualifications. Women may vote in about half of the countries. Almost everywhere the ballots are furnished by the political parties, and there is little opportunity to vote a split ticket. Unfortunately, the author gives us less information about the all important questions: who registers the voters and counts the ballots? It would be interesting to know what changes in the electoral machinery itself seem to have played a part in the development of better elections in countries like Chile and Colombia.

It is perhaps unreasonable, when an author presents so much useful material, to suggest that he might have presented more. Historians, however, will probably feel that a discussion of Latin-American political life should devote more attention to the traditions inherited from the colonial period and to the political development of each country since independence. It is difficult, for example, to understand the difference in political conditions in two nearby countries like Colombia and Venezuela unless one has a more adequate picture of the background in each country. More attention might also profitably be devoted to the way in which political parties are formed and held together and to the very important changes in the composition and alignment of political parties in the last quarter century. It would be unfair, however, to ask any author to do this for all of the twenty republics within the compass of one volume. As it stands, the book is a very useful one. It gives a picture of governmental machinery and practice in Latin America that is more complete and more accurate than anything previously available to students.

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Expansionists of 1812. By JULIUS W. PRATT. (New York: Peter Smith, 1949. Pp. 309. \$3.25.)

A reprint of a well-known study first published in 1925. The author's contribution to the understanding of the forces leading to war in 1812