

donça come to mind among those who have published in Mexico and Buenos Aires. Indeed, among these, Renato de Mendonça holds a special place, for he has published four books in Spanish in Mexico alone (*El Brasil en la América Latina*, 1944; *Pequeña historia del Brasil*, 1944, the predecessor of the present volume; *El Brasil y su cultura*, 1944; and *Pensamiento de Ruy Barbosa*, 1945).

The trend is there and I hope it will continue. I wonder whether its counterpart will appear—the beginning of publication in Brazil and in Portuguese of worthwhile books about the Spanish-American countries.

A. M.

Revista Cubana, Vol. XXIV, enero-junio, 1949. (Habana: Imprenta P. Fernández y Cia., 1949. Pp. 469.)

It is a little out of the ordinary to review in these pages an issue of a magazine, but this number of the *Revista Cubana* is an unusual one. In commemoration of the centennial of the birth of the Cuban philosopher-critic, Enrique José Varona, the Ministry of Education of that country asked a number of the island's scholars to prepare addresses on the lives and works of representative leaders in the development of Cuban thought. A collection of these studies composes this issue of the *Revista*.

The point of departure is the administration of Captain General Luís de las Casas (1790-1796), a true son of the Enlightenment, who did for Cuba what such monarchs as Frederick II of Prussia, Catherine II of Russia, Joseph II of Austria, and Charles III of Spain aspired to do for their countries. Winning the coöperation of the island's aristocrats and intellectuals, he became the sponsor of institutions and movements that were destined to mold the next half-century of its history and which are not without their influence even to the present day. The year 1790 saw the establishment of the *Papel Periódico de la Havana*, Cuba's first, save one short-lived publication. Four years later there was founded the Consulado de Comercio y Agricultura, first proposed by Francisco de Arango y Parreño and supported and presided over by Las Casas. This corporation was a board of public works and education, in addition to serving the functions of a modern chamber of commerce. Another of the vital associations of intellectuals in Cuba, the Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, was started in 1793. It was in the assembly hall of this body that this series of addresses was presented.

Dr. Emeterio S. Santovenia has interpreted the age of Las Casas in an admirable manner. Other contributors are César García Pons, Gaston Baquero, Antonio Hernández Travieso, Higinio Medrano, Luis A.

Gómez. Domínguez, Félix Lizaso, José María Chacón y Calvo, Rafael Esténger, Francisco J. Ponte Domínguez, Ramiro Guerra, Ernesto Arduza, Mario A. Rodríguez, Jorge Mañach, and Medardo Vitier. They have discussed, respectively, the liberal minded Juan José Díaz de Espada, who became bishop of Habana in 1800; the professor-priest José Agustín Caballero, teacher in the Seminario de San Carlos and the inspirer of the distinguished group known as the "Generation of San Carlos"; the priest-patriot Félix Varela; the educator José de la Luz y Caballero (nephew of José Agustín), who trained in his academy many of the leaders in Cuba's independence movements; the statesman-historian José Antonio Saco, whose *Historia de la esclavitud* is one of the monumental works on the subject; Domingo del Monte, Venezuelan by birth, but founder of a Havana circle that made the thirties, forties and fifties of the nineteenth century the most significant in the history of Cuban thinking and literature; the poet José María Heredia; the patriot-economist Gaspar Cisneros Betancourt; the economist-statesman Francisco de Arango y Parreño; the reforming Conde de Pozos Dulces; the orator-revolutionary Manuel Sanguily; the historian, biographer and literary critic Enrique Piñeyro; the apostle of Cuban liberty, José Martí; and finally Enrique José Varona, of whom it has been said: "Después de Martí es el hombre a quien la intelectualidad cubana ha rendido mejor vasallaje."

"La acción salva," proclaimed Varona, but when the need came for him to assume the leadership of the revolution on the death of Martí, he remained "excesivamente cerebralista." Martí, on the other hand, was not only a thinker, but a man of action; yet it is the thinker Martí that Dr. Mañach presents here in his brilliant analysis. Martí the man of action can be seen better in the biography by the same author. Dr. Medardo Vitier has outlined Varona's influence under four heads: "su tendencia crítica, el motivo y los límites de su escepticismo, el influjo del humanismo en sus credos láicos, y en fin, su tesis sobre la función social de grandes hombres." The philosopher in him "no se contenta allí con exponer sino que pide cuenta de las doctrinas y arremete contra algunas." He was essentially a skeptic, but he never paraded his skepticism. Scattered references to it appear in his published works, and on one occasion "Mi escepticismo" was the subject of an address before El Ateneo, an address which he never published, however, and in his classroom lectures Varona was careful to avoid the subject because he did not wish to influence his pupils in that direction. Says Vitier: "no maldice ni se desespera; ve las tinieblas, y todavía pide la luz salvadora de las virtudes ciudadanas." Vitier finds the explanation of Varona's skepticism in his humanistic leanings. Widely versed in

the ancient classics and modern literatures, Varona departed from religion to develop his own "fe lática." On the influence of "grandes hombres" he was opposed to such thinkers as Carlyle and Emerson, who laid so much at the feet of heroes and "representative men." But he himself appears in this list which the Ministry of Education has designated "La ilustración cubana."

Estimates on the relative merits of the addresses in this collection will vary with each reader. The reviewer inclines toward those on Las Casas, Del Monte, Arango y Parreño, Piñeyro, Martí and Varona, no doubt a prejudice begotten of personal interest in these individuals. One regrets that the list is so abbreviated, but the selection is admirable. These studies by outstanding scholars present a panorama of Cuban culture from the last decade of the eighteenth century through the second decade of the twentieth. It is unfortunate that the address on José Agustín Caballero which was delivered extemporaneously does not appear in the printed collection.

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DUVON C. CORBITT.

The Year Book of the West Indies and Countries of the Caribbean, 1948-1949. Published by THOMAS SKINNER & Co. (London and Montreal: Thomas Skinner & Co., 1950. Pp. 914. Maps, index. \$7.50.)

An illustrated compendium of statistical and descriptive data in its twenty-first year of publication which now includes Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and the five Central American republics in addition to the earlier coverage. The unusual features include an "Historical and General" section of over sixty pages which summarizes recent developments on subjects such as the Caribbean Commission, the Organization of American States and the British West Indian Federation. The references to trade and commerce are particularly complete. On the other hand, there are numerous misspelled words, misplaced accents, factual inaccuracies, and inconsistencies (such as citing an area figure for a country in two different ways).

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WILLIAM S. STOKES.

BACKGROUND

(European and American)

Anales mexicanos; uno pedernal—diez caña. Translated to Spanish by FAUSTINO CHIMALPOPOCA. [Colección Amatlacuilotl.] (Mexico City: Editorial Vargas Rea, 1949. Pp. 111. Paper.)

This anonymous manuscript written in the Mexican language, translated by Lic. Faustino Chimalpopoca Galicia and compiled, with others,