

Toro's second volume is a considerable improvement on his first. But if he continues the series his real test is yet to come, for he is now nearly through the spectacular age of discovery and conquest and must presently grapple with the more prosaic but tremendously important problems of the colonial period.

CHARLES E. NOWELL.

University of Illinois.

#### BRIEF MENTION

*Bartolomé de Las Casas, an Interpretation of His Life and Writings.* By LEWIS HANKE. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951. Pp. ix, 102. Illustrations, index. Paper. Gs. 5.) An English version of the series of lectures on Las Casas given by the author at the University of Virginia in 1948 and subsequently in Cuba. A Spanish edition of this work was noticed in the November, 1950, issue of this REVIEW. The outstanding type, format, and paper of the present edition and the well-chosen and attractive plates make it in many ways preferable to the Spanish version. The book serves as the best introduction to Las Casas in English.

#### NATIONAL PERIOD

*Report of Ramos Arizpe to the Spanish Cortes.* Translated and annotated by NETTIE LEE BENSON. [The University of Texas, Institute of Latin-American Studies, Latin-American Studies XI.] (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1950. Pp. xiii, 61. Bibliography, index. Paper.)

Dr. Miguel Ramos de Arizpe, a lawyer and priest, was one of the most influential political leaders of the Mexican War for Independence. He was first a spokesman for reform and later one of the great constitutional fathers of the Republic of Mexico. A native of Coahuila and its representative to the Spanish Cortes, he wrote a detailed *Report* on the four eastern Interior Provinces of New Spain: Coahuila, Nuevo León, Nuevo Santander, and Texas. Students of Mexican history will find this translated and annotated edition of his *Report* a useful document. It serves a triple purpose: first, by giving an excellent description of life along the border; second, as a document which summarizes effectively the internal causes of the War for Independence; and third, as an illustration of the political awareness of a colonial leader and his sound arguments for reform.

Ramos de Arizpe found much to praise in the climate, the production of the land, and the character of the people of the eastern Interior Provinces. But he found education inadequate, commerce hampered by "extraordinary prohibitions," and the government in the hands of an arbitrary, despotic, selfish, and incompetent military which ruled by "force and fear." Having praised the virtues of the people and con-

demned the evils of the government, he boldly recommended economic and political reforms. He wanted representative councils in the provinces and greater civilian participation in the government of the cities. He gave excellent arguments to support his request for direct trade with the upper gulf ports and freedom from the monopoly of Veracruz. The military, he thought, should be used only to restrain the Indians and to defend the borders against any threat from the United States. Somewhat like the appeal of the English colonials, the appeal by Ramos de Arizpe was partly against "taxation without representation."

The editor and translator has given us a seven-page introduction, containing a brief biography of the author and a history of the various editions of his *Report*. The *Report* itself is divided into thirty-one numbered topics with titles, each topic carefully developed and clearly presented. Most of the footnotes clarify or correct references to place names and geography. A map would have been a useful addition. A brief bibliography lists the items consulted in this study.

JOHN RYDJORD.

University of Wichita.

*Paraguay independiente*. By EFRAIM CARDOZO. *Uruguay independiente*. By J. E. PIVEL DEVOTO. [*Historia de América y de los pueblos americanos*, edited by ANTONIO BALLESTEROS Y BERETTA, Vol. XXI.] (Barcelona: Salvat Editores, S. A., 1949. Pp. 637. Maps, illustrations.)

In this single volume, the histories of two Latin-American countries of the Plata lands bring a useful survey of events from two often differing national points of view. This is of especial importance, because Río de la Plata history has for too long been seen only through Argentine or Brazilian eyes. Yet, until the Paraguayan and Uruguayan interpretations have been considered, there can hardly be any fair evaluation or adequate understanding of the national thought patterns behind the international attitudes of the countries involved. Strongly bound in a volume of convenient size, well-printed, and proofread with more than ordinary care, and with its 412 fine illustrations, this volume will be a valuable addition to any historical library. Its two maps, unfortunately, are bad, especially that of Paraguay which is practically illegible.

The first history, *Paraguay independiente* (401 pp.), is of especial importance because so few works on Paraguayan national history have hitherto been made generally available and even more because it is based upon precisely those Paraguayan documents which have not been available to other writers on the general history of the Plata lands. Written by a former minister of public instruction who has himself also played a