

fault or abuse—" (p. 67); "a man may be detected by his deportment to what class of people he belongs . . ." (p. 97); "We may weep for the past, but should endeavor to look more happy for the future . . ." (p. 176); "Man is not half so miserable as he would under a thousand various shadings believe himself . . ." (p. 177). Concern for his wife's boredom, her departure in 1840 for her native Philadelphia, and his partial friendship thereafter with Samuel D. Forsyth conclude the quotations from the diary. Williamson's last will and instructions for property disposition and burial have been appended.

Unfortunately the author, after "seven years of research" (p. xvii), did not see fit to acquaint the reader—either by footnotes or in her introduction—with the roles and significance of the Venezuelans and foreigners mentioned by her subject. Moreover, the treatment of Williamson's years as consul in La Guayra is not in accord with his reports to the State Department; his interesting and revealing (because it relates much of business practices and why and how he made money) law suit with Edward W. Robinson is barely mentioned, despite the fact that 500 manuscript pages concerning this matter are extant in the United States. The author writes "The steadfastness and innate goodness of the man spoke to me from the pages" (p. xvii), but, alas, had she but consulted the recordings of others her view might have been changed. All in all the work is an attempt to produce a semi-popular book at the expense of sound scholarship. Her essay on authorities, none of whom she cites, is largely a commentary on the geographical works of Augustín Codazzi and the general history of Rafael María Baralt. The illustrations are of the Casa Llaguno, the first embassy, now the Museum of Colonial Art. The end-maps serve no purpose. But one can commiserate with the author's "aching back and dirty dress" (p. xiii), her looking "at a word for half an hour," (p. xiv), and her statement "A hundred years passed—and here was I, hunched over the diary and blinking my eyes as time held me spellbound" (p. xvii).

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Iturbide of Mexico. By WILLIAM SPENCE ROBERTSON. (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1952. Pp. ix, 361. \$6.00.)

Iturbide has long been a controversial figure in Mexican history. Liberals have denounced him and conservatives have supported the

first emperor. With a background of years of study and research in eight different countries Professor Robertson has now attempted an impartial estimate of Mexico's first independent ruler. Certainly his biography will provide the basis for a reevaluation.

Iturbide, of *criollo* background, grew up and was trained in a conservative atmosphere. It is no wonder, then, that he fought on the side of the crown against the first instigators of Mexican independence. In discussing Iturbide's part in the early struggles for freedom Robertson presents all the minute details. Possibly too many, for the result is not only small errors in statements of fact but more important, and this is true of the entire book, a consequent neglect of economic, social, and political conditions.

With the readoption in 1820 of the liberal Spanish constitution of 1812 it was logical that Iturbide should desert the loyalists and become one of the leaders of Mexican independence. In a fine chapter, Robertson develops the origins of the Plan of Iguala and describes Iturbide's rise to the height of his popularity with the proclamation of the Plan.

By December, 1820, Iturbide was beginning to develop his ideas of independence for Mexico and as early as January 10, 1821, he began to correspond with Vicente Guerrero. In contrast to the generally accepted belief that these two men met before the Plan of Iguala was proclaimed, it is the author's belief that they did not see each other until after the event.

As to the Plan itself, Iturbide was at least in part the author. As Robertson states: "Essentials of this program agree with certain proposals made in Iturbide's letters to Guerrero, Negrete, and the *cabildo* of Acapulco. In style the original plan resembled the language used in Iturbide's letters to Guerrero." The reader gets the impression, however, that the ideas in the Plan were unique. It must be remembered, however, that both in Mexico and in Spain these views were held by many as a possible basis for maintaining Spanish influence in America.

From this time until his death Iturbide moved from one mistake to another. One of his greatest errors in judgment was his failure to grasp the desire for republican-federal institutions among the Mexicans. It is unfortunate that Robertson missed the article by Dr. Nettie Lee Benson in this journal (Feb., 1945) on the Plan of Casa Mata which certainly would have aided him in presenting a

more rounded picture of the political aspirations of the Mexicans.

With these limitations Robertson's *Iturbide* is a good biographical study.

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Historia de los partidos. By SANTIAGO TÁVARA, edited with notes by JORGE BASADRE Y FÉLIX DENEGRI LUNA. [Biblioteca de la República.] (Lima: Editorial Huascarán, 1951. Pp. lxx, 264. Paper.)

This work is the first in a series which is to include important primary sources for Peruvian history. The eminence as historians of its editors, Jorge Basadre and Félix Denegri Luna, assures that the selections will be wisely made and the several works excellently edited.

Santiago Távara was born in Piura in 1790. After the successful conclusion of the war for independence from Spain, he played an important role in the political life of his country. Practically everything that he here records he knew from personal experience.

The material of this book was published originally in a series of articles in *El Comercio*, beginning with July 17, 1862, and concluding on November 11 of the same year. This is the first publication between two covers. Basadre writes of *Historia de los partidos* that it was "un primer intento de recorrer los sucesos y las etapas de la Emancipación y de la vida republicana del Perú, para buscar en ellos un fondo orgánico y una articulación." He adds that the author was trying to trace something impersonal, invisible—the footprints of ideas (p. xxxv). Consequently Távara was initiating a new type of history. The editors attribute to the author objectivity and truthfulness. Indeed, when Távara wrote these memoirs he had reached the age of seventy-two and was outside the active politics of his country; he could afford to be frank.

Távara was interested in tracing the activities of Peruvian liberals. He proves that Peru has always had, since independence, a group that could properly be called liberals. He himself, of course, was of that group.

A few of the author's statements will indicate his attitude and the nature of his criticism: He believed that Peru's many revolutions were a sacrifice which was offered to a great principle and an expiation for all that happened in the colonial period (p. 77). Of