

together. The essay's chief fault is a tendency to make a complex subject seem even more involved by overwriting.

The polarization of forces is a principal theme of Villoro's study: Liberty accompanied by violence at one extreme, and Order through subjugation at the other. This contrast is embodied in the person of Hidalgo, who chose the end of immediate freedom despite destructive means (Luis Villoro, "Hidalgo: Violencia y Libertad," *Historia Mexicana* Vol. II. No. 2. Oct.-Nov. 1952). This article has been incorporated into the book being reviewed); and Abad y Queipo, the Bishop-elect of Michoacán, who believed in eventual Independence, but felt that peace and order under a tyrant were better than the chaos which liberty would bring to an unprepared society. This conflict between Liberty and Order remains throughout the decade of revolt and the Iturbide Empire. It is in part responsible for the wave of disillusionment which follows the establishment of the republic. Villoro feels that José María Luis Mora's plans for economic reform were the solution which would make Freedom and Stability compatible.

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SINCE 1830

The Burr Conspiracy. By THOMAS PERKINS ABERNETHY. New York, 1954. Oxford University Press. Illustrations. Map. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 301. \$6.00.

For students of Hispanic-American relations, no period of history is more absorbing than the early nineteenth century, when the land-minded citizens of the new and somewhat shaky North American republic were thrusting westward into inevitable collision with Spain's American empire. In the vast hinterland national boundaries and allegiances were alike highly unstable, presenting enticing opportunities to the ambitious and the discontented.

Dr. Abernethy's skillful pen describes an important result of this conflict. Here are presented the Burr Conspiracy's widespread ramifications and crowded cast; its fluctuating fortunes; its semi-comic errors; and its double edged treacheries and amazing loyalties. If Burr's real aim still remains uncertain it is no fault of scholarship, but rather reflects the shifting objectives of a master plotter's expediency. Of additional interest to Hispanic-American students are the accounts of Pike's southwestern expedition and the attitudes and activities of such Spanish officials as ministers Yrujo and Cevallos and governors Casa Calvo and Herrera.

This book will remain for some time our best treatment of an episode of color and significance.

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Cartas ao amigo ausente. By JOSÉ MARÍA DA SILVA PARANHOS. Introduction by JOSÉ HONÓRIO RODRIGUES. Rio de Janeiro, 1953. Ministério das Relações Exteriores, Instituto Rio-Branco. Illustrations. Index. Pp. xxvii, 356. Paper.

It almost seems gilding the lily to review this interesting and instructive collection of letters, since that was so ably done in his introductory critical essay by the eminent Brazilian historian, José Honório Rodrigues. However, a few descriptive remarks may be welcomed by those who do not have the book at hand.

The fifty-seven letters appeared anonymously in the *Jornal do Comércio* from December 23, 1850 to December 28, 1851. José María da Silva Paranhos was a member of the editorial staff then, and they have been attributed to him ever since. Nevertheless, since Paranhos accompanied Honório Hermeto Carneiro Leão as secretary to the Special Mission to Uruguay, Entre Rios, and Corrientes on October 23, 1851, he could not have written the last ten letters. For one thing, Honório Hermeto, more lion than lamb, was an exacting master; for another, the letters continued to chronicle current events in Rio de Janeiro. By examining internal evidence and other factors, Sr. Rodrigues adduces strong arguments indicating that letters forty-nine through fifty-seven were from the pen of Francisco Antonio Picot, editor of the *Jornal*, who stood to lose one of his paper's most popular features. The letters were discontinued two weeks before Picot left for France. The assignment to Montevideo started Paranhos on the long and distinguished career in public life which earned him the title of Visconde de Rio-Branco and the gratitude of king and country.

What makes the letters so important is not only that they embody the political, economic and social theories of a great statesman in his early thirties, but that they gauge the very pulse of Brazil in one of its most crucial periods. Thanks to the military prowess of Luiz Alves de Lima e Silva, Baron of Caxias, the country stood solidly behind Pedro II. The conservatives were giving it energetic leadership. Yet there were serious problems at home and abroad. Public opinion frowned on the slave trade, but resented bitterly the arbitrary methods Great Britain used to enforce its abolition. The machinations of Juan Manuel Rosas to reunite the old Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires were a constant threat to faithful allies and to the newly restored