

BOOK REVIEWS

GENERAL

Adiós al séptimo de línea. By JORGE INOSTROSA C. 3 vols. Third edition. Santiago de Chile, 1957. Impresa Editora Ziz-Zag. Pp. 276, 283, 358.

With the possible exception of the Independence, no event in Chile's history can rival the War of the Pacific in its emotional impact on Chileans. Even the violence of the Civil War must take a poor second place compared to the patriotic heat generated by the war against the alliance of Peru and Bolivia. The enormous success of this historical novel dealing with the conflict (it was reported two years ago to have sold more than 30,000 copies, an unusually high figure for Chile) is doubtless founded on feelings of patriotism as well as on literary esteem.

In order to paint the picture of the entire war—nothing less than this is the aim of the book—the author had to select an over-size canvas, comparable to that of *War and Peace*. The edition at hand includes three volumes totaling 915 large pages of double-column format, and yet the reader is not likely to feel overwhelmed by the dimensions of the story. The first volume, "La frontera en llamas," deals with the preliminary tensions in Antofagasta in 1876 and the outbreak of the war, concluding with the formation of the Esmeralda Regiment under the leadership of Colonel Santiago Amengual in June, 1879. "Las cruces del desierto" covers events up through the battle of Tarapacá (November 27, 1879), and the final volume, "Los infantes de bronce," concludes with the occupation of Lima. A sense of continuity is provided not only by following the exploits of the Esmeralda Regiment, but also by recounting the personal adventures of one of its soldiers who is seeking his sweetheart, a secret agent in Peruvian territory. An intricate series of flash-backs helps to maintain the unity of the narration.

The author has held the number of fictional characters to a minimum in order to give to the history of the war, which is a good enough story in itself, the dominant role in the book. Although he had to color some of the characters, his analysis of motivation of individuals and of government and military decisions adheres closely to historical accounts. It is apparent that he studied carefully Encina's *Historia de Chile* as well as Encina's sources. Naturally, there is no pretense of objectivity, as there was not for Encina; both

authors write from a strong nationalistic bias, not only sincerely but fervently.

This bias is the cause of both the success and the failure of the book. In his desire to let Chilean heroism speak for itself, the author has invented as little as possible. With a fine talent for distilling dramatic elements, his story is never dull in spite of its extreme length. The present reviewer can testify to its forcefulness when presented in serialized form in Chilean radio broadcasts. However, the characterizations tend to be superficial, thin, and artificial, leaving little to the reader's imagination. This defect is compensated to a great extent by the excitement of a story which had to be selected instead of created. Although the novel will probably not find permanence as literature, it is a remarkably colorful introduction to a vital segment of Chilean history.

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Globe and Hemisphere. Latin America's Place in the Postwar Foreign Relations of the United States. By J. FRED RIPPY. Chicago, 1958. Henry Regnery. Tables. Index. Pp. xi, 276. Cloth. \$6.00.

The scope of this book is considerably narrower than the title indicates. The emphasis is almost exclusively upon economic matters. This is appropriate, explains the author, because "economic relations actually received major stress during the period," and because there is little to add to the much discussed political, diplomatic, and military relations.

However, Mr. Rippy definitely has something to add to what is generally known about the economic aspects of inter-American relations. In four introductory chapters, the reader is treated to the fruits of his research labors on the history of United States private investment in Latin America. Nineteen tables of statistics illumine his narrative.

In the latter two-thirds of the book, which deal with United States public investment and governmental assistance to Latin America, Mr. Rippy abruptly abandons the role of detached economic historian and assumes the mantle of angry taxpayer and exploited consumer. The Latin Americans, he maintains, have been rather ungrateful recipients of United States largesse, and they are getting about all they deserve. He portrays the Inter-American Highway project as a poor investment, the Rama Road in Nicaragua a swindle, the rubber planting experiments in tropical America a fiasco, and the