

in that of a priest who dared from his pulpit to denounce the Jesuits as the "Company of the Devils" and went scot-free, as the order was, just at that moment, expelled from the Spanish dominions. Popular satire, well exemplified here, aroused persistent but unsuccessful efforts to stamp it out, as ideas were advanced, under that cover, which encouraged revolution and later independence.

The Appendix presents a hair-raising "Act of Contrition" of a parish priest, and an autobiographical sketch and four letters—one to his mother who had denounced him—by José Antonio Rojas, after he escaped from the Inquisition. Described as "more like an *entremés* than a trial in the Court of the Faith," the sketch is a formidable indictment, in a passionate literary style, of colonial life and religious servitude in Mexico in the early nineteenth century.

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Martín López. Conquistador Citizen of Mexico. By C. HARVEY GARDINER. Lexington, 1958. University of Kentucky Press. Illustrations. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Pp. ix, 193. \$6.00.

The author's stated objective, to focus "attention on a minor figure to give perspective to the human factor operating within the framework of certain Spanish institutions and cultural patterns present in the sixteenth-century New World," seems, at first glance, laudable enough—and Professor Gardiner works at it with courage and obvious enthusiasm. Unfortunately, the figure of Martín López is simply too minor (thus inducing a plethora of "padding" in an attempt to round out the story) and, even more unfortunately, the skeletal biographical material is rendered opaque by the weak portrayal of Spanish-Mexican "cultural patterns" and institutions. A number of other conquistadores might have served Gardiner's objective better, but López was obviously selected because of an attachment growing out of the author's

earlier volume, *Naval Power in the Conquest of Mexico*. Possibly one can sympathize with this way of selecting a protagonist for such a purpose, but it has put far too great a burden on poor old shipbuilder López, who apparently had enough troubles as it was.

The initial error (for thus I consider it) of selecting López for such a rôle seems to have made the achievement of Gardiner's stated objective virtually impossible. The result is neither satisfying biographical portrayal nor is it a very penetrating cultural picture. There is far too much wrapping of the commonplace, or the perfectly obvious, in grandiosity of phrase—and the abundance of perilous platitudes and somewhat naïve generalizations finally makes the reader (this one, at least) quite impatient. Selection of a more significant conquistador-colonist (and several of them certainly demand the careful attention of historians and biographers) might have mitigated faults which one does not ordinarily expect to find in an author of Professor Gardiner's standing.

When all this is said, however, the author must be given due praise for putting some accent on the complexities of the post-conquest period in New Spain. It is still commonplace (even among the otherwise well-educated) to view Spanish occupation of the New World as simply a destructive military invasion; hardly more, and certainly without significant sequel. Insofar as Gardiner's present volume tends to modify this simplicity of view, it will indeed contribute to needed enlightenment of the uninitiated and perhaps stimulate the interest of beginning students in things Hispanic. Possibly this is all that we should demand of such a book on such a framework.

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Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1523-1543. The Narrative of Alvar Nuñez Cabeça de Vaca. Edited by FREDERICK W. HODGE. *The Narrative of the Expedi-*