

ographic landmarks, and they are as welcome as old friends.

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*The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America.* By LEWIS HANKE. Philadelphia, 1959. University of Pennsylvania Press. Illustration. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 217. Cloth. \$5.00.

Reprint of the 1949 edition.

#### REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

*La actividad política del reino de Chile entre 1806 y 1810.* By NESTOR MEZA VILLALOBOS. Santiago, 1956. Instituto de Investigaciones Histórico-Culturales. Introduction. Appendix. Pp. 160. Paper.

In spite of the attention devoted by historians to the Revolutionary era in Spanish America, the period of transition when the disintegrating Spanish regime existed side by side with the incipient independence movements is still shadowy, at any rate for some regions of the empire. The external events are familiar enough—the actions of governors, movements of troops, activities of cabildos—but we are still uncertain about motives and intentions, and we still lack precise answers to many questions, including the question what were the social and economic interests behind the attitudes of Spaniards and creoles and behind the positions which they adopted. Only by detailed studies like the present one can the picture be filled in. Sr. Meza Villalobos has made an original and informative contribution to the study of the independence movement in Chile in the years when Spanish officials were vainly endeavouring to maintain an authority which appeared to have no source. Avoiding theories and ideologies, he has gone to the archives and his study is based, among other things, on good use of material from the Archive of the Indies, Seville. He

analyses the policies of royal officials and the actions of the cabildo of Santiago, and he clarifies the role of the upper classes in Chile and their quest for personal security in the years when the disintegration of the monarchy forced them to look to their own interests. The book, otherwise scholarly, suffers from lack of an index.

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*Cartas del Libertador. Tomo XII (1803-1830).* Compilation & notes by MANUEL PÉREZ VILA. Caracas, 1959. Fundación John Boulton. Illustrations. Indices. Pp. xxi, 469. Paper.

Many unedited letters of the Liberator were found when the Fundación John Boulton microfilmed all documents in the Archivo Nacional de Bogotá relating to Venezuelan history. During the same period J. León Helguera of North Carolina State College, commissioned by the Fundación, discovered more original letters in the United States. The directors of the Fundación realized that these letters plus others which Lecuna had not published or had inserted in various issues of the *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de la Historia* would fill a volume. They decided to continue the *Cartas del Libertador* with this Volume XII, preserving the format, critical editing and analytical index of the previous volumes; and adding a few new and useful features. One of the most helpful is the Spanish translation which follows letters originally written in English or French.

For a very good reason some letters are included in Volume XII which appear in those edited by Lecuna. He edited copies which contained errors while the Fundación John Boulton has the original letters or more perfect copies. The Fundación John Boulton is to be congratulated for thus building on the solid foundation laid by Vicente Lecuna.

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