

1850's, Marcy won wide respect for his thoughtful conduct of foreign affairs. His greatest triumph came in 1854 with the Marcy-Elgin Treaty which eased Anglo-American tensions, but in many ways he served his country better by restraining the impulsive Young Americans with their plans for the acquisition of Cuba and their numerous filibustering expeditions in Central America. He bitterly opposed the erratic efforts of Pierre Soulé to detach Cuba from Spain and, though the Ostend Manifesto was in part due to his own ambiguous instructions to Soulé, Marcy was finally able to frustrate the expansionists.

Spencer's biography, the first full-length portrait of Marcy to appear, is based on a thorough study of manuscript collections. Wisely choosing to concentrate on Marcy's years as Secretary of State, the author, however, is tedious in his detailed accounts of diplomatic maneuvering. An awkward style and a strong favoritism for Marcy further mar the presentation of a very sound job of research and investigation.

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ARGENTINA

Argentine. Un monde. Une ville. By R. M. ALBÈRES. Paris, 1957. Librairie Hachette. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 350.

Out of his nine year residence in Argentina after World War II and the characteristic French ability to compress data and insights from half a dozen disciplines into a stimulating synthesis, M. Albères has written the best general account of Argentina known to the reviewer.

There are five sections in the book. The first, "Un Pays d'Horizons," may rather set one's teeth on edge: it seems at the outset that here is another hackneyed European account of the vastness and rawness of Argentina, written with the author's eyes firmly fixed on little old France. But our author moves with increasing deftness through the psycho-environmental maze,

emerging with such illuminating comments as, "Les dix kilomètres du port de Buenos Aires constituent pratiquement la seule frontière économique ou intellectuelle de l'Argentine." The second part of the book is a long and incisive view of Buenos Aires. Part Three describes the provinces. Part Four, "La Nation et les Hommes," is mainly an analysis of contemporary society, but placed against a good historical summary in which the key role of the immigrant is emphasized ("On mit les hommes dans le pays comme on met du charbon au foyer de la locomotive"). Part Five is entitled "Richesses et Activités," and the sixth section, "Civilisation et Culture Argentines." The latter is a keen examination of the Argentine cultural temperament and the achievements and defects in that sector of Argentine life.

Except for occasional carelessness (also characteristically French) in the use of Spanish accent marks, this is such a good book that it is a pity that it will probably never appear in the language most Americans read.

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The Argentine Novel in the Nineteenth Century. By MYRON I. LICHTBLAU. New York, 1959. Hispanic Institute in the United States. Bibliography. Pp. 225. Paper. \$4.50.

Given Argentina's belated political and cultural history, this work assumes a significance somewhat broader than that indicated by the title. It becomes, perforce, a study of the origins of Argentine prose fiction and a scrutiny of its line of development as it relates to social phenomena, literary movements, external influences, and the unfolding of that national aesthetic consciousness which has rapidly moved Argentina to the forefront in Hispano-American letters.

The approach is basically historical. Though the author sets criticism as one of his objectives, other problems—chronological ordering and classification,