

counting the story of the conquest of Mexico with emphasis on Sandoval's role when accounts are available. And most of these accounts are bare narratives of action. In filling gaps and particularly when dealing with the conqueror's motivations, the author had to rely heavily on speculation as evidenced by frequent recourse to such expressions as "perhaps," "surely by then," "quite possibly," "for some reason," and the like. In view of this difficulty it might have been more economical for Professor Gardiner to have written a shorter evaluative essay rather than yet another book on the conquest of Mexico.

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NATIONAL PERIOD

Proyección del rosismo en la literatura argentina: seminario del Instituto de Letras. Rosario, 1959. Universidad Nacional del Litoral. Facultad de Filosofía y Letras. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 245. Paper.

This book is the result of a seminar conducted by the Institute of Letters of the National University of the Litoral, Rosario, Argentina, during the year 1959. Professor Adolfo Prieto was director of the seminar. Some fourteen other professors collaborated in the seminar and in the preparation of this book.

The collaborators represented a variety of fields of interest. Their subject was a difficult one. As the prologue says, "the mere mention of Rosas and his age before a group of Argentine scholars would arouse the most inflamed reactions." But the participants resolved to lay aside any prejudices they may have had about Rosas, and to examine their subject with objectivity.

The book consists of seven chapters and a bibliography. The introduction contains an evaluation of the historic and social importance of the age of Rosas, and notes the volume and significance of the literature conditioned by *rosismo*. Chapters II through VI show how Rosas and his times were subjects for the poet, novelist, short story writer, dramatist, journalist, and biographer. The last chapter deals with the symbols, signs, and images of *rosismo*.

The authors of this book show that most of the literature of the nineteenth century condemns the tyranny of Rosas. His most severe critics were his own contemporaries. Esteban Echeverría, the romantic poet, wrote *El Matadero* which epitomized the crimes of Rosas. José Marmol, the novelist, wrote *Amalia*, a description of the sad

events of the time. D. F. Sarmiento, *Life of Facundo, or Civilization and Barbarism*, is the best polemic against Rosas.

Rosas is defended in the field of journalism, but this is because he controlled the main newspaper of Buenos Aires, namely *La Gaceta Mercantil*, for many years.

The collaborators of this volume state that, with certain exceptions, rosista literature has maintained the same characteristics in the present century as in the preceding one. During the last decade particularly, much has been written on the subject, and apologists of Rosas are still few and far between.

The book is well organized and properly balanced. It has an excellent bibliography. It will be useful to all students with an interest in Rosas and his times.

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WILLIAM DUSENBERRY

El constituyente de 1856 y el pensamiento liberal mexicano. Introduction by F. JAVIER GAXIOLA, JR. México, 1960. Librería de Manuel Porrúa, S.A. I. y N. Colegio de Abogados, Biblioteca Mexicana, 25. Pp. 126. Paper.

This small volume, sponsored by the Colegio de Abogados, contains four essays of varying quality and length written by Mexican jurists for the centennial of the Constitution of 1857. The first essay (one-half the book) by Lic. Gonzalo Obregón chronicles the participation of most of the thirty-one members of the Colegio who were also deputies in the 1856 Constituent Assembly. The author is not concerned with interpretation nor does he discriminate between the varying viewpoints of these lawyer-deputies. Two other short contributions deal with the Rights of Man in the 1857 Constitution and with the agrarian problem in Mexican liberal thought.

The final essay, a scant fifteen pages by Felipe Tena Ramírez, is an exceptionally clear and suggestive schematic interpretation of Mexican constitutional history. Mexican liberalism in the nineteenth century, argues the author, was in the difficult position of pursuing two diverse objectives. The first was to recover for the state its sovereignty, lost to the forces of corporate privilege (principally the church and the army) at independence. The second was to weaken the state in favor of individual liberty by means of constitutional restraints. The first objective was achieved by the *Reforma*. However, apart from the *juicio de amparo*, the second was not achieved, except in the economic sphere, because of the exceptional authority which had to be granted the State in order to triumph over entrenched colonial privilege, and also because of the political inexperience of the Mexican