

enjoyed an idyllic existence under Spanish rule. Nor does Dr. Gandía seem to see any inconsistency between portraying sixteenth-century Spain as a land of perfect liberty and asserting that the Spanish Conquest was inspired by men searching for liberty, not fortune or adventure.

Gandía provides a useful reminder that there was a Spanish liberal tradition and that it did exert an influence on Argentine political ideas. It was not, however, the main current of the Spanish heritage. It was at best a thin stream, and its remarkable feature is not that it had so relatively little importance, but that in its environment it survived at all.

Arlington, Virginia

JOSEPH R. BARAGER

#### NATIONAL PERIOD

*The Cuban Story.* By HERBERT L. MATTHEWS. New York, 1961. George Braziller, Inc. Index. Pp. 318. \$4.50.

Herbert Matthews of the *New York Times* editorial staff was the first reporter, Cuban or foreign, to interview Fidel Castro after his December 2, 1956, landing in Oriente Province. The story of this interview and later stories written by Matthews contributed importantly to the success of the Castro forces. With extensive quotes from his *Times* stories, Matthews tells of his part in reporting the Cuban revolution. He upholds his own reporting as accurate and fair in contrast to the inadequate and biased coverage by American news media in general. He admits, however, that the story of his first interview with Fidel was inaccurate on several counts, not the least of which was his statement that the Castro forces were winning successes when actually they were at their nadir. This frank admission partially destroys his defense "that every word I wrote was true," and gives at least some substance to charges that he was irresponsible in his reporting. On the more basic matter of the interpretation of trends in Cuba, he was right when he predicted that Batista would last only two more years.

Matthews knows Fidel Castro intimately although he insistently maintains that he carries no weight with the "maximum" leader. He regards Castro as an extraordinary man who may now find himself in the process of being dwarfed by the chain of events he started. Castro is complex, says Matthews. He is irrational, emotional, unpredictable, but with a genuine idealist who loves the people, although he does not trust them. The tendency toward dictatorship

early manifested by Castro, in the author's view, is rooted in the interplay of Castro's power-hungry personality and the problems of the new Cuba. Castro abandoned political democracy because its concepts, alien to his personality and beyond his comprehension, seemed to be inconsistent with social revolution. Nor are the individualistic Cuban people easily disciplined or united in support of a common ideal; probably only a dictatorship could so unite them. Weighing the good and bad features, Matthews concludes that on balance the revolution has been good for Cuba. Despite the growing Communist influence, he believes that it will continue to be a uniquely Cuban rather than a Communist revolution. Regarding the revolution as one in the classic French pattern, Matthews refers to the Castro leadership as the Jacobin stage, but he seems to foresee no Thermidor.

The author probes searchingly two major aspects of the revolution; the emergence of Communist influence and the deterioration of relations with the United States. He also discusses at length the impact of Castroism in Latin America. Little attention is given to the implementation of revolutionary policies within Cuba. Although Matthews grapples with the reasons for Communist influence, he finds it difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion. He seems to be saying that a complex set of pressures and limited alternative forced Castro, a non-Communist who was ideologically adrift, to turn to the P. S. P. The revolutionists from the first believed that the United States was determined to destroy them, in large part because of the history of relations between the two countries. Thus, "A conflict between Cuba and the U. S. had been built into Cuban-American relations by past history and it overflowed in 1959. . . ." The question of who bears responsibility for recent difficulties is a matter of opinion, the author admits, but he believes that the United States may be primarily responsible and certainly pushed Cuba into Russian hands by cutting the sugar quota.

This is by far the best book yet written about the Cuban revolution, and one which the scholar can read with both interest and profit. However, it does not pretend to be a scholarly history, and Matthews in fact seems to have doubts about the ability of historians to tell the "living truth" about the revolution. Matthews is both reasonably dispassionate and hesitant about giving yes and no answers to his own questions. The result is much stimulating discussion of the whys and wherefores of the revolution. He overlooks the importance of the signing of a Cuban-Soviet trade agreement early in 1960 as a reason for the reduction of the sugar quota, and he does

not seem to be aware of the U. S. offer, made in April, 1959, when Castro visited the U. S., to give financial assistance to the revolution. There are other points where this reviewer disagrees with Matthews' interpretations, but these are matters of personal opinion about a subject too close in point of time to permit more than tentative conclusions. The style is somewhat uneven with a noticeable roughness in a few places. One can only lament that Matthews did not possess his present perceptiveness and openmindedness when he wrote his first Castro stories in 1957.

University of Michigan

DAVID D. BURKS

*José Antonio Miralla y sus trabajos.* Edited by Francisco J. Ponte Domínguez. Habana, 1960. Talleres del Archivo Nacional. Documents. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vi, 362. Paper.

Among the plans outlined by the late director of the Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Captain Joaquín Llaverías, was a series of publications making available to scholars in other lands the material in the Archivo concerned with their respective countries. The first such volume appeared in 1955 and was dedicated to Haiti. As 1960 approached the successors of Llaverías proposed to do the same for Argentina, Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, and Chile, as Cuba's contribution to the celebration of the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of their independence movements. First to appear was the volume on Venezuela (La Habana, 1960) in which are reproduced valuable papers concerned with the history of that country. Few comparable papers on Argentina are found in the Archivo Nacional de Cuba, so it was decided to publish the writings of José Antonio Miralla, a native of Argentina who moved to Cuba and who became one of the precursors of the island's independence.

Miralla was born in Córdoba de Tucumán in 1790, went to Buenos Aires in 1805 to study in the Real Colegio de San Carlos, and was present when a British force invested the city in 1807. In 1810 he went with a fellow student to Lima where he completed work for a medical degree (which he seems never to have used), and was for a time suspect by the authorities because of what was happening in Argentina at the time. Becoming the protégé of the Conde de Vista-Florida, Miralla went to Spain with his protector as secretary when the count was chosen councilor of state. When, however, Ferdinand VII upset the constitutional system in Spain, Miralla left for Cuba where he became the head of a prosperous importing firm, a personage of importance in commercial circles, and a member of the highly