

respected Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País, to whose *Memorias* he became a frequent contributor. With the restoration of the constitutional regime in 1820 Miralla became a captain in the "constitutional militia" and a warm advocate of the principles of the Constitution of 1812. Soon, however, he became involved in the independence conspiracies centering around the "Rayos y Soles de Bolívar," probably because of his connection with the Masonic lodge in Habana which supported the movement. Accused of plotting an uprising in the interior, Miralla slipped away to New York where he joined the revolutionary committee that was working for Cuban independence. It was while traveling for this committee, first in Colombia and later in Mexico, that Miralla died in the latter country at the age of 35.

The present volume contains a biography of Miralla (155 pages) by Francisco J. Ponte Domínguez of the Cuban Academy of History, and a collection of Miralla's writings edited by the recent director of the Archivo Nacional de Cuba, Jorge Quintana Rodríguez. The writings are grouped under two heads: literature, consisting of poems and essays; and Asuntos políticos y sociales. Most space is devoted to the first, but the student of Cuban history will profit most by the latter. Particularly valuable is the essay in which Miralla outlined the improvements he thought necessary for Cuba. This was read to the Sociedad Económica in 1816 and became the basis of a program of encouragement of white immigration in Cuba, but which finally turned into the plan under which more than one hundred and twenty-five thousand Chinese coolies were brought in as well as thousands of Indian prisoners of war from Yucatan.

While the volume is dedicated to Argentina, it is the student of Cuban history who will profit most from its publication.

Asbury College

DUVON C. CORBITT

*Historia del Gral. Viamonte y su época.* By ARMANDO ALONSO PIÑEIRO. Buenos Aires, 1959. Mundonuevo. Index. Bibliography. Pp. 418. Paper.

One of the better contributions to the sesquicentennial celebration of the Argentine independence movement, this well-documented book is an attempt to rescue Viamonte from oblivion and to give him his true place in Argentine history. The documents come mainly from the private collection of Carlos Sánchez Viamonte (who writes a helpful prologue for the book) and from the public archives of Argentina. On the whole, in spite of one or two over-eulogistic di-

gressions, the author has succeeded in his intentions to do justice for the first time to this Hero of May. He does it, fortunately, by sticking to facts gleaned from the documents. The result is a well-written, well-documented, and altogether original and responsible biography of a *prócer* who has heretofore been ignored and even unjustly condemned.

The book denies Ignacio Núñez's contention that Saavedra and Viamonte had their differences, and in general refutes skillfully the bad impression of Viamonte left by Núñez. In this regard much space is consumed with a detailed explanation of the many hatreds, jealousies, and conspiracies among the early leaders of Argentine independence, 1810-1812, at the moment of great import and always a good topic for polemics in Argentina. Viamonte's role in the fight against the British invasions takes on a different light, for he actually performed gallantly as *sargento mayor* and rendered his services not with the help of Martín de Alzaga as heretofore believed, but on his own. In this interpretation one has to believe López and not Mitre, since López used the same documents the author uses and Mitre never saw them.

Among other interesting conclusions reached in this excellent work are the following: Viamonte and not Pueyrredón commanded the forces which retreated south after their defeat at Desaguadero and the blame for the defeat should lie on the shoulders of Castelli and Balcarce and not on those of Viamonte; in 1812, throughout the trial of Desaguadero, it is clearly shown that the Buenos Aires government considered it a crime to attack the principle of loyalty to Ferdinand VII; the disaster of Viamonte's campaign against Artigas and Sante Fe should not be blamed against him for he failed to receive the aid promised him by Buenos Aires; until the first government of Rosas the two men cultivated a friendship based on mutual interests (both men being *estancieros* and federalists), Rosas' support of Viamonte's promotion in the army, and cooperative opposition against Lavalle's coup d'état, but after that relations quickly cooled and became hostile; Viamonte saved Rivadavia's life in 1834 on humane grounds because Viamonte was incapable of political intrigues; Viamonte saw the necessity of a constitution and often said so; Viamonte's excellent work in Entre Ríos, until now unknown, was interrupted by the circumstantial negligence and ineptitude of Buenos Aires in spite of Viamonte, and the people of Entre Ríos should remember him with gratitude; Viamonte's term of office as governor of Buenos Aires saw several outstanding reforms introduced, like the creation of the Registro Civil, his insistence on de-

fending human rights, and his defense of Argentine sovereignty against papal pretensions.

But let the author himself sum up the contributions of this little known Argentine leader:

Guerrero contra los indios, Portugal, Inglaterra, España y la anarquía, patricio cofundador del estado argentino, consejero de diversos gobiernos inúmeras veces, gobernador de Entre Ríos en una oportunidad y tres de Buenos Aires si contamos su primera substitución, no hemos soslayado otras de las facetas que integraba su completa personalidad. Parlamentario, se condujo con sobriedad y talento. Economista, tuvo la virtud de propugnar, desde el llano, medidas antiinflacionistas que concretó en el poder, sin vacilaciones. Jurista, defendió dos veces, con alegatos magistrales, derechos en riesgo de conculcarse. Institucionalista, estructuró la relación armónica de los poderes y las provincias. De ideas definidas y coherentes, mantuvo una posición doctrinaria y moderada que lo caracteriza como inteligencia equilibrada y lúcida. Fué antimilitarista y anticlericalista antes de que aparecieran el militarismo y el clericalismo. Aunque esto pueda parecer una paradoja, es incuestionable, pues advirtió los peligros de la intervención militar en la política con su decreto del 31 de octubre de 1829, y se opuso a las pretensiones papales, *de tipo clerical y no religioso*. Estas fuerzas no existieron como peligro real y organizado sino hasta bien pasada la segunda parte del siglo XIX; el militarismo, para ser más precisos, recién a comienzos del presente. Viamonte, adelantándose a la época, como en tantos otros problemas, detuvo esos avances imprudentes.

An extensive appendix of formerly unpublished documents, a valuable bibliography on the period, and an index of names make this work even more valuable to the historical investigator.

University of Colorado

Fritz L. Hoffmann

*Estudios históricos.* By Pío Jaramillo Alvarado. Quito, 1960. Casa de Cultura Ecuatoriana. Pp. 499. Paper. \$ 30.

This fine collection of essays by a reputable native scholar, for the most part previously published, covers many facets of the history of modern Ecuador. If there is an underlying theme, it is the constitutional development of the country. But other topics are dealt with, including the touchy boundary disputes with Colombia and Peru, regarding which considerable evidence is marshalled.

That the author has profound faith in liberalism is reflected on nearly every page. Candidly, he notes that the twin enemies of