

BOOK REVIEWS

GENERAL

Handbook of Latin American Studies: No. 23. Edited by NATHAN A. HAVERSTOCK and EARL J. PARISEAU. Gainesville, 1961. University of Florida Press. Prepared in the Hispanic Foundation in the Library of Congress. Indices. Pp. xiv, 461. \$15.00.

The new volume of this bibliographic yearbook follows the arrangements used for its predecessors. Divided into sections on anthropology, art, economics, education, geography, government and international relations (now merged), history, labor and social welfare, language, law, literature, music, philosophy, and sociology, the *Handbook* lists about 3800 entries selected from more than 35,000 available items, among them those appearing in 550 periodicals. The selection is made following practices this time stated in the editor's note (p. xi), taking into consideration, among other factors, the length of the item, the need of balancing each section, and, in matters politic, aiming at the best means of conveying understanding.

These practices have shown their merits in the product. Items, well selected and arranged, include not only books but also articles in periodicals, both in various languages and from various countries. The only exception is the section on law where the selection is limited to important books; additional data will have to be gathered from the *Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals* (1960-), or from legal bibliographies available in book form, domestic and foreign. Annotations are meaty, avoiding clichés by offering concise summaries accompanied by critical evaluations. Indices by subject and author are carefully compiled and supplemented by a list of periodicals by title with abbreviation and classification added.

A few critical remarks from a purely bibliographic standpoint might be in order. First, it may be doubtful that the placing of abbreviations of periodicals at the end of each section has in fact "proven helpful" (p. xiii). Second, the system of abbreviations adopted for periodicals has, as admitted, serious "limitations and imperfections" (p. xiii). If, for example, the *American Anthropologist* is to be found under CBAAA/A, or *The Americas* suspected under AAFM/TAM, then there must be a better way to do it, maybe by looking for less cabalistic signs. One such method would be to abbreviate titles by using their initials and adding a number under which titles would be listed under the same initials. Using this method,

American Anthropologist would become A 11, and *The Americas* simply A 18, with the publishing institutions added in the same index.

All such suggestions are, of course, debatable. But as to the *Handbook*, there can be no doubt that the group of competent volunteers directed by the efficient editorial staff have again produced an outstanding bibliographic work unparalleled in the field of Latin American Studies.

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Sudamérica. Biografía de un continente. By ERNST SAMHABER. Translated by RAMÓN DE LA SERNA. Buenos Aires, 1961. Editorial Sudamericana. Illustrations. Pp. 641.

This book was first published in Germany in 1946 under the title *Südamerika* but apparently was not reviewed in the *HAHR*. But someone interested in Ernst Samhaber, an erudite journalist, should consult Dr. Fritz Hoffmann's penetrating reviews (*HAHR*, XXXV, 549) of two other Samhaber books dealing with Latin America, published in 1954 and 1955. Dr. Hoffmann calls the Samhaber books "thought-provoking."

This excellent translation is of an earlier Samhaber book, a history of Latin America in which each chapter sketches a regional topic, and all chapters are arranged chronologically. The book is divided into twelve sections: "El Descubrimiento," "La Conquista," "Construcción," "Espejismo," "Desenvolvimiento," "Ataques desde el Exterior," "Fronteras," "Reformas," "La Independencia," "El Nuevo Estado," "La Nueva Economía," and "Nuevos Problemas." For example, in section I ("Descubrimiento") there are three chapters: "Golfo de Paria, 1498—arribaje"; "Panamá, 1513—el Istmo atravesado"; "Estrecho de Magallanes, 1520—circumnavegación." The last section ("Nuevos Problemas") has also three chapters: "Panamá, 1914—el despertar de la costa occidental"; "São Paulo, 1924—el núcleo vital brasileño; Arica, 1929—expansión económica norteamericana."

Consequently the book goes from 1498 to 1929 and therefore lacks the earlier and later data quite important to Latin American history. This chronological spotlight description is interesting and useful for those who already know some Latin American history but it is of doubtful use for nonexperts. Some of Samhaber's interpretations might be questioned by specialists but in general the author has an excellent knowledge of Latin America and its history. The style and organization are excellent. The lack of notes and bibliography