

mended to beginning students of Mexican agriculture, but the more sophisticated reader will use it only as a stepping stone to further studies, the references to which he will have to look for elsewhere. For the student of Mexico's land reform, *Política agrícola* is obligatory reading.

Agency for International Development  
Bogotá, Colombia

ERNEST FEDER

*Incidents of Travel in Yucatan.* 2 Vols. By JOHN LLOYD STEPHENS. Edited and introduction by VICTOR WOLFGANG VON HAGEN. Norman, Oklahoma, 1962. University of Oklahoma Press. Illustrations. Appendix. Index. Pp. xxxiv, 315, xix, 327. \$15.00.

Among the ruins of the Ancient World, a New Jersey-born lawyer discovered a genuine interest and ability in archeology and in writing. It was then that John Lloyd Stephens decided to record his impressions in a series of two-volume sets: first, in 1838, he published *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land*; in the following year—and using the first four words of the previous title which had been so successful—there appeared a set on Greece, Turkey, Russia, and Poland. Hailed as the great American traveler, Stephens' books had a remarkable sale; in three years abroad he had made twenty-five thousand dollars. While in London, moreover, he met his future companion Frederick Catherwood, an English painter and architect who had also traveled extensively in the Middle East. The two partners left New York for Central America in October, 1839, determined to explore more ancient sites. In addition, Stephens had accepted a diplomatic assignment, namely, to renew the United States' treaty with the Central American Republic. But civil war frustrated his objective; and thus Stephens was able to devote full time to the exploration of ruins in Middle America, especially those at Copán (Honduras), Palenque (Chiapas), and Uxmal (Yucatán). Those buildings, he noted, were the work of one and the same people, the Mayas, and they had no connection with civilizations of the Old World—a novel conclusion for the times. Unable to complete their work in Yucatán because of Catherwood's illness, the explorers returned to the United States. In 1841, Stephens published a third set of "Incidents," dealing with his recent findings. By October of that year, the travelers were on their way back to Yucatán accompanied by Samuel Cabot, a young Bostonian doctor. During the next ten months, the trio explored no less than forty-four Mayan locations to the south and east of Mérida and along the Atlantic coast and islands of Yucatán—the subject of the two volumes under review.

This fourth set of "Incidents" is a veritable gold mine for the archaeologist since it contains numerous plates, charts, documents, reports, and descriptions of Mayan ruins. According to the editor, who hails the conclusions in this study as the "Magna Charta of American archaeology" (p. xx), the formation is exceptionally accurate and has been borne out by subsequent research. Unfortunately, a fire in 1844 destroyed the relics which had been brought back to the United States.

For its literary qualities as well as the facts it provides about Yucatán's society, this work should interest the historian and the intelligent lay reader. The author's style is delightful, realistic, and intimate—so much so that the reader finds himself sharing the experiences vicariously. He can smell the body odors and smoke in the gambling halls; he feels the mosquitoes swarming down upon him in the damp apartments of Uxmal, as well as the bites of those ubiquitous *garrapatas*; and he waits breathlessly as Stephens wriggles and scrapes his way through narrow holes in search of Mayan secrets. There are pleasant episodes as well; for example, Dr. Cabot's operations on cross-eyed Yucatecans; Stephens' embarrassed remarks about the *compañeras* of priests; and the Indians' fascination at watching Cabot shoot down birds in mid-air. Incidentally, ornithologists should enjoy the description of birds in the appendix.

The life and customs of *yucatecos* are everywhere present in these volumes—the bullfighting, *paseos*, and festivities at Mérida, the capital, are contrasted with those of the interior *ranchos*, or Indian settlements. The plight and debasement of the Indians are sketched with feeling—their drunken orgies, burial practices, and their docility. Perturbed by the changes wrought in them since Mayan days, Stephens tried to explain their degradation as the result of Spain's deliberate policy to eradicate all vestiges of the indigenous past. In these pages, moreover, there are ominous harbingers of the 1844 holocaust: the failure of the corn crop, the hunger and unemployment of the Indians, and their availability for warfare and politics. At this time, Yucatán was in a state of *de facto* secession from Mexico. But a crisis was developing as Stephens and associates prepared for their return to the United States. Santa Anna had given the Yucatecan government an ultimatum to rejoin Mexico.

The editor has done an excellent job, limiting himself to modernizing the spelling of some words and to writing explanatory footnotes. And his introductory article is exceptionally well-written and conceived. The University of Oklahoma Press, moreover, deserves congratulations for this handsome study—in Janson typeface—which

is number thirty-seven in its American Exploration and Travel Series. All libraries should have this set on their shelves.

University of Arizona

MARIO RODRÍGUEZ

*Historiografía de Cuba.* By JOSÉ MANUEL PÉREZ CABRERA. México, 1962. Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia. Comisión de Historia. Index. Pp. 394. Paper

La serie Historiografía, de la Comisión de Historia del Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, con sede en México, ha publicado hasta la fecha los estudios correspondientes a Haití, British West Indies, Ecuador, Brasil (siglo XVI), Paraguay, Brasil (siglo XVII) y Cuba, el séptimo tomo, correspondiéndole este último al historiador cubano, José Manuel Pérez Cabrera. Dentro de las Publicaciones de la Comisión, le corresponde el No. 106; así como el 262, de la serie general de Publicaciones del Instituto.

La obra está dividida en cuatro Libros: 1, Antecedentes, siglos XV a XVIII, subdividido en dos capítulos, La crónica de Indias y Libros de viajes e ilustración; 2, Los orígenes vernaculares, con cuatro capítulos, La historia, floración tardía de nuestra literatura colonial, Alusiones tradicionales y primeros ensayos, De Morell a Urrutia e Historia y crítica; 3, Primeras manifestaciones del siglo XIX, con un solo capítulo, De 1801 a 1841; y 4, Apogeo de la historia en la época colonial, con siete capítulos, Consideraciones generales, Los clásicos de la historia de Cuba, Historia y política, Historia y erudición, Historia y crítica, Historia local y Biografía. Las referencias bibliográficas se agrupan por epígrafes o tópicos, al final de todos y cada uno de los capítulos, agregándose a las mismas opiniones, noticias y comentarios, que no aparecen en el cuerpo de la obra. Al final del trabajo, aparece un Índice alfabético, que abarca todo su contenido. En este índice hemos notado que solamente se incluyen los nombres citados en el texto, excluyéndose los que aparecen en las secciones bibliográficas al final de cada capítulo: ejemplo, Vérez de Peraza, Elena, aparece en al Índice alfabético con la referencia a la página 5, y no se incluye en dicho Índice su mención en la página 29.

Desde la publicación de la *Biblioteca histórica cubana*, por Carlos M. Trelles, tres tomos, Matanzas—Habana, 1922-26, hacía falta un estudio como el presente, para reordenar y valorizar su extenso contenido. No compartimos la opinión de nuestro buen amigo Pérez Cabrera, cuando dice que para evitar "el tratamiento siempre enojoso de los autores que aun viven, hemos conducido nuestro indagación hasta 1898, y nada más;" pues hubiéramos preferido que tuviera