

ported shot in the Franco zone, but actually was only imprisoned there, and now lives peaceably in New York City. Knox College

GABRIEL JACKSON

COLONIAL PERIOD

Balboa. By ROBERT FARRINGTON. New York, 1963. Avon Book Division. The Hearst Corporation. Pp. 192. Paper. \$.50.

Robert Farrington has made a judicious selection of historical personages and events in writing this epic novel. Reflecting an understanding of early Spanish exploration and conquest in the Americas, he portrays the legendary exploits of one of Spain's most renowned conquistadores, the expedition of Vasco Núñez de Balboa to the South Sea. By this selection Farrington was not only blessed with a dauntless and high type adelantado as his main character, but also with a famous group of followers, such as Francisco Pizarro, as his secondary personages.

Farrington's *Balboa*, which must be evaluated as a novel and not as a scholarly monograph, possesses historical value, particularly for the non-academic historian. Although the author has necessarily relied on an imaginative dialogue, the work graphically reflects an understanding of the Spanish and of the period. The reader is thus vividly impressed with the cruelty, intolerance, and materialism of the conquistadores but simultaneously becomes aware of their deep faith, their recognition of noble Indian traits, and their ability to remain civilized in savage environment. Undoubtedly, the depiction of the role of the dog in the conquest and the oversympathetic characterization of Vasco Núñez are most impressive in this work.

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Pirates, Indians and Spaniards, Father Escobedo's "La Florida." Edited by JAMES W. COVINGTON. Translated by A. F. FALCONES. Foreword by CHAR-

LES W. ARNADE. St. Petersburg, Florida, 1963. Great Outdoors Publishing Company. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Pp. xvi, 174.

For over three centuries Father Escobedo's enormous (over 21,000 lines) poem has awaited publication. Important to the historian, for whom it is a basic source, and to the litterateur—for Escobedo was not a great poet, yet not a poor one either—it deserved publication in the original language. It is to be regretted that this first printed version should be an incomplete, careless, and inaccurate translation. Little better could be expected from the remarkable procedure described by the editor: two ladies (of unstated qualifications) making a hand copy of the manuscript in Madrid, "translating many of the words from 'old' Spanish into the language of the Twentieth Century"; then, a translation made in Tampa by an accountant-notary, "a native of Santander, Spain"; then, a 'checking' by "a native of Cuba who speaks Spanish and English equally well"; and, finally, editing by an American historian who apparently knows little Spanish. (Nowhere is there indication that the translator saw either the manuscript or a photocopy of it.)

This volume has many defects: mistranslation; bad English; inaccurate reference to the original manuscript; frequent misprints; some errors in fact; almost unbelievably bad Spanish orthography.

Mistranslations: Checking casually the first hundred pages of Professor Covington's book with photocopies of the original, this reviewer found some thirty cases. Two examples must suffice: "with two young men by his side" (p. 87); in the manuscript, "con dos moças a los lados" (240r) these being the *daughters* of a shipwrecked Spaniard, as is fully explained in the text. And page 33: "He crossed the sea in such a relaxed manner it seemed as if he were on a mill stone turned by horsepower. Throughout the entire trip . . . he cooked the meals for everyone." This involves a mistranslation of *atahona*. The real meaning is: "He was

as relaxed on the voyage as if he were at home in a food shop, cooking all our meals for us" (159r).

Bad English: "the worse of all" (45); "the hostiles" (41, n. 54); "I insisted on working the pumps and to forget the music" (49); "Their shouts was . . ." (75); "Everyone must pay for their crimes" (57).

Inaccurate reference: The numbers inserted to indicate the pages of the manuscript are frequently lacking; others are misplaced. Some twenty errors or omissions appeared in the first 95 pages. Also, the arrangement of the original in *partes* and *cantos* is difficult to perceive in the Covington-Falcones version.

Errors of fact: It is stated that Escobedo "claims he came with the group" (i.e., the Silva expedition to Guale in 1595). This section is one of the few in the poem in which Escobedo does *not* claim personal knowledge of what he tells. Again: Note 47 on page 40 correctly states that "no account lists Escobedo as . . . in the 1595 group leaving Sanlúcar (sic)." But the reference in the text is to a 1587 expedition.

Spanish orthography: *Cartagena* consistently; also *Miguél*, *Baracósa*; but *Sanlúcar* always, unaccented. Also *Matánzas*; *Juan* and *Juán*; *Hernan Cortéz*; *Nuestra Señora de la Asuncion*; *senor*; *Díos* and *Dios*; etc., etc. It almost seems that the incorrect forms outnumber the correct.

The English exemplifies 'translation English' in some of its least attractive aspects.

Professor Covington's notes, drawn from a variety of sources, provide valuable commentary. If they could be used in connection with a scholarly edition of the original text, they would be invaluable. Professor Arnade's foreword is excellent, summarizing concisely our knowledge of Escobedo and his poem. This is really the best part of the volume.

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Carlos, The King Who Would Not Die.

By JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES. Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963. Prentice-

Hall, Inc. Notes. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 272. \$4.95.

This is a hereditary "who-dunnit." The victim is Charles II, ill-fated biological specimen of Hapsburg inbreeding, who served as the last feeble representative of that dynasty and whose death in 1700 at the age of thirty-nine plunged Europe into the conflict known as the War of the Spanish Succession.

Newspaperman and novelist John Langdon-Davies brings a facile pen to his examination of Spanish history during Charles II's reign, although the result is more like a good mystery story than serious history. The leading characters are reproduced in bold bigger-than-life strokes of the brush. There is poor Juana la Loca, the mad queen, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, whose demented condition, reasons Mr. Langdon-Davies, was compounded by cross breeding; and inter-marriage until Carlos II was the product of two family trees in which Juana la Loca appeared eight times—seven of the eight great-grandparents of Carlos II descended from the mad queen!

Carlos was not a particularly bright child: "defective in speech and subject to fits; teeth which would not meet to masticate the immense burdens that unnatural gluttony threw against them; chronic indigestion; horrible gout . . . all . . . worked together to produce a pathological inability to make up his mind and a tendency to religious gloom which militated against clear political thinking."

Although Charles is the subject of the book, his relations are not neglected. There is his errant father, Philip IV, and Don Juan de Austria, Philip's bastard son; strong-willed Mariana of Austria, the poor king's mother; Marie Louise, Carlos' first wife, said to be a French spy for Louis XIV; and the second wife, María Ana of Neuburg. Through the book there runs a thread of witchcraft, superstition, poison, and the Devil. So fascinated is the author with his material that he spends an entire chapter on the 1680 *auto-de-fé* in Madrid in tones little removed from the Black Legend of yore.