

of their volume. The authors have written an interesting book, but it has no more weight than a morning newspaper. Far from being "a brilliant reconstruction of one of the central events of our time," as the flyleaf proclaims, this is but an entertaining pedestrian account.

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*Historia diplomática de Colombia, 1810-1934.* By RAIMUNDO RIVAS. Bogotá, 1961. Imprenta Nacional de Colombia. Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores. Bibliography. Indices. Pp. 812. Paper.

A century and a quarter of Colombia's diplomatic history, from the inception of the independence period (1810) to 1934, forms the substance of this work. Nineteen chapters of narrative, chronologically arranged, then topically by nation, and a concluding essay take the reader, in a fairly succinct fashion, through the maze of boundary disputes, difficulties with the United States and the major European powers, and, by 1934, the peaceful settlement of the bulk of Colombia's major historic diplomatic problems. Space does not permit a detailed description of the wide range of topics, incidents, claims, and counter-claims which are covered in this book.

Although possessing one of the richest foreign ministry archives in the Americas, Colombia has not seen fit to permit any scholars, save a very few nationals and a handful of foreigners, access to it. Thus, any book drawn from sources in the Archivo de Relaciones Exteriores is more than welcome. In this case, it is doubly so, since Raimundo Rivas (1889-1946) not only spent much of three decades (1913-1946) in the archives but, thanks to his earlier *Relaciones internacionales entre Colombia y los Estados Unidos. 1810-1850* (Bogotá, 1915) and his edition of *Escritos de don Pedro Fernández Madrid. Tomo I* (Bogotá, 1932), had clearly established himself as Colombia's leading diplomatic historian. Yet, despite Rivas' eminence as a student in

this field, and despite his several important diplomatic missions for Colombia, the book, which he had completed in 1935, was not to see publication for a quarter of a century, again illustrating the timorousness of Colombian officialdom regarding its diplomatic archives.

In the main, these apprehensions are without basis. As Rivas' book so clearly shows, Colombian diplomacy from 1810 to 1934 was based on policies of national self-interest and selfless idealism, with the latter predominating. Colombia's consistent adherence to the principle of peaceful arbitration of disputes and to the grand Bolivarian design of an Inter-American system of cooperation are eloquent testimony to the lasting influence of the statesmanship of Pedro Gual (1783-1862), Pedro Fernández Madrid (1817-1875), and Manuel Ancizar (1812-1882).

Students of intra-Latin American relations, as well as those concerned with the relations of the United States and Colombia, will profit much from this book. Colombianists can hardly afford to ignore it. For those interested in the internal history of Colombia, Rivas renders an important service. He clearly demonstrates the basically negative attitudes—intrinsically isolationist—of the legislative power and does much to strengthen the impression that very few executives (save Santander, Mosquera, and Rafael Núñez) really wielded much influence over Colombian foreign policy but, rather, followed the lead of their foreign ministers.

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*Cuatro años de democracia.* By ISAÍAS MEDINA ANGARITA. Prologue by ARTURO USLAR PIETRI. Caracas, 1963. Pensamiento Vivo, C. A. Pp. 176. Paper.

One of the major points of controversy in recent Venezuelan political history is the October, 1945, Revolution and the events surrounding it. The 1963 presidential campaign revived the controversy, and it has been extended by the posthumous publication of this auto-