

topics," and he justifies his inclusion of them as part of the text on the grounds that "tables are not read" and that "texts are, or may be." I, for one, cannot agree that the author is doing the reader a service by consistently confining statistical data to the text. By the time the reader reaches the chapter on Costa Rica and comes to the fifth paragraph on the number of farm animals and barnyard fowl in a country, according to the latest census, his eagerness for such information is somewhat dulled. Fortunately, at the end of the Costa Rica paragraph, a bit of comic relief is provided by the statement that: "There were also 16,000 swarms of bees."

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José del Valle of Central America. By LOUIS E. BUMGARTNER. Durham, 1963. Duke University Press. Notes. Tables. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 302. \$8.75.

Like many *provincianos* before him, José Cecilio del Valle from Choluteca came to Guatemala City in the 1790s to enroll at the Universidad de San Carlos, the cultural hearth of the Captaincy-General of Guatemala. Exposed to the brilliant teaching of Father José Antonio Goicoechea and other lights of that day, the young Honduran steeped himself in the thought of the Enlightenment, developed a social conscience with regard to the Indian, and revealed a special talent for "political economy." Despite his scholarly proclivities, he decided in favor of the legal profession because of its remuneration and the opportunity it provided for a career in colonial administration. As a *criollo*, of course, his future was limited; but, surprisingly, his advance was rapid and steady. He even dared to hope that some day he might wear the *oidor's* toga. By pursuing a discreet and consistent course of loyalty to Spanish authority and by winning the confidence of two captain-generals including the controversial José Bustamante, who took over in 1811, Valle furthered his interests. In the process he incurred the enmity of the "family" at the capital who opposed him at every turn and maligned him for his unpopular stand against the Constitution of 1812 and its home-rule provisions. In 1818, when a new captain-general relieved Bustamante, the "sons of Guatemala" succeeded in undermining their provincial rival who despaired of his future in "that Ethiopia."

His political star regained its ascendancy in 1820 when news reached the captaincy-general of Colonel Riego's revolt and the restoration of the Cádiz constitution. Now, turning his back on the authoritarian past, Valle espoused constitutional reforms within the

Empire and managed to win the elections for mayor of Guatemala City. By September 15, 1821, he was ready to break with the mother country and drew up the Declaration of Independence. Subsequently, he helped bring about Central America's annexation to Mexico and served as the representative of his native province in the legislature of Agustín de Iturbide's government. Always a realist in politics, when Iturbide's power began to crumble, Valle returned to Guatemala City; and, in October, 1823, he joined the triumvirate which headed the provisional government of Central America.

As a member of the executive branch, Valle displayed a realistic grasp of the problems besetting the establishment of a republican régime and was able to initiate enlightened reforms which would strengthen the new nation. Appreciating the need for a centralized financial system, he made a dramatic appeal to the National Constituent Assembly on this subject. But logic and reason were not enough to stem the tide of states rights sentiment and the provincianos' distrust of Guatemala City interests which might capture control of a unitary government. A compromise resulted. In the presidential elections which followed the acceptance of the constitution the popular Valle received the most votes, only to have the victory nullified in Congress by his enemies. Thoroughly disgusted, he withdrew from public life and stayed in Guatemala during the Civil War of 1826-1829 as a passive spectator, busying himself with his books, correspondence, and business. When the Liberals emerged victorious, he returned to the political arena and in 1834 was elected to the presidency. This time death robbed him of the honor.

This commendable and searching study of José del Valle and his times draws heavily from unpublished family papers and documents from Guatemalan archives. It is without question a definitive work on Valle's pre-Independence career; Professor Bumgartner has mastered and explained the political events of those years with the depth and perception of the expert. Moreover, he deserves congratulations for his lively style, sense of humor, and objectivity. When it was necessary to destroy the myth, he did so with understanding and taste.

My only reservation concerns his decision to compress the last decade of Valle's career into two short chapters and several lines in the conclusion. He was able to do this by avoiding a detailed presentation of the constitutional question in 1824 on the ground that Valle had only a limited role in those deliberations—a valid point, to be sure. In so doing, moreover, the author side-stepped the heated argument concerning the nature of the government which was created by the Constitution of November 22, 1824: Was it a "Confederation"

or a "Federation"? By minimizing the discussion—and it should be noted that up to that point the author had skillfully balanced the treatment of the "man" and "his times"—Professor Bumgartner unwittingly sided with the states rights school, for he leaves us with the impression that Valle was virtually alone in his centralized or nationalistic views about government. This, in turn, exposes him to the charge of ignoring the literature and debates on constitutional reforms of the early 1830s while Valle was still alive. Nor does the decision in question do justice to the "patriots" and to the explanation of Valle's popularity with them. After all, they were alumni of the same school, almost the same class; and they had learned from the same font. Significantly, it was José Francisco Barrundia who paid a glowing tribute to Valle and mourned his loss to Central America. In short, this study would have been impregnable if chapters eleven and twelve had matched the depth of the earlier ones. In any case, let there be no misunderstanding: this is a first-rate piece of scholarship which sets excellent stylistic standards for the profession.

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Puerto Rico, Freedom and Power in the Caribbean. By GORDON K. LEWIS. New York, 1963. Monthly Review Press. Notes. Index. Pp. 626. \$10.00.

Doña Inés Mendoza de Muñoz has been effusive in her praise of this book; her husband the Governor has been understandably less enthusiastic. All sectors of island political life have reacted to this controversial analysis of Puerto Rican life and politics. Few, even the unconditional *independentistas*, would find themselves in complete agreement with the author. Others, like the unappreciative colleague to whom the volume is dedicated, have denounced the author in terms verging on slander.

Dr. Gordon Lewis's objectives are: (1) to examine extensively the general experience of Puerto Rican life and thought; (2) to place this experience within the larger framework of the Pan-Caribbean world; (3) to expose the continued United States domination of the neo-colonial society of Puerto Rico; and (4) to view Puerto Rico as one possible prototype of a new society being formed as a result of the struggle between the developed and underdeveloped communities of the world. With characteristic candor the author in his introductory chapter establishes the independence of Puerto Rico and a socialized economy as the two guide posts which serve to orient his thought throughout the book.