

The Papaloapan Project—Agricultural Development in the Mexican Tropics.

By THOMAS T. POLEMAN. Stanford, Calif., 1964. Stanford University Press. Maps. Tables. Appendix. Index. Pp. 167. \$4.50.

Reforma agraria, colonization, rural re-settlement, and *proyectismo*, are representative of the terms increasingly noted in the mounting volume of studies relating to the economics of the Latin American republics. Though their meaning is generally understood, their practical application has been given limited attention due to a scarcity of field research reports of specific land reclamation projects. Dr. Poleman's capable and well-written study of such a project in Mexico is therefore of immediate significance and use to the Latin Americanist, be he a specialist in history, agriculture, sociology, or geography.

The Papaloapan Project, an outgrowth of the author's doctoral dissertation, is a thoroughly documented and convincing analysis of the first major attempt by a Latin American government to solve the pressing land/man relationship problem through a large-scale combined reclamation, agriculture, and colonization effort. It relates to the Mexican government's development plan in the Papaloapan basin in the Mexican tropics dating from 1947. Basing himself on both official published sources and field investigation, Dr. Poleman traces the characteristics, failures, and successes of the program, and in a particularly notable concluding section, sums up a number of "guideposts for the future" relating to the prospects for converting heretofore unexploited hot tropical zones into new areas of agricultural development.

Unencumbered by exhausting verbiage or lengthy technical discussions, this work serves as a succinct and excellent supplement to George McCutcheon McBride's basic survey of Mexico's land systems. In complimenting Stanford University's Food Research Institute for its timely publication, the hope must also be expressed that this study will be included among the required

source materials available to Alliance for Progress technicians.

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Viva Mexico! By CHARLES MACOMB FLANDRAU. Urbana, Illinois, 1964. University of Illinois Press. Index. Pp. 302. Paper. \$1.95.

The place of travel literature in Mexican historiography remains, for the most part, an unexplored subject. In purely quantitative terms, this literature is rich. Financial incentives, ready accessibility, positive encouragement from various governments, special assignments, and perhaps even a certain alluring mystique have combined to make Mexico somewhat of a Mecca for the foreign traveler. Not a few of these travelers have recorded their impressions. The large majority of these accounts, however, are noteworthy only for gullibility and naiveté of authors who, after having spent several hurried weeks covering as much of the country as physically possible, left their insight to posterity. Among the better works three stand out as being particularly valuable: Alexander von Humboldt's *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, written at the end of the colonial period (1808); Madame Calderón de la Barca's *Life in Mexico*, written during the fourth decade of the nineteenth century; and the work presently under consideration, Charles Macomb Flandrau's *Viva Mexico!*, written during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Charles Flandrau (1871-1938) was born in Minnesota, traveled in Europe with his family during his youth, and was graduated from Harvard in 1895. His only brother, William Blair McClure Flandrau, owned a coffee plantation in eastern Mexico and between 1903 and 1908 the author spent much of his time with his brother in the Mexican states of Veracruz and Puebla. *Viva Mexico!* is the product of repeated residence in a restricted area of rural Mexico during the latter stages of the Díaz dictatorship.