

*cianos* faltering on the charge. Half-buried corpses sticking out of stones, a stethoscope used as a mine detector, a baby girl suddenly born in the dark at a moment when subterranean mines explode, hand-to-hand fighting, a tank with hooting klaxon, soldiers stumbling through the rubble to rifle pit and parapet—what marvelous material for the historian, or for what we once thought of as Hollywood.

While “Reading Notes” are collected at the back of the book, there is no point-by-point documentation in the usual sense of the term. Almost equally regrettable is the absence of an index. On p. 99, it is stated: “The Republican mine was the brain child of a woman, Margarita Nelken. . . . When the Alcázar failed to be starved into surrender, she wired twenty-five Asturian miners: I NEED YOU. WE MUST BLOW UP THE ALCÁZAR.” Your reviewer quoted this passage to Señora Nelken, who replied: “I wish to answer your attentive lines referring to my SUPPOSED letter to some Asturian miners, in order that they use dynamite to blow up the Alcázar of Toledo, which does not have ANY MARK of truth. . . . I NEVER sent any such demand to the Asturian miners. . . .” Respecting so central a matter, it would seem that the author should have consulted and cited informed people on *both* sides even if he chose to relegate all versions except one to footnote or “Reading Note” status.

University of Kentucky

HOLMAN HAMILTON

#### COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

*La idea colonial de Ponce de León. Un ensayo de interpretación.* By MANUEL BALLESTEROS GAIBROIS. San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1960. Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña. Bibliography. Pp. 292.

Professor Ballesteros Gaibrois has written this thoroughly interesting and very thoughtful study of Juan Ponce de León in order to establish the motivations and the responses of the Spanish conquistadors to their experience in the New World. He has chosen Ponce de León thinking him typical of the men who came to settle the region. Ponce, as a loyal servant to his king, reflected the hopes and aspirations of his times. Living in a society that approved of success, he was ambitious and sought glory. He also was a product of an age in which the mysterious and the exotic appealed to those facing a dull and dreary daily existence, so that the challenge of adventure led him, as it did many other Castilians, to participate in the settling of the New World.

The author does not present a biography of the man, but illus-

trates through Ponce's actions his own contention that the Castilians were faithful to king and country, and that they were adherents to the principles of law as they understood it. The author also shows them willing to bring their civilization to an alien territory, to plant it, and permit it to flourish. This was Ponce's contribution to Puerto Rico—the establishment of his society and of his people in this new environment.

By analyzing Ponce's relationship with the crown, with the settlers and the Indians of Puerto Rico, and with his superiors in the Indies, Professor Ballesteros Gaibrois ably accomplishes his goals. However, Ponce was more than just another Castilian adventurer. He was a singular man, and this study merely confirms it.

University of Victoria,  
British Columbia

J. C. M. OGELSBY

*Solórzano y la política indiana.* By JAVIER MALAGÓN and JOSÉ M. OTS CAPDEQUÍ. México, 1965. Fondo de Cultura Económica. Index. Pp. 117.

This little book was prepared as a prologue of a new edition of Juan de Solórzano's famous work to be published by the Fondo de Cultura Económica of Mexico. But the authors, two distinguished students of the "derecho indiano," decided to bring it out separately, as the publication of the longer work seems to have been postponed. The first part of their book contains a biographical sketch of Solórzano, not very easy to write, as rather little is known about his life. Furthermore, what we know is not very exciting.

In the second part, the authors present the contents of *Política indiana*, on the whole following Solórzano's own disposition. This presentation is well balanced and knowledgeable but not overly analytical. Probably they left most of their critical comments for the footnotes of the forthcoming edition. In the present book the reader cannot even find a clear statement on the relationship between *Política indiana* (1648) and the earlier Latin version, *De indiarum iure* (I, 1629; II, 1639). In certain cases the evolution of Solórzano's thought may be followed even beyond the Latin version as shown by G. Lohmann Villena (in *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, VII, 1950, 255-277) with regard to the *mita minera*. The book concludes with a bibliography of Solórzano's works. It might have been supplemented with another bibliography listing studies of interest on *Política indiana*, as its footnotes are not exhaustive. The book reviewed here will certainly be of great use for quick reference as a summary of Solórzano's