

National Period, the Reform, the Díaz Era, and the Revolution. Clearly the number of individuals covered in the more recent eras is inadequate as compared to the earlier. It is easy and therefore unnecessary to point out individuals who were or who might have been omitted. No choice of 150 individuals could be completely acceptable to everyone.

Since these sketches are only one or two pages long, they will add little, if anything, to the knowledge of specialists. This book is helpful to have in any library much as any collection of important individuals might be. It is not, however, worth stretching a budget.

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The Modern Mexican Essay. Edited by JOSÉ LUIS MARTÍNEZ. Translated by H. W. HILBORN. Toronto, 1965. University of Toronto Press. Pp. 524. \$8.50.

This dense and scholarly selection, first published in Mexico in 1958 (*El ensayo mexicano moderno*), is expertly translated by Harry W. Hilborn of Queen's University. As José Luis Martínez states in his lucid introduction, there are many kinds of essays—he manages to distinguish ten—and the works which the translator excluded fall into those categories not directly pertinent to the objective of this anthology. Several common traits tie these essays together. Martínez believes that “they distinguish the Mexican character: sobriety, delicacy, a profound nationalistic instinct, measured gravity, a longing for universal understanding.” The book is a harvest of the Mexican “literature of ideas” that goes back to Justo Sierra, undisputed father of the modern essay in Mexico.

The Modern Mexican Essay has fulfilled the objectives of the translator, i.e., to present a Mexican outlook and to impress the English-speaking reader with the high quality of the essays chosen. On the other hand, even if the *leitmotif* may sound a bit repetitive,

the reader will find a great variety of ideas and points of view that will appeal not only to those who are interested in Mexican culture, but also to people who are interested in good non-fictional literature.

A Successful Failure. The Saga of Texas, 1519-1810. By ODIE B. FAULK. Austin, 1965. Steck-Vaughan Company. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 218. \$2.95.

The Revolutionary Decades. The Saga of Texas, 1810-1836. By DAVID M. VIGNESS. Austin, 1965. Steck-Vaughan Company. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 214. \$2.95.

The Saga of Texas, a six-volume series of which these two volumes are the first and second, is planned to appeal to the general public by providing, in everyday language and inexpensive but attractive format, the main facts of the history of this state, largely available earlier only in widely scattered articles, school texts, or scholarly tomes.

A Successful Failure covers the period in which Spanish explorers discovered and mapped the territory and Spain struggled to guard it against foreign aggression by establishing Spanish settlers. Although unsuccessful in colonization, Spain left her impress on both land and people through her language, architecture, and colorful customs. In spite of the tragedies and hardships recounted, daring adventure and romance lend interest to the tale.

The second volume is more factual, as much had to be compressed. The settlement of colonists from the United States; their increasing dissatisfaction with the Mexican government; the underlying fear, on its part, of encroachment by the United States; and the grim determination of the Anglo-Americans to resist force—all were factors which led to the independence of Texas. The story is skillfully and largely impartially told.

The writers are to be commended for their judicious selection of material,