

Yrigoyen. By FÉLIX LUNA. Buenos Aires, n.d. Editorial Desarrollo. Pp. 446. Paper. \$3.50.

According to the author, this is a "biography of the great Radical caudillo [Hipólito Yrigoyen] . . ." (p. 9). It would be somewhat more accurate to describe the book as a history of the early years of the Radical Civic Union written by an ardent *yrigoyenista*. As a biography of Yrigoyen the book has a number of faults. First of all, Yrigoyen's childhood is almost completely ignored, and only a few pages are devoted to the first thirty years of his life. (It might be added that these pages are devoted at least as much to Leandro Alem as to Yrigoyen—probably because of Luna's belief that during this period "Yrigoyen is only the nephew of Alem. . . . He lacks a life of his own" [p. 41]). More disturbing to the reviewer is the fact that analysis of the personality and character of Yrigoyen is exceedingly brief; for example, Krausism and its effects upon the Radical leader are dismissed in less than two pages.

Even if viewed as a history of the UCR the book is far from ideal. To begin with, it is considerably less than impartial. The author states quite frankly that "we do not pretend to be impartial. We could not be, because this is a book written with love and devotion" (p. 11). The bias is evident even in the first chapter where Luna criticizes virtually all politicians opposed by Alem and Yrigoyen (he is especially hard on Julio Roca), while eulogizing those whom they supported. As is perhaps to be expected, the Antipersonalist Radicals are subjected to the greatest degree of condemnation. At one point Luna says "antipersonalism was not a reaction. It was the offensive of the displaced to regain their positions" (pp. 312-313). He concludes that the antipersonalists were not really antipersonalist, but instead were anti-Yrigoyen—a point with which the reviewer is in full agreement—but he goes on to say that to be antipersonalist was to be *antipueblo*.

In spite of its bias the book does have some good sections, at least two of which deserve to be mentioned. One is the detailed description of the formative period of the UCR (1889-1912), which concentrates on the elections of 1892 and 1898, and the Radical revolts of 1890, 1893, and 1905. Another excellent passage is the author's examination of the intraparty dispute which led eventually to the formation of the antipersonalist UCR—this includes an excellent summary of the conflict within each of the provincial organizations of the UCR. Nevertheless, the book is disappointing; those familiar with the

earlier works of Félix Luna might well expect it to be the final word on the life and politics of Hipólito Yrigoyen. It is not.

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Alvear. By FÉLIX LUNA. Buenos Aires, 1958. Libros Argentinos. Pp. 332. Paper. \$2.50.

Marcelo Torcuato de Alvear (1868-1942) was an Argentine aristocrat who early joined the Radicals. For many years and even while president of the republic (1922-1928) his politics were a matter of *noblesse oblige*, and he often lived in France between political forays. Luna sheds no new light on those years. He treats them briefly so as to focus on Alvear's more serious activities in trying to lead the Radicals back to power after Justo José de Uruburu's coup of 1930. Alvear failed, says Luna, because he could never see national affairs other than superficially, and because neither he nor anyone else was able to draw the broken party back together again. The book has a modicum of research in it and reflects a good knowledge of blow-by-blow politics. Luna's postulates are probably sound: for example, that the Radicals constantly fell short during the 1930s and early 1940s because they made no meaningful appeal to the people but, instead, were concentrating on just the thing which the dictators could always thwart, a free access to the polls. The chief difficulty with this book is that it tends to see people in two dimensions, and political groupings without contexts or relationships. Thus for those of us who did not live in Argentina during the 1920s and 1930s this book has only limited value.

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Independence or Death! The Story of the Paraguayan War. By CHARLES J. KOLINSKI. Gainesville, 1965. University of Florida Press. Notes. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvi, 236. \$6.50.

The most disastrous of all Latin American wars has been the most neglected. True, Brazilian and Argentine historians have written valuable accounts of the Paraguayan War, and Uruguayan scholars have produced a few good studies. But no Paraguayan historian, with the possible exception of the expatriate Arturo Rebaudi, has yet seen fit to write a scholarly treatise of the conflict that all but annihilated his country. Historians in countries other than the four combatants in the War of the Triple Alliance also have failed to exploit this potentially rich field.