

BOOK NOTICES

Initialed notices were written by Vicente Cantarino, David M. Fletcher, Robert E. Quirk, James R. Scobie, Otis P. Starkey, and Thomas G. Powell, all of Indiana University.

Latin America. A Geographical Commentary. By IRMGARD POHL and JOSEPH ZEPF. Edited by KEMPTON E. WEBB. London, 1966. John Murray. Illustrations. Maps. Figures. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 315. 30s.

Fewer than three hundred pages of text and fifty-three well selected photographs tipped in on coated paper are little enough to describe one-fifth of the earth's land area; obviously this survey must be concise. The approach is also systematic, considering most countries first as to physical structure, climate, and vegetation and then by population and economic characteristics. The larger countries are also treated regionally. There are introductory chapters on South America, the Lands of the Andes, Central America and Mexico, and Islands of the Caribbean. A statistical summary terminates the book.

The style, in part to be credited to the unidentified translator from the German, varies from encyclopedic to very interesting. Some details—for example, on the howling habits of Amazonian monkeys—seem out of place in such a compact volume. On the other hand numerous quotations from travel books give excellent word pictures of the countryside and its peoples.

To sum up, this is a good book for the Latin American student lacking in geographic background; however, it will add little or nothing to the knowledge of the expert. It is apparently designed for a rapid survey, and its commentary contains few novel ideas.

O. P. S.

Los Subamericanos. By VÍCTOR ALBA. México, 1964. B. Costa-Amic, Editor. Notes. Pp. 324. Paper.

Víctor Alba's activities as a journalist and scholar place him in the tradition of the *pensador*—facile, fluent, more notable for eloquence than solidity. The present volume, a collection of eighteen essays (most of which have been published before), gives us once again his analysis of the Communist threat, the menace of "a new oligarchy of impatient technicians," the need for cooperation between labor unions and peasant communities, the proper role of the United States in fostering Latin American development, and the urgent necessity for creating "a continental conscience." Like most such gatherings of fugitives, the book is repetitious and poorly organized. Alba's style leans heavily on rhetorical questions in the manner of the Stalinists he detests, and, like them, he answers with lists: fifteen characteristics of the middle classes, four myths about Latin American economic growth, four tendencies of "negative nationalism." Despite frequent felicitous phrases, the book seems remote from reality and far too long.

Readers who have sampled the sizable literature dealing with contemporary Latin America will find nothing that is new and a great deal that is trite or outdated. The chapter on communism adds little but obscure rhetoric to Robert J. Alexander's survey of that topic. Alba's views on the middle class as the decisive force for social change have been expressed more forcefully, and with some positive evidence, by John J. Johnson and others. The author's economic ideas are secondhand and second-rate. The book has some symptomatic interest, however, as an example of the almost complete loss of support for *fidelismo* among Latin American liberals, and the consequent willingness to forget or forgive past American sins of omission or commission there. And the Latin Americans to whom these essays were primarily addressed may learn something from the author's discussion of the ignorance of "Marxists

by osmosis" or his view of dictatorship as "the historic punishment for the failure of democratic revolutionary movements."

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The Papers of Woodrow Wilson. Volume I: 1856-1880. Volume II: 1881-1884. Edited by ARTHUR S. LINK *et al.* Princeton, 1966, 1967. Princeton University Press. Notes. Indices. Pp. xxxii, 715; xviii, 680. \$15.00 each.

The recently published and highly controversial attempt of Sigmund Freud and William C. Bullitt to psychoanalyze Woodrow Wilson lends special interest to a new edition of his writings. The identities of the general editor and his staff, together with the impressive initial statement of goals and procedures, guarantee a series of volumes of the high standard being set by modern editions of the published writings of Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and other early Americans. Latin Americanists will not expect to find much if anything of value in the early volumes of the series, but by the time Link and his cohorts reach 1913, they should have polished their editorial techniques to a high finish. Even between volumes one and two an improvement in the subject entries of the index is noticeable.

D. M. P.

The Alliance for Progress. Key to Latin America's Development. By J. WARREN NYSTROM and NATHAN A. HAVERSTOCK. Princeton, 1966. D. Van Nostrand Company. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 126. Paper. \$1.45.

La Alianza para el Progreso: Esperanza y frustración. By HERNANDO AGUDELO VILLA. Bogotá, 1966. Ediciones Tercer Mundo. Pp. 81. Paper.

Anyone wishing quick insight into the problems facing the Alliance for Progress and the friction which it has helped to produce in hemispheric relations might well start with these two

pamphlets. All three authors have had direct experience in the field—the Americans as teachers, editors, or writers, the Colombian as a member of the Panel of Nine (the "Nine Wise Men") under the Alliance itself. Both books sketch the historical background of the Alliance and summarize its purposes and early activities in relatively straightforward manner. Both recognize that the Alliance has met with some success but has also fallen short of many of its original goals.

The principal differences between the books and their chief value to the reader lie in their explanation of the Alliance's failures and in the general atmosphere surrounding their judgments. Nystrom and Haverstock emphasize the need of experimentation in new problems of cooperation, the difficulty of reconciling rapid development with self help, and the vast problems of changing relatively static societies. Their general attitude is hopeful, discreet, a bit bland. To Agudelo Villa, however, the Alliance is "una revolución deformada" (p. 63) which has lost sight of its original goals. President Kennedy appears often in his pages, President Johnson almost never. In explaining the decline of the Alliance, Agudelo Villa gives most prominence to the insufficiency of American financial aid, the lack of truly multilateral direction, and the regrettable tendency of the United States to use financial aid as an instrument of policy. All three authors would probably agree that the Alliance has been basically pragmatic in nature, but their definitions of pragmatism would differ widely.

Probably neither book gives sufficient weight to Latin American shortcomings. While discoursing at some length on the population explosion and its effect on the Latin American standard of living, Agudelo Villa has nothing to say on any sort of birth control or planned parenthood. (Neither do the Americans.) Both books briefly recognize the obstacles posed in Latin America by reactionary privilege and corruption, but neither attempts any very penetrating analysis.

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