

His Excellency, the Ambassador. By ERICO VERISSIMO. Translated by LINTON LOMAS BARRETT and MARIE McDAVID BARRETT. New York, 1967. Macmillan Company. Pp. 439. \$6.95.

Gabriel Heliodoro Alvarado, ambassador from El Sacramento to the United States, is a fine figure of a man, both in and out of bed. Unfortunately he is also a cardboard caricature, as is everyone else in this novel. Latin Americans are nearly all corrupt and sex-mad, Americans calloused and tasteless. Verissimo has made a few exceptions—a Sacramentan poet-hero, obsessed with liberty and guilt feelings, and for good measure two "ugly Americans"—but these are cardboard too. The first three-fourths of the book is filled with the sort of politico-erotic Washington goulash popularized by *Advise and Consent*; the last fourth is taken straight from news dispatches about Castro's coming to power, with names and places changed. In other words, this is a formula novel. Too bad that the formula was not better guarded.

D. M. P.

Spanish Life in the Late Middle Ages. Selected and translated by KENNETH R. SCHOLBERG. Chapel Hill, 1965. University of North Carolina Press. Appendices. Pp. 180. Paper. \$4.00.

Although this book is published in a series of "Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures," it is simply an anthology of translations, not a scholarly work. Its purpose is "to give English speaking readers some idea of the life in and around the court of Juan II. It does not pretend to be either a history, sociological study, or literary *précis*" (p. 8). Under eight different headings, Scholberg offers in translation selected chapters from works dealing with fifteenth-century Spanish life. Each selection is introduced by a very short and general introduction. Students for whom this book has been conceived may wish that the author had paid greater attention to their needs with a more specific and illuminating presentation of the indi-

vidual selections. They also will feel that the translations often follow too closely the baroque syntax and style of the originals, thus impairing the reading and understanding of the text (see pp. 24, 69). Since Scholberg restricts himself to writers of the fifteenth century, it must be questioned to what extent his anthology can be considered representative of Spanish life in the late Middle Ages.

V. C.

First Around the World. A Journal of Magellan's Voyage. By GEORGE SANDERLIN. New York, 1964. Harper and Row. Illustrations. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 196. \$3.95.

For every volume published on Magellan in English since the World War, five have appeared on Columbus; yet Magellan's voyage stands as the greatest feat of navigation in history. Sanderlin's new book is thus a welcome addition to the small shelf of "Magellana." Though written for the young student, the work will have a far wider interest, for the author makes history not only absorbing but downright exciting.

A twenty-six-page introduction in easy conversational style places Magellan's life in the context of sixteenth-century navigational and geographical knowledge, rivalries, restlessness, and avarice. The "journal" which follows is pieced together from various sources, largely, of course, the account of Antonio Pigafetta, but beginning with the letter of Maximilian Transylvanus (which precedes Pigafetta in Ramusio) and a passage from Las Casas. Next are several contemporary documents, including part of Magellan's second will, and there are excerpts from Gaspar Corrêa's *Lendas da Índia*, from the account of an unknown Genoese pilot with Magellan's fleet, and from the *Derroteiro* of another pilot, probably Francisco Albo. Though the captain-general did not survive to tell his own tale, there is fortunately no dearth of contemporary accounts. Drawing from these, Sanderlin begins with Magellan's voyage as an idea, carries the reader

briefly through the anxious years of planning to the voyage itself, and to the eventual return of a single vessel to Seville, completing the circumnavigation.

Achieving a smooth and continuous narrative from the mixed and often inconsistent sources has required a large measure of creative skill. The device used is a series of connecting explanatory notes and commentaries, set off in smaller type. The sources are carefully identified in the commentaries, but some of them might have been more closely related to the appended bibliography and their present location indicated. Unlike the rest of the book, the bibliography will be of value only to the student. Since bibliographies of Magellan are few, a fuller one than this would have been useful.

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Cortés. The Life of the Conqueror by His Secretary. By FRANCISCO LÓPEZ DE GÓMARA. Edited and translated by LESLEY BYRD SIMPSON. Berkeley, 1966. University of California Press. Illustrations. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 425. Paper. \$2.45.

Simpson's translation of Gómara, published in 1964, is now available in an attractive, unabridged paperback edition. (Originally reviewed in August 1965)

T. G. P.

Padrones olvidados de Montevideo del siglo XVIII (I y II). By JUAN ALEJANDRO APOLANT. Montevideo, 1966. Imprenta Letras. Separata del "Boletín Histórico" del Estado Mayor del Ejército, No. 104-105 y No. 106-107. Indices. Pp. 142. Paper.

Throughout the colonial period, in both urban and rural areas, the Spanish government periodically ordered censuses, or "house counts," as a basis for tax, tribute, labor, or military assessments. The best of these contain

detailed demographic, economic, and social data, the analysis of which permits an evaluation of the components of Latin American society and their interrelationships. In connection with his study of the family in Uruguay, Apolant has carefully transcribed two of these censuses, taken in Montevideo in 1750 and 1772-73, adding indices to enable the researcher to locate rapidly individual households in either or both censuses. Analysis of the second document, more detailed than the first, yields valuable material regarding social structure, economic activities, military affiliations, geographic and racial origins, and other characteristics of the residents of early Montevideo. Such information, particularly when supplemented by similar data from other regions, could illuminate the nature and development of the city in Latin America. Additional publications of this kind would be welcome.

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Tiradentes. By LEÓN TENENBAUM. Buenos Aires, 1965. Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires. Bibliography. Pp. 126. Paper.

It is appropriate that a paperback on *Tiradentes* should be written by an orthodontist. León Tenenbaum (the name is spelled correctly) is a graduate of the University of Buenos Aires, College of Dentistry. In 1961 he edited for publication in Buenos Aires a collection of scientific works on the practice of orthodontics. In 1963 he received an award from the Argentine-Brazilian Cultural Institute for a paper which eventually was expanded to this book. There is little here that cannot be found in a good textbook, but Tenenbaum has given us a readable account of Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, who is remembered in history as *Tiradentes* and is revered in Brazil as a revolutionary hero whose aims were eventually fulfilled. Tenenbaum also recounts the role of priests in Brazilian revolutionary efforts as in the Mexican movement for independence. An interesting book, it