

*Martín Güemes: Tyrant or Tool? A Study of the Sources of Power of an Argentine Caudillo.* By ROGER M. HAIGH. Fort Worth, 1968. Texas Christian University Press. Figures. Notes. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 77. Paper. \$3.50.

Robert M. Haigh expands his earlier treatment of Güemes (*HAHR*, November 1964, pp. 481-490) in this short monograph. He holds to his conviction that Güemes was not a tyrannical caudillo, but rather an agent of the dominant group. Since the question "tyrant or tool" was already decided in the article, one should not expect an extensive discussion of the subject here. This failing might have been partially overcome had the author taken the reader into his confidence by commenting on his discovery of Güemes' true role.

Divided into four brief chapters, Haigh's monograph concentrates on the royalist-patriot struggle in Salta during the chaotic 1810-1821 period. It is a particularly sensitive account of the attempt by a remote province to maintain its identity in the face of both constant threats from Spanish Upper Peru and intrigues in Buenos Aires and the neighboring provinces. Five appendices coupled with a useful index and bibliography provide valuable biographical data concerning Salta's kinship elite.

The work builds to the last chapter, wherein the relationship of Güemes to the kinship elite is made explicit. The validity of Haigh's theory depends on his demonstration of Güemes' connection with the coterie of dominant landholding families. While the author's conclusion is eminently plausible, history would have been better served had he presented but one shred of direct evidence to prove conclusively that the election of Güemes by the Salteño elite was a conscious act. Still—though scholars have assumed the inbred nature of regional leadership in Latin America—it is Haigh who has performed the signal service of docu-

menting this phenomenon for the Argentine northwest.

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*Guardia Nacional. Orígenes del partido y ciudad de Chacabuco, 1865-1890.* By OSCAR MELLI. La Plata, 1967. Ministerio de Educación. Publicaciones del Archivo Histórico de la Provincia "Dr. Ricardo Levene." Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Notes. Pp. xii, 294. Paper.

The publication of historical studies concerning the peopling of Buenos Aires province has been a major undertaking of the provincial archives "Ricardo Levene." In this volume, number thirty-four of the series, Oscar Melli has more than adequately fulfilled his stated purpose of presenting the reader with an "exact account of the birth, organization, and development of a village and district of rural Buenos Aires province in the second half of the past century" (p. 8). In tracing the founding of Chacabuco district (1865) and the subsequent growth of its central town, the author has not attempted to write another laudatory pioneer chronicle. To the contrary, his thirteen carefully written chapters sketch the panorama of the agricultural and transportation revolution that transformed the Argentine pampas in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Particularly interesting to this reviewer is Melli's account of the Argentine government's attempt to populate the pampas south and west of the capital by granting land to national guard veterans of the Paraguayan War. Speculation and fraud soon ended this experiment. The study also recounts the disappearance of the Indian and gaucho, the policy and personal conflicts among local officials, the impact of immigrant farm workers on the region, and the discouraging struggle to provide a minimum of educational opportunities for the rural areas. Well-documented from provincial and national archives, clearly written and

carefully organized, this volume is an excellent example of local history at its best.

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*La revolución argentina del 90.* By ROBERTO ETCHEPAREBORDA. Buenos Aires, 1966. Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires. Libros del Tiempo Nuevo. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 84. Paper.

The Argentine revolution of 1890 had a very real effect on the subsequent development of national politics and history. Unlike many a successful revolution that set national development back, this unsuccessful one opened the door to the future. Even in failure it helped to create the Unión Cívica Radical and to begin a democratic evolution for Argentina. And though the government broke the revolution, the weak and corrupt president and those who stood with him were renounced and extirpated from public life. With them went many of the old philosophies and much of the power base of the old oligarchy.

Hence an analytical study of the events leading up to the Noventa and the evolution of institutions and philosophies evolving from it would be a fascinating and useful exercise in historical scholarship. This book does not succeed in that aim. It is a small book. Too large a portion of it is dedicated to earlier Argentine history and to the world scene. The author comments that much of the documentation is still unavailable, held in family libraries. His materials are largely books previously published on the same topic, and those are numerous enough to make another slim volume unnecessary.

Thus the usefulness of the book is limited. It provides a detailed accounting of the military activities of the revolt and a few interesting prints of the participants reproduced from the Archivo Gráfico de la Nación.

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*Aldebarã ou a vida de Lima Barreto (1881-1922).* By FRANCISCO DE ASSIS BARBOSA. Rio de Janeiro, 1967. Edições de Ouro. Illustrations. Notes. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 416. Paper.

This is a revised edition of the work which won the Fábio Prado literary award for 1952. It should interest students of Brazilian life and culture during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Lima Barreto's best known books include *Triste Fim de Policarpo Quaresma* and *Recordações de Escrivão Isaías Caminha*, both strongly autobiographical in content and tone.

He was, as he often said, a poor mulatto of humble origins, destined, it would seem, to sickness, debts, and misery. His attempts to drown his sorrows led to alcoholism, the mental hospital, and to an untimely death at only 41 years of age. For many years a functionary of the War Department, he added to his slender income by more or less regular contributions to Carioca magazines, many of them extremely short-lived. Lima Barreto's style was sardonic and amusing, though an anarchistic vein appears in many of his comments on Brazilian politics and society. In dress, manner, and habits he was bohemian. Yet his bohemianism was intensely individual, almost solitary. He achieved few honors in life and died lonely and almost forgotten.

Dr. Assis Barbosa belongs to the new generation of critics, who find Lima Barreto a true precursor of modernism, the man whose object is to "tell it like it is." He has been called the secretary of the epoch in which he lived. Lima Barreto was extremely conscious of Brazilian prejudice against "homens de cor," men of color, as Brazilians delicately refer to blacks, and he blamed his color for much of his unhappiness and for his failure to win renown as a writer. "É triste ser não branco" (p. 156). He felt disdain for the Brazilian middle and upper classes of his day, and was bitter because of their estrangement from the problems of the poor. He was strongly influenced by