

*Economía y sociedad en el Uruguay liberal, 1852-1904; antología de textos.* By JUAN ANTONIO ODDONE. Montevideo, 1967. Ediciones de la Banda Oriental. Colección "Reconquista". Tables. Pp. 279. Paper.

"In a word, there is in Buenos Aires only Spain; in Montevideo there is cosmopolitan North America." With these words, written during his 1845-1846 visit to Uruguay, Domingo F. Sarmiento epitomized the distinctive national tone he saw emerging in the small capital city, even in the shadow of protracted foreign interventions. But, however perceptive, the Argentine's critique was more accurate as long-range forecast than as contemporary diagnosis, for the Uruguayan people had to weather several generations of factional strife and political turmoil before attaining true national integration and relative constitutional stability. In any case, it is from this era of Uruguay's evolution that Juan Antonio Oddone has brought together his "anthology of texts" on the *Economía y sociedad en el Uruguay liberal*.

By assembling the testimonies of diverse contemporary leaders and observers, Oddone spotlights the socio-economic changes which helped to modernize Uruguay in the second half of the nineteenth century. His witnesses pinpoint the problem areas which confronted the nation after its "Great War" of the forties and fifties: agricultural primacy and productive diversification; rural poverty and urban concentration; free trade and protectionism; population and underpopulation; institutional weakness and absence of a middle class. They testify to the transformation brought about by the liberalizing influences of immigration, foreign investments, overseas markets, free trade, and improved techniques. Through these selections, the editor seeks to portray the maturation of the "vacillating and prostrate Uruguay" of Rosas' time into the "arrogant and friendly country" of Batlle.

This panel of witnesses represents a broad spectrum of official and unofficial commentators. Twelve of the nineteen are native-born or immigrant Uruguayans, mostly cabinet ministers, members of Congress, and journalists. The alien observers include an Argentine historian, a Brazilian financier, two French diplomats, a North American traveller, a Spanish lawyer, and a Spanish economist. The diversity of their backgrounds and concerns are mirrored in the variety of their writings.

Professor Oddone is modest in his claims for the volume. In spite of its broad title, he does not presume to create "a global image of the economic life of the country and its related social reality"; rather

he aspires only to place in historical perspective an integral stage of Uruguay's development. He confesses that his contributors represent mainly the views of the dominant classes and the defense of existing institutions, but reminds us that some of them support the "establishment" only with reservations. He concedes the heterogeneity of his testimonial gleanings (reflexions, opinions, fragmentary impressions), but sees them bonded by their emphasis on common problem areas. He has not planned his book for specialists, though many will find his theme stimulating and his evidence useful.

The format of the volume is not unlike that of Alfred A. Knopf's Borzoi series. In a scholarly fifty-page introduction, the author delineates what he regards as Uruguay's principal "structural elements" in the late nineteenth century—demographic trends, monoproduction, foreign commerce, banking and credit, and transportation. He concludes each of these sub-sections with a helpful "*recapitulación*." He carefully sketches the qualifications and orientation of each contributor and faithfully identifies the source and date of each selection.

Among a number of eye-catching items in this little volume, two are particularly revealing. As early as 1876, an Uruguayan legislator-diplomat argued his nation's need to create a solid middle class that would unify its disparate popular elements. In quite different vein, a French diplomat in 1886 reported to his government the grave threat posed by United States' designs to establish hegemony over Uruguay and the River Plate area.

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*Uruguay, país en crisis.* By ABRAHAM GUILLÉN ARAPEY. Montevideo, n.d. Nativa Libros. Illustration. Tables. Pp. 244. Paper. \$2.45 (U.S.).

*Cinco perspectivas históricas del Uruguay moderno.* By OSCAR MOURAT *et al.* Montevideo, 1969. Fundación de Cultura Universitaria. Tables. Charts. Figures. Pp. 202.

Fifty-four newspaper articles (the most recent appeared in 1965) analyzing Uruguay's major economic problems comprise *País en crisis*. These reflect declining productivity, rampant inflation, and the too-numerous unproductive citizens—including public employees (one to every 13 inhabitants, in contrast to one to 59 in The Netherlands or one to 125 in Belgium), plus an excess of pensioners and unemployed—who burden the economy.

Arapey castigates the government for perpetuating defunct eco-