

One might wonder whether they were not unconsciously motivated by a now almost stereotyped habit of conformity at the expense of scholarship.

The sections dealing with the Vietnamese Lao Dong Party's relations with native political, religious, and ethnic groups, and with foreign states undoubtedly stand as the most comprehensive study so far presented on the subject. The evidence seems to suggest that the hands of the United States and of Nationalist China were at first not entirely clean in producing the ascendancy of Ho's regime in Vietnam and possibly in the whole of Southeast Asia. But the omission of France's impact on the local development inevitably led the author to take reactions as "actions" in some cases. For instance, while the multitudinous "war laborers" are described as enduring a "never-ending martyrdom," and the finance cadres as being of "scrupulous honesty" and "quasi-religious zeal" — all in support of the Viet-Minh movement — one can hardly help asking: Do they really love communism so much, and nothing else?

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Uruguay, Portrait of a Democracy. By RUSSELL H. FITZGIBBON. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1954. Pp. xiv, 301. \$5.75.)

The editors of the Rutgers University Press have chosen as a subtitle for this book, "An Informal Survey of the Switzerland of Latin America." But Professor Fitzgibbon places this in his own perspective in his concluding chapter: "Uruguay is Uruguay. Most people probably mean it as a compliment to . . . call it the Switzerland . . . of the Western Hemisphere, but [that country] could consider [itself] complimented by the comparison." The author's own feeling toward this little country is reflected by his dedication, "To the Uruguayans, good neighbors, as much personally as rhetorically."

It would be difficult not to feel something of this from the book itself. This is not a sharply penetrating political and governmental analysis, although many acute observations are made which will be of interest to students of politics. Rather, it is a warmly sympathetic, yet critical, descriptive account of the whole of Uruguayan society. While there are chapters which are reminiscent of travel literature, there are others, written with an effectiveness such as no other writer has yet mustered, which deal with the problem of city versus country, commerce and industry versus agriculture. More than most writing of the past twenty years, Mr. Fitzgibbon attempts to place in its proper perspective the impact of the socialist policy of Jose Batlle y Ordoñez upon the commercial life of the nation, and to differentiate this from the social welfare programs which he fathered.

The wholly justifiable criticism of Uruguay's political scene which Mr. Fitzgibbon makes is worth noting. Batlle's radicalism was of his day and milieu. The leading political party has so institutionalized it that today's Socialist vote is about one per cent. Yet this institutionalization has been its own corruption. The current conflict between Batlle's sons and nephew bear witness. An appropriate chapter title is assigned, "The Lengthened Shadow of a Man."

The book concludes with a useful, yet concise, statement of Uruguay's strengths and weaknesses. While one finds both "Challenge and Opportunity" in Uruguay, yet by the normally accepted Latin-American yardstick it has few problems to meet. The author concludes that Uruguay's virtually utopian (to employ an over employed adjective) situation is due to its *integration*, a word for which it is easy to use the synonym "maturity." This appears to convey the true meaning of the success of democracy in Uruguay. Within the Latin social environment, this country has achieved a highly successful resolution of the problem of peaceful, popular, civilian government.

There is a useful bibliography of works in English on the country, and a short descriptive listing of the leading Uruguayan publications as well.

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A History of France. By LUCIEN ROMIER. Translated and completed by A. L. ROWSE. (New York: St. Martin's Press. 1953. Pp. xvii, 487. \$6.50.)

This posthumous work of a distinguished French historian has both charm and a weighty theme. Its charm lies in its taut, Gallic style, which has not suffered from A. L. Rowse's translation, and in the narrative of French history itself, which can never be dull. Sometimes indeed the narrative obscures the theme and the reader is confused, if not bored, as monarchs, "good" and "bad," "strong" and "weak," succeed one another and civil alternate with foreign wars. Yet the theme dominates the narrative. Very briefly, this theme is the French national consciousness, which, formed in the earliest times, has expressed itself in successive civilizations and has provided the principal resource on which great leaders have relied in rescuing the nation from decline and raising her to new heights.

This way of looking at history goes in and out of fashion and is subject to familiar criticisms; but, as the record of stubborn nationality and of powerful leaders must suggest, it is far from absurd. Today social scientists are, of course, a good deal more willing to admit than they were a generation ago that the concept of "national character" can be a helpful