

Obviously this work is a valuable addition to a specialist's library, as well as to the knowledge of the general reader.

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*Noticias confidenciales de Buenos Aires a U.S.A. (1869-1892)*. By COURTNEY LETTS DE ESPIL. Buenos Aires, 1969. Editorial Jorge Álvarez. Colección Cómo Nos Ven. Notes. Pp. 245. Paper.

Throughout more than a decade of world depression and war in the 1930s and early 1940s, Argentine Ambassador Felipe Espil served his country in Washington with tact and skill. In later years both he and his American-born wife, Courtney Letts, sustained their interest in Argentine-American relations through research and writing. In 1953 Sra. de Espil contributed a worthy article to this review (XXXIII, 152-167); in 1967, she published *La esposa del embajador*, a charming and revealing account of her ten years in the Washington embassy of her adopted country.

Now, through the eyes and words of United States diplomats to Buenos Aires, the Sra. de Espil has endeavored to give the Argentine people a picture of her throbbing nation in the years 1869 to 1892. As indicated by her chapter titles—phraseology borrowed from official despatches—American diplomats began to view Argentina as a “magnífico y vigoroso país joven” and as a “poderoso centro comercial.” In comparing Argentine evolution during these decades with that of the United States, she finds both parallels and contrasts. In each nation the government and people emerged from bitter convulsion and civil war to turn their energies to the tasks of recovery and reunion. In matters of national leadership, however, she suggests that Argentine executives from Sarmiento to Pellegrini considerably surpassed their Washington contemporaries. At any rate, for the first time the two nations began seriously to view each other.

The author's plan of organization is ingenious and effective. Using microfilm copies of the Diplomatic and Consular Despatches for her period (supplied by the United States National Archives), she has culled excerpts from more than two hundred documents. Through discerning interpolations between quotations and skillful arrangement of chapters, she has woven a narrative account of Argentina's late nineteenth-century resurgence. Where the despatches lack delineation, she has employed contemporary newspapers and historical works. She has utilized the resources of *La Nación*, *La Prensa*, the

Lincoln Library of Buenos Aires, and the Chicago Historical Society. She acknowledges the assistance of her ambassador husband.

Nearly two-thirds of the volume is devoted to the despatches of two ministers: Thomas O. Osborn (1874-1885), key figure in the mediation of Argentina's limits controversy with Chile, and John R. G. Pitkin (1889-1893), Washington's representative during porteño financial and revolutionary crises. But in addition to matters of high government policy, Sra. de Espil has incorporated colorful personal sidelights of diplomatic careers: July 4th receptions, repetitious complaints about low salaries and inadequate quarters, and excursions into the provinces with Argentine presidents. In evaluating the perceptiveness of the American observers, she asserts that they were "certainly objective," though "almost always favorable" to Argentina. While there was no John Adams among them, she submits, all were "capable, industrious, worthy representatives" of their country.

In accomplishing the considerable task of translating the documents, Sra. de Espil strove "meticulously not to change a single word," but in at least a few instances she has failed to note ellipses. The scholar who uses the book must take this lapse into account, but it should not diminish in the slightest anyone's enjoyment of these imaginatively conceived vignettes.

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*Memorias. El sitio de Montevideo: 1846.* By GENERAL TOMÁS DE IRIARTE. Buenos Aires, 1969. Editorial y Librería Goncourt. Pp. xxii, 559. Paper.

General Tomás de Iriarte was born in Buenos Aires and trained in the Colegio Militar de Segovia in Spain. Having fought in the war against Napoleon, he returned to America to join the Independence forces. In 1835 Rosas exiled him, and he began to write his memorias. He was in Montevideo when the siege began and the memorias became a diary. The editor, Enrique de Gandía, has titled the section of the diary for 1846, *El Sitio de Montevideo: 1846*. (It is Volume XI of Iriarte's memorias; Volume I, *La Independencia y la Anarquía*, appeared in 1944; and a final volume, *La Nueva Troya*, is still to be published.) On January 18, 1846, Iriarte noted ". . . nuestro plan es consignar en este diario cuanto circula, y hasta los raciocinios de los especuladores políticos, a fin de que se conozca con la mayor exactitud posible el modo que esta población ofrece desde el principio