

## Book Reviews

*The conquest and colonization of Yucatan, 1517-1550.* (Publ. 582.) Robert S. Chamberlain. Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Institution, 1948. Pp. vii + 365. (Illustrated.) \$4.75, paper; \$5.50, cloth.

In any historical or scientific writing, the background of the author plays an important part. Probably few historians in the American field have a more imposing background in the history of Spanish conquests than Robert Chamberlain. The number of bibliographical works concerning Spanish conquests in Yucatan, especially by those conquistadores, the Montejos, have largely resulted from Robert Chamberlain's researches. This book may be regarded as the consolidation of a whole series of accomplishments in this direction.

The author has pointed out the great importance of an exhaustive work concerning the conquest of Yucatan. This phase of the New World enterprises of the Spanish is certainly the least known of any. The conquest of the Valley of Mexico and of the surrounding peoples has been exhaustively chronicled from several viewpoints. Spanish entradas in northern Mexico and the Southwest have also aroused considerable historical enthusiasm. Pizarro's conquests of the vast Inca state are known to every casual student. The more important explorations and conquests of Yucatan by the Spanish have been heretofore inexplicably slighted. Yucatan was the first portion of the mainland of the Americas west of Cuba to be discovered, but it was the last area of these coasts to be subjugated. This sequence seems to have been followed by present day scholars. Even the name of the great conquistador, the Adelantado, Francisco de Montejo, is little known. Robert Chamberlain ably brings out the qualities of Montejo during the many difficulties of the Spaniards in exploring and pacifying Yucatan. The publication of *The conquest and colonization of Yucatan* assures the name of Montejo its just place with Cortés, Pizarro, Balboa, Jiménez de Quesada, Alvarado, and Valdivia.

The Spanish history in relation to Yucatan is closely followed from the time of the discovery and the initial phases of the conquests, through the many entradas and colonization attempts, to the final conquest after the great Maya revolt. The last portion of the book deals with the first years of the colony to the middle of the 16th century. Francisco de Montejo, into whose hands the Castilian Crown gave the occupation of Yucatan, had interests in addition to Yucatan proper; consequently the history includes other areas adjacent to Yucatan. Montejo had his eyes fixed on other areas—Honduras and Higueras, the region of Golfo Dulce and Chiapas. The history of these neighboring provinces was inextricably interwoven with that of the Mayan area.

It would be a strange book indeed that a reviewer could not criticize in some minutia. The controversial points are of little importance, however. In cases of possible doubt the author has carefully cited the original texts in elaborate footnotes. By the very nature of these early sources, there were controversial accounts and mutually exclusive data and dates. The author has reviewed and weighed the evidence carefully in all cases. In many instances Mr. Chamberlain has exhibited a thorough knowledge of the background of his subject over and above purely historical facts. He displays an intimate acquaintance with the encomienda system, for example, without which knowledge much of the Spanish history in Yucatan is inexplicable. The bibliography and footnote structure of this book convinces this reviewer that the author has made adequate use of all known sources relating to the history and conquest of Yucatan.

*The conquest and colonization of Yucatan* is a significant work on the background of the European advent in the Americas. Between two covers, Robert Chamberlain has collected all of the data pertinent to this period, indicated the significant features, and authenticated the whole.

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*Fatigue and impairment in man.* S. Howard Bartley and Eloise Chute. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1947. Pp. 429. \$5.50.

This book proposes a thesis that conflict and frustration are cardinal factors in the etiology of fatigue and at the same time provides, unwittingly, excellent material for testing this hypothesis. For the reviewer, the theory has "worked." He became frustrated. And he became tired. On checking with others who read the volume he was able to verify that his was not an exceptional, idiosyncratic reaction.

Throughout, the treatment suffers from a basic dilemma. Arbitrarily, the authors limit the meaning of fatigue to the experience of feeling tired. They use the term impairment for the objective, biochemical and physiological alterations present in a variety of situations in which the human organism is placed under strain. Their primary interest is in fatigue, not in impairment. Yet most of the book is devoted to impairment. The result is a definite lack of balance.

There is need for a detailed summary of the results and problems of "stress" physiology, taking into account the phenomena of both adaptation and breakdown of the adaptive mechanisms. This need became even more acute as a result of the accumulation during the war years of a large mass of new data on the effects of