Book Reviews

Latin America—Today and Tomorrow

Continuity and Change in Latin America. John J. Johnson, Ed. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1964. xiii + 282 pp. $6.75.

Change in Latin America is taking place so rapidly that it is difficult to keep up with it in thoughtful, printed words. The present collection of studies is one of the better recent attempts. Population growth of the area —about 3 percent per year—is higher than that of any other major area in the world. This, together with unresolved land-tenure problems, has caused thousands of former rural dwellers to try to crowd into the enormous and often filthy slums, the shanty towns that surround most of the large cities. New patterns of industrialization and economic organization struggle with old traditions of raw material and crop production, inadequate technical education, stratified social systems, and political customs often based as much on personalism as on principle and orderly practice. Editor Johnson sums up some of these problems in an excellent introductory chapter.

Thoughtful studies of eight functioning social types or significant segments of the population, each written by a North American expert, are then presented: the peasant (by Charles Wagley), the rural laborer (Richard N. Adams), the writer (Fred P. Ellison), the artist (Gilbert Chase), the military man (Lyle N. McAlister), the industrialist (W. Paul Strassmann), the urban worker (Frank Bonilla), and the university student (K. H. Silvert). In the final chapter R. P. Dore, a British sociologist, makes an interesting comparison between Latin America's problems and those of Japan. The variety of topics treated is wide, and in this review I can only make scanty remarks about each presentation.

Chase's chapter on the artist is the most compact and also the most comprehensive treatment of this subject that has come to my attention. He not only discusses aesthetic values, but ties the artists' activities to the social, economic, and political contexts in which they work. He points out that most present-day artists are against dictatorships of either the right or the left. Silvert finds that, contrary to some widely held opinions, the majority of university students are not radical or irresponsible. "Indeed, there is some reason for advancing the thesis that the student is at least temporarily a better citizen than his elders."

Peasants, as Wagley treats them, are rural workers who are attached to the land, either as owners of small plots or as share-workers on plantations. They have traditionally lived in communities made up of fellows of their own kind, rather removed from and neglected by the national system. Indian peasants have been more isolated than mestizos. Wagley discusses the problems involved in the inevitable absorption of peasants into national life.

Adams' "rural labor" includes not only agricultural workers but all who work or live outside the cities. Adams comes to some rather original conclusions in his analysis of the political and governmental influences in the organization of such workers.

The writer, as Ellison points out, has generally enjoyed greater prestige in the national system in Latin America than in the United States. Among other aspects, Ellison looks into the writer's part in "anti-yankyism" and in Marxist and other leftist movements. The Latin American military, especially the officer corps, has been both conservative and progressive. As McAlister says, the officers still play a quasi-political role in many countries. But they have also been agents for change, not only as military requirements themselves have demanded more science and better science, but also as the military has taken increasing interest in such modern developments as building roads and bridges, improving ports, and planning communities.

In such countries as Uruguay, Puerto Rico, and Mexico, Strassmann sees the Latin American industrialists only now emerging from the type of confused state from which their counterparts in the more industrially developed countries have already emerged. "Family firms, nepotism, paternalism, repression of labor, bribing of public officials, empires of fraud, panic before sizable reforms and sanctimonious acquiescence afterward" are still characteristic of much Latin American industrial life.

Urbanization of the worker, as Bonilla points out, has not produced the scale of upward social and economic mobility that the worker has enjoyed in the United States and Western Europe. If United States representatives are to be helpful in Latin American labor organization, they must make careful studies of the local and national situations and not rely solely upon the experiences of their own country.

Finally, in comparing Latin America with Japan, Dore finds that by 1870 the latter had rid itself of much feudalistic land holding and older economic organization, without giving up certain indigenous customs and institutions. In other words, Japan performed a sort of "do-it-yourself" transformation of its economy which Latin America has been unable to do. However, this was accompanied by a militaristic nationalism that, of course, caused troubles.

In many books of this kind, one finds one or more of the authors going off at odd angles from the central theme. Such is not the case in the present volume, which is a fairly consistent collection of contributions in consonance with its title.

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Statistical Images

Economic Growth in the West. Comparative experience in Europe and North America. Angus Maddison. Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1964. 246 pp. $4.50.

This is a remarkably useful compendium of information about the comparative economic history of 12 or 13 countries of the Atlantic community, including the United Kingdom, the countries of the Common Market, the Scandinavian countries, the United

States, and Canada and sometimes Switzerland and Austria, but excluding Spain, Portugal, and Greece. The main focus is on the rate of growth of these economies, especially since World War II, with some attempt at explanation as to why they have had different rates of growth. The overall conclusion is not surprising, that investment promotes growth and that governments can promote investment if they do it wisely.

One is tempted to make a kind of Ripley's "Believe It or Not" out of a lot of the information gathered here. Did you know, for instance, that Sweden had the highest rate of growth of output per head from 1870 to 1913, and that Canada had the lowest from 1950 to 1960, with the United States coming in second to last? Did you know, for instance, that if we measure welfare-stateism by the percentage of the gross national product in transfers, Germany is at the top and the United Kingdom almost at the bottom, beaten only in "un-welfare" by Norway and the United States? Did you know, for instance, that the fastest growing countries had the lowest price increases, or that the big countries no longer dominate the small ones? One could go on at some length. It would be interesting to have a follow-up study investigating the generally held images of these economies and contrasting these images with what might be called the statistical images. There would be an astonishing divergence. The book brings out extremely well the backwardness of the economic policy of the United States and the enormous economic cost of economic conservatism. Maddison and the Twentieth Century Fund are to be congratulated on an illuminating and timely study.

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Trace Elements

The Biology of Trace Elements. Their role in nutrition. Karl H. Schutte. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1964. xx + 228 pp. Illus. $8.

Trace elements have long been of interest to workers in many disciplines. Their role in biology has been studied variously by botanists, agronomists, veterinarians, nutritionists, physicians, biochemists, and, more recently, physical and inorganic chemists. It is clear that these elements are essential to the understanding of many biological processes, but the varied approaches employed by workers in many different disciplines render complex the task of assessing and interpreting the enormous amount of material now available.

In the not too distant past, discussion of the biological role of trace elements has been tainted with base and ignoble connotations, largely because much of the available information was qualitative, and speculation often substituted for fact. In some instances, this general area of interest served to advance the notions of faddists, and at times those of false prophets, who found their fondest wishes and ideas confirmed, occasionally by data of dubious validity and, at times, by no data at all. It requires a discriminating observer of this inhomogeneous scene to render the important service of integrating the material judged to be of lasting value, while critically evaluating lesser contributions. *The Biology of the Trace Elements* unfortunately does not accomplish this end and even falls short of the still more limited objectives that a writer in this field might be expected to set for himself.

The scope of this book is less broad than the title indicates. More important, there is little evidence of the requisite knowledge and understanding, of either the literature or the problems, to facilitate their appreciation by the uninitiated. Agronomy and botany provide most of the source material, but, again, the information presented is largely phenomenological. Pertinent work from other fields is enumerated in indiscriminate fashion, with little apparent effort to eliminate material that might be of dubious validity. Many speculative ideas formulated in the past are restated here without new documentation concerning their merit. The reader is left to his own devices to distinguish fact from fancy. Important segments of the literature are ignored completely, and, thus, the resulting errors of omission are too numerous to recite. The book, unfortunately, conveys an erroneous impression of the state and scope of the field by including much of what might best have been deleted, while neglecting a great deal of importance. Perhaps one quotation will transmit the flavor of much of the writing. Under the subheading "Psychological phenomena and trace elements" (p. 126) the following may be found:

"Organic illness, malnutrition, and excessive physical strain all result in psychological alterations in man and animals. Diet governs mental health to a considerable degree, so it is not surprising that *essential nutrients* should play some part in psychological processes, although this is seldom stressed. Yet trace elements are known to be involved in some very marked alterations of behaviour.

"In the chapter dealing with reproduction lack of copper, iodine, or manganese was shown to result in a pronounced decrease in sexual urge or libido, although in the iodine deficiency sperm formation was normal [14]. In female animals lack of oestrus does not imply inability to ovulate, at least in iodine-deficient cows or manganese-deficient sows, but the lack of interest in intercourse consequent upon deficiencies results in great economic loss to the farmer.

"Perhaps in this context the effect of high levels of iodine or manganese is of particular interest, as they result in symptoms among which nymphomania is very important [12, 117]. In thyrotoxicosis (Graves' Disease) of humans the high levels of thyroxine produced result in 'a type of woman who is volatile, lively and temperamental, and who, if the disease is not too far advanced, is usually distinctly attractive to the male' [11]."

It is hard to know what one will come across, but *The Biology of Trace Elements* turned out unexpectedly to contain a young man's guide to a successful Saturday night out.

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Analytical Chemistry

Steroid Chromatography. R. Neher. Translated from the German edition (1958) by R. H. Bathgate. Elsevier, New York, ed. 2, 1964. xiv + 389 pp. Illus. $11.

For a number of years Robert Neher, a well-known and outstanding contributor to the specialized field covered by this book, has concentrated on the large-scale application of chromatographic methods to industrial research and development. He has excelled in the design and construction of apparatus and laboratories suitable for this type of work, and his ideas