BOOK NOTICES

For El Paso's citizens, the Mexican Revolution represented not a foreign conflict but an event that became a significant part of their lives.

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Carlos Páez de la Torre’s monograph proves a disappointing work. The author prefers diplomatic, military, and political history and sacrifices social and economic interpretation. Three major chapters, organized chronologically, narrate the events between 1855 and 1862 and thereby preclude a broader analysis of the Confederation within the context of nineteenth-century Argentine history. Páez describes the uneasy alliance between the Confederation and the state of Buenos Aires, during which the Confederation sought legitimacy through foreign recognition and financial solvency from 1855 to 1858. His second chapter covering the years 1858–1861, depicts the diplomatic and military relations between the Confederation and Buenos Aires and the Confederation’s continuing struggle for political and economic independence. The final chapter records the collapse of the Confederation, and the reassertion of the supremacy of the city and province of Buenos Aires. A chronology details the annual events affecting the Confederation from 1855 to 1862.

Páez’ writing often lacks focus while his footnotes demonstrate dependence on secondary materials with consultation of the Tucumán archives. For the reader interested in the developments and demise of the Confederation, the book is useful. The failure of the work is not what the author attempted, but rather that he was not tempted to do a more ambitious project.

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This is a thumbnail biography of Jorge Claraz, whose endowed for botanical and zoological studies led the Society for Scientific Investigation, Switzerland, to become the Georges and Antoine Claraz Foundation. A Swiss and German trained geologist and mineralogist, Claraz went to Brazil in 1856 with Christian Heusser to investigate the treatment of Swiss settlers there. Before long, he was exploring the province of Minas Gerais. A little later, after a stint as a sheep raiser in the province of Entre Ríos, he began a scientific exploration of the southern and central sections of the province of Buenos Aires (1861–1865) and the area between Río Negro and Río Chubut in Patagonia (1865–1866). His published reports inspired the establishment of the Swiss settlement of Colonia Calesa on the Río Negro. Meanwhile, he and Heusser, a government surveyor, acquired large tracts in Bahía Blanca and Carmen de Patagones. They received the land free because it was beyond the frontier and on condition that they raise cattle or sheep or plant trees. They concentrated on cattle, sheep, and horses. Four brothers of Claraz also became estancieros in Bahía Blanca. In the 1870s, Claraz conducted geo-