BOOK NOTICES


Handsomely bound and profusely illustrated, this volume of the *Time-Life Old West* series provides an interesting, well-written narrative history of the Mexican War which is based on standard U.S. secondary sources. The wonderful illustrations, obtained from over a hundred libraries and collections, and comprising more than half of its pages, are well worth the price of the book. They include paintings of battle scenes, portraits, photographs of soldiers and all manner of military paraphernalia, newspaper clippings and cartoons, and facsimiles of documents. The textual presentation emphasizes primarily the military conduct of the war as seen through American eyes.

S.M.D.


In her effort to rescue Mexican working women from historical obscurity, Vivian Vallens has attempted an ambitious project—the impact of foreign financed industrial capitalism on the feminine labor force. Beginning with a general survey of conditions in all classes of society in the Porfiriato, she summarizes the effect of economic change on the conditions of Mexican working women. She relies heavily on such U.S. standards as Page Smith, Elizabeth Faulkner Baker, Robert Smuts, Susan Bell, Gerda Lerner, and Evelyn Reed, assuming the Mexican experience to be the same as that in the United States and Europe, a debatable point. In a section on political background, Vallens emphasizes the effect of liberalism and positivism on middle-class women, especially relating to their education and entrance into professional occupations. The reaction of a few radical women in journalism and socialist organizations is seen as an indication of awakening awareness of women on all levels. A description of the Porfirian economy, drawn primarily from Fernando Rosenzweig, is supplemented by a summary of world trends in the nineteenth-century textile and cigarette industries. Anarchism and mutual societies, including a list of women participants, of the nineteenth century are covered briefly, based heavily on the work of John Hart. The heart of the short work is the chapter on factory workers, based primarily on newspaper accounts of a variety of protest and strike incidents primarily involving women/workers in cigarette factories in Mexico City. No statistical data on numbers or categories of workers involved is included. Several pages are devoted to the famous Rio Blanco textile strike of 1907 without reference to the most authoritative source, Rodney Anderson's history of the Mexican labor movement from 1906–1911.

A revised master's thesis, the work suffers from a lack of theoretical framework, an overly enthusiastic attempt to enlarge the admittedly small role of women factory workers in Mexico, careless use of sources and a restricted access to documentary information (limited to that available in the major universities of California). One hopes that this theme—the study of a major segment of the labor