turn of the century. The author argues that the European powers were attempting to reestablish a position on the American continent, and especially to open enclaves near the imminent Canal of Panama. Third, the difficult economic and political situation prevailing in Venezuela in 1902 made it the perfect choice for a confrontation of European and North American interests. The author concludes that the peaceful resolution of the conflict — with the United States as mediator — enhanced U.S. hegemony in the hemisphere, badly damaged Venezuela's sovereignty, and calls into question the supposed nationalism of Cipriano Castro.

The book contains a useful eighty-page appendix of historical documents.

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ROBERT D. BOND


Martín Fierro is more than a literary work: it is a cultural monument that has been used for the most diverse social and intellectual purposes possible. Cárdenas is concerned with Hernández' poem as a primary historical source, and she studies it in conjunction with an historical essay published in 1872 by Coronel Alvaro Barros and with a number of other contemporary publications and documents. Her principal interest is in issues associated with developments in the Argentine army between Caseros (1852) and 1872, and official policies and general attitudes toward foreigners during the same period. Pursuing the hypothesis that Hernández' poem faithfully reflects the conciencia of its time, Cárdenas focuses on strategic passages from the Ida (that Hernández was a politician, landowner, and journalist lends credence to his awareness as a literary writer of the "public concerns" of his time).

Not a detailed historical treatise, Cárdenas' monograph is more a contribution to historical studies based on homologous readings of disparate sources than it is to analytical historiography or literary criticism. Her study is ultimately of modest interest because she does not address herself to the long-standing theoretical problem in Latin American intellectual studies of the legitimate uses of "ostensive" literary works in historical research or of how historical contextualizations of a text enhance literary criticism.

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DAVID W. FOSTER


A hired gunman for a political boss, Getúlio has been sent out to capture and deliver a political prisoner. However, circumstances change and political expediency now dictates that the prisoner be set free. Getúlio's boss publicly denies having given the orders and sends a message to the embarrassing mission: release the prisoner. For a variety of reasons Getúlio refuses. Surviving ambushes, he is stopped only at the outskirts of town and killed by federal troops.

This bare bones synopsis of the plot leaves out what is perhaps most ad-