

La Crónica del Rosario en el exterior

Crónica del muy ilustre Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario en Santa Fe de Bogotá. Libro Primero. By GUILLERMO HERNANDEZ DE ALBA. (Bogotá: Editorial Centro, 1938. Pp. xiii, 348).

THE cultural history of colonial Bogotá could well be told in relation to two colleges—Nuestra Señora del Rosario of the Dominicans and San Bartolomé of the Jesuits. No orthodox university ever rivaled them as the centers of education in New Granada. Dr. Guillermo Hernández de Alba, upon the cuarto centennial of the founding of the city of Santa Fé de Bogotá, has presented the history of Rosario from its foundation (1651-1653) to 1733 in the first book now published. He has drawn heavily upon the local college archives, the papers brought over by the Jesuits to document the history of San Bartolomé, the Archives of the Indies, and much other source material.

The author feels a profound respect for the college, its students, and professors, from the founder, Fray Cristóbal de Torres, to the republican epoch. His predilection for the convent atmosphere is bespoken not alone in the title *Crónica*, but in the very style of the presentation. The volume is, then, an account of intellectual Bogotá in the least interesting part of the colonial period. Although written by a modern, it covers a time not marked by intellectual evolution in America. Hence, there is little difference between this production and, let us say, the *Crónica* (1687) of Plaza y Jaén on the University of Mexico. But it is useful as documentation to the general historian and, of course, is the very grist upon which the mills of local history grind. More illuminating, because

more general and more concise, is the author's *Panorama de la Universidad de la Colonia* (pp. 13).

A more useful service could be performed in the next book which, supposedly, will cover that period in which the tenets of modern philosophy and science penetrated even the doors of Rosario. If the book is to rise to the requirements, it will have to abandon the sterile technique dictated by the nature of the ground covered in the first book. The breach between the books would make a good point from which to begin an analytical history of Bogotá in general and Rosario in particular. It should answer questions left untouched in the first volume, such as: What was the status of literature in the college? When and how did methodical doubt begin to pervade the theses of its students? What influence did this philosophical education have upon those «distinguished sons» of whom Rosario can boast? In what manner were Aristotelian and Galenic science replaced in the city? It would be hard to incorporate these answers in a mere chronicle and difficult to find them if the incorporation were achieved.

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