

The United States Versus Porfirio Díaz. By Daniel Cosío  
Villegas. Translated by Nettie Lee Benson. (Lincoln,  
University of Nebraska Press, 1963)

The distinguished author of this monograph had access to manuscript sources not available to previous scholars who, for the most part, published their works three or four decades earlier, and mainly for this reason his story of the Mexican-United States crisis of 1876-1880 is more complete. As Professor Stanley Ross remarks in his brief introduction to this English edition of a small volume that originally appeared in Spanish, Villegas is "objective and his account is well balanced and fair." The Mexican scholar's main contribution is a careful analysis of the influences in operation at the time in both Mexico and the United States.

The major issues in dispute between the two neighbors during these years were: mutual claims for injuries to persons and properties; the smuggling of goods from Mexico's free zone on the northern border into the United States which had suddenly become a high-tariff country; border raids by Indians, bandits, and cattle thieves; the levying of forced loans by the Mexican government; and the refusal of this government to permit citizens of the United States to become owners of land in the northern frontier region of Mexico. The effort of the Rutherford B. Hayes administration to force a satisfactory settlement of these issues by withholding recognition of the Porfirio Díaz government until satisfactory agreements had been negotiated failed for the most part, though reciprocal claims awarded according to the terms of a claims convention of 1868 were promptly paid by each government.

This English edition, translated and edited by Nettie Lee Benson, is not without defects. Maps and specific footnote citations to sources are lacking, though abbreviated references to sources are listed chapter by chapter in notes at the end of the volume. The bibliography of published works is far from exhaustive. In fact, it does not contain even all of those mentioned in the



in the narrative. It would be very difficult for the most industrious of scholars to test the accuracy of this monograph. But it seems likely that no such testing would be worthwhile. Daniel Cosío Villegas is a very reliable expert on the history of Mexico and Mexico's relations with the United States, and the topics which he discusses here have been dealt with by numerous scholars in the United States, including, among others, Robert D. Gregg, Charles W. Hackett, James M. Callahan, and the writer of this review.

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