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*James G. Blaine and Latin America.* By David Healy. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001. Pp.vii, 278. Bibliography, index. \$39.95.)

President Bill Clinton stated after the passage of NAFTA in 1994 that he envisioned a Western Hemisphere common market by 2003. More than a century earlier, that was the goal of James Gillespie Blaine, who led the Republican Party during the 1870s as Speaker of the U.S. House and senator from Maine and who lost the presidential race of 1884. Blaine attempted to implement this globalization plan during his two tenures as secretary of state in 1881 and 1889-92. His crowning Latin America achievement was the creation of the First Inter-

American Conference, the precursor of the Pan American Union, which in 1948 became the Organization of American States.

This book focuses on the Latin America aspects of Blaine's diplomatic career, which were not covered in depth in the scholarly biography by David S. Muzzey, *James G. Blaine: A Political Idol of Other Days* (1934), or in various hagiographies written by Blaine's relatives and friends. While at the helm of the Department of State, Blaine intervened diplomatically in boundary squabbles in Central America, the War of the Pacific, attempted to acquire Caribbean naval bases and an isthmian canal, and narrowly avoided war with Chile in 1891 over the USS *Baltimore* incident, in which a street mob in Valparaíso killed two American sailors and seriously wounded seventeen others.

The author emphasizes that Blaine initially lacked training in diplomacy or international law. His political aspirations often complicated his diplomatic role, he knew no foreign language, and his travel abroad was limited to a three-month tour of Europe in 1867. Blaine's first term as secretary of state, truncated after one year by the assassination of President James Garfield, is analogous to that of a bull in a china shop. He was an Anglophobe, "inexperienced in diplomacy, impulsive, hasty and overambitious" and "hindered by inept agents." As a result, "he attempted much and accomplished little," according to Healy.

Blaine's second diplomatic term is more measured and conciliatory. He and President Benjamin Harrison usually worked in harmony and opposed territorial expansionism, rejecting in 1891 a Danish offer to sell the Virgin Islands. Blaine's successful Latin America tariff-reciprocity agreements were nullified by a protectionist Democratic Congress in 1894. His last year in office was marginalized by absence, ill health, "marred by lost documents, unsent notes, and missed appointments," prompting his sudden resignation.

This work could have been better served with illustrations, maps, and a broader analysis of the First Inter-American Conference, which is here limited to only fourteen pages. Blaine was elected by the conference participants to preside at the event. The six-month affair was attended by ten American representatives and twenty-seven delegates from seventeen Latin American nations, only six of whom spoke English. The participants received a six-week railroad tour of northern American cities from Boston to Omaha.

The author failed to cite the conference's documents in Record Group 43 at the U.S. National Archives. The Latin American delegates' view of the meeting is based exclusively on an 1890 article in the *North American Review* by the antagonistic Mexican minister to the United States. Healy overlooked the important role played by Cuban exile

participants. These included one of the two official interpreters, Washington, D.C., attorney José Ignacio Rodríguez, and the only three official Hispanic translators, former Confederate colonel Ambrosio José Gonzáles, New York businessman José Ramón Villalón, and J. Vicente Serrano. Villalón and another compatriot, Gonzalo de Quesada, secretary of the Argentine delegation to the conference, later figured prominently in the Cuban independence movement. These expatriates failed in their attempt to have the conference issue a declaration on Cuba's right to independence.

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