



In the Absence of Don Porfirio: Francisco Leon de la Barra and the Mexican Revolution (Latin American Silhouettes)

Peter V. N. Henderson

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Francisco León de la Barra became president pro-tem of Mexico in 1911 after the fall of Porfirio Díaz as a result of the Treaty of Ciudad Juárez. He played a pivotal role in the early Mexican Revolution. This biography of de la Barra, longtime supporter of Porfirio Díaz, shows that he served as the bridge between the traditional forces of Díaz and the revolutionaries of Francisco Madero. Despite established historiography, which paints a picture of de la Barra and other Porfirian reactionaries trying to subvert the Revolution, this book demonstrates that de la Barra and the Porfirians endorsed many of the same ideas as Madero and his civilian colleagues, including a belief in democracy and progressive social reform. These themes became the legacy of the Madero years, but properly could be ascribed to an entire generation of political and intellectual leaders rather than to a single individual. This book, the product of extensive archival research, concludes that de la Barra, the forgotten man, had a major hand in bringing progressive reforms to Mexico that have been overshadowed because of the simultaneous popular uprising that demanded much greater changes in land tenure and working conditions. *In the Absence of Don Porfirio* reveals that the de la Barra government laid the foundation for many of the ideas that would become the critical issues of the post-1920s Mexican state.

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