

The Loyalist and the Rebel Sympathizers on Spain

CORRESPONDENT IN SPAIN. By Edward H. Knoblaugh. 233 pp. New York: Sheed & Ward. \$2.50.

COUNTER-ATTACK IN SPAIN. By Ramon Sender. Translated from the Spanish by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell. 288 pp. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$3.

HEROES AND BEASTS OF SPAIN. By Manuel Chaves Nogales. Edited by C. F. Harding. Translated by Luis De Baéza. 303 pp. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. \$2.50.

SPANISH REHEARSAL. By Arnold Lunn. 254 pp. New York: Sheed & Ward. \$2.50.

THE MARCH OF A NATION. My Year of Spain's Civil War. By Harold G. Cardozo, Special Correspondent of The London Daily Mail With the Nationalist Forces in Spain. 316 pages. New York: Robert McBride & Co. \$2.75.

VOLUNTEER IN SPAIN. By John Sommerfield. 155 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.50.

By T. R. YBARRA

SIX books, six points of view. Every one of these writers on the Spanish civil war, foreigners and Spaniards, gives us page after page of heroism and horror, endurance and agony; they make us hear the whirring of attacking planes over helpless cities, the deafening explosion of bombs that scatter terror and death, the thrill in the charge and counter-charge of brave men on bloody battlefields, the cruel suffering behind the lines, of haggard women and emaciated children. Beyond these points of similarity, however, the quintet show sharp divergence in outlook and treatment.

Mr. Knoblaugh is essentially the reporter "covering a story." Long familiar with the Spain of before the civil war, he returned to the Madrid which he knew as a city of peace and gaiety to find it a martial camp, shaken by almost daily bombardments. He set out at once to chronicle whatever he saw without worrying about whom it might please or displease; and, like almost every newspaper man abroad who acts that way, he soon fell afoul of that lynx-eyed killjoy, the censor. Mr. Knoblaugh and the Spanish Government's censor did not get along at all; what the American considered ordinary reportorial objectivity the censor deemed rank anti-government bias. Finally, after a bullet had come flying through his window one day which he realized was not a stray bullet at all, Mr. Knoblaugh decided to get out of Madrid.

Writing from a safe refuge in a neighboring land, he came to the conclusion that the Spanish Loyalists could not possibly win without direct foreign intervention, because their armies lacked offensive power. That was before Teruel. What has been revealed in the fighting around that battered and riddled town—irrespective of its ultimate result—may have caused Mr. Knoblaugh to change his mind.

Señor Sender is of quite another stripe. About him there is not a trace of the aloof observer. One of the foremost of present-day Spain's writers, he was prominent for years in the ranks of Spanish liberals inimical to the reactionaries who had dominated the country for generations. He soon identified himself more and more with the interests of the Spanish proletariat, until finally, when war burst over his country, he joined the Loyalists. That he stood shoulder to shoulder with anarchists, syndicalists and Com-

munist was to him immaterial—enough that they were enlisted now in what he deemed the cause of justice and freedom.

His book is admirably written. His sketches of battle and horror give deep insight into a fine mind. The reader learns how an intellectual, plunged suddenly into war, knows fear, meets it, overcomes it. We know how he feels when motor trucks filled with men are pulverized before his eyes; when he sees before him the blood-covered corpse of a friend, suddenly struck dead at his feet.

In chapter after chapter the sincerity and simplicity of the writer strike one in every sentence. But the most poignant bit in the whole book is one which Señor Sender wished to omit and only allowed to pass after he bound over his friend, the translator, to reproduce it without comment or addition of any sort. When the war started the author's young wife was at Guadarrama, near Madrid. Franco's Insurgents suddenly swept into the town. For weeks the husband was without news of her. Then — But here is the story, in his own words:

I shall give here only the bare facts. I shall silence, extinguish the voices which rise clamorously and imperatively in my heart. * * * My wife went to the Civil Governor's office to ask for a passport. * * * They arrested her. * * * A month after her arrest they brought a priest who confessed her, and then they took her to the cemetery, where they shot her.

Back to the front, grimly resolved to fight to the end for the Loyalists, went the stricken husband.

"Soon I shall be able to tell you about our triumph," he wrote to his friend, the English translator of his book. And at the front he still is—if he has not been killed.

The author of "Heroes and Beasts of Spain," also a Spaniard, reacted to the Spanish civil war in a way far different from that of Señor Sender. He, too, tells tales of battle and murder; but he looked on from the sidelines. Loyalists and Insurgents were to him merely instruments in a terrible tragedy of stupidity and bloodshed. "A plague o' both your houses" is his motto. Finally he could stand the horror no longer; he shipped away to Paris.

Terror has made life impossible and blood was choking me. * * * The decision I made to desert my post was not only because blood was spilled by gangs of murderers who brought Red terror to Madrid but also because of the death sown in the town among women and children by Franco's air raids. I was as much afraid of the barbarity of the Moors, the bandits of the Foreign Legion and Falange (the Spanish Fascists) as of the illiterate Anarchists and Communists.

Few correspondents for foreign newspapers in Spain during the Spanish civil war have as long and exciting a record of service as Mr. Cardozo, author of "The March of a Nation." Having arrived there very soon after the struggle started as representative of the strongly pro-Franco London Daily Mail, he witnessed with his own eyes much of the fighting, including the battles in the mountains outside Madrid, the relief of the stubborn rebel garrison in the Alcazar of Toledo, Franco's unsuccessful attempts to capture the Spanish capital and his more successful operations around Bilbao.

Mr. Cardozo has tried to give his book a historical background; he prefaces his tales of exciting adventure by some pages leading up to the rebellion led by Franco against the Spanish Government in the Summer of 1936. But those seeking sober, unbiased writing will waste their time perusing his pages. Like the paper for which he worked, the author is first, last and all the time a violent partisan of the Spanish rebels. In his eyes their victory will mean salvation for Spain, that of their government foes perdition. And he loses no chance to harp on this point—calm, objective chronicling of the Spanish conflict is no more to be found in his pages than in those of the many ardent partisans of the government who are rushing into print nowadays.

In "Spanish Rehearsal" the author adopts a very simple method. Being strongly in favor of the Insurgent cause, he tries to prove that committing atrocities in the Spanish civil war is an exclusive specialty of the Loyalists; that accusations of massacre leveled at Franco's men are deliberate fabrications. Anybody taking his statements at their face value would decide that the sooner Franco's angels rid Spain of the government devils the better for everybody concerned. But the

book is written in a style that precludes taking any of its statements at face value; it may be safely said that few apologists for Franco have been of less use to him than Mr. Lunn.

Mr. Sommerfield, a young Englishman who joined the Loyalists soon after the outbreak of the war, is, like Ramon Sender, a convinced liberal. In his eyes the cause of Spanish loyalism is the concern not alone of Spanish liberals but of liberalism throughout the world. What lends a special tang to Sommerfield's book is his feeling for the comrades with whom he fought and suffered. The book is dedicated to one of them, an Englishman, killed in battle in Spain on his twenty-first birthday—and, again and again, the author draws little word-pictures of other foreign fighters for the Spanish Government which are eloquent proof of the affection which they inspired in him.

And what a life they led! Huddled in the mud around Madrid's University City, with Franco's men only a few yards away, they "built barricades with volumes of Indian metaphysics and early nineteenth-century German philosophy," and embellished them, in a mocking humor, with

posters urging foreign tourists to "come to Sunny Spain." And they smoked their pipes while shells screamed and men were torn to shreds around them.

Six points of view in six books. If Spain's agony makes Spaniards holding these views, and others like and unlike them, so satiated with bloodshed that they will forever after reconcile conflicting standpoints by strictly peaceful means, then all the awful things chronicled by this quintet of eyewitnesses will not have happened in vain.

This year marks the ninetieth anniversary of the D. Van Nostrand Company, publishers of technical and scientific books. Organized originally to import military books from Europe, one of the first publications of this firm was Casey's "Handbook of Military Tactics," the first military manual of arms ever published for the American Army. It was the official manual of the Northern soldier during the Civil War. In celebration of its ninetieth year, Van Nostrand will publish in February a one-volume "Scientific Encyclopedia" of more than 2,000,000 words in 1,500 pages with 1,200 illustrations in line, half tone and color.