

Books of Special Interest

Spain, Old and New

SPAIN: A SHORT HISTORY OF ITS POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT. By HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1925.

Reviewed by RUDOLPH SCHEVILL
University of California

THE author of this book desires to present a brief history of Spanish politics, literature, and art for beginners, embracing more than two thousand years in less than four hundred pages, an achievement bound to be uneven whether the purpose was serious or entertaining. The early chapters dealing with the Roman domination and the Mohammedan conquest are a trifle thin, and hardly yield more than a glimpse of what after all is the foundation upon which Spanish civilization rests. The picture of the Middle Ages is more successful, and the general reader will find some colorful pages on the Spanish people and their first achievements in art and upon the field of battle. No objection need be raised to the pleasing mixture of history and romance which characterizes several chapters, notably where the topic is political and the interest flags, where crowns are at stake, feuds are common, and the confusion is not readily resolved into facts. This applies to those portions which deal with the house of Trastámara (fourteenth century), the reigns of John II and the Catholic Sovereigns (fifteenth century). The difficulty of explaining the religious policy of Ferdinand and Isabella, the status of the Jews, and the function of the Inquisition is met and treated with commendable tolerance. Too many writers still think it their duty to sit in judgment on the acts of men of the long ago, although time and the logical sequence of events have already inflicted the penalty. Other brief well-written chapters are those on Charles V in Spain, architecture under Italian influence, and the reign of Phillip II; a pleasing tourist's account can be found in the chapters on sculpture and painting. The disquisition on Murillo could be cut down to a paragraph.



On approaching the eighteenth century, however, the author hastens a trifle too fast, leaving hardly more than eighty pages for the last two hundred years. Having nothing striking to say of this period, he repeats the commonplace that "altogether Spain was very ill" and thus fails to record the many vital forward steps. Of Ferdinand VI, in whose reign very genuine and significant progress was made, we are told "there is nothing in his reign worth recording, so I pass on." The political labyrinth of the nineteenth century is lightly treated, perhaps wisely for this type of history, but the unprecedented growth of social and industrial Spain during the last thirty years is given no adequate place, and a discussion of Spain's intellectual and artistic progress cannot be clear, especially to the beginner, without a coordinating thread of genuine understanding of all phases of Spanish life.

Throughout the author's presentation of the literature runs a thread of apology for his "rash and ignorant prejudices." This tone is modest and commendable, but does out "Marmion." At this point one hesitates notably when the opinions expressed are based on admittedly insufficient foundations. A few examples of this method will suffice. The epic of the Cid, we are told, has often been compared with the Chanson de Roland; but, says the author, "if I had to make a comparison, I think I should fetch out 'Marmion.'" At this point one hesitates to think of the feelings of anyone with genuine understanding of this foremost of Spanish epics. Instead of Ormsby's version, or the "bits of translation made by Hookham Frere" the admirable and complete English version by Leonard Bacon should be recommended to the reader. On balladry, one of the striking achievements of the Spanish people, we read "all Spanish ballads are a little disappointing to beginners because of their form." And not one scape the dreadful touch!

Coming down to more modern times, the romantic movement, for example, some of its essentials are given, but the essence which distinguishes it from romanticism in the rest of Europe is not clearly set forth. And how the rogue story, crassly realistic, cynical, and without warmth or passion, or Quevedo's "Sueños" (Visions of Hell) can be said to have had "a romantic cast" and thus anticipate the Romantic movement, is puzzling, to say the least. Upon reaching

the drama of the nineteenth century, it has been deemed sufficient to print for the beginner a roster of twenty-two names "and others," as though such a page could have the slightest meaning to anyone. Too often it is apparent that the author has not read the material treated, and that we are getting Ticknor, like a voice from the tomb, or Fitzmaurice-Kelly, or Merimée, whose opinions are not always felicitously chosen.

The "generation of 1898," whose achievement we are witnessing today, is perhaps too near to judge fairly. We become acquainted with some of the important leaders of the modern movement, and their portraits are well-drawn; but the ultimate bent of their minds can be more satisfactorily explained by taking into account the influence of their great teacher, Francisco Giner, and of his *Institución libre de enseñanza*. Of this there is no mention. Of contemporary lyric poetry the author says nothing, and if he says but little of modern painting and nothing of sculpture, he may offer the sound excuse that he has attempted too much. At the close we find countless authorities for quotations and statements made in the text. As bibliography this is very confusing and must remain wholly unintelligible to any beginner. Nothing could be more difficult to use than Cejador y Frauca's fourteen folio volumes on Spanish literature, and not many casual readers are apt to manipulate Menéndez y Pelayo's "Historia de los Heterodoxos" (a history of Protestantism) or to decipher the meaning of such hieroglyphics as "Bullar," "Ord," "FF," "Prae." As a matter of fact, the author has lost sight of the ignorant and indolent here and is merely provoking the narrow-minded scholar.

From the beginner's point of view it is fair to add that the above strictures seem a trifle severe, that many a reader may be guided a wearisome journey or a tedious hour by perusing some of the pages of this book; but even its charm could be enhanced by more vigor and punch to suit the modern beginner, and by less sweetness and modesty, lest the casual reader be led to believe that the book is addressed only to a gathering of gentle elderly folk, and not to a virile young world.

War by Machines

PARIS, OR THE FUTURE OF WAR.

By CAPTAIN B. H. LIDDELL HART. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1925. \$1.

Reviewed by EDWARD P. WARNER
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"MAN cannot make a machine," said the report of the President's Aircraft Board, "which is stronger than the spirit of man," and the same document, dipping further into prophecy: "The next war may begin in the air but, like the last one, it is likely to end in the mud." Captain Hart has no patience with such reactionary sentiments. Himself as wholly of the new school as Colonel Mitchell, he sees a future of war in which machines will be primary and the men that work them secondary and in which victory will be achieved not by attrition, but by overcoming the enemy's will to continuance, as the greatest of chess masters achieve their victories not by laborious capture of all the adversary's pawns, but by carefully schemed combinations leading directly to sudden checkmate.

Bonaparte and Clausewitz, on whom the author places the major share of the blame for the theory of victory by exhaustion of man power, are to disappear as military prophets, giving way to the chemist and the engineer. War of the future, says Captain Hart, belongs to the airplane, the submarine, the tank, and to gas, and especially to gas, which is to drive the individual from the surface of the earth, forcing him to rise above the deadly cloud in an airplane or to encase himself in a gas-proof tank and charge through it. He intimates that the British high command at least was converted to the new warfare while yet locked in the embrace of the old, for the book states among its other historical allusions that the idea of a swift penetration through the German lines and a blow in the rear by a fleet of light tanks running at high speed had been adopted as the basis of British strategy for the campaign of 1919. "This plan," says the author, "heralds the dawn of scientific military thought in its grasp of the truth that even the military objective is a moral one—the paralysis of the enemy's command and not the bodies of the actual soldiers," and he sees in the dawn of that idea a return to the principles of warfare as practiced by inspired military

leaders long before Bonaparte, by Alexander at Arbela, and by Scipio Africanus against Hannibal.

Brief as it is, numbering scarcely eighty small pages, "Paris" gives an excellent presentation of the viewpoint of a modernist who has not been too enamoured of one specialty to see the field of military operations as a whole. Specialists will find flaws in particular points, as in the indication that civil aviation may be expected to provide great reserves for the armed forces, and there will be many who agree with the Morrow Board and feel that Captain Hart has treated the infantry and the battleship in too high-handed a manner, but even they will find the book interesting and provocative rather of thought than of resentment and bitterness. In that respect it stands in marked contrast to certain other pronouncements recently made on the same side of the same subject.

Human Behavior

WHY WE BEHAVE LIKE HUMAN BEINGS. By GEORGE A. DORSEY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1925. \$3.

Reviewed by FREDERICK H. LUND
Barnard College

FOR the reading public this book provides an interesting array of information; but, because of the diversity of its treatment and the variety of topics brought under consideration, it is scarcely to be recommended for systematic study. Selecting some of the more striking facts from the fields of biology, physiology, and psychology, Dr. Dorsey attempts to account for man's probable origin, ascent, and present structural and functional traits. The staid formulae of science are paraded to the rhythm of a vivacious man-in-the-street style. Organic chemistry, anthropology, endocrinology, and the theory of prepotent reflex mechanisms, all contribute to the composite picture of the human machine.

Thus, for those who have been looking for a book which brings together from the various sciences some of the essential facts relative to human origin and functional adaptation, this must be a welcome volume. To the reader who has neither the time nor the prerequisite information for the appreciation of scientific treatises, who wants to know in few and unequivocal statements what the human and biological sciences have to offer of immediate and practical interest,—in other words, the individual who wants (as most of us do) to have the world presented in a nut-shell—in statements simple and unqualified—this book must meet with hearty approval. Indeed, the author states that his aim is to present "a complete up-to-date story that can be held in one hand and read without a dictionary"—a comprehensive story of human life in all its ramifications.

Dorsey first informs us as to our ontogenetic development, the development and growth of the individual from a single germ cell. Next the phylogenetic development—the origin, growth, and differentiation of the species according to Darwinian and evolutionary concepts.

But these facts are less potent in arousing our interests today than a few generations ago when they formed the battling ground between the ecclesiasts and the scientists. Accordingly, the author does not lose too much time on them and advances to a more fascinating and absorbing subject which is commanding much more general interest at the present—the endocrine of ductless glands. In the physics and chemistry of these is to be found the final solution of the perplexities of growth, the nature of age and decay, and the mysteries of emotion, instinct, and sex.

With this background the more sober facts of nervous integration are brought to our attention to account for the coordinated activity by which the organism becomes a unit with harmonious adjustment of the various organs and capacities; and secondly, as a mechanism by which the internal conditions of the organism are brought into accord with the external environmental conditions through the intermediary of the senses and the musculature.

The remaining chapters discourse on the nature of acquired and native forms of behavior. They include a somewhat sketchy account of the reflexes, instincts, and habits,—the interrelation of these and the factors upon which modification and selection in learned modes of response depend. In his discussion on instincts he vacillates between Watsonian behaviorism and a mechanistic account on the one hand, and the purposivistic and vitalistic accounts of McDougall, Freud, and Bergson on the other.

Placid Lives

BENONI. By KNUT HAMSUN. Translated from the Norwegian by ARTHUR G. CHATER. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1925. \$2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

READING "Benoni" it is difficult to imagine it an almost contemporaneous story, for its simplicity of life in a Norwegian settlement, and some particular quality of Knut Hamsun's (accentuated by the translator) give it a flavor of long ago. Some of it carries one back, by its touches, as far as the old Scandinavian sagas, and more of it as far as the sixteenth and seventeenth century. For one thing, we have in America no counterpart of the naïve existence of these carpenters and fishermen and farmers, and for another, "Benoni" seems pitched by intention in an elemental and unsophisticated key—not that which in "The Growth of the Soil" has its deep and rich earthy undertone, but one instead of placid lives never touched by great passions and sorrows, where life goes on without variety or expansion, and death is the comfort of longevity.

And so "Benoni" is just a book of quiet humors. There is nothing in the man who gives it his name to stir or excite us; he is a mild and unimaginative fisherman and mail-carrier whose one acute perception is that of the class he was born into. So aware is he of his rightful station in life that he is more prepared for failure than success. But he happens to be level-headed and lucky and he gets rich. He rises to very partnership with Mack of Sirilund, the great man of the district beyond whose greatness Benoni can see nothing further. Thus Hamsun's humor descending upon this fellow is of the homeliest and kindest. In a world which makes Benoni Hartvigsen a great power with fifty thousand dollars, there is no place for satire or speculation. For another reason also this humor can have no edge: circumscribed Benoni's ideals and conceptions may be, but he is not a fool. His is the essence of good sense. One cannot laugh, but only smile at one who struts with moderation when he grows rich, and knows how to use his money and how to climb into a more cultured world with understanding as clear as it is limited.



One fly blackens Benoni's ointment—he aspires unsuccessfully to the hand of Mack of Sirilund's god-daughter, who comes of gentlefolk and has more intelligence and refinement than herself. They get as far as engaged, but she throws him over for her perennial suitor Arentsen the lawyer, and even when her husband becomes a peniless drunkard, she will not accept him. One does not know the ultimate outcome because the present book has a sequel, "Rosa," which will no doubt shortly be translated.

"Benoni" is simpler and lighter than the other books of Hamsun with which I am familiar. It has neither color nor variety, and I think no one can find it more than a quiet story. But it is not ineffective; artless as it is, it holds one's attention by means of its loose yet continuous quality of narrative, which is never impeded by excursions into other fields. The sphere of the book is decidedly a simple one, but it has its contrasts even so, as between Benoni and the more worldly and cultivated Mack and Rosa and Arentsen. In the relations between these last two there is a certain cynical enlightenment which takes us into a world more familiar and real to our minds. Presumably the translator has been at pains to duplicate in English Hamsun's style and its evocations, but his work has an unhappy air of transliteration and is often stiffly out of date. One hopes that this want of charm in Mr. Chater's version indicates the presence of accuracy.

A recent gift of 200 prints to the New York Public Library from C. Davies Sherborn, son of Charles William Sherborn, who has been called "the father of the modern engraved bookplate" makes the number of this artist's engravings in the library's collection over 360.

Spain has instituted a new holiday, called "Dia del Libro," in honor of Cervantes, to be celebrated October 7, the anniversary of his birth. Special literary prizes will be awarded on that occasion, and it is intended that the holiday will be extended to all Spanish-speaking countries in America.



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Books of Special Interest

Philosophical Complexities

THE MIND AND ITS PLACE IN NATURE. By C. D. BROAD. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1925.

Reviewed by RALPH BARTON PERRY
Harvard University

THE author of this book has come to the fore in recent years as the most prominent of the younger members of a group of English philosophers, destined, perhaps, to be known as the "Cambridge School." The patriarch of this school is Professor Samuel Alexander, and its other leaders are Mr. Bertrand Russell, Professor G. E. Moore, and Professor A. N. Whitehead (now of Harvard). The members of this school are distinguished by their interest in systematic philosophy, especially in metaphysics and theory of knowledge. They have personal opinions on these subjects, which they publish and support by argument; whereas their contemporaries at Oxford, so it is said, are addicted to the study of other peoples' opinions,—notably those of Plato, Aristotle, and Kant. As Cambridge men they also find themselves in near propinquity, not to classical philosophy, but to mathematics and natural science; whose problems and results they borrow, and whose methods they analyze and emulate.

The philosophical doctrines of this school all betray one dominating purpose, which is to overcome the "dualisms" of mind and body,—not by reducing the one to the other, but by bringing them into relations of homogeneity or continuity. In so doing, they find themselves, despite their scientific associations, in sympathy with great pre-Kantian speculative philosophers, such as Aristotle and Leibnitz,—who, it so happens, were also scientists. They discuss God as freely as they do elections and relativity.

There are three of these "dualisms" which have become a part of the stock in trade of modern philosophy: First, the dualism between purpose and mechanism; second, the dualism between the conscious will and the bodily organism which it occupies; third, the dualism between the perceiving mind and the external physical object which it knows. On the first of these issues Dr. Broad adopts the view which he calls "Emergent Vitalism," meaning that while the living organism is composed altogether of physico-chemical elements, and contains no peculiar *element* such as the "entelechy" of Driesch, it possesses a peculiar structure, so that its behavior could not be predicted from a complete knowledge of physico-chemical laws. As regards the relation of the conscious will to the bodily organism, the author adopts the older and the common-sense view of Interactionism as against Parallelism. The outcome as regards the third issue is less decisive. Perception itself contains objective "sensa" together with certain subjective states, the latter being excited by the former in such wise as to create a specific "external reference."

By an examination of the sensa and their correlations one may learn something about the physical object, its shape, size, position, microscopic parts, etc. But the physical object as such has to be postulated. If we did not assume it one should never find evidence of it. Thus perceptual knowledge of the physical world reduces in the end to what Mr. Santayana calls "animal faith."

Dr. Broad's discussion of mind is further notable for its almost entire omission of reference to thought, belief, judgment, and the other higher processes; and for its inclusion of the "supernormal" facts, which "the careful work of the Society for Psychical Research has elicited." He records his belief that the prejudice against these facts is due to a disposition on the part of scientists "to confuse the Author of Nature with the editor of *Nature*," and argues for the theory of mind that shall at least provide for such facts if there are any. As to what, in conclusion, mind is, the author formulates seventeen possible views, and having lingered hesitatingly over these, finally casts his vote in favor of a qualified form of "Emergent Materialism." According to this last surviving view, the world is material in its substance and composition, mind being a peculiar and irreducible quality attaching to certain material complexes.

The book is a curious mixture of idiom and technique, of casual opinion and laborious analysis. It is both sceptical and, except in moments of temperamental irritability, tolerant and indulgent. It mortifies the philosophic mind by an aggravation

of difficulties, and consoles common-sense and traditional piety by affirming constructive beliefs. The author possesses ingenuity rather than originality. He has neither the speculative imagination of Professor Alexander or Professor Whitehead, nor the wit and innocence of Mr. Russell. He reminds one rather of Professor Moore in his inexhaustible capacity for multiplying distinctions. It takes a reader with a stout mind to follow him, as he threads his fox-like way through the jungle of philosophical complexities. The amateur reader who would like to know as briefly as possible what mind is, had best look elsewhere, or confine himself to the summaries which the author charitably supplies at the end of the chapter; for it is Dr. Broad's way to erect and overthrow at least a dozen very carefully elaborated false hypotheses for one that he allows to stand. But for the professional student who is bent on erecting a hypothesis of his own, this book provides both an extraordinary assemblage of philosophical designs and building materials, and a well-equipped gymnasium for the exercise of the philosophical muscles.

Exploding a Myth

COLERIDGE AT HIGHGATE. By LUCY ELEANOR WATSON. Longmans, Green. 1926. \$3.75.

EVERYBODY who believes that a man is more the worse for having faced and attempted to conquer his vices, even when he happens to be a poet, will welcome Mrs. Watson's evidence concerning the later years of Coleridge's life. For a century now it has been supposed that he became and continued to be a drug-fiend even after the days when he placed himself in the care of Dr. Gillman, the author's grandfather, at Highgate. De Quincey, the prince of opium eaters, although an admirer of the poet, was chiefly responsible for the biographical legend which has persisted so steadily since Coleridge died. Coleridge, he said, had a strong and excellent constitution, which was undermined by the mere indulgence of a luxurious sensation and not to relieve pain. Mrs. Watson proves beyond doubt, supporting her case with overwhelming evidence including that of a post-mortem, that Coleridge suffered from his earliest years more agony than De Quincey ever was called upon to bear. It is stated even in the "Dictionary of National Biography" that the post-mortem revealed no cause of his long sufferings. The author, however, brings modern as well as contemporary medical evidence together to demonstrate the fact that Coleridge's pain during the greater part of his life cannot be doubted. Her accounts of his long residence under the care of Dr. Gillman are sufficiently well established to show that he gradually ceased taking those enormous potations of laudanum which have been attributed to him by De Quincey. They also help to reverse the old idea that laziness and inanition prevented him from writing during the latter years of his life. Dr. Green, the Professor of Anatomy at the Royal College of Surgeons, during Coleridge's lifetime, wrote that "if the public may regret that the fruits and results of his wonderful powers were less than might have been expected, they have more cause of wonder at the works which he accomplished under the grievous impediments from which he was a sufferer." It is pleasant to recall that the contemporary American scholar and admirer of the poet, Dr. G. L. Prentiss, helped to supply much of the evidence which has made it possible for Mrs. Watson to write this vindication. We could wish that there were more details of Coleridge's self and less of his ills. But the student of his life cannot afford to neglect this extremely vital chapter for the author has rendered an invaluable service to those who have never been able comfortably to reconcile the character and habits of one who was not only a great poet and the greatest of all critics but also the most brilliant talker of his age.

"Black Oxen," by Gertrude Atherton, in the German translation of A. Paul Maerker-Branden, is now appearing in serial form in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, preparatory to a dramatic presentation late in Spring.

As a guide to contemporary prose and poetry "Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit" (1925) by Albert Sörgel is indispensable. He organizes a tremendous mass of material deftly, but without panderism, and blazes a trail well worth following.



The City

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Politics and Society

and how the two may be brought into a state of compatibility is the burden of Professor Merriam's book. In *New Aspects of Politics* he considers specifically the lines along which there are signs of a new approach to political problems, and indicates the probable line of future progress in all of these fields. *New Aspects of Politics*. By Charles E. Merriam. \$2.50, postpaid, \$2.60.

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