

the attempts of the Junta Central, the Regency, and the Cortes to put together a viable Spanish government. Next comes the work of the Cortes of Cádiz in creating the Constitution of 1812 and an analysis of that document. Professor Lovett then describes Joseph and his government and follows this with an inquiry into the origins and actions of the *afrancesados*. He continues with a treatment of the *guerrilleros* and their savage and personal war against the French. The concluding chapters deal with the British operations in Spain, the French withdrawal, and the return of Ferdinand.

Lovett considers the principal cause of the Spanish War of Independence to be Spanish nationalism, to which he appears somewhat more sympathetic than Connelly. Indeed, far from being "archaic," the Spanish reaction to Napoleon was a "people's war" which "inspired the other enslaved European nations." More significant, the war was also a revolution that divided Spaniards into the quarreling camps of liberals and conservatives, so important for the next century.

Lovett's work is the most detailed and comprehensive treatment in English on the War of Independence. It is written from an obviously thorough acquaintance with not only the printed sources but much archival material. The work is carefully organized and written with clarity. Both books belong in the library of every Hispanist, and each author should be congratulated on his achievement.

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GEORGE M. ADDY

*The Siege of the Alcázar.* By CECIL D. EBY. New York, 1965. Random House. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 242. \$4.95.

An associate professor of English at the University of Michigan, Cecil Eby has written a colorful account of the drama of the Alcázar—one of the most spectacular episodes in twentieth-century Spanish history. The challenge of attack, the strain of defense, exchanges of insults, the hope of relief, hoses spraying gasoline, tank guns blazing—these are a few representative features of a siege lasting ten full weeks before being lifted in September 1936.

Eby's actors range from career army officers and women in labor to journalists, a Paramount cameraman, and a female combatant nicknamed Snub Nose. Armored cars, grenades, and point-blank fire are scarcely unexpected. But the military-history buff who savors details will be impressed by "pieces of steel tubing packed with dynamite and lit by a cigarette" (p. 189), as well as by parachutists deliberately machine-gunned from the air. Green cadets and seasoned Civil Guards defending their positions are opposed by overall-clad *mili-*

*cianos* faltering on the charge. Half-buried corpses sticking out of stones, a stethoscope used as a mine detector, a baby girl suddenly born in the dark at a moment when subterranean mines explode, hand-to-hand fighting, a tank with hooting klaxon, soldiers stumbling through the rubble to rifle pit and parapet—what marvelous material for the historian, or for what we once thought of as Hollywood.

While “Reading Notes” are collected at the back of the book, there is no point-by-point documentation in the usual sense of the term. Almost equally regrettable is the absence of an index. On p. 99, it is stated: “The Republican mine was the brain child of a woman, Margarita Nelken. . . . When the Alcázar failed to be starved into surrender, she wired twenty-five Asturian miners: I NEED YOU. WE MUST BLOW UP THE ALCÁZAR.” Your reviewer quoted this passage to Señora Nelken, who replied: “I wish to answer your attentive lines referring to my SUPPOSED letter to some Asturian miners, in order that they use dynamite to blow up the Alcázar of Toledo, which does not have ANY MARK of truth. . . . I NEVER sent any such demand to the Asturian miners. . . .” Respecting so central a matter, it would seem that the author should have consulted and cited informed people on *both* sides even if he chose to relegate all versions except one to footnote or “Reading Note” status.

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HOLMAN HAMILTON

#### COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

*La idea colonial de Ponce de León. Un ensayo de interpretación.* By MANUEL BALLESTEROS GAIBROIS. San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1960. Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña. Bibliography. Pp. 292.

Professor Ballesteros Gaibrois has written this thoroughly interesting and very thoughtful study of Juan Ponce de León in order to establish the motivations and the responses of the Spanish conquistadors to their experience in the New World. He has chosen Ponce de León thinking him typical of the men who came to settle the region. Ponce, as a loyal servant to his king, reflected the hopes and aspirations of his times. Living in a society that approved of success, he was ambitious and sought glory. He also was a product of an age in which the mysterious and the exotic appealed to those facing a dull and dreary daily existence, so that the challenge of adventure led him, as it did many other Castilians, to participate in the settling of the New World.

The author does not present a biography of the man, but illus-