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**La Escondida Senda: Ten Centures of Spanish Poetry**  
edited by Eleanor L. Turnbull and introduction by Pedro Salinas

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developed human person he needs the guidance and the support of adults. In turn he owes them obedience and love. To regard children as full grown, independent, and responsible individuals is unscientific and a crime against both the child himself and society.

FREDERICK FOX

## LA ESCONDIDA SENDA

TEN CENTURES OF SPANISH POETRY. An Anthology in English Verse with Original Texts From the XIth Century to the Generation of 1898. Edited by Eleanor L. Turnbull with introductions by Pedro Salinas. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1955. Pp. xv-452

Ten centuries—a thousand years—are a long time in the history of any country, but particularly so in that of Spain. These ten centuries from the year 1000 A.D. to the early 1900's have witnessed stirring events on the Iberian Peninsula. They saw most of Spain under the Moors, and they witnessed the pushing back inch by inch of Moslem power till all the Peninsula was free. They saw Spain transformed from a chaos of counties, dukedoms, and kingdoms, into a united realm under the monarchs who were "Catholic" in more senses than one. They saw the Crusades, the voyages of discovery, the "stately Spanish galleons," the "invincible armada," the phenomenal expansion of the Spanish empire that encircled the globe and its slow shrinking back into the isolation of the Iberian Peninsula. These centuries saw the Spanish monarchy at its zenith and in its decadence. They saw the building of the great cathedrals and palaces; the rise and slow decline of the universities of Alcalá and Salamanca; the spread of the great religious orders; the great Spanish mystics: St. John of the Cross, St. Theresa of Avila, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola—to name a few. These were centuries of great movements in art: gothic, renaissance, baroque, romanticist. These centuries saw on the one hand a rigorous Spanish Inquisition that counted among its victims a great saint (Loyola) and a famous poet (Fray Luis de Leon); and on the other hand a militant anticlericalism and rationalism that could with one stroke of the pen, "for reasons hidden within our royal bosom," order the expulsion of thousands of priests and religious from all Spanish dominions in both hemispheres and the closing down of churches, colleges and schools.

A country that goes through all this during a thousand years cannot but produce a sizable body of literature. But when to these stirring events are added the great cultural influences of Catholic thought and of Greek and Roman literature (cultivated with great assiduity in Spain); when, furthermore, to these cultural influences is added the native lyricism of the Spaniard — whose voice is naturally melodious, whose ear is attuned to the murmur of rivers and the singing of nightingales, whose feet dance readily to the sound of castanets; when, finally, to this native lyricism and these cultural influences is added a mystic cast of thought which makes the Spaniard turn easily to contemplation: when all these are added together, the result is great literature. And this great literature is distilled in this excellent anthology.

Of course, not all of Spanish literature is here included. Cervantes is not here, nor Saint Theresa, nor Father Rodriguez, nor the great Spanish plays of which only lyrical excerpts are included. What we have here is the best of Spanish lyrics: the original texts on one side, and excellent translations into English verse on the other.

It is remarkable, however, how little of the turmoil of the past ten centuries is directly reflected in Spanish poetry. There is, of course, the *Cantar del Mio Cid* which purports to mirror the events in 11th-century Spain. Apart from this and a few other examples, Spanish poetry seems surprisingly little concerned with the turmoil of contemporary events. Fray Luis de Leon, professor in turbulent times at the University of Salamanca and prisoner for five years of the Spanish Inquisition, writes not of rebellion or defiance or hostility or injured pride, but sings of the joys of solitude and the peace of the cloister:

Que descansada vida  
 la del que huye el mundanal ruido,  
 y sigue la escondida  
 senda por donde han ido  
 los pocos sabios que en el mundo han sido!

Calderon de la Barca, writing in an age of baroque, and when Spain is at the zenith of worldly power, asks if life is not a dream from which we would some day awaken. Gonzalo Adolfo Bécquer, writing in an age of romanticism, but also of revolutions, mourns only that the identical swallows will not return. It is as if the Spanish soul,

weary of stern realities, turns to poetry for a respite and hears in it the twittering of swallows and the warbling of nightingales. This, and the Spanish preoccupation for form, give to Spanish poetry an atmosphere at once delightful and disciplined.

Miss Turnbull's anthology is a delight both to the scholar and to the general reader. It can be read with pleasure both by those who know Spanish and by those who don't. The Spanish texts are from the best editions: those by Damaso Alonso, or by Menendez Pidal, or the *obras completas* of the various poets, or from the many-volumed *Biblioteca de autores españoles*. A few are from the *Oxford Book of Spanish Verse*. The English translations are by a score of authors including Longfellow, Masfield, Edgar Allison Peers, Byron, Thomas Walsh, George Ticknor. Many of the translations are by Miss Turnbull herself. In general, the translations are excellent, and their competence might be seen in the following example, of Lope de Vega's well-known sonnet on a sonnet.

Un soneto me manda hacer Violante,  
que en mi vida me he visto en tanto aprieto;  
catorce versos dicen, que es soneto;  
burla burlando van los tres delante.

Yo pensé que no hallara consonante,  
y estoy a la mitad de otro cuarteto,  
mas si me veo en el primer terceto,  
no hay cosa en los cuartetos que me espante.

Por el primer terceto voy entrando,  
y parece que entré con pie derecho,  
pues fin con este verso le voy dando.

Ya estoy en el segundo, y aun sospecho  
que voy los trece versos acabando;  
contad si son catorce, y está hecho.

The translation is by James Young Gibson, and goes as follows:

To write a sonnet doth Juana press me,  
I've never found me in such stress and pain;  
A sonnet numbers fourteen lines, 'tis plain,  
And three are gone ere I can say, God bless me!

I thought that spinning rhymes might sore oppress me,  
Yet here I'm midway in the last quatrain;  
And if the foremost tercet I can gain,  
The quatrains need not any more distress me.

To the first tercet I have got at last,  
 And travel through it with such right good-will,  
 That with this line I've finished it, I ween.

I'm in the second now, and see how fast  
 The thirteenth line comes tripping from my quill—  
 Hurrah, 'tis done! Count if there be fourteen.

Occasionally, the translations achieve a certain brilliance rivaling that of the original. For instance, Quevedo's well-known lines

Poderoso caballero  
 es don Dinero

are rendered thus by Thomas Walsh:

Over kings and priests and scholars  
 Rules the mighty Lord of Dollars.

That, of course, is not translation but paraphrase, but (though perhaps unjust to priests and scholars, whatever might be said of kings) it is excellent paraphrase, and the whole of Quevedo's poem is rendered thus brilliantly. For example:

Mother, unto gold I yield me,  
 He and I are ardent lovers;  
 Pure affection now discovers  
 How his sunny rays shall shield me!  
 For a trifle more or less  
 All his power will confess,—  
 Over kings and priests and scholars  
 Rules the mighty Lord of Dollars.

Miss Turnbull's anthology has one more virtue to commend it: the brief introductions to the individual authors or periods, most of them by Pedro Salinas, a few by Damaso Alonso. This book should be in every college reading room, and on the desk of everyone who loves good literature.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

## SOUND POLITICAL THEORY

FUNDAMENTALS OF GOVERNMENT. By Henry J. Schmandt and Paul G. Steinbicker. The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1954. Pp. xii-507.

Books on politics and government, both national and international, are legion. But sound analyses of political theory and practice