

SPAIN AND THE WORLD

Let anarcho-syndicalists invent their own systems, and until they have attained it go on dreaming . . . But behind the dream there is a human truth of the most generous kind — sometimes let one insist, absolutely sublime. Is not that enough?

—RAMON SENDER
(Seven Red Sundays).

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Madrid Front. "Moving to the Line of fire." (Illustration from the "War in Spain").

The C.N.T. And Its "Leaders"

(From Our Correspondent in Barcelona)

I WAS in the Casa CNT-FAI during the entire period of conflict, I saw them making their plans, military plans, figuring and calculating and preparing. I saw who was doing it and under what conditions . . .

I saw Federica Montseny mobbed by a bunch of angry and very indignant Libertarian Youth, who had just come in with the tanks. They wanted to go out and wipe up the city with the counter-revolutionists. I saw them talk to her. And believe me, not only was she not regarded as a leader who had to be handled with respect and kid gloves, but they did not even regard her as an older comrade who might have more experience and whose opinions might be worth listening to. Nor did she expect it. She argued with them on a plane of equality—thorough equality. Nothing could be better to see.

At the time, she was still the "Minister of Health" etc. In any other movement not only would the rank and file have held her in awe, but she would have done everything possible to keep them awestruck. In our movement, not only do the comrades refuse to regard such stuff seriously, but it was quite evident that she herself did not regard it as such. She was one of the comrades responsible for directing the movement at the moment; she was not an infallible leader. As a matter of fact, she yielded to them at the end, and that was the only way the argument finally ended. Little as I could understand, I got the meaning of her final shrug of the shoulders and the last few words that brought the discussion to a close. She said something to the effect, "Give us one more chance to end this conflict peacefully. If we fail you have the full freedom to act and do as you please." This took place on Thursday afternoon. By Friday, the fighting actually did die down. After seeing that, and after seeing her jostled about in a crowd by the comrades, including Garcia Oliver; and after seeing them moving in the crowd, talking to the comrades, all of them, the great anonymous mass of our comrades, no one can tell me that a chasm has developed between the "leaders" and the rank and file, that there is a distance between the two.

At the present time, a conference of the Local Federation of the FAI is being held. They have only had three sessions so far, but it is becoming evident already that the FAI is preparing to take a firmer attitude from now on. At least that seems to be the trend. But during all these preliminary talks of the comrades, in which the sentiment of the movement is being sounded out, there is no reproach for the "leadership," for Oliver, Montseny and the others. They must give a report of their stewardship, but they are not being reproached for what they have done, because what they did they have done with the consent and upon the advice of the Movement. The FAI is as much a movement of workers as any union could be. A movement of selected workers, of the most idealistic, the most class conscious, the most devoted. I don't believe you could have a finer gathering of men any place as at a FAI gathering. No union could ever have that selectivity, that opportunity for free and open discussion, that complete cordiality, that unanimity of basic principles that a gathering of FAI workers shares.

Then again, the unions have also been holding numerous Congresses and Conferences. Every day there are announcements of new such meetings. And certainly the delegates to these sessions come directly from the workers, instructed by them. Nor are the decisions of such sessions valid until they are ratified by the local unions represented. Every month Local and regional and national plenums of the CNT are being held, in which the delegates gather from their local organisations with direct instructions of the membership. How can one say that the "leadership," the National Committee, or the Regional Committees are drifting away from the membership and leading them around by the nose?

If, then, there is such close contact in the movement, between those who happen to be in the directing positions and those who are still working in the factories and the fields, you probably ask, why this loss of militance? Why this continual retreat? Why all this manoeuvring? Our movement, and with it, all the people of Spain are in one of the most tragic situations that any people have ever found themselves in history. On the front is international fascism, backed by all the powerful resources of Italy's and Germany's war machinery. In the rear, the Communists and the bourgeois parties are working most unscrupulously to rob the workers and peasants of their conquests. Supporting the latter is international finance and Russia. They, and the latter in particular, are determined to forestall a Social Revolution. Their manoeuvres of the past few months definitely prove, to my satisfaction, that all of them, including Soviet Russia and the Spanish communists, have faced the dilemma and made their choice. Between Franco and the Social Revolution, all of them prefer Franco. I stress this because there are comrades here who still do not want to believe that the communists have reached such a low level. As the situation stands now, we too must make a choice. At the present time, we must still depend upon the outside for armaments. We absolutely cannot manufacture enough in Spain to keep an army of 400,000 armed. It is an utter impossibility. If at the present time, we go out on the streets and crush all the counter-revolutionary elements as they should be crushed, and as every anarchist in Spain feels they should, we immediately cut off all possibility of outside aid in any form whatever. There would be civil war within the international war against fascism. The fronts would be torn asunder, and above all we would be isolated from all supplies of arms from the outside. In other words, the fall of Bilbao because of sheer superiority of weapons, should knock all the illusions out of us that the war can be won by spirit alone, etc. Therefore if we take the offensive and wipe out our enemies in the rear, as we can do any time we please,

POLITICAL UNDESIRABLES

Where Do They Hide?

THE Communist Press and its sympathisers have gone to great pains to impress us that the CNT-FAI harbours political undesirables who are potential members of Franco's Fifth Column.

Even Ramon Sender in his book (reviewed elsewhere) cannot refrain from this "Communist temptation." He writes (p. 175) ". . . in some parts of Spain the CNT has rashly opened its doors to members of the lower and even the middle classes with two great an eagerness to proselytize, and through its syndicates people had entered who were not merely indifferent or neutral, but what was worse, dangerous and treacherous."

"Fragua Social" of Valencia however supplies interesting data which does not seem to tally with his (or shall we say the Communist Party's) statement.

The "Fragua Social" (20/7/37) writes:

"I have here an item that puts wings to my pen in starting this commentary. The Regional Congress of CNT Unions of Levante

considered certain interesting questions that must be considered and that, until now, have been only partially understood.

"The purifications of the Unions absorbed the attention of the Congress, and all the delegates contributed to the discussion with great zeal. The political parties that have tried to soil the spotless reputation of the CNT, at times impudently, always in an irresponsible manner, have hit up against the truth, calm and immovable, that pointed an accusing finger at them, showing them up with the hard realities of fact. . . . Here are the statistics for the province of Albacete, in which the Investigating Committee of the Anti-fascist Front rooted out the undesirables:

Political undesirables hiding:
In the UGT..... 1,637
In the political parties 686
In the CNT..... 489

What have Ramon Sender and the Communist Party to say to these most interesting figures?

we open the way for a Franco victory, with all the massacre it incurs, and with the complete suppression of everything that today still serves to inspire the workers of the world. On the other hand, we know that we will only receive weapons to carry on against Franco from the outside, only in measure as the other countries are convinced that we are being put in our place, i.e., that they feel certain that we cannot assert ourselves afterwards and put our programme into practice. However, so long as Franco is defeated, so long as we have our own armed contingents on the fronts, so long as we have so much arms in the rear, directly under our control, we shall always be able to fight for our ideals after Franco is disposed of. In other words, no matter what retreats we are compelled to make at this time, while the war is still on, the final decision is by no means prejudiced by it. The final decision in Spain will be the test of arms after Franco is gone, and don't forget it. Everybody knows it, we as well as they. That is why they are doing everything possible to out us into a position of inferiority so that it shall be that much more difficult for us to move at the end of the war. But whatever they do, they cannot take our weapons from us, and they know it. When the patrols of Control were dissolved and they were ordered to give up their weapons, they surrendered, as somebody in a position to know put it, "forty old muskets." Literally so. And the Patrols of control are known to have plenty of arms. When the Valencia Government and the Generality called upon everybody to surrender their arms for the "front," our movement "complied" by printing the order in "Soli" (it took up a full page), without a single comment of its own. I understand, that a couple of hundred old rifles were turned in altogether.

I want to point out that no matter what the manoeuvres during the war, no matter what the retreats we are compelled to make now, the actual strength of our movement rests upon its arms, and we are well armed! The movement is a healthy one and is not too concerned over the political fortunes of our "representatives," nor, I believe, are the "representatives" themselves.

SPAIN'S ART TREASURES

The principal works of art in Spain are as safe as they can be "in the present unhappy circumstances." This conclusion is reached by Sir Frederic Kenyon (the former Director of the British Museum) and Mr. J. G. Mann, who recently visited Spain to see for themselves what steps were being taken for the protection of the country's artistic treasures. The work done to this end they describe as "truly remarkable."

In their report just issued they state that:

The general method has been to concentrate everything in a few repositories where they can be made reasonably safe against anything but deliberate bombardment. Thousands of pictures, frescoes, sculptures, books, papers &c., and masses of furniture from churches and private collections have been assembled in selected churches and other buildings in Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona, and some small towns in the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees.

Special departments have been organised to carry out this work, and every object is punctiliously labelled and registered. Laboratories for treatment of works of art have been established, and posters have been distributed throughout the country exhorting the people to respect and defend their artistic patrimony.

The best of the pictures in the Prado (some 500 in number) have been brought down to Valencia, carefully packed in stout packing-cases, and stored in the towers of a mediaeval gate of the town. It is proposed to send the pick of the Spanish paintings to Paris, for an exhibition of Spanish art; but nothing has gone yet, and conditions of transport are difficult.

Some of the best of the private collections in Madrid are also in Valencia, including much of the Duke of Alba's, whose palace has, however, been wrecked. The Royal Palace, which faces the main battle front, has suffered somewhat, but its contents have been removed.

The invaluable suits of armour and weapons from the Royal Armoury are stacked in small rooms below the great hall. The best of the manuscripts in the Escorial have been brought to Valencia, together with 2,000 manuscripts and 5,000 printed books from the National Library of Madrid. We saw many individual pictures and objects of art for which we asked, and were able to investigate thoroughly the methods taken to store and protect them.

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CATALONIA—AN ANSWER TO COMORERA

ON more than one occasion Fascist data has been exposed for the benefit of those people who seek the truth. In that way Fascist propaganda has been used by Fascism's opponents to expose this regime.

To-day we are not only faced with Fascist propaganda and lies, but also with an abundance of literature, issued by the Communist Party of Great Britain, in which no attempt is made to seek the truth, and no effort spared to destroy those individuals and organisations which have been to the fore in the struggle against Fascism.

Thus we are not surprised to see published by the Communist Party a pamphlet entitled "Spain Organises for Victory," in which speeches by Hernandez and Comorera are reproduced and accompanied by a Foreword from the pen of J. R. Campbell, whose bourgeois mentality was fully exposed in his pamphlet "Spain's Left Critics" and discussed in No. 9 of "Spain and the World." Hernandez's speech was an attack on Caballero and all praise for the Negrin Government.¹ At the moment we are more concerned with the speech of Comorera who chose as subject "The Position in Catalonia."

Perhaps some comrades are familiar with Comorera's function in Catalonia since July 19th, 1936. When the C.N.T. was included in the Catalonian Government, one of the portfolios held by that body was that of the Department of Food Supplies. During that time prices of food were fixed, besides many other essential reforms. With the arrival of Comorera all this work was wiped out with one stroke of the pen. He wished to break the power of the Unions by turning over the function of food supplies to private companies. Thus small proprietors, petty traders and tenants were able to increase their profits through higher prices. This resulted in discontent amongst the masses, and the scarcity of necessary commodities, such as bread, became chronic.

We mention this en passant, as Comorera in his speech has much to say against the "counter-revolutionaries"!

Comorera makes a sweeping statement at the very beginning:

"Two political lines, two concepts and two lines of conduct have been face to face, both seeking the aid and sympathy of the popular masses. The correct political line is that put forward by us, and the concepts and actions which have been rejected, are those put forward by the FAI."

The two concepts are as follows: The P.S.U.C. maintains that the War comes before the Revolution, whilst the FAI says that War and Revolution cannot be separated. Actually, Comorera misstates the FAI's attitude when he says: "The FAI held that the revolution, that special kind of revolution which they have wanted to carry out in our country, came before everything."

Perhaps Comorera is unaware of the fact that there are no fewer than 50,000 Anarchists on the Aragon front, and does he forget that the first to rise against the Fascists and military in Barcelona were the comrades of the CNT-FAI, and that once victorious in Catalonia they organised the first revolutionary columns to stem the Fascist advance in Aragon? All that is forgotten now.²

Comorera maintains that because of the FAI's apparently mistaken ideology, "Catalonia has not understood and has not been able to do its duty in the war," nor has it given aid to the men who "fight in the Basque country, Madrid and Andalusia." The obvious omission, Aragon, which receives all its supplies from Catalonia; the swelling of the population by hundreds of thousands of refugees; the sacrifice of the civil population which regularly do without bread, sugar and other necessities so that they may be sent to Madrid; the committee organised for "Ayuda a Madrid" (see SPAIN AND THE WORLD No. 11). The help brought to Madrid when she was in danger, by Durruti and his column of 9,000 comrades (they were heroes then; now they must fall under the category of "irresponsibles.")

Neither does Comorera fail to vilify the achievements of the workers and peasants. Collectivisation is spontaneous, as so many eye-witnesses have told the world

1. We shall deal with Hernandez's speech in a subsequent article.
2. "Manchester Guardian," October 2nd; Special Correspondent writes: "For the first time in its history Catalonia has gone out to the help of Castile. The march to Saragossa was headed by the CNT-FAI."

through the Radical Press. The Communist Party instead tells the world that—

"Forced collectivisation in country and town has been carried out with a sinister policy of coercion, violence and, on occasion, murder."

We answer by accusing the PSUC in company with other reactionaries, of being responsible for counter-revolutionary activities, the aim of which has been to destroy the collectivities by the use of criminal violence. We accuse them of the murder of the Mayor of Puigcerda, Antonia Martin and three of his comrades; of the murder of the Secretary of the CNT at Mascarague, Francisco Moreno; of the massacre of the workers of Tarragona and Tortosa.³ We accuse them of counter-revolutionary activity in Aragon, where the Aragon Council (whose "legality" has been acknowledged by the Valencia Government) has been dissolved and our comrade Joaquin Ascaso arrested and charged, amongst other things, of having embezzled money and jewellery! Can Ascaso be accused of having forced himself into the position of President of the Aragon Council? The *New Leader's* correspondent in Spain writes as follows (20th August):

"Ascaso is the most popular working-class leader in Aragon. Although only about thirty years of age, he was elected President of the Aragon Council by a ten to one majority."

"The real reason for his arrest and deposition is the enthusiasm and efficiency with which he has carried out collectivisation."

"The Spanish Press has not announced his dismissal or arrest — though news of it has passed from mouth to mouth in a way which is an extraordinary

3. See 18th July issue "Spain and the World."

4. To show how truly 'revolutionary' his party is, Comorera outlines (on p. 68) the necessary revolutionary methods to be adopted in Catalonia. They are:

"In the first place, the Government which has to be constituted must declare itself in complete solidarity with the Popular Government of the Republic. It must promise, publicly and solemnly, to work in accord with the Government of the Republic, to speed up the formation in Catalonia of the Regular Popular Army, to reorganise completely our rearguard and our war industry."

"The Government, which has to be constituted, must condemn categorically the counter-revolutionary movement of the 3rd May; it must set itself firmly to prevent the pos-

sibility of a repetition of that criminal movement, and consequently it has to agree from the start to every precautionary measure against usurpation of authority. It must proceed immediately to dissolve the Patrullas de Control, to dissolve the POUM, and to dissolve forthwith every committee which has arrogated to itself municipal or State functions."

"The Government which has to be set up must pledge itself to recognise that Government must exercise power, that there is only one power, and that that power emanates from the Government of the Generalitat. It must pledge itself to eliminate, in whatever manner is necessary, all those who try to repeat past experiences and who want to return to the days of the 'Uncontrollables.' That is to say: Eliminate those who do not agree with Comorera and his Party. The creation of a regular army — Centralisation 100%."

feature of Spanish life — but from a copy of "L'Humanité" I see that he is alleged to have ruled with the aid of a few "extremists" and that the peasantry were eager to be saved from his rule. This is all nonsense. The peasants in Aragon spontaneously carried through collectivisation, and their regard for Ascaso almost reaches the stage of worship. He has been replaced by a member of the UGT (despite the fact that the organisation hardly exists in Aragon) who is strongly opposed to collectivisation."

Fenner Brockway, Secretary of the ILP, who has recently returned from Spain, also exploded the myth, and discloses an important fact:

"I met Ascaso in Valencia. He was interviewing members of the Government about collectivisation in Aragon and pressure was being exerted on him to sabotage it. There was not a mention of 'embezzling jewellery.' This is obviously a concocted charge to justify his dismissal."

Who, then, are the counter-revolutionaries? According to Comorera the PSUC is the "most powerful party in Catalonia and the only Catalan revolutionary working-class party."⁴ These are indeed fine words! On the other hand, we have supplied the true facts. The attitude of the Communist Party seems to be far from revolutionary. The rise in numerical strength of that party and the UGT in Catalonia is due to the fact that its "revolutionary" programme is most attractive to the bourgeoisie, which cannot but bless a Comorera who allows them to continue speculation at the workers' expense!

But Comorera tells us that their "increase in prestige" has arisen because they interpret the "aspirations of the working masses of city and country," and that the CNT "have lost prestige" because of "their errors and their atrocities"! And he goes on to say that because our comrades have not been able to understand this situation they have blamed the PSUC and that the only way of resolving their problems was to make "the UGT submit and annihilate the PSUC." According to Comorera this has been attempted by our comrades!

In other words the PSUC accuses the CNT-FAI of dictatorial tactics. Comorera has a poor memory. Had the CNT-FAI the intention of annihilating the opposition in Catalonia, it would have been an easy matter right from the beginning of the Revolution. On July 20th, and even much later, everything was in our comrades' hands. Let the special correspondent of "Manchester Guardian" refresh Señor Comorera's memory. He writes (October 2nd, 1936):

"The key to the situation lies necessarily in the hands of the Anarcho-Syndicalist organisations of the National Labour Federation (CNT) and the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI)."

"In Catalonia the CNT-FAI hold this position owing to their large numerical superiority and their initiative both in the war and in the organisation of economic and social life in the rear."

"About two weeks ago the inhabitants of the island of Ibiza entered the CNT."

Again, on October 24th, the "Manchester Guardian's" correspondent writes:

"With the transformation of the Catalan 'Government' into the Catalan Administrative Council it became possible for the Syndicalists to take part actively instead of merely collaborating, an absurd situation in Catalonia, where the National Labour Federation (CNT) controlled by far the larger portion of the organised workers, all the most vital unions, and had taken the initiative and leadership throughout the struggle against the rebellion and in the reconstruction of economic life."

In spite of this superiority—not merely numerically—there was no attempt made to limit the activities of other anti-fascist organisations. The bookstalls in Barcelona had Communist propaganda as well as Anarchist propaganda. Meetings were held quite openly and all organisations held demonstrations unmolested. Neither was there a censorship of the Communist Press. True to their ideals the Spanish Anarchists were granting liberty to all those who professed to be fighting for the workers' cause. And this was not through fear of the Communist Party, which, in a "Manchester Guardian's" correspondent's words, "despite the boasts of the Comintern is a puny growth. Moscow has really been on the scene only since 1927. With barely 50,000 members it has now 16 deputies in the Cortes, but they are there more by virtue of the distribution of party tickets within the Popular Front than on their merits."

Now, strengthened physically and morally by Moscow's intervention, the Communist Party has shown itself in its true colours: tolerance only for those who think in line with their way of thinking. Our comrade, Berneri, criticised the Communists in several articles in "Guerra de Clase." He was indirectly warned by the Russian authorities in Barcelona, and when these veiled threats were unheeded, and Berneri continued to expose—and foresee—Communist tactics, he was shot in the back. Elimination—this is the fate of so many militant comrades in Spain to-day. Many comrades who have gone to Spain to fight for the Liberty of the Spanish people and against all dictatorships, have, thanks to the anti-revolutionary stand of the PSUC, either died in mysterious circumstances (Bob Smilie for instance), are in prison, or have been expelled from Spain. We read in the "Combat Syndicaliste" of 27th August the text of a telegram from the Comité Regional of the CNT-FAI and Libertarian Youth and addressed to Comrade Besnard of the AIT:

"Please intervene on behalf of foreign anti-fascists expelled from Spain to Marseilles. Prevent the Italians and Germans amongst them from being handed over to the Fascist consuls. Demand the 'right of asylum.'"

To these victims of counter-revolution we add the Libertarian Youth, many of whose members have "disappeared" or have been foully murdered. We add also those members of the POUM who are in the prisons to-day, accused of being Trotskyists and Fascists; whilst others, like Andres Nin, have "es-

5. We shall also publish an article on the whole question of the Aragon Front and of the dissolution of the Aragon Council at a later date. "Solidaridad Obrera," Barcelona daily of the CNT, announces that it has a complete documentation on the subject and will publish it at some future date when it will be "most opportune." We feel justified in waiting until then before publishing our material on the subject.

6. The "Sunday Times" (May 9th) publishes the following, from its Gibraltar correspondent.

"It is reported here that a force of 8,000 men sent by the Valencia Government to aid the Catalan Government was checked after fighting with Anarchists near Fortosa."

caped" never to be heard of again. (The term "escaped" can be understood in the same way as the term "to commit suicide" applies in the Italian and German gaols.)

THE MAY DAYS.

The Assault on the Telephone Building.

The reasons Comorera gives for Salas' attack on the Telephone Exchange are twofold. The first is that the CNT had taken possession. "The Telephone Buildings," he writes, "as far as we know, is not the private property of the CNT." The second is that neither Azaña nor Companys could use the phone without "the indiscreet ear of the controller hearing it."

The first reason, as Comorera presents it, would appear reasonable, but he fails to speak the truth. The Telephone Building was in the hands of a workers' control committee in which there were representatives of the CNT and the UGT, besides a delegate from the Generalitat. There were more CNT men in the committee but this was only natural as there were more CNT workers in the Exchange. Now the UGT is in sole control and Comorera must consider this state of affairs as being satisfactory!

The second point strengthens our contentions. Namely, that the Communists wish to transfer power from the workers to a governing clique. Thus Azaña and Companys are authorities whose privacy must be respected. Azaña can give instructions for the elimination of the "uncontrollables" without the "uncontrollables" tapping his line and having time to warn their comrades!

He then attacks our comrades on the Aragon front.⁵ He recounts how they "ran the risk during those days of leaving the Aragon front open to attack from the Fascist army, because thousands of men from these sectors went to the rear, and they massed themselves in the Aragon rear, prepared not to give the final blow to Fascism, but to add themselves to the forces of the 'uncontrollables' here. There were, in the Barcelona streets, men brought in small groups from the Front, with their complete equipment."

He does not mention, however, that the Valencia Government sent 8,000 Civic Guards to Barcelona to exterminate the "uncontrollables."⁶ Why were these men not doing their share in the fight against fascism? Why were they kept in the rearguard, fully equipped, whilst on the Aragon Front our militiamen were unable to advance because of a lack of heavy artillery and arms in general?

As a result of the May incidents Comorera reminds us that "there are still more than 80,000 rifles and 3,000 machine-guns, and hundreds of thousands of hand-grenades; that there are mortars and that there have not yet been returned those cannon from the Aragon (continued on next page)"

Until further notice all correspondence, moneys for the newspaper & Orphans' Fund should be sent to
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(Continued from Page 2)

tillery Park and from the coast defences which were stolen during the days of the putsch."

Presumably, the comrades of the CNT-FAI and the POUM have them in their possession. Señor Comorera would certainly not suspect a Communist of stealing cannon from the Artillery Park. But, Señor Comorera, obtaining goods under "false pretences" is equally serious. We have not forgotten of an incident which, just by coincidence, occurred a short time before the May incidents! The details are as follows:

On Friday, March 5th, 1937, a few individuals presented an order, signed by Vallejo, director of the arms factories, to the arsenal in Barcelona, to give them ten armoured cars. The director of the arsenal found the document in order and delivered the cars. At the last moment doubts arose as to the authenticity of the order, and the director telephoned to Vallejo for verification. The document proved to be forged, but, in the meantime, the armoured cars had been driven away. They were followed and observed to go into the Voroschilov Barracks, belonging to the PSUC, that is, the communists.

It seems a pity that Señor Comorera ignored this incident when he spoke of the rifles and machine-guns in the rear-guard. We realise that it would be ideal if the Anarchists were to give up their arms and the Communists keep their arms for the purpose of "public order" and "war against the uncontrollable." Unfortunately for the

Communists our comrades say: "We shall give up our arms when the Communists do likewise."

A PROGRAMME TO WIN THE WAR.

These, according to Comorera, are briefly:

Catalan culture, which must give young people a sound physical and material education; "a vast plan of pre-military education for the unmobilised young people or for those who have not reached the age of mobilisation, but who are on the verge of being called up. Thus will be prepared the necessary reserve for the Regular Popular Army, and the country will be in a position to respond to whatever eventuality arises and can count on a strong organisation of the rearguard."

Note the phrase "a strong organisation of the rearguard." To the credulous it means "against Fascism." To the true revolutionists it means "to exterminate the revolutionary elements."

Comorera also thinks that the new Government "must prosecute implacably all speculators, punishing with an iron hand by means of the Popular Tribunals all those who are responsible for corruption and profiteering."

And yet when he was head of the food supplies he gave every opportunity to speculators to speculate! Added to this, the workers must all have "identity cards, that is, the trade union card and the military card; because every day it becomes more necessary to clean up our rearguard and to reorganise efficiently the struggle against agents-provocateurs and traitors

who do not want to help in the war against Fascism, and the only way to prosecute these is to insist on personal documents of identification, and they must, as we have said, be the trade union card and the military card."

During the May days, and subsequently, those comrades who had a CNT (Trade Union) card and had the misfortune to be stopped in the streets by PSUC guards, were either shot then and there, hurled into prison, or held hostage in the Hotel Colon. The identity card certainly has some use when discrimination is to be made between CNT members and UGT followers!

Comorera concludes with more fine words: "We do not demand, nor do we present the programme of our Party. We present the anti-Fascist programme, a programme for an anti-Fascist front which must be accepted by all honourable anti-Fascists."

We conclude by asking: **Then Comorera and the Communist Party along with the petit-bourgeoisie are the only honourable anti-fascists? The 2½ million or more CNT-FAI followers and the thousands of UGT followers who have rejected the Communists' influence in their midst, and have joined hands with the CNT to intensify their struggle against dictators of the Mussolini and Stalin type, are not honourable anti-fascists?**

Time and events will show who were and are the true revolutionists and pioneers of the new social system free from political and economic intrigues. **V.R.**

CORRESPONDENCE

"THE CHURCHES MUST NOT BE RE-OPENED!"

ANSWER TO A CRITIC

The Editor, "Spain and the World."

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to read in the number of "Spain and the World" dated August 25th the article entitled "The Churches must not be Re-opened."

I agree with all you say about the Catholic Church in Spain. It has been and is and will be on the side of the exploiters. Its political activity must be crushed.

But . . . I remember a gentle and sincere Basque priest, Father Laborda, who came to see me in Dublin . . .

You believe in Liberty. So do I. It is possible for quite sincere and honest people, opposed to every form of Capitalistic exploitation, to believe that there is a God—not the God of Franco!—to believe that the purely materialistic explanation of the world is insufficient and explains nothing—to believe that in some way we cannot, limited as we are to Time and Space, understand, there is a life beyond death.

I believe all this. I accept the gentle teaching of Jesus Christ—though I do not know whether he was God, or, if he was, what it means to say so.

Therefore I hold that every form of metaphysical and religious belief should be allowed complete freedom.

At the same time I hold most definitely, that the Catholic Church must be a political and imperialist and exploiting organisation, using the pains of hell, and the hope of Heaven as a lever to crush and exploit in the interests of Capitalism, be bridled and forced to confine itself to purely religious work. There are honest and sincere priests and nuns. I have met them.

I dislike Stalinism as much as you do. But I am sorry that you should lend yourself to intolerance and to a denial of the spiritual foundation of the world—a denial which cannot be based on knowledge, for we have no knowledge, only faith, only our own spiritual experiences.

As for Franco and his backers—I know of no punishment sufficient for them!

Yours etc.,

B. RUDMOSE BROWN.

Trinity College, Dublin. 31st August, 1937.

WE seem agreed with our correspondent on the point that the Catholic Church "has been, and is, and will be, on the side of the exploiters." This fact prompted our article, and we emphatically repeat, without fear of appearing intolerant, that the Churches must not be given a further opportunity of playing the role of exploiter and oppressor of the Spanish people.

Our correspondent will agree that nowhere in the articles was there suggested that people should be prevented from having religious faith or believing in the "spiritual foundations of the world," if they care to believe in things which to use Mr. Brown's own words: "cannot be based on knowledge" and must needs depend on "faith" and our "spiritual experiences." But we do maintain that religious belief must be a spontaneous manifestation and not a result of intensive propaganda (yes, I say "propaganda") during early childhood or through the clergy.

The Church has assumed in its teachings that man is fundamentally bad. Thus is it necessary to have the Commandments. Thus the Church thinks that only with its blessing can men and women live as decent human beings. Failing that they are sinners of the lowest order!

The Anarchists on the other hand believe in the fundamental goodness of human beings and all those things which the Church tries to to achieve through fear, the Anarchist achieves by making each individual feel his position in Society and his "duty" towards his fellow beings. In Bakunin's words: "I can really be free when those around me, both men and women, are also free." This liberty should be the aim of all men and women who live on this planet. Because by its achievement, egoism, hatred, competition, and as a result war, will automatically disappear.

The Church has done nothing in this respect. And we must not limit this opinion to the Church in Spain only. These pacifists of the Protestant Church who believe in turning the other cheek to Hitler and Mussolini, will only have it smacked much harder, and reaction in all its forms will continue unchecked.

The Church in Spain, which consisted of 100,000 State paid priests, succeeded only in keeping the mass of the people in complete ignorance and by threats of everlasting torment, made women spy on the political activities of their husbands who belonged to the workers' unions, which for so long were obliged to work underground in Spain.

Mr. Brown perhaps does not read the Catholic Press with as much attention as the present writer. In this week's "Universe" for instance, there are one or two interesting items of information, which show the Social value of the Church. The first is that "A Catholic boy may not be sent to a Protestant boarding school without special leave from the Bishop of

the Diocese!" Whilst another is to inform a reader that "For the Angelus, the bell is rung in three series of three rings each. For the Regina Coeli the manner of ringing is the same."

Does our correspondent believe that the ability to ring an Angelus or a Regina Coeli, and distinguish between them is sufficient to justify the existence of a Church? Or does he consider of any "spiritual" value the suggestions of a priest that to suppress Communism people should say five mysteries of the Rosary each day; (b) organise their families for the recitation of at least one mystery each day together, on the knees; (c) that they carry the Rosary on their person, so that occasional mysteries may be said during the day. This at any rate, will mean that, we are not merely talking, but doing something in these times of dire stress." ("Universe" 12th March.)

Or does he think the existence of a Church justified because Bishops bless the flags of Fascist invaders in Ethiopia, or Franco's troops in Seville, or because priests bless inanimate objects from newspapers to Malcolm Campbell's speed-boat?

Or does he think that those 100,000 priests and innumerable nuns (nuns in many cases because they have not had the courage to face life), would be of more use to humanity at large if they were to study to become doctors and nurses in new hospitals (perhaps converted Churches!) available in every small village in Spain.

Thus they could be of use to their fellow beings and even if their spiritual belief persisted, no one would stop them in their own homes from reciting mysteries or thinking of Angelus' and Regina Coeli to their heart's content.

But we repeat, their belief is a matter which concerns them alone. Once that belief is preached publicly and imposed on others, whether through the schools or by a subtle play on the emotions of those individuals who are mentally weak, it becomes an insidious propaganda, which as our correspondent himself knows and admits, will be utilised by the forces of reaction within its organisation as well as from without.

Perhaps our correspondent will argue that as a result the future generations will not be acquainted with the Christian faith. This is not so. They will be acquainted with the Old and New Testaments in the same way as to-day, they can acquaint themselves with the works of Aristotle, Socrates and of teachers even earlier than their time. They will be at liberty in that way to embrace the Christian faith if they feel the urge, as a result of their studies. Perhaps, when they will have also read of the exploits of the Church and its Christian hierarchy (because these documents will be available!) they might, unlike Mr. Brown, consider it advantageous, and quite sufficient to confine their thoughts and activities within the mere limits of "Time and Space!" **V.R.**

American Letter

Harry KELLY

THE rise of the C.I.O. and the spread of Industrial Unionism in this country is probably the one hopeful note in an otherwise discouraging situation. It is at the same time one of the many examples that illustrate the truth of the contention that a long and painful struggle is inevitable in laying the foundation for a movement that can come only when social and industrial conditions are ripe for it.

Robert Owen's theory of self-government by the producers as expressed in his Grand National Federation of Trade Unions in 1834 was the forerunner of modern socialism and syndicalism and these in turn precursors of what is now called Industrial Unionism. Guild Socialism also could be added even though its advocates felt that self-government by the producers was insufficient and supplemented that theory by advocating an organization of the consumers to deal with what they called public matters: education, roads, sanitation, etc.

The rise of anarcho-syndicalism in France and the Knights of Labor in the U.S.A. followed in turn by the American Federation of Labor all prepared the way for the I.W.W., and that organization in turn laid the foundation for the present C.I.O. movement. The Syndicalist and I.W.W. movement may be regarded as militant trade unionism dedicated to revolutionary ends whereas the present C.I.O. movement has so far advocated nothing but organization of the workers on an industrial basis although its leaders do stand for a more equitable distribution of wealth. President Roosevelt does the same and claims such redistribution will save capitalism.

It is an old saw that facts are stubborn things and while the technocrats have been laughed down and perhaps out there are certain basic truths in their claims that can neither be laughed out nor down. These basic truths are that the fiercer the competition for trade the greater the increase in machinery to cheapen product and the more machinery is used the more difficult it is for those displaced to buy the product produced. It is a vicious circle for

when men need wages most the employer, trying desperately to get what little trade there is, installs more machinery to displace more labour and destroy more purchasing power.

Industrial unionism is the natural corollary to this development of machinery, for skilled workers are getting as scarce as the proverbial hen's teeth and a peep into an automobile factory for instance will show every walk of life represented from clergymen to bartenders and tennis players. Craft unionism, as exemplified in the American Federation of Labor, grows more outmoded every day and the leaders of that body know it but are fighting a rearguard battle, holding on to their jobs as long as they can. With leaders of unions like the carpenters, teamsters (truckmen) and others as well as Green, president of the Federation, receiving salaries around \$20,000 a year, principle plays a very minor part in this fight against the C.I.O. Certain it is that the methods employed by the leaders of the A.F. of L. against them have been as unscrupulous as that of any corrupt political party and the issue is as simple as the following:

The rules of the Federation state clearly that no union can be expelled except by a two-thirds vote of that body and as the ten unions under fire had about twelve hundred thousand members, or more than one-third, that was impossible. The Executive Board, however, was controlled by the reactionaries, and that group suspended them from membership some four months before the convention met, and as suspended members have no right to vote it was easy to have the convention endorse their action. Conditions are different from the days of the I.W.W. for while that organization played a magnificent part in the history of labour in the U.S. it was a little ahead of its time and was really trying to "put over" an ideal. They made their appeal for the most part to unskilled labour and having little or no money back of them, were at a disadvantage, and unable to cope with war hysteria, brutal capitalism, and a corrupt labour move-

ment, and the war all but destroyed the organization. The C.I.O. started out with the backing of ten powerful unions, money for organizing purposes, and an intelligent leadership, and perhaps most important of all, modern industrialism had prepared the way for them and the tide is rolling their way.

It is too early to say how the organization will develop for it is in the formative stage, but the idea of industrial unionism is sweeping the country and great masses of men and women, hitherto unorganized, are being gathered in the fold. Mass industries like Auto and Textile are being organized probably for the first time; Steel, a hollow shell for forty-five years or ever since the days of the Honestead strike, is reorganizing, and coal and garment workers are organized almost 100% with new groups like retail clerks (shop assistants), office workers and government workers numbering from two and a half to three million are awakening and organizing. Even groups like school teachers and newspaper writers are showing more activity than ever before. Gains in wages, shortening of hours of labour and improved shop conditions are being made daily and let no revolutionary deity or despise these ameliorative ends for when men preach ideals they want to see them carried out, and in the long struggle to translate these ideals into reality certain ameliorative ends are achieved. In fact they must be, for just as man cannot live by bread alone neither can he live by ideals alone. The C.I.O. has so far made no declaration as to ends other than to urge an ever higher standard of living for the masses and to attain that they know and say there must be a better and more equitable distribution of wealth but they are inspiring and organizing the mass and it may well be that this is far more important than all the political fiddle faddle in the shape of new legislation passed or contemplated by the present administration at Washington. It is too bad we cannot report a real revolutionary movement in this country, but as we said at the beginning, facts are stubborn things and these are the facts.

BOOK REVIEW

The War in Spain

Ramon SENDER

THE WAR IN SPAIN, by Ramon Sender. Translated by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell. (Faber and Faber, London. Price 12/6).

"The War in Spain" is a book worth reading. It comes as a stimulating tonic after a series of books, in many cases by foreign journalists who neither know the Spanish temperament nor the Spanish language, and who consequently fail to bring to the fore the two sides of the conflict in Spain: the war operations and the spirit (political conviction) which has carried the brave Spanish people through it all — Ramon Sender as Sir Peter Chalmers (who translated the book into the English language) points out in the preface, is considered the most distinguished living author in Spain, and we are convinced of this especially when we read the unforgettable section dealing with the pitiless bombardment of Madrid ("Madrid Valdemoro — Sesema — Madrid") in which he not only speaks highly of the heroism of the Madrilians, but penetrates even deeper into their very beings and minds.

To us, perhaps it is regrettable that he should even touch on politics, because though he is not a member of the Communist Party — he has an infatuation for that body. Thus, when he couples a man's action with a political party, one is certain to read that the intelligent and honest are the Communists whilst the ingenious, the idealists (in this case, the impractical) and useles members of the militia are the Anarchists.

Elsewhere the Author penetrates into the psychology of the individual, puts life, real poetry, into inanimate objects. Yet when he dis-

cusses politics he becomes superficial. The Communist Party alone said that it was necessary to fortify Madrid! In the Villages of Adamez and Villefranca it was only Communist leaflets that were asked for by the inhabitants! And then Communists are the only ones who "do things without anyone knowing about them, and their only preoccupation being to get them well done!" And one could cite other examples which, if one knew no better, would lead the reader to believe that there were no anarchists in Spain, or that, the few that there are, their contribution to the revolution is nullified by their "lack of discipline." The C.N.T. "when they are collected in units serve for nothing but to upset other troops!"

But these are mere details, (which must not be given too much political importance) of an otherwise excellent book. The planning of the material is well chosen. The months previous to the rebellion are outlined in the first chapter; the second describes the reaction of the Madrid rising in San Rafael where the author lives with his family. The subsequent chapters deal with the war: strategy, offensives, retreats, the heroism of a practically unarmed people, enemy aviation ... But interwoven into these forceful chapters, Ramon Sender, with his gifted pen presents detailed portraits of his comrades at arms; he lets us enjoy that sense of humour which even during these tragic days has been so characteristic of the Spanish people.

Perhaps one of the most moving chapters is the one entitled "A Blinded Boy." The savagery of the

enemy towards women and children is brought to the fore with vivid mastery. It was in the village of Villafranca. "Our comrade took us towards a little square nearby, and showed us there a six year old boy with his eyes bandaged. The boy was trying to make a sand castle by pressing in his hands the soil he had scraped up. He had not yet learned the games of the blind, and was trying in vain to play at his old games. Our Comrade told us: "He is blind. A Moor violated and murdered his mother in front of him. Then he went off, but returned afterwards to put out the child's eyes."

How symbolic of Fascism in Spain and in the remainder of the world!

How typical of the Spanish proletariat is Sender's reflection: "I was too moved to tell him, "Your father will live among our heroes, and to-morrow will share our glory, but if he dies," I thought, "you will be the child of everyone. Just as your father's curse will dry up the rivers of the fascists and scorch their fields, so our blessing will open all roads before your feet. Three millions of proletarians will lend you their eyes, that you may see my boy."

This spirit of solidarity amongst the majority of the anti-fascist forces is the only guarantee for the ultimate defeat of Franco. Without it, the three million proletarians will share the fate of that six year old boy.

V. R.

Are You Sending A Regular Contribution To The Orphans Fund?

NOTICE: Owing to pressure on our Space, we are unable to publish our Balance Sheet and Orphans' Fund receipts in this issue. We feel it necessary however to remind readers that the Deficit is still £97, and that if we are to continue regular publication, the deficit must be appreciably decreased within the next few weeks!

G. GALASSO

WE were shocked to learn of the death, two weeks ago, of a young anti-fascist friend, Giovanni Galasso at the age of 23.

Whilst a medical student at London University, he was largely responsible for the formation and success of the International Society in his college, and his energy and capabilities were not spared in his attacks on Mussolini's and Hitler's Fascisms.

To his parents, whom he so dearly loved, goes our deepest sympathy. Death has robbed them, and us, of an active and intelligent son and comrade.

Perhaps the true sincerity of this young anti-fascist can be better understood by repeating the words he uttered to friends who visited him in hospital:

"If I knew that my father had modified his (anti-fascist) political views, I should lose all my esteem for him."

SOLIDARITY FUND

VIIIth List.

New Eagle, Pa: (List 113 per F. Venturini), V. Tognozzi \$1, Pelina 50c, F. V. 50c, Celestino M. \$1-12/-; North Bergen, N.J.: List 133 per D. Froscati A.C.F. \$1, J.S. \$2, J.M. \$1, J.P. \$1.50, B.G. 30, D Froscati \$6-£2/11/2; McKeesport Pa: List No. 33 (per J. Rossetti), R. Perez \$3.50, F. Alvarez \$1, J. Artinez \$1.25, M. Fernandez \$1, P. Brunteto \$1-£1/11/0; Johannesburg, S.A.: List No. 5 (per L. Sapire), R. Shapshak \$1, A. Dunbar £1, A. Lowson 4/6, A. Morris 4/6, J. Van den Bergh 5/-, Z. Amdler 4/6, J. Prischas 5/-, E. Boyarsky 5/-, L. Sapire £1 — Total £4/8/6; Youngstown, Ohio: per A. Toffel 8/-; Allentown Pa: Lucetti 8/-; New Haven: collected amongst comrades £2/0/0; Rochester N.Y.: List 53 (per Gruppo Libertaria) £4/0/0; London: Tab. (per Farrer) 2/6; Greenock: S. Marietta 2/6; London: J. E. Dobson 5/-; Victoria Australia: List No. 92 (per L. Cicuto), L. Cicuto A10/-, G. Centazzo A5/-, G. Raimondo A5/-, —15/6; Total £17/4/2.

Previously acknowledged £90/18/1.

PATHOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

The press states that some 2,000,000 Englishmen left their beds at 3 a.m. one morning last week to listen to the relay of the Farr-Louis fight held in New York.

Robert Taylor's admirers, states the National Press, mobbed him on his arrival in England. Before leaving the States the same occurred. Two women hid under his bed whilst another, who had the doubtful pleasure of holding his hand, explained during a moment of temporary insanity that she would "never wash that hand in her life."

It is not always years that bring reason. A young lady aged 14, by the name of Mercia Williams, writes to the "Star" in the following terms.

I am only a girl of 14, but I must say I was disappointed when I read about all the girls rushing to meet Robert Taylor. I thought English girls had more sense than to rush to see a person that will soon be forgotten. A few thousand were waiting to see him. Now, Mr. Editor, if I remember rightly, when the Spanish refugees came to England, hardly anyone went to see them arrive. They need more comfort than a person who will soon be forgotten. They will go down in history. Also, do you remember the starving Jarrow marchers? They got hardly any help.

It is a pity that the Robert Taylor fans cannot remove their gaze or their repressed minds from the features of their hero and pay more attention, as this sensible young correspondent of the "Star" suggests, to the plight of the wretched Spanish orphans, or their own struggling working class.

Their existence in society could then seem more justifiable. LIBERTARIAN.

PUIGCERDA

(Concluding Instalment)

There is, however, a slight difference. If the owner's power in the controlled factories has been completely expropriated, it is not so from the financial point of view — for he receives a salary — a salary of 250 pesetas a week, I was told at the Spanish factory, although elsewhere they were not quite so sure of the figure and at the French factory they were not aware of the amount or even of the existence of this salary.

If, in these two factories, the situation is identical from the point of view of capitalist intervention, it seemed to me to differ quite a lot from the point of view of management. In the Spanish concern, there is no director; it is the workers control committee that manages directly; in the French factory, on the other hand, where there was, along with the owner, a French director from Roubaix, who has been with the concern for 15 years, this director was kept on and it is he who appears in actual fact to direct all the operations, the committee taking no part except to give the necessary signatures.

In regard to the general progress of the business, the two enterprises have been very much affected by the War. As opposed to the condensed milk plant, whose principal raw material is on the spot and which possesses unlimited outlets, these textile factories have experienced a considerable reduction both in their source of supply and their outlets — due, of course, to the actual scarcity in Spain of nearly all kinds of commodities. The war naturally has not created a demand for tissues of high class novelty! And so far as common tissues are concerned, the Barcelona factories are better equipped than those of Puigcerda. Since, moreover, these Barcelona factories are located beside their stocks of wool, which recently have been considerably reduced in volume, they naturally tend to keep this wool for themselves.

The result is that in these textile factories the work is slack. There are, however, nearly the same number of workers as before. 76 in the Spanish concern, 56 in the French — for there is nothing for them to do elsewhere.

Up till now these two concerns have been able to pay wages from their own resources by using on the one hand the product of the sales and on the other hand the funds which were in the bank on July 19th. In the French concern these two sources work out about equal.

The Syndicated Mine

I mentioned above the difficulties which the condensed milk plant experienced in procuring coal. The scarcity of coal is indeed one of the most serious problems facing Republican Spain. Now about 10 kilometres from Puigcerda, near the village of Das, there is a bed of lignite which was being worked by a capitalist and two or three men prior to the Revolution. The comrades of the CNT at Puigcerda believed that this lignite might overcome the coal shortage so they therefore collectivised the mine and a group of CNT miners began to develop it.

At the present time, the survey of the bed, (which consists of a series of almost vertical layers), the preparatory work and the mining itself are being done simultaneously by means of two shifts each 20 metres deep. Naturally the main thing at the moment is the preparatory work. But nevertheless on the 20th February, 36 workers in three shifts, extracted 15 tons a day. The following week 15 more men were engaged on the job and in proportion to the progress of the preparatory work, the number of workers increased to about 150. A daily production of 50 tons is estimated almost immediately and later on this will be increased to 100 tons per day.

Unfortunately it is not coal but lignite

— and like all lignite is very much loaded with water and sulphur. It is therefore not suitable for every kind of work, but in war time it is of real service.

Actually this lignite is carried by little lorries to a small station a few kilometres distant and from there it is transported by railway to some cement factories which use it.

This enterprise, created exclusively by the CNT is under its sole control.

The Equality of Wages

It is obvious from what we have said above that the new juridical condition of industry is not only varied in character but it is also far from being fully determined. It is all in a state of becoming, so to speak.

It was necessary, before all else, to expel the owner and continue production in spite of his absence. This first task has been fully accomplished and that for the present is the essential fact.

For the future that will not suffice. The relations of the different concerns among themselves, the relations between the concerns, the syndicates and the public authorities (where these exist) will have to be progressively determined in a more precise manner. For myself, I attach paramount importance to the nature of these relationships. It is their character which will determine whether collectivisation is leading to the creation of an authoritarian society, totally submissive to the power of a totalitarian state, or on the contrary to a society of free men, formed by the re-union of free groups of producers.

The economic and judicial relations of the new society at Puigcerda are not yet sufficiently developed to enable one to estimate in which of these two directions they will travel.

On the other hand, there is one point that has been well established — namely, in all enterprises, whether in the co-operatives, or the municipal services or those enterprises that have been collectivised and placed under workers' control, a great and supreme principle applies, a principle without which all collectivisa-

tion loses its sense:— It is "Equality among men — by equality of remuneration."

A standard wage, irrespective of trade or function, such indeed is the great principle established at Puigcerda and actually put into operation — with but very few exceptions.

A standard wage means that everybody earns the same amount of money whether he is a director, skilled workman or a manual labourer! But it varies according to sex, number of children and also according to the amount of work to be done in a particular industry.

Here are the actual wages paid. Outside of the factories — that is to say, in the co-operative and in the municipal services, the standard wage paid to all workers whatever their trade or grade is 50 pesetas a week for the men and 35 pesetas for the women. The Militia, who are paid directly by the State of Catalonia at the rate of 70 pesetas a week, return 20 pesetas to the Municipality in order to be on the same footing as the other workers.

In the factories (textile and condensed milk) the wage is a little higher. 55 pesetas for the men and 40 pesetas for the women.

In addition, for all, there is a supplement of 5 pesetas per week per child.

These wages, according to my information, have only two exceptions — and these two exceptions apply to the foreign technicians. The Swiss technician, the director of the condensed milk factory, draws the same wage as the workers but certain "gratuities" are added — while the French director of the textile factory has been allowed to retain the same wage. In other words, we can say, without deceiving ourselves, that the standard wage is the rule at Puigcerda.

So Puigcerda marches on towards Socialism.

R. LOUZON.
(The first and second instalment appeared in Nos. 17 and 18, and copies are obtainable, price 2½d. each).